

# **(Un)veiled bodies of resistance**

***How women in the Occupied West Bank village of Budrus oscillate organised and everyday resistance practices against the Israeli occupation since the ending of the Second Intifada in 2005***



Laurie Treffers  
5489407  
Utrecht University  
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# Abstract

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This thesis contributes to bridging the theoretical gap between practices of organised and everyday resistance by analysing the case study of resistance practices among women in the Occupied West Bank village of Budrus. Previous research has failed to systematically link more organised forms of resistance to acts of everyday resistance. Taking an individualist, interpretivist approach with a focus on practices and narratives, this thesis answers the following research question: *How are practices of everyday resistance oscillating with organised resistance practices of Palestinian women in the West Bank village of Budrus since the ending of the Second Intifada in 2005?* Based on fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews, ten core forms of resistance are identified: the weekly Friday protests, responses to ‘alarm calls’ and Facebook activism (as organised resistance) and Friday morning ‘picnics’, farming the land and the annual olive harvest, checkpoints and the refusal of immobility, motherhood, education and narratives and creating counter safe spaces (as everyday resistance). By systematically analysing these resistance practices through the four dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation, this research explains how these forms of resistance synthesise in social life. This thesis argues that a distinction between organised and everyday resistance does not, however, sufficiently allow us to understand how women oscillate between different resistance practices. The concepts of ‘veiled bodies of resistance’ and ‘overt bodies of resistance’ are hence introduced. Urgency in the form of a direct threat to the land or another villager are required for women to move between these two roles and to negotiate this role shift with the men in their community. By critically reviewing existing notions of resistance through a gendered lens, this research adds a more feminist perspective on female agency in conflict and resistance.

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# Map of the Occupied Palestinian Territories



Map in *The Gaza Strip & West Bank: A map folio* (1994) by the Central Intelligence Agency. Budrus is marked on the map in red by the author.

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# Introduction

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It is a Friday morning in late April in the village of Budrus, the Occupied West Bank. I am walking with Ifza and her aunt Nadia through the fields near the Israeli Security Wall, or ‘the Apartheid Wall’, as the villagers call it. Both women, born and raised in Budrus, are among the few female participants in the weekly protests that have been organised for the past three months. The villagers have been protesting U.S. president Donald Trump’s decision to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in December 2017. Before the protests begin, Ifza and her aunt explore the fields. While it is supposed to look like a morning stroll, the women are looking for Israeli soldiers that might have hidden themselves in the greenery. Sometimes soldiers do so in order to arrest children during the protests that will follow later that day. Nadia is picking flowers while Ifza collects emptied tear gas cans in a plastic bag. We end their weekly round at the village’s cemetery, overlooking the fields and the Wall. The village’s mosque broadcasts the call to prayer, meaning it will not be long before the crowd of men and young boys will reach the cemetery to march towards the Wall. Nadia starts making bouquets from the flowers she collected and places them in the empty tear gas cans. When I ask her why she does so, she answers: “Because it is a different kind of hope. When they give us ugly things, we turn it into something beautiful.”<sup>1</sup>

## Academic and empirical context

The turning of tear gas cans into flower vases can be seen as an example of ‘everyday resistance’. The field of resistance studies profoundly expanded when James C. Scott introduced this term to contrast more public forms of resistance in 1985. With everyday resistance, Scott refers to daily acts that subalterns use to resist dominant power holders when collectively organising themselves is too dangerous. I adopt Johansson and Vinthagen’s (2013: 10) contemporary definition, in which they define everyday resistance as “resistance that is done routinely, but which is not politically articulated or formally organized (yet or in that situation)”. Johansson and Vinthagen (2013: 2) write that the concept demonstrates how resistance is “*integrated into social life* and is a part of normality; not as dramatic or strange as assumed” (emphasis in original). Notwithstanding, as Lilja et al. (2017) have recently argued, there remains a profound theoretical gap between these everyday practices of resistance and the classical definition of resistance. For the latter type of resistance, I use the label of ‘organised resistance’. Based on the work of Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) and Hollander and Einwohner (2004), I define organised resistance as often collectively organised action that is aimed at challenging existing power structures and is visible and easily recognised by both the target of the collectively organised action and observers. These two categories of resistance are generally

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<sup>1</sup> Author’s field notes, 30 March, 2018.

researched separately from one another, as if people practice either organised *or* everyday resistance in certain times and spaces.<sup>2</sup>

The example of Nadia on this particular Friday morning in April illustrates how practices of everyday and organised resistance are in fact enacted simultaneously in social life. Shortly after Nadia has practiced everyday resistance by making vases out of tear gas cans, she will attend the weekly Friday protests. There is thus access to organised forms of resistance, such as protests, yet she practices these everyday acts of ‘hope’ to resist that what she calls ‘ugly’. Research on how these two forms of resistance are interacting remains vacant. In order to solve this theoretical complication, this thesis aims to answer the following research question: *How are practices of everyday resistance oscillating with organised resistance practices of Palestinian women in the West Bank village of Budrus since the ending of the Second Intifada in 2005?* Having a personal interest in women in political conflict, the focus on women was evident. As Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) argue, researching resistance is essentially about researching power. There are more power intersections than the intersection between the resister and the target of resistance. One of the core intersections that we must research in order to understand power and resistance is that of patriarchy. Building upon feminist theory, in particular the work of Mahmood (2005), I argue in this thesis that Palestinian women practice resistance differently than men do. Furthermore, there is the assumption that organised resistance is a male realm, whereas, especially in the Palestinian case, everyday resistance is often associated with women (Richter-Devroe 2011: 33). By redefining different forms of resistance and critically looking at how women engage in both organised and everyday resistance practices through a gendered lens, I aim to provide a more feminist understanding of resistance in general.

Budrus is a village twenty-one kilometres northwest of Ramallah and falls under the Ramallah governorate. It has 1,500 inhabitants and was established approximately 500 years ago (ARIJ 2012: 5). All inhabitants of the village are Arab Muslims.<sup>3</sup> Budrus was chosen as the case study for this research for three main reasons. First, it is a village with a history of organised protests in which women played an important role. In 2003, the village became known for its mass protests against the building of the Israeli Security Wall (ISW). The women of the village were of crucial importance in these protests, as portrayed in the 2009 documentary *Budrus*. Women placed themselves on the front lines of the action, resulting in substantial media attention. The villagers refer to this period as ‘*Intifada Al-Jiddar*’, or ‘the Wall Intifada’. A second reason for selecting Budrus as the case study for this research is because the weekly protests in the beginning of 2018 provided concrete research material on women in organised resistance practices. A third reason is that daily life in the village is still very much affected

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<sup>2</sup> For organised resistance, see for example Tilly and Tarrow’s (2015) work on social movements, or Chenoweth and Stephan’s (2011) work on civil resistance. For everyday resistance, see Kerkvliet 2009, Thomson 2013 and Colborn 2016.

<sup>3</sup> According to local community leader ‘Abu Ahmad’. Informal meeting on 13 March, 2018.

by the Israeli occupation. The village is divided into two administrative areas.<sup>4</sup> Around 11.2 per cent of the village falls under ‘Area B’, which means the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has control over civil matters but Israel continues to have overriding security responsibility. The main land of Budrus, 88.8 per cent, is however classified as ‘Area C’, resulting into Israel having full control over security and administration matters (ARIJ 2012: 15).

I focus on the period after the end of the Second Intifada in 2005, because most research on Palestinian resistance, especially from the perspective of political conflict, is focused on the First (1987-1991 or 1993) and Second Intifada (2000-2005).<sup>5</sup> The scale of visible resistance during these Palestinian uprisings against the Israeli occupation explains why these periods are of great interests to conflict analysts and the like. However, while military repression since the Second Intifada has indeed made it difficult for Palestinians to politically organise themselves (Richter-Devroe 2011: 16), protests, sit-in, boycotts and other forms of political activism are still very much daily events in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). Although there are a few studies that discuss sumud after 2015 (see Ryan 2015), the majority of the research on everyday resistance among Palestinians focuses on empirical evidence from the Second Intifada (see Hammami 2006; Richter-Devroe 2011; Johansson and Vinthagen 2015). Sumud directly translates to ‘steadfastness’ and is approached in this thesis as a form of everyday resistance specific to the Palestinian case. Research specifically focused on the role of women in Palestinian resistance likewise well researched, but similarly confined to the timeframes of the Intifadas (see for example Peteet 1991, Sharoni 1995, Ameri 1999, Holt 2003). Due to the lack of research on the period after the Second Intifada, this research aims to produce knowledge on resistance practices of Palestinian women since 2005.

## **Academic significance and objectives**

I argue that the research question I have formulated is a significant question to ask, as its answer can help us understand in a more informed manner how practices of everyday and organised resistance are interacting. As Hollander and Einwohner (2004: 551) write, the topic of resistance touches the essence of social science, as it involves “issues and debates that that are at the heart of the sociological perspective, including power and control, inequality and difference, and social context and interaction”. Therefore, it is worthwhile to further explore and theorise different forms of resistance and how they blend in social life. While Scott has fundamentally changed our perspective of what is political, the political expressions of subalterns, especially women, remain to be analysed distinctly from more formal forms of politics, such as organised resistance. A more feminist perspective is needed to include marginalised voices in the analysis of political conflict. More specific to the study of

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<sup>4</sup> According to the Oslo II agreements in 1995, the West Bank has been divided into area ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’. Area A is fully administered by the National Palestinian Authority (NPA), Area B is under shared administration by the NPA and the Israeli state and Area C is under complete Israeli control.

<sup>5</sup> These dates are the most common timeframes used to historicise the Intifadas (see for example Norman 2011).

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this research adds to the debate on how practices of sumud are related to forms of organised resistance and focuses on a time period that is often neglected in the study of the conflict. The objectives of this research are (1) to understand the meaning of resistance in the individual's life; (2) to understand how everyday resistance is practiced; (3) to understand how organised resistance is practiced; (4) to understand how everyday and organised resistance interact; (5) to determine factors that shape the decision to deploy either organised or everyday resistance and (6) to generate new and build upon existing theories of resistance. More generally, this research has the main function of generating theoretical ideas, while being contextual in the sense that I am 'describing the form or nature of what exists' by documenting practices of resistance among women in Budrus, and explanatory in the sense that I am examining 'the associations between what is' by focusing on the interactions between different forms of resistance (Ritchie 2003: 27). Further, the case study of women in Budrus is chosen in order to 'give voice' (Ragin and Amoruso 2010: 46) to a category of people that is often not included in the analysis of political conflict, let alone approached as an active agent of resistance, namely Palestinian Muslim women in rural areas.

## **Methodology**

### ***Theory and concepts***

This research takes an interpretivist epistemological stance and an ontological position that focuses on individual agency. My core aim is to understand the practices of individuals in light of the social structures they are embedded in. I have hence adopted a post-structuralist analytic framework (Johansson and Vinthagen 2016: 4). One of the challenges of my research is that I use analytic tools from different ontological traditions. It is therefore of importance to clarify my theoretical lens. I adopt a Foucauldian perspective of power, following the authors of my analytic framework, in which "power is conceptualized as ubiquitous rather than located in certain groups; that is, productive rather than merely repressive, and relational rather than reified" (Johansson and Vinthagen 2014: 4). This definition however remains vague and does not make explicit more coercive forms of state power. Whereas others use the distinction between sovereign power, biopower and disciplinary power<sup>6</sup> in conceptualising power and resistance, I use the distinction between 'compulsory' and 'productive' power as Demmers and Gould (2018: 5) do after the work of Barnett and Duvall (2005). Compulsory power is defined as "the direct, often coercive, capacity to control the action of others" (Barnett and Duvall, 2005a: 43 as cited in Demmers and Gould 2018: 5). It is thus about the often material domination of one actor over another (Barnett and Duvall 2005a: 43). Productive power on the other hand is "the constitution of specific types of actors capable of effective action within a given social domain" (2005a: 43). This power is related to the 'production of subjectivity in systems of meanings' (2005a: 43). Duvall and Barnett have some interesting thoughts on how these two forms of power are

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<sup>6</sup> See Lilja and Vinthagen 2015 and Gordon 2008.

related to resistance. Compulsory power “fosters the inclination of directly controlled actors to possess those attributes that enable them to counter the actions of their controllers, and, in turn, themselves, to directly shape the behavior of others” (Duvall and Barnett 2005b: 23). Productive power, on the other hand, requires resisters to “destabilize, even to remake, their subjectivities, and, thereby, to transform, or at least to disrupt, the broader social processes and practices through which those subjectivities are produced, normalized, and naturalized” (2005b: 23). I use this distinction of compulsory and productive power rather than the distinction of sovereign power, biopower and disciplinary power because the former allows me to simplify my analysis of power. This is necessary in order to remain focused on the theoretical complication of this research, which is the relationship between resistance and resistance, rather than the relationship between power and resistance.

Furthermore, I build on the feminist theory of Saba Mahmood (2005, 2006), who delivered ground-breaking work on defining agency of women in the Muslim world. Mahmood (2006: 38) argues that secular feminists failed to conceptualise female agency beyond the dichotomy between resistance and subordination to patriarchal norms and that the liberal desire to be free from (male) subordination might not be universal. In this sense, I approach agency as the autonomy and capacities an individual woman has to pursue her own interests inside the power structures she is embedded in, while keeping in mind that her interests might not entail to be free of male subordination.

When I label something as ‘resistance’, I mean that the act is *intentionally* done with the aim to undermine (some) power. Whether the act actually undermines this power is beyond the scope of this research. A core objective of resistance studies has been to ‘give voice’. Too often, this has resulted in framing of ordinary everyday acts as resistance, even when the agent of that act does not define the act as such. This is not ‘giving voice’ to subordinates, nor does it improve the analytic usefulness of the term. To stay away from this tenacious habit of framing everything as resistance, I will only discuss resistance practices that my respondents themselves *recognise* as and *intend* to be resistance. Hereby, I take quite a drastic stance in the debate. As Hollander and Einwohner (2004) write, precisely the subjects of recognition and intention are the main bottlenecks in providing a hegemonic definition of resistance. But we cannot aim to ‘give voice’ to a group of people and then at the same time dismiss what they are saying. I am not interested in getting involved in abstract ‘false consciousness’ discussions, as this is not what my research is about. It is about how women oscillate practices between everyday and organised resistance and how they *experience* being conscious of power and resistance.

A problem that has been identified with this approach is that it might exclude lower educated classes who lack a certain political consciousness (Hollander and Einwohner 2004: 542). However, as everyday resistance is essentially about a culture of ‘hidden transcripts’, there has to be *some* consciousness that makes resistance resistance. A second problem identified with my approach is that the resister might not be able to discuss the motivations behind an act, because it is for example too risky to do so. Conducting fieldwork in a village that is mostly under the control of the Israeli state, I

was unable to escape this scenario. Nonetheless, during my fieldwork, I experienced that many women actually perceived speaking to me as an act of resistance in itself. This corresponds to Richter-Devroe's (2011) fieldwork experiences on resistance practices among women in the Occupied West Bank (OWB). While my approach might indeed have left out certain groups of women and thereby acts of resistance, it is more important to me to stay true to the objective of giving voice rather than to ascribe words to other people's actions. Finally, it should be clarified that I approach resistance as an act that can have multiple motivations and outcomes. When the agent defines an act as resistance, and I thus define an act as resistance, it does not mean the particular act cannot also be a coping or survival mechanism and/or self-beneficial.

### ***Puzzle statement and sub questions***

As stated earlier, the 'puzzle statement' that this thesis aims to answer has been formulated as follows: *How are practices of everyday resistance oscillating with organised resistance practices of Palestinian women in the West Bank village of Budrus since the ending of the Second Intifada in 2005?* It is of importance to note here that while I interviewed my respondents about the period since the Wall Intifada ended in 2004, I only first-hand observed resistance practices in spring of 2018. In order to answer the puzzle statement, several sub questions have been formulated. The first sub question focuses on practices on everyday resistance: (1) *How are acts of everyday resistance practiced through dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation by women in Budrus between 2005 and 2018?* The second sub question is formulated nearly identically, but instead focuses on organised resistance: (2) *How are acts of organised resistance practiced through dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation by women in Budrus between 2005 and 2018?* The third sub question is: (3) *How are practices of everyday resistance and organised resistance interacting in 'oscillation dynamics' in the resistance practices of Palestinian women in Budrus?* In order to research this last question, I have divided the question in four sub-sub questions: (3a) *What are the key similarities and differences between dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation of everyday and organised resistance?*, (3b) *how do Palestinian women narrate the connection between these two forms of resistance?*, (3c) *what are the main indicators in the decision to practice either everyday or organised resistance in a specific situation?* and (3d) *how can these 'oscillation dynamics' be theorised?*

### ***Research design***

The research strategy I adopt is qualitative and focuses on merging inductive and deductive reasoning (Ragin and Amoroso 2010). The knowledge produced in this thesis is derived from naturally occurring data, in the form of both participant and non-participant observation, and generated data through in-depth interviewing. I focus on *practices* of individuals and how they give meaning to these practices

through *narratives*. Whereas observation and participation allowed me to gain a better understanding of the practices, in-depth interviewing was most suitable to gather knowledge on the narratives about these practices. The meaning I ascribe to actions is thus derived from a dialogue between this naturally occurring and generated data.

