

Campus in Camps
INITIATIVES



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02

THE SQUARE

Learning in the common space



סמינריום של סטודנטים
במחנות הפליטים

Campus in Camps

INITIATIVES

THE SQUARE

Learning in the common space

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AL FAWWAR REFUGEE CAMP

Beyond the Camp: Into the Common

The initiatives included in these booklets are the result of a collective effort made by the Campus in Camps participants in dialogue with community members, associations and collaborators*.

They are based on reflections and observations articulated over a year of communal learning in which knowledge emerged not as pre-constituted information but rather as critical understanding of the social and political context. A group of concepts considered fundamental for the comprehension of the contemporary condition of Palestinian refugee camps took the form of what we call the *Collective Dictionary*, the conceptual framework within which the initiatives are inscribed and find their profound and coherent meanings.

*

The initiatives have been inspired through dialogue with Sandi Hilal, Munir Fasheh, Alessandro Petti and activated with Tamara Abu Laban, BraveNewAlps, Ayman Khalifah, Matteo Guidi, Sara Pellegrini, Giuliana Racco, Diego Segatto, Dena Qaddumi.

During the second year, more emphasis has been placed on the kind of knowledge that emerges from actions. Gatherings, walks, events and urban actions are meant to engage more directly with the camp condition. What is at stake in these interventions is the possibility for the participants to realize projects in the camps without normalizing their exceptional conditions and without blending them into the surrounding cities.

After sixty-five years of exile, the camp is no longer made up of tents. The prolonged exceptional temporality of this site has paradoxically created the condition for its transformation: from a pure humanitarian space to an active political space, it has become an embodiment and an expression of the right of return. The initiatives bear the names of this urbanity of exile: *the garden, the pathways, the municipality, the suburb, the pool, the stadium, the square, the unbuilt, the bridge*. The very existence of these common places within refugee camps suggests new spatial and social formations beyond the idea of the camp as a site of marginalization, poverty and political subjugation.

Alessandro Petti,
program director
Dheisheh, June 2013

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01

INTO A COMMON LIFE

An historical background of Al Qassas
square, Al Fawwar refugee camp

From *harajeh* to *saha*

Saha, Baha, Harajeh are all terms used by people in Palestine to describe a public space; they all refer to the space with different connotations.

Harajeh is a Palestinian colloquial term that indicates a restricted and small place. People used to call small spaces surrounded by walls or surrounded by their houses, *harajeh*, like a courtyard. Awatef Anati, a housewife explains that *harajeh* describes a square or a space that is not open on the sides, meaning that there are walls that surround it.

HARAJE
a small place
surrounded
by walls

Saha is a wide place or a space between the houses in which there are no buildings¹. It could also mean a wide place in a neighborhood used for holding different kinds of sport or public meetings². Another meaning is a wide space in the middle of a building, e.g. *saha* could be the playground of a school.

SAHA
a space
between
houses

¹ Al-Mo'jam
al-Waseet
dictionary

² Al-Mo'jam
al-Ghani
dictionary

BAHA
a green open
space

¹ Al-Mo'jam
al-Waseet
dictionary

Baha is a square or a plaza, but it refers to a green space, in fact one of its meanings is *many palms*¹. In Al-Mo'jam al-Raed dictionary it is defined as *a space that belongs to a specific building like a yard of a palace*. The clear difference between *saha* and *baha* is that the latter is green and planted unlike the former, which is mainly constructed.

In Al Fawwar refugee camp a small *harajeh* called Al Qassas has been transformed into a wide public square, available for the entire camp community. It had been an unusual, restricted, left-over space within a crowded neighborhood. People stopped calling it *harajeh* once it was turned into a constructed and large space. From a community courtyard it became a commonly accepted public *saha*.

As other camps in the West-Bank, Gaza and the Arab hosting countries, open spaces in Al Fawwar refugee camp are limited and barely exist. This affects the collectivity, the activities and people's movement in the camp. In order to respond to this, the Camp Improvement Unit, one of UNRWA's operating projects in the West Bank, with the community of Al Fawwar agreed, after a long discussion, to create a space in the camp, for the people and to make it accessible for all.



Al Qassas in 2009

— ph. UNRWA

An initial space of 160 sqm, surrounded by two old UNRWA shelters located in the Al Qassas neighborhood, turned into a 510 sqm public space. They started in 2007 discussing together with the people the meaning and implications of building a “public space” in a refugee camp. The initial discussion questioned the political implications of having this new common space:

“...they were built within the original footprints of the tents they replaced – and the main concern of the camp inhabitants until now has been ensuring that there is at least one bed for each child in the family. Until now, the common space and how to use it has been the last thing on their minds. And now they are not only

2007
First
discussions
among the
community
around the
meaning of
“public space”

building homes but also beginning to shape common spaces. Is this another concession – another way of accepting the permanency of the camp and giving up the dream of return? Is the plaza merely a wretched attempt to mitigate the conditions of total subjugation? Or is the plaza the physical indication that the refugees have abandoned their strategy of convincing the whole world of their misery through their architectural misery; that they are instead initiating a new strategy of capitalizing on their strengths as refugees rather than their weakness as victims?” (Sandi Hilal, Head of Camp Improvement Program in the West Bank)



Al Qassas in 2009

— ph. UNRWA

Once the community managed to overpass these fundamental questions, further discussions raised issues such as what activities would be acceptable in such a place, who would take care of the space, which community members should be using it, what should be the role of women in this space, and finally what should the space look like and what would be its impact on the surrounding context.

