

2

Palestinians in the Syrian Uprising: *The Situation on the Ground*

ASHRAF MOUSA

Introduction

At the outset of the Syrian civil war, Syria was home to 495,970 Palestinian refugees (149,822 living in official camps),¹ most of whom had entered, or were descended from individuals who had entered the country in 1948. These refugees, while not technically Syrian citizens, were closely integrated into the Syrian state, enjoying effectively identical rights to Syrian citizens, but retaining a close ideological affiliation to the Palestinian national cause. The Syrian regime also maintained and funded a number of Palestinian resistance organizations, while relating to others in various different ways over time.²

When the protests that would escalate into the Syrian revolution and then the Syrian civil war began in 2011, Palestinians living in Syria found themselves on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, they had reason to be grateful to the regime, which had rooted its claims to legitimacy in its staunch support for the Palestinian cause.³ And yet on the other, this same argument could also be reframed as entailing a debt of gratitude to the Syrian *people* in their liberation struggle. On top of this, Palestinians needed to factor in the divergent positions taken by the key Palestinian factions, the regime's long cultivation of loyalist Palestinian front groups and, of course, the self-interested question of which side was likely to win.

This study seeks to shed light on how and why Palestinian communities in Syria arrived at the political positions they ultimately did in relation to the conflict. In order to do so, it draws on a combination of pre-existing studies published in Arabic, including those mentioned above, as well as the author's own extensive direct experience as a Syrian Palestinian political

scientist who was present in Syria during the initial years of the war. During this period, the author had numerous opportunities to visit and spend time in several refugee camps between 2012 and 2016, including the two discussed in detail here, as well as to speak to individuals involved in the events occurring there. (Formal fieldwork would, of course, not have been permitted to a Syrian academic during this period). Since then, this picture has been updated with informal conversations and correspondences with a personal network of friends and acquaintances from these camps.

Taking a case study approach, the paper seeks to compare and contrast the experiences of Palestinians living in two camps in particular: Neirab camp, which is located on the outskirts of Aleppo, and Daraa refugee camp, which is located some distance from the city after which it is named.

Previous Studies

The subject of the role played by Palestinians in the Syrian civil war is virtually untouched in the academic literature available in English, and indeed there is apparently not a great deal of material that deals with Palestinians in Syria at all. The most comprehensive treatment is Neil Gabiam's book *The Politics of Suffering: Syria's Palestinian Refugee Camps*, which deals with questions of Palestinian political identity in the context of the urbanization of the camps.⁴ Similar concerns are reflected in other studies, such as Brand's 1988 paper addressing the supposed dilemma of "integration",⁵ and Hanafi's 2010 chapter which, by contrast, draws on the experience of Palestinians in Lebanon and Syria to critique the idea of the refugee camp itself.⁶

In Arabic, the topic has been addressed in a significant number of media comment pieces and research papers. However, few of these go into any considerable depth. The overall situation of Palestinians in Syria is also the subject of a monograph by Yousef Zidane and Yousef Fakhreddine. Published in 2013, this provides an extensive and detailed overview of the

subject, including invaluable casualty figures for Palestinians in the conflict. However, the book's analytical content is somewhat limited.⁷

Professor Osama Mohammed Abu Nahal's "The position of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas with regard to the Syrian crisis, and reflections on the future of the Palestinian cause", as its title suggests, is mainly concerned with the way in which the Syrian war impacted on the leadership of the dominant Palestinian factions as opposed to the situation of Palestinians on the ground, (or for that matter, factions other than Fatah and Hamas). More problematically, the author tends to treat the factions he deals with in a monolithic fashion, meaning that he does not take account of the important ways in which the Syrian revolutionary cause placed considerable strain between the official position of the factions' official leadership and their rank-and-file members. He also, in my view, misreads the position of Hamas, which he believes to have been one of full engagement in the conflict.

Despite these limitations, Professor Abu Nahal does acknowledge the inherently contradictory situation in which Palestinian refugees in Syria found themselves after the outbreak of Syrian popular protest, given the positions taken by the major Palestinian factions. His ultimate conclusion is that the fall of the Syrian regime, for all its flaws, would at present be a disaster for the Palestinian cause. Whoever might assume power after it would be bound to return the favour to those who had supported it militarily, such as the United States, Turkey or other Arab states.

Another significant study is "The Palestinians in Syria and the Syrian Revolution" by Salah Hassan of The Arab Centre for Research and Political Studies. This study concerns the position of Palestinians towards the Syrian civil war and deals with these positions from many different perspectives. In contrast to Abu Nahal's work, then, it does to some extent consider the positions taken by ordinary Palestinians and the Palestinian general public, as well as those taken by the political leadership and elites.

However, it is largely concerned with history and concentrates on the events that occurred in Yarmuk refugee camp only, without considering the bigger picture of the other refugee camps, and the role of geographical position in relation to the key events of the revolution in the formation of the general mood of each camp in favour of one grouping or another. The study concludes that the Palestinians would do best to support the Syrian uprising, taking into account moral and political considerations, and that the position of neutrality is to be rejected. He urges that those Palestinian factions which have fought alongside the regime should be isolated.

The Yarmuk refugee camp also appears as a case study in a work by Ayman Abu Hashim, appropriately titled: "The Impact of the Syrian Revolution on the Palestinians of Syria – a Case Study of Al-Yarmouk Refugee Camp: Aspects of Intervention and Interaction", focusing on how events in the camp influenced the events that occurred in Syria. Unlike the studies above, it sets out a Palestinian perspective on what happened in the camps. But the study does not concern all the segments, levels and groupings which represent the Palestinians in general, and their perspective concerning the events they lived through in Syria.

Finally, "The Palestinians in Syria: Between the Hammer of the Revolution and the Anvil of the Regime" by Tariq Aziza of the Centre for Palestinian Studies is an attempt to impartially understand the reasons that pushed Palestinians to become engaged in the Syrian uprising. Aziza, however, seems to view the Palestinians as a homogenous group without engaging with the details of the Palestinian situation, or drawing distinctions between Palestinians' many positions and alignments. It also researches into the history of the relationship between Palestinians and the Syrian regime, reducing 'the Palestinians' to the Fatah movement. This study argues that it would be in the best interest of Palestinians to distance themselves from the conflict and refrain from fighting in it to the extent possible. Indeed, neutrality, despite its shortcomings, is the least-worst option.

As this brief review shows, the material in Arabic, while going deeper into the subject than studies available in English, tends to be politically engaged and opinion based, as well as tending to view Palestinian political positions as indistinguishable from the official stances taken by the Palestinian political leadership. And yet – as I shall now explain – this is far from an accurate reflection of how Palestinian politics has actually played out for those Palestinians caught up in the Syrian conflict.

Palestinians in Syria at the outset of the conflict

In the first months of the Syrian uprising, the general sentiment among Syria's Palestinians was that it was best not to get involved in what was seen as a fundamentally Syrian political issue. Involvement, such as it was, was limited to individuals, and “focused on providing relief and medical aid to those trapped in the hotspots and displaced persons from their rebellious neighborhood, this happened in Daraa camp and later on in Alramel camp in Lattakia and the Alaedon camp in Homs”.⁸

Nevertheless, as the conflict progressed, Palestinians found it increasingly impossible to avoid deeper and more partisan involvement. This didn't necessarily entail physical mobilization into the fighting – many Palestinians supported one side or another but did not take up arms. Where Palestinians fought with the regime, they did so by means of the same structures for the mobilization of Palestinians that had existed before the war – that is to say, in specifically Palestinian units created by and loyal to the regime.⁹ Conversely, Palestinians who physically took up arms against the regime (which seems to have been uncommon, in contrast to those who supported the rebels ideologically) did so by joining the same rebel units as Syrians.¹⁰

Possible reasons for Palestinian involvement

Overall, five factors can be identified as plausibly significant in pushing Palestinians in Syria towards mobilizing on one side or another, namely: factional affiliation, geographical proximity, demographic overlap, ideological convictions and provocations,

in addition to, of course, material incentives and sanctions. I will now discuss these in turn.

Factional Affiliation

Most of the Palestinians in Syria, and elsewhere, belong to or support one or other of the Palestinian factions. As a result, when these factions mobilized on one side or the other, this inevitably tended to mean that they took their followers with them (although, as we shall see, this was by no means a given). Indeed, differences between the positions of factional leaderships and rank-and-file members have put Palestinian factions under considerable strain.¹¹ The lack of unity, however, both among the different factions and within them, meant that there was no unified reference point for all Palestinians which might have led them towards a united position. The Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) did not deal with the issue of Palestinian refugees in Syria in a responsible manner, “and their position was inadequate and shocking and gave rise to complacency among Syrian Palestinians, who hoped that the PLO and the PA would play a greater role in protecting and defending them”.¹²

Geographical Proximity

As the battle lines of the Syrian civil war were drawn, Palestinian refugee camps frequently turned out to be near the hot spots of the conflict. This made any attempt to keep a distance from it literally unsustainable. As Baytari notes, for example, “Al-Yarmouk camp, which is the largest Palestinian camp in Syria, is located among the neighborhoods of Qadam, Tadamon, and al-Hajar al-Aswad. All these neighborhoods were hot spots, and places where security was threatened.”¹³ Homs camp (Alaaedon) was in the same situation, being close to the Baba Amr neighborhood, which was considered the area in the city of Homs where conflict was most intense.

Demographic overlap

As a consequence of the gradual integration of Palestinians and their refugee camps into Syrian society, Palestinian camps have become home to an increasing population of Syrians, living side by side with Palestinian neighbours. The Yarmuk camp, for example, has a mixed population of Syrians and Palestinians. On the other hand, many Palestinians live in Syrian cities alongside native Syrian people. Many Palestinians, for example, lived in the city of Aleppo, far from their camps (Neirab and Ein Al-Tal). According to Badwan, as many as 29% of Palestinian refugees reside within cities in Syria.¹⁴

Ideological convictions

For Palestinians in Syria in general, partisan involvement was a particularly agonizing step precisely because there was no single political narrative which clearly favoured either the rebel or regime sides. Nevertheless, many individual Palestinians developed strong convictions based on their reading of Palestinian history in Syria.

Palestinians who opposed the regime believed that they were obligated to the Syrian people for their hospitality since the *Nakba* when they had been forced to flee to Syria. The Syrian people had received the Palestinians and given them equal rights,¹⁵ living side by side with them for many decades. Therefore – so the view went – it was not reasonable for Palestinians to see their Syrian brethren suffering from injustice and oppression without any solidarity and sympathy in their desire to obtain their freedom; the freedom that has long been a slogan echoed by the Palestinians since the *Nakba*.

They also recalled the history of the regime's injustice and brutality against the Palestinians, both in general, and with specific regard to Palestinians in Syria. These grievances included Syrian governmental actions in the Lebanese civil war such as that Tel Za'tar massacre in 1976 and the siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. They also included the programme of arrests that was carried out by the regime after its conflict with Yasser

Arafat in 1983. Another key memory was of the special "Palestinian branch" of the security forces, as well as the regime's attempts to split the Palestinian factions, as happened within the Fatah movement in 1983. Indeed, there was a long list of painful incidents still deeply rooted in the minds of many Palestinians, which caused them to welcome the prospective fall of the regime.

On the other hand, there were Palestinian refugees who supported the regime. They believed in the regime's narrative that there was a global conspiracy against Syria and that they had proof to justify this position. For example, the countries which demanded that Bashar Al-Assad should step down were the same countries that had historically been hostile to the Palestinian cause, or had never supported it, whether they were Arab countries, such as the Gulf states, or international powers, such as the United States and the members of the European Union. They believed that the aim of the war was to weaken the axis of resistance and to overthrow the Syrian regime, which had been supporting the Palestinian cause over the past decades and had been embracing the rebel factions. They also recalled past history to justify their points of view, invoking, for example, the 1973 October War, and the support they provided to repel the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, during which hundreds of Syrian soldiers were killed.

This point of view is neatly encapsulated by Palestinian researcher Muhammad Abu Nahal: "If the Syrian regime falls, the Palestinians will be lost as a people (not as a leadership) and their strategic allies in the region and the world will also be lost. They will also lose the political, military and moral support that they have been provided with from regional and international allies."¹⁶

These Palestinians also believed – in a reformulation of the argument put forward by anti-regime Palestinians – that they owed the Syrian *regime* their support because of the laws which put them on a par with their Syrian brethren. The laws were issued before the Arab Baath Socialist Party came to power (thus

before Assad took power) but remained under the new government. The fact that these decrees were still in force without any changes was a source of gratitude for Palestinians. They compared their situation with the situation of Palestinian refugees in neighboring countries, where they lived under difficult conditions.¹⁷ It is also worth noting that Palestinians who took this position were generally taking a stance that was in line with the official one adopted by the key Palestinian factions, who believed that the alternative to the regime was linked to external agendas hostile to their cause. Additionally, there is no doubt that a few Palestinians based their position on personal interests, some seeking to preserve privileges granted by the regime, while others derived benefits from the existence of the regime.

Provocations

While ideological convictions and contingent factors on their own might well have ultimately driven Palestinians to mobilise, this process was almost certainly hastened in some cases by provocative actions by the regime (and, in some instances, by Syrian rebels). At least in the view of Palestinians with pre-existing rebel sympathies, there was a clear policy by the regime from early on to try to inflame tensions between Palestinians and (pro-regime) Syrians by spreading propaganda that Palestinians were behind the riots which took place in some Syrian cities, such as Daraa and Latakia. The Syrian newspaper, *Al-Watan*, which is close to the regime, made an accusation in its issue dated 22 March 2011 that some of the Palestinian refugees were behind what was going on in Daraa. Later on, Buthaina Shaaban, political and media adviser to the Syrian president, accused a group of Palestinians in the Alramel camp of being behind the "sedition" in Latakia when, on 27 March 2011, she claimed that "some of the Palestinian brothers attacked and damaged the shops in Latakia city and initiated sedition in the community".¹⁸

Later on, this accusation moved from mere media hype to reality when some Palestinian camps witnessed incidents which were indeed a turning point, bringing about the realization that

the regime was using violence against peaceful demonstrations. The most important incident, which was known as "the second return march", or "Al-Kalesa events", on 6 June 2011, occurred when members of the regime loyalist Popular Front General Command fired on the funeral of the martyrs of the second "return march", leading to a number of deaths and dozens of injuries among the young mourners.

A second major turning-point for the Palestinians, in Syria in general and the camps in particular, came in mid-August 2011, when the Syrian army bombed Alramel camp which is located on the city's outskirts. About five thousand Palestinians fled the camp under fire in the course of a major crackdown on protestors in Latakiya."¹⁹

The assassination of a number of officers of the Palestine Liberation Army, because they refused to involve the Liberation Army in the fighting, was new proof in confirming to some Palestinians that the regime was trying to drag them into the furnace of the conflict.²⁰

From the point of view of the party which was against the regime, the demonstrations which took place in most Syrian cities were peaceful for the first few months²¹, as President Bashar al-Assad had said, and therefore the problem lay in the regime's unwillingness to reform and their using of the security forces to abort popular mobilization.

Daraa and Neirab: A View from the Camps

Having outlined the general factors behind Palestinian mobilization in the Syrian conflict, I will now seek to explore the question in more depth by focusing on the specific cases of two Palestinian refugee camps in Syria: Daraa and Neirab. These cases present an interesting contrast because of the opposite sides they ended up on: broadly speaking, Daraa adopted a strongly anti-regime position, whereas Neirab did not.

Daraa refugee camp was originally founded in 1950. A new camp was created immediately next to the first one in 1967 to accommodate new refugees from the Six Days' War,

including Syrians displaced from the Golan Heights. The camp is located immediately to the east of the city of Daraa and, as is usual with Palestinian refugee camps in Syria, can now effectively be considered an integral part of the Daraa metropolitan area, with the population consisting of a mixture between the original Palestinian inhabitants and some with Syrian national status. The total population of the camp is 13,000.²²

Neirab camp, with a population of 19,000,²³ is located in a mostly rural area 16 kilometers to the east of Aleppo, meaning that it constitutes what is in effect an independent township. It was founded between 1948 and 1950, meaning that most of its inhabitants are Palestinian refugees from this period.

Historical and geographical factors mean that, immediately prior to the outbreak of the Syrian conflict, the two camps differed somewhat in terms of the make-up of their respective populations. The camps also differed somewhat from a socio-economic point of view. Daraa camp – like the city in which it is located – depended largely on the agricultural industry. Neirab's economy was more dependent on education and, ultimately, on UNRWA institutions.

From a political point of view however, there is little reason to believe that the two camps were unlike. In common with most Palestinian refugee camps immediately prior to the outbreak of hostilities, political affiliations approximated to those in Palestine itself with a roughly equal balance between supporters of Hamas and of Fatah. Despite the existence of several groups closely aligned with the Syrian regime, such as Saiqa, Fatah al-Intifada and the PFLP-GC, these groups have enjoyed only limited popular allegiance in Syria as elsewhere.

In what follows I present a necessarily simplified account of how overall sentiment in these places changed over the course of the war. Naturally, opinion in neither camp was monolithic during the period with which I am concerned. Nevertheless, it is meaningful to speak of a general shift in the prevailing opinions in both cases. As I argue, these attitudes were primarily determined by the question of which side caused damage to the camp

and its inhabitants (such as destruction, killings, arrests, siege, shelling). Here, the geographical location of the camp and its importance to the conflicting parties played the most significant role in the course of events and facts.

Given that the Syrian civil war originally escalated from the protests that began in Daraa in March 2011, it is unsurprising that Daraa refugee camp was embroiled in the conflict from its outset. In the early months, inhabitants of the camp assisted Syrian demonstrators by providing humanitarian relief. Soon, the camp was also serving as a refuge for those wanted by regime forces. As an article in *Al-Araby* put it, this “made the camp a target, especially as the camp is located between Daraa al-Mahatta and the Syrian displaced camp, making it a mandatory channel for the regime's forces to suppress protesters in the displaced camp or in the area around the dam”.²⁴ As early as 23 March, Daraa camp had produced its first Palestinian martyr, Wissam Amin al-Ghoul, who was killed by Syrian security forces after he tried to transfer two injured Syrians to the camp’s hospital.²⁵

A direct consequence of these acts of solidarity was to place the camp itself directly in the firing line. According to the media activist Ayham al-Said, “Most of the camp's Palestinian refugee inhabitants were displaced as a result of the barbaric shelling of the camp by the Syrian regime”.²⁶ By June 2017, the number of casualties had reached 370, with the addition of 68 political detainees.²⁷ Additionally, the Working Group for Palestinian-Syrians confirmed that about 80% of the camp was destroyed. The regime had arrested and killed a significant number of the camp’s inhabitants.²⁸

Neirab camp offers a different and contrasting story. The camp is located in close proximity to Neirab Military Airport, to the headquarters of the 80th Brigade of the Syrian Army which was charged with defending the air base, and to Aleppo International Airport. It was, therefore, a place of key strategic importance for both regime and opposition forces.

As a consequence of this, the camp experienced significant violence early on in the conflict from opposition forces. On 11 July 2012, a rebel militia kidnapped and executed fourteen members of the Palestinian Liberation Army faction while they were returning from Musayef to Aleppo. This was despite the fact that the Palestinian Liberation Army had not yet adopted a clear position in support of the regime. The situation further escalated in 2013, when opposition militants besieged the camp, blocking access to essential commodities and causing considerable hardship to the inhabitants – especially children.²⁹ This was in addition to deaths, injuries and destruction of houses and shops caused when the camp was shelled.³⁰ This hostility has continued. As recently as May 2019, the camp was again shelled by opposition forces who killed ten people, including children and elderly people.

By contrast, the camp saw comparatively little repression from the regime. While a number of the camp's inhabitants were arrested, some of whom were subjected to torture, the regime did not launch indiscriminate violent attacks on the camp of the kind seen in Daraa and other Palestinian camps.

Ultimately, Neirab camp became characterized by an attitude of popular outrage against the opposition factions, which helped to provide a pretext for the regime and its supporters in the camp to form a military force supporting the regime, known as the Jerusalem Brigade.³¹ There is some reason to believe that a self-reinforcing dynamic ultimately emerged between Neirab's reputation for regime loyalism and the regime's own politics towards the camp. As one former inhabitant of the camp noted, as the conflict progressed, there was a widely held belief that regime security forces displayed preferential treatment towards inhabitants of the camp on the basis of their presumed loyalty.

To summarise, according to the Palestinian Working Group for Syria, as of 2011, the number of Palestinian refugees who were killed in Daraa camp is 413³², most of them by the regime³³, while the number of Palestinian refugees who were killed in Neirab camp is 183, most of them by armed opposition groups. According to UNRWA statistics, the population of the

Neirab camp is about 19,000, while the population of the Daraa camp is 13,000, meaning that in proportional terms, the regime violence against Daraa was more severe than that of rebel groups against Neirab.

Discussion

As the cases of Daraa and Neirab indicate, Palestinian mobilization in the Syrian civil war was closely bound up with contingent factors and dynamics on the ground. This is not to say that ideological and pre-existing structural variables, such as the five factors outlined earlier, were irrelevant – indeed we can see all of them at play in one way or another in the cases. Demographic overlap was clearly important in helping to account for the rapidity with which the Palestinians of Daraa became entangled in the fate of their neighbours. Geographical proximity was also important – and arguably was even more so in shaping the fate of Neirab. These factors, in turn, opened the camps to provocative attacks from the regime in the case of Daraa, and rebel forces in the case of Neirab, which represented the most immediately proximate cause of their political alignment. It is worth noting that it was apparently not simply repression on its own that was key here, but rather the experience of indiscriminate repression. The two factors that seem to have been least relevant were pre-existing factional loyalty and ideological affiliation, although these were not necessarily entirely irrelevant. As we have seen in the case of Neirab, the fact that Palestinian paramilitary groups that had been allowed to operate in Syria were typically closely linked to the regime seems to have predisposed some Syrian rebel groups towards an early hostile stand against them. This, in turn, was an important factor in tipping the alignment of the camp in favour of the regime. Nevertheless, there is little reason to think that Daraa's ideological and factional make-up at the outset of the Syrian conflict was radically different to that of Neirab.

As civil war scholar Stathis Kalyvas has observed, mobilization in civil wars is often understood as ideologically

58 POST-UPRISING EXCAVATIONS

motivated and based upon political alignments that preceded it, and largely account for the dynamics of the subsequent violence.³⁴ In line with other studies examining “micro-level” dynamics of violent conflict,³⁵ the case of the Palestinians in Syria helps to challenge such assumptions. There is little reason to believe that, at the outset of the Syrian civil war, Daraa and Neirab camps differed to any significant degree in the political sympathies and affiliations of their inhabitants. Nonetheless, over the course of the war, they ended up – as we have seen – taking diametrically opposed positions. Despite the many potential ideological and social factors that could have accounted for Palestinian partisanship in the conflict, it appears that both contingent and arbitrary events are largely accountable for the actual positions they ultimately adopted.

¹UNRWA in Figures – January 2011, UNRWA, online, accessed 28/6/2019 Available online at: <https://www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/2011092751539.pdf>. This figure refers only to officially registered refugees. Since not all Palestinians in Syria are officially registered the actual figure may well be higher.

² See: e.g. Strindberg, A. “The Damascus Based Alliance of Palestinian Forces”, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 29:3, Spring 2000, pp. 60-76.

³See: e.g. Hinnebusch, R. *Syria: Revolution from Above*, London: Routledge, 2001 - especially chapter 7: “Syrian Foreign Policy”.

⁴Gabiam, N. *The Politics of Suffering: Syria’s Palestinian Refugees*, Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2016.

⁵ Brand, L. “Palestinians in Syria: The Politics of Integration”, *Middle East Journal*, 42: 4, Autumn 1988, pp. 621-637.

⁶ Hanafi, S. “Governing the Palestinian Refugee Camps in Lebanon and Syria: The Cases of Nahr el-Bared and Yarmouk camps”, in S. Hanafi and A. Knudsen, eds. *Palestinian Refugees: Identity, Space and Place in the Levant*. London and New York: Routledge, 2010.

⁷ Fakhruddin, Y. and Y. Zidane, *Palestinian Refugees in the Syrian Tribulation: Research Papers, Statistics, Documents*. Paris: Center for Democratic Republic Studies, 2001.

⁸ Fakhruddin and Zidane, op. cit. p. 36.

⁹For further details, see: Ouf M. “Palestinian militias are fighting alongside Assad in Syria”, *Sasa Post*, 11/03/2018, online, Accessed 15-3-2019. <https://www.sasapost.com/palestinian-militias-fighting-with-syrian-regime/>.

¹⁰ Fakhruddin and Zidane, op. cit. p. 38

¹¹ Abu Hashem. A, “Consequences of the Syrian Revolution for the Palestinians in Syria: The Case of Yarmouk Camp: Aspects of Intervention and Interaction”, *Palestinian Affairs [Shu’un Filistiniyya]*, vol. 252, 2013, p. 8.

¹² Fakhruddin and Zidane, op. cit. p. 41

¹³ Baytar, N. *The Palestinians in Syria, between Revolution and Uncertainty*. Centre for Palestinian Studies, 2012, p. 2.

¹⁴ Badwan, A. “The reality of Palestinian refugees in Syria examined”. *Haq al-Awda*, no. 61, n.d.

¹⁵ All decrees and decisions relating to the granting the rights to Palestinians on equal footing with the Syrians were issued before Hafez

al-Assad came to power. Law No. 260 was passed unanimously by the Syrian Parliament and signed by the President Shukri al-Quwatli on 10 July 1956. For further details, see:

- Badwan, A. "The Current Situation of Palestinians in Syria: An Eye-Witness Testimony", *Al Majdal*, no. 57, Summer 2015, p. 8.

¹⁶ Muhammad Abu Nahal, O. "The Positions of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas towards the Syrian Crisis and its implications for the future of the Palestinian Cause", research paper presented to the conference on Palestinian National Security, 2-3 November, 2016. p. 33.

¹⁷ In 1964, by Ministerial Decree No. 17561, the Lebanese Ministry of Labor prohibited Palestinians from working in about seventy categories of jobs. For further details, see: "Palestinian refugees suffer in Lebanon". Washington Institute, Autumn 2012, online, accessed 28/6/2019.

<http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/policy-analysis/view/palestinian-refugees-languish-in-lebanon>,

¹⁸ al-Tibi, A. "Writing in response to the accusations of Bouthaina Shaaban: How long will the Palestinians remain a scapegoat the failures of the regimes?", *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, 29/3/2011, online.

<http://archive.aawsat.com/details.asp?section=4&article=614791&is-sueno=11809#.WSymqZLyvIU>,

¹⁹ Bitar, N. "Yarmuk Refugee Camp and the Syrian Uprising: A View from Within", *Institute for Palestine Studies*, Vol. 43, 2013, p. 69.

²⁰ Colonel Reda al-Khadra and Colonel Abdul Nasser al-Maqari and his driver were assassinated in late February 2012. Colonel Ahmed Saleh al-Hassan was assassinated in late June of the same year, following the targeting of officers of the Palestine Liberation Army. For further details, see: Zaghmout, M. "The situation of Palestinian refugees in Syria after the revolution" *Action Group for Palestinians of Syria*, 11/29/2016, online. <http://www.actionpal.org.uk/ar/post/6261>.

²¹ Bashar Al-Assad, The revolution was peaceful for six months, Syria stream dignity Channel, 6/2/2016, online, accessed 14/4/2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyZNCU0B2oc>

²² UNRWA, "Where we work", online, accessed 25/5/2019.

<https://www.unrwa.org/ar/where-we-work>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ali, A. “Daraa is the camp of the revolution” *Al Arabi*. 13/8/2016, online, accessed 14/4/2020.

<https://www.alaraby.co.uk/society/2016/8/12/%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%B9%D8%A7-%D9%85%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AB%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%B0-%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B9%D9%87%D8%A7>.

²⁵ Fakhruddin and Zidane, op. cit, p. 36.

²⁶ Ahmad. E. Daraa Refugee Camp, insistence to stay and withstand despite the devastation *alkhaleeonline.*, 17/7/2016, online, accessed 14/4/2020.

<https://alkhaleeonline.net/%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%A9/%D9%85%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%AF%D8%B1%D8%B9%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%A5%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A8%D9%82%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%85%D9%88%D8%AF-%D8%B1%D8%BA%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1>,

²⁷ Zaghmout. M, op. cit.

²⁸ Hamoud, Tarek, and Ibrahim Al-Ali, eds., *Palestinians of Syria and the Closed Doors*, The Palestinian Return Centre & Action Group for Palestinians of Syria, 2017; UNRWA, *The biannual field report on the situation of Palestinian refugees during the period between July and December 2016*, UNRWA, 2016, p. 48.

²⁹ “Free army tightens siege on Neirab refugee camp”, *Al Fajr TV*, 6/4/2013, online, accessed 25/5/2019. <http://alfajertv.com/news/64918.html>

³⁰ For further details, see Hamoud, T., and I. Al-Ali, eds., *Palestinians of Syria and the Closed Doors*, op. cit. pp. 46-48.

³¹ It was formed in 2013. In addition to the Palestinian fighters, it has in its ranks many of the Syrian fighters.

³² Palestinian Working Group for Syria Website , Statistics, accessed 14/4/2020, <http://www.actionpal.org.uk/en/geographical-by-incident/3/daraa>.

³³ Palestinian Working Group for Syria Website , Statistics, accessed 14/4/2020, <http://www.actionpal.org.uk/en/geographical-by-incident/3/daraa>.

³⁴ See: Kalyvas, S. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

³⁵ For an overview, see: Kalyvas, S. “Micro-Level Studies of Violence in Civil War: Refining and Extending the Control-Collaboration Model”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 24:4, 2003, pp. 658-668.