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[FILE FOR REVIEW]

**Article's title:** Olive growing in Palestine: A decolonial ethnographic study of collective daily-forms-of-resistance

**Journal name:** Journal of Occupational Science

**Name and details of author:** Mr Juman Simaan. Senior lecturer and PhD candidate in occupational therapy. Allied Health Professions School, the Faculty of Health and Wellbeing, Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU). Rowan Williams Court, 30 Pembroke Court, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4UF, UK. [Juman.simaan@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:Juman.simaan@canterbury.ac.uk)

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**Abstract:** This article describes a study of the daily lives of Palestinian olive growers living under military occupation. Framed in de-colonial theory and occupational justice concepts, and using critical ethnographic methods, the research explored how land colonisation influences the daily activities relating to olive growing, and how olive-growing families respond to the experience of occupational apartheid through their daily activities and their shared values. In-depth interviews were conducted with four participant-families, and observations were made, in the West Bank, Palestine, during key periods in the olive farming cycle. Family stories and thematic analysis pointed to three themes, which were analysed in relation to Wilcock's 'occupational determinants of health'. These themes, identified as *Sutra*, *A'wna*, and *Sumud*, challenge and extend Western-oriented notions of doing-being-becoming-belonging, and illustrate communal Palestinian ways of knowing and resisting. Decolonial ethnographic methods highlight Palestine as a conceptual space illuminating a set of values and means of action that move beyond the individual as the main area of concern, and perceive human communities as a continuation, and in mutual relation to, their environment. This article provides insights on collective occupations learnt from a global South group, potentially widening occupational science's and occupational therapy's understanding of people, their environments and occupations, which may also be useful in other fields of study. More research on collective occupations, using decolonial theory and methods, is needed in different groups within Palestine and other global South societies to substantiate the insights resulting from this research.

**Keywords:** decolonial ethnography; collective occupations; occupational consciousness; daily-forms-of-resistance

## [Main text]

### Introduction

“The *fallah* [peasant] is a master tuner; he coordinates his living with the land, plants and climate.”  
Abu-Nedal (participant)

This paper presents a study of everyday lives of olive growing communities living under military occupation in the West Bank of Palestine, and contributes to the emerging movement in occupational science focusing on collective occupations and on collective occupational ill/well-being as consequences of engaging in meaningful human activities (Ramugondo & Kronenberg, 2015). Framed in de-colonial thought, it aims to learn from global South communities (Santos, 2014) that use everyday activities to resist structures, such as settler-colonialism, that restrict their ways of doing and thinking (Said, 2000). Everyday doing by communities experiencing social and occupational injustices aids exploration of collective occupations and the intentions behind them, drawing attention to groups and their occupations previously unstudied in occupational science (Ramugondo, 2015). Highlighting examples of collective values such as *Ubuntu* in South Africa (Ramugondo and Kronenberg, 2015) and *Sumud* (in this study) potentially contributes to an approach that contrasts with a mainstream occupational science that emphasises the individual and separates her from her context (Dickie, Cutchin & Humphry, 2006). Exploring ways of living and occupational well-being (Ramugondo and Kronenberg, 2015) in groups that, as in South Africa and Palestine, suffered Western settler-colonialism, can begin to set right a gap in occupational science’s research, and to make it more inclusive of collective worldviews essential for challenging theoretical imperialism (Hammell, 2011) as discussed below.

Palestinian communities have experienced ongoing settler-colonialism, wars, uprisings and military occupation, leading to violence, segregation and displacement (Said, 1992; Masalha, 2012). 60% of the population in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) reside in rural areas (Rosenfeld, 2004), and olive growing remains the significant part of the economy and everyday life it has been since the Bronze Age (Thompson, 2000). About half of farmed land is planted with 10 million olive trees in the oPt (Oxfam, 2010). The fruit and wood are variously used for food, fuel, tool-making and medicine, and the olive tree is a national, political, spiritual and religious symbol ubiquitous in Palestinian culture (Al-Batma, 2012).

The initial research questions addressed two main concerns. Firstly, how do settler-colonialism and the military occupation influence the daily activities of olive growing communities in the oPt, such as travelling to and from grove and press, accessing land, harvesting, planting and maintaining groves? Manifestations of the military occupation include land confiscations, illegal colonies built on farmers’ land, restrictions on movement, segregation and violence by soldiers and settlers (United Nations Human Rights Council/ UNHRC, 2013). Secondly, what means do communities adopt to enable this activity to continue, given that humans are occupational beings who adapt what they do and their environment in response to changes in circumstances (Wilcock, 2006)? As the study proceeded, the focus of data analysis shifted to deeper ways of knowing and doing, or the values and motivations for the activity of olive growing that are rooted in the specific ways of life that were observed as active responses- or resistance- to occupational injustices caused by settler-colonialism. This deepening was inspired by decolonial ideas about learning from communities that use non-hegemonic means of resisting social and cognitive injustice (Santos, 2014). Santos recognised the

‘self-knowledge’ conceived in the global South (a term that refers to parts of the globe suffering most acutely the unjust systemic consequences of combined capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy) to counter social injustice, including cognitive and occupational injustices — concepts that are explained below.