ABU RABIH (the oldest of the camp’s elders) *This is a good plaza. It has to be taken care of by the neighbors. People should not be allowed to come here and cut firewood in the winter. People have to take care of this plaza as if it were their home. This is the real secret for the success of this plaza.*¹

HADIYAH (one of the neighbors) *There is no problem with building a square for our neighborhood. But it has to be only for the people of our neighborhood and not for all the people of the camp.*

ABU RABIH *If you think that this square would be open to anyone, whoever he is, to come and bring his chair and sit, or to have fun or to stay during the night, you are absolutely on the wrong track. This is unacceptable in Fawwar camp. Mixing between men and women would be unacceptable, especially mixing between young ladies and young men.*

¹ All of the following excerpts are from Sandi Hilal, *Abu Ata, Architect: A Play In Four Acts*, from *Architecture is All Over*, ed. Marikka Trotter and Esther Choi (2013)

A YOUNG MAN *This plaza will serve this neighborhood very well; here the kids will play, here we will have our important occasions, here we will have our weddings and funerals. It is the only open space in this big neighborhood: how come you think that we will not take care of it? This plaza will be a treasure for all of us.*

Some women exclaimed that if the square is opened for everybody in the camp, the guys will be using it, which is unacceptable and embarrassing for them. There were also some voices saying that it would be a good idea, but they all need to take care of the square as if it is their own houses.

SOCIAL RULES
can construct
a rigid
framework
for women's
behavior and
actions

When asking about women's appearance in the square some women were against sitting in the square to have their morning coffee there or any other of their daily activities. Others said that they didn't care what anybody said about them if they do this. Other women said that they can use the square for activities, not for leisure and entertainment. The women were accusing their men of not accepting and allowing them to go out, and the men were defending themselves saying that the women themselves refused to go out.



One of the two demolished shelters (2009)

— ph. UNRWA

AMEENAH *What woman would leave her home, her kids, and come to drink coffee in a square? It would be a shame for a woman to leave her home without a proper reason. Do you want us all to come here in the plaza and have coffee and tea? Do you want them to write about us in Al Ah'hiram? We already cannot deal with our husbands; never mind us going out and having tea and coffee in the square!*

The construction of the plaza was in the end, the product of a lot of time and dedication from the community. After working closely with the two shelter owners, who were in a process of moving to another place in the camp, the local committee managed to compensate the shelter owners in order to demolish them and



Al Qassas in 2012

— ph. Livia Minoja

2008

Series of meetings to figure out the most suitable design for the square

make way for the plaza. In 2008, the Camp Improvement Unit started the project by demolishing the shelters and preparing the space. They held several focus groups for men and women trying to find a suitable design for the square that could match their desires.

People debated between having an opened or closed square and if it should be larger or the same as the previous space. At last, they emphasized the importance of the plaza being somehow an enclosed space.



One of the two demolished shelters (2009)

— ph. UNRWA

ABU ATA *The enclosure of the plaza was a very important step, I think, and absolutely essential (...) the walls create a special and protected space, because a person who is simply passing through the neighborhood would never find himself in the plaza by chance. (...) with the new plaza's design, whoever is passing in the street can pass without interruption, and whoever wants to enter the plaza does so at their own risk, which means that the person has to accept the possibility that he might get hit by a soccer ball, which means in turn that if he gets hit by the ball, he will just laugh and be happy to be part of the game. For me, this is what makes this plaza a special one.*

In 2012 and after 5 years of working on the square, it was finished. It is now a large open square of 700 square meters, surrounded by walls, basins for plants and vegetation surrounding it, and 4 entrances. This square constructed in the middle of the camp in an area crowded with closed houses turned to be the sole, common space in the camp where all people of different ages and genders can have access. A place where women, men, children, young, old can have different activities.

2012

The square turned into a large open space of 700 sqm



Al Qassas in 2012

— ph. Livia Minoja

Commoning and *Mujaawarah*

During the last Campus in Camps year *Mujaawarah* was one of the most discussed subjects with Muallem Munir Fasheh, one of the mentors. *Mujaawarah* is a learning style that depends on collectivity, with the learner or *al-moreed* (knowledge seeker) contributing in his/her learning. It is a process in which all the learners/*al-moreedon* (the plural of *moreed*) benefit from each other's experiences.

This learning style is different from the academic styles used in the educational institutions - schools and universities - as there are no teachers and students, each has the ability to create his own knowledge depending on his own stories. It can also be held anywhere, in a public square, in one of the houses, in the street, or even in a school or a university, away from the academic atmosphere. Learning here is considered as a common that everybody has a right to engage in, since common as a concept can not only be applied to spaces, but also to thoughts. The idea of mutual learning that *Mujaawarah* brings opened our eyes to the importance of applying this concept in the camp,

which forms a fertile ground for collective and experienced learning.

In our camp, learning as a common is another missing element. It is generally not accepted for women to join certain learning sessions side by side with men, under the rubric of notions such as *haram* (prohibited), *aib* (shame), etc. We personally had an experience that illustrates this when we couldn't join a conversation cycle because all the learners were men.

Emerging from our belief that learning is a right, we began thinking of how we can, as women, create our collective learning. As a first step to this, in October 2012, we started meeting with different women in order to figure out what kind of learning we are attached to. The two months of interviews opened the door on different, interesting subjects, but the most discussed was learning English. It seemed that many women had a great desire to learn this foreign language.

