

Campus in Camps
Collective Dictionary

RESPONSIBILITY

المسؤولية

FINAL DRAFT
15.01.2013



كالمخيم في المخيم
جامعة في المخيم

RESPONSIBILITY

المسؤولية

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CAMPUS IN CAMPS

Campus in Camps is a two-year experimental educational and project oriented program, engaging the participants from the West Bank's refugee camps in an attempt to explore and produce new forms of representation of camps and refugees beyond the static and traditional symbols of victimization, passivity and poverty. The program aims at transgressing, without eliminating, the distinction between camp and city, refugee and citizen, center and periphery, theory and practice, teacher and student.

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Campus in Camps is a program by Al Quds University (Al Quds/Bard Partnership) and hosted by the Phoenix Center in Dheisheh refugee camp in Bethlehem. It is implemented with the support of the GIZ Regional Social and Cultural Fund for Palestinian Refugees and Gaza Population on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in cooperation with UNRWA Camp Improvement Programme.

The content of this publication does not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the institutions mentioned above.

The Collective Dictionary is a series of publications containing definitions of concepts.

The terms proposed are those considered fundamental for the understanding of the contemporary condition of Palestinian refugee camps. These words have emerged as a result of actions and active dialogs with the camp community. Written reflections on personal experiences, interviews, excursions and photographic investigations constitute the starting point for the formulation of more structured thoughts.

The Collective Dictionary is both the reference and conceptual framework for all Campus in Camps projects and interventions.

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Responsibility and representation at the individual and collective level

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Responsibility is like a package, with its natural divisions, without imposing on anybody. A sense of responsibility can be based on the famous quote by Al-Imam Ali, “The worth of a person is what he/she embodies, not only a source of strength, which stems from one’s inner world and from one’s relationships with their surrounding”. Embodying the worth of an individual or group gives them natural responsibility toward this worth. Indeed, if the worth matches the society or community around, then, in this case, responsibility means representing the individual’s and group’s worth. If we look to the nicknames of Palestinian families, we notice that they are connected with what those families embody, such as, The Haddad family “Blacksmith Family” or The Najjar Family “Carpenter Family”. With these nicknames, everyone knows where to go if they need a wooden chair or new shoes for their horses; therefore, the society that they are in has given them a natural responsibility and they embody that worth.

Perhaps, the Palestinian family is a good example to elucidate the term of responsibility, and we can explain this role, through my personal story, one which has happened to a major part of the Palestinians. We realize the importance of what each one does and how that affects and connects to catering to the needs of the group and the individuals within it.

The grandfather and grandmother, in many of families, represent the center of the family and a point of gathering. If the family is split up, the grandparents gather them easily with simple, inherent tools. My grandmother is like the roots of the olive tree, extended and branched out with all its roots feeding it with water and food, but if those roots are cut off, it will die. When we go to my grandmother, we find at least five different dishes of food. Although she cannot eat more than half a dish in an entire day, all of us take the responsibility to go to her with a dish of food and to eat with her in her home that is connected with my house. Even if she cannot eat with you and even if you see five different kinds of food on the wooden table, you will continue to do it. She refuses to leave her home. Everyone is asking her to stay in their home, but in vain. She believes that her home is the forum for everyone, and it's her responsibility to be there if anyone needs her. Time and time again, my grandmother acts based on her beliefs and conviction with responsibility towards her family and invites the whole family over for food. Everyone

awaits this initiative. My grandmother will decide to invite all of us to a party of *Moshat* and *Zalabia* (a Palestinian traditional food) and the responsibility of each one is to come on time and bring with them a bottle of olive oil and cauliflower from their home. Everyone arrives to my grandmother's home early that Friday morning.

My grandmother gathers her strength before others arrive and makes that huge delicious morning coffee. When we arrive to her home, we drink coffee and start with individual and collective fun conversations, amusing conversations, sad conversations, and happy conversations. Then my aunts start to fry the *Moshat* and the smell consumes the home, descending throughout the rooms, hitting the noses of all the family. I see everyone is sniffing and looking for when the first *Moshat* will be ready to eat. And that Friday ends with a smile, most of the times from all, with a wait for the next initiative from my grandmother that no one can refuse the invitation. All clean the home, turning it into how we found it before we came. When the day is over, we close the day with a smile, with each one taking their part of the *Moshat*, happiness, and growing trust of the importance of these family Fridays. Responsibility here is not planned, and it is not disconnected, and we don't need an annual strategy for it.