The study’s contexts are discussed first, followed by description of the methodology and the research process. One participant family is introduced, followed by an example of occupational apartheid from the field. Three themes generated from the analysis are then discussed in relation to theory and the research literature. Finally, conclusions are given and the implications of the study are explored.

### **The contexts of the study**

**Researcher’s positionality:** As a Palestinian citizen of Israel and the UK, I have straddled cultures and ways of life since childhood. In my homeland, where the majority native Palestinian community became a minority after their dispossession, I felt like a foreigner and was treated as a second-class citizen by the state of Israel. My ancestors were land-based *fallahin* (peasants), and because of the *Nakba* (‘catastrophe’, referring to the expulsion of approximately 500 villages and communities that preceded the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948) my grandparents were forced to flee their home, becoming wage labourers in the town where I was later born. I was segregated from other Palestinian communities in the oPt and from Israeli Jewish society, with whom I had little contact prior to university education. I trained in OT in an Israeli university, where the profession adopted a Western biomedical model that is still dominant globally. This is an example of ‘theoretical imperialism’ whereby knowledge created by scholars in the West, who base their findings on taken-for-granted ontologies and epistemologies, is incorrectly thought to be universal and applicable to global communities (Hammell, 2011). This position of ‘liminality’ (Zureik, 2016) — between village and town, Palestinians and Israelis, West and East, positivist and inclusive models of practice — led me to enquire with ‘radical scepticism’ about links between power and knowledge production relating to my own community and occupational science (Said, 2003). My position of liminality enabled an ‘intercultural translation’ (Santos, 2014) of specific meanings of acting and thinking from the everyday lives of olive farmers to the language of occupational science, useful in the process of decolonising knowledge-producing and practice in occupational science and OT.

**The disciplinary context:** Although occupational science emerged from within binary views of person and environment, it is considered a means to re-focus on occupation – rather than on the human body – in theory and practice (Frank, 2012). Studies showed the importance of contexts as equal to, and often more significant than, the biological abilities of the person in the relationships between occupation, environment and people (Wilcock, 1993). Occupational science produced concepts such as occupational justice, which addresses the inequalities between groups in society in accessing occupations, and it attempts to describe how such injustice is created by contextual factors outside the control of individuals (Pierce, 2012). It is seen as a science for transforming society (Laliberte Rudman, 2014) by exploring injustice and how communities adapt, resist and cope. More research is needed to provide specific examples of these concepts, and there is a need to explore theories placing collective occupations, communities and their contexts within an inclusive frame (Hammell, 2015). In this study, a Palestinian de-colonial perspective is used, in conjunction with occupational justice concepts, to interpret the everyday lives of olive growers. One example of occupational injustice observed in this study is occupational apartheid, defined as a systematic restriction on accessing and participating in occupations by individuals and groups based on their gender, age,

nationality, religion, or other identifying differences (Kronenberg & Pollard, 2005). More work is required to develop this concept with empirical examples and relevant theoretical foundations, which this study contributes to (Durocher, Gibson & Rappolt, 2014a; 2014b).

**The historical-political context:** Palestine is a crossroads of three continents, Asia, Africa and Europe, and its topography and climate is diverse and support various wildlife and ways of life (Qumsiyeh, 2004). Historiography describes diverse and interdependent communities, which worshiped a group of gods and founded a unique ‘Mediterranean economy’, featuring terraced agriculture and olive growing, that has existed for thousands of years (Thompson, 2000). This model was interrupted, but never eliminated by invasions by Romans, Crusaders, Muslims, Byzantines, and Ottomans - cultures that have left their marks on the land and people (Thompson, 2000). In the late 1880s, land reforms led to privatisation of communal land owned and worked by the *fallahin* who constituted up to 80% of Palestinian society (Mousa, 2006). This led to sales of land to rich landowners who lived in cities or abroad, and to Zionist settler-colonialists from Europe (Mousa, 2006). The British Mandate (1918-1948) was characterised by suppression of Palestinian communities, culminating in the *Nakba*: the dispossession of the majority of the native population in 1948 when Israel was established on the majority of their lands (Masalha, 2012). Since 1967, when Israeli forces (IDF) invaded the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, colony-building has encroached further into fertile land (Masalha, 2012). These and other developments — hundreds of checkpoints, zoning and segregating of land and communities, the illegal separation wall being built by Israel — led many to shift from land-based and self-reliant *fallahin* lives to being wage-labourers dependent on a permits, subject to movement restrictions and with little social security (Rosenfeld, 2004; International Court of Justice, 2004; UNHRC, 2013). Nevertheless, *fallahi* ways of life did not disappear; moreover, olive growing has seen a revival since the 1970s as a form and means of *Sumud* (Shehadeh, 1982): a way to persist, to hold on to the land and way of life — a concept detailed below.