The reasons behind this are various such as: their desire to improve their children's level in English, a personal motivation for acquiring this international language, a tool of communication and comprehension for their jobs, etc. Another strong reason was that English, or learning any language, in fact, was considered a kind of activity or mental exercise which is useful to our health. Many of the women expressed their desire to help their kids in

learning English, since most of the students faced difficulties in English. Naela Dasouki, a housewife, said that she wished that she knew English in order to help her kids who have difficulties in learning it. Suad Derbashi, an Arabic teacher in the Fawwar UN girl's school and a member in the Women's Center, said that she had a good English before, but she lost it out of not practicing. She continued that, as a member in the Women's Center, she needed to have good English, so that she can communicate with donors who would be interested in funding the Center's activities. Majdoline Sarahneh, a housewife, expressed her passion for learning English and her love towards foreigners by some English words that she knows. She kept saying "I love English...I like communicating with other people of other countries."

The answers delivered by women concerning their desires to learn English may have further dimensions than what was explicitly mentioned. Most of them said that they wanted to learn for the sake of their children or jobs, besides other personal reasons. We can understand that English is a means to facilitate other aspects of their lives, to allow them to participate and shape these other elements.

Collecting all these voices allowed us think more deeply about holding these classes. The next step for this communal learning was to look for a place where these lessons could be held. We were looking for a

place that can express all of us, a place which is not related to any specific organization in the camp. We found no place but the public square constructed by the Camp Improvement Unit of UNRWA. It's a healthy place where we can feel the sunshine and breathe some fresh air. As it is open and wide, many people can use it at the same time.

The choice of using this square as the place where these language cycles will be held has a connotation. Learning as a process is a kind of mental exercise. Coupled with having these mental exercises in the square (because of its fresh air) will have double positive effects.

02

BUILDING A GROUP

The birth of a collective awareness
towards ourselves and towards the place

drawings by Daniela Sanjinès

“

What woman would leave her home, her kids,
and come to drink coffee in a plaza?
It would be a shame for a woman to leave
her home without a proper reason. Do you want
us all to come here in the plaza and have coffee
and tea? Do you want them to write about us
in the newspaper *Al Ah'hiram*? We already
cannot deal with our husbands; nevermind us
going out and having tea and coffee in the plaza!

— 2007



“

The real problem
is the women in this camp.
Even if you enclose the plaza
they will still not come.

They will never leave
their work and their homes
and come and gather
in the plaza.

— 2007

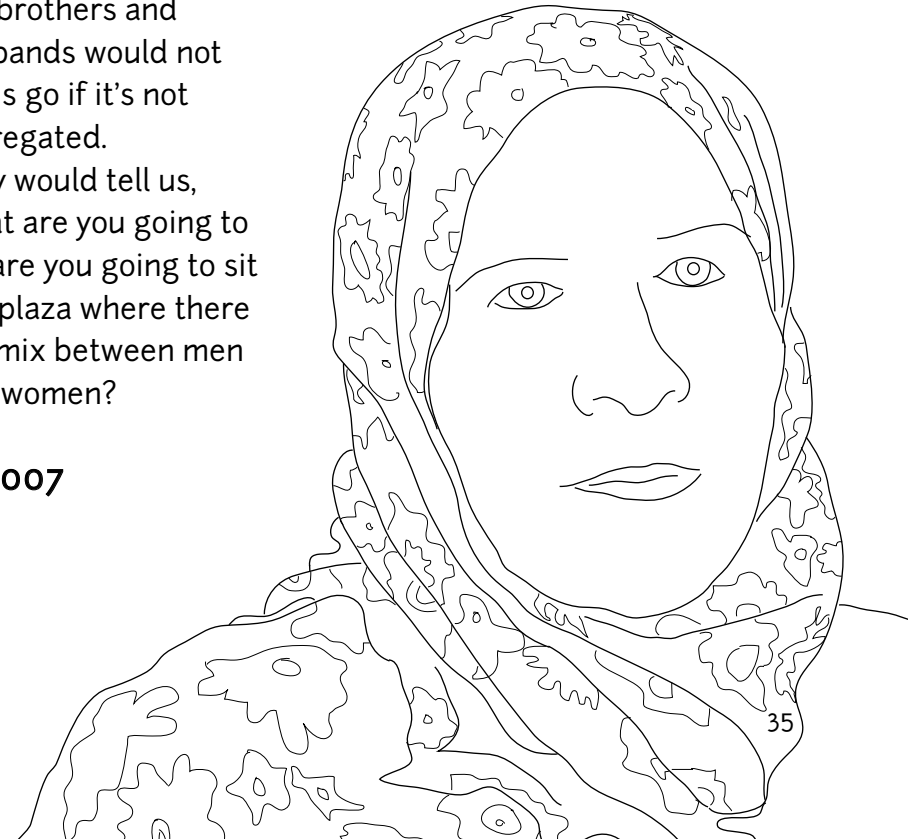


“

We should prohibit
men from coming into
the women's section
of the plaza.

Even if we agree
to come to the plaza,
our brothers and
husbands would not
let us go if it's not
segregated.
They would tell us,
'what are you going to
do, are you going to sit
in a plaza where there
is a mix between men
and women?'

— 2007



“

Any cultural activity would be acceptable in the square. We could see a film or come and have a lecture. But not tea and coffee. A cultural activity is ok, but not a leisure activity. Even *tabbouleh* is a prohibited activity!