I structured my research design around five ‘steps’ that were guided by my sub questions. The first step was to collect empirical evidence on everyday resistance (sub question 1). The second step was to collect empirical evidence on organised resistance (sub question 2). Third, deriving from the sub-sub questions 3a, 3b and 3c, I collected empirical data on the interaction of everyday and organised resistance practices in Budrus. These three steps were often entangled with one another in practice during my fieldwork, as everyday and organised resistance interweave in social reality. The empirical data was gathered by combining the data collection techniques of (participant) observation and in-depth interviewing, which I will further elaborate on in the next paragraph. The fourth step was the analysis of data. This process was again divided into two steps, namely that of descriptive and explanatory analysis (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 14). In my descriptive analysis, I focused on coding my data according to the four dimensions of my analytic framework, which will be further discussed in Chapter 1. From here, I developed classifications of different acts of everyday and organised resistance that occurred among women in Budrus. The focus in the second phase of analysis was to discover patterns and convergences in my empirical evidence by comparing the four dimensions of my analytic framework. The fifth step was the theorising process, in which I returned to existing theory on the topic to see how my findings could generate new ideas on resistance practices. The goal of this step was to create a dialogue between ideas and evidence (Ragin and Amoruso 2010: 57).

### ***Data collection techniques***

The empirical evidence for this research has been collected by combining three core data collection techniques, namely that of participant and non-participant observation and in-depth interviewing. This combination allowed me to synthesise my observations of practices of resistance with the meanings my respondents gave to these practices through narratives. I stayed in Ramallah from 3 March until 16 May, 2018. During the weekends, I lived with a host family in Budrus, participating as much as possible in their daily lives. I helped in the household, joined family and women’s gatherings and attended a wedding to experience local culture. During this period, I conducted interviews with twenty women in the village. I used a topic guide<sup>7</sup> to semi-structure my interviews, but often, probing questions were needed to further direct respondents. This semi-structured interview technique was used to eventually be able to systematically compare results. At the beginning of each interview, respondents were asked to make a timeline of their most important life events in order to acquire an overview of both their personal histories and their narration of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix II: ‘Topic guide’.

Interviews were arranged by my two ‘fixers’ and translators. One of them is a 29-year-old doctor in a Ramallah hospital and the daughter of a prominent community leader, the other is a 22-year-old accountancy student. They did not have previous experience with either fixing or translating. I was unable to work with a professional translator due to logistic and financial issues. With my basic knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic, it was possible to guide the translation to some extent. In my experience, the main advantage of using a local, non-professional translator who personally knows the respondent is that it is much easier to establish trust: women seemed to quickly trust me because I was with a person that they trusted. Interviews were often conducted in groups of two or three women, who in all cases were related to each other. This was due to practical considerations as well as that I experienced it encouraged women to share more information if the other respondent in the interview was doing so. The women also helped each other to remember certain events and dates.

My non-probability sample technique was that of ‘snowballing’ (Ritchie and Lewis 2003: 94) by using the personal networks of my fixers and their families. As an independent researcher not affiliated to any organisation, I was reliant on the contacts that I had established as my ‘gatekeepers’ of the community. In this sense I was constrained by local culture, as it was not seen as appropriate for me as both a foreigner and a woman to walk around the village unaccompanied and introduce myself to people. I was thus dependent on my host family and the resources they could provide me. I interviewed twenty respondents, some of whom I interviewed twice. All women were Palestinian and their ages varied between 22 and 86 years old. Seventeen of them were born and raised in Budrus. The three who were not born in Budrus all lived in the village before the Wall Intifada began in 2003. I managed to sample a group of women from different ages and backgrounds, from middle-aged housewives and widows, to young mothers who work full-time, to students.<sup>8</sup> I purposefully directed my fixers in the process of arranging interviews. I would for example inform them I wished to interview more students in order to create a more diverse sample. It should be stated here that my translators, due to their inexperience, found it difficult to approach women they did not personally know. As a result, the women I have interviewed often come from the same families. One family is known in general as a ‘Fatah family’ and the other is known as a ‘ Hamas family’. However, none of my respondents identified as being politically active for either organisation, although they might sympathise with the views of a certain party. While these two families are the main families in the village, it might be possible that other politically oriented views are not included in this research due to a lack of access to these women.

### ***Ethical considerations: anonymity***

Before each interview, I asked my respondents if I was allowed to record the interview and if they wished to stay anonymous. While each of them confirmed I was allowed to use their real name, I have

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix I: ‘Overview of interviews’.



refrained from doing so in this final result. This is because the village remains under close supervision of the Israeli army and arrests during night raids and at checkpoints are a daily reality. As I could not foresee the consequences of using my respondents' names in my research, I have given each of them a pseudonym. Their real names are known to my supervisor and translators.

### ***Challenges and limitations***

In this section, I reflect upon my positionality in the field and acknowledge the challenges and limitations of this research. First of all, I believe my profile as a female student allowed me to conduct this research. It was because I am a woman that I was able to spend time with my respondents and join them in their everyday activities. I would not have had this kind of access as a male researcher. My identity as a student was also important in negotiating my access. The villagers have a very high regard of education and thus helping me in conducting my research so that I could complete my MA degree seemed to be of genuine importance to them. Further, they seemed glad that someone was interested in the daily struggles they are still encountering. I have only experienced positive curiosity from the villagers and was welcomed with warm hospitality wherever I went. I believe that the fact that I stayed with a well-respected family in the village helped in encouraging women to speak to me. As stated earlier, I do not know if my affiliation to this particular family has closed other 'gates' and thereby alternative stories for me.

A main limitation of this research has been the fact that I do not speak the local dialect and that most of my respondents were not fluent in English. While I speak basic Modern Standard Arabic and managed to learn a few skills in the local dialect during my fieldwork, all interviews were conducted with translators. Due to my basic knowledge of the Arabic language, I was able to guide translations to a certain extent. For example, I could ask what the respondent meant with a specific word in Arabic if I noticed my translator did not directly translate it. If I had my doubts about a translation, I asked a second translator to translate a specific sentence by listening to the audiotape. I dealt with this language limitation in my research design by focusing on practices rather than discourse and language.

Another main challenge I have been concerned with is the security threat towards my respondents. It could be dangerous for women to participate in my research and discuss their resistance practices. In some instances, women told me they were scared of possible repercussions by the Israeli state, after which I reassured them that their safety was of the utmost importance to me, but that I would understand if they would prefer to withdraw their consent. In all cases, the respondent wished to continue with the interview. My notes and audiotapes were digitalised and deleted from my laptop, phone and voice recorder before travels that might include control checks by the Israeli army. To my knowledge, two women refused interview requests out of fear of repercussions. I do not believe this security threat profoundly influenced my final results. Generally, I managed to create a safe space

and a foundation of trust in which my respondents could share their stories. The fact that I interviewed two or more women at the same time in almost all cases and the respondent's trust in the translator, which often was family, seemed to make them comfortable enough to share their experiences and views beyond severe self-censorship. It of course remains impossible to know what information has been withheld from me.

Finally, I need to acknowledge my personal bias in regard to this conflict. In a conflict as heated and widely discussed as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is difficult to escape bias and I will not pretend I managed to do so. I have lived in Jordan and met many Palestinian refugees there, which sparked my initial interest in the conflict. My time spent among Palestinians for this research has nurtured my sympathy for the Palestinian cause. I have at all times tried to keep my personal views to myself during interaction with my respondents. I do believe spending the process of reflecting upon my data and writing this thesis out of the field allowed me to create a distance in which I could practice critical self-reflection. In my awareness of my personal bias and the continuous triangulation of my respondents' claims, I hope I remained as objective as possible in the writing of this thesis.

## **Chapter outline**

In Chapter 1, I provide a thorough literature review of relevant works on my research topic. This chapter is structured in three main sections. In the first section, theoretical-based literature on the concept of resistance is discussed. The second section focuses on empirical evidence in the case study of Palestinian resistance, in which I discuss literature on female resistance and sumud. The third section presents the analytic framework that I have adopted to structure my analysis.

In Chapter 2, I introduce a classification of three main forms of organised resistance that women practice in Budrus, which are the weekly Friday protests, responding to 'alarm calls' and Facebook activism. After describing these three cases in depth, I analyse them by using the analytic framework.

Chapter 3 is similarly structured to the second chapter, but discusses practices of everyday resistance. First, I argue how women in the village personally narrate the meaning of sumud. Then I turn to local practices of sumud. I present a classification of Friday morning 'picnics', farming and the annual olive harvest, checkpoints and the refusal of immobility, motherhood, narratives and education and creating counter 'safe' spaces.

In Chapter 4, I aim to create a dialogue between the ideas presented in Chapter 1, and the empirical evidence of Chapters 2 and 3. First, I compare my findings of Chapter 2 and 3 in the dimensions of my analytic framework, after which I present new data on how women in the village explain the connection between organised and everyday resistance practices. I then turn to the concept of 'oscillation dynamics' and aim to specify this concept with empirical evidence. In the final stage of my analysis, I move beyond existing theories to introduce the concepts of 'veiled bodies of resistance'

and 'overt bodies of resistance'. I argue that this distinction will allow us to better understand the different dynamics between forms of resistance in the case of women in Budrus.

# Chapter 1. Literature review and analytic framework

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## 1.1 Introduction

In the first section of this chapter, literature on resistance as a theoretical concept is explored. Whereas ‘organised resistance’ is generally a defined category that most academics agree on, ‘everyday resistance’ is a much more contested concept. I have therefore selected four critiques on everyday resistance to emphasise, as these critiques were most often cited in the body of literature I compiled and have informed evolved understandings of the concept. The ‘gap’ that I have identified in literature on the topic of resistance is then described. The second section of this chapter focuses on empirical evidence on the topic of women’s resistance in the OPT. After giving a short overview of women’s activism after the Second Intifada, I turn to previously conducted research on *sumud*. In the third and final section of this chapter, I explain how I have constructed my analytic framework and operationalise the concepts of ‘organised’ and ‘everyday’ resistance.

## 1.2 A typology of resistance

Hollander and Einwohner (2004) aim to synthesise the use of the term ‘resistance’ by reviewing over a hundred books and articles from different academic disciplines on the topic. They conclude that a hegemonic definition of resistance remains vacant. Authors do generally agree that two key elements should be embedded in the definition of resistance, namely that resistance is an *action* and that this action is *oppositional* to something or someone else (2004: 538). Hollander and Einwohner furthermore identify two central issues that often form the core of disagreements in defining resistance. The first disagreement is whether or not resistance has to be *recognised* as such by others, and if so, by which others. The second disagreement is whether or not the actor must have the *intention* to practice resistance (2004: 542). In order to deal with these central issues, Hollander and Einwohner propose a typology of seven types of resistance (see figure 1). The indicators of their typology are based on a distinction between actors: they use the categories of *actor/agent*, or the individual who is practicing the act of resistance, *target*, the entity that the act of resistance is aimed at and the *observer*, an outside actor, in this case the researcher. The main distinction that forms the departure point of my research is that between overt (or organised) and covert (or everyday) resistance. As Hollander and Einwohner write, overt resistance is the ‘consensual core of resistance’: academic generally agree on its meaning. In paragraph 1.3, I will return to my use of the term. The

other category of resistance, everyday or covert resistance, is however a much more contested category that has its own field of study. It therefore requires more attention in this literature review.

**Table I.** Types of resistance

	Is act recognized as resistance by		
	Is act intended as resistance by actor?	target?	observer?
Overt resistance	Yes	Yes	Yes
Covert resistance	Yes	No	Yes
Unwitting resistance	No	Yes	Yes
Target-defined resistance	No	Yes	No
Externally-defined resistance	No	No	Yes
Missed resistance	Yes	Yes	No
Attempted resistance	Yes	No	No
Not resistance	No	No	No

*Figure 1. 'Types of resistance' by Hollander and Einwohner (2004: 544).*

### 1.2.1 Everyday resistance: Weapons of the weak

James C. Scott introduced the term 'everyday resistance', which he interchangeably uses with the term 'infra politics' in his book *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance* (1985). Based on ethnographic research in a Malaysian village that is undergoing the 'Green revolution' in the late 1970s, Scott's (1985: xvi) core claim is that peasants use 'ordinary weapons', such as "foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on" to resist the dominant power holder. These acts require "little or no coordination or planning; they make use of implicit understandings and informal networks; they often represent a form of individual selfhelp; they typically avoid any direct, symbolic confrontation with authority" (1985: xvi). Scott (1989) frames these everyday forms of resistance as a class struggle and makes the case for embedding everyday resistance into the analysis of political conflict. He claims that everyday resistance is inherently political: Any account that ignores everyday resistance is ignoring how the lower classes manifest their political interests (1989: 33). Scott (1989: 36) furthermore states that everyday resistance must be approached as a form of collective action, as "high levels of everyday resistance cannot be sustained without a fairly high level of tacit cooperation among the class of resisters". Just because small communities use dense informal social networks rather than bureaucratic bodies, does not mean there is a lack of coordination: "What is happening is by no means merely random individual action" (1989: 52). In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (1990), Scott changes his focus towards discourse. He adds the concept of 'hidden transcripts' to his theory, which he defines as "discourse that takes place 'offstage', beyond direct observation by powerholders. The hidden transcript is thus derivative in the sense that it consists of those offstage speeches, gestures, and practices that confirm, contradict, or inflect what appears in the public

transcript” (1990: 4). The ‘public transcript’ is “the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate” (1990: 2). These hidden transcripts and their relationship to public transcripts must be understood in order to understand the political life of subalterns (1990: 17).

While Scott’s work has provided a crucial new perspective on resistance, there are some deeply problematic issues with his theory. First of all, as Mitchell (1990) argues, Scott’s perception of power, hegemony and consciousness is based on a false dualism between the material outside world and the world of culture and ideas. Mitchell’s (1990: 562) main critique is that domination is not only materially coercive while the mind of the subaltern remains ‘free’, but that domination is creating truths. Second, Scott’s theory does not explain the perpetual emergence of violent conflict. Gutmann (1993: 77) writes that “the emphasis here is wrong; it is not a question of overt or covert in isolation; rather, at least in Latin America today and historically, these forms occur together, alternate, and transform themselves into each other” (1993: 77). Third, I find Scott’s ontology inherently problematic. He takes different stances on human action and consciousness when explaining different components of his theory, resulting into a lack of ontological coherence. Tilly (1991) concludes for instance that Scott’s ontology clashes in his explanation of the relationship between hidden transcripts and collective, organised action. Scott explains the switch from hidden to public resistance with rational choice theory, while he uses a Marxist structuralist perspective in his first works, and a postmodernist perspective in his book on hidden transcripts.

None of the above authors manage to move beyond mere criticism on Scott’s concept of everyday resistance. Bayat (2000) does introduce an advanced concept, namely that of ‘quiet encroachment’, as he finds that the concept of everyday resistance is not suitable to analyse how the urban poor in the southern hemisphere interact with the state. He proposes the notion of quiet encroachment, or “the silent, protracted but pervasive advancement of the ordinary people on the propertied and powerful in order to survive and improve their lives (...) marked by quiet, largely atomized and prolonged mobilization with episodic collective action” (2000: 545–546). According to Bayat, ‘encroachers’ start with their acts out of necessity: they are in pursuit of survival and a dignified life. However, these acts shift them into the realm of politics and become collective when their ‘gains’ of encroachment are threatened and ‘passive networks’ are activated (2000: 547). I find Bayat’s concept particularly insightful as it connects daily acts that are intended to undermine power with more organised and collective forms of resistance. However, I disagree with Bayat’s (2000: 545) robust distinction between deliberate, conscious political acts of resistance, coping strategies and acts of ‘encroachment’. As written in the introduction, I believe an act can be politically conscious, a survival or coping strategy and ‘encroaching’, or self-beneficial, simultaneously.<sup>1</sup> I think Bayat’s pursuit of a ‘pure’ type of resistance is futile and does no justice to the complexities of resistance practices in social life, let

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, section ‘*Methodology: Theory and concepts*’, 14.

alone allow us to understand what drives people's actions beyond simplistic one-dimensional motivations.