## Methodology

**Decolonial ethnography:** This study is framed in decolonial theory and views the system of power in Palestine as settler-colonialism based on, and supported by, Western imperial principles and practices (Said, 1992). Said’s critique of ‘Eurocentrism’ exposes links between power – in the hands of imperial authorities, Western scholars and policymakers - and knowledge production and dissemination (Said, 2003). The historical and current contextual conditions in which people live are the main contributors to the lives of people, who as a result of interacting with their specific context, create their own daily lives and culture (Said, 2003). This fits with ideas of occupational justice regarding environmental conditions influencing and influenced by the people and by what they do. Communities, in decolonial thought and occupational justice, are seen as active survivors resisting injustices and adapting their acts and environment to continue to live and develop (Rasras, 2005; Rumugondo, 2015). A key assumption of decolonial thought, is that the purpose of scholarly work is to seek human freedom, rather than to be a tool for control as studies in colonial contexts have often been, and this should be the basis of researchers’ ethical and practical considerations (Said, 2003).

To witness, learn about and record everyday activities, critical ethnographic methods were used (Madison, 2012). They focused on culture and human relationships, and the power dynamics within them (Madison, 2012). In Palestine, de-colonial ethnography has been shown to be helpful in confronting the power of hegemonic groups within society, and for addressing the ‘crisis of

representation' in researching other-than-Western groups by scholars who misrepresented colonised communities for centuries (Furani and Rabinowitz, 2011). Additionally it has been shown that ethnographic research about Palestinians has the potential to 'reinvigorate' the critical capabilities of this method by providing a 'conceptual space', in which the epistemic and political dynamics of everyday living — based on a morality devoid of Western dichotomies like the humans-environment separation — can be empirically examined (Furani & Rabinowits, 2011). In occupational science, ethnographic methods have been used in works that pushed the boundaries of the discipline to highlight global South communities' activities focusing on the person and how they are an integral part of their context. For example, Frank (1996) studied craft production as a means for women to resist discrimination and the military occupation in Palestine-Israel. She highlighted Palestine-Israel as a unique context for research, and introduced the idea of resistive occupations that transform communities' circumstances. More recently Kantartiz (2013) explored everyday life in a Greek town using ethnographic methods to highlight the nature and meanings of collective occupations in other-than-Western human societies.

**Research design:** Ethical approval was gained from the ethics committee at CCCU, ensuring the anonymity of participants and their informed consent to engage in the study, in order to guarantee their security and my safety as a researcher. I conducted an initial field visit to talk to olive farmers about the research, and to ask whether they would be interested in participating in the study. For pragmatic reasons and through personal contacts, I contacted the Joint Advocacy Initiative (JAI) — a project run by the local YMCA to coordinate olive picking and planting programmes to support farmers — who introduced me to potential participant families. I hoped to meet families who lived on or own cultivated land in areas threatened with confiscation, or featuring violence or intimidation restricting the practice of farming. The study took place within rural communities in the southern hills of the West Bank of Palestine where many threatened plots of land were located. It was decided to consider the family household as participants because of the family-oriented and collective nature of both Palestinian society and the activity of olive growing. All names of people and places were altered to protect their identities.

There were three field visits of up to four weeks each during key seasons in the olive growing cycle, when families- encountered in the initial visit- were revisited. I participated in picking, planting, ploughing and pressing activities alongside participants. Eleven in-depth interviews were conducted in Arabic with family members and were audio-recorded. Field observations were recorded in field notes. A reflective journal was kept to record my responses to experiencing everyday life in the oPt, and to help resolve ethical and methodological issues arising from immersion in the culture. When returning to the UK, I transcribed and translated the interviews, and conducted a six-step theoretical thematic analysis loosely based on Braun ~~and~~ Clarke's stages (2006)-: immersing in and familiarising self with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and refining themes, defining and naming themes, and finally writing final report/thesis - a stage I am at as this paper goes to publication. Whilst adopting this mainstream method, I focused on data extracts, codes and themes that suggested meanings of activities related to olive growing, including the reasoning, values and motivations for actions, which enabled farmers to cope with the adversities they experienced. This focus was founded on the notion that the 'native' point of view, "despite the way it has often been portrayed [in mainstream ethnography], is not an ethnographic fact only, [and] is not a hermeneutical construct primarily" (Said, 2000, p. 310). Instead, articulations by and conceptions of participants in the colonial context should be considered to be expertise on the "sustained adversarial resistance" to unjust knowledge production and practices forced upon them

by colonial authorities (Said, 2000, p. 310). In other words, I aimed to be led in my analysis of the data by farmers' perceptions and opinions of how they managed to respond to the adverse consequences of settler-colonialism on their daily activities relating to olive growing, and how their expertise can inform occupational science's conceptualisation of everyday activities and their relationships to context and the wellness and continuation of human groups.