If we look at these events, in general, from start to

finish, we will find that each person completes the other, and the others complete the person.

Is the country a big family? What if yes, and what if no?

Family Representation

There is one representative for each family within the community, a wise person who always thinks of his family members over himself. The method used to choose this person varies from one family to the next based on certain circumstances. This person tends to be the oldest member in the family. One of the responsibilities of this person is to solve the family problems and speak on their behalf after negotiating and agreeing with them on sad or happy events. However, this process is not a law or a constitutional amendment. The type of relationship within the families and within the community as a whole facilitates and creates a communal role that satisfies the community members.

Nonetheless, my dad once told me a relevant short story that happened to him: One day I was asked by a family member to go with him to his fiancée's house based on my good relationship with her family and ask her to marry him. We then went to the fiancée's

house to legitimately ask for her hand from her family; however, I was surprisingly asked to represent the family in front of the fiancée's family. I then asked the eldest in my family to take my place, but everyone else insisted I be the representative.

The question that comes into my mind is whether the home is a big family or not?

Abu Mazen and the responsibility he bears towards the Palestinian people

Mahmoud Abbas is the leader of the Fateh movement, the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the leader of the Palestinian Authority. But where is Abo Mazen in all these responsibilities that they claim he bears. It is impossible for a person to follow three calendars and lead three different huge groups like the ones mentioned. Aren't there any other people to mitigate the responsibilities the president bears? The Palestine Liberation Organization is the only legitimate representative. That said, it is committed to direct and carry the commitments the Palestinian people have set to achieve freedom. In addition, the PLO is responsible for protecting the Palestinians' right of return and identifying Palestine as an occupied territory. So what is the difference between the PA, the PLO, and Fateh? Even the politi-

cal parties in Palestine have begun to follow the one position in which Palestine is an unarmed territory under occupation. As refugees in Deheisheh refugee camp, we need water, and since the PA is responsible for us, it has to provide the basic life necessities for us despite the fact that the water wells are controlled by the occupation force. Indeed, where is the PA in this equation? When a person steals from his or her neighbor, the PA arrests him; however, the Israeli Force comes and arrests another family member the following day. Where is the safety that should be provided to the community members? Or is the responsibility divided into what is possible and what is not? The Palestinian President states in one of his interviews, “ I don’t want to go back to Safad (my original village). Safad is located within Israel outside the Palestinian borders. I might visit it as a tourist but not as a resident.” Some people argue that it is a point of view but we should stop here to explain some important aspects that need to be clarified. Since he is the only representative through three main different ways, the PLO, the PA, and Fatah, does he have the right to say his personal opinion about one of the most substantive Palestinian rights? And what is the enemy’s idea of taking advantage of this attitude for its own sake?