### **1.2.2 Resistance dynamics**

A key question that critiques on Scott's work raise is how forms of everyday resistance relate to forms of organised and more collective resistance, and vice versa. As becomes evident from Gutmann's and Bayat's work, empirical evidence presumes that forms of organised and everyday resistance can be deployed simultaneously in certain times and spaces. The dynamics between these two forms of resistance however remain undefined. This theoretical gap is the starting point of my research. Previously, Lilja et al. (2017) have attempted to conceptualise the nexus between power and everyday and organised resistance. They provide three possible types of dynamics. Based on Scott's work, they introduce 'linear development dynamics', in which "everyday resistance might transform into large scale, collective and organized resistance" (2017: 44). Bayat, on the other hand, is an advocate of 'oscillation dynamics', in which "everyday forms of resistance ('quiet encroachment') and collectively organized resistance (sudden large mobilizations in which 'passive networks' are temporarily activated) might be utilized in different times and spaces, depending on what is feasible, as a reaction to the type of repression applied against the resistance" (2017: 44). The authors themselves argue that one type of dynamics is missing, namely a dynamic in which organised resistance encourages everyday resistance. Building on the work of Mahmood (2005), they argue that practices of organised resistance can create particular conceptions of the self, which allows individuals to "move outside the boundaries of the resisting organisation and make their own everyday resistance" (Lilja et al. 2017: 47). These three possible dynamics remain vaguely outlined. My research aims to be deductive in the sense that I explore if these possible dynamics allow me to further analyse resistance dynamics in the case of Budrus. Now, it is time to turn to existing empirical evidence on Palestinian resistance, in particular women's resistance and the practice of sumud.

## **1.3 Women's resistance in the Occupied West Bank**

### **1.3.1 Activism and informal resistance**

Richter-Devroe (2012: 185) writes that Palestinian women's activism was widespread during the First Intifada. Most women's activism was informal and manifested itself in demonstrations and economic boycotts. During the 2000s, popular resistance in Palestine was in "a process of localization, professionalization and internationalization", but women's activism remained informal in the sense of not being politically organised and was more community-oriented than men's popular resistance (2012: 186). With her use of the word 'popular resistance', Richter-Devroe seems to refer to the practices that I label as 'organised resistance', such as protests and boycotts. Richter-Devroe is mainly concerned with how resistance after the Second Intifada has been gendered. Through participation,

observation and in-depth interviews throughout the OWB, Richter-Devroe (2012: 193) states that a core frame through which women frame their popular/organised resistance is that of motherhood. In these ‘mother politics’, “women politicize the domestic sphere by presenting their domestic duties and reproductive roles as a form of political activism” (2012: 193). It is often this frame of mother politics that women use to explain their need to participate in resistance. Richter-Devroe (2012: 195) concludes that while popular resistance among women has not yet brought the Palestinians concrete material changes, it challenges established norms of female political agency and could eventually result in social change. She argues that resistance among women however has to remain informal in order to continue to exist - both because of gender roles that are ascribed to women and Israeli repressive methods. Besides providing an impressive amount of empirical evidence on Palestinian women’s ‘organised’ resistance after the Second Intifada, Richter-Devroe has also researched the topic of women practicing *sumud*.

### **1.2.2 Everyday resistance in Palestine: practices of *sumud***

Everyday resistance in the OPT is often described through the concept of *sumud*. The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) introduced the term in the 1970s and 1980s. Richter-Devroe (2011: 33) defines *sumud* as the “stubborn insistence to carrying on with life and even seizing every opportunity to enjoy it, despite all odds”. Palestinians use the term to describe a wide variety of practices. These can be materially based survival strategies, for example to continue to work on occupied agricultural land, or it can manifest itself through cultural resistance (upholding Palestinian traditions) and social and ideational resistance (upholding a sense of normality) (2011: 33). This type of resistance is often associated with women’s resistance (Peteet 1991; Johnson 2007; Richter-Devroe 2008; Johansson and Vinthagen 2015). Johansson and Vinthagen (2015: 114) write that *sumud*’s “distinguishing feature is how it is integrated in and emerges from ordinary people’s everyday life, as individual response to the experience of domination”. Some key manifestations of *sumud* that are mentioned in literature on the topic are that of the insistence on enjoying life (Richter-Devroe 2011), resisting immobility by traveling regardless of hardships caused by the Israeli occupation (Hammami 2004), slowing down processes at Israeli checkpoints (Johansson and Vinthagen 2015: 129) and remembering names of lost villages to preserve Palestinian identity (Van Teeffelen et al. 2011).

There are some perspectives in the literature on how *sumud* relates to more organised forms of resistance. According to Singh, *sumud* is a ‘passive’ form of resistance that supports more ‘active’ overt forms of resistance (2012: 530). I disagree with this notion of ‘passive’ versus ‘active’ resistance. In both cases, the agent of resistance is *doing* something. Stating that the agent is ‘passive’ when practicing everyday resistance discredits the foundation of the concept, which is that everyday resistance is also an *action* in opposition to power. Notwithstanding, Singh’s claim that *sumud* supports forms of organised resistance is an interesting hypothesis to be further explore with empirical



evidence. Another possible relationship between organised resistance and sumud is given by Khalili (2007: 99), who argues that sumud is “the only strategy of struggle when all other avenues are closed, when organisational infrastructures are destroyed, and when complete annihilation – not only of political institutions, but of every person – is a real possibility”. However, the sole example of Nadia in the introduction of this thesis demonstrates the exact opposite.<sup>2</sup> Nadia practices her act of sumud – turning tear gas cans into bouquet vases – right before she attends the weekly Friday protests. She thus does have access to another form of struggle, and yet she practices sumud. This explanation thus also does not saturate my need for a more conceptual perspective on resistance dynamics.

To discuss a more concrete example of women practicing sumud, Richter-Devroe (2011) argues that Palestinian women are framing acts of ‘enjoying life’ and traveling as resistance against the Israeli occupation. She argues that women travel beyond the boundaries Israel has established in order to enjoy life and are thereby undermining Israeli ‘spacio-cidal’ policies. Richter-Devroe (2011: 39) defines spacio-cidal policies as “the systematic dispossession, occupation and destruction of Palestinian living space”. Their everyday acts aim to “redefine their occupied, fragmented and dispossessed spaces” (2011: 39). Richter-Devroe (2011: 41) further emphasises that these acts of pursuing normalcy and joy are not only challenging Israeli domination, but that they also undermine patriarchal structures. The women are challenging patriarchal forms of control and restriction by traveling and being mobile in informal networks. They are able to do so because they stay true to the Palestinian ‘meta-frame’ of resistance by framing these acts as such (2011: 42). This example illustrates how resistance can be a means to negotiate relationships inside a patriarchal society.

To conclude this section, my brief discussion of the empirical research demonstrates that a wide variety of research on Palestinian women practicing either organised or everyday resistance has been done. However, research on the topic has not yet been done in a systematic manner through which we can understand the dynamics between everyday and organised resistance among Palestinian women. While Richter-Devroe, for example, has conducted impressive research on both organised resistance practices and sumud among Palestinian women, she fails to connect these two forms of resistance in her work. In order to research these dynamics, I adopt the following analytic framework.

## **1.4 Analytic framework**

Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) have proposed an analytic framework to research everyday resistance. Their work resonated with me as the most useful for my own research, as they move beyond the core critiques on Scott’s approach and are to my knowledge the first to present a framework that allows us to systematically research everyday resistance. Johansson and Vinthagen (2013: 9) perceive everyday resistance as part of a “continuum between public confrontations and hidden subversion”. Their analytical framework is built on four core assumptions. First, the authors

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<sup>2</sup> See Introduction, 9.

aim to overcome one of the core disagreements in the field of resistance studies as identified by Hollander and Einwohner (2004), namely, the question of intent and consciousness, by focusing on the *acts* of the individual, rather than the individual's *consciousness* or *intent* (Johansson and Vinthagen 2013: 11). As written in the introduction, while I adopt their stance on focusing on the act or practice of resistance, I define an act of resistance precisely by the consciousness and intent of the agent.<sup>3</sup> Second, they integrate power into their analysis (2013: 31). Johansson and Vinthagen do not provide concrete definitions of power, but I have discussed earlier how I approach power in this thesis.<sup>4</sup> Third, related to this second core assumption, the authors argue that the dynamic and interactive process of power must be analysed in an intersectional frame. This implies that while actors might be more 'powerless' in interaction with the target of resistance, they could be more 'powerful' inside other social networks (2013: 31). Fourth, everyday resistance is a heterogenic and contingent practice, as it exists only in a specific context (2013: 31).

But then how do we concretely analyse everyday resistance when adopting Johansson and Vinthagen's understanding of the concept? The authors suggest that everyday resistance should be researched in four dimensions of social life: *repertoires*, *relationships of agents*, *spatialisation* and *temporalisation*, and in four intersections of power relations: *gender*, *sexuality*, *class* and *'race'/ethnicity* (Johansson and Vinthagen 2016: 432). They emphasise that the distinction between the four dimensions is made for analytical purposes, but that they are highly intertwined in actual social life (2016: 419). The authors borrow some key ideas and concepts to research these dimensions from different academic fields and ontological stances. For example, Johansson and Vinthagen (2016: 421) turn to Tilly's concept of repertoires of contention and change it into 'repertoires of resistance' to research the dimension of repertoires, in which 'culturally learned routines' in the social context of individuals are analysed. They define a repertoire as "a collection of ways or methods of resistance that people are familiar with, know of, understand and are able to handle." (Johansson and Vinthagen 2015: 6). The dimension of relationships is intended to analyse "*who* is carrying out the actions of everyday resistance; the different agents and their relationships" (Johansson and Vinthagen 2016: 422, emphasis in original). In order to do so, the authors use the distinction that Hollander and Einwohner (2004) make between the agent, target and observer. In the dimension of spatialisation, Johansson and Vinthagen aim to research how social life is spatially organised. One of the concepts I adopt after their example to operationalise this dimension is that of 'sites of resistance'. After the work of Johansson and Vinthagen (2016) and Chin and Mittelman (1997), I define a site of resistance as the location or social space in which resistance is situated. Sites of resistance do not necessarily have to be spaces: they can also be bodies. Abdo (2014: 21) has researched everyday resistance among Palestinian female detainees in Israeli prisons and argues that Palestinian women's bodies have essentially become a site of resistance, since they are subject to humiliation, subjugation and victimization

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<sup>3</sup> See Introduction, section '*Methodology: Theory and concepts*', 13-14.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

through psychological, racial and sexual abuse. The last dimension of temporalisation remains highly underdeveloped. In this dimension, everyday resistance is approached as “temporarily organized, and as practiced in and through time as a central social dimension” (Johansson and Vinthagen 2016: 427).

While Johansson and Vinthagen state that they approach everyday resistance as part of a continuum with organised resistance, their analytical framework does not overcome the gap in the literature on the topic as identified earlier in this chapter. The question remains *how* everyday resistance relates to organised forms of resistance, and vice versa. In order to make this gap researchable, I will expand the analytic framework of Johansson and Vinthagen by applying the same dimensions of analysis to practices of organised resistance. In the following chapters on organised and everyday resistance, I use the dimensions of repertoires, relationships of agents, spatialisation and temporalisation to structure my analysis. I use all four dimensions for both categories of resistance to eventually be able to synthesise the forms of resistance in Chapter 4. Besides focusing on gender as an intersection of power, I would like to add another intersection that Johansson and Vinthagen do not mention, but which is crucial to take into consideration in the case of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict: the compulsory/productive power of the Israeli state. To complete the construction of this analytic framework, my main two concepts, that of organised and everyday resistance, must be further specified.

#### **1.4.1 Operationalising ‘organised’ and ‘everyday’ resistance**

As stated earlier, the distinction between organised and everyday resistance is the starting point of my analytic framework. Theory helps us to understand reality and therefore inevitably always simplifies that reality. The organised/everyday dichotomy does no justice to the complexity of resistance practices in social life. Thus, while being aware that the distinction I use is artificial, I have decided it serves my analysis best to work with this distinction. As this research is concerned with a theoretical complication that derives from a separation between the two categories of resistance, this separation is necessary to further build academic knowledge on the topic.

Based on Johansson and Vinthagen’s work and the typology of Hollander and Einwohner (2004), I define organised resistance as often collectively organised action that is aimed at challenging existing power structures and is visible and easily recognised by both the target of the resistance and observers. Examples are revolutions, demonstrations, sit-ins, oppositional campaigns, the organisation of village or women’s committees, existence of local organisations that are (in)formally organised to advance independence from the state, the boycotting of goods and tax strikes, violent confrontations with police or military and hunger strikes. Drawing from my review of the literature, I have formulated six indicators of organised resistance: (1) The action is *organised* and *premeditated* to the extent that at least two or more people are involved; (2) the action is therefore *intentional*; (3) the action is clearly *visible* to the target of resistance and to the (culturally aware) observer; (4) the action

is *performative*: it is ‘dramatic’ and meant to be seen; (5) the action *publicly* and *explicitly challenges dominant power(s)* and discourses and (6) the action is inspired by a *repertoire* or *culturally learned routines* of specific forms/techniques of resistance.

I use Johansson and Vinthagen’s (2013: 10) definition of everyday resistance, which they define as “such resistance that is done routinely, but which is not politically articulated or formally organized (yet or in that situation)”. In this thesis, I use the word *sumud* interchangeably with everyday resistance. I have previously mentioned examples of *sumud*, such as enjoying life despite hardships and remembering names of lost villages. For everyday resistance, I have formulated the following indicators: (1) The action is done by *individuals* or a *informally organised small group*; (2) the action is done in a *regular* or *habitual* manner; (3) the action is not *politically articulated*; (4) the action is *non-dramatic* and *non-confrontational*; (5) the action has the *potential* to undermine (some) power; (6) either the act or the actor is often *concealed* from the target of resistance; (7) the action is typically inspired by a *subcultural attitude* or *repertoires of resistance* and (8) the action is often *not recognised* as resistance by the target, but this is not always the case.

## **1.5 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I reviewed the most relevant literature on my topic, both from a theoretical and an empirical perspective. I explained that the ‘gap’ in the literature is that it remains unclear how organised forms of resistance relate to everyday forms of resistance, and vice versa. In my review of existing empirical research, I discussed Palestinian women’s more organised forms of resistance after the Second Intifada and practices of *sumud*. While there has been extensive research on both these topics, they have not yet been systematically linked to one another. This thesis aims to do so by using the analytic framework as presented in the last section of this chapter. Now, it is time to turn to the collected data.

# Chapter 2. Women's organised resistance practices

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## 2.1 Introduction

It is a Friday morning, the most important day of the week for Muslims, in the beginning of March. The men of the village will head to the mosque around noon for afternoon prayer, while the women stay at home and prepare Friday lunch. But between praying, cooking and eating a meal together, the villagers of Budrus have one other Friday obligation – the weekly protests at what they call the ‘Apartheid Wall’. The differentiated tasks in the morning hours reflect the distinctive tasks men and women have during these protests. This chapter aims to answer the first sub question of this thesis: *How are acts of organised resistance practiced through dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation by women in Budrus between 2005 and 2018?* First, the village’s history of protests against the Israeli occupation is discussed in order to provide the context in which contemporary practices of resistance must be understood. Whereas women were at the forefront of the action in the 2003 protests against the construction of the ISW, their roles in the protests nowadays are mostly confined to supervising and taking care of logistics. Why, in a village that was once famous for its women participation in protests, are women now mostly participating ‘behind the scenes’ during this weekly event? As most of my data was gathered on the topic of the Friday protests, I focus on this form of resistance extensively, before turning to what I label ‘responding to alarm calls’ and Facebook activism.

### 2.1.1 Budrus: A history of protests

The village of Budrus is only a couple of kilometres away from the so-called ‘Green line’ that formed the *de facto* border of the state of Israel after the 1948 Israeli-Palestinian war. While surrounding villages, such as Beit Nabela, were destroyed during the war, Budrus remained on the map. To my knowledge, there are no (English-language) academic resources on resistance practices in Budrus between 1948 and 2003. To summarise the village’s history of resistance, I thus had to rely on my respondents’ knowledge and memories. I was only able to triangulate their information through other respondents. The first protests in the village apparently started during the First Intifada (1987-1991). Respondents argue Budrus was very active during the first large-scale Palestinian uprising.<sup>1</sup> Nadia recalls how women, including herself, joined the men in the protests. Women would throw stones at soldiers and sew and paint the Palestinian flag on cotton and murals. Women would also help men

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<sup>1</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

escape or hide from the Israeli army. Hayat likewise remembers the First Intifada vividly. According to her, the women of Budrus did not politically organise themselves during a period when so-called ‘women committees’ against the Israeli occupation became popular in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>2</sup> Rather, they played a supportive role to the political practices of men. My respondents do not think the Second Intifada (2000-2005) affected the village, as the events mainly occurred in the cities. They refer to the Wall Intifada as a distinct period from the Second Intifada, although the timeframes overlap.