Narratives of four families, as the main participant families in this study, were constructed, and together with the thematic analysis, they provided the key information analysed and interpreted below. Following the initial analysing of the data, I shared the emerging themes and the stories with participants, in face-to-face meetings as well as by email, to check for accuracy and to ensure their views were well represented. Feedback from this correspondence was incorporated in the final construction of family stories, and contributed to the refinement of the themes discussed below. The analysis was conducted in relation to Wilcock's theory of the human need for occupation, which proposed the terms 'doing', 'being', 'becoming' and 'belonging'-introduced by Hammell (2004)- as the occupational determinants of health: humans are born as occupational beings who need to do activities to survive, and also to provide meaning, development and belonging to a people, society, heritage or land (Wilcock, 1993, 2006; Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). It acknowledged the importance of contexts and community, but was based on Western ontological understandings of people, their environments and occupations. It didn't, however, fully address the belonging element and its relation to becoming, which is thought to encompass the collective elements of occupation (Hitch, Pepin & Stagnitti, 2014a; 2014b).

**Participant-families:** Before the interpretation of the themes is discussed, some information is presented about a participant family, followed by an example of an event from the field, framed using an occupational justice lens. All four participant families were observed to engage in olive growing activities in some capacity, whether living in town or village. They learned how to manage the relationship between themselves, the activity of olive growing and the place they lived in. These elements — drawn from interviews, informal conversations and observation — were the key factors in constructing families' occupational narratives. The four participant-families were observed to have some aspects of daily life in common, such as heritage, geography and the historical and socio-political conditions within which they lived. However, each was found to be unique in other circumstances. Two lived in villages, one in a town, and the fourth lived on their land with extended family. One family relied totally on agriculture to support them economically, while the other families needed other employment to supplement their income for survival. Another family lost all their land when they were expelled from their village in 1948, going on to live permanently in an urban refugee camp, and recently they bought land for olive cultivation. One of the participant families is introduced next, and some of the issues relating to olive growing as a daily meaningful activity are briefly described.

### **Um-Nedal and Abu-Nedal's family**

**People:** Um-Nedal and Abu-Nedal are in their sixties. They are separated, and Abu-Nedal has since married and divorced twice. Nedal, who is in his 30s, is their only son and is married to Nahed; they have four children. Um-Nedal lives in an apartment across from Abu-Nedal's ground floor apartment, which is beneath the house Nedal built for his family. Nedal has four sisters who live with their families elsewhere, and he is the main breadwinner for the three households. Abu-Nedal's older brother and his extended family live nearby and they co-own the olive groves and vegetable plots.

**Place:** The family live in Dar-el-Shoke, a village of 1,200 residents who belong to a few extended families. Their descendants are thought to have lived in this valley for thousands of years. The village is adjacent to the Green Line (the armistice line separating the oPt from Israel), and was occupied by Zionist militias in 1948, when residents fled the village and lived in caves or nearby villages and camps. An agreement in the 1950s between Israel and Jordan (which governed the West Bank until 1967) allowed the villagers to work their land but not live on it; several villagers were killed and injured during that period whilst working on their land. Later in the same decade the village was attacked by Israeli forces, most of it destroyed. In the 1970s families decided to attempt to resettle in their village and formed committees responsible for agriculture, education, rebuilding and water. They, unlike the majority of hundreds of other villages expelled in 1948, managed to successfully negotiate their return. Village families share a system of irrigation from natural springs, whose water is collected in pools from which pipes transport water to vegetable plots. Two illegal Israeli colonies are located on the two hills the village is nestled between. Settlers are armed, and protected by watchtowers, fences, walls, private security guards and the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces, the name for the Israeli armed forces). Villagers worry about the colonies and fear more land will be confiscated for their expansion, as in 2014 when hundreds of acres were taken. Some of the colonies' houses lie only a few metres from the village schoolyard, and pupils are often harassed by settlers on their way to and from school. Villagers often complain of intimidating armed settlers hiking through the village and bathing in their springs.