INVESTIGATING THE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBILITY AMONG THE PEOPLE OF THE CAMP

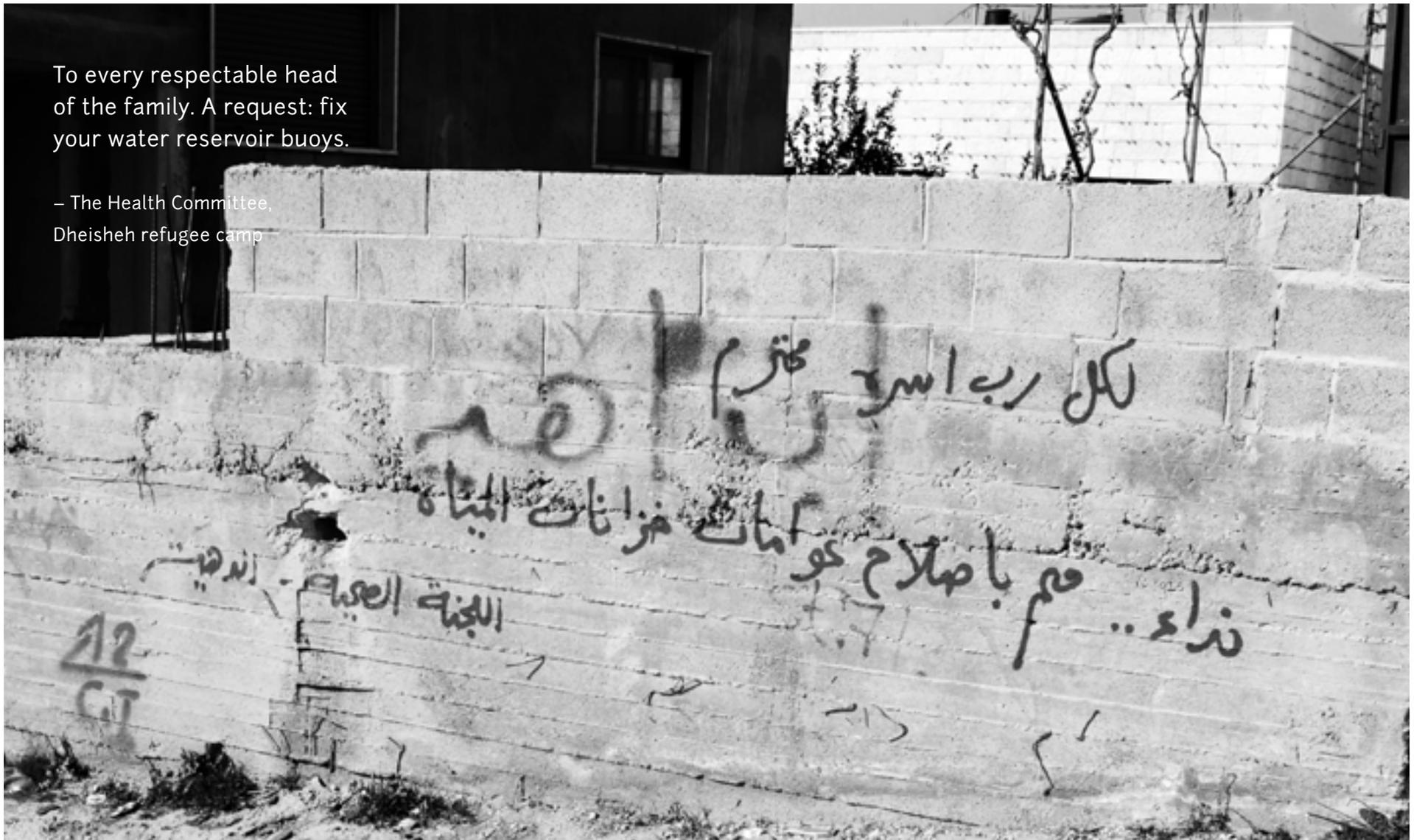
Qussay Abu Aker
Ahmad Al-Lahham

We have decided to make interviews randomly with people from Dheisheh refugee camp in connection to our attempt to redefine the responsibility.

We agreed on the questions, and agreed that we do eight interviews about responsibility with eight people, but with dividing them into two groups, the first group to ask them about this term in general as Palestinians, and the second group to ask them about it through the camp and being refugee, and later on we have transcript the interviews, analyzed, and translated them, and we want to share it as part of redefining the term of responsibility.

To every respectable head
of the family. A request: fix
your water reservoir buoys.

– The Health Committee,
Dheisheh refugee camp



Spreading responsibility methods. A common wall in Deheishe refugee camp.

– ph. Giuliana Racco

Interviews

by Ahmad Al-Lahham

– A. S. 50 years old

How you define the responsibility?

Well, we can divide it into two parts. The first one is the responsibility toward work, when you are in charge, you should be totally aware of everything about the job, the employees, and even to know how to deal with everybody. The second part is the responsibility toward the house and the family, which I consider as more important than the responsibility of the job; you should be responsible for your family on the social, security and behavioral levels. And in order to make all this possible, you have to make your family feel that you are perfect.

What is the source of your responsibilities?

Responsibility does not come from nothing. It comes when you are aware and educated about responsibility, and the person should go step by step in order to be responsible.

What is the ceiling of your responsibilities?

About my work, I am responsible for every nut and bolt in the association. I am responsible for everything in the association.

Does the fact that you are living in a refugee camp have anything to do in this regard? Do you feel that you are responsible for anything in the camp?

Of course, I am responsible of everything in the camp, about every defect in the camp, about any defect of the UNRWA. I should be a partner of solving the problem as well because my belonging to the camp is what led me to do this.

What is the difference between you as a refugee living in a camp and any other person living in another place in term of responsibility?

The occupation might be what makes us responsible for each other and always in contact with each other. Now, someone living in Beit Jala or Beit Sahour does not care about anything outside his house. The camp gives us a special responsibility toward everything in it. When I meet someone from the camp outside the camp I feel that I am meeting one of the closest persons to me.