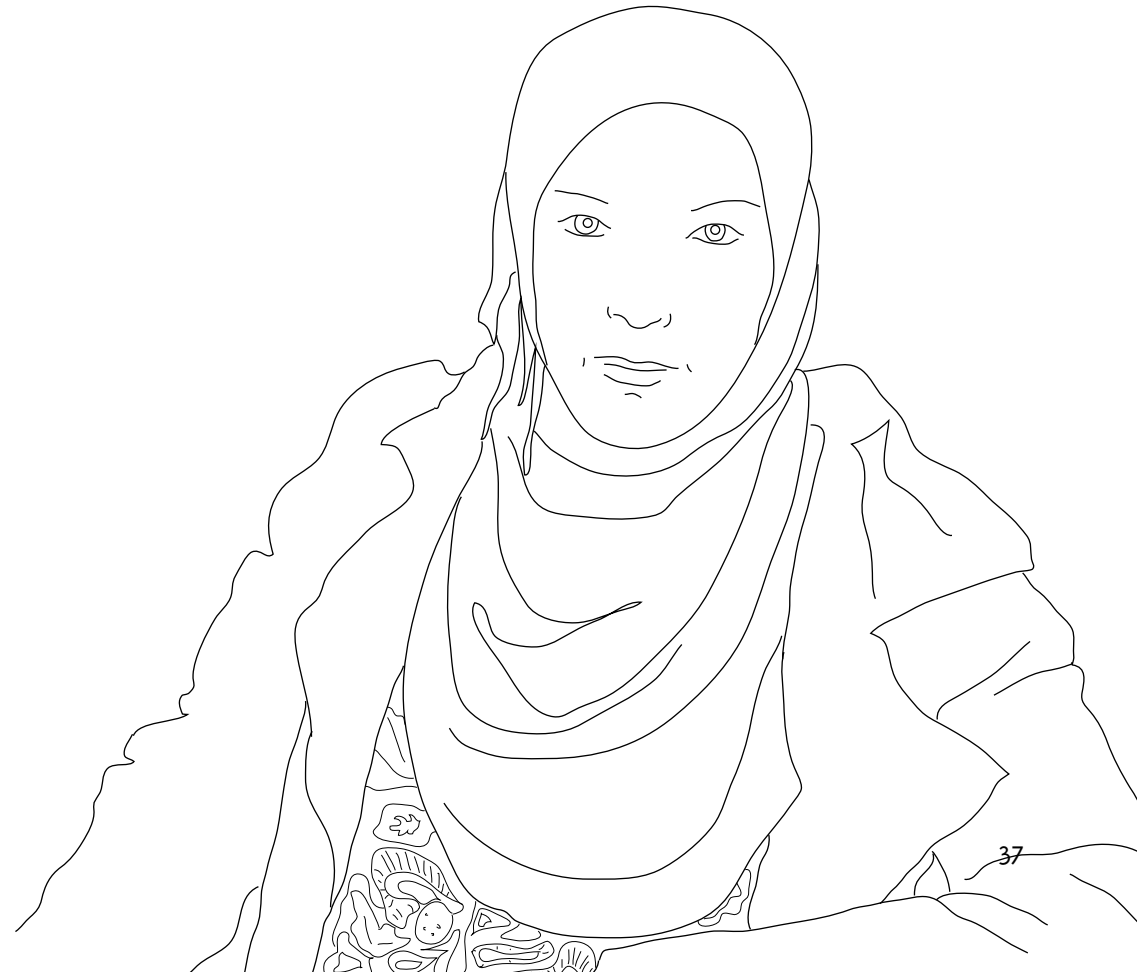
— 2007

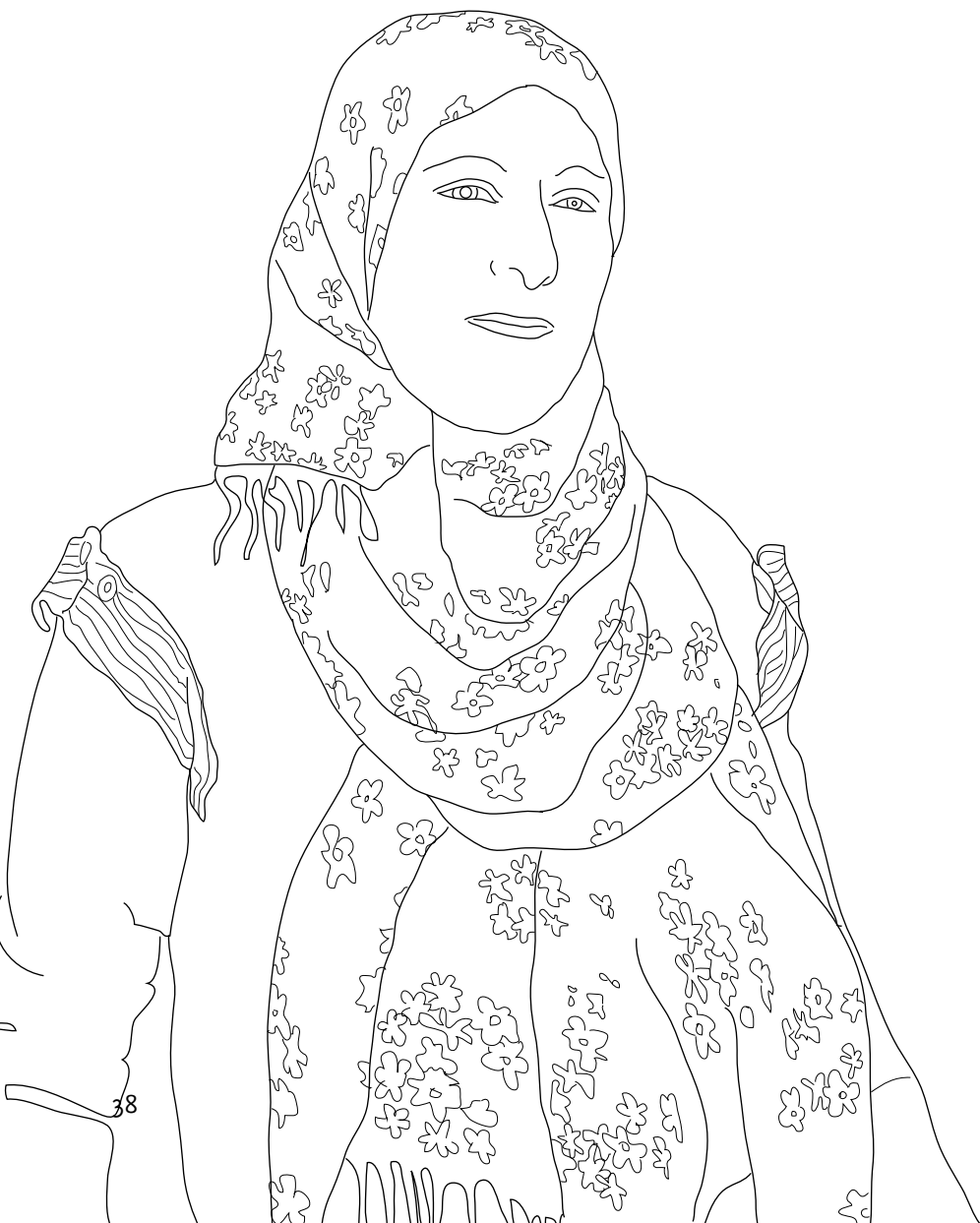


“

After cooking *maftoul*, our presence in the square became so ordinary to the point that even today our husbands and children want to know more about the activities we are doing.

— 2013





“

If we had cooked *maftoul* in another place, for example in one of the centers in the camp, we wouldn't be comfortable as it was in the square. Here in the square, we arranged the square, we cleaned it and therefore we feel it is ours. We cooked, we ate and we cleaned without any order from anybody.

— 2012



“

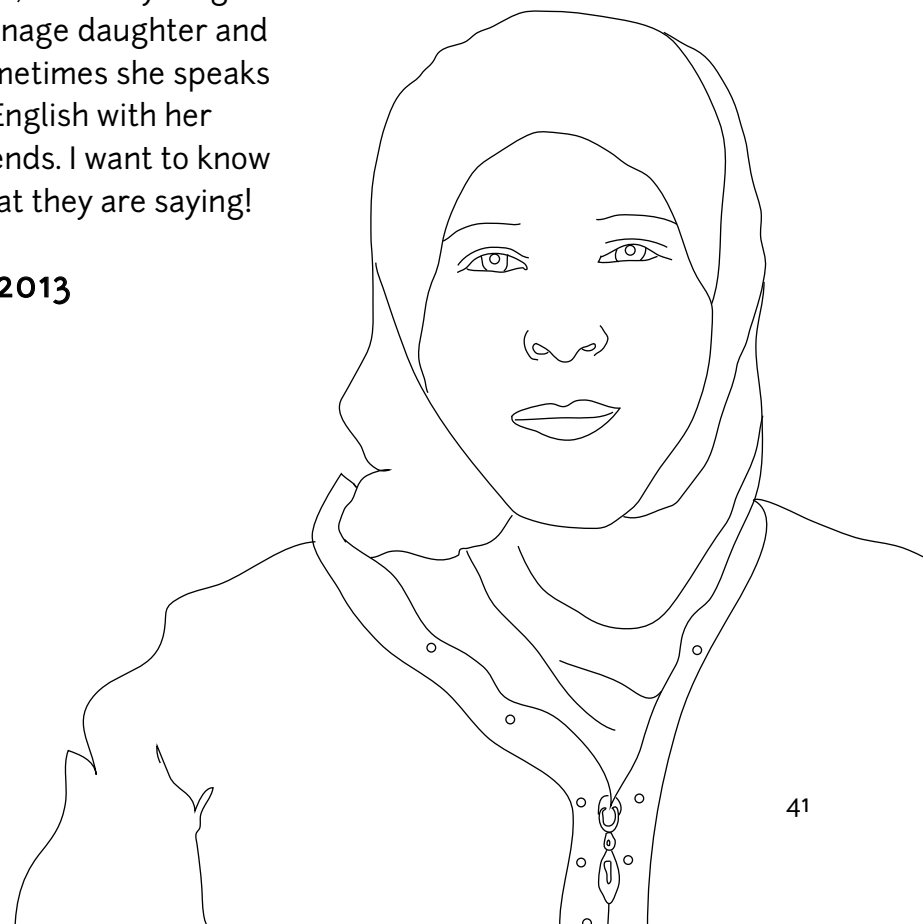
Although I am a bit old,
I am still looking
forward to learning
English in the square.
I think it will be useful
for my job in the
Women's Center.

— 2012

“

I want to be able to
help my kids with
their homework. There
are times when I am
with them and I say
a word in English
and they correct my
pronunciation.
It is embarrassing!
Also, I have a young
teenage daughter and
sometimes she speaks
in English with her
friends. I want to know
what they are saying!

— 2013



“

I never was able to picture what this plaza would look like. I never imagined that we would have been able to find a solution that would satisfy everyone. I have to be honest with you: this plaza created a lot of discussion and conflict in the camp.