**Activities:** Most of the villagers farm the remaining land, but most need other sources of income, often from construction work in Israel, as is the case for Nedal. A few others are granted permits to work as labourers in nearby colonies. When not working in the olive groves, Um-Nedal is a member of the local women's cooperative, where they make foodstuffs and weave baskets from olive shoots. Nahed worked as a social worker, but took a break to raise her children. As the sole breadwinner of three households, Nedal has a permit to work in construction in Al-Quds (the Arabic name for Jerusalem), where he works during weekdays. He must cross a nearby checkpoint daily, where he waits in long queues and endures a "humiliating" body search. He supplements his income by working in his barbershop in the village in the evenings. On weekends, Nedal works on the land. Abu-Nedal returned to live full-time in the village two years ago, before which he lived in the nearest large town; earlier still he moved around because of his political activism and his career as a journalist. The family do little in the groves outside of autumn, during which they harvest and prune the trees, and plough the ground between the trees. When needed, they plant new olive trees in the winter. The family does not irrigate or spray the trees; organic fertilisers are added during winter. They prune the few figs, almonds and grapevines they have by the beginning of spring, when they also begin work on the vegetable plots to prepare them for summer planting. Work on vegetables continues throughout summer, at the end of which vegetables are picked and grapes and figs are harvested.

### **Occupational apartheid**

I joined the JAI to help with the harvesting of Abu-Samir's olive grove in Dar-el-shoke, which borders the latest construction site of the nearby colony. The grove was littered with rubbish dumped from the colony. As the group finished loading the harvested olives, four army jeeps and six heavily armed soldiers on foot approached Abu-Samir with instructions written in Hebrew, which he could not read, and a map, as evidence that his land had been declared a closed military zone. They evicted the group and banned anybody from entering the plot of land until further notice. Abu-Samir later

told me the family were lucky to have completed the harvest before the IDF arrived, as they might have evicted us from the land, preventing his family from benefiting from the harvest this year, as had been the case in the past. He felt lucky that they had let him keep his yield this time, which he thought might be because of international volunteers' presence as witnesses.

These and other similar incidents observed during this study illustrate systematic and deliberate restrictions on participating in olive growing due to policies of segregation based on belonging to the native Palestinian community, and can be described as occupational apartheid, defined as:

The restriction or denial of access to dignified and meaningful participation in occupations of daily life on the basis of race, colour [*sic*], disability, national origin, age, gender, sexual preference, religion, political belief, status in society, or other characteristics. Occasioned by political forces, its systematic and pervasive social, cultural, and economic consequences jeopardize health and wellbeing as experienced by individuals, communities, and societies. (Kronenberg & Pollard 2005, p. 68)

Examples of other practices and policies that lead to occupational apartheid include: confiscating what the IDF deems 'unworked land', uprooting trees to make way for construction of the separation wall, and roads for Israelis only (Manor, 2017). Moreover, settler-colonisers (many migrated from Western Europe and North America) can travel and work anywhere they wish. Palestinian olive growers, however, were observed not to be passive recipient of these policies: they resist occupational apartheid through their daily activities and the values and motivators these activities are grounded in, which will be discussed next.

### **Study's key themes**

The data pointed to olive growing as a collective occupation (Rumugondo & Kronenberg, 2015) strongly linked to its context, and not only done for the material survival of the family: all families expressed the emotional, socio-cultural, spiritual and political dimensions of this occupation. Their experience of olive growing was found to challenge and extend occupational justice concepts based on Wilcock's occupational determinants. The three themes that were formulated following the thematic analysis of field notes and interview transcripts are *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud*.

***Sutra*** translates as securing the sustenance and survival of the person or the family. It is linked to the emotional security and meanings gained from doing an activity. This correlates with the relationship between doing – for survival and security – and being – for meaning and fulfilling roles in the community (Wilcock, 2006). When reflecting on why he grows olives, Abu-Nedal told me: "We have a saying: 'Whoever has an olive and a fig is not poor'". He added: "The olive is the only tree that lives on, and is a symbol for our identity. It protects the land and the soil and it means the land has owners." He was referring to the ability of olive trees to live hundreds or thousands of years with little maintenance or irrigation, characteristics that mean it is considered a perfect fit for the dry climate and the restrictions on land access. He was also referring to the multiple uses of the olive tree: food, oil, fuel, cleaning, building and medicinal. Furthermore, this statement illustrates the socio-political meanings that growing olives for *Sutra* encompasses.

Olive growing motivated by *Sutra* is an occupation that affects people's wellness, and is not separated from other activities and roles a person has to fulfil. On the relation between olive growing and his well-being, Abu-A'ttallah explained how growing olives gives him a sense of contemplation, contentment and well-being. For all participant-families, olive growing for *sutra* was

not isolated from other types of activity in the routines of family. Abu-A'ttalah combines his growing activities with other activities, such as caring for his son, or visiting family. During harvest times, participant-families were observed to spend days in the grove working, singing, eating and enjoying being in nature. Some groves are used to host guests, have picnics and for play and exploration for children. Olive growing for *Sutra* supports the critique of mainstream OT theory's tendency to separate types of occupation into three distinct categories: self-care, work and recreation (Hammell, 2015). For olive farmers in Palestine the boundaries between the different categories of activities merge, as they engage in diverse types of activities, and fulfil different roles, through the doing of olive growing for *Sutra*. This illustrates a unique collective occupation done not only for individual, but also for relational intentions: social and political, as discussed next.