– A. S. 25 years old

How you do define responsibility?

Look, the term “responsibility” is a new institutional term. Its roots come from the word duty, or social duty. Belonging or belief in an idea will generate for you a kind of sense that might be responsibility or the duty.

What are you responsible for?

Responsibility or duty exists in every detail of your life: in your family, in the street, in the way you deal with the people and even in the paper that you throw away, even in the social occasions such as funerals, which I consider a duty or what you call responsibility.

What is the source of your responsibilities?

Well, I have defined the term responsibility from my life and my experiences, as I told you about the funerals for example. When I was asking my father why should I go to the funerals, he was always telling me that it's a duty or responsibility that I should meet, because this is all what our life is about, it's the atmosphere that we have in the camp, it's the thing that is in common (the atmosphere) between us in the camp, and we should keep it. So that, through my life and experiences and the fact that I am a refugee in a camp, is what created this status we call “responsibility”.

Do you feel that you are responsible of the camp?

Of course, as a part of the society of the camp, I have a duty or a responsibility that we might consider as maintaining the camp. We can call it a kind of affinity that has been created between the camp and myself. This affinity forces me to be responsible for this relationship

What are the limits of your responsibilities?

It starts with the paper in the street, in your house,

the way you deal with your brother, and it reaches your responsibility for the general cause of concern in Palestine.

– M. Q. 24 years old

How you define responsibility?

It is about satisfying the needs of a group of people, or any job that requires you to take care of it and to be responsible for it.

Are you responsible for something in the camp?

Of course, because the camp represents all of us. For that, we all have many things to do. You might be responsible about your house and family, your neighborhood, about the association that you are in and many other things. You are indirectly responsible for many things in the camp. You don't have to work in an association in order to be responsible. No, you are responsible for your neighbors, friends, family and the reputation of the camp. You indirectly have many duties. You find yourself responsible for many things when you start thinking about the word responsibility.

What is the source of your responsibilities?

Since I am living in a society, I have to be responsible for it, and I have to take care of it because it represents me. I might not take care of a large area the way I do in my camp or in my society. The respon-

sibility starts with yourself then the people who are close to you and then your friends and the society. You take care of the things that are closed to you and then the move outward.

Do you consider the fact that you are living in a camp as a source of responsibilities?

Of course, because we all grew up in the camp, and we have special social relations among us. For example, look at Duha, it has people from everywhere and it has been recently established. But in the camp we all grew up together.

What does the political exceptionality of the camp mean to you anything in term of responsibility?

That's right, we have built the camp neither as an investment nor as a piece of land which we live on. No, the camp is about many thoughts and principles. My belonging to the camp is not like my belonging to any other place. On the other hand, I feel that I own a part of the reputation and achievements of the camp. Because of that, anything good in the camp will be considered as a credit for me, and this is what distinguishes your life in the camp from your life in any other place. There are many residential areas that have been developed, but in the camp you feel that you have an intimacy with the camp.

What are the limits of your responsibilities?

I may sacrifice anything I own for the benefit of the camp because the camp touches me. Here in Dhe-

isheh, we are like a big family. Because of that, you might sacrifice for anyone in the camp as if you were sacrificing for your brother, cousin or friend because we are like a big family in the camp. We are responsible for anyone in the camp in positive things for sure. I am responsible to stop anybody who is negatively affecting the camp. I am responsible to stop any association that does something negative in the camp.

– N. A. 32 years old

What is the definition of responsibility?

It's an unlimited and comprehensive definition, but responsibility is the ability to identify needs and analyze a problem in order to find a way to solve a problem.

Do you feel a sense of responsibility towards the camp?

Sure, sure. Every resident of the camp, whether inside or outside the camp has a moral responsibility towards the camp and its residents by serving the camp and trying to find the best way to help developing the camp and giving it support. Each one is responsible in their own way, a teacher at school, a manager at his organization, an employer at his job, a janitor in the streets. Everyone in the camp is responsible for something, the women in their houses raising their kids. Responsibility is a very broad concept but we all fall under that concept when serving the camp.

Is the political exceptionalism of the camp one of the sources of responsibility?

Since the camp is an exception, I think that it's a positive exception that encourages development and not destruction. We see ourselves as a link that draws the road and politics in Bethlehem. Our mere existence here in our organizations, homes, and jobs is an attempt to shoulder that responsibility by giving and feeling a sense of belonging. A responsible person who does not feel a sense of belonging is irresponsible. We, in Dheisheh camp, have a sense of belonging. I think that even though a lot of people work in organizations and in the civil society, it does not go against the best interest of the camp.