When Israel announced it would build its ‘security wall’ beyond the established ‘Green line’ borders in 2003, Budrus was one of the six villages that feared for its existence (Budrus 2009: 0:04:45). The villagers were threatened with the loss of three hundred acres of land and three thousand olive trees. These olive trees were not only crucial for economic survival, but were also of profound importance for the village’s intergenerational history and culture, as shown in the documentary *Budrus* (2009). The documentary, directed by Julia Bacha, follows local community leader Ayed Morrar and his 15-year-old daughter Iltizam as they organise non-violent protests against the building of the ISW. In a time when the violence of the Second Intifada is making headlines in international media, Morrar gathered the men of the village to peacefully demonstrate at the construction site of the Wall (Budrus 2009: 00:08:25). Remarkably, he managed to unite local leaders from political opponents Fatah and Hamas, but the unexpected coalition did not seem to be making any progress in achieving their goal – saving their land and olive trees. According to Morrar’s daughter Iltizam, this was due to the lack of women participation. Encouraged by her father, Iltizam mobilised the women of the village, who now walked in the forefront of each demonstration. The protests received a lot of media attention and international protesters, including Israeli citizens, started to join the demonstrations. In a timespan of ten months, the villagers organised fifty-five protests. Eventually, the Israeli government decided to move the wall. Instead of three hundred acres, Budrus now lost ten acres of their land. The success of the protests inspired surrounding villages in the OWB to organise similar peaceful marches against the ISW (GNAD 2015).

Today, daily life in Budrus is still very much affected by the Israeli occupation. Besides a big part of the olive trees being cut off from the village by the ISW, the villagers are under constant observation by two panoptic towers on the north and west flank of the village.<sup>3</sup> The villagers hear gunshots six days a week, with the exception of the Israeli holy day of Shabbat, from dawn until sunset, as there is an Israeli military training camp nearby on the other side of the fence. In order to construct and build houses on the biggest part of the land, villagers rely completely on rare Israeli permits. In addition, villagers deal with the daily struggle of checkpoints in commute to their university or work in surrounding villages or cities. After the Wall Intifada, several protests were organised between 2008 and 2017 for the Palestinians in Gaza. In 2013, villagers protested after Israeli soldiers killed a young boy, named Samir Awad (Sherwood 2013). In 2015, 15-year-old Lafée Awad

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The towers were built to monitor the ISW in 2004/2005.

met the same fate and another round of protests was instigated. According to my respondents, many women of the village were present during the Gaza protests, whereas most women attended the protests for ‘martyrs’ Samir and Lafee. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, the direct reason for using Budrus as the case study for this research is that the villagers have been organising weekly Friday protests since February 2018, to demonstrate against U.S. president Donald Trump’s decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital in December 2017.<sup>4</sup> Whereas these protests initially started as non-violent, they now usually turn into violent clashes. To conclude, it thus can be stated that Budrus is a village with a history of protests in which women prominently participated. This participation however has always been informal in the sense that the women did not politically organise themselves. While the women of the village were at the forefront of the protests in 2004, their role nowadays is quite different.

## **2.2 Weekly Friday protests**

The Friday protests that started in February 2018, and are still being organised at the time of the writing of this thesis in June 2018, have become almost a routine in which both the villagers and the Israeli army play their written parts. The protests usually begin around noon, except when there is a wedding in the village. On Facebook, several groups of villagers are active in organising the protests. These groups consist of both, usually young, men and women. After Friday’s afternoon prayer, the men and young boys walk from the mosque to the cemetery near the ISW, which is less than a ten minutes walk. Before the crowd reaches the fence, Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and Israeli army trucks are already positioned behind the fence. Sometimes, soldiers, who often operate in small groups, are stationed inside the village’s territory. What follows is a weekly game of cat-and-mouse: the soldiers aim to push the villagers back to the centre of the village by using tear gas bombs and rubber-coated bullets while the villagers chant slogans and young boys throw stones at soldiers. Regularly, the army takes over the cemetery and school. There are very few women who join these marches, except Ifza (29 years old), her mother Nahla (49 years old) and aunt Nadia (59 years old), and sometimes her cousins. Some teenage girls join in small groups. Occasionally, other women come to ‘protect’ their husbands and children, mainly by supervising them and making sure they do not go ‘too far’. While women are thus not very visible during the process of Friday protests, they are very much involved ‘behind the scenes’. While watching the youngest children, they keep an eye on the news and social media, monitor the protests from the rooftops of their houses to warn men about the whereabouts of soldiers, collect stones for boys to throw, open their house to the wounded and those suffering from tear gas and provide water, food and lemons, which help to decrease tear gas symptoms. Women thus take a supportive and logistic role in this weekly routine. Around 3 PM, both the villagers and soldiers retreat. The men and few women return home to their families and eat lunch.

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<sup>4</sup> See Introduction, section ‘Academic and empirical context’, 10.

I define these weekly protests as organised resistance because they are organised and premeditated, intentional, clearly visible to the target (the Israeli state), performative and explicitly challenging dominant power structures.

### **2.2.1 Women's participation**

The few women who join the protests give similar motivations to do so: out of responsibility to protect their husbands and children, to convey a message to Israel and the international community and to assert against the daily problems they encounter due to the Israeli occupation. What is interesting is that all women who participate belong to the same (extended) family. Nadia, a widow and mother of ten children, is one of the few women who join the protests every week. She argues that “it is very important for women to participate alongside their sons and husband and everybody else. The role of women is most of all one of responsibility. Most things come out of a mother instinct. We would get so worried if we just stayed at home while everybody else, our family, sons and brothers, would participate.”<sup>5</sup> She also participates to show her rejection about what is happening to Palestinians: “Some countries show their reaction for example through the UN council, how are we supposed to show our rejection? A protest is a way of me showing it.”<sup>6</sup> Her daughter Samira (21 years old) agrees: “Sometimes there is no other place for you to share your thoughts and anger about some issues and situations.”<sup>7</sup> According to Nadia's other daughter Rana, who sometimes participates in the protests, the role of women has mostly been a supervising role after the end of the Wall Intifada: “It is good to give them [the men] a push. They are here and they have our support. At the same time we are there to tell them: ‘Don't go too far, don't put yourself in danger’.”<sup>8</sup> Nahla joins the protests because of the daily problems her family encounters, such as the constant fear that her loved ones will be arrested, economical issues and difficulties with transportation, especially in cases of medical emergencies. “The Israelis are the gatekeepers. They have the key for every gate and door of Palestine. They control it. (...) If we did not have these problems, why would we protest?”<sup>9</sup>

Women who do not join the protests often argue they do not see the urgency as much as they saw it fourteen years ago, that they have other obligations to their families and that there is no need for women to get involved in violence. Manal, a 39-year-old housewife and mother of four, says both her husband and her children participate every Friday, while she remains at home: “Sometimes I go when other women are there, but something would have to require my presence. Right now, there is no need for it.” With this ‘need’, she refers to the lack of urgency of a direct threat to the land or villagers. Cousins Safa and Tahira, both 22 years old, think that there is no need for women to get involved in the violence. Tahira states: “We think the men are stronger. If there are no men, we will go. And

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<sup>5</sup> Author's interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Author's interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



women have more obligations, to take care of the house and the children.”<sup>10</sup> Hanoun (24 years old) was very active in protests from a young age. At age twelve, she marched in the Wall Protests. Now, she says, she has other obligations: “I am working and I have my family. My son needs care.”<sup>11</sup>

Women in the village thus place a strong emphasis on traditional gender roles: women are supposed to take care of the household and the children, whereas the men worry about politics. The protests are promoted as ‘men-only’ events on Facebook. According to three respondents who are active in organising the protests on social media, this is because the demonstrations these days are violent clashes rather than peaceful marches. But the lack of women participation is not a one-way street: women do not refrain from joining the protests simply because they are not invited. Ifza has previously tried to mobilise women in the village to demonstrate, but most women she approached argued that the Friday protests are ‘no place’ for a woman to be. They would only be a burden for the men, as the men would be worried about protecting the women. It thus seems that during the Wall Intifada, the threat of losing land and olive trees was so urgent, that an exception was made for women’s participation in protests. In general, the political sphere remains a male domain. While today’s generation of young women is going to university and getting jobs, the middle-aged women of the village often did not get a higher education. They were confined to the household and their roles as a wife and mother. Women are generally not politically active or organised, whereas most men in the village are affiliated to a political party. It was the urgency of the direct threat to the land in 2003 that allowed women to negotiate a different role in organised resistance practices.

### **2.2.2 Friday protests: dimensions of analysis**

In this paragraph, the above description of the Friday protests will be analysed and extended through the four dimensions of analysis of Johannson and Vinthagen.<sup>12</sup> Turning to the dimension of *repertoires*, it can be concluded that protests in the village of Budrus have become routinised. They are an essential part of the resistance repertoire of the villagers. The strategy of resistance, initially non-violent demonstrations at a symbolic location, and the division of roles is specific to the ‘set of agents’, namely the villagers of Budrus. Most respondents seem to draw from a repertoire in which women participate in the protests, but in which they mainly operate behind the scenes and in a supporting role. The women clearly deploy a gender-based repertoire of resistance, explaining their choices and behaviour during the protests mainly through their gender. It is *because* they are women that they do not join the weekly protests by marching. They seem to find this answer self-evident. The few women who do join the protests regularly are seen by most of my respondents as exceptional.

In the dimensions of *relationships*, the relationship between the agent, the woman who chooses to participate in the act of resistance but at the same time is confined and confines herself to

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<sup>10</sup> Author’s interview with Safa and Tahira on 22 April, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Author’s interview with Hanoun and Hayat on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.4 ‘Analytic framework’, 26-27.

the margins of that act, and target, the Israeli state, is complicated by gender roles. The influence of family honour, purity and virginity is of importance here. As Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2004) writes, the sexual victimisation of women is a big threat to Palestinian resistance. Due to the social stigma surrounding the subject, social abuse by Israeli soldiers is a very difficult subject to research and document. There is a lot of social anxiety surrounding protecting a woman's 'purity' and thereby the family honour from sexual abuse by Israeli soldiers. According to Shalhoub-Kervorkian, this in return has made Palestinian women's bodies a bigger target of violence and abuse. During my fieldwork, a young man was arrested from his family home during a night raid. As usual during these events, soldiers emptied and searched the house. All inhabitants were forced to line up outside the house. During my interviews a couple days after this event, female relatives of the man told me that the Israeli soldiers only searched the women in their nightgowns, while the men had to watch. The respondents felt deeply humiliated by this act.<sup>13</sup> Returning to Abdo's (2014) work, as discussed in Chapter 1<sup>14</sup>, the fact that the Palestinian women's bodies have become a site of both oppression and resistance as they are subjected to humiliation and abuse, complicates how female agents of resistance in Budrus interact with the target. As their bodies could be turned into a weapon of oppression, they seem to marginalise themselves during the Friday protests in order to protect their own and their family's honour.

In the dimension of *spatiality*, the site of resistance during the Friday protests is the ISW and territory of the village. The Israeli state is controlling the boundaries of the landscape, the movement and interaction in this space. The wall is a highly symbolised site, illustrated by how the villagers call it 'the Apartheid Wall': for them, it symbolises Israel's politics of segregation and inequality. The fence is in itself a disciplinary mechanism, aimed at separating Palestinians from Israelis, but to uphold the fence, other disciplinary functions are in place. Surveillance tactics are of crucial importance. The panoptic towers monitor the villagers' every move and whoever comes too close to the fence risks being shot. The Israeli state apparently also uses the cameras to take photographs of boys throwing stones, to later identify and possibly arrest them. Another disciplinary function is the weapons that the Israeli army and IDF use during the Friday protests. The tear gas and rubber-coated bullets are not meant to kill, but are intended to keep the villagers 'in place': away from the Wall and Israeli territory. As a result, the Israeli army is 'protecting' the boundary of the Wall, whereas the villagers 'protest' the boundary. It is in particular this dimension of spatiality where it becomes clear that the protests are a form of resistance that is engaging with both compulsory and productive power. The interaction between agent and target is a physical struggle over control of the territory: the villagers aim to keep the soldiers at the fence by using their bodies and stones as weapons, whereas the soldiers use tear gas and rubber-coated bullets to coerce the villagers into cooperation. However, the wall is not solely coercive. It is also productive as its existence produces a space that the villagers can

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<sup>13</sup> Author's interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.4 'Analytic framework', 26-27.

turn into a site of resistance. This finding corresponds to Uzguc (2010) analysis of the Wall as a ‘third space’: it is both an oppressive and productive mechanism.

The dimension of *temporalisation* is an interesting dimension to explore here, as it is the only dimension in which the villagers are more powerful than the Israeli soldiers during the Friday protests. Essentially, the villagers take control of time. They decide when the soldiers ‘have’ to show up at the fence, and when they can leave. While women are dependent on the men showing up in order to practice their resistance, they do have some say in the dimension of temporalisation by being involved in the planning of protests through social media. The control over the Israeli army’s time is acknowledged by the villagers. One example that illustrates this, is that one morning, when I was meeting Ifza to go to the fields, she figured out quite late that there would be no protests that day due to a wedding. Nonetheless, she wanted to go to the Wall to see if there would be soldiers waiting for the usual crowd. We walked to the cemetery, from where we could overlook the Wall. Indeed, two tanks and half a dozen soldiers were in place. Ifza found this highly comical and took pictures and videos to post on Facebook. She then called her father and other relatives to inform them. Quickly, the whole village knew about the soldiers in position and it was the topic of conversation, or rather, laugh, for a couple of days.

### **2.3 Responding to alarm calls: informal mobilisation**

A form of organised resistance that puts women more visibly in the forefront of resistance is what I have labelled as ‘responding to alarm calls’. On the Facebook page of the village, villagers warn each other if soldiers are sighted near or in the village. The village’s mosque will then broadcast the information through its speaker. The sight of soldiers usually means that someone is getting arrested or that a house will be demolished. The villagers, including women and children, will then rush to the scene and try to stop soldiers, or at least ‘be there for the family’, as Nadia calls it.<sup>15</sup> Sometimes, their interaction with the soldiers gets physical, but usually, the women aim to stand in their way. They will for example run into a house that is about to be demolished, or make lines in front of the house so that the soldiers and/or the bulldozer cannot get through. Nahla recalls when a couple of weeks ago, she and some other women rushed to a house that was about to be demolished. “We were standing in front of them and we stayed there. That was the reason the Israelis did not destroy it.”<sup>16</sup> There is no formal plan on what to do during these alarm calls; it seems to have become a routine in which every villager knows his or her part. Nadia says that she does not worry about her children when an alarm call occurs, because she knows she will find them at the scene once she gets there.<sup>17</sup> The villagers seem to perceive their response to these alarm calls as self-evident: of course, this is what they do when soldiers come onto their territory.

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<sup>15</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018

<sup>17</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

While the responses to alarm calls are thus not organised in the form of being planned or premeditated and lack political articulation, it is a *public* response by a *group* of people to the presence of power holders. It is routinised and could in that sense be approached as premeditated. Because this act is intentional, clearly visible to the target and performative and dramatic, I approach it as a form of organised resistance. The action publicly and explicitly challenges the dominant power holder. This form of organised resistance is in interaction with the Israeli state's compulsory power: it is the arrest or demolishing of one's home that is resisted by placing bodies at strategic places. The acts that are being resisted are repressive rather than productive manifestations of power.