**A'wna** means collaboration founded on solidarity with family, village and community – including land, trees and animals. It was analysed in relation to the notion of belonging, which has two main aspects: connectedness and contribution to others' well-being (Hammell, 2004); both aspects were observed in this study, but just as *Sutra* highlights a unique understanding of occupation as doing for being, *A'wna* extends the notion of belonging with a specific communal Palestinian perspective.

One kind of connectedness *A'wna* is based on is a bond between humans and their land, trees and animals. Abu A'ttallah said: "The land you dig will pray for you, but the land you abandon will curse you," referring to those who, by not working their land, risk its expropriation by the Israeli authorities. This relationship was illustrated in metaphors used by other participants — some described caring for trees as their own children. Indigenous populations express this interconnectedness with nature and land across the globe, whereby their relationship with the natural environment is expressed and maintained through everyday occupations (McNeill, 2016). Whereas non-human communities are viewed in traditional OT theory as environmental resources to be exploited (Iwama, 2006), olive growers –like other colonised indigenous communities elsewhere- consider them integral to their community, having mutually connected destinies.

A second association *A'wna* expresses is intergenerational / familial. Abu-A'ttalah was inspired by an elder in his family to love the land, work it and become self-reliant. Nedal described this familial element of olive growing: "We were brought up to see our grandparents grow olives. When the first rain came people knew it was olive harvest season. A beautiful season with memories of everyone helping and sharing food". The value of *A'wna* in rural Palestinian society is based on a hierarchy of solidarity, or 'layers of kinship' as Sayigh termed it. Sayigh (1979) showed how family solidarity was at the top of this scale. A family in Palestine often includes three generations of patriarchal blood relatives. A father and a mother, their children, and their sons' families. It also often includes the grandparents from the father's side. Extended families are part of *hamoulas* (clans), and at times the whole village can be formed from one or two *hamoulas*. Next in the scale of alliances come the village identity and solidarity with neighbours. The peasant family and the solidarity between members of the clan was an effective form of defence against oppression by imperialism, distant land-owners and the higher socio-economic classes (Sayigh, 1979). This "formed the structural setting within which the peasants' culture of 'moral familism' developed" (Sayigh, 1979, p. 21). The 'family collective' in a Palestinian village is both the unit of production and the unit of consumption, and according to Sayigh, "its economy was based primarily on its rights to family and communal village land, its labour power, and the social ties that could be converted into material aid when needed" (1979, p. 22).

As a result of historical and political events, *A'wna* evolved to require interdependence with other local and global communities. For Abu-A'ttallah and Um-Yasin, the harvest season is a big event in the family's calendar, described as 'Palestine's wedding', for it is a collective celebration across the country. Schools announce a two-day holiday so that children and teachers can help with the harvest. Their family have a few groves of olives of different varieties, each planted on a different terrace. Some leave fruit on the trees to be gleaned by local families who do not possess land - an ancient practice that illustrates how the doing of something for community belonging also contributes to others' wellness.

*A'wna* has recently evolved to embrace internationals. Damir reflected on the overseas volunteers who visit his family's farm:

We felt we're not alone. Solidarity by people from abroad is very important. For example, we hosted 40 people. Those come from 40 families, who come from 40 towns. Solidarity with the Palestinian people is widening, these people go and tell [about Palestine] in a positive way. Not the stereotypical picture I see in the news about Palestinians. I tell them about what happened to us. They experience Palestinian hospitality, and these things give a different picture of our situation to the outside world. They come and see, and go and tell.

Damir was relaying a relationship of witnessing and being witnessed which Palestinians I talked to believed useful in resisting a dominant narrative that portrays them as 'uncivilised' or 'terrorists', and in resisting the colonisation of their land. This interdependence has evolved throughout Palestine's history, whereby family, village, and community mutual support were the cornerstones of life in rural Palestine before 1948 (Sayigh, 1979). This continues, but as a result of colonisation, military occupation and the lack of state welfare, solidarity has evolved to include international connections. JAI works with international organisations, while others work with Israeli-Jewish organisations such as *Ta'ayush*, whose members I met during planting saplings with a family who were struggling to access and work their land due to restrictions and violence from the IDF and nearby settler-colonisers. Having allies from Israel and the West present on the land is thought to reduce farmers' exposure to violence, according to participants. Solidarity with outsiders reflects what Said (2003) termed a 'collective constituency' whereby communities fight oppression of all kinds by collective means, while sharing and exchanging ideas and practices. The aim of this constituency is the opposite of the 'othering' or nationalism that Said criticised as an import of Western colonial powers based on essentialist and racist ideas about race and ethnicity.