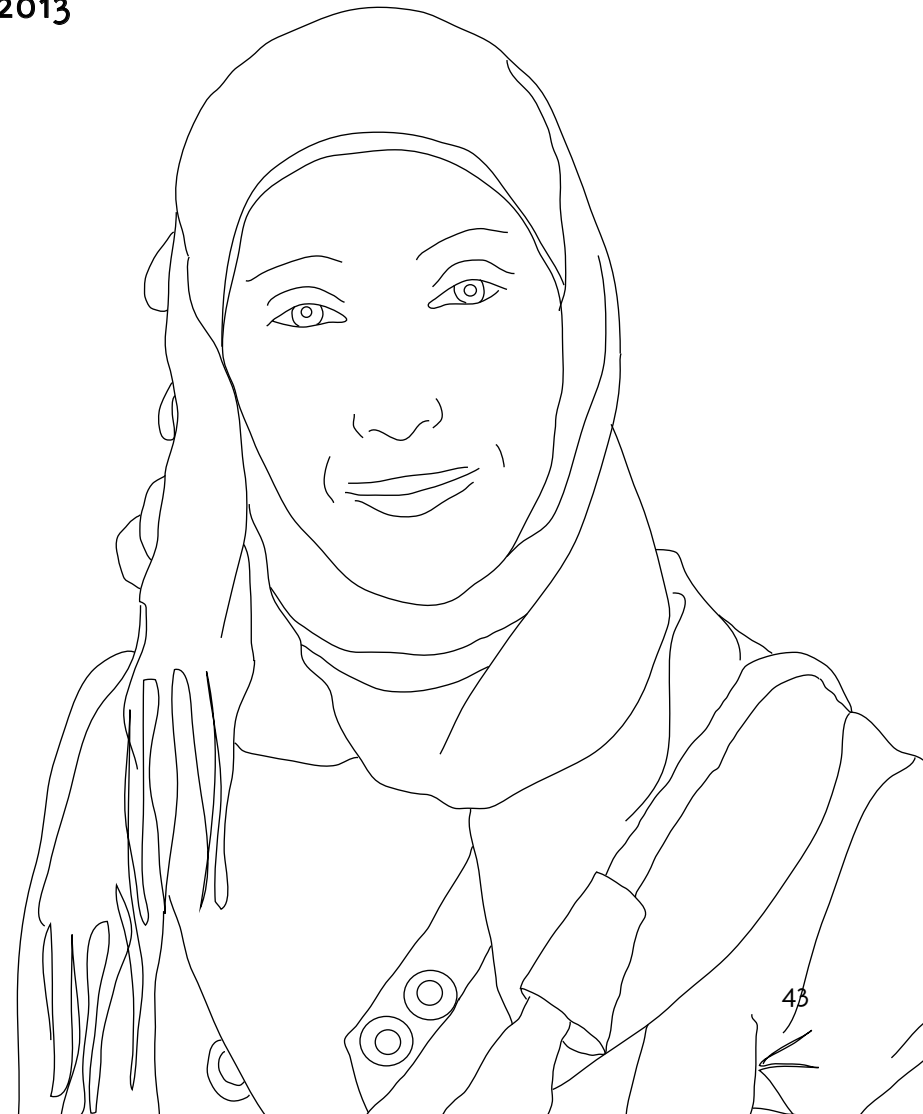
— 2011



“

The walls around the plaza are now very suitable to give the place some privacy. I agree, we are in a house but without a roof.

— 2013



“

In the past we could call this place *harajeh* because it was a closed private space between the houses, but now the plaza is a wide open space and it is available to everyone therefore it should be called *saha*. *Harajeh* means narrow and private space and this square is not like this anymore.

— 2013



03

FIRST MEETING

19TH NOVEMBER 2012

Meeting at the Women's Center

A common starting point

After the interviews, we felt the need to gather all the people we met during the past period and discuss together the different points of views concerning the reasons behind learning English and the idea of using the new public square as the basic location for holding this *Mujaawarah*. We all gathered in the Fawwar Women's Center and the main discussion turned quickly into whether the square should be used or not. We invited also Sandi Hilal, the



— ph. Sara Pellegrini

Head of Camp Improvement Program in the West Bank, who developed the project of the new plaza.

Some women were against the idea; they were skeptical of how we could gather in the middle of the camp to learn English or even anything else. Other women had no problem and were defending their rights of being able to use this public space. As a result, we decided that we needed to discuss this matter more overtly, in order to resolve it. We had a collective discussion that resulted in agreeing on using the square for the English classes on the condition that it had to be partly covered for our privacy and protection. It's possible that while using the square women and men will be watching us from their houses and that will be embarrassing and bothersome for some women, especially if certain activities required moving and even removing some clothes. It was also considered beneficial to cover the space of the square to provide some protection from the sun and rain. After that, critical issues were discussed with Munir Fasheh, such as our unhealthy nutritional system, and the traditional, rigid academic teaching followed by our schools. This meeting was a first small *Mujaawarah* in which we shared all sorts of precious knowledge.



Women meeting on November 19, 2012

“

Our personal story of knowledge springs from our project that consisted of interviews and our visit to Beit-Al Karama in Nablus. We realized that knowledge is practical as well as theoretical, and that it is an action. We used to look at knowledge as represented by a book or an academic certificate and that the person's experience will never have a role in furnishing his personal knowledge, but now, after the new experience which we got from interviewing the women, we can definitely say that one's experience has a great role in forming his personal knowledge. Most of the women we interviewed don't have an academic certificate; however, they are well educated by the events they had in their life, and they can speak about anything easily. Life itself is a school, we can all learn from what's happening in our daily life.