### **2.3.1 Alarm calls: dimensions of analysis**

When looking at the dimension of *repertoires*, there appears to be a culturally learned routine that instructs villagers to rush to the scene whenever soldiers arrive in the village. The lack of organisation involved in the alarm call responses can be explained by this culturally learned routine: why should something that is apparently 'self-evident' be organised? It is a collective way of dealing with the occupation that parents teach their children. In the realm of *relationships*, it is interesting to see how suddenly, the divisions among women and men disappear. While during the Friday protests, men and women operate in different roles; both men and women will rush to the forefront of the action when an alarm call occurs. This also changes the relationship between women and the soldiers. Women situate themselves in direct confrontation with the soldiers, which quite often turns into physical contact. Apparently, there is something about the alarm calls that makes it more urgent for women to risk their and their family's honour than during the weekly protests. When I asked Ifza about this observation, she argued that it is easier for women to directly confront the Israeli state when a direct effort is expected from them, and when success is likely. In her experience, it is easier to mobilise women for a land confiscation than for a solidarity protest for the people in Jerusalem or Gaza, as this is less personal and further from home. This explanation is consistent with the explanations respondents gave of why they do not join the protests. Many of them stated they did not see a direct reason to join the protests – it is not like their land was immediately threatened as it was in 2003. We can thus conclude that in order for women to place themselves closer to the soldiers, they need to perceive an *urgency* because of a *direct threat* to their families and the village and anticipate success of their act of resistance to be likely. The internal relationships during these alarm calls also explain why women in Budrus do not feel the need to politically organise themselves. As Hayat explains: “There is no need to belong to an organisation. If soldiers arrest a person, all women will go and help them. We all work directly as one unit.”<sup>18</sup>

In the dimension of *spatialisation*, power is highly contested between the agent and target during this act of resistance. As soon as soldiers enter the territory of the village, the power struggle

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<sup>18</sup> Author's interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018; Author's interview with Hanoun and Hayat on 3 May, 2018.

intensifies. While villagers use the ISW as a marking of their territory in everyday conversations, most of them see the land behind the Wall still as a part of the village. The power dynamics are different than during the protests. During the protests, soldiers are protecting the boundary of the ISW while the villagers are protesting it. During the alarm calls, the villagers are 'protecting' the boundary. While Israeli soldiers have weapons and could clear the way violently as a means of disciplining the villagers, in practice, they often retreat when surrounded by a mob of angry villagers. In a sense, the villagers here thus also have a disciplinary mechanism, namely that of collective gathering.

In the dimension of *temporalisation*, the control over time is dual. On the one hand, the Israeli state decides when arrests and demolitions take place. Often, this is in the middle of the night, so that quick mobilisation will be difficult for the villagers. The soldiers control how villagers spend their time: instead of sleeping, entire households are forced to line up outside during an arrest or people quickly have to pack their belongings when their house is about to be demolished. On the other hand, the alarm calls often result in the fact that it takes Israeli soldiers much longer to succeed in their task, if they succeed at all, due to the collective response by the villagers.

## **2.4 Facebook activism and cyber colonialism**

Another form of resistance that was mentioned by several, mainly younger, respondents is that of Facebook activism. Ten out of twenty respondents said that they share or write posts about the Israeli occupation on Facebook, from sharing news articles about the situation in Gaza, to remembering dates of death of martyrs and spreading information about arrests or demolitions that occurred in the village. Three of my respondents stated that they help in the organising of the Friday protests on Facebook: they make events, share it with their friends and encourage men and young boys to join.<sup>19</sup> They perceive this as a way of participating in the protests. They thus use social media as a tool to mobilise people for organised resistance in real life. I added most of my respondents who use Facebook in this manner on the social platform and collected a small sample of posts they wrote or shared during the period of my fieldwork. I used this sample in addition to my generated data to analyse this form of resistance.

Similar to categorising the alarm calls as organised resistance, I need to explain myself when I discuss Facebook activism as a form of organised resistance. Aouragh (2008), who has done extensive research on Facebook activism among Palestinians, calls Facebook activism for example everyday resistance. Facebook activism is indeed a hybrid form of organised and everyday resistance. It is everyday in the sense that it is done by individuals in a regular and habitual manner. However, it is organised in the sense that it is intentional and clearly visible. As one of my respondents said about her Facebook activism: "We know the Israelis are following us on social media. This is why it is

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<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with Safa and Tahira on 3 May, 2018.

resistance.”<sup>20</sup> Their posts and comments are thus meant to be seen and aim to convey a message. I therefore have chosen to discuss Facebook activism as a form of organised resistance.

### **2.4.1 Facebook activism: dimensions of analysis**

In order to contextualise the analysis of my data, I should discuss previous work on the topic of Facebook activism. Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2011a) has researched what she labels ‘e-resistance’, or electronic resistance, among young Palestinian women. While Israelis are in firm control of technological development in the Palestinian territories, women who share their opinions in cyberspace “deteritorialize power, renegotiate it, and use counter narratives against the masters of the cyberworld” (2011a: 202). Shalhoub-Kevorkian thus speaks of ‘technological agency’, in which women can move beyond spatial power structures to practice agency. In a way, Facebook activism is more easily accessible to young women than physical resistance, as they can move beyond the patriarchal structures that confine them to the margins of direct interaction with the target of resistance. However, the power dynamics involved in the practice of Facebook activism are more complex than it might seem. Aouragh (2011b: 56) argues that technology plays a dual role in conflict areas: it is both oppressive and progressive, and therefore can enable both domination and resistance. The worldwide web is not free of colonial structures. Tawil-Souri and Aouragh (2014: 107) speak of ‘cyber colonialism’, in which “the internet reinforces a world of contact and influence between radically asymmetrical powers”.

Using social media as a tool of resistance is not something new in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Aouragh (2016: 136) introduces the idea of a ‘cyber intifada’, or a Palestinian ‘uprising’ in the virtual world. I approach this idea of a cyber intifada as a repertoire, or a public transcript in the words of Scott, in which Palestinians use social media to give a voice to the Palestinian narrative and document injustice and oppression. It is in this sense that my respondents use Facebook and draw from this repertoire: they produce counter narratives to public narratives of Palestinian resistance. It is thus a shared “collection of ways or methods” that a “specific set of agents” knows how to use.<sup>21</sup> What is interesting is that, similar to the alarm calls, when discussing Facebook activism, the respondents do not seem to draw from a gender-based repertoire of resistance. They do not make a distinction between the role of men and the role of women in cyberspace resistance, whereas they do make this distinction clearly when discussing different gender roles during the Friday protests. Patriarchal structures are thus less visible in cyberspace than in actual life.

In the dimension of *relationships*, the interaction between agent and target is complicated by several factors. While social media provided Palestinian activists with a platform through which they could inform the general public, share the Palestinian narrative and organise events and protests, it also makes Palestinian activists easily exposed to surveillance and possible arrest by the Israeli state

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<sup>20</sup> Author’s interview with Qadira on 28 April, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.4 ‘Analytic framework’, 26-27.

(Aouragh 2014: 129). Furthermore, what activists can post is not only confined by possible Israeli state repression. Internal oppression by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and tensions between Hamas and Fatah are also influencing self-censorship (2014: 120). In addition, corporate algorithms and Facebook monopolism increasingly control movement inside cyberspace (2014: 126). The interaction between agent and target is thus severely shaped and complicated by internal politics and oppression, and restrictions on the means of interaction. The dimension of relationships is strongly intertwined with the dimension of *spatialisation*. While the existence of cyberspace gave Palestinian activists the possibility to move beyond physical boundaries in practicing resistance, the Israelis are still very much in control of internet infrastructure in the OPT. Tawil-Souri and Aouragh's (2014) research shows that Israeli policy determines what equipment can be installed and how and where installation of that equipment takes place. The Israeli army furthermore confiscates and destroys equipment and/or forbids its import. In summary, while there is an increased opportunity to practice resistance through cyberspace, the access to that cyberspace is still controlled by the Israeli state.

In the dimension of *temporalisation*, it is interesting that many posts of my respondents are often focused on the remembrance of past events or the celebration of life events and future plans. They for example frequently post or share stories related to *al-Nakba*, or 'The Catastrophe', in 1948<sup>22</sup>, villages that no longer exist and the dates of birth or death of martyrs. Posts about important life events can also be seen as a form of resistance. The birth of a child, weddings and graduations are events that are widely shared among family members on Facebook. One of my respondents explained this observation of mine as follows: "They want to stop our living, to stop our breathing, to stop our education, to stop our love, to stop our marriage. Everything that is related to our living, they reject it."<sup>23</sup> In this sense, women are resisting the productive power of the Israeli state. It is not only the survival of the Palestinian people that these young women aim to display on social media. It is also about sending a message that they have the right to determine their own lives and futures. The celebration of marriage, childbirth and graduation is a celebration of moving beyond the available options the Israeli state aims to construct for them.

## 2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed that today's protests in Budrus need to be placed in a longer course of organised resistance. While Budrus was active during the First Intifada, I mainly focused on the Wall Intifada in 2003, as there was more information available. The women of Budrus played a crucial role in the Wall Intifada. However, after these protests, women returned to their informal, non-political forms of resistance. The few women who join the protests regularly give similar motivations to do so: out of responsibility to protect their husbands and children, to convey a message to Israel and the

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<sup>22</sup> With *al-Nakba*, Palestinians refer to 'The Catastrophe' in 1948, when more than 700,000 Palestinians were forced to flee from the territory that is today known as the state Israel.

<sup>23</sup> Author's interview with Hanoun and Hayat on 3 May, 2018.

international community and to attest the daily problems they encounter due to the Israeli occupation. The women who do not join the protests often argue they do not see the urgency as much as they saw it fifteen years ago, that they have other obligations to their families and that there is no need for women to get involved in violence. This explanation is given based upon a gender-based repertoire, in which women are mainly confined to the private sphere. In addition, women seem to marginalise themselves during the Friday protests in order to protect their own and their family's honour. This however does not mean they are not involved. They operate 'behind the scenes'. Returning to the indicators of organised resistance as formulated in the introduction of this thesis, while the action of protesting is clearly visible, performative and publicly challenges dominant powers, this does not mean women's performances during these actions are also visible and performative. They interact with the Israeli state in a more indirect way. When practicing resistance through responding to alarm calls and Facebook activism, women however move beyond patriarchal structures. In the case of alarm calls, the urgency and direct threat persuade them to directly confront soldiers as they did during the Wall Intifada, whereas on Facebook, they can move beyond physical boundaries to share their opinions and challenge the Israeli narrative.



# Chapter 3. Women's everyday resistance practices

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Budrus is actually a great example of sumud, because in 1967, and even before that, a lot of people left the village. When the war started, everybody left. (...) But a small group of people decided to stay in Budrus. Some of them left and came back immediately after the war was over. That is sumud, or steadfastness. The people who stayed are the reason there is a village called Budrus today and is now Palestinian territory. – Ifza<sup>1</sup>

## 3.1 Introduction

Before the streets of Budrus turn into a violent scene full of tear gas grenades and emptied bullet sleeves during the weekly Friday protests, the village is still quiet. People are preparing themselves for the hectic afternoon that will follow. Except for Ifza and her younger cousins, who gather at her grandmother's house to go to the fields near the Wall. They bring snacks, pick wildflowers and herbs to bring home, talk about their week and take photos of each other to post on social media. For the panoptic cameras that are monitoring the village, it is supposed to look like girls having fun on their day off. What the young women are actually doing is looking for traps Israeli soldiers might have placed to arrest children during the demonstration that will follow later that day. This chapter focuses on these covert forms of resistance, or sumud, that play a crucial role in women's everyday lives in the village. The aim of the chapter is to answer the second sub question: *How are acts of everyday resistance practiced through dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation by women in Budrus between 2005 and 2018?* First, I discuss the daily struggles women in Budrus encounter and how they give meaning to the concept of 'sumud'. While Chapter 1 provides a general overview of the interpretation of sumud and the academic debate around it<sup>2</sup>, it was crucial for me to establish the meaning of sumud in the village before turning to local practices of sumud. I argue that sumud is not only everyday resistance, but also a psychological coping mechanism to deal with the hardships of daily life under occupation. Then, based on analysis of my empirical evidence, I introduce a classification of five forms of everyday resistance that I have identified as core

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.2.2 'Everyday resistance in Palestine: practices of sumud', 25-26.

forms of sumud in the village. Besides these Friday morning ‘picnics’, I analyse the practices of farming and the annual olive harvest, checkpoints and the refusal of immobility, motherhood, education and narratives and the creation counter ‘safe’ spaces.

### **3.2 Sumud as resistance and coping mechanism**

When asked how the Israeli occupation affects the women’s everyday lives, respondents often mention living in fear for their children, arrests of husbands and other male family members and temporarily becoming a women-led household, going through daily checkpoints on commute to university or work and economical issues. To elaborate on the first issue, many women stated that they live in fear for their children being arrested or killed when playing outside, but also when they go to Budrus’ primary and middle school, which is near the ISW. According to one of my respondents, who is a teacher at the school, soldiers sometimes enter the building during classes or hide themselves in the toilets, which are in a separate building outside the school.<sup>3</sup> As a result, she allows her students to go to the toilets two by two. Another respondent states that she never knows if her children will come home that day if she sends them to school in the morning, due to these harassment techniques of the army.<sup>4</sup> Another issue that is often discussed is the arrests of husbands and fathers. Almost all respondents had either a husband or a father who had gotten arrested at least once. In a patriarchal society as Budrus, the absence of a husband and father for even one day can be a struggle.

When asked the question what ‘sumud’ means to them, respondents often answer that sumud is to stay on the land, despite the sadness and pain they suffer, and to continue life by giving birth and raising children. According to Nahla, continuing life is essentially resistance: “They don’t want us to make families, they don’t want us to live, they don’t want us to be happy. Everything we do is against the will of the occupier.”<sup>5</sup> Samira describes sumud as a form of consciousness:

It is about the understanding and the consciousness of the occupation. (...)  
We should never come to think about it as a normal state and live with our  
enemies (...) We should live in it and make it into a culture, that this is  
occupation.<sup>6</sup>

Her mother Nadia agrees and argues that sumud can expand through consciousness and education: “I believe this generation is more conscious and educated about the occupation, so they have more sumud. They will fight more than the previous generations.”<sup>7</sup> However, sumud is not solely resistance or consciousness. It simultaneously seems to be a psychological coping mechanism to deal with the

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<sup>3</sup> Author’s interview with Abeer and Azhar on 29 March, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Author’s interview with Manal on 20 April, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 29 March, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

hardships of everyday life under occupation. Tahira explains that the fact that her mother took care of her and her brothers and sisters after her father was arrested is a form of sumud to her. “My mother taught me that even when my father is arrested, there is no reason to be depressed about it, as there is still hope for staying on the land and to protect it.”<sup>8</sup> Her mother Hayat states that her form of sumud in this situation was to be patient and await her husband’s return while continuing life.<sup>9</sup> Rana gave a similar example of sumud: “It is staying despite all of the sadness. When they arrest one of your family members or you lose a family member as a martyr, you stay.”<sup>10</sup> Sumud is thus also a way of dealing with everyday struggles. As Qadira describes it: “Sometimes we feel down, but our sumud means we rise up again.”<sup>11</sup> As written in the introduction<sup>12</sup> and Chapter 1<sup>13</sup>, I believe an act can simultaneously be a conscious political decision or resistance, a coping strategy and an act ‘encroachment’. Just because an act can also be seen as a coping mechanism, does not mean it is any less of ‘resistance’. Now, it is time to look at more concrete ways in which these women practice sumud.

### 3.3 Friday morning picnics

Just as the Friday protests have become routinised, so have the Friday morning picnics of Ifza and her cousins. Around 10 AM, they gather at their grandmother’s house. They drink coffee and chat about the latest gossip. An hour later, they go into the fields. They listen to popular Arabic music on their phones, eat crisps for breakfast and take pictures of each other, while making their usual round in the fields to discover traps. They cover as much ground as possible without coming too close to the fence. One of the places they stop by is the remembrance stone for Lafee Awad. The stone with a picture of Lafee marks the location where Israeli soldiers killed the young man in 2015. The girls look underneath trees and inside bushes. On their way back, they pick wildflowers and herbs to bring home. Sometimes, Ifza’s mother Nahla and her aunt Nadia join. Sporadically, the Israeli army sends a surveillance drone to see what exactly is happening during these picnics, reminding the women that their every move is indeed carefully being monitored.