***Sumud*** refers to values and actions through which people persevere, persist and hold on to their land and trees to enable the continuation of their communities, and to express all aspects of their identities: the physical, emotional, social, cultural and political; it is sometimes translated as 'steadfastness'. Said (1999, p. 100) described *Sumud* as "a form of 'elementary resistance' that turns presence into small-scale obduracy."

One example of an action based on *Sumud* was observed when I was helping a family plant 500 olive saplings. They were uprooted a few days later by the residents of the nearby colony. This was not the first such experience for the family, and they told me they would replant the land again until the aggressors give up. Indeed, they planted more trees the following year and they were still there when I revisited them that year. Other examples of everyday forms of resistance observed in this study included: finding an alternative way to access land that had been fenced or gated or where

constructing roads was banned, such as by donkey; finding alternative materials to build needed structures banned by the IDF e.g. stone already present on the land; responding to a ban on water containers by rehabilitating old wells for storing rainwater; and using caves for illicit shelter and storage. Other families appealed to the courts and UN organisations to gain their land rights with partial successes; still others accessed confiscated land clandestinely to reclaim it by planting olives.

*Sumud* is a position that families adopt as a necessity in the face of occupational apartheid and that has been evolving throughout the history of colonisation in Palestine. Participants attested to a revival in olive growing since the 1970s, to counter the increase in land grabs and colony expansions. An agricultural committee was established in Dar-el-shoke to provide volunteers and expert support to farmers in reclaiming land, planting and maintaining olives, and constructing terraces and wells. Reflecting on the need for this revival, Nedal said: “As a Palestinian I take a lesson from my father. He worked in politics, in nationalistic work, in education and journalism. Eventually he returned to farming because we have a problem in the general situation here, there are no prospects, there’s no future.” This reflects that taking such measures is a necessity rather than a choice – echoing a finding in McGrath & McGonagle’s (2016) study of turf-cutting in Ireland. Being on and working the land in the oPt reduces the chances of it being confiscated, and therefore families need to find means to access and work the land.

*Sumud*, as a necessity, requires compromises and sacrifices. Um-Yasin and Abu-A’ttallah left their families and moved to their land to protect it. In justifying these compromises, Um-Yasin said: “As long as we protect the land, we will preserve ourselves. We will stay put on our land.” She added: “Staying put on the land is our only *jihad*.” The term *jihad* in Arabic originates from the root meaning ‘to make an effort’ to fight oppression (Dar Al-Mashriq, 1986). Many of the olive growers stated that this was their way of fighting the occupation, rather than by protesting or carrying arms. However, some chose to take part in different types of unarmed resistance, such as in art, science or political organisation, as well as resisting through their daily acts that provided them and their families’ survival, wellbeing and hope for a better future. Such unarmed resistive occupations have also been identified in the contexts of the struggle for civil rights in North America and against apartheid in South Africa (Frank & Muriithi, 2015).

These efforts are oriented towards a future and communities’ self-determination, as Damir reflected:

The future will be difficult. I believe that despite these circumstances we should be able to change our own reality. What we can do is a small stone in the large mosaic. You add another stone, and we add another one, then we can hopefully complete the whole picture. We need to have a vision for the future, and be realistic, not to live in our dreams.

Damir’s family’s land was under threat of confiscation, hundreds of their trees had been uprooted and their solar panels and wells were destroyed by the IDF. Their vision, which they had been working on for the last decade, included developing an organic farm, educational programmes for local communities, and a volunteering programme for international activists. Their daily-acts-of-*Sumud* were based on a hope that families could not afford to lose. John Berger, writing about Palestine, called this determination ‘undefeated despair’ (Berger, 2007).

*Sumud* is interpreted here as expressing the relationship between the future-oriented determinant-becoming - and the need to connect and contribute to communities’ wellness - belonging (Hitch et

al., 2014a; 204b). An important aspect of this determination is a specific consciousness that communities have developed through education and the renewal of traditional practices such as olive growing. People have been brought up to recognise the historical injustices and their individual and familial roles in confronting the consequences of restrictions on their way of life and daily occupations. This awareness is founded on communal beliefs that challenge the focus on the person and the dichotomy between humans and their context, on which Wilcock's terms were based. This 'occupational consciousness' is linked to this study's findings, and is discussed next.