What are the sources of responsibility?

The sources of responsibility differ from one person to another. If you ask a religious person, he would say that the source of responsibility is the Koran. The political orientation of a person plays a role in responsibility. Sometimes, the responsibility a person who belongs to a certain political group stems from rules and laws. The religious person's responsibility stems from the Koran. As organizations, our responsibility stems from people's needs.

What is the ceiling of these responsibilities towards the camp?

My responsibility is as much as I can serve the camp. In other words, as a member of the parents' council

at Dheisheh school, I perceive my responsibility to be following up the issues of the children at school. As a member of an administrative body of the Dheisheh youth club, my responsibility is to follow up the issues of the youth and the members of the club. I wish that each person in their own way would define their own responsibilities. Sometimes society holds you responsible for something, so we have to be honest with ourselves about whether we can shoulder that responsibility or not.

Is there a collective responsibility for the camp?

There is a collective responsibility that gathers us all, whether an official in an organization or an ordinary person. There are issues that concern us all in the camp, such as the cleanliness of the camp and its streets, electricity issues in winter, water issues in summer, drugs, minors' smoking, and a lot other issues that all people agree on whether we are part of a political party or not. There are issues that bring us together.

Reflections upon the interviews

Ahmad Al-Lahham

Based on the 4 interviews that I had conducted, I found the answers I got are very similar to the answers that my colleague Qussay got through the interviews that he made. Almost all of the interviewees define responsibility in terms of the family and the social relations. In regard to the limits of the responsibility, some of the interviewees said that the limits of their responsibility are determined by their capabilities of doing what they are thinking about. At the same time, others said that they are responsible for "everything" in the camp.

After I finished asking the four basic questions, I aimed to connect the political exceptionality of the camp with the term "Responsibility" and whether this exceptionality would make a difference in the way they perceived or talked about responsibility. What I found interesting in this regard was that when I was asking the four basic questions, I got answers that might be close to an answer I may get from any non-refugee person who is not living in the camp. But In contrast, when I asked them whether

Interviews

by Qussay Abu Aker

the exceptionality of the camp has anything to do in this regard, I found the answers very attractive, as if I had reminded them that they were refugees living in camp and have responsibilities toward it. The four persons said directly and unhesitatingly that they are responsible for anything in the camp and about protecting its political exceptionality as a refugee camp.

To conclude, the Palestinian refugee who is living in a refugee camp is a part of the Palestinian society, and he is not disconnected from the Palestinian atmosphere. The evidence for that was that when I asked then the 4 basic questions –which were general and not only about the camp-, I found the answers very normal and distant from the refugeehood status that they have. But in contrast, the dramatic change in the answers when it came to the camp and its political status, told me that the refugee who is living in the camp has a common responsibility toward the camp and everything inside the camp if somewhat unconsciously. But living concerns forced the people of the camp to consider the family as the priority.

– K.H. 38 years old

What's your definition of responsibility?

To have the ability to be administrative over the place I am at, and to be able to respond to all consequences of the decisions or anything coming from me. My responsibility is how I feel toward the place I am at.

What are you responsible for?

For sure at first I am responsible for my children and home, my position at work. My belonging to a place gives me responsibility toward it.

What is the source of your responsibility?

Mostly internal. I mean, I feel from inside, according to need, to take responsibility that I can have a role in.

What's the limit of your responsibility?

It is open.

There isn't any limit?

Unless there is a rule I have to be committed to.

– A.H. 40 years old

What's your definition of responsibility?

It has many different meanings. It includes administrative responsibility, responsibility toward your home, people, work and society. To have the ability to control things in your home and address any needs despite their type, in responsible and efficient way, to be able to manage the family or the community your living in, just like when you are responsible for individuals at your work, and your ability to manage these individuals in organized and active way.

What are you responsible for?

I consider myself responsible where ever I am, being home and at work I am responsible despite who is the administrative person I am dealing with or even if he is responsible for me, I still consider myself responsible. Responsibility isn't only toward individuals, it's also in your work, the way you do your duties. The way of serving people also has kind of responsibility, and so I consider myself responsible wherever I am.

What is the source of your responsibility?