The Friday morning picnics are a form of everyday resistance because the act is intentionally concealed from the target. The action is not meant to convey a message. Rather, it is a disguised way of possibly undermining Israeli power when the army hides soldiers in the fields. The women use their femininity and daily habits – social gathering, collecting flowers and herbs – to conceal their resistance. This form of resistance is a response to compulsory power. Traps by Israeli soldiers would be placed to arrest children, thereby practicing the ability to control the actions of others. By

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<sup>8</sup> Author’s interview with Safa and Tahira on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Author’s interview with Hayat and Hanoun on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Author’s interview with Qadira on 28 April, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> See Introduction, section ‘*Methodology: Theory and concepts*’, 14.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.2.2 ‘Everyday resistance in Palestine: practices of sumud’, 25-26.

exercising this form of ‘counter-surveillance’, the women are negotiating possible coercion of the Israeli state. In order to do so, they need to remain concealed. The dimension of *repertoires* must be linked to women’s roles in the Friday protests as analysed in chapter 2.<sup>14</sup> The Friday picnics are following the same script, with women playing a mainly invisible role: rather than physically being at the fence when the protests start, they are operating in the margins, in this case preparing the protests in a disguised manner. In the realm of *relationships*, women are concealing any interaction with the Israeli state, therefor dominating this interaction. The territory they are in is *spatially* disciplined by the Israeli state, due to the fence, panoptic cameras and drones. In case the women would come too close to the fence or would engage in ‘suspicious’ behaviour, the army will send tanks and soldiers. At the same time, women are also practicing a disciplinary function in the spatial dimension. By their weekly picnics in the fields, it is difficult for soldiers to hide in order to arrest children during the day. In the realm of *temporalisation*, it is interesting that while the soldiers are made to believe the women are spending their time doing a leisure activity, they are actually practicing resistance, creating a different perspective on how time is spent.

### **3.4 Farming and the annual olive harvest**

Another example of sumud that was given by almost all respondents was that of working on and taking care of the land. As there appears to be an increase in the Israeli state trying to buy the village’s land, several respondents argue that simply not selling the land is a form of sumud in itself.<sup>15</sup> The farming of the land is a more active form of sumud that most women in the agrarian village practice. An example of this is the annual olive harvest, which takes places every October. On the other side of the ISW, there are multiple olive trees that were cut off from the village when the Wall was built. In order to do the annual harvest, women have to receive permits by the Israeli government, which are frequently denied. Even when the women are allowed to go to their family’s trees, they have three days from 7 AM to 3 PM to conduct the harvest, which is a very limited time. In addition, women state they often deal with harassment by Israeli soldiers. Soldiers try to slow down their work and bother them in other ways. Going despite this harassment is not just because of the economical dependence on the olives, but also because it provides an opportunity to practice sumud. This form of resistance is mainly a response to productive power. Taking care of the land became meaningful as resistance precisely because the land is threatened by the target of resistance. It allows women to turn their land into a site of resistance.

The land is a crucial part of the *repertoire* of the villagers. Villagers often speak of a connectedness with the earth and their land. Taking care of it is almost as taking care of your children, as some women narrate their relationship to the olive trees. It is thus deeply embedded in local culture

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 2, section 2.2.2 ‘Friday protests: dimensions of analysis’, 34.

<sup>15</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

and often, women state that teaching their children to learn to love the land and how to take care of it is a crucial part of sumud. Manal describes how her connection to the land is central in teaching her children about sumud and resistance: “They look up to me, and they will do what I do. The way I am living, the way I am taking care of my land. They just look at me and learn. They see how we as their parents are trying to save this land.”<sup>16</sup> Farming the land and the olive harvest are not necessarily forms of resistance that are recognised as resistance by the target. It is rather sending an indirect message of steadfastness. Women are however not only sending a message to the Israelis, but also to their children by taking care of the land. In the realm of *relationships*, farming is thus a message from the agent (the woman farming her land) to the Israeli state (the target) and to her children and community. This dimension of is again closely related to the dimension of *spatialisation*. The land is deeply meaningful to the villagers. While the villagers are in control of interventions in the landscape by farming it and for example planting new olive trees, the overruling or compulsory power lays with the Israeli state. An interesting example of this is that one day during the protests, one of the olive trees caught fire due to a tear gas bomb and drought. Nahla wanted to put out the fire, but the soldiers would not let her go near the tree. According to Ifza, the soldiers were even laughing at her mother’s distress. The control over the land is thus continuously contested. There are also gender-specific forms of control aimed at the agent, namely the harassment during the olive harvest. As explained in Chapter 2, this harassment is one of the reasons it is difficult for women to directly confront soldiers.<sup>17</sup> In the dimension of *temporalisation*, the Israeli state decides when and how long women can work on the land during the annual olive harvest. For the villagers, the aspect of routine is crucial. The farming and olive harvest, year after year, day after day, is meaningful as sumud because it is continuous. It is about nursing an olive tree back to life after it has been burnt. Not just after the first time, but after every single time it catches fire during the Friday protests.

### **3.5 Checkpoints and the refusal of immobility**

Another routinised action that respondents define as sumud is that of refusing immobility by going through checkpoints every day on commute to work or university. Nahla tells how harassment at the checkpoints has become worse in the last couple of years and how she experiences it as torture.<sup>18</sup> The women speak of these processes at checkpoints as exhausting and the cause of a lot of frustration. Samira expresses her daily frustration when going to university in Birzeit: “You go to university, and you see the Israeli occupations flags flying in front of you. You see checkpoints. Any soldier has the right to stand there and stop you, in the middle of the road, for no reason.”<sup>19</sup> Often, she is late for class due to checkpoints. It is the continuing of life despite this daily frustration that is framed as sumud.

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<sup>16</sup> Author’s interview with Manal on 20 April, 2018.

<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 2, section 2.2.2 ‘Friday protests: dimensions of analysis’, 34.

<sup>18</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

Wafiyah for example remembers that when she was in college in Ramallah during the Second Intifada, there was always a checkpoint on her way to university. Everyday, the women had to go through the tiring procedure of getting out of the bus, walking over a mountain and then getting onto another bus. Yet, she finished her education.<sup>20</sup> Fatima never received a higher education, but perceives the education of her daughters as *sumud*: “Especially for girls, going to university and traveling long distances when seeing barriers, such as checkpoints, is *sumud*.”<sup>21</sup>

Commuting to university or work despite checkpoints is not the only way women refuse to be immobile due to the Israeli occupation. Ifza is one of the few women of the village who has travelled extensively outside of the OWB. She recalls her travels as humiliating and difficult:

The borders are the worst nightmare for everyone. The Jordanian border is the worst experience I have ever lived during my traveling. (...) They just harass you with a lot of questions, they will take your paper and make you wait for no reason. And the humiliation of searching your stuff. Sometimes, they would break some of your stuff. (...) Our Palestinian passport doesn't have lots of permissions, so traveling around the world, without visa, is also harder for us.<sup>22</sup>

Nonetheless, Ifza continues to travel, explaining that it is about ‘enjoying my rights as a Palestinian’. She thus faces these obstacles – the frustration, the humiliation, the lack of access - in traveling in order to live life by her own terms.

The power that is resisted with this act of *sumud* is both compulsory and productive. The coercion of the checkpoints and other control mechanisms is unavoidable if one wishes to live a life as normal as possible in the OWB. Thus, instead of avoiding it, women renegotiate the meaning of going through checkpoints. Their daily frustrations have a larger purpose when placed in the frame of *sumud*. Women thus react in a productive manner to this compulsory power: it is about recreating subjectivities and meanings about a form of coercion they cannot escape. The *repertoire* of *sumud* in this case is about living life on one’s own terms, despite the hardships the occupation brings. It is an intergenerational repertoire that is especially meaningful for girls, as women getting a higher education or work was not as self-evident decennia ago in a rural village such as Budrus. There is thus both a gendered and a social class aspect to the script. Checkpoints are seen as torture, harassment and a constant reminder of the Israeli occupation. Nonetheless, their existence should not stop Palestinians from continuing their life and education. In terms of *relationships*, the target of resistance is dominating the interaction with the agent of resistance at the checkpoint. The Israeli soldier decides

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<sup>20</sup> Author’s interview with Fatima and Wafiyah on 14 April, 2018.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Author’s interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

who he or she lets pass and who he or she will check or interrogate. The power structures here are highly racialised. The checkpoint itself and the decision of who can move freely and who cannot is founded on a clear separation between the Israeli Jewish soldier and the Arab Palestinian. Resistance of the agent is often not verbally expressed, as this might lead to hour-long interrogation. It is the act of going through the checkpoint everyday, and thereby cooperating in this mechanism of control, that is seen as the resistance. In the realm of *spatialisation*, the Israeli state is controlling the landscape and deciding who can enter and move inside that space. The checkpoints in themselves are disciplinary functions, aimed at regulating the population. In the dimension of *temporalisation*, soldiers are in complete control of time at checkpoints. It is their decision if a Palestinian will be on time on his or her work or university. They decide if and how much Palestinian will be late. On the other hand, it is the routine, the continuity of actions in time, that makes this act of resistance meaningful to the agent.

### **3.6 Motherhood, education and narratives**

Giving birth, raising children and educating them on how to practice sumud, is often mentioned as the core shape through which women in the village practice sumud. The very act of giving birth – of giving life – is seen as resistance against the Israeli occupation as it is to continue life, to give life to the next generation, despite Israeli attempts to contain the Palestinian people. Hanoun states: “They want to stop our living. To stop our breathing, to stop our education, to stop our love, to stop our marriages. Everything that is related to life, they reject it. So if we continue being alive, this is resistance.”<sup>23</sup> Besides giving birth, educating children is also often seen as sumud. Nadia explains how she influenced her children’s practice of sumud:

I believe I am one of the main reasons behind my children’s sumud. They got it from me, the way I talk about the homeland, about the occupation, about the Palestinian issue, it transferred somehow to my children. (...) I can see my belief in sumud is in them, they just practice it, without even being conscious of it. This is something you get from your parents and their stories about the homeland.<sup>24</sup>

The practice of sumud and the script it entails are thus an intergenerational practice: it is given from one generation upon the next. Nadia states she in turn learned her sumud from her mother:

My mother was from the village of Beit Nabala, which is now abandoned. She would always be talking about every single detail about daily life in Beit

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<sup>23</sup> Author’s interview with Hayat and Hanoun on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

Nabala. I felt connected to Beit Nabela, and I was so sad for it, because it felt like my own village. As if I knew the place, and the people living there. That is how my mother's stories connected me to that place.<sup>25</sup>

She passed her mother's stories about Beit Nabala on to her children and grandchildren. Manal often tells her children about the 2003 protests, when she carried her oldest daughter, one year old at the time, with her. She also tells them about their father, a prominent local Fatah leader, and the times he was arrested and spent in prison.<sup>26</sup> Hanoun recalls how her mother told her stories about, for example, the Nakba and about Ahmed Yassin, the founder of Hamas.<sup>27</sup> All three women emphasise the intergenerational aspect of telling these stories to their children. They see it as their responsibility to teach sumud to the next generation - a responsibility that was also practiced by their mothers.

Education at schools also allows women to practice sumud. Azhar, who works at the primary school in the village, tells her students stories about historical Palestine and the Nakba and teaches them names of lost Palestinian villages inside Israeli territory. Her sister Abeer used to work as a teacher. Abeer told her students for example about the 1953 massacre in Budrus' neighbouring village of Qibya. Both women find it their responsibility to tell their students that violence is not the best way to resist the occupation. Azhar explains: "The boys are proud of themselves for going to the Wall and throwing stones after class. I tell them this is not always the right way to do it. To study is better to resist than to throw stones and being shot for nothing."<sup>28</sup>

In the *repertoire* of motherhood and education as sumud, being a mother means being an educator. It is the knowledge about sumud that must be passed on to the next generation – either children or students – that is a form of sumud in itself. In the dimension of *temporalisation*, the intergenerational aspect is thus crucial. Perspectives on the past, but also visions for the future, are conveyed from mother to child, or from teacher to student. In the realm of *relationships*, the interaction is focused on relationships inside the own community, rather than between the agent and target of resistance. In this internal interaction, the woman takes an authoritative role. She is powerful in narrating and sharing her stories. In the realm of *spatialisation*, the denial of the state of Israel is an interesting way of resisting the Israeli state as a counter discourse. When discussing the conflict, women continuously refer to the territory inside Israel as 'Palestine'. In this way, they are defying Israel's physical power and boundaries. The act of sumud that is practiced through motherhood and education is a main example of how productive power is targeted. By raising children and telling them stories about the homeland, women uphold a system of meaning in which existing is resistance and in which Palestine continues to survive.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Author's interview with Manal on 20 April, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Author's interview with Hayat and Hanoun on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Author's interview with Abeer and Azhar on 29 March, 2018.



### 3.7 Creating counter 'safe' spaces

A key issue that women in Budrus deal with is the lack of safe spaces. Ikram explains her frustration:

Sometimes after work or in the weekend, you would like to sit with the kids and enjoy your free time, but you cannot because most of the time there are soldiers and tear gas and you cannot even let your kids play outside. (...) You cannot enjoy your simple pleasures.<sup>29</sup>

Hanoun is also worried about the lack of a space safe for her son: "Any mother in life wants to find a safe space for her children. In Budrus, there are no safe spaces to play for my son." Hanoun does not let her two-year-old son play in the streets. She is afraid he would get hit by a stray bullet or tear gas can, or taken by Israeli soldiers. She wishes she could take him to the places in the mountains where she used to go to when she was a child, to play football, sing and draw together. To deal with the lack of safe spaces, Hanoun tries to create them in her home. She cultivated a little garden at her house, so that her son can play 'in nature'. She dreams of taking him to the sea one day, but it is nearly impossible for the villagers to get permits to travel to, for example, the coastal city of Haifa. So she allows him to swim in the bathtub. They pretend it is the sea. During these activities, Hanoun reads her son stories or sings for him to compensate for the sound of gunfire.<sup>30</sup>

Another mechanism that makes women feel unsafe is the presence of the panoptic cameras. One of my respondents tells me it bothers her that her hijab has to be on at all times, even when she is sitting in her garden. "I do not feel free. Everywhere I go, I know there is a camera filming. (...) When I go to the fields around the village... Especially for us girls, when you are in nature and there are no people around you, you just take off your scarf and enjoy nature. But with the cameras, we cannot do that. We have to make sure the hijabs are on all the time."<sup>31</sup> As a result, the women turn their homes into sanctuaries - this is the only place where they can take off their hijab and move freely.

Shalhoub-Kevorkian (2005) introduced the idea of creating counter spaces as resistance. She argues that the state of Israel aims to undermine the social fabric of Palestinian society and that its policies target the feeling of safety and security of Palestinian families (2005: 115). The family home, religious buildings and schools have become places of insecurity and political violence. As a response, Palestinian women have created counter discourses and counter spaces of safety. In the case of women in Budrus, the family home has become a symbolic site. It is the home in which a woman can provide a safe space to play for her children and can take off her hijab and feel 'free'. Some women state they prefer to stay in the house as much as possible to avoid being filmed by the cameras. As Johannson and Vinthagen (2015: 6) state, this avoidance of surveillance techniques can also be seen as a form of

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<sup>29</sup> Author's interview with Ikram and Karima on 28 April, 2018.

<sup>30</sup> Author's interview with Hayat and Hanoun on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Author's interview with Qadira on 28 April, 2018.

everyday resistance. The creation of a safe haven inside the family home remains fragile. Soldiers can enter the home, or school, at any time and take physical control of the space.

The women deploy contradictory *repertoires* to resist the lack of safe spaces. For Samira, as described in section 3.1, *sumud* means being conscious of the abnormality of the occupation. The lack of a safe space is not normal to her. However, another respondent argues she ignores Israeli soldiers as much as possible. She states: “We should not consider them as soldiers, nor as something important and big. We will continue our lives as if they are not here.”<sup>32</sup> This is at the same time a defensive mechanism; she also does to avoid getting herself and her family into trouble. In terms of *relationships*, this form of resistance is interesting precisely because it avoids any interaction with the target of resistance. In terms of *spatialisation*, the villagers are constantly reminded of the control of the Israeli state. In Chapter 2, I quoted Nahla, who stated that the ‘Israelis have every key to every door of Palestine’.<sup>33</sup> This is why she calls living in Budrus ‘a kind of a prison sentence’. Some families can see the Wall from their windows, clearly marking the boundaries of this ‘prison’. The villagers hear the gunshots from the military training camp on the other side of the Wall, six days a week, from dawn until sunset. On *Shabbat*, Saturday, the soldiers take a rest. The silence is remarkable. In other words, the villagers are reminded by their human senses every day that they do not live in a safe and secure space. They see the Wall and panoptic cameras, cannot escape soundscape of gunshots and smell tear gas regularly, even in their homes. At any time, Israeli soldiers can invade the house and destroy properties. This also related to the dimension of *temporalisation*: the women always live in the fear of when the soldiers will enter their home. Will their husbands or sons be at home to provide any physical protection? Will they be sleeping, and not wearing their hijabs? To conclude this section, women are thus trying to create safe spaces in their own homes as a form of resistance against the lack of safety in their daily life. Hereby they are targeting mainly productive power. Women are creatively constructing safe spaces. These spaces are not actually safe, but it is the production of the feeling of safety that is of importance. The spaces create are discourses of safety and can be threatened at any time by the compulsory power of the Israeli state.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I explained how women in Budrus give meaning to the concept of *sumud* in their own words. When asked how the Israeli occupation affects the women’s everyday lives, respondents often mention living in fear for their children and arrests of husbands and other male family members and temporarily becoming a women-led household, going through daily checkpoints and economical issues. Women frame the concept of *sumud* as staying on the land and continuing life, while being conscious of the abnormality of the occupation. Simultaneously, *sumud* is also a psychological coping

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<sup>32</sup> Author’s interview with Ghayda on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>33</sup> See Chapter 2, section ‘2.2.1 Women’s participation’, 32.

mechanism of dealing with the everyday hardships of life under occupation. I analysed five core forms of sumud that women in Budrus practice in their everyday life. These practices are generally gendered in the sense that they often relate to motherhood. The women describe giving birth and raising children as their most important form of sumud. Women's everyday resistance is as much a message to the Israeli state – a message of steadfastness – as it is a message to their children and community. It is, as they describe it in that sense, a way of life.