As to the interviews, we were shocked how many of these housewives know a lot of things that we don't even realize. We can say that each woman is a wide world of knowledge. Each of them has something that differentiates her from the others. Some are interested in sewing, which is a skill that

needs good experience to be done perfectly. Others are interested in designing clothes and flower-making using simple materials. It's obvious that their embedded knowledge led them to recognize that beautiful things can be fabricated by these simple and available materials. We expect that the all these knowledges will be shared during the project we will implement, each singular knowledge will be enriched and supported by the other knowledge that the other women have.

(We are the ones who build our knowledge, from the Collective Dictionary KNOWLEDGE)

This first meeting in the Women's Center was shocking for everybody; it was above our expectation. We had some fears concerning how using the square will be perceived by everybody who's attending. We expected that the majority would reject the idea, but on the contrary, many voices were strongly with it. It seemed that nobody can no longer bear being inside closed spaces; we were all longing to have some fresh air.

04

A GATHERING IN THE SQUARE

19TH DECEMBER 2012

Cooking *maftoul* in the square

Outdoor *maftoul*

For encouraging ourselves to take this important step, we decided to start using the space for one of our daily actions which is cooking, but not any meal, *maftoul*, one of the most famous and delicious Palestinian dishes.



— ph. Giuliana Racco

This event broke any fear we had before about appearing in and using the public space, even



if we were worried a bit at the beginning, especially when some women and men were looking at us through their windows and roofs.

We changed our negative attitude against the place by one of our traditions “cooking *maftoul*”. It was also an occasion for having a short English lesson made through the activity of cooking shaped as a game. It was a contextual lesson that expressed the leisure nature of the event, the nature of the women and the nature of the space itself. That day gathered women from Fawwar, Arroub, Dheisheh, and Deir Ballut (near Nablus). It was like a vision, which can’t be achieved without leaving a lasting effect. It was a day which carried a lot of tension, hard work, happiness, laughter and waiting for unknown results.



“

The day before, at 7 am we began by carrying the ingredients and distributing them to all the women who wanted to prepare some maftoul the following day. We went to the supermarket and bought the vegetables: 7 kilos of potatoes, carrots, tomatoes and zucchini. At the poultry shop we bought 25 chickens. At 5 pm, we went to the man who wanted to bring the tent, chairs and tables, and he promised that everything will be ready by 6 pm. Meanwhile we had a delicious dinner, a gift after all that hard work. At 7 pm, Abdullah called to tell us some bad: the tent was not covered on all sides as we wanted, so we had to go and check. We returned back to the plaza to see what happened, and we told the man to cover the sides because this is what we had decided with the women when we had meet them. So we soon solved the problem and returned back to Ayat's house to continue working and preparing the schedule and the flash cards for the English lesson. We stayed up working after midnight. In other words, you can say that we didn't sleep at all.

(A day of amazing participation, from the Collective Dictionary PARTICIPATION)



The *maftoul* day was the changing point of our gatherings in the square. We were all surprised that the day went so well, everyone was present with no people complaining and no disturbances. It may be that many factors had a role in this. First, it's the first time we had an event in an open space, not in the Women's Center or the public committee; we felt we are at home, we were cooking, eating and even talking comfortably. Indeed, it's probably because we were just doing some traditional practices that our ancestors used to do a long time ago. Our ancestors' relation with public space was more familiar than ours; our grandmothers were cooking outside together, singing folklore songs while harvesting the crops and doing other things without hearing any comment from anybody.

05

SHARING EXPERIENCES

5TH MAY 2012

Gathering of Arroub and Fawwar women



— ph. Tamara Abu Laban

Spaces and experiences

The December event opened the door for other events. The group of women was growing and building relationships. Another activity was held on May 5, 2013, an event that not only gathered the women of Fawwar, but also those from Arroub. We shared the common space



available in Fawwar to discuss our roles in the camps, how we can benefit from each other's experiences and how to create connections between the two refugee camps. We noticed that we were all totally comfortable in discussing our matters in this public space. We even had a collective breakfast there after the discussion. The comfortable, intimate and family atmosphere that was in the square helped us to reveal our thoughts and share our experiences easily and created a kind of *mujaawarah* between us. As another step for connecting the camps together and sharing the public places available there, we decided to have our next gathering or even English lesson in Arroub, in the public stadium built by the Popular Committee. It is a place that some women have started to use for walking in the open air.

Although people in Arroub and Fawwar come from the same original villages, they are different. Fawwar camp is a more a closed society than Arroub; until we began using the *saha* there were no female activities in a public space, but in Arroub, some women have begun to go to the stadium and even engage in exercise. They challenged themselves and their society through this action.

When we had the breakfast, the women from Arroub were affected by the hospitality by the women of Fawwar, who had brought food from their own houses to those women who had forgotten to bring, even one woman was distributing sweets because her son got married one week ago. The women from Arroub promised that they would do the same when the women of Fawwar visit the Arroub camp.