There is the personal source, which is an internal thing, and there is the one that comes from above. If you are an employee in an organization like al-Phoenix or UNRWA, there is someone in charge that authorizes to you certain responsibilities.

How about the other one?

Which is when you are home. It's not only authorized responsibility, even toward yourself you are responsible.

What's the limit of your responsibility?

I don't want to talk much about this, but each person has a limit in his responsibility. For example, in my home despite my being in charge, there is a limit for me, being responsible doesn't mean dealing with people as servants.

What would limit this responsibility?

Culture, attitude and the atmosphere you are living in. My responsibility would be financial or social, and it's not ideal. For example my wife has responsibilities, my daughter too, so each one's place defines his responsibility.

– K.H.K. 37 years old

What's your definition of responsibility?

To fulfill my role in my family, my home, my neighborhood, and my watan. Responsibility is to fulfill the role I am required to do.

What are you responsible for?

Many things- my children, my wife, my home, my neighbors, and my political role in my watan.

What is the source of your responsibility?

The moment I got married this created responsibility for me, my being in the watan Palestine, and the political situation made me responsible toward many things including the struggle, which is not only through fighting.

What's the limit of your responsibility?

Wherever it requires me. Wherever I am supposed to reach - I should reach.

– M.Q. 28 years old

What's your definition of responsibility?

First of all, responsibility comes from duties. Each one has duties toward their society, home, and family. So I think responsibility is how much you can do your duties toward people, the surrounding circle, whether family, work or home.

What are you responsible for?

First for myself, my attitude, and my family. I have a daughter and wife; I am responsible toward them, to provide all their needs. Also I am responsible toward my watan. Also I have a social responsibility. As a young man, people expect that I have national sense, to work for goodness in the society. There are many things people expect from you through your responsibility and social status. Also, if you are a member of a

political party or organization. Or let's say to a group of people who has certain principles, besides the religious responsibility, which means your religion obliges you to be responsible to spread your religion, to show how good this religion is. Besides your responsibility toward the god, he asks for things from you and you have to do them to have a good end.

What is the source of your responsibility?

The source of responsibility first comes from you, internally. There are impositions on you from the community or culture or religion which obliges you to build your life track and personality. This track will obligate you with responsibilities, like being a Muslim youth or a worker or a father. For example, if you are responsible for a family, you have to provide its basic needs, raise your children and teach them. Now comes religion, which imposes on you several responsibilities, and everything you interact with in a direct way gives you responsibilities.

What's the limit of your responsibility?

The possible. As much as you work you will have responsibilities. For example, if you work in two organizations you will have responsibilities toward them. If you are religious person you have more responsibilities. And if you are a person whose home requires that you be there all the time and do other things besides being a father or a husband, this gives more responsibility, the limit can change.

Reflections upon the interviews

Qussay Abu Aker

Considering the meaning of the term responsibility through these answers, we can see a limitation of this term inside the family as a practical example. It's connected to the people surrounding the person and their value in his daily life. Besides people, the person's interest in society and work play a role, but only as a secondary priority, through a definition that is more ideal than practical.

And so, in connection with the meaning of responsibility drawn from the people I interviewed, and moving toward what they are responsible for, there are three out of four of their responsibilities that come from position, social status or religion, all of which are related to ideology and the shape these connections that establish the meaning of responsibility. While for the fourth person, responsibility is related to the family too, it is connected to the social surrounding at the level of the neighbor.

If we look to the source of the sense of responsibility, we can find that three people pointed to two sources: the first one comes from an authority rooted in position,

social status or marriage, while the second one is personal, which doesn't need to be authorized by a certain power, but instead comes from a living ideology that is built through interacting with the surrounding elements that contributes to a personal understanding. While for the fourth person, he introduced the source of responsibility directly through the main connections in his point of view: the family and the status of Palestine. And he sees that he should fulfill his role without mentioning what this role could be.

As for the limits of responsibility as provided by these definitions, we can see that there are limits to responsibility and categorization of responsibility. The limits were connected to ability, culture, attitude and religion, which means there is a line drawn by these social limitations. As for the categorization, the answers show that there are certain roles for responsibility that are connected to the actual ability to do each kind of responsibility.

In the end, we can say that there is something like mysterious hand that decides responsibility, which mainly is understood limited to the family, work and religion. Responsibilities outside of this triangle are introduced in ideal and general terms, far away from experience or specific situation. This leads us to say that the limitations of responsibility in factors that develop through the time can be an obstacle toward dealing with any case outside of this triangle.