# Chapter 4. Oscillating between veiled and overt bodies of resistance

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## 4.1 Introduction

In this Chapter, the theory of Chapter 1 is connected to the empirical data as presented in Chapters 2 and 3. As stated in the introduction, four sub-sub questions have been formulated to guide the analysis: (a) *What are the key similarities and differences between the dimensions of repertoires, relationships, spatialisation and temporalisation of everyday and organised resistance?*, (b) *How do Palestinian women narrate the connection between these two forms of resistance?*, (c) *What is the main indicator in the decision to practice either everyday or organised resistance in a specific situation?* and (d) *How can these ‘oscillation dynamics’ be theorised?* First, I compare practices of organised and everyday resistance by using the analytic dimensions of Johansson and Vinthagen. This allows me to synthesise the two different categories of resistance I have constructed. In the second paragraph, I present new data on how women in Budrus narrate the difference between everyday and organised forms of resistance. In the second section of this chapter, I turn to theory by first discussing Lilja et al.’s concept of oscillation dynamics, after which I propose an alternative explanation of oscillation by introducing the concepts of ‘veiled’ and ‘overt’ bodies of resistance.

## 4.2 Comparing organised and everyday resistance

There are some core similarities and differences in the four dimensions of analysis when comparing organised and everyday resistance among women in Budrus. In the dimension of *repertoires*, a clear script on the role of women in resistance emerges. The spatial boundaries of Budrus and the historical narratives that are connected to it form the foundation of this script. Respondents often speak of a connectedness with the earth and their land and the will to protect it, often implying that the land is worth more than their own lives. The importance of the land is illustrated by the comparison that women regularly make between their olive trees and children. It is the need to protect the land from which a repertoire of resistance follows. In this repertoire, women are seen as crucial in sustaining organised resistance practices in the village. However, the role they take is often marginal and invisible to the target of resistance during the weekly Friday protests. Women play the role of coordinators and supervisors. Whereas they were visible on the frontlines during the Wall Intifada in 2003, nowadays, they take power in the realm of their homes during the weekly Friday protests. There is one crucial difference between the protests in 2003 and 2018, namely that of *urgency*. When there is

a direct threat to the land, for example by land confiscation or a house demolition, or to another villager, a woman's honour and that of her family is worth risking possible physical harassment. In such cases, the shift from off-stage to on-stage resistance is justified. When practicing *sumud*, women base their practices on the same repertoire as when they practice organised resistance. The repertoire that women in Budrus draw from when practicing both organised and everyday resistance consists of two main 'building blocks': the need to protect the land and the role of mother. I label this overarching repertoire 'motherhood of the land'. As women are feeling a responsibility to protect their children from the Israeli state, they feel a responsibility to protect their land. Their practices, whether they practice organised resistance by responding to alarm calls or *sumud* by telling their children stories about lost villages, are aimed at protecting and preserving the land and the memories that are connected to it.

In the dimension of *relationships*, interaction between women and the Israeli army often occurs in covert ways, unless there is a direct threat. In cases of such urgency, women physically place themselves in direct confrontation with Israeli soldiers. This shows how women have a certain agency in deciding how to situate themselves in relation to the more powerful. This is again related to the repertoire of motherhood of the land: when the land is threatened in any way, women use their agency to move beyond patriarchal structures. Their male family members seem to accept this role shift because the repertoire is tenacious. Women seem to play equal roles to their male counterparts during the alarm calls and Facebook activism. When practicing *sumud*, women place themselves in a similar relationship to the Israelis as they do when practicing organised resistance: their focus lies on intercommunal relationships rather than on interacting with the target of resistance, unless urgency requires direct confrontation. The internal power structures between men and women in the village however remain to be difficult to analyse as an outsider and operate in enigmatic ways that require more in-depth research.

In the realm of *spatialisation*, the Israeli state is in physical control of more than eighty per cent of the land due to most of Budrus' land being categorised as 'Area C'. However, the disciplinary mechanisms that are in place affect the whole village. The panoptic cameras and drones cause feelings of insecurity and discomfort. In addition, the Israeli army uses its highly trained soldiers and advanced armoury to 'contain' the villagers. Additionally, women are the targets of gender-specific forms of disciplining, such as physical harassment. The villagers have one technique of disciplining Israeli soldiers: collective gatherings. When soldiers are severely outnumbered by villagers during for example the alarm calls, they often retreat. In the spatial dimension of the conflict, the ISW is a highly symbolised site. It is a boundary created by the Israeli state to mark Israeli territory from that of occupied Palestinian territory. However, the site is not only coercive, it is also productive in the sense that villagers can turn in into a site of resistance. In the realm of cyberspace, it might seem as if women can move beyond coercive physical boundaries, but it is the Israeli state who remains in control of internet infrastructure in the OWB. The casting of roles between who is protesting and who

is protecting the boundary of the Wall is fluid. During the Friday protests, the villagers are protesting the boundary, whereas the army is protecting it. During the alarm calls, the roles shift and the villagers turn into the role of protector of the boundary, aiming to push the soldiers out of their territory. Especially in the dimension of spatialisation, the complexity of how power is distributed and how resistance is formed in constant interaction with that power becomes evident. Just because the Israeli army is clearly physically more powerful in controlling and disciplining the villagers, does not mean the villagers do not practice any agency. They find creative ways to resist and negotiate the spatial domination they live under.

In the dimension of *temporalisation*, there are some interesting conclusions to be made, precisely because this is the least developed dimension Johansson and Vinthagen's framework. The control of time is constantly contested in the village of Budrus. The Israeli state has control of time in terms of deciding when to demolish houses, arrest people, install checkpoints and allow the olive harvest. One case in which the villagers have control over time is by organising the weekly Friday protests. They force the Israeli state to mobilise its forces. As a counterstrategy to deal with their lack of control over the temporalisation of social life, women in the village take power over their collective past and memories through narrating stories to their children, and of their future, by sharing their dreams and ambitions in life. Their focus is often on the intergenerational aspect of resistance. It is routine, the repeating of everyday acts, that makes an act everyday resistance, or *sumud*, such as the farming and going through checkpoints.

### **4.3 Women's narration of interaction**

While the analytical framework of Johansson and Vinthagen has allowed me to analyse in depth both everyday and organised resistance and gave me the opportunity to systematically compare the two forms, it was of importance to me to include how my respondents themselves narrate the relationship between organised and everyday forms of resistance. When asked what the difference is between forms of organised resistance and *sumud*, respondents give three types of explanations. A first group approaches organised resistance as an 'add-on' of *sumud*, which is a continuous process in their everyday lives. Ifza explains: "Organised [protests], they come and go. But *sumud* has been there from the very beginning of the occupation. We are living *sumud* everyday. (...) Organised protests are an add-on of *sumud* in some periods."<sup>1</sup> Her mother Nahla agrees: "Everything we do is *sumud*. (...) In some places there is only *sumud*, but in others there are protests and *sumud*."<sup>2</sup> *Sumud* is thus perceived as an underlying force that shapes other forms of resistance. Nadia formulates this as follows: "If you would not believe in your right to resistance, or your *sumud*, you would not have the

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with Ifza, Nahla and Rana on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

courage and the strength to stay on your land and continue life and go to protests.”<sup>3</sup> Her daughter Samira states that it is sumud that gives direction to protests: the long-term process of sumud shapes organised resistance practices.<sup>4</sup> A second group of respondents declares that sumud is the repetition of organised resistance. As Fatima states: “When we go to protests, there is a fighting between us and the Jews. But if the protests happen again and again and again, this is sumud.”<sup>5</sup> Maryam mentions a similar example. The Wall has a big yellow door through which soldiers can enter the village. Apparently, young boys routinely destroy or damage this door. Every time the Israeli army fixes it and the boys destroy it again. It is the repeating of this act that is sumud, according to Maryam.<sup>6</sup> A third group argues that there is no difference between sumud and organised protests. They explain protests as a manifestation or tool of sumud. Hanoun states that “sumud and protests are not two different options”.<sup>7</sup> Manal’s answer corresponds to this statement: “When you work all day on the land, farming it, worrying about it, it is the same as going to a protest because you know you are at this protest to save the very land you are working on.”<sup>8</sup> Rather than focusing on the intention of the action to explain the difference between organised resistance and sumud, Qadira focuses on the outcome of the action to compare the two forms of resistance: “[Sumud and protests] have the same effect against the occupation. When the people go to protests, they are fighting for their freedom and when they are staying in their house, they are here; they are also fighting for their freedom.”<sup>9</sup> None of these three explanations however clarify how and why women deploy forms of organised or everyday resistance in certain times and spaces. This is why it is now time to turn to theory on resistance dynamics.

#### **4.4 Oscillation dynamics**

Based on the work of Lilja et al. (2017), three possible dynamics that could explain the interaction between organised and everyday forms of resistance were introduced in Chapter 1.<sup>10</sup> Derived from Scott’s work, Lilja et al. (2017: 44) propose the relationship of ‘linear development dynamics’, in which “everyday resistance might transform into large scale, collective and organized resistance”. Based on Bayat, on the other hand, they introduce ‘oscillation dynamics’, in which “everyday forms of resistance (‘quiet encroachment’) and collectively organized resistance (sudden large mobilizations in which ‘passive networks’ are temporarily activated) might be utilized in different times and spaces, depending on what is feasible, as a reaction to the type of repression applied against the resistance” (2017: 44). The authors introduce a third type of dynamics in which organised resistance encourages everyday resistance. Building on Mahmood (2005), they argue that practices of organised resistance

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<sup>3</sup> Author’s interview with Nadia and Samira on 24 March, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Author’s interview with Fatima and Wafiyah on 14 April, 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Author’s interview with Hayat, Hafsa, Maryam, Safa, Hanoun and Tahira on 15 March, 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Author’s interview with Hayat and Hanoun on 3 May, 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Author’s interview with Manal on 20 April, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Author’s interview with Qadira on 28 April, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Chapter 1, section 1.2.2 Resistance dynamics, 24.

can create particular notions of the self, which allows individuals to “move outside the boundaries of the resisting organisation and make their own everyday resistance” (Lilja et al. 2017: 47).

My empirical data presumes that the latter type of dynamics is not useful in making sense of my empirical evidence. On the contrary, I would argue that my case study shows how everyday resistance also encourages organised resistance, as some of my respondents state that everyday resistance is an underlying repertoire that inspires acts of organised resistance. This corresponds with Singh’s claim that *sumud* supports more overt forms of resistance, rather than the other way around.<sup>11</sup> I also am not content with Scott’s linear development dynamics, as the case of Budrus clearly illustrates that organised and everyday forms of resistance can exist simultaneously. Even while the villagers have the opportunity to practice organised resistance, they still continue their practices of everyday resistance. The idea of oscillation dynamics therefore remains to be the most plausible sensitising concept to explain the dynamics between these organised and everyday resistance.

#### **4.4.1 Time, space, feasibility and type of repression**

Lilja et al. provide four possible indicators that could explain the oscillation between everyday and organised forms of resistance: *time*, *space*, *feasibility* and *type of repression*. Based upon my empirical data, it is possible to further specify these indicators in the case of Budrus. In the realm of *time*, women in Budrus are dependent on others to be able to practice organised resistance. They do not have direct control over the times at which they practice this form of resistance. In the case of the Friday protests, they depend on the men of the village to show up to protests in order to supervise and coordinate these protests. In the case of alarm calls, they depend on Israeli soldiers to conduct house searches, demolitions or arrests in order to physically protect something or someone and thereby resist compulsory power. As stated earlier, the case of Facebook activism is a dubious case of organised resistance, as it is highly individual. Nonetheless, Facebook activism cannot be practiced at any given time: the women in the village are depending on functioning internet access to conduct this type of resistance. Contrarily, in the case of *sumud*, women do not rely on the actions of either soldiers or the men in their community in order to be able to practice resistance at a specific time. The Friday morning picnics are often conducted without actual soldiers being hidden. Women can educate their children, take care of the land and create counter safe spaces at any given time they choose to do so.

In terms of *space*, organised resistance practices are also situated in spaces that are created by others to some extent. The space to practice protests is established by the men, who turn the Wall into a site of resistance. Similarly, the space to practice responses to alarm calls is constructed by soldiers threatening that space. The existence of cyberspace to practice Facebook activism is likewise dependent on the Israeli state, as explained above. *Sumud*, on the other hand, is a practice that can be practiced in any space. Simply existing in one’s home can be a form of *sumud*. Rather than needing

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<sup>11</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.2.2 ‘Everyday resistance in Palestine: practices of *sumud*’, 25-26.



access to a space to practice resistance in, women are able to create these spaces themselves. Creating organised resistance spaces is more difficult for women than it is for men, as the political realm remains a male sphere that women are often excluded from.

*Feasibility* is a rather vague indicator that Lilja et al. do not specify. Does this mean that the act of resistance has to be potentially successful in undermining power or that the practice of resistance must be accessible to the agent? As stated in the introduction of this thesis, I am not interested in the outcome of resistance practices.<sup>12</sup> Hence, I seize take the freedom that this vaguely defined indicator allows and focus on the accessibility to acts of resistance. In terms of gender roles, women in the village have an abundance of responsibilities in the household. They often argue these responsibilities are why they cannot join the Friday protests, or why it would not be acceptable for them to join. When their husbands leave to protest, they need to watch over the children or cook meals. It is thus less feasible in this sense for women to practice organised resistance, whereas they can combine raising their children while practicing *sumud*, for example in the form of sharing stories and creating counter safe spaces. Feasibility in this sense is directly shaped by patriarchal structures in society, rather than restrictions that are created by the target of resistance.

Related to *type of repression*, I would like to return to the distinction between compulsory and productive power. In order to conduct resistance practices that are mainly targeting compulsory power, such as the Friday protests and alarm calls, but also the checkpoint routines, there has to be some kind of compulsory repression that physically dominates the village or the villagers. When this concrete form of repression is present, the agent is able to practice acts of organised resistance. When the type of repression mainly follows from productive power and is focused at creating narratives and subjectivities, other forms of resistance are needed to counter this repression, such as raising children, education and farming the land as an example for the children. These forms are much more about narratives than about physical domination and coercion. This is in line with Duvall and Barnett's argument on how these different types of power require different types of resistance.<sup>13</sup>

It thus can be stated that in order to practice organised resistance, women must have access to both a time and space in which they are able to practice such resistance. This time and space is often created through the actions of others, which in turn is related to the feasibility of practicing certain kinds of resistance in agreement with gendered household tasks and the type of repression the target utilises. In opposition, everyday resistance is a form of resistance than can be practiced at any given time and place, and allows a woman to be less dependent on either the target of the resistance or other people inside her community. The decision to practice either organised or everyday resistance is furthermore influenced by the type of repression or power that is used by the target of resistance. In cases of compulsory power, a woman will need more organised forms of resistance to challenge that

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<sup>12</sup> See Introduction, section '*Methodology: Theory and concepts*', 12.

<sup>13</sup> See Introduction, section '*Methodology: Theory and concepts*', 13.

power, whereas the resistance requires a focus on recreating narratives and subjectivities when power is mainly productive.

As becomes evident from the analysis above, my data allows me to further specify the indicators of oscillation dynamics. However, the question should be raised to what extent this concept helps me to create a dialogue between my empirical evidence and ideas. This thesis has been structured through a strict distinction between organised and everyday resistance. As acknowledged in Chapter 1, this was likely to damage the complexity of social life.<sup>14</sup> It is therefore time to move beyond this distinction in the final stage of my analysis.