**Occupational consciousness:** Key to engaging in olive-growing as a collective occupation motivated by *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud*, is the socio-political consciousness olive growers demonstrated in everyday activities. Abu-Wehaab said: "The future needs awareness and belonging, because if there is no awareness, everyone will migrate. Those who have it, even if they go away, they will come back. We have no life apart from this country, and we need to preserve it." Um-Weehab, his wife, a retired teacher who had always worked on the land, added: "The old will die and the young will forget. The role of the teacher comes into play here. Teachers with this awareness will engage pupils who don't read this in books. They will teach the things that the other side is hiding [referring to attempts by the Israeli authorities to monitor school curriculums], and open their eyes." She worried that Israeli policies, aiming to preserve the status quo of segregation and colonisation, would cause younger generations to forget their heritage and lose their connectedness to their native land and traditional practices. Communities visited during this research were resisting this by ensuring that acts of *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud*, based on historic experiences and ways of living, were practised despite land colonisation and segregation designed to erase these ways of life.

Occupational consciousness has been discussed elsewhere in relation to research with South African families whose everyday doing continues to be impacted by historic Western settler-colonialism (Ramugondo, 2015). It was defined as the continuous awareness of the dynamics of power playing out in individual and collective occupations (Ramugondo, 2015). *Ubuntu* in South Africa is a communal value based on humans and context being in a mutual relationship rather than separate entities. Ramugondo saw it as an example of occupational consciousness, and not only as a mental activity of recognition, but also as an intentional response to the effects of occupational apartheid, resulting from the systematic segregation of access to occupational possibilities for certain groups. This intention and response plays out in daily meaningful activities that members of the group engage in together, and for each other's collective occupational well-being (Ramugondo & Kronenberg, 2015). Applied to olive growing as a collective occupation, it can be argued that occupational consciousness based on values of *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud*, provide people with the awareness that the activity of farming olives is used as a tool to impose occupational injustice by restricting access to land, land confiscation, and violence against trees and farmers as shown above. At the same time, they also recognise that farming olives has a function in confronting this same injustice. This the farming communities do by finding creative ways to access the land, replanting olive trees and through solidarity and cooperation with others. Like *Ubuntu*, *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud* – collectively termed here as daily-forms-of-resistance - are built on a global South communal values system that does not focus principally on the individual, nor see her as divorced from her contexts: the human and other-than-human. They are means of thinking and doing that rely on a mutual association between the individual and her context, and have implications for theorising human occupations as a relational phenomenon in occupational science, as well for advocating for collective occupations as means of interventions in OT.

## Conclusion

This study adopted decolonial ethnographic methodologies considering Palestine a setting for conceptual exploration of everyday life. Olive growing as an everyday activity in Palestine is an example of a unique collective occupation done for communal occupational well-being, and grounded in the 'epistemologies of the South' (Santos, 2014), which were found to guide participant-families' acting and reasoning. *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud* were identified as daily-forms-of resistance, interpreted as means of awareness and response to injustices enacted in everyday living of olive growers in the oPt. Daily lives of olive growers illustrated ways of doing and a values system "located outside European truths as well as close to their beginnings [that] could become a place of *theoria* (seeing beyond)", and so transcending dichotomous Western reason (Furani and Rabinowitz, 2011, p. 485). This was done by shedding fresh light on constructs such as collective occupations, occupational consciousness and occupational apartheid, and by offering another example of a values system from a global South group that has the potential for offering empirical evidence for, and refining such constructs.

My position of liminality enabled an 'intercultural translation' (Santos, 2014) of everyday doing among olive growers to the language of occupational scientists, which can potentially be a step towards achieving cognitive justice. This can be accomplished by giving voice to, and learning from, other ways of doing and thinking, in order to challenge the dominance of Western-based reasoning that has contributed to centuries of cognitive, social and occupational injustices; there will be no global social justice - including occupational justice - without cognitive justice. Cognitive justice can be achieved by introducing epistemologies of the South applied in producing knowledge in occupational science, and in practice in occupational therapy, in particular in emerging roles within disadvantaged groups, such as people seeking refuge, or travelling communities in Europe. *Sutra*, *A'wna* and *Sumud* - as Palestinian means of acting and valuing - can, by contributing to theorising human occupation, potentially benefit other disciplines and practices in health, social and political sciences that are interested in the daily lives of human groups, such as anthropology, sociology and rural studies.

There is a risk of idealising the farming communities as heroes fighting for nationalistic causes, and so contributing to essentialist ideas and the 'othering' critiqued here. However, resistance is part of daily life in the oPt, and is not a choice but a necessity. Observations and analysis demonstrated the mutual local and global solidarity that olive growing in Palestine contributes to, which counters the separatist 'othering' and nationalistic myth. Further adoption of decolonial methodologies exploring other unique collective doing within particular human groups would be useful. Further studies exploring doing, being, becoming and related occupational justice concepts will be helpful in providing evidence for the utility of such concepts in other areas of the world.

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