What makes you do what you do?

Qussay Abu Aker, Ahmad Al-Lahham

There is always a motivation behind the actions we do in our daily life. We act and sometimes react toward things we face, aiming either to empower or reject it, to evolve or devolve it.

We will start with a story that we experienced in the *Campus in Camps* project. The story started when there were rising wonders and fears from people in the camp about the project's funding, process, and aim, which caused a lot of rumors.

Even though this caused frustration and pain for us, we noticed a positive dimension that led us to discover strength among our communities in the camps. We found a sense of responsibility that they had toward the camp and everything happening in the camp.

Through our knowledge of the camp and its people, we can say that the only motives behind these wonders and fears, which pushed them to search on the internet, ask and discuss about it, was the sense of responsibility they have toward the camp, camp

exceptionality, and the importance of protecting this exceptionality. This point came out of our talks with the community group we met; their biggest concern was how we were going to do something in the camp without changing its exceptionality through normalizing it.

Although the story is simple, it tells us a lot about a trend that exists in the camp where the people have a sense of responsibility toward the surrounding political and social environments and unknown interventions in the camp. This sense creates the camp's immunity to unaccepted and suspicious interventions, which creates something close to a protective shield around the camp and refugees' exceptionality.

Regenerating this sense in the different concerns of our community life, not only toward external intervenes but also within initiatives that comes from the community, would lead to everyone's contribution and participation to respond to our concerns through our available resources.

This strength, which came out as a result of the sense of responsibility that the people of the camp have towards the camp and towards any activities that take place within its borders, is definitely one of the most important resources. It even might be considered as infrastructure we can build on, and it might be used to invested in creating a collective work atmosphere

based on the community participation of the people of the camp in achieving very important projects that aim to improve the daily life in the camp while keeping its social and political exceptionality.

A comment on facebook: everything is followed by the community of Dheisheh.



To be or not to be...

The challenge remains, and the responsibility is historical...

To the people of Dheisheh refugee camp who shaped through the history of the Palestinian issue the safety valve which all conspiracies were upended on, either by the enemy or conspirators on our issue. In this time, the Palestinian refugees' case going through its most difficult moments all over the West Bank through the attempt of the popular committees to sign an agreement with the Palestinian authority related to the electricity and another with the UNRWA related to the

reduction and firing of employees through compromising that defiantly harms the refugees even on the political level which defiantly touches the right of return. So, we in the refugee youth movement, in coordination with the high committee, call for an urgent meeting to discuss these facts at 6:00 pm at the sit-in tent at the UNRWA office.

In regard to our recycling project, we believe that this sense of responsibility – which is not only about protecting the exceptional political status of the camp- has many other dimensions, such as a health dimension which is about the general cleanliness of the camp. In this regard, and since we live in the camp and are aware of the initiatives that take place in it, we know that nobody cares about the general cleanliness, except the UNRWA which is responsible for cleaning the camp 6 days a week through its sanitation department. But in the meantime, there are no initiatives from the people of the camp in this regard. But also through our knowledge of the camp, we can say that the sense of responsibility in this aspect also exists (despite the absence of the initiatives). It might be very hard to find someone in Dheisheh opposed any initiative in this regard. Then, any initiative in this regard will have a very good level of participation and concern from the community. As a result, we consider this sense of responsibility as the core of our project because the aim of the project at the end of the day is to build on this sense of responsibility.

Responsibility and its importance in the life of societies

Murad Odeh

Each society is composed of various elements, and the most important ones are the people, the land, common culture, and language. In another way, it's the correlation between a group of people that have the same culture and language with the land they are living on. Certainly, these relations differ from one society to the next. Each society has its own features that positively differentiate it from other societies. So we see that these basic elements differ in value and importance from one society to another, especially, in modern and contemporary societies.

If we look at society as created from a group of people, then individuals create the nucleus, and the correlations between these individuals composes the society as a whole. When direct responsibility is taken by each individual toward his/her society and direct responsibility is assumed by the society toward the individual, this is a mutual (or reciprocal) relation in society.