## **4.5 'Veiled' and 'overt' bodies of resistance**

Women in Budrus make a certain role shift in their practices of resistance, but this role shift does not necessarily take place between the categories of organised and everyday resistance. For example, the protests are a form of organised resistance in which women participate; yet they remain invisible and concealed. Women operate 'off-stage'. The alarm calls are as well a form of organised resistance, but in this case, women turn to 'on-stage' resistance by directly confronting the Israeli army. Both the protests and alarm calls are practices of organised resistance – yet women adopt different roles. There is thus a shift occurring inside these practices of organised resistance, rather than between categories of organised and everyday resistance. The concept of oscillation dynamics as introduced by Lilja et al. does not explain this shift. I would therefore like to introduce an alternative understanding of oscillation dynamics. Rather than oscillating between organised and everyday resistance, it is more useful to speak of oscillation between 'veiled bodies of resistance' and 'overt bodies of resistance' in the case of women's resistance in Budrus.

Whether they are practicing everyday or organised resistance, women in Budrus perceive themselves as *bodies of resistance*. During daily life inside their homes, they identify their sole existence, their physical presence on the land, as resistance. No direct interaction with the Israeli state is needed to give meaning to these acts of resistance. During the Friday protests, women aim to protect their honour and that of their family by operating in the margins. They are facilitating the protests and thereby actively participating, but avoid direct confrontation. Their bodies as a site of resistance remain veiled, or hidden, in interaction with the target of resistance. The interaction remains indirect. They are practicing resistance while manoeuvring inside patriarchal boundaries. I define a veiled body of resistance as 'an individual woman practicing resistance, whether organised or everyday, without directly confronting the target of resistance to protect her honour and femininity'.

When women respond to alarm calls, they are likewise acting as bodies of resistance. However, this is where they shift into a role in which they directly and visibly confront Israeli soldiers. They physically place their bodies between the soldiers and that what they aim to protect. Their bodies

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<sup>14</sup> See Chapter 1, section 1.4.1 'Operationalising 'everyday' and 'organised' resistance', 27.

become overt sites of resistance. While certainly still wearing their veils, protecting the meaning of their veil is less important due to the *urgency* of the situation. This urgency is a direct threat to the land or another villager. The women decide – and their male relatives allow it – to prioritise their land over their gender roles and honour. I define an overt body of resistance as ‘an individual woman practicing resistance in public interaction with the target of resistance’. This distinction does not include the practices of Facebook activism, as I approach the *physical use* of women’s bodies as the foundation of these alternative oscillation dynamics. Further in-depth research is needed to theorise gendered practices of Facebook activism.

Thus, rather than speaking of an oscillation between organised and everyday resistance, I argue it is more useful to speak of oscillation between veiled and overt bodies of resistance. This oscillation takes place when there is an urgent need for women to shift in their relationship to Israeli soldiers, and by doing that, also in relationship to the men of their society. This distinction illustrates how women use their agency to move between the categories of organised and everyday resistance and structures of domination.

## **4.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I synthesised practices of organised and everyday resistance among women in the village of Budrus. Comparing the four dimensions I have used to structure my analysis, it becomes evident how entangled these analytical dimensions are and how each of them is crucial to provide a thorough analysis of power and resistance. I discussed that women have three ways of explaining the relationship between everyday and organised resistance: (1) they either approach organised resistance as an add-on of their daily sumud, (2) they argue that the repeating of organised resistance is sumud or (3) they state that the intentions and outcome of both resistance practices make them identical. Furthermore, I argued that the oscillation between everyday and organised resistance and its indicators are not as interesting or tangible in this case study. It is rather the oscillation between veiled and overt bodies of resistance that illustrates how women use their agency in resistance practices and how they manoeuvre and shape power structures, both in relation to the target of resistance and to their own community.

# Conclusion

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The aim of this thesis was to answer the following research question: *How are practices of everyday resistance oscillating with organised resistance practices of Palestinian women in the West Bank village of Budrus since the ending of the Second Intifada in 2005?* The research objectives were to contextualise practices of resistance among women in Budrus, to explain the connection between different forms of resistance and to generate new theoretical insights on the dynamics between organised and everyday resistance, while ‘giving voice’ to the specific group of rural Palestinian women. In this conclusion, I reflect on my findings, how my research is situated in the academic debate, the concept of veiled/overt bodies of resistance and what broader general implications my findings have for analysing female agency in resistance. I end with recommendations for further research.

## Research findings

In Chapter 2, I presented a classification of three core forms of organised resistance among women in Budrus. I analysed the weekly Friday protests, the routine of responding to alarm calls and Facebook activism through the four dimensions of Johansson and Vinthagen. It was argued that today’s protests in Budrus need to be placed in a longer history of organised resistance against the Israeli occupation. While women also participated in the First Intifada, they played a crucial role in the success of the so-called Wall Intifada in 2003. In 2018, women are much less visible during the weekly protests. The few women who do participate have similar motivations to do so. They state they attend the protests out of responsibility to protect their husbands and children, to convey a message to Israel and the international community and to attest the daily problems they encounter due to the Israeli occupation. Women who do not participate often state they do not see the urgency as much as they saw it fifteen years ago, that they have other obligations to their families and that there is no need for women to get involved in violence. These accounts are based upon a gendered repertoire in which the political realm remains reserved for men and women are mainly confined to the private sphere. In addition, women are threatened with physical harassment by soldiers, as their bodies could be turned into a weapon of oppression due to patriarchal structures in the rural Palestinian community. Women hence seem to marginalise themselves during the Friday protests in order to protect their own and their family’s honour. When practicing resistance through responding to alarm calls and Facebook activism, women however manage to move beyond these patriarchal structures. In the case of alarm calls, the direct threat of losing the land or a house, or to the safety of a fellow villager by, for example, arrest, persuade them to directly confront soldiers, targeting practices of compulsory power. On Facebook, they can move beyond physical boundaries to share their opinions and challenge the Israeli narrative, targeting the productive power of the Israeli state.

In Chapter 3, I presented a classification of everyday resistance practices that women exercise: the Friday morning picnics, farming and the annual olive harvest, checkpoints and the refusal of immobility, motherhood, education and narratives and the creation of counter safe spaces. When asked how the Israeli occupation affects the women's everyday lives, respondents often mention living in fear for their children and arrests of husbands and other male family members and temporarily becoming a women-led household, daily checkpoints on commute to university or work and economical issues. Women frame the concept of *sumud* as staying on the land and continuing life, while being conscious of the abnormality of the occupation. Simultaneously, *sumud* is also a psychological coping mechanism of dealing with the everyday hardships of life under occupation. Practices of *sumud* are gendered in the sense that women often relate these practices to motherhood. Respondents describe giving birth and raising and educating their children on the Israeli occupation as their most important form of *sumud*. Women's everyday resistance practices are as much a message of steadfastness to the Israeli state as it is a message to their own community.

In Chapter 4, I systematically compared these practices of organised and everyday resistance by synthesising the four analytic dimensions. I argued that women draw from the same repertoire when practicing organised and everyday resistance. This overarching repertoire was labelled as 'motherhood of the land'. The repertoire is built on two main building blocks: the importance of the land and women's protective role as mother. As women in the village are feeling a responsibility to protect their children from the Israeli state, they feel a responsibility to protect their land. This repertoire derives from and in turn reinforces traditional gender roles, while simultaneously allowing women to move beyond these patriarchal boundaries in some cases. It is an urgency that forces a woman to choose her role as protector over her honour and femininity. In this chapter I furthermore discussed three ways through which respondents explain the relationship between organised and everyday resistance. They (1) either approach organised resistance as an add-on of their daily *sumud*, (2) argue that the repeating of organised resistance is *sumud* or (3) state that the intentions and outcome of both resistance practices make the two identical.

Turning to the 'theorising' part of my analysis in Chapter 4, I argued that out of the three possible dynamics that Lilja et al. provide of the relationship between organised and everyday resistance, the concept of oscillation dynamics was the most useful sensitising concept. I concluded that in order to practice organised resistance, women need to have access to a *time* and *space* in which they are able to practice this type of resistance. In addition, it must be *feasible* for them to balance their resistance practices with their gender role expectations and the *type of repression* that is used must be compulsory or physically coercive in order for them to utilise organised resistance tactics. Moving beyond existing theory, I argued that oscillation between organised and everyday resistance does not sufficiently allow me to create a dialogue between my empirical evidence and ideas. It is rather the oscillation between veiled and overt bodies of resistance that illustrates how women use their agency in different resistance practices and how they manoeuvre inside and negotiate power structures.

## **(Un)veiled bodies of resistance**

To return to the research question, it can be concluded that whether women respond to alarm calls or teach their children how to take care of the land, they base their actions on the repertoire of motherhood of the land. Their resistance practices take different forms in certain times and spaces, depending on the access to forms of organised resistance and the type of repression by the Israeli state. However, the oscillation is not so much between the categories of organised and everyday resistance. Rather, women shift in the *roles* they adopt during resistance practices. The concepts of veiled and overt bodies of resistance help us to understand different resistance practices among women in Budrus in specific, and perhaps among Palestinian women in general. I have defined a veiled body of resistance as ‘an individual woman practicing resistance, whether organised or everyday, without directly confronting the target of resistance to protect her honour and femininity’, and an overt body of resistance as ‘an individual woman practicing resistance in public interaction with the target of resistance’. It is urgency, or a direct threat to the land or another villager, that is needed for women to move beyond their own boundaries and to negotiate this role shift from a veiled to an overt body of resistance with the men in their community.

My research adds to the academic debate on resistance in several ways. First, I constructed a more concrete repertoire of Richter-Devroe’s concept of ‘mother politics’. As discussed in Chapter 1, Richter-Devroe (2012) argued that Palestinian women politicise the domestic sphere through their domestic duties and reproductive roles.<sup>1</sup> I specified a repertoire through which women practice these mother politics, namely by utilising the script of ‘motherhood of the land’. Following this script, they do not only apply mother politics to the domestic sphere, but to the land in general. Second, my research allows me to critically reassess the category of organised resistance through a gendered lens. The indicators of organised resistance I formulated in Chapter 1 did not sufficiently take into account how men and women might operate differently when practicing the same act of resistance. An act of resistance, such as a protest, might be clearly visible to the target and outside observer, but this does not mean a woman is also clearly visible as the agent of that act. In patriarchal societies, women might practice organised resistance in more ambiguous ways in order to preserve internal power structures. Third, in a broader reflection on feminist theory, my research hence underpins the thought that a woman can resist certain structures of domination, while enabling other structures of domination. My respondents often define their actions as resisting the Israeli occupation, yet they do not seem to question their position in patriarchy. Rather, they promote traditional gender roles and emphasise their roles as wives and mothers. This perspective adds to a more complex understanding of female agency beyond liberal or secular definitions, as set by the work of Mahmood (2005). It illustrates that while certain structures of domination are oppressive, they can simultaneously be productive. The repertoire of motherhood of the land does not solely restrict women to traditional gender roles. It also produces a

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1, section ‘1.3.1 Activism and informal resistance’, 24.

space in which they can practice agency and move beyond traditional gender roles by becoming overt bodies of resistance in cases of urgency. Fourth, my research affirms Scott's argument for analysing everyday acts of resistance as political acts. Women in Budrus have never formally and politically organised themselves, yet they have been an important force in the village's resistance practices against the Israeli occupation. It would be a shame to not include their forms of resistance in the analysis of political conflict.

## **Recommendations for further research**

There are several recommendations for further research I can suggest based upon this thesis. First of all, research to explore the proposed concepts of veiled and overt bodies is highly required to see if these concepts are also applicable to other cases. Case studies of other Palestinian communities would help in a possible generalisation of resistance practices among Palestinian women in general. Deriving from the several subtopics I touched upon, it could be interesting to research how the Palestinian repertoire of sumud is intergenerational and how it is adapted to certain times and spaces, rather than solely being practiced with the intention of being intergenerational. Related to this and specific to the case of Budrus, further research on women's participation during the First Intifada and how the resistance repertoire of women today corresponds with the repertoire then could provide important insights on the development of repertoires of resistance. As the notion of motherhood is of crucial importance in the repertoire of women in Budrus, it could furthermore be worthwhile to explore notions of fatherhood in the practice of sumud, in order to theorise how gender roles are manifested in practices of sumud. Likewise, it could be beneficial to research how power relationships between men and women inside communities are shaped in the negotiation of resistance roles. Further still, more research on Facebook activism as resistance is needed, especially from a gendered perspective. Whereas women take different roles in physical resistance practices, it might be that they also adopt different positions in cyberspace.

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## Appendix I. Overview of interviews

Number	Name	Age at date of interview	Birth place	Occupation	Marital state/ children	Date of interview(s)
1	Ifza	29 years old	Budrus	Doctor in Ramallah hospital	Single	24-3-2018
2	Rana	38 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married, four children	24-3-2018
3	Nahla	48 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married, six children	24-3-2018
4	Nadia	59 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Widow, ten children	24-3-2018
5	Samira	21 years old	Budrus	Student journalism	Single	24-3-2018
6	Abeer	35 years old	Amman, Jordan	Previous teacher English	Married, three children	29-3-2018
7	Azhar	35 years old	Amman, Jordan	Teacher primary school Budrus	Married, three children	29-3-2018
8	Fatima	58 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married, ten children	14-4-2018
9	Wafiyah	32 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married, three children	14-4-2018

10	Hayat	47 years old	Beit Ellow (village in OWB)	Housewife	Married, eight children	15-4-2018; 3-5-2018
11	Hafsa	86 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Widow, ten children	15-4-2018
12	Maryam	44 years old	Budrus	Hairdresser	Widow, two children	15-4-2018
13	Safa	22 years old	Budrus	Student special education	Single	15-4-2018; 22-4-2018
14	Hanoun	24 years old	Budrus	Works in medical laboratory	Married, one child	15-4-2018; 3-5-2018
15	Tahira	22 years old	Budrus	Just graduated as a teacher	Single	15-4-2018 22-4-2018
16	Manal	39 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married, four children	20-4-2018
17	Qadira	26 years old	Budrus	Opening a beauty salon in Budrus	Single	28-4-2018
18	Ikram	30 years old	Budrus	Physiotherapist	Married, 2 children	28-4-2018
19	Kalila	29 years old	Budrus	Physics teacher	Married	28-4-2018
20	Ghayda	41 years old	Budrus	Housewife	Married	3-5-2018

## **Appendix II. Topic guide**

Individual/paired/triad interviews

Budrus, Occupied Palestinian Territories

March/April 2018

### *Research topic*

“Oscillating everyday and organised resistance: How Palestinian Women in the West Bank village of Budrus practice resistance against the Israeli occupation”

### *Objectives*

- To explore life histories in detail;
- To understand the meaning of resistance in the individual’s life;
- To understand how everyday resistance is practiced;
- To understand how organised resistance is practiced;
- To understand how everyday and organised resistance interact;
- To determine factors that shape the decision to deploy either organised or everyday resistance.

### *Introduction*

- Introduce research and researcher;
- State objectives of the interview;
- Discuss confidentiality and anonymity;
- Ask permission to record;
- Ask if there are any questions.

### **1. Personal information**

- Full name
- Nickname
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Marital status
- Current activity
- Current home situation

### **2. Life history**

- Let participant make a direct family tree;
- Let participant map the most important life events in timeline;
- Ask participant to explain timeline.

### **3. Organised resistance**

- Discuss what researcher means with organised resistance (see flashcard);
- Ask if participant has a different understanding of the term.
- Questions:
  - Did you participate in the protests during the Second Intifada?
  - How do you recall this period of protests?
  - Have you participated in organised resistance since 2005?
  - Does your family participate in organised resistance?
  - What do you think the role of women in organised resistance is in Budrus after the protests during the Second Intifada?

### **4. Everyday resistance/sumud**

- Definition of everyday resistance
- Discuss what researcher means with everyday resistance (see flashcard);
- Ask if participant has a different understanding of the term.
- Questions:
  - How is the occupation a part of your everyday life?
  - Do you resist the occupation in your everyday life? How?
  - What does sumud mean to you?
  - Has the meaning of sumud changed throughout your life?

### **5. Oscillating resistance practices**

Explore the relationship between everyday/organised resistance by using variables of:

- Time;
- Space;
- Feasibility;
- Type of repression.

#### *Wrap up*

Summarise key points;

Ask if respondent wants to share reflections on the interview;

Check in on their emotional wellbeing;

Ask if there are any questions;

Let them know that researcher might ask for a follow-up interview;

Let them know that if there are any further questions, they can contact researcher;

Thank them for their time and cooperation.