

PALESTINIAN SOLIDARITY TOURISM:
A RAPID ASSESSMENT OF HOST EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory study examines Palestinian host experiences with, and perceptions of, Solidarity Tourism in Palestine (STP). Solidarity tourism is a form of justice tourism that emphasizes solidarity with the subjects of oppression. This form of tourism emerged in response to mass tourism that has often replicated colonial dynamics around the globe. In the Palestinian context, solidarity tourism has been employed for decades and is estimated to be a \$20 million dollar industry. However, for an industry that is intended to respect the agency of the hosts, surprisingly, there is limited scholarship on host perspectives and experiences. This study hopes to address this gap by utilizing a rapid assessment approach featuring ethnographic methods and is guided by Makkawi's (2009) call for critical community psychology in Palestine. Data collection included semi-structured interviews with Palestinian hosts. Data was analyzed using MAXQDA following Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach. Solidarity tourism in Palestine is both a strategy for nonviolent resistance against Israeli settler-colonialism and a pragmatic source income. Results include forms, pathways, motivations, impacts, and potential improvements to solidarity tourism in Palestine.

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INTRODUCTION

Mass tourism is a global industry worth \$9 trillion, making up 10% of global gross domestic product (GDP) (Constantin et al., 2020). Mass tourism has largely developed and centered around the desires of the wealthy in the geopolitical North who travel to the geopolitical South and often replicate colonial dynamics of exploitation (Korstanje, 2012). Tourism highlights the differential mobility between the geopolitical South and North. Citizens of the geopolitical North enjoy the freedom to travel globally while the structures and policies in their countries typically hold anti-refugee policies and sentiments (Higgins-Desbiolles et. al., 2019). Kelly (2016) argues that mass tourism has historically been a mechanism that hides the impacts of the colonial violence experienced globally. Tucker (2019) similarly contends that mass tourism reinforces hierarchical power imbalances and conceptualizes it as a form of neocolonialism.

In response to many of the concerns with mass tourism, locals and activists as well as justice-oriented tourists developed what has become known as alternative tourism to prioritize social and environmental impacts over profit with efforts to develop more meaningful relationships between hosts and guests (Isaac, 2010; Scheyvens, 2002). Solidarity tourism has been employed in a number of contexts outside of Palestine such as in apartheid South Africa (Thorn, 2006), the United States (Copeland, 2011), Columbia (MacDonald, 2016), Iraq (Brown, 2020), and most recently the Ukrainian war (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2022). Solidarity tourism has proven to be an effective strategy, as Thorn (2006) noted that key activists in the anti-apartheid movement had visited South Africa and witnessed the brutality of apartheid firsthand and connected with South African

activists. This travel solidified their passion and motivation for the organizing work that led to the success of the transnational anti-apartheid movement (Thorn, 2006).

Palestine is a site that engages heavily in both mass tourism as a religious and historical destination as well as alternative tourism in solidarity with the ongoing Palestinian struggle against Israeli settler-colonialism.¹ Researchers examining alternative tourism in Palestine typically focus on its role in achieving peace with limited investigation of Palestinian host experiences with alternative tourism (Kelly, 2016). I propose to bridge this gap by conducting an exploratory study of host experiences with a specific form of alternative tourism known as solidarity tourism in Palestine².

SOLIDARITY TOURISM IN PALESTINE

As illustrated in Figure 1, Alternative Tourism is a broad category that encompasses other specific forms of tourism such as sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and justice tourism. The third of these specific forms, justice tourism involves “purposeful travel directly aiming to meet criteria of social, political and environmental sustainability” (Isaac & Hodge, 2011, p. 101). In justice tourism, participants align themselves with the disadvantaged and oppressed. My proposed study will focus on solidarity tourism in Palestine, a form of justice tourism emphasizing solidarity between the tourist and Palestinian hosts. I characterize solidarity tourism to Palestine as travel to Palestine that

¹ Settler-colonialism is a term referring to a form of colonization that employs an ongoing system of power and oppression that seeks to colonize and replace indigenous societies, with success achieved when the colonizer is presented and recognized as indigenous (Wolfe, 2006; Veracini, 2013; Salamanca et al., 2012).

² I use first-person voice throughout this article to remain aligned with my epistemological approach. For more information on the use of first-person language in academic writing, see Webb, 1992.

2002, p. 104, as cited by Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009, p. 336-337). Palestinian solidarity tourism can be defined as any travel to Palestine that includes the elements listed above and can include the explicit aim of being in solidarity with Palestinians under Israeli settler-colonialism. This would not include any tours and groups that reinforce Israeli settler-colonial propaganda such as the Israeli Birthright programs (see Clyne, 2010).

Table 1 provides an example itinerary for the first day of a solidarity tourism delegation. According to the itinerary, tourists first learn about the realities of Palestinian life in the Old City of Jerusalem. After the Old City of Jerusalem, the tour continues in Bethlehem where they learn about the Bethlehem context and visit one of the refugee camps, meeting with Palestinians connected to community organizations and residents. For an example of a first-person narrative related to this itinerary that goes beyond Day 1, see Appendix.

Table 1

Example First Day itinerary for solidarity tourism group

Day Time	Location	Summary
Day 0 8:00-17:00	Arrival at Tel Aviv Airport and Pickup	<i>We have multiple arrival times, so pickup is coordinated with each person/group.</i>
17:00-	Rest and Adjust to Time Difference	After arrival at the hotel in the Old City of Jerusalem, you'll have the day to rest and adjust to the time difference. Meals are provided at the hotel, and you are welcome to explore the area.
Day 1 8:00-10:00	Old City of Jerusalem	<i>Palestinian Jerusalemite Guide:</i> Walking tour of different quarters and witnessing the settler enclaves in the Old City and highlighting the surveillance Palestinians are subjected to.
10:00-11:30	Meeting with residents of Jerusalem	<i>Palestinian Jerusalem Residents:</i> We will spend this time with 4 residents of Jerusalem who will share about their experiences under Israeli occupation and apartheid in the context of the Old City of Jerusalem.

Table 1 (cont'd)

11:30-12:30	Lunch in Old City of Jerusalem	<i>Lunch at Palestinian restaurant:</i> The owner will share about the experience of being a business owner in the Old City.
12:30-13:15	Bus to Bethlehem	<i>Palestinian guide on bus:</i> Guide will share about the path we are taking, one that most Palestinians aren't allowed to travel on. This will be the first Israeli military checkpoint we cross as a group, notice how cars aren't stopped and there is no walking path. This is a drive-thru only checkpoint, meaning Palestinians with green ID's can't use it. Reserved for settlers, foreigners, and blue ID holders.
13:15-14:30	Bethlehem-Community Organization	<i>Meeting staff at organization:</i> Staff will share with us their work and local context and the challenges they face. We will also have a chance to speak and meet with some of the youth involved in their programs.
14:30-14:50	Bus to refugee camp in Bethlehem	<i>Palestinian guide on bus:</i> Guide highlights the placement of the refugee camp and what to expect.
14:50-16:30	Aida Refugee Camp	<i>Meeting staff at organization:</i> Debriefing about Aida Camp and challenges. Staff-person will lead a walking tour of the camp taking us through the history of how the camp became what it is today.
16:30-19:00	Dinner in groups	<i>Small group dinners:</i> Split into groups of 3-4, dinner is with local residents in Aida. This is a chance to connect and converse with Palestinians.
19:00-19:30	Bus to hotel	
19:30-21:30	Desserts & Reflection	<i>Debrief with dessert:</i> Palestinian <i>Knafeh</i> provided during our debriefing/reflection session at hotel conference room.
21:00-	Rest	<i>Be sure to get enough rest for tomorrow.</i>

Understanding Palestinian experiences with solidarity tourism is of paramount importance due to solidarity tourism's role in international organizing for Palestinian liberation from Israeli occupation, and because of its practical importance to Palestinians. In terms of its practical importance to Palestinians, solidarity tourism provides an important avenue for income for Palestinians. As alternative tourism in Palestine accounts

for an estimated 5 percent of all tourist activities in Palestine, the estimated economic value of solidarity tourism in Palestine could reach a value of 20 million US dollars (Kelly, 2016; Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics [PCBS], 2020a). Below, I discuss the context, development, and history of solidarity tourism in Palestine, the connections to Palestinian community psychology, and review extant literature.

Development of Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

Solidarity tourism developed in response to Israeli policies aiming to systematically and structurally isolate Palestine from the rest of the world, and to deprive Palestinians of resources and rights (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Kassis & Solomon, 2013). Under Israeli occupation, Palestinians have restricted movement through a web of walls, fences, settlements, and checkpoints throughout the West Bank (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015). The Gaza Strip has been under Israeli military siege since 2007, with even more restricted mobility than the West Bank (Barakat et al., 2020). These restrictions on Palestinian mobility prevent Palestinian access to fundamental services such as healthcare and education (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013). Palestinian mobility is dictated by the color of license plates and *Hawiyyas* (ID Cards) with different ID cards for Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and Israel (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013; Tawil-Souri, 2012). The *Hawiyyas* and attached permits define which Palestinians can go where, when, and for how long (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013).

Higgins-Desbiolles (2015) highlights the stark inequalities in freedom of movement between Israelis and Palestinians. Whereas Israeli settlers can move freely throughout the West Bank and Israel, Palestinians are confined to certain areas and roads within the West Bank (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015). Moreover, the occupying Israeli army rarely, if at all,

grants Palestinians permission to travel beyond the 440-mile apartheid³ wall that encircles the Palestinian population (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015). The wall “separates Palestinians from their schools, their fields, their relatives, and each other” (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015, p. 44). This wall has received ample international condemnation. For example, the International Court of Justice ruled the wall to be a violation of international law and ordered its dismantling in 2004 (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Kattan, 2007). Nevertheless, the wall has continued to be built and expanded by Israel (Alsaafin, 2019).

Although restrictions on movement are crucial to contextualizing tourism, it is important to note that restrictions on mobility are not the sole feature of the occupation. The occupation includes social and political control, and acts of military aggression including extrajudicial executions, and state-sanctioned assassinations of Palestinians by Israeli operatives (Schaeffer Omer-Man, 2017; Rosenfeld, Ziv & Al-Bazz, 2022).

Kelly (2023) highlights the history and development of solidarity tourism in Palestine. Kelly lists three goals for Palestinians engaged in solidarity tourism: a) to challenge Israeli state narratives and raise awareness of the Palestinian reality under Israeli occupation; b) to keep Palestinian presence in areas and fields that are under threat by Israeli expropriation; c) to confront “the racialized asymmetries in their profession that privilege tourists’ accounts of what they witness over Palestinian narratives of their own displacement” (Kelly, 2023, p. 4). Kelly (2023) discusses the development of solidarity

³ Apartheid was used to describe the formal system of segregation and discrimination based on race in South Africa. Apartheid is now used to refer to any formal system of racialized oppression. The use of apartheid to describe the wall Israel built in Palestine is intentional to accurately depict the impact. Israel has developed a system that segregates and discriminates against Palestinians and formally states that the right of self-determination applies exclusively to the Jewish people (Amnesty International, 2022)

tourism in Palestine with attention to the first *Intifada*⁴ (uprising) before these trips were formalized. The discussion centers Palestinian attempts and efforts to challenge Israel's dominion and oppression and one of the ways they did this was by employing solidarity tourism in Palestine (Kelly, 2023).

History of Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

Up to 1993: Roots of Solidarity Tourism

Prior to 1993, solidarity tourism in Palestine took the form of informal groups visiting to learn about and support Palestinian liberation. These groups were called for by Palestinians who called the international community to *come and see* the impacts of Israeli settler-colonialism since the 1970s (Jean-Klein, 2002). Some of these groups' involvement began due to relationships with Palestinian Christians and churches such as the first visit of the General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in 1996 (Weiderud, 2005). The early connection of churches to the Palestinian struggle helped lay the foundation for the network that was leveraged by the Kairos Palestine document discussed below. At the time, the occupying Israeli state did not allow Palestinians to become officially licensed tour guides (Kelly, 2016). Since becoming eligible for licensing, only forty-two tour-guiding permits were issued to Palestinians, while more than 8,000 licenses have been issued to Israeli guides (Kelly, 2016). By the year 2000, more than a million tourists came through the West Bank annually, most as mass tourists (Kelly, 2016). Using differential licensing for Palestinian vs Israeli tour guides, the Israeli state ensured that the majority of these

⁴ The first Intifada was a grassroots Palestinian uprising against Israeli military occupation that involved years of sustained community organizing and resistance. Palestinians employed a variety of strategies in response to worsening Israeli suppression and violence such as the use of underground classrooms when Israeli forces outlawed education for Palestinian students (Makkawi, 2017).

tourists were only exposed to experiences that the Israeli state deemed appropriate. For instance, many tourists' only exposure to Palestine is when they are visiting the Nativity Church in Bethlehem, where they are shepherded into and out of the church post-haste (Kelly, 2020).

2000-2005: Second Intifada

Between 2000 and 2005, the second Intifada took place. This was a period of Palestinian armed resistance to Israeli occupation. During this time, Israel barred tourists from entering Palestinian areas, leading to significant deterioration of the tourist industry of Palestine (Kelly, 2016). This ban on foreign tourists also included attempts, mostly successful, to prevent international observers, such as UN aid workers and the International Committee of the Red Cross, from accessing sites of Israeli military action (United Nations [UN] News, 2002). The height of violence in this time period was the Spring of 2002 when the 6 largest Palestinian cities were placed under military siege that led to the killing and injury of almost 2,000 Palestinians (UN News, 2002). The brutality of this time period is seen in the case of the Jenin massacre of 2002 where the Israeli military conducted a campaign of mass arrests accompanied by the systematic extrajudicial execution of at least 52 Palestinians that were then buried under buildings demolished by bulldozers (Ridley, 2020; UN, 2002; UN News, 2002). Although mass tourism was greatly reduced between 2000 and 2005, solidarity tourists continued to find ways into Palestine to witness, document, and engage in solidarity with Palestinians during repressive military violence perpetrated by the Israeli state (Dudouet, 2006; Kassis et. al., 2015). This included a number of Christian and church-related efforts such as the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI), the Community (formerly Christian)

Peacemaker Teams, and more secular efforts like the International Solidarity Movement (Leppert-Wahl, 2017; Weiderud, 2005).

2005-2019: Return to Tourism

As the second Intifada came to an end, the tourist industry recovered slowly. Hotel activity did not return to the 1999 levels until 2008 (Aljazeera, 2005; Faraseen & Bader, 2011). In 2009, a coalition of Palestinian Christian churches and church related organizations around Palestine came together and issued a call to the world from a Palestinian Christian perspective in Jesus' birth city, Bethlehem (Kairos Palestine, 2009). They called on the international community to stand in solidarity for justice against the oppression of the Israeli occupation and called for economic sanctions and boycott against Israel to bring an end to the Israeli occupation (Kairos Palestine, 2009). The Kairos Palestine call to action spurred increased interest in the international Christian community to come and see especially through their international conferences that attract hundreds of new and seasoned solidarity tourists to Palestine (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2016; Sangguniang Laiko ng Pilipinas, 2018; Wright, 2022). By 2013, solidarity tourism in Palestine made up about 5 percent of the tourism sector, amounting to as much as \$20 million US dollars of revenue (Kelly, 2016; PCBS, 2020). Nevertheless, issues of differential licensing – and differential access to tourist sites – between Israelis and Palestinians continue. Moreover, Israel continues to subject tourists that announce they are going to Palestine, or who have Arab names or features, or have spent time in Arab countries, to interrogation and deportation (Kelly, 2020). The targeting and limiting of the Palestinian state continues, especially as it relates to tourism, particularly solidarity tourism.

2020- Present: Current Status

It is important to note that— as a result of the global coronavirus pandemic— most, if not all, tourism into Palestine was halted from early 2020 (Isaac & Abuaita, 2021). The absence of tourists coincided with an escalation in direct Israeli military violence. Israeli demolitions of Palestinian homes and forced displacement almost doubled in 2021 compared to 2017, with 907 structures demolished and 1,204 people displaced compared to 421 structures demolished and 664 people displaced in 2017 (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], n.d.). In addition, Israel conducted a triple assassination in the West Bank on February 15, 2022 (Rosenfeld, Ziv, & Al-Bazz, 2022). This form of mid-day military assassination had not occurred in the West Bank in over 15 years (Rosenfeld, Ziv & Al-Bazz, 2022). This raises the possibility that solidarity tourism could deter some forms of Israeli state violence.