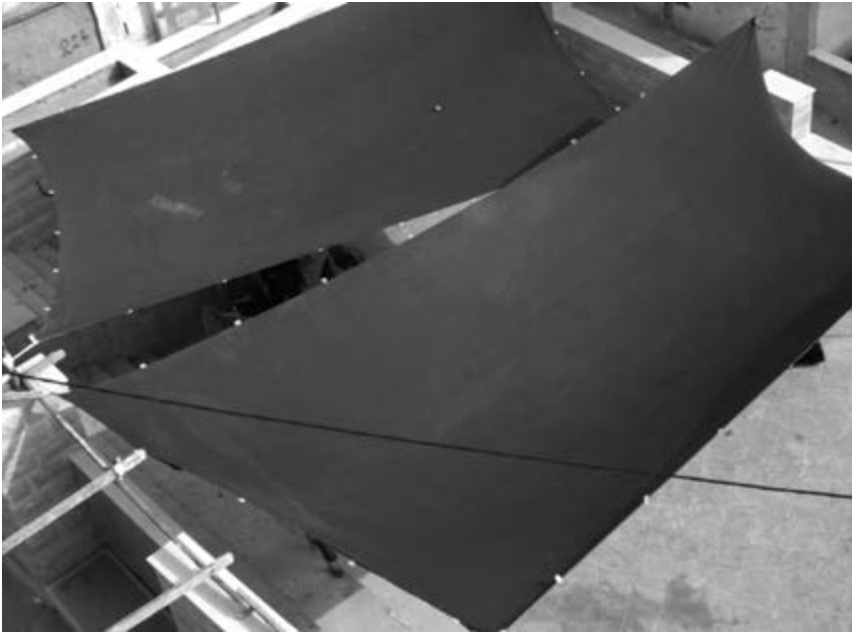
Previous page: ph. Dena Qaddumi

o6

IN THE SQUARE, 6 YEARS LATER

29TH MAY 2012

Talking with women in the square six
years later the first meeting



— ph. Tamara Abu Laban

After the practice

In 2007, a first meeting was held by the Camp Improvement Unit with the neighbors of the square and other people of the camp. Many women who attended argued that they would never use the square for daily acts like having a cup of tea, and other sorts of activity considered as a kind of leisure.

In 2013, the same faces with other new ones, had another gathering with the architect who was responsible for accomplishing the project. These same attendees with new faces had participated in the events held in the square - the same place but with different reflections.



Now, the women who had said that it was impossible to have a cup of coffee in the square were themselves drinking coffee. Most of the reflections were positive, appreciating having this public square in this neighborhood, and hoping to have other squares in their neighborhood.

They reflected on its positive side as a place where most of the wedding parties are held, a place where they can have some fresh air and meet each other, a place where they can

accompany their children without worrying about them. Few voices were complaining about some men who would observe them using the square. They wanted the square (*al saha*) to be covered, partly for having more comfort in doing future initiatives.

The differences between the two gatherings were telling. In 2007, when women had refused the idea of sitting in the square, it was perhaps largely due to its novelty. They had never engaged in such an act, and were afraid of what others, especially men, might say in response.

However, when there was no negative reaction to their use of the square, they became more relaxed and confident about this action.



The square, 2012

— ph. Matteo Guidi

Ideas and initiatives for the future

It's known that most of the students in the UNRWA and governmental schools face difficulties in learning English because of the traditional, rigid, and boring way of teaching mandated in the schools. The English taught in the schools has no relation with students' experiences, environment and life in the camp. It is removed from their reality. This concept matches with the definition of knowledge we had in the *Collective Dictionary* which is "the ability to create or redefine the meaning through our experience and our real life." We are thinking of having English lessons also for these students in the square, which is also a place of joy and leisure. The students there can learn English in a very familiar context. They will feel that they are in their own homes; they can amuse and learn at the same time. The difference between the square and the school is that the square is more related to the youth's daily life and knowledge because of its active location in the middle of the camp. This is unlike the school where the atmosphere is so academic and has no relation with the student's experiences.

The English lessons that will be given for the mothers and their children will not only be in the *saha*, but can also take place in other places in the camp, such as the Women's Center, the child center, the sport stadium or one of the private homes. It's a kind of a small "flying university", a style that was first used in Poland when it was under the control of the Soviet Union. In Palestine a similar concept took place during the First Intifada. Students attended different places to have their lectures, because universities and schools were closed. Our parents tell us that they were studying in stores and even in the private homes. While it was used here and in Poland for political and security reasons, we will be using it for changing the mood and nature of learning with each changed place.

Selecting the Women's Center as one of the spaces where English classes can be held could be a step that enhances the role of the Center in the social and cultural life of the camp and a good beginning for mutual cooperation. The Center was constructed in the 50s by UNRWA who was responsible for funding the Center initially. When UNRWA stopped funding it, local community institutions took this responsibility. The Women's Center is always considered as a mirror that reflects the activity of women in the community. In that sense, it is necessary to activate the Center's role, as some women perceive it as dormant.

Regarding the language classes, we will have other activities that won't be far from the context in which we live. We can have activities that spring from our tradition as well as those that address some negative habits that need to be changed. For example, one cycle could be *reshaping the social networks in the camp*.

Reshaping the social networks in the camp

People always referred to the camps as places where social relations are still protected and exist, but it is not the case nowadays. The camp, as other places, has been influenced by the negative social dimension of development, people no longer gather to chat or discuss their own matters. They have started to be more individualistic, caring about their personal interests. The public space can be one point that re-gathers the people again; they will again have the direct contact they had before in the past. It's a chance to begin new healthy social relations built on mutual comprehension and communication. The *saha* can be a place of well-being. For example, women can gather to help each other in preparing the vine leaves for cooking. It is known that this meal requires a lot of effort. This mutual cooperation enhances the social relation among people and breaks all kinds of social barriers.

How to get involved

THE SQUARE. LEARNING IN THE COMMON SPACE

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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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