From this point, we can discern the importance of the individuals to create their society and maintain its well-being and the importance of each person, whatever their role or position is in creating it. If we look at the Arab Revolutions as an example, specifically in Tunisia, where the individuals live under difficult pressure from their government, they feel that each person has responsibility towards themselves and their people. This sense of responsibility becomes a necessity in starting to reject the authoritative and suppressive regime in that country. This revolution starts with individual efforts then others surround and support them, so the responsibility that stemmed from the individual begins to pour into the general concern, welfare, and society. This collective of responsibilities starts to harmoniously reject the regime until ousted. Therefore, it is not possible to separate the importance of each individual, those who revolted, from what happened in these revolutions. If we look at the huge number of demonstrators, more than 3 million people, each one, on his/her own, carries the responsibility for what's going on around them until they all are gathered. Here, the meaning of responsibility reaches its clearest point. If the individuals do not feel their responsibility toward their country, and nobody moves forward, then the situation will remain as it was and the suffering will continue in these societies. But the burden of suffering will be divided to each individual, to his/her name and atmosphere. Therefore, responsibility, in

all its shapes and colors, in the life of humans, completely correlates and originates with the well-being of societies. Without feeling and practicing responsibility, well-being will be lost.

Care

Naba' Al-Assi

Responsibility cannot be divisible; rather, it's a strong feeling toward each other in our simple communities. The responsibility of the mother inside her home to her children is what leads to the responsibility of her children to the community. Here, I will give some examples from my life to show the real meaning and necessity of responsibility.

Community

Several months ago when I was visiting one of my friends from a village in Bethlehem, I notice a strange movement through the home. Several of his family members as well as people from the village were gathering

I asked him: "What's going on?"

He said: "My brother had an accident and ran over a girl with his car. She was fifteen years old, and we are going to her family to give them their compensation (*Al Atwah*) and see what they need. We also need to restore the relation between our two families (his family and the girl's)."

This sense, in one way or another, makes me think about how strong the relations are among the people in the village. In a short time most of the people from a different families from the village gathered. There was at least one person from each family from the village there to represent his family in the event. And here I see clearly the strength of this community and how strong the relations are between the people. I saw how the villagers realize the meaning of participation and how they feel toward each other. What could force them to participate in this case or another, and what is the motivation behind this concern over the suffering of other families in the village?

In my opinion, what motivates the people to participate and cooperate is the social solidarity and the strength of the relations between the people in the community itself. This leads everyone to care about one another and their social surroundings. Here, all the members of the small community are partners in maintaining public and private interest. And this is what the modern civil society is trying to exclude and ignore from the communities through law and legal actions, to prioritize the individual case and implement a global system that is contrary to human values and principles.

This is responsibility as it is for the neighbors and the relatives inside this community. It's how to care for and participate with others in their sadness and

joy. It's an interactive process between the community members that make this social responsibility.

A Palestinian Mother

Another example about the responsibility: the mother, specifically the Palestinian mother, whose husband has been martyred or arrested by the Israeli occupation army. She accepts her responsibility to care for their children and bear the burden of the house and the hardships of life, all during the absence of a life partner. She chooses this with full conviction in order to provide a better future for their children.

My mother once prepared a huge amount of *Maftool* (a Palestinian dish). I asked her why she was preparing such a large amount, and she said it was for our big family and the neighbors. I was thinking about this and asking myself about this scene of sharing and caring. Is it love, or something else? After that, I realized that it was a kind of responsibility.

Resistance & Participation

Perhaps here I can tell about something I see every-day and every moment: the refugee camp. The camp itself is, in my opinion, a clear example of responsibility- of the old and young in the camp taking of one another. Every one of them is doing what he or she can do without being forced. This was very

clear during the first and the second intifadas, and even until today. All of the people in the camp were fighting the occupation, everyone in his own special way. There was no one rule, no one way to resist. So participation is also a type of resistance, and without resistance participation would be weak.

At this point, I can explain my own experience, one I consider as the best in my life: my participation in the *Campus in Camps* project. In this experience, I have realized and learned a lot. Dealing with the other participants and the feeling of responsibility among us, most of the participants practice responsibility in different ways. If any one of us absence, for example, most of the participants start asking about him, “what happened,” “where is he,” “is he okay?” etc.

Social solidarity and relations create a social fabric. And this leads to a diverse cultural awareness; it leads to the superiority of this diversity to become common, known and respected by all parts of society in a way to make a sense of responsibility toward the community and ourselves.

RESPONSIBILITY

Collective Dictionary

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TEXT EDITING

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BOOK DESIGN

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EDITION

Printed in January 2013

COPYLEFT

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Used fonts: Junction by Caroline Hadilaksono

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