Solidarity Tourism and Community Psychology

As Palestinian community psychology operates within a colonial context, it should advance the anticolonial struggle (Makkawi, 2009; Meari, 2015). Makkawi (2009) argued that Palestinian community psychology is more akin to Latin American liberatory psychology than US community psychology and is closely tied to liberatory struggles. Community psychology in Palestine affirms resistance and legitimacy of anticolonial struggles (Meari, 2015). Considering the role of Palestinian solidarity tourism and the overall goals of advancing the Palestinian national struggle, Palestinian solidarity tourism can be situated as one of the enactments of community psychology in Palestine.

Solidarity tourism in Palestine is central to Palestinian community psychology practice. The roots of community psychology and Palestinian solidarity tourism can be

found in the community organizing of the first Intifada (Kelly, 2023; Makkawi, 2015). The development and expansion of solidarity tourism in Palestine began as informal groups in the First Intifada supporting and learning about the Palestinian struggle for liberation and has been employed as a strategy ever since (Kelly, 2023). Jean-Klein (2002) notes that solidarity tourism was a strategy used to educate international students, professionals, and consultants with the goal of gaining advocates for the Palestinian liberation movement. With this in mind, solidarity tourism in Palestine was first and foremost a strategy to advance the Palestinian national struggle against Israeli settler-colonialism.

Scholarship Examining Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

Scholarly examination of solidarity tourism in Palestine has most often involved conceptual reflections and arguments for practice, with only seven published articles reporting on empirical research. For example, scholars have discussed solidarity tourism as a form of alternative tourism less susceptible to cooptation by mass tourism and presented case studies examining various Palestinian forms of solidarity tourism (Barnard & Muamer, 2016; Dudouet, 2006; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Kassis et al., 2016; Khalilieh, 2016; Kutulas & Awad, 2016; Selwyn & Isaac, 2016). Overall, scholars have 1) contextualized the tourist industry in Palestine with emphasis on the political realities, especially the Israeli settler-colonial military occupation; 2) situated solidarity tourism within the broader efforts and strategies for nonviolent resistance to the Israeli military occupation, and 3) identified areas for potential development, contributions, and advances in solidarity tourism.

Historical and Political Contextualizing of Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

Scholars emphasize that the Palestinian tourism industry cannot be examined without the socio-political realities this industry faces (Barnard & Muamer, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2016; Isaac & Platenkamp, 2012; Isaac, 2013; Isaac & Ashworth, 2011). Shoval & Cohen-Hattab (2001) examine the spatial shifts and patterns in tourism and political regimes in Jerusalem over the last 150 years. They detail the shifts across the decline of the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate of Palestine, the split control of Jerusalem among Israel and Jordan, and the current Israeli control of Jerusalem.

Brin (2006) discusses politically oriented tourism in Jerusalem, equating Palestinian tourism with Israeli tourism and labeling them both as belligerent and classifying both as a type of propaganda. Higgins-Desbiolles (2013) contends that Brin's arguments are insufficient at best, and offers an alternative argument rooted in a critical analysis and understanding of ongoing Israeli settler-colonialism. Higgins-Desbiolles' (2013) analysis centers the differential power dynamics between the Israeli military state and Palestinians subjected to Israeli settler-colonialism. Without addressing Brin (2006) directly, Isaac & Platenkamp (2012) present an argument that overlaps with that of Higgins-Desbiolles; in situations such as the Israeli occupation neutrality favors the oppressor. This argument expands on earlier work by Isaac (2010b), where he argues that "the context of the circumstances in Palestine and Israel is that of colonialism, apartheid, and racism, a situation in which there is an oppressor and an oppressed, a coloniser, and a colonised" (p. 587).

Much of the conceptual literature on tourism in Palestine engages the sociopolitical realities (i.e. Israeli settler-colonialism and the impact on Palestinian society), grounding

any analysis in the impacts of ongoing Israeli occupation, military law, and settler-colonization (Almbaid, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Isaac, 2009; Isaac, 2010a; Isaac, 2010c; Kassis, 2006). For example, Isaac (2011) reviews the impact of the apartheid wall on tourism and tourism development. In later work, Isaac (2017) conceptualizes justice tourism as a response to Israeli violations of Palestinian rights, especially relating to the continued inequitable distribution and access to water resources.

Some scholars have paid special attention to identifying the ways tourism has been used by Israeli officials to reinforce settler-colonialism through the erasure and replacement of Palestinian history and existence (Barnard & Muamer, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Kassis, 2013; Noy, 2013). For example, Israel uses national parks and museums to erase Palestinian infrastructure (Barnard & Muamer, 2016). Such is the case of Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, which is built on a site where Jewish militias massacred the Palestinians in the village of Deir Yassin (Duffy, 2001). The existence of the museum draws attention away from the massacre and prevents the return of survivors and their descendants to their land. Additionally, Israeli law prohibits the victims of massacres and expulsions from mourning on *Nakba*⁵ (catastrophe) Remembrance Day (Abdel-Fattah, 2013).

Situating Solidarity Tourism in Broader Palestinian Resistance

A number of scholars have focused on situating solidarity tourism in the context of Palestinian resistance. From this perspective, solidarity tourism in Palestine can be understood as a strategy of nonviolent organizing to resist Israeli settler-colonialism

⁵ The Nakba refers to the 1948 ethnic cleansing of Palestine and establishment of the Israeli settler-colonial state. Ninety percent of the Palestinians in what became Israel were driven out (Masalha, 2008).

(Dudouet, 2006). For example, Isaac (2016) recognizes the prevalence of pilgrimage tourism but calls for a reimagining of this form of tourism to advance the struggle against military occupation.

Other scholars focus on the way Palestinian solidarity tourism is used strategically to highlight differential mobility between the visitor and the locals (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2016; Kelly, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013). For example, in Hebron, one of the largest Palestinian cities in the West Bank, Shuhada Street (renamed as King David St. by Israelis) is referred to as “Apartheid Street” (Arnoldi, 2015). Palestinians are not permitted to be on this street, even those that live in the houses on the street are required to enter through the back, while foreigners and Israelis can roam freely (Kelly, 2016).

Strategies employed in support of the Palestinian struggle include raising awareness on the realities of the Israeli occupation of Palestine (Isaac, 2010b; Isaac & Platenkamp, 2012; Kassis, 2006; Kassis, 2013), challenging Israel's monopoly over tourism (Kassis, 2013), economic contributions through fair trade tourism (Al-Rimmawi, 2003; Kassis, 2013), developing relationships (Isaac & Platenkamp, 2012), inspiring action in their home countries (Isaac & Hodge, 2011; Isaac & Platenkamp, 2012; Kelly, 2016), and supporting local Palestinian organizing and resistance (Dudouet, 2006; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Noy, 2013).

Higgins-Desbiolles (2009) recognizes that although solidarity tourism is more appropriate for Palestine, there are some limitations including the fact that tourist encounters are short-term and not a long-term solution to the injustices faced in Palestine. Similarly, there is a concern that the retelling of tourist stories when they return home evoke pity to the Palestinian people, while feeling compassion for the storyteller (Higgins-

Desbiolles, 2009). This concern was echoed by Kelly (2020) in recognizing that even solidarity tourism exists because settler-colonial logic views Palestinians as unreliable thus requiring people to see the oppression with their own eyes. Some solidarity tourists may approach their tourism with colonial logic expecting to see the suffering of Palestinians first-hand, and unsure how to respond when their expectations are disrupted. This is seen when tourists consider whether enjoying their solidarity tours and having joyful experiences with Palestinians diminishes the portrayal of the cruelty of the occupation (Kelly, 2020). The reality is that Palestinians are not solely defined by their oppression, rather they live in spite of it (as powerfully illustrated in Rafeef Ziadah's iconic spoken word performance, *We Teach Life, Sir!*⁶).

A number of case studies explore specific examples of solidarity tourism in Palestine, with two primary examples used: the Alternative Tourism Group & the International Solidarity Movement (Dudouet, 2006; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Kassis et al, 2016). The Alternative Tourism Group is a Palestinian organization based in Beit Sahour offering justice tours that follow what they call the advocacy strategy for tourism (Kassis, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013). The advocacy strategy refers to their tours that are intended to uncover the roots of the Israeli settler-colonial project by hearing from people that are directly impacted by the oppression (Kassis, 2013).

As for the International Solidarity Movement, the contribution to the Palestinian struggle is more direct in terms of activism on the ground. In a case study examining the Palestinian International Solidarity Movement, Higgins-Desbiolles (2009) discusses the

⁶ A performance of this piece can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aKucPh9xHtM>

potential of solidarity tourism as well as potential limitations and obstacles. The International Solidarity Movement engages tourists as volunteers aiming to: 1) Protect Palestinians engaged in nonviolent resistance, 2) Challenge mainstream media misrepresentation or omission of the Palestinian struggle, 3) Bear witness to the realities and share about them when they return home, 4) Break sieges and isolation from the rest of the world (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009). The International Solidarity Movement is an example of solidarity tourism that follows the lead and responds to the needs of local Palestinian organizers and activists.

International Solidarity Movement tourists joined active nonviolent resistance led by residents in the village of Budrus (Dudouet, 2006). The residents of Budrus led a 10-month nonviolent resistance campaign to the erection of the apartheid wall on their land, which would have cut them off from 300 acres of village land (Dudouet, 2006). Although Israel still built the wall, they were able to shift the location, losing a smaller portion of their land (Dudouet, 2006). As evidenced in Budrus, earlier iterations of solidarity tourism in Palestine called on internationals to stand in solidarity in Palestine by engaging in active nonviolent resistance or serving as international observers with the hope of restraint by the Israeli military for fear of international condemnation (Dudouet, 2006; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2010). More recently, Palestinian hosts engaged in solidarity tourism are calling upon tourists to organize and advocate within their home country to end policies that support Israeli settler-colonialism (Kelly, 2016). For example, the primary call to tourists from the United States has been to end 3.8-billion-dollar annual US military aid to Israel (Horton, 2021).

Areas for Development, Contributions, and Advances in Solidarity Tourism

Scholars have identified areas for potential development of solidarity tourism in Palestine (Almbaid, 2016; Cakmak & Isaac, 2016; Isaac, 2016; Selwyn & Isaac, 2016; McIntosh & Alfaleet, 2016). Some scholars have discussed the Gaza Strip as a potential site for increased development around tourism while also recognizing the potential of tourism to advance efforts towards peace based on justice (Almbaid, 2016; McIntosh & Alfaleet, 2016). Isaac (2016) draws attention to the potential of pilgrimage tourism in transforming to a form of solidarity tourism that contributes to Palestinian needs. Other scholars have discussed the potential for experiential community-based tourism in Palestine (Kutulas & Awad, 2016; Saadeh, 2016). Khalilieh (2016) explores the potential of a Palestinian campaign to reconnect Palestinians in the diaspora to Palestinians in Palestine and spur investment for the goal of development. That said, this author also raises the concern that some forms of economic development can normalize the existence of the occupation under continued Israeli settler-colonialism and may lead to a “Five Star Occupation” (Khalilieh, 2016, p. 121).

Significance

To date, scholars have made important contributions to the theory and practice surrounding solidarity tourism in Palestine. My work builds upon these contributions by centering the experience of Palestinian hosts. Very few existing empirical studies have centered these experiences, an approach that—by definition—elevates other perspectives as having priority over those of people who are purportedly the focus of solidarity tourism and prevents their perspectives from influencing this form of tourism.

RESEARCH QUESTION

My overall goal with this study was to explore Palestinian hosts' experiences with, and perceptions of, solidarity tourism in Palestine. For the purpose of this research study, the term host refers to any Palestinian engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine, including sociopolitical tour guides, staff of host community organizations, Palestinian families/individuals that house solidarity tourists, and Palestinians that engage with programs where Palestinian locals are invited to converse and develop relationships with visitors as an element of solidarity tourism.

Specifically:

- What are hosts' typical forms of engagement or involvement in solidarity tourism in Palestine?
- How do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine?
- Why do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine?
- What control do Palestinian hosts have over their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine?⁷
- What impacts of solidarity tourism do hosts perceive on themselves and on participants?
- What do hosts recommend to improve solidarity tourism in Palestine?

⁷ It was originally my intent to answer this question directly, but it became apparent that this question was not received well and closed people off, as it may have been received as insulting and counteractive to their goals of further expanding solidarity tourism.

METHODOLOGY

Research Paradigm and Approach

My approach was framed by Makkawi's principles for critical community psychology in Palestine (Makkawi, 2009). Briefly, Makkawi (2009) suggested that researchers who study Palestine should recognize the systematic nature of trauma, stand in solidarity against state violence and oppression, identify and call out the roots of oppression, support community efforts to rebuild and heal from oppression, and emphasize social change alongside healing and education. I implemented these principles using a rapid assessment approach featuring ethnographic methods to efficiently arrive at culturally responsive interpretations that can support Palestinian hosts (McNall & Foster-Fishman, 2007).

Reflexivity

As a Palestinian scholar based in the United States, I have a number of key assumptions that guide and frame my research. First, Palestinians struggle against a settler-colonial project. Second, Palestinians have a right to self-determination. Third, Palestinian research must not be independent of the struggle for justice. Fourth, Palestinians are agents of change and researchers should respect their agency. Fifth, Palestinians are the experts of their reality. Sixth, as is the case globally, the Palestinian context is largely patriarchal, and researchers must engage in practices that ensure and support gender equity.

Solidarity tourism has played a formative role in my life. As the son of organizers and community leaders, I spent much of my childhood meeting and speaking with international visitors to Palestine. In my hometown of Bethlehem, we often joked that

because we were not able to freely travel to see the world, the world travels to see us.

These interactions broadened my worldview and illuminated oppressive dynamics between visitors and hosts such as differential mobility and access to wealth.

Positionality

As a Palestinian from Bethlehem, I am committed to the struggle for Palestinian self-determination and human rights. I have been engaged in Palestine related advocacy and education since I was a child. As a Palestinian from Bethlehem having had experience as a host and organizer in solidarity tourism, I'm both an insider and outsider. Because of my insider positionality, participants interacted in ways that were supportive and would foster my own development. This became more relevant when asking about political and religious identities in trying to gauge if that impacts the type and forms of engagement in solidarity tourism. They avoided the question and clearly did not want to share if they had any political leanings towards one party or another. My interpretation is that they did this in order to reinforce unity in the Palestinian struggle. As a Palestinian from Bethlehem, my experiences are different from Palestinians in the villages around Bethlehem or the Palestinians living in the refugee camps in Bethlehem. The neighborhood I grew up in is historically politically active which meant that there were countless nights where Israeli forces raided and either assassinated or arrested neighbors, and there were numerous times they raided our home whether to conduct searches or to use as a strategic location in their raid.

Additionally, as a Palestinian man, my interactions and access to the perspectives of Palestinian women are culturally limited due to Arab gender norms (see Nydell, 2018). For example, participants seemed less willing to put me in contact with Palestinian women that

fit my participant criteria. It is also possible that those women who I did interview may have been less likely to be critical and share openly about the ways the patriarchy and their identities as women impact their engagement in solidarity tourism. The fact that gender plays a role in the experiences that I was interested—an one that I may have been unable to have adequate insight into—was highlighted by one participant’s sharing that tourists liked to work with her because she offers a female perspective on the Palestinian reality under settler-colonialism.

Context

I collected data in the Bethlehem governorate of the Palestinian West Bank, which offered two advantages. First, Bethlehem is both an internationally recognized tourist destination because of its significance in the Abrahamic faith traditions and a site for struggle against Israeli settler-colonialism; therefore, there is a concentration of organizations that engage in solidarity tourism. Second, although there is mistrust of outsiders relating to this work in the settler-colonial setting, I have established connections and relationships in this location where I have engaged with solidarity tourism as a host and organizer.

On the ground, Bethlehem is surrounded by more than 40 obstacles for Palestinians, of which 17 are Israeli military checkpoints (OCHA, 2017a). These obstacles are used by the Israeli military anytime they want to close off access to the city (for more information, see OCHA, 2017b). The Bethlehem governorate is subject to numerous forms of Israeli settler-colonial oppression including home demolitions, land confiscation, settlement expansion, and is home to three refugee camps housing more than sixteen thousand Palestinian refugees (Negotiation Affairs Department, 2017; OCHA, 2015). My time in

Palestine for data collection was immediately preceded by the Israeli military's killing of the prominent Palestinian journalist, Shereen Abu Akleh. The impact of her killing was felt throughout Palestine and interviewees made multiple references to this crime.

Sampling

Participants

I recruited participants strategically combining case sampling followed by chain-sampling (Teddlie & Yu, 2012), I interviewed 15 participants over 14 interviews as two individuals opted to be interviewed together. I attempted to contact more than 40 individuals and organizations that were thought to have been engaged in solidarity tourism. I received responses from 3 organizations that they did not work in solidarity tourism and the majority either did not respond to contact attempts or their contact information was inaccurate. A few of the organizations contacted were no longer active and some staff shifted to other organizations, potentially as result of the economic fallout of COVID-19 (see Isaac & Abuaita, 2021). Participants' ages ranged from 23 to 62 ($M = 47$ years old, $SD = 13.52$). Ten participants were male and 5 female. Their involvement in solidarity tourism ranged from 3 to 37 years ($M = 21$, $SD = 10.87$). Following each interview, I asked interviewees to recommend other potential participants who are involved in solidarity tourism.

Participation Criteria

In order to participate in this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria: 1) Be a Palestinian living or working in the Bethlehem Governorate; 2) Have engaged in hosting, leading, or meeting with solidarity tourists at least 3 times in the period between 2015 and 2020 (i.e., the 5 years before the global coronavirus pandemic); 3) The experience

of tourism that they engaged in meets at least one of four characteristics for solidarity tourism:

- a. Hosts speaking about oppression,
- b. Tourists encountering and witnessing poverty,
- c. Tourists engaging in conservation or development work, and
- d. Tourists engaging in revolutionary tourism.

I conducted interviews between May 2022 and August 2022. Saturation is typically achieved within the first dozen interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). I determined that saturation regarding the breadth of content occurred after interviewing the 15th participant. I reached this conclusion as no new breadth of content had been introduced by participants since the 13th interview. I do note that it is possible that participants might have provided greater nuance if my interviews were focused on in-depth exploration of any one of the multiple phenomena that I focused on. However, my research focused was on broadly understanding a wide range of phenomena within STP rather than conducting an in-depth exploration of any one phenomenon.

Data Collection

Data collection included semi-structured interviews and my corresponding observations. I followed an interview protocol. All participants agreed to have interviews audio-recorded (to allow for later transcription and analysis). Participants chose whether to be interviewed in Arabic or English. Although only three of the interviews were conducted in English, participants did include English words for various points in the interviews.

I recorded field notes from interviews guided by Phillippi & Lauderdale's (2018) approach to field notes, such that they included⁸:

- Basic information (e.g., season at time of data collection, cultural and national holidays at time of data collection).
- Geographic setting (e.g., relation to occupation actions, proximity to threat).
- Societal pressures (e.g., local events and community context).
- Setting of interviews (e.g., proximity to closest Israeli Military outpost or presence, room, space).
- Participants (e.g., nonverbal behaviors, demeanor of participants).
- Interview (e.g., participant response to interview overall, adaptations to interview questions, anything else pertinent to actual interview).
- Critical reflections (e.g., post-interviews after reflecting on the experience, critical reflections may arise).

Data Processing and Technologies

Although this research study did not pose additional risks beyond that of daily life for Palestinian hosts, I took several steps to protect the anonymity of the information they provided. I recorded interviews using a password protected recording device. Any identifying information was removed from transcripts to ensure anonymity. Recordings were stored with double-layer password protection.

⁸ I recorded the field observations for all but the final interview, as there was little variance between the field notes. Most of the relevant field notes were incorporated in the context section that discusses the Bethlehem context, with the exception on a note of the shift in asking about research question #4 which is discussed in the results and discussion sections.

Data Analysis

I used MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software that can work with Arabic and English to implement Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis (TA) approach. This approach involved 1) familiarizing myself with data, 2) generating initial coding, 3) searching for themes, 4) reviewing themes, 5) defining and naming themes, and 6) producing the report. Data analysis was an iterative process that cycled through the steps a number of times to ensure clarity and accuracy. To familiarize myself with the data, I listened to all recordings and reviewed the transcripts multiple times. Because the interviews were conducted in the colloquial Palestinian Arabic, which does not have a standard written form, I also frequently referred to the interview recordings to ensure accuracy of the transcripts. The initial coding involved generating numerous codes and taking note of any potentially important ideas related to my research questions. After the initial coding, I sorted codes according to themes (e.g., proximity to tourists as a pathway to engagement in solidarity tourism). After identifying themes, I reviewed all themes for clarity and consistency. I then named and defined themes which guided the development of the report. The report included the development of tables 2 through 7 and the selection of illustrative quotes to accompany the results.

Trustworthiness

I took several steps to ensure trustworthiness and quality in this research project. First, I followed the 15-point checklist for good thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The checklist has guidance for the steps throughout the data processing and analysis with specific consideration for: transcription, coding, analysis, and the written report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Second, I evaluated trustworthiness according to the constructivist

paradigm which includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004). I evaluated credibility by seeking feedback on the preliminary findings from participants using a synthesized member checking approach (Birt et. al., 2016), triangulated between interviews and literature, debriefed with my research partner in the field, and sought peer scrutiny of a subject matter scholar and my graduate chair (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004). I address transferability by clearly discussing demographics, context, participants, information on data collection, and time period (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004). I established dependability by detailing the study design and implementation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004). I fostered confirmability through detailed description, illustrative quotes, and emphasis on triangulation in the discussion (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Shenton, 2004).

RESULTS

In Tables 2 through 7, I present the results of my data analysis. Following Sabella & El-Far's (2019) practice, I protect participants' anonymity by the use pseudonyms for their names that consisted of demolished Palestinian villages around Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Research Question 1: What are hosts' typical forms of engagement or involvement in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Table 2

Forms of Solidarity Travel to Palestine

Broad form of STP Specific form	What it can look like
Exposing social political and economic realities under Israeli military occupation.	Exposing the realities of living under Israeli military occupation with attention to social, political, and economic impacts.
Meeting with local organizations, especially with civil society, women, and Palestinian youth organizations and groups.	Travelers meet with local organizations to learn about their daily lives, struggles, and their work. There is particular interest in women and youth.
Learning about Palestinian farmers and their struggles.	This can involve going out and meeting with farmers, speakers detailing their struggles, and helping with the olive planting and harvest.
Exploring prisoner issues including child prisoners.	This often involves a former political prisoner speaking to tourists about their experiences in Israeli prisons and exposing human rights violations such as torture and forced transfer out of Palestinian territories.
Visiting refugee camps.	These are often walking tours through refugee camps detailing the stories of the places as they walk through, with some meetings with local residents and an opportunity to hear about their experiences.
Hebron tours as case study of Israeli settler-colonialism and occupation	The Hebron tours involve visiting the old city, walking to the Ibrahimic Mosque and viewing this experience as a microcosm of Israeli settler-colonialism. Al-Shuhada' St in Hebron is closed to Palestinians, and reserved for foreigners and Israeli settlers, with all Palestinian shops on the road forcibly shut. This highlights the segregation of roads and areas within the West Bank.

Table 2 (cont'd)

Examining Israeli settlements and the settler movement	This is often achieved through bus tours through the hills of the West Bank and pointing out Israeli settlements on the hills, and Palestinian villages below. Travelers may visit the villages that are subjected to Israeli settler violence and expansionism and speak to residents to learn about their experiences.
Learning about the apartheid wall and its impacts on the landscape, resources, and people.	This often begins as a presentation with maps highlighting the size and scope of the Israeli Apartheid wall. After a preliminary introduction, tourists are often taken to look at the wall from a distance, where it can be seen “like a snake” (‘Artuf) cutting through valleys and mountains. The map of the wall is also shown next to a map of natural resources, highlighting the theft of Palestinian resources, especially control of water aquifers.
Examining land theft and annexation by the Israeli state.	This involves looking at maps that show how the West Bank is split into Areas A, B, C, with settlements and the wall clearly indicated. Hosts share about land their families and communities have lost to the Israeli state from 1948 to modern day land theft.
Hiking and highlighting geopolitical changes and landscape.	Hikes throughout the West Bank often involve going through rural areas where farmers struggle to maintain their farmland in the face of settler-violence and Israeli military occupation. These hikes can also involve going through demolished Palestinian villages, as well as villages that have been able to survive expulsion and annexation attempts such as Battir, near Bethlehem. This also includes pointing out indigenous and invasive fauna and flora and their connection to the Israeli settler-colonial project.
KAIROS Palestine, a movement led by Palestinian Christians to call for global solidarity to advance justice in Palestine.	A movement from Palestinian Christian leaders calling on the global community to work towards a sustainable and just solution. With special attention to STP to Palestine calling on Christians around the world to come not only to see the historic stones, but also the living stones.
Introductions to the Boycott Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) Movement.	Some hosts debrief tourists on the BDS Movement as a nonviolent movement to hold Israel accountable and to challenge profits off the violation of human rights and international law. This form is also cited as a reason some organizations have lost some of their funding from international partners.
Focus on Palestinian culture, traditions, and relationships	This broad form of STP focuses on developing relationships with Palestinians and experiencing Palestinian culture and traditions.
Homestays and getting to know Palestinians	These are used to allow for tourists to get to know Palestinians and as a form of STP that directly supports Palestinians as a pragmatic form of income.
Cuisine tours that can be embedded into sociopolitical tours.	These cuisine tours include Palestinian food, with an emphasis on challenging Israeli attempts to co-opt and advertise Palestinian food as Israeli. Travelers can also be a part of the preparation of food, which can be collective such as in the case of stuffed grape leaves and <i>shishbarak</i> and are used as opportunities to socialize in Palestinian society.

Table 2 (cont'd)

Highlighting pluralism and diversity in Palestine (Muslims, Christians, Samaritans, Druze, Bahais, etc.)	This form of STP involves visiting various communities throughout historic Palestine, including the Druze, the Samaritans, etc.
Travelers engaging with Palestinian organizations and the community with the intention of advancing the struggle for human rights and self-determination	This broad form of STP is more focused on longer stays for tourists to engage in volunteering and research at local organizations.
Travelers volunteering with and supporting local organizations.	Travelers that have visited Palestine before or have had friends and family visit often reach out to organizations for opportunities to volunteer. One of the best ways this happens is that the tourists fundraise for the organization and then travel to offer their services as well as fiscal support for their programs. One of the most common ways this happens is as a volunteer with summer camps.
Travelers engaged in research that protect and advance Palestinian rights and self-determination.	This form of STP involves students and scholars that engage a part of the Palestinian experience or struggle in their work or towards achieving a degree. For example, this study was completed in partial fulfilment of a PhD.

I detail the forms of solidarity tourism in Palestine raised by participants in Table 2.

Table 3 covers the same forms of solidarity tourism but includes a quote from participants that named or referenced that form of solidarity tourism. I organized these into three broad categories of solidarity tourism in Palestine: (a) exposing the social, political, and economic realities of Palestine under Israeli settler-colonialism, (b) exploring Palestinian culture, traditions, and relationships, and (c) engaging with local organizations and communities with the intention of advancing the struggle for Palestinian human rights and self-determination.

The first broad form of solidarity tourism in Palestine involves exposing the sociopolitical and economic realities of Palestine under Israeli settler-colonialism. This form of solidarity tourism in Palestine is conducted through tours and presentations by

Palestinian hosts and can include: meeting with local organizations and groups, learning about the Palestinian farmers and their challenges, exploring political prisoner issues (including child prisoners), visiting refugee camps, visiting Hebron as a case study of Israeli settler-colonialism, examining Israeli settlements and the Israeli settler movement, learning about the apartheid wall and its impacts on landscape, resources, and people, examining land theft and annexation by the Israeli State, hiking and highlighting geopolitical changes and landscape, KAIROS Palestine as a Palestinian Christian movement calling on the international community to come and visit the living stones, and introductions to the boycott divestment & sanctions (BDS) movement as a possible way for people to advocate for Palestinian rights.

Ayn Karim shared about when a tourist asked a former Palestinian child political prisoner what he would do if his torturer were present:

‘How can you ask me such a question when I know what it is like to be tortured’ but then he continued and he said ‘If you asked what I wish to do, I wish to become an Arabic teacher as I wish to be able to teach the people of my country to be prideful in who they are and the culture that they come from’.

This encounter occurred during a solidarity tourism session that connected a former prisoner to tourists. It is not uncommon for Palestinian hosts to share personal accounts of some of their most difficult experiences.

The second broad form of solidarity tourism in Palestine focuses on Palestinian culture, traditions, and relationships. Hosts’ work to connect tourists to Palestinians through homestays which help facilitate relationship development. In an effort to introduce tourists to Palestinian culture, hosts organize cuisine tours that can also be embedded

within programs that focus on exposing the sociopolitical realities but are also possible to be independent of those forms of solidarity tourism. Additionally, hosts discussed efforts to highlight pluralism and diversity in Palestine by visiting various religious communities such as the Samaritans, Druz, and Bahais.

The third broad form of solidarity tourism in Palestine consists of tourists engaging with Palestinian communities and organizations through volunteering and scholarly research that may enhance and promote Palestinian rights and self-determination. Much of the research is conducted by students using the research in partial fulfillment of a degree.

Table 3

Forms of Solidarity Tourism with Quotes

Broad Form of STP Specific form	Quotes in English	Original Quote if in Arabic
Exposing social political and economic realities under Israeli military occupation.	“Many people...don’t know [what] life looks like for a Palestinian living under occupation. It’s very important to tell your story, about the reality, how [life is] for a Palestinian”. (Bayt Mahsir)	
Meeting with local organizations, especially with civil society, women, and Palestinian youth organizations and groups.	“Women’s groups ... that we as an organization work with and showed [the tourists] the nature of our work” (Dayr ‘Amr).	مجموعات نسوية ... الي احنا كمؤسسة منشغل فيها وفرجيناهم طبيعة عملنا.
Learning about Palestinian farmers and their struggles.	“We invite [solidarity tourists] to participate in a program that is about 10 days with the primary goal of being in solidarity with Palestinian farmers in the Bethlehem Governorate” (‘Aqqur).	مندعيهم للمشاركة ببرنامج مدته تقريبا 10 ايام والهدف منه التضامن بشكل رئيسي مع المزارعين الفلسطينيين بمحافظة بيت لحم.
Exploring Prisoner issues including child prisoners.	“We have a special focus and target on child prisoners” (Ayn Karim).	

Table 3 (cont'd)

Visiting Refugee Camps.	"There are also visits to Palestinian [refugee] camps" ('Aqqur).	يكون في كمان زيارات لمخيمات فلسطينية.
Hebron tours as case study of Israeli settler-colonialism and occupation	"For example, in Hebron there is Hai-Jaber, which is near a settlement, and they are not allowed to walk there at all" (Dayr 'Amr).	زي في الخليل في حي جابر وهو قريب ع مستوطنة وممنوع يمشوا في نهائي.
Examining Israeli settlements and the settler movement	"[Solidarity tourists] see the settlements directly how they impact people's lives and see the settler harassment present there daily" ('Aqqur).	يشوفو الاستيطان مباشر كيف بأثر على حياة الناس ويشوفو مضايقات المستوطنين الموجودة بشكل يومي.
Learning about the apartheid wall and its impacts on the landscape, resources, and people.	"There is a society and people living here under [Israeli] occupation ... Like the [refugee] camps and the wall and Aida camp, which has a special status by the wall" (Bayt 'Itab).	في مجتمع وشعب عايش هون تحت الاحتلال ... زي المخيمات والقرى والجدار ومخيم عايدة اله وضعية خاصة بحكم الجدار.
Examining land theft and annexation by the Israeli state.	"When we had this problem with the land, confiscation and so on, I started inviting guest groups to visit" (Bayt Mahsir).	
Hiking and highlighting geopolitical changes and landscape.	"I would take them on a hike from the Makhroul to Battir and through the hike explain everything about the timeline of the conflict, the geography, the wall, the settlements, because you are in a place that is harmed" (Bayt Thul).	فكنت اخدهم على هايك من المخروور لبتيير من خلال الهايك تشرحهم كل اشي عن [تاريخ الاحتلال] الجغرافية, الجدار, الاستيطان, لانك موجود بمحيط موقع متضرر.
KAIROS Palestine, a movement led by Palestinian Christians to call for global solidarity to advance justice in Palestine.	"The Kairos [Palestine] Document, through it our message to the international community as Palestinians, but here Kairos Palestine, our calls to the world from a Christian perspective" (Dayr 'Amr).	وثيقة كايروس [فلسطين], من خلاله رسالنا للمجتمع الدولي باعتبارنا فلسطينيين بس هون كايروس فلسطين كان توجهنا للعالم من منطلق مسيحي.

Table 3 (cont'd)

Introductions to the Boycott Divestment & Sanctions (BDS) Movement.	"Lectures about [the boycott divestment and sanctions movement], we may discuss it a little and how it has advanced the subject of solidarity tourism" (Aqqr).	ومحاضرات عن [حركة المقاطعة] هذا ممكن نحكي عنه كمان شوي وكيف ساهم كثير في موضوع السياحة التضامنية.
Focus on Palestinian culture, traditions, and relationships		
Homestays and getting to know Palestinians	"They send people to our houses, and they will profit a little bit and they stay, they see, they live with families, they take them into the area of conflict" (Bayt Naqquba).	
Cuisine tours that can be embedded into sociopolitical tours.	"I began doing Palestinian cuisine tours, and once we had breakfast in Jerusalem, lunched in Hebron, and had dinner in Beit Jala. They had a lot of fun, it's an experience for them and for me. I also introduced them to my community and my people" (Al-Burayi).	صرت اعمل [جولة اكل] فلسطيني ومرة افطرننا بالقدس تغدينا بالخليل وتعشينا في بيت جالا وكثير انبسطوا فهيك يعني بتكون خبرة الهم وانا بالنسبة الي كمان عرفتهم على مجتمعي وعلى ناسي.
Highlighting pluralism and diversity in Palestine (Muslims, Christians, Samaritans, Druze, Bahais, etc.)	"Getting to know the plurality of our nation and going to Nablus to meet the Samaritan brothers or the Golan and the Druze brothers or Haifa for the Bahais. This is considered solidarity tourism to know the social, religious, and demographic reality" (Allar).	التعرف على تعددية الوطن والذهاب الى نابلس للتعرف على الاخوة السامريين أو في الجولان على الاخوة الدروز أو زيارة لحيفا للبهائيين. وهذه تعتبر سياحة تضامنية لمعرفة الواقع الاجتماعي الديني الديموغرافي.
Travelers engaging with Palestinian organizations and the community with the intention of advancing the struggle for human rights and self-determination		
Travelers volunteering with and supporting local organizations.	"Every year they would bring 10 to 15 [international] volunteers and send them to schools, in churches" (Bayt Thul).	كل سنة كانوا يجيبوا 10 ل 15 متطوع بيعتوهم على المدارس بالكنائس.

Table 3 (cont'd)

Travelers engaged in research that protect and advance Palestinian rights and self-determination.	“There is one woman here now from Spain. She is also a researcher and is working on the subject of women and Palestinian resistance and is meeting with women” (‘Artuf).	وحدة موجودة هلا من اسبانيا كمان هي باحثة وقاعدة بتشتغل ع موضوع المرأة المقاومة بفلسطين ويتسوي لقاءات مع المرأة.
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Research Question 2: How do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in

Palestine?

Table 4

Pathways to Engagement in Solidarity Travel to Palestine

Themes Sub-themes	Quote	Original Arabic Quote
Engagement/employment in an organizations or local committees that work in STP	“I was working at [a church organization] in the 90’s and we started a program called the alternative tourism [sic] which is a way to involve the tourists that are coming to see more than dead stones and to interact with people let us say to walk the old city and meet some people” (Bayt Mahsir).	
Used as a strategy to respond to Israeli attempts to dispossess and land theft	“We had some groups coming between 1991 and 2002 and all started when the Israeli Authorities declared the [land] as state land, so we started hosting solidarity groups to come and see ... and then go back and tell” (Bayt Mahsir).	
Service on popular committee that developed an element focused on STP	“I was in the popular committees and [wondered] how did I want to implement [STP] in reality, so I created like a small department that had to do with this [STP]” (‘Artuf).	أنا كنت باللجان الشعبية وكيف بدى اطبقه على الواقع فعملت زي [قسم] علاقة بهذا الموضوع وبعدها كنا بنأسس بمركز ... منشغل فيه وشوي وشوي واحنا منكون فيه.

Table 4 (cont'd)

Organization's networks abroad and locally led to engagement in STP to support their work	"The organization's leadership was undergoing internal and external networking and its art and cultural activities developed into performance tours abroad which led to having tourists and our local partners that were already hosting" (Bayt 'Itab).	ادارة المؤسسة كانت عاملة تشبيك داخلي وخارجي وأنشطتها فنية ثقافية فنتج عنها جولات عروض في دول خارجية ادت انه نستقطب مجموعة من السياح بالاضافة للشركات مع المؤسسات المحلية الي بتستقبل اساسا.
Proximity to tourists, not explicitly in a position that focuses on STP	"I was working at the souvenir shop and always bewildered at how [tourists] come and don't understand much about the situation, they speak with us thinking we were Jewish or Israelis, and from then, I wanted to be a guide" (Bayt Thul).	أنا كنت بالسنتواري اشتغل وكنت دائما استعرب انه كيف هيك يجوا ومش فاهمين كتير على الوضع بحكوا معنا بفكرونا يهود او اسرائيليين من وقتها كنت حابب اكون دليل.
As a tour guide, not explicitly focused on STP, working with tourists that expressed interest in the sociopolitical realities.	"[I started in STP] from people's questions, you have to be diplomatic and if I wanted to overwhelm people with we and we and we are oppressed. ... I refuse to speak from the perspective of a victim" (Al-Burayi).	من أسئلة الناس، مهو انت لازم تكون دبلوماسي يعني اذا انا بدي انهال على الناس باحنا واحنا واحنا مضطهدين. ... انا برفض هذا الشي بشدة وبرفض احكي من منطلق الضحية.
As a volunteer/ participant at an organization that does STP and engaging in their activities.	"I remember a long time ago, I mean, we were here at the organization. They would have international summer camps and those in solidarity would come from all over the world, even during the second Intifada, they would support the people, and have activities for the children, and teach English... we were part of their activities" (Dayr al-Hawa).	بتذكر من زمان، يعني احنا هون بالمؤسسة كانوا يعملوا مخيمات صيفية دولية لمتضامنين اجانب يجوا من كل العالم حتى بفترة الانتفاضة الثانية كانوا يساندوا الاهالي ويعملوا فعاليات للأطفال ويدرسوا انجليزي ... ونكون جزء من نشاط غيرنا.
As an employee with regular tourist contact (e.g., front desk at an institution), where tourists may express interest in learning about the sociopolitical realities and Palestinian culture.	"I started at a hostel in Bethlehem, foreigners would come in and start telling me about how difficult the airport and [King Hussein] bridge were, how they were afraid to come to Bethlehem, so these topics would be discussed. Sometimes we'd be sitting together... and they'd discuss these topics, and, of course, I would share so that they can better understand the reality we live. I would share about my life experience, about the context we live in about the sieges, the difficulties we experience as a family, I'm half Jerusalemite and Bethlehemite, and all the obstacles they [Israel] put for us" (Dayr Rafat).	بلشت في هوستل موجود في بيت لحم، الاجانب يدخلوا وهما يبلشوا يحكوا كيف المطار او الجسر عجب عليهم، كيف خافوا انه يجوا ع بيت لحم فكان ينفتح هيك مواضيع او مرات قاعدين مع بعض ... وبيبلشوا هيك موضوع وطبعا كنت ادخل معهم عشان افهمهم اكثر عن الواقع الي احنا عايشينه. كنت احكي عن خبرة حياتية موجود فيها عن الوضع العايشين فيه الحصارات الي بتصير الغلبة الي بتصير لالنا كعيلة انا نصي قدس نصي بيت لحم، قديش في غلبة نلنقي يحطولنا عراقيل.

As summarized in Table 4, I identified two major themes in participants' answers about their pathways to engagement in solidarity tourism to Palestine. The first is employment/engagement in organizations or popular committees⁹ that work in solidarity tourism in Palestine. The second is proximity to tourists, not explicitly in a position that focuses on solidarity tourism in Palestine. The first theme involved employment or engagement in organizations or local popular committees that engage in solidarity tourism in Palestine. This theme included three subthemes: (a) the hosts employed solidarity tourism in Palestine as a strategy to respond to Israeli land theft and dispossession, (b) hosts served on popular committees, and (c) organizational networks led to engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine.

The second theme included three sub-themes: (a) mainstream Palestinian tour guides that develop solidarity tourism components; (b) volunteers/participants at local organizations that engage in solidarity tourism in Palestine; and (c) employees with regular tourist contact responding to tourists' interest in learning more about Palestinian sociopolitical realities and culture. Dayr 'Amr, shared " تجربتي بلشت كأنا كصبيبة التزمت بمؤسسة وكانت " (My experience began as a young woman committed with an organization that would host internationals that wanted to learn how we as youth are living in Palestine. So, we would come and speak about our cause")¹⁰.

⁹ Popular committees can be described as neighborhood level groups that serve the local population by responding to community needs through activities such as mutual aid and food distributions. See Hanbali (2022) for more information.

¹⁰ Quotes are presented in their original language first, if the language of the interview was Arabic, then english follows in parenthesis. However, if the interview was in English, the quote will be presented only in English.

Research Question 3: Why do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Table 5

Motivations for Engagement in Solidarity Travel to Palestine

Themes Sub-themes <i>Specific elements of the sub-theme</i>	Quotes	Original Arabic Quote
As a form of resistance/ contribution to national struggle, including:	"This is my resistance, this is something I can do and understand. I have passion for it, and this is the way I can resist" (Bayt Thul).	هاي هي مقاومتي يعني هاي شغلة بقدر عليها وفاهمها وفي شغف الها وهاي هي الطريقة الي بقدر اقاوم فيها.
To fight for their community's rights.	"My motivation is my faith in the Palestinian cause and that our cause is just. As Palestinians, we want to live in peace and maintain our rights, that's why we are calling for justice for the Palestinian people" (Dayr 'Amr).	الدافع ايمانني بالقضية الفلسطينية انه قضيتنا قضية عادلة كفلسطينيين بدنا نعيش بسلام والمحافظة على حقوقنا عشان يهك احنا بنطالب العدالة للشعب الفلسطيني.
<i>Due to experiencing oppression and to share about it.</i>	"I grew up in an environment and my environment is political. The first missile fell on my grandfather's house in 1967, my grandfather, uncle, and aunt were martyred... we grew up understanding that we have the right and freedom to defend our national cause" (Dayr 'Amr).	وغير هيك كمان انا تربيت في بيئة الي هي بينتي السياسية انه اول قذيفة نزلت ع دار سيدي بال 67 فتم استشهد سيدي وخالي وخالتي فتعودنا بالوطنية بعروقنا من اجدادنا يعني احنا ربينا انه لنا الحق والحرية في الدفاع عن قضيتنا الوطنية.
<i>Working to enhance international advocacy.</i>	"That we are seeing the results of our work. First, the groups and solidarity delegations and the people that want to learn about the country and the Palestinian cause are increasing and as a result of our efforts we are seeing many solidarity networks with us and the Palestinian people" (Aqqur).	انه عمالنا منشوف نتائج شغلنا، اول اشي الجروبات والوفود التضامنية والناس الي حابين يجوا يتعرفوا على البلد وعلى القضية الفلسطينية عماله بزاد ونتيجة شغلنا عمالنا منشوف كثير من الشبكات المتضامنة معنا ومع الشعب الفلسطيني

Table 5 (cont'd)

As an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, anti-colonial struggle.	“My motivation ... is political and to change people’s understanding and solidarity... The American when he comes... If he wants to be in solidarity with the global cause, and he is against colonization... to stop supporting colonization... it’s not solidarity it’s a joint international struggle... it’s a struggle against imperialism, against capitalism, against colonization, don’t tell me solidarity in its literal meaning” (‘Artuf).	دافعي للاستمرار ... هو سياسي وتغيير مفاهيم الناس والتضامن ... الأمريكي لما يجي هان ... اذا بده بتضامن مع القضية العالمية وهو ضد الاستعمار ... يوقف دعم الاستعمار ... فهو مش تضامن هو نضال مشترك أممي ... هي نضال ضد الامبرالية، نضال ضد الرأسمالية ضد الاستعمار فما تقلي التضامن بمعناه الحرفي.
To challenge misrepresentation of Palestine in Western Media.	“[My motivation is] getting the awareness to the Western world because there’s an image that is misrepresenting us. When they are able to see the reality, when they go home they share the reality they saw. That’s the awareness and from awareness we get solidarity for a better life for myself and my children. So it comes back to me to live in a better reality” (Dayr Rafat).	[دافعي] نقل الوعي للعالم الغربي لانه في صورة كبيرة معاكسة لنا فلما يكونو قادرين يشوفوا الواقع فيقدروا لما يروحوا ع بلادهم ينقلوا الواقع الي شافوه فهي الوعي ومن الوعي يصير في تضامن معنا لحياة افضل الي ولولادي. فالمرجوع راجع الي عشان اقدر اعيش في واقع احسن.
To build bridges across cultures.	“It’s a form of building bridges between different cultures” (‘Allar)	عبارة عن بناء جسور بين الثقافات المختلفة.
Because of a sense of responsibility.	“We felt this is a social responsibility we bear, that’s why we continued with what’s in our hearts” (Dayr al-Hawa).	منحس انه هاي مسؤولية مجتمعية لازم نحملها عشان هيك كملنا من الي كان قبلنا.
Because they feel passion for their work.	“It is my passion, I mean it’s the best thing ever if your hobby is your career, it’s very important. Additionally, I have a political passion and love my country and want it to become better and I believe that we are developing our country and strengthening its steadfastness” (Dayr Aban).	بالشغلة هاي يعني احسن اشي بالدنيا اذا هوايتك هي مهنتك هذا اشي مهم. بعددين انا عندي شغف سياسي بحب البلد وبدي اياها تصوير للأفضل وعلى اعتقادي اننا منساهم في تطور البلد وتقوية صمودها.

In Table 5, I detail participants’ motivations for engagement in solidarity tourism. I found four broad themes: (a) as a form of resistance/contribution to national struggle, (b) to build bridges across cultures, (c) because of a sense of responsibility, and (d) because they feel passion for their work. The first theme, as a form of resistance or contribution to the national struggle, was the richest and most discussed motivation for host engagement

in solidarity tourism in Palestine. This theme is tied to the struggle for liberation and self-determination. As Ayn Karim shared: “I believe in this work and I think as a student of peace studies and nonviolence and civil disobedience it becomes clear that the greatest threat to the Israeli occupation is civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance”. This theme also included three subthemes: (a) fighting for their community’s rights and to enhance international advocacy; (b) as an anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and anti-colonial struggle; and (c) to challenge misrepresentations of Palestine in Western media.

The second theme, to build bridges across cultures, includes explicit recognition of the value of cross-cultural encounters as a way to expand knowledge and widen horizons. The third theme, because of a sense of responsibility, is rooted in feeling responsible for the realities they and their communities face, and that they can improve their community’s reality through this work, both locally and nationally. The fourth theme, because they feel passion for their work, includes participants that explicitly named that they have a passion for their work with solidarity tourism in Palestine and consider it a calling not just a source of livelihood.

Research Question 4: What control do Palestinian hosts have over their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

It was originally my intention to directly ask participants about possible inequities and the control they have over their engagement, but it became apparent in the first interviews by their avoidant responses and body language that this question was not received well and closed them off. However, this research question is indirectly answered through the findings of research questions 2 and 3. My question was meant to examine potential problematic dynamics in solidarity tourism but was poorly received as hosts aim

to promote solidarity tourism. Thus, the question itself was perceived as potentially counter to their interests as the critique may lead to decreased numbers of solidarity tourists for fear of reinforcing oppressive dynamics. Instead of directly asking about this, I aim to answer this question by examining the pathways to engagement and motivations for engagement. Their involvement in solidarity tourism in Palestine is both by choice and out of necessity. Palestinian hosts view solidarity tourism in Palestine as one of their greatest contributions to the Palestinian national struggle for liberation and self-determination. They engage with solidarity tourism in Palestine with the ultimate goal of advancing their struggle for justice and recruiting allies into the Palestinian solidarity movement. Dayr Rafat shared that their goal is:

نقل الوعي للعالم الغربي لانه في صورة كبيرة معاكسة لنا فلما يكونو قادرين يشوفوا الواقع فيقدروا لما يروحوا ع بلادهم ينقلوا الواقع الي شافوه... فهي الوعي ومن الوعي يصير في تضامن معنا لحياة افضل الي ولولادي (Raising awareness in the Western world, because there is huge misrepresentation of us, so when [foreigners] are able to see the reality, they can, when they go back to their countries share about the reality they saw... from awareness, solidarity develops with us for a better life for myself and my children).

As this and Ayn Karem's quote in Research Question 3 highlights, their engagement is done with the explicit awareness that they are contributing to the national struggle and in spite of the potential harm and hardship they may experience as a result of this engagement.

Research Question 5: What impacts of solidarity tourism do hosts perceive on themselves and on participants?

Table 6

Impacts of solidarity Travel to Palestine

Category Themes Sub-themes	Example Quote	Original Arabic Quote
Psychosocial Impacts		
Personal development (self confidence, teamwork, conflict resolution skills, etc).	"The impact on my character is that I strengthened my self confidence, to be confident in myself and speak in front of foreigners about my cause" (Dayr 'Amr).	التأثير على شخصيتي قوت عندي الثقة [بالنفس] انه اكون واثقة انه احكي قدام الاجانب عن قضيتي
Feeling connected to world outside of Palestine (feeling that we are not alone).	"When we are able to engage with those who are coming for solidarity it is always hopeful and it inspires hope because we are told through their very existence ... to hear our difficulties that we are not alone" (Ayn Karim).	
Feeling fulfilled for contributions to national struggle.	"We are delighted that we feel that we are contributing something to our nation, that we are promoting the Palestinian cause and gaining solidarity. This gives us a feeling of satisfaction and happiness that we are contributing and fulfilling our responsibility for our nation" ('Aqur).	احنا مبسوطين انه احنا منحسن انه منقدم اشئ للبلد، انه احنا منروج للقضية الفلسطينية ومنكسب متضامنين وهذا بعطينا شعور انه احنا [راضيين] وبالسعادة انه احنا منقدم واجبا للبلد.
Fear, fatigue, anxiety, trauma, and stress.	"There are negatives like fear, anxiety, worrying, and PTSD, some people say they can't sleep anymore, I can't sleep I get nightmares at night. Especially seeing how Israel assassinated the journalist [Shereen Abu Akleh] or assassinated a child or tortured the boy or girl, it's impact is deep from a psychological perspective ... and what Israel is practicing is uncivilized" ('Allar).	وفي سلبيات مثل الخوف والقلق وبصير [اضطراب] وفي قسم بقلك بطلت أقدر انام مش ممكن انام بتجيني كوايبس بالليل وخصوصا لما نشوف كيف اسرائيل اغتالت الصحفية او اغتالت الطفل أو عذبت الولد أو البنت فتأثيرها عميق من ناحية سيكولوجية ... وانه اسرائيل الي بتمارسه غير حضاري.
Action		
Visitors come to volunteer and serve local efforts, which has led to:	"Many people come and think to come back to volunteer here after they meet the people" (Bayt Umm al-Mays)	كثير ناس بييجوا وبفكروا انه يرجعوا يتطوعوا بالبلد بعد ما يتعرفوا على الناس.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Decreased settler-attacks in some cases.	"Since we [started having] international visitor groups and volunteers ... attacks from settlers have stopped" (Bayt Mahsir).	
Some positive policy shifts for some Palestinians.	"I see some movement for my rights, I feel that I am living in a slightly improved position. If you came 3 years ago, I was not allowed to drive ... because there is international pressure ... I have West Bank ID and through family reunification, I can drive into Jerusalem with my car. ... My wife [with Jerusalemite ID] had to drive me around for the last 10 years [because I couldn't drive our car because it was an Israeli license plate], but now I can drive myself ... Similarly, 4 years ago, I was able to get health insurance ... from my perspective, STP had a big part in understanding the reality and made improvements" (Dayr Rafat).	عم بشوف في تحريك نوعا ما لحقوقي يعني عم بشوف اني عايش بشوي موقع افضل يعني اذا اجيت قبل 3 سنين كان ممنوع اسوق ك فلسطيني... لانه صار في ضغط دولي... مررتي كانت شوفيرة الي 10 سنين اليوم انا قادر اسوق ... كمان قبل 4 سنين صار في عندي تأمين صحي... السياحة التضامنية بنظري الها شغل كثير كبير انه يفهم الواقع ويتحسن.
Relationship development and partnerships between local and international organizations.	"In general, I strengthened my international and local relationships, and I developed an expertise in the political realities in Palestine. I had many opportunities to travel to many European countries and delivered lectures at universities around the world about the Palestinian cause" (Dayr al-Hawa).	بشكل عام قويت علاقتي الدولية والمحلية صار عندي خبرات اكثر بالواقع السياسي الفلسطيني صحتي فرص وسافرت على كثير دول اوروبية واعطيت محاضرات في جامعات كثير بالعالم عن موضوع القضية الفلسطينية.
Visitors becoming involved in advocacy in home country, for example:	"What I'm seeing in the last few years, STP helped to increase Western society's awareness, and the standard view that the Arab Palestinian is bad has transformed into nations lifting up our struggle in their counsels and their own struggles and increasing awareness in their nations" (Dayr Rafat).	الي بشوفه في اخر سنوات, نقل السياحة التضامنية ساعدت على رفع الوعي بالمجتمع الغربي والنظرة الي كانت دايمه انه عربي فلسطيني سيء اليوم عنا دول عم ترفع قضيتنا قدام المجالس والقضايا تبعهم بدولهم وعم ترفع الوعي بدولهم.
Fundraising to support humanitarian efforts, programs, and organizations.	"Some of them began rallying support and funds for some humanitarian causes" (Allar).	في منهم صار يحشد معونات أو أموال لبعض القضايا الإنسانية.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Advocacy on specific issues (medical aid, BDS, family reunification, prisoners rights, and children's rights).	"[The tourist] became advocates for the Palestinian people and undergoing campaigns ... to provide medical surgeries in Palestine. Every so often, they come with doctors and spend 10 to 20 days and they conduct medical operations or help with teaching or serving our community" ('Allar).	وصارت مناصرة للشعب الفلسطيني وتقوم بحملات وهذه من اهداف السياحة البديلة... بعمل عمليات جراحية بغزة وكل فترة بتيجي لغزة مع اطباء ويقعده 10 ل 20 يوم وبسوا عمليات طبية أو بيجو بدرسوا أو بخدموا بالمجتمع.
Contributing to local media about Palestine.	"Some [tourists] write articles in the newspapers, some do interviews on radios and televisions" ('Aqur).	في ناس يكتبه مقالات بالصحف، في ناس بعمله مقابلات بالراديوهات والتلفزيونات.
Visitors challenge false portrayals of Palestinians in media.	"they would write to me and say 'we now understand the news in a different way and see that it's very one sided', because they came 'we started telling our friends that, no, it's not how it really is, we were there'" (Al-Burayi).	بكتبولي بحكولي صرنا نفهم الاخبار بشكل ثاني ونشوف انه كتير [من جانب واحد] فهما عشان كانوا هون صرنا احنا نحكي لاصحابنا لا مش هيك احنا كنا هناك.
Palestinians invited to share abroad through:	"The issue at Sheikh Jarrah, a while ago, at 11:30 at night, on Free [Press] Washington DC, they called me to speak about this issue" (Dayr 'Amr).	"قضية الشيخ جراح قبل فترة الساعة 11 ونص بالليل على حرة واشنطن ديبي اتصلوا فيا تلفون احكي عن هاي القضية"
Online solidarity tourism programs.	"online, where you speak to them with Skype, Zoom, and YouTube, at the same time is alternative tourism" ('Allar).	لاونلاين الي انت بتحكي عليهم مثل السكايب والزووم واليوتيوب وبنفس الوقت السياحة البديلة.
Invitations for Palestinians to travel to speak in other countries.	"They [tourists] told me 'when we go back home, we can't repeat what you said but we want to tell our organizations and congregations, we have to tell them in Germany so they know, please come and give a lecture' and I travel and give lectures" (Al-Buriya).	بحكولي "احنا لما نرجع ع بلادنا ما منقدر نعيد الي حكيتي بس احنا بدنا نحكي لمؤسساتنا لرعايانا، لازم نحكيلهم لازم بالمانيا يعرفوا، تفضلينا عنا واعمل محاضرة" وبسافر وبعمل محاضرات.
International exchanges with youth and organizations.	"We have exchanges, and we can send volunteers abroad long term, like a year, and we have accreditation to do this work" ('Artuf).	في عنا تبادلات ومنقدر نبعث كمان [متطوعين] على برا [لوقت طويل] يعني لسنة ومعنا [الاعتماد] انه نقدر نعمل هذا الحكي.
Learning		
Culture and thought exchange.	"We can learn from one another but on the same level, eye to eye level not just to say we are learning from you and you are teaching us, no, we are learning from one another" (Bayt Mahsir).	

Table 6 (cont'd)

Travelers change in perspective on Palestine, which is seen through:	"Some [tourists] may have a full transformation in their thinking and awareness. ... this leads them to want to be in solidarity" (Dayr Rafat)	في منهم يمكن عنده تغيير كامل بالفكر والوعي ... وهذا الاشئ بخليهم بدهم يتضامنوا.
Increasing global empathy and solidarity with Palestine.	"We were able to change the world, and we all know that the level of solidarity with the Palestinian people in the last few years is much higher than previous years" (Dayr al-Hawa).	وبصراحة قدرنا نغير في العالم وكلنا منعرف انه اليوم مستوى التضامن مع الشعب الفلسطيني بالسنوات هاي اكبر بكثير من السنوات الفائتة.
Challenging stereotypes & perspectives that view Palestinians as inferior.	"They come with assumptions and then leave with a different thinking. They think the Palestinian is coming to steal from them ... but they see the reality and they have a change, they begin to recognize how the Palestinian human is warm and welcoming ... and how high [our] hospitality is, and they return home relishing these things" (Dayr 'Amr).	هما بيچوا حاملين اشئ براسهم وبروحا بفكر مختلف. بفكروا انه الفلسطيني جاي يسرقهم ... بس يشوفوا ع ارض الواقع بصيروا عندهم تغيير بصيروا يحسوا قديش مثلا الانسان الفلسطيني [دافئ ومرحب] ... و[الضيافة] قديش عالية, فهما بروحوا ع بلادهم يتغنوا بهذا الاشئ.
Transformation of tourist from Zionist to advocate.	"The chief mayor, he came 10 years ago and we developed a sister city with them, I'm always in charge of these delegations, so I took them to Hebron ... and we have a peace festival every September ... and he said, 'I was pro-Israel, I was a pure clone ... you helped me understand and opened my eyes about the truth', he went back and joined the BDS movement" (Al-Burayi).	رئيس رؤساء البلديات، اجا عنا قبل 10 سنين وصارت التوأمة ودايما انا مسؤولة عنهم وعن وفدهم فاخذته على الخليل ... وكل سنة شهر 9 منعمل مهرجان السلام ... حكالي "انا كنت داعم إسرائيل وكنت نسخة نقية ... الي انتي فهمتيني اياه" وهذا و اشئ بفخر فيه "انه الوري جيتيني اياه فتح عيني على الحقيقة" فهو رجع ع بلده وانضم [لحركة المقاطعة].
Opening tourists' eyes.	"We opened peoples' eyes, this is how things start, not only when they come here but when we go there, sometimes like with people who never been in Palestine and then the first thing is using a new perspective, a new story, so it helps them to understand" (Bayt Mahsir).	
Hosts gaining different perspectives and awareness on Israeli occupation	"I developed more knowledge of my country, I began to love it more. I started to learn its history and multiple narratives ... because these questions are going to be asked, and the people coming can be professors... He has read many books and has some familiarity, and you bear the responsibility to help them understand the subject more. Through my engagement my awareness and knowledge increased" (Bayt Thul).	صار في عندي معرفة اكثر عن بلدي صرت احبها اكثر. صرت اعرف تاريخها اكثر صار عندي المام لرواياتها... لانه كل هاي الاسئلة راح تتسأل عنها, ومرات الي جاي يشوف هو يا برفسور ... هو قارئ عدة كتب وصار عنده نوع من الالمام فانت بدك تكون على قدر المسؤولية الي تقدر تساعده يفهم اكثر الموضوع. يعني من خلال مشاركتي زاد الوعي والادراك.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Hosts learning about other people's struggles	"A few days ago, we had tourists from Pakistan, and they were subjected to occupation and pressure and all these things, and there really was a cultural exchange, and an exchange of the political experiences, and of war, and pressure. It's not just me expanding the horizons for people interested in hearing about me, I also expand my horizons and hear people and understand more about the world" (Bayt 'Itab).	من اكم يوم اجوا ناس من باكستان, وكانوا متعرضين لامور الاحتلال والضغط وكل هاي الأمور, فهي كانت فعليا تبادل ثقافي, وتبادل بالتجارب السياسية, والحروب, والضغط. فهي مش انا بس بفتح افاق الناس الي جاية تسمع عني, برضوا انا بتنتفتح افاقي وبسمع الناس وبفهم اكثر عن العالم.
STP Development		
STP developed to a place it can be economically viable for Palestinians, in addition to being a strategy for advocacy.	"Today, we succeeded in showing the tourism offices that this work can also make you money and this is an accomplishment" (Dayr Aban).	اليوم احنا نجحنا انه نورجي مكاتب السياحة انه كمان هذا الشغل بسويكلوا مصاري وهذا نجاح.
Increasing number of Palestinians working/involved in STP.	"During Corona, I worked better than a large hotel. This is a difficult feat, I was able to have people come and stay [at our guest house] in these circumstances and to have income and hired women. We worked on our community, I mean people from Ramallah, Nazareth, Jenin, and Nablus, and whoever comes, knows we have a guest house so they stay with us" (Bayt Umm al-Mays).	انا اشتغلت بالكورونا احسن من اوتيل كبير. فهذا تحدي الي انه انا قدرت اجيب ناس يناموا عندي في هيكل ظروف ودخل مصاري وشغلت البنات فيه. اشتغلنا على المجتمع, يعني كان ناس من رام الله والناصرة وجنين ونابلس الي بيجي بعرف انه في بيت للضيافة فينام عنا.
Local organizations and efforts gain fiscal support through STP.	"This man ... came and got to know me and then this happened. Now they want to send money every month to support the organization" (Bayt Umm al-Mays, translated form Arabic).	هذا الزلمة ... اجا تعرف علي وطلع من هذا الاشئ. هلا بدهم يصيروا يبعنوا كل شهر اشئ بسيط للمركز.
Increasing number of solidarity tourists, as:	"The numbers [of solidarity tourists] is increasing, the number of those in solidarity and the solidarity delegations are increasing" ('Aqqur).	الاعداد عمالها بتزيد, اعداد المتضامنين والوفود التضامنية عم بتزيد.
Travelers promote STP in their home country.	"Most people that come once they want to come back again... they feel a responsibility about the situation and they want to tell more people and they want to bring more people" (Bayt Thul).	ومعظم الناس الي اجوا اول مرة بدهم يرجعوا كمان مرة ... وبيشعروا انه عندهم مسؤولية اتجاه الوضع بدهم يحكووا لناس اكثر وبدهم يجيبوا ناس اكثر.

Table 6 (cont'd)

Shift from fear of coming to Palestine to increased travel.	“People would send us emails saying they’d like to come but it’s a dangerous place and it would put our lives at risk so we can’t come. When they began coming and seeing that at least its safe on the local level, peaceful and not aggressive and that the Palestinian people are welcoming of foreigners ... if a traveler walked on their own in the refugee camp at 11pm they won’t feel like a stranger” (Bayt ‘Itab).	وكانوا دائما يبعثوننا رسائل انهم حابين يجوا ع فلسطين بس هاي منطقة خطرة ويتعرض حياتنا للخطر وما منقدر نيجي. فلما صاروا يجوا ويشوفوا انه الوضع على الاقل امن على المستوى المحلي مسالم ومش عدائي وانه الشعب الفلسطيني مرحاب وبستقبل الاجانب ... لو اجنبي مرق لحاله الساعة 11 بالليل ما راح يحس حاله غريب.
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In Table 6, I detail the perceived impacts of solidarity tourism to Palestine. I

organized host responses into 4 broad categories: (a) psychosocial impacts, (b) impacts that can be characterized as action, (c) impacts related to learning, and (d) impacts that highlight the development of solidarity tourism in Palestine. Each category is discussed below.

Psychosocial Impacts

Psychosocial impacts included the following themes: (a) personal development such as self-confidence, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills; (b) feeling connected to the world outside of Palestine; (c) feeling fulfilled for contributions to the national struggle; and (d) fear, fatigue, anxiety, trauma, and stress.

Personal development refers to the personal impacts of engaging with solidarity tourism in Palestine as reported by hosts. This included benefits both for tourists and hosts such increased self-confidence, skills in teamwork and conflict resolution, and developing their professional identity and gaining experience. A second theme for hosts was the feeling of connection to the outside world. As Ayn Karim stated: “we are told through [solidarity tourists’] very existence... that we are not alone”. A third theme is the feeling that hosts have contributed to the national struggle for liberation and self-determination by their

engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine. For example, Dayr Rafat said “ بشعر بارتياح اني ” “I feel at ease [knowing] that I did my part and reflected the [reality] and life experiences I am living; this is my impact”).

The psychosocial impacts are largely positive with the exception of the theme focusing on fear, fatigue, anxiety, trauma, and stress. These negative impacts were discussed by hosts as impacting both tourists and hosts. Bayt Mahsir commented on mitigating burnout:

We are not asking you to do more than you can because our struggle is like a marathon, it's not like something you can end in one year... no, it is a long run, maybe not in our generation, so that's why I try to encourage people... to do [solidarity] in a way not to feel at the end tired.

In reference to the PTSD, anxiety, trauma, and fear one participant shared about a volunteer who was oriented on how to respond in case of an Israeli military raid during their stay at their organization. In reality, nothing can prepare people for an Israeli military raid:

قامت تتصل فيا تلفون ,قامت القيامة الساعة خمسة الصبح دخلوا الجيش ... ارتعبت البننت ... الساعة خمسة الصبح ... قلنلها انا عند المركز بالزبط. مجزرة صارت, طخوا ضربوا [the area] ... She was terrified... at 5 in the morning, [all hell broke loose], she got up and called me and I told her I'm right there. A massacre occurred, they shot, hit ...).

Impacts Characterized as Action

One of the central impacts of engagement in solidarity tourism is action that follows or accompanies a person's engagement. This includes (a) tourists' volunteering, (b) relationship development that supports funding and coordinating in organizing and

providing services, (c) tourists becoming involved in advocacy in their home countries, and (d) inviting Palestinians to share abroad about the struggle and their experiences.

One of the most commonly cited impacts is visitors coming to volunteer and serve local efforts, in which I identified two subthemes: decreased Israeli settler-attacks in some cases, and some positive policy shifts. The first sub-theme referencing decreased settler-attacks is perceived as a direct result of volunteer presence in places that had been targeted by Israeli settler groups. The second sub-theme of positive policy shifts for some Palestinians references some improvements around family reunification and freedom of movement, but only for some Palestinians, and largely tied to Palestinians in the West Bank who are married to people without West Bank ID, such as foreigners, Jerusalemites, and Palestinians that remained or were internally displaced on the land that became Israel. The improvement in some of the policies that impact these Palestinians was attributed to increasing global solidarity and presence.

The second theme in this category focuses on relationship development and the ensuing partnerships between local and international organizations as the impact. I placed this theme in the action category because the relationships developed were not passive relationships of simply being acquainted with people or organizations, but rather relationships with accompanying action and active engagement between local and international organizations. Ayn Karim discusses this form of relationship development that “entail[s] new projects and the development of projects”.

The third theme was tourists becoming involved in advocacy in their home countries. Bayt 'Itab, shared “ناس عنجد طلعت صوتها لبرة وبتتفاعل وبتضامن بشكل كثير قوي” (“People really raised their voices externally and are engaged and are strongly in solidarity”). I

organized host responses referencing traveler advocacy in home countries into four subthemes: (a) tourists fundraising to support humanitarian efforts, programs, and organizations; (b) advocacy on specific issues such as medical aid, Boycott Divestment and Sanction (BDS), family reunification, and children's rights; (c) contributing to local media about Palestine through interviews or op-eds; and (d) visitors challenging false portrayals of Palestinians in media by sharing about their experiences and what they saw with their social circles.

The fourth theme was Palestinians invited to share abroad through online solidarity programs, invitations for Palestinians to travel and speak in other countries, and international exchanges with youth and organizations to deepen understandings of each other's experiences and develop cross-cultural relationships. This cross-cultural learning happened at one of these exchanges in Belgium as 'Artuf shared: "كنا ببلجيكا وكان في مجموعة " طليان موجودة ... هلا طلعنا هناك وتحدثنا ... عن الواقع الفلسطيني وهما بعمله عن ايطاليا والعقبات الموجودة الي بتواجههم ("We were in Belgium, and there was a group of Italians present We went there and spoke... about the Palestinian reality and they [spoke] about Italy and the obstacles they face").

Impacts Related to Learning

Learning is a broad category of impacts and includes three themes: (a) bidirectional cultural and thought exchange between tourists and hosts, (b) tourists changing their perspectives on Palestine which includes four subthemes, and (c) hosts gaining different perspectives and awareness of the Israeli occupation. The bidirectional cultural and thought exchange emphasizes the bidirectional element of learning through solidarity

tourism in Palestine, recognizing that both hosts and tourists change as a result of the engagement.

The second theme of tourists changing perspectives on Palestine included subthemes that hosts felt were tied to the changes in traveler perspectives. These included: (a) increasing global empathy and solidarity with Palestine, (b) challenging stereotypes and perspectives that view Palestinians as inferior, (c) transformation of tourists from Zionist to advocate, and (d) opening their eyes. The major difference between the subthemes *transformation from Zionist to advocate* and *opening their eyes* is that Zionists have a more active role in supporting the Israeli state, while the opening their eyes subtheme includes tourists that may have been politically ambivalent.

The third theme primarily highlights the shifts in the host perspectives and understandings of the Israeli military occupation. Through their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine they are motivated and interested in gaining new and deeper insights and perceive this deeper understanding and awareness as an impact of their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine. A subtheme related to gaining different perspectives and awareness of the Israeli occupation is hosts learning about other people's struggles in general, which may be one of the ways their perspective and awareness on the Israeli occupation changes.

Impacts that Highlight the Development of Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

The final category of impacts relates to the development of solidarity tourism in Palestine as a field. This category includes two themes: (a) solidarity tourism in Palestine developed to a place it can be economically viable for Palestinians, in addition to being a strategy for advocacy; and (b) Increasing number of solidarity tourists. Participants cited

increasing number of Palestinians involved and working in solidarity tourism as evidence of solidarity tourism in Palestine becoming economically viable. Additionally, they discussed the local organizations and efforts that are able to gain fiscal support through their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine. As Dayr 'Amr shared: "بصير عندهم حب لدعم وبصيروا يعملوا مشاريع من هدفها التشبيك لعمل مشاريع هون. انا بعرف كثير ناس صارت تلم مصاري وتعمل آبار على مشكلة المياه" ("They develop a passion to support and they begin engaging in projects with the goal of networking to implement projects [in Palestine]. I know a lot of people that began collecting money to dig wells to address the issue of water").

The second theme focused on the increasing number of solidarity tourists in general. This was attributed to tourists' promotion of Palestinian solidarity tourism in their home countries as well as a shift from a fear of coming to Palestine to increasing travel to Palestine. Bayt 'Itab shared that "في بعضهم بودي دعوات لوفود اخرى تزورنا، في بعضهم بشبكوا معانا فردي او" "Some send invitations for other delegations to visit us, and some connect with us as individuals or as groups"). A number of hosts mentioned that many tourists they meet came to Palestine as the result of a family or friend who had traveled there earlier. Bayt 'Itab shared: "اجت مجموعة صبايا وكانوا حابين يطوعوا ... فأنا اول سؤال سألتهم اياه انه كيف انتوا سمعتوا عنا؟" ("A group of women came and were interested in volunteering... so my first question was how did you hear about us? And their friend was actually here with a delegation and told them").

Research Question 6: What do hosts recommend to improve solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Table 7

Changes to Improve Solidarity Travel to Palestine

Category Themes Sub-themes	Quote	
International Advocacy Efforts		
Increased strategic coordination in advocacy abroad.	“Synergizing the solidarity tourists across the globe that is especially within the same locale, because I think you go to the USA and you can go to Washington DC alone and you can probably find at least 10 to 20 different organizations all working for the benefit of the Palestinian community that aren’t necessarily synergized” (Ayn Karim).	
Palestinian Government Development of STP		
Expanding Palestinian embassies’ role in STP abroad (e.g., educating people about Palestine and promoting STP).	“Because we don’t have an online library or information center, no municipality, no village council, no popular committees that provide information about the Palestinian cause before [tourists] come. Our embassies around the world aren’t working, they are sleeping. We need to get to the [tourists] before they come with our embassies, activities, international festivals in the streets at organizations in Europe and America and the whole world” (Dayr Al-Hawa)	لانه معناش ولا مكتبة اونلاين او مركز معلومات ولا بلدية ولا مجلس قروي ولا لجان شعبية بتقديم معلومات عن القضية الفلسطينية من قبل ما تبجي فاحنا سفاراتنا بكل العالم بشتغلوش نايمين فهدول احنا لازم نوصلهم قبل ما يجوا يعني بالسفارات وبالفعاليات والمهرجانات الدولية بالشوارع بالمؤسسات الي باوروبا وامريكا وكل العالم

Table 7 (cont'd)

Developing STP infrastructure for individual tourists (e.g., visitor center at checkpoint 300).	"I don't find that the governmental organizations and ministries, especially the ministry of tourism, are fulfilling their role from this angle. For example, [tourists] arrive at the checkpoint, they are lost if they haven't checked trip adviser, and figured out where [they] want to go. No one is helping and you find [them] stuck between the taxis that want to scam him with fares. Why don't we have an active office from the ministry" (Dayr 'Amr)?	ما بلاقي المؤسسات الحكومية والوزارات خاصة وزارة السياحة ماخدة دورها صح في هذا الجانب مثلا وصل المحسوم بنزل الاجنبي بضيق اذا مش داخل ع ترب ادفايزر وحاطط وين بده يروح وحدا مساعده بتلاقي معلق بين التكايسي الي بدها تضحك عليه بالموصلات، ليش ما يكون في النام مكتب فعال من قبل الوزارة
For municipalities, ministries, and PA to support and promote STP, for example:	"Similar to the way Israel uses media to reflect an image of us, its really important for us to use media, and not to wait for the [traveler] to arrive here to use media and reflect our image" (Dayr Rafat).	زي ما اسرائيل بتستخدم الميديا لعكس الصورة اتجاهنا قديش مهم احنا نستخد الميديا وما نستتي السايح ليحي عنا هون نستخد الميديا ونعكس الصورة
Provide protection for Palestinian guides from Israeli agency censorship and punitive action.	"The Palestinian guide must have rights, and protection. There isn't... protection, I mean if I have a problem, if I spoke a word extra about politics, we are subjected to problems and accusations by the Israeli offices and we feel like we are alone" (Al-Buriya).	لازم يكون الدليل الفلسطيني عنده حقوق عنده حماية ... ما في... حماية يعني لو اتعرض لمشكلة يعني اذا حكينا كلمة زيادة بالسياسة منتعرض من المكاتب الاسرائيلية لمشاكل واتهامات بس احنا منشعر اننا لوحدها
Training		
Maintaining Palestinian hospitality.	"If we have the opportunity, for us to be hospitable, and we are known as hospitable. I mean a cup of tea or coffee will not bankrupt us, and if [tourists] want to pay, we tell them within reason" ('Allar).	اذا يكون في مجال، انه نكون مضيافين ونحن معروفين انه مضيافين يعني كاسة شاي او قهوة ما بتفقرنا واذا هما بدهم يدفعوا منقلهم ضمن المعقول
Trainings for Palestinians involved in STP such as the following:	"The ministry of tourism can do many things... There should be courses... But specifically on this solidarity tourism, the person who chose this career, its not just a career, you have a responsibility" (Al-Burayi).	وزارة السياحة بتقدر تسوي كثير ... ولازم يكون في الهم دورات ... ولكن بالزبط ع هاي السياحة التضامنية يعني الي اختار هاي المهنة هي مش بس مهنة عليك مسؤولية

Table 7 (cont'd)

Strategic and effective communication.	"how you can speak about your cause in an effective way, what strategies that convince you, what are difficult questions ... and how I can answer them" (Dayr 'Amr)	كيف انه انت تحكي قضيتك بطريقة ناجحة ايش الاساليب المقنعة الي بتفتنك، ايش اسئلة صعبة ... كيف بقدر اجاب عليها .
Adding political specialization to the tour guide curriculum.	"There should be more training for tour guides in this area, and increasing their awareness and political understanding. And their information to have direct relationship with the issues regarding the Israeli occupation and the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian struggle" ('Aqqur).	لازم يكون في تدريب اكثر للادلاء السياحيين في هذا المجال ورفع مستوى فهمهم السياسي ومعلوماتهم الها علاقة بشكل مباشر بالقضايا الي بتتعلق بالاحتلال الاسرائيلي والقضية الفلسطينية والنضال الفلسطيني.
Remain current with information shared with tourists.	"To be a person prepared, who has continuous education and always updating. When we began in [1993], the [Israeli] settlers were numbered at 100,000. I can't keep saying the same number, today its 800,000 there's always updates in information and change" ('Allar).	انه يكون انسان مهياً عنده ثقافة متواصلة ودائمة ومحدثة احنا لما بدينا بال 93 كان عدد المستوطنين 100.000 بقدرش أضل أقلهم نفس هذا الرقم اليوم 800.000 يعني دائماً في استحداث للمعلومات وفي تغيير
Changes in Palestine		
Local improvement of promotion and advertising for STP.	"The Bethlehem municipality has 85 twin cities with other municipalities around the world. If the Bethlehem municipality got 3 like us with a laptop, who speak English, to contact these twin cities, they can change quickly, and get the message to the world more quickly" (Dayr Al-Hawa).	بلدية بيت لحم عندها 85 توأمة مع بلديات في العالم لو بلدية بيت لحم قعدوا 3 زينا معهم لابتوب وبحكوا انجليزي يتواصل مع هدول التوأمة بقدرنا يغيروا بشكل سريع بقدرنا يوصلوا رسائل للعالم بشكل اسرع
Address mistreatment of tourists (such as harassment and overcharging).	"When I was working at the hostel, the taxi driver, just to bring [the traveler] from Manger square, it should be 10 Shekels ... but he takes 200 Shekels from them" (Dayr Rafat).	لما كنت اشتغل بالهوستل كان يجي صاحب التاكسي بس يوصلوا من باب الدير لموقع ولازم بس 10 شيكل ... يوخد منه 200 شيكل.

Table 7 (cont'd)

Sociopolitical education and connection among Palestinians.	<p>"The awareness of the Palestinian, to speak as a teacher, this isn't in the curriculum. I mean, we have that this is my right, my nation, I'm a Palestinian, but there isn't how important for me to be aware of what's happening... My awareness increased to many things, I began understanding things present in reality, what a checkpoint closing between certain hours means, closures during holidays. What it means that I can't drive in Jerusalem, what it means that half of my family are Jerusalemites, and half in the West Bank. What settlements mean" (Dayr Rafat).</p>	<p>وعى الفلسطيني يعني احكي كاستاذ مش موجود بالمناهج. يعني موجود انه هذا حقي ووطني انا فلسطيني ولكن مش موجود قديش مهم اني او عى للى بصير ... زاد وعيى لامور كثيرة صرت افهم اشياء موجودة ع ارض الواقع ايش معنى محسوم بتسكر بساعات معينة ايش معنى اغلاقات بالعيد ايش معنى اني ما اسوق بالقدس ايش معنى نص اهلي قدس ونص اهلي ضفة ايش معنى مستوطنات .</p>
Equitable compensation for Palestinians	<p>"I think being able to say yes we do wish to facilitate and help promote solidarity tourism but we can't continue to do it at the expense of the local people, we can't continue to suffer occupation and also be expected to also to pay for the hospitality of these visiting delegations especially when these visiting delegations oftentimes come from much more economically secure and powerful countries and communities especially in the West" (Ayn Karim)</p>	
Coordination and connection among Palestinians working in STP including:	<p>"To speak with each other, if I learn something, to share it with you, and if I fall short with something, you criticize" (Dayr Al-Hawa).</p>	<p>انه نحكي مع بعض، اذا انا تعلمت اشئى اعلمك اياه واذا انا قصرت في اشئى انت تنتقدني فيه.</p>
Engaging with cultural activities and the arts.	<p>"To find [tourists] a Dabka troupe, to have activities between all the hotels in town, that at this time, at this place, there's an activity, so they are encouraged. There's traditional clothing at this place, and there's a museum" (Bayt Umm al-Mays).</p>	<p>نشوفله فرقة دبكة ويكون النشاط بين كل اوتيلات البلد انه الساعة هاي في فالمحل الفلاني فعالية فينتجع. في لبس تراثي في المحل الفلاني في متحف.</p>
Developing a unified discourse.	<p>"a course or training to unite our discourse" (Dayr 'Amr).</p>	<p>دورة او تدريب انه نوحده [الحديث] تبغنا.</p>

In Table 7, I detail host suggestions to improve solidarity tourism to Palestine. I categorized findings into 4 categories: (a) international advocacy efforts, (b) Palestinian government development, (c) training, and (d) changes in Palestine. Each category is discussed below.

International Advocacy Efforts

This category is brief and includes one theme: Increased strategic coordination in advocacy abroad. As Ayn Karim highlighted: “Unfortunately... I think the effectiveness of solidarity tourism is less of a Palestinian question and more an issue of the advocacy that is born out of this solidarity tourism engagement in the local international communities”. Along the same line of thinking Ayn Karim continued to share about the double standard in perceptions around violence and connects tourists’ advocacy in their own communities as a part of what impacts solidarity tourism in Palestine’s effectiveness:

Part of the effectiveness of solidarity tourism comes from the injustice suffered in the international communities by their own systems of rule... such as the right to kill, the right to punish, such as how different forms of violence are construed as more pure or necessary than others, such as Israeli military violence which is a formal state sponsored violence versus Palestinian freedom fighters or Palestinians’ right to resist the occupation.

Palestinian Government Development of Solidarity Tourism in Palestine

This category highlights efforts that Palestinian government entities can take to advance and support the development of solidarity tourism in Palestine. I identified three subthemes: (a) expanding Palestinian embassies’ role in solidarity tourism in Palestine abroad; (b) developing solidarity tourism infrastructure in Palestine for individual tourists;

and (c) for municipalities, ministries, and the Palestinian Authority to support and promote solidarity tourism in Palestine.

The first theme, expanding Palestinian embassies' role in solidarity tourism in Palestine abroad, includes educating people about Palestine and promoting solidarity tourism in Palestine internationally. There is a perceived lack of a centralized place to house information relevant to Palestine for interested individuals and groups. One of the suggestions to address this was to increase the Palestinian embassies' role in raising awareness about Palestine abroad. The second theme, developing infrastructure for individual tourists, was tied to a notable increase in individual travel and a shift from organized tour groups to increased individual exploration. An example of such infrastructure is the creation of a visitor center at checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem, the main checkpoint to the Southern part of the West Bank, to share information with tourists and connect them to services and resources.

The third theme emphasizes the role of municipalities, ministries and the Palestinian authority in supporting and promoting solidarity tourism in Palestine. I identified a subtheme of providing protection for Palestinian guides from Israeli agency censorship and punitive action. 'Allar highlighted a challenge related to this:

مثلا، بتكون انت بزيارة للموقع بتصير مراقب من الاحتلال. مثلا انت رايع تضامن مع البدو في الخان الاحمر مع الاجانب بتصير اسرائيل بدهم يخدوك وكذا وبتتعرض لضغوطات ومخاطر (For example, you would be in a visit to a place, and you begin being surveilled by the occupation. For example, you are going to be in solidarity with the Bedouins in Khan Al-Ahmar with foreigners and Israel wants to take you, and like this you are subjected to pressures and dangers).

A few of the hosts get work through some Israeli agencies and Al-Burayi shared an example of one of the challenges they face when working with Israeli agencies:

حاولوا يشكوا علي وتعرضت لشكاوي وطلبت اعتذار رسمي وكتابي. واتهمت من مكتب اسرائيلي انه انا بوقف بالباص وبكل كره وغضب بحكي عن الشعب الاسرائيلي واسرائيل. ... و هذا الجروب 30 شخص كانوا اكم واحد مضى ع هذا المكتوب, [المرشد] الاسرائيلي اتناوله على البار بالليل وملاه (They tried to complain about me, and I was subjected to complaints, and asked for a formal and written apology. I was accused from an Israeli agency that I stood in the bus and full of hatred spoke about the Israeli people and Israel. ... And this group had 30 people, a few of them signed a letter, the Israeli [guide] got it at the bar at night and [fabricated tourist complaints]).

Training

I identified two themes and three subthemes that formed the training category. This category includes comments explicitly describing training as an enhancement to a component of solidarity tourism in Palestine. The themes included: maintaining Palestinian hospitality and training for Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine. The second theme contained three subthemes: (a) strategic and effective communication, (b) adding political specialization to the tour guide curriculum, and (c) remaining current with information shared with tourists.

The first theme is maintaining our Palestinian hospitality and not moving to view the tourists by what they can contribute or the ways we can benefit from them. 'Artuf phrased this point through a reminder not to turn tourists into numbers: "المطلوب من" (What's required from Palestinian organizations is not to turn the foreigner into a number. He is a foreigner that came and he

is a person”). Similarly, ‘Allar emphasized the need “عدم الاستغلال من جانبنا” (“to not exploit from our end”).

The second theme is training for Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine. This theme includes three subthemes: (a) strategic and effective communication, (b) adding political specialization to the tour guide curriculum, and (c) remain current with information shared with tourists. The theme of training for Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine includes both training focused on tour guides and activists that are engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine. Bayt ‘Itab shared: “هدول الاشخاص لانه اغلبهم ناشطين في مؤسسات وليسوا [مرشدين سياحيين] ناس غير متخصصين يعني ناس بشتغله ع ثقافتهم ولغتهم الخاصة وبطور رسالة مؤسستها ورسالة المجتمع” (“These people, because most are activists in organizations and not tour guides, people not specialized, meaning they are working on their education, their language, and developing the message of their organization and the community”).

The first subtheme is training specific to strategic and effective communication. Bayt Mahsir responded that “training, like how can you introduce your cause to people? Sometimes they can do it straightforward, sometimes they can need to get ... to understand” would be helpful to improve the effectiveness of solidarity tourism to Palestine. The second subtheme of training involves adding a political specialization to the tour guide curriculum. This involves the formal adoption of solidarity tourism in Palestine in the broader Palestinian tourism industry. Finally, the subtheme that emphasizes the need to remain current with the information that hosts share with tourists. ‘Allar noted that “في التغييرات السياسية الديموغرافية الفكرية. كان المد اليساري من السبعينات اليوم في المد الديني فلازم يكون دائما” (“There are political, geographical, and intellectual changes in the demographic and intellectual. The leftist trend of the seventies today is the religious trend, it must be always”).

changes. There was the leftist tide in the seventies, today is the religious tide, so the person needs to remain in contact with the ideas, efforts, and workshops”).

Changes in Palestine

I identified 5 themes that were focused on efforts that can be taken in Palestine to improve solidarity tourism in Palestine: (a) local improvement of promotion and advertising for solidarity tourism in Palestine, (b) address mistreatment of tourists, (c) sociopolitical education and connection among Palestinians, (d) equitable compensation for Palestinians, (e) coordination and connection among Palestinians working in solidarity tourism in Palestine. The coordination and connection among Palestinians working in solidarity tourism in Palestine includes two subthemes: (a) engaging with cultural activities and the arts, (b) developing a unified discourse.

The first theme, local improvement of promotion and advertising for solidarity tourism in Palestine includes a recognition by participants of the strategic value of promotion towards visibility and increasing the number of solidarity tourists. As Bayt Umm al-Mays shared “لازم نشتغل على التسويق اكثر, يعني انا ما بشتغل على التسويق” (“We need to work on promotion more, I mean, I don’t work on promotion”). While Dayr ‘Amr shared about one of their approaches to promotion: “مثلا, كثير منحب نوخذ [تعليق] من الي يزورونا, زي انا بسألك شو [الخبرة]” (“For example, we like to get quotes from visitors, like I ask you what your experience was with this organization... and I should use this in promotion”).

The second theme I identified was a focus on addressing mistreatment of tourists, such as harassment and overcharging. Dayr Rafat expressed frustration with how some people’s treatment of tourists may undo the impact of their time spent speaking with

tourists: “يعني ايش فائدة انا احكي اليوم على الواقع الي انا فيه لواحد اجنبي وبعد شوي يلحق واحد بالشارع يزت عليه مي” (“I mean, what’s the benefit for me to speak today about my lived reality to a foreigner, and after a bit, someone chases him and throws water on him”).

The third theme is a call to increase the sociopolitical education and connection among Palestinians. Participants identified a need to increase the sociopolitical awareness and connection among Palestinians. This may have benefits beyond just that of solidarity tourism in Palestine, but participants recognized it as a possible change to improve solidarity tourism in Palestine. ‘Allar shared that solidarity tourism in Palestine is “هي أيضا” (“Also for the Palestinian in Bethlehem to get to know Palestinians in the North, South, and Jerusalem”). As for the focus on the Palestinians sociopolitical awareness, Dayr Rafat made the connection: “اذا بدنا نرجع” (“If we want to return to the Palestinian, to make him more aware, it’s important to understand these [sociopolitical] topics, and to understand the importance of solidarity tourism”).

The fourth theme that I identified is that focusing on equitable compensation for Palestinians would improve Palestinian experiences and engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine. While there is a call to prevent the overcharging of tourists, the flipside of this is the inequitable compensation of Palestinian hosts for their labor in solidarity tourism in Palestine. ‘Allar shared about a group they were going to feed, but the organizer felt that the cost was too much and decided to go elsewhere for their food. ‘Allar clarified that “هالا لو” (“Now if we looked at it just at what’s offered, they’d tell you this is exploitation, but when they see the amount of food that I provide, he’d say that [its appropriate]”). Similarly, Al-Burayi

noted the discrepancy in salaries between Palestinian and Israeli guides “ال[مرشد] الاسرائيلي “ (‘the Israeli [guide] has a much higher salary than ours’). ‘Allar also shared “بفضية الإكرامية يعطوا اسرائيل أكثر منك” (“In the matter of the honorarium they give Israel more than you”).

The fourth theme of coordination and connection among Palestinians working in solidarity tourism in Palestine. This is distinct from the third theme in that this theme focuses on those engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine while the third theme is more general. Participants recognized the challenges and potential benefits of increased coordination between those that work in solidarity tourism in Palestine. For example, Ayn Karim shared that “What might also help is being able to synergize the various organizations and institutions working [in] solidarity tourism in a way that doesn’t force them into competing for... solidarity tourists”. Bayt Mahsir phrased this in a different way:

I think we need to walk together, there are many people that are doing this work but without coordinating with one another ... I can talk about my field, I do not need to be involved with other fields, other people can tell about other fields, if you want to know about this particular something go and visit that organization, so this will help understand and also to understand it’s a network.

I also identified two subthemes as part of the coordination and connection among Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine. The first is involving cultural activities and the arts in programs for solidarity tourism, and tourists in general. Dayr al-Hawa proposed a network between organizations and hotels in the area to coordinate events for their guests, and have recommendation for Palestinian cultural activities such as Dabka and Palestinian cuisine. Bayt Mahsir recognized that there are different avenues and

strategies for getting the Palestinian story out there: “You can explain the story through culture, through music, through dancing”.

The second subtheme revolved around developing a unified discourse for Palestinians engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine. The challenge was highlighted by Bayt Mahsir: “Sometimes those people are hearing mixed information, so they come and talk to me, and I tell them about something and then they go somewhere else and hear... different information”. Dayr ‘Amr also discusses one of the ways this comes up:

على القضية الفلسطينية يعني اذا وحدنا حالنا احنا كمجتمع فلسطيني بصير الوضع عنا مختلف يعني هون بنتقضونا
(Regarding the Palestinian cause, I mean if we were unified, as a Palestinian community, the situation would be
different, I mean there are those that criticize us like for example, that we don’t have
unity, we have the issue of Hammas and Fatah and its impact).

DISCUSSION

Solidarity tourism is broadly defined as travel in support of persons who are the subjects of injustice, exposing structures of oppression that may not otherwise be visible. In the Palestinian context, solidarity tourism is focused on the Israeli settler-colonial project that violates indigenous Palestinian human rights and self-determination. Solidarity tourism in Palestine has the potential to serve as a strategy for encouraging and advancing the Palestinian struggle for liberation and self-determination and as a pragmatic source of less exploitative tourism-based income for Palestinians. There is not much research on Palestinian hosts' experiences with, and perceptions of, solidarity tourism in Palestine. In order to address this gap, I interviewed 15 Palestinian hosts involved in solidarity tourism and analyzed their responses using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis procedure. In this section, I contrast my findings against those of previous studies and propose implications for research and practice. I organize my discussion around each of six questions that were my focus in this study.

RQ1: What are hosts' typical forms of engagement or involvement in solidarity tourism to Palestine?

Palestinian hosts engaged in Palestinian solidarity tourism tend to focus on three broad forms of solidarity tourism to Palestine. The most discussed form of solidarity tourism involved exposing the social, political, and economic realities of Palestine under Israeli settler-colonialism. The second form focused on introducing tourists to Palestinian culture, traditions, and people. The third form involved tourists engaging with Palestinian communities to support the advancement of Palestinian liberation and self-determination.

My findings highlight that forms of solidarity tourism in Palestine which researchers have largely studied independently from one another can be conceptualized as components of solidarity tourism. Specifically, exposing the social, political, and economic realities of Palestine under Israeli settler-colonialism (Barnard & Muamer, 2016; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2013; Kassis et al., 2016; Kelly, 2023; Khalilieh, 2016; Kutulas & Awad, 2016), longer-term international volunteering in Palestine (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2009), and blended cultural (i.e. cuisine, dance, art, etc.) and sociopolitical tourism to Palestine (e.g., Amram, 2019; El-Haddad & Schmitt, 2021) have tended to be studied independently from one another. My findings suggest that each of these sets of activities are components of solidarity tourism in Palestine.

Research Implications

Research into the impacts of the various forms of solidarity tourism, and the factors that influence these impacts, would be useful. There may be different impacts for tourists or hosts involved in different types of solidarity tourism. The expectations and training that tourists have before their travel may also influence the impacts of solidarity tourism. For example, the International Solidarity Movement trained all their members and emphasized that this movement is Palestinian led, which is likely to lead to better experiences with Palestinian partners (Dudouet, 2006). Another consideration for practice is the depth of the various forms of solidarity tourism. Do hosts tend to engage with each form at a similar depth or are there varying degrees of introductions to each form depending on who the host is? Are there particular forms that are more difficult for the hosts? Are there ways to better incorporate elements that support Palestinian communities and their survival in the face of Israeli settler-colonialism?

Practice Implications

Palestinian hosts tended to be involved in multiple forms of solidarity tourism and report little coordination with colleagues doing similar work. Increased coordination could limit replication and potentially lead to increased capacity for solidarity tourism. One example of this is *Hantourism* (Kelly, 2023). Hantourism is a community based Palestinian collaborative that connects tourists to local farmers, guesthouses, guides, chefs, and more (Kelly, 2023). One of the strengths of Palestinian solidarity tourism is that it is not disconnected from the local context, and efforts should be taken to preserve that. This means that solidarity tourism hosts are cognizant and considerate of the local community. For example, Dayr al-Hawa mentioned how they are responsive to the refugee camp residents and not having them freely take photos of children without consent adding “ في النهاية احنا مش حديقة حيوانات ” (“In the end, we are not a zoo”). Additionally, with increased coordination among hosts, there may be an opportunity to engage in practice focused evaluation to identify areas for improvement and be increasingly responsive to global shifts and local needs.

RQ2: How do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Palestinian hosts became engaged in solidarity tourism in one of two ways: engagement with an organization or committee that does work in solidarity tourism in Palestine and proximity to tourists. Many hosts reported volunteering or participating in local organizations as their first experiences with solidarity tourism in Palestine. Others discussed how they were either working or living in proximity to tourists who reached out and expressed their interest in learning about the realities in Palestine.

Before 1993, Palestinians could not be tour guides, nor could they have their own organizations (Kelly, 2023). Thus, those who were engaged in solidarity tourism before 1993 had to be informally engaged. Similar to Kelly's (2020) notes on the Palestinian guides involved in solidarity tourism, I found that a number of those involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine were and continue to be organizers in their communities. This is not surprising considering that foundations of Palestinian solidarity tourism are built on the organizing of the first Intifada (Kelly, 2016). Their experiences and roles as organizers may have become an asset in their work as solidarity tourism hosts and led to the development of solidarity tourism today. In a reflection on radical love, rebellion, and decolonial solidarity, Atallah (2022) states that "Decolonization doesn't need tourists. Decolonial solidarity requires a passage into direct struggle, linking across movements..." (p. 82). Solidarity tourism can be the passage for tourists to engage in intersectional struggles against oppression. Relatedly, solidarity tourism ought not be led by traditional tour guides, but rather people who are so invested in their community and their struggles that they engage in multiple strategies to bring about positive social change.

Research Implications

In future studies, scholars can examine the prevalence and frequency of the two pathways of engagement that I identified. It would also be important to learn if hosts that joined from different pathways (e.g., through community organizing vs through tourism training) result in different patterns of involvement and/or differential impacts of the solidarity tourism experiences that they host. Differences tied to pathway to involvement might include hosts' preference for some forms of solidarity tourism over others and or different lengths of host involvement in solidarity tourism. For example, it may be that

hosts who were active in community organizations doing work adjacent to solidarity tourism have longer involvement in solidarity tourism because of increased contact and support from their community.

Practice Implications

There are opportunities to leverage these pathways to host involvement to more effectively support and prepare Palestinians for solidarity tourism. In terms of preparation and support, hosts who worked in advocacy might require more preparation in practical aspects of hospitality and travel management while hosts who were involved in mass tourism might require more preparation when it comes to tourists' exposure to, and education about, sociopolitical issues.

The two pathways can also inform efforts to expand solidarity tourism. Educating Palestinians who work in, or in areas closely related to, mass tourism about relevant solidarity tourism practices may increase the number of tourists exposed to those practices and interested in solidarity tourism. In parallel form, there are some advocacy and organizing entities whose goals might be better advanced by incorporating specific solidarity tourism practices. One example of these ideas put into practice is Kairos Palestine's leveraging of the Palestinian Christian identity in Bethlehem to call on Christians worldwide to also visit the "living stones" (i.e., the Palestinian people).

RQ3: Why do hosts become engaged in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Palestinian hosts' main motivations for their engagement in solidarity tourism are a) as a form of resistance/contribution to national struggle, b) to build bridges across cultures, c) because of a sense of responsibility, and d) because they feel passion for their work. Two sub themes from the first of these motivations align with, and clarify, existing

work. The subtheme “to fight for their community’s rights,” aligns with Kelly’s (2023) argument that, despite the many nuances and challenges of engagement in solidarity tourism, Palestinian hosts persist “because they value its role in helping Palestinians – from shop owners to farmers – stay on their land in the face of forced exile” (Kelly, 2023, p. 62). Similarly, Kelly (2020) noted that some Palestinian hosts reframe the touring and witnessing as “‘partaking in the culture of resistance’ (Kassis 2012)” (p. 100). Viewing host engagement in solidarity tourism as a form of resistance and contribution to the national struggle aligns with the roots of solidarity tourism prior to 1993 where the international community was invited to *come and see* (Jean-Klein, 2002).

The subtheme of challenging misrepresentation of Palestine in western media directly aligns with another of Kelly’s arguments. Quoting Michel Awad, the director of the Siraj Center, a tourism nonprofit, Kelly (2023) names that one of the goals in alternative tourism is “‘to change the perception about Palestine’” (p. 65). Similarly, Isaac and Abu Eid (2019) noted that visitors who engaged in alternative tourism experienced a framing shift that defied the media portrayal of Palestine as dangerous. This change in perception is necessitated because of dedicated, systematic efforts undertaken by the Israeli government to delegitimize the Palestinian liberation struggle and self-determination efforts in a manner that portrays them unfavorably (Spero, 2021). Israel also engages in “state sponsored trolling”, which refers to systematic bullying and disruption targeted at opponents and critics on social media (Megiddo, 2019). A leaked report from the Act.IL, an Israeli app funded by the Israeli government to influence foreign public opinion and battle the BDS movement, shows they had a \$1.1 million budget in 2018, and incentivized the “troll army” to post by offering prizes and scholarships (Winstanley, 2019).

The theme “building of bridges across cultures” encompasses building connections to people across the world who face similar struggles such as those involved in the Movement for Black Lives in the United States. As such, it reflects the arguments that scholars have previously put forward on the importance of solidarity tourism in creating alliances with similar struggles worldwide (see Bailey, 2015; Davis, 2016; Naber, 2017; Mensa, 2018; Lentin, 2020). Bayt ‘Itab noted an example of this when they met with a group from Pakistan that were also subjected to military occupation.

One of the motivations Kelly (2023) discusses was not present in my findings. Specifically, Kelly notes that solidarity tourism has evolved into a form of income for Palestinians. This motivation was not directly addressed by participants in my study, although some did indirectly allude to the personal economic benefit of involvement in this work and celebrated that it is a viable source of income for those engaged. I believe this theme may not have been directly present because of the Palestinian norms around income and salary. This may be tied to a strong cultural belief that displaying good fortune causes jealousy in other and later-term misfortune (Abu-Rabia, 2005). This belief, and related traditions, are summarized under the term “evil eye,” and are known to drive social norms around privacy, humility, and charity (Abu-Rabia, 2005). I note also that many of the participants in my study engaged in solidarity tourism as one part of their employment for local organizations, not the entirety of their roles, and—therefore—may be less likely to associated solidarity tourism as a source of personal wealth. Perhaps because solidarity tourism was not their primary source of personal income, a number of participants shared that their engagement therein is costly in terms of its time, effort, and energy demands.

Research Implications

Most of the reasons that participants gave for becoming involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine reflected the importance that they ascribe to their work as part of resistance to the Israeli settler-colonial occupation. This highlights the connection between solidarity tourism and the broader Palestinian resistance, underscoring some of the ethical considerations for scholars conducting research in the context of Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation. These considerations apply both to research expanding on findings directly relevant to this hypothesis and, generally, to research that interfaces with resistance to occupation. Broadly, in these contexts and situations, scholars must be particularly thoughtful about what questions are worth pursuing and what impacts their research could have on participants and consider what responsibility they have towards preserving the self-determination and human rights of the Palestinian people (see Joudah et. al., 2021).

For instance, when studying Palestinian strategies for liberation researchers would do well to consider whether the methods that they have chosen put participants at risk for identification. The Israeli military is known to confiscate data and arrest or detain groups engaged in what they deem a threat to national security, which can include participation in a university student organization (Addameer, 2020). They have also raided organizations and confiscated data that may be used to identify potential targets for arrest and detainment (McKernan, 2022). In my reporting, I have detailed the age and sex of participants in the aggregate, as Bethlehem area Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism may be identifiable with that information. It is also important for researchers to understand the historical and present context and root causes of their findings and to

meaningfully account for them when interpreting their findings (Meari, 2015). The need for solidarity tourism in Palestine arises because of Israeli occupation. Ultimately, effective solidarity tourism should contribute to its own demise by ending the Israeli settler colonial occupation (and, therefore, the need for solidarity tourism).

The embeddedness of solidarity tourism within Palestinian's struggle for liberation and self-determination also underscores that any research in this area would ideally have practical use. Thus, a general direction for future researchers would be to ensure that their research activities maintain strong links to the work of hosts. This can be accomplished by using participatory research strategies that meaningfully involve hosts in all phases of research, including the design (e.g., by incorporating the direction of community advisory groups), execution (e.g., by using participatory data collection and analysis), and dissemination (e.g., by creating practical products informed by findings) (see Bradbury, 2015).

Practice Implications

Current findings underscore the importance that hosts ascribe to their work within the context of Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation. In a previous subsection, I discussed the potential benefits of efforts to coordinate solidarity tourism activities, which might potentiate their impact. I have also discussed the manner in which solidarity tourism, as a practice in a broader collective of acts of resistance, can be expanded. Here, I note the importance of intentionally incorporating solidarity tourism into a broader formal strategy for resistance. It is clear from this study's findings, and from the tendency for the Israeli army to escalate aggression when mass or solidarity tourists are not present (Rosenfeld, Ziv, & Al-Bazz, 2022), that solidarity tourism has the potential to help in

maintaining global awareness of Israeli occupation, maintaining global support for Palestinian resistance (including other acts of resistance that leverage global support, such as boycott, divestment, and sanctions), and potentially impacting Israeli military action against Palestinians. Solidarity tourism, therefore, can play a key role in maintaining international awareness and support.

RQ4: What control do Palestinian hosts have over their engagement in solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Participants in this study were motivated to engage in solidarity tourism because of its importance as part of the Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation. That said, as Kelly (2023) has noted, Palestinian hosts engaged in solidarity tourism are traversing the boundary between Palestinian resistance and tourism in a context where the dynamics of occupation are still at work. Under occupation, the Israeli government attempts to control important aspects of Palestinian life including movement, both within Palestine and internationally. Hosts therefore make agentic choices in contexts often limited by occupation.

Although participants discussed their engagement in solidarity tourism as one of their most notable contributions to the national struggle, it is important to recognize challenging colonial dynamics that impact solidarity tourism in Palestine (Kelly, 2020; Kelly, 2023). These include foreigners' need to *witness* the realities in Palestine rather than relying on Palestinian scholarship, investigations, reports, and experiences (Kelly, 2020; Kelly, 2023). Such a need exemplifies an epistemic violence that deems Palestinians unreliable to detail their lived realities (Kelly, 2020). Despite these problematic dynamics,

Palestinian hosts still view solidarity tourism as a promising strategy that they do not want to discourage (Kelly, 2023).

Research Implications

Considering hosts' conceptualization of solidarity tourism as part of Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation, the avoidant responses to my questions about control over their involvement and about potential inequities are not surprising. These questions may have been received as critical of solidarity tourism—or as eliciting criticism of solidarity tourism— by participants. Participants were clear in their responses that they did not want to discourage solidarity tourism. This limited the information that I was able to obtain regarding hosts' sense of control over their involvement in solidarity tourism. I believe that an approach that recognized the competing pressures of their agentic decisions in the context of Israeli occupation and control might have been better received by participants. A better research question would have been: How do Palestinian hosts navigate and negotiate their engagement in solidarity tourism? This again highlights the importance of researchers to carefully consider the current and historical context of Palestinian life under Israeli occupation, and account for it in the design, execution, and dissemination of their research (Meari, 2015).

Practice Implications

Palestinian hosts work with groups that vary in their awareness and support for Palestine and must navigate a space that is not entirely tourism, nor entirely solidarity. The groups they work with can be Zionist, Palestine focused activists, oblivious, or anywhere in between. Thus, having a space for critical reflection may support Palestinian host wellbeing and develop collegial solidarity between hosts. Critical reflection is frequently employed in

efforts to bring about social transformation, especially through Participatory Action Research (Chiu, 2006, see Johns, 2008). Palestinian hosts can engage in critical reflection at the first-(personal reflection on experiences), second-(reflection with others), and third-person (engaging wider audiences and sharing reflections) levels to advance collective and personal social transformation as a part of the broader work towards national liberation (Chiu, 2006). The use of identity-based caucusing may be of particular interest and relevance for second- and third-person reflection (see Buehler et al., 2021 European-American Collaborative Challenging Whiteness, 2005; Hudson & Mountz, 2016). Identity-based caucusing has largely been used in anti-racist transformation efforts and I believe the approach can be sufficiently adjusted to be more culturally relevant and appropriate to the Palestinian context.

RQ5: What impacts of solidarity tourism do hosts perceive on themselves and on participants?

I categorized impacts into four broad categories: psychosocial impacts, action, learning, and solidarity tourism in Palestine development. Participants seemed to be in agreement that their engagement with solidarity tourism has led to positive change. Participants cited a number of examples to highlight said impacts. However, these gains were not without potential risk to both hosts and tourists. Hosts discussed fear, fatigue, trauma, and stress as a result of engaging with such work while under Israeli military occupation and reported such impacts among tourists as well. That said, it is important to note that fear, trauma, and stress are not abnormal for Palestinians living under military occupation (Baker & Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 1999; Giacaman et. al., 2007; Nguyen-Gillham et. al., 2008).

One of the psychosocial impacts was a feeling of connectedness (i.e., not feeling isolated from the world). This is a notable impact considering Israeli efforts to isolate Palestinians from the world (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015; Kassis & Solomon, 2013). These efforts include isolation of Palestinians from other Palestinians such as is the case between cities in the West Bank through the use of checkpoints and requiring Israeli military permits (Abu-Zahra & Kay, 2013; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015). This can also be seen in Israeli policies around family reunification, the Gaza siege since 2006, the expulsion of tourists that are perceived as supporting and advocating for Palestinian rights such as in the expulsion of a Human Rights Watch's director (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2015, Human Rights Watch, 2019). Thus, the impact of Palestinians not feeling alone while under a repressive military occupation is an accomplishment within itself.

In the action category of impacts, participants cited tourists' engagement in advocacy and activism in their home contexts in support of the Palestinian people. To call on tourists to organize and advocate within their home country is notably one of the primary goals of solidarity tourism (Kelly, 2016). The primary actions hosts reported tourists taking when they returned home were raising awareness which included speaking with family, friends, and faith communities as well as writing op-eds or sharing about their experiences in Palestine on podcasts. Kelly (2020) also found that many tourists engaged in raising awareness by sharing their experiences on these trips. Kelly (2020, 2023) looks at this narration of the Palestinian context and experience as once again reinforcing settler-colonial logic that does not view Palestinian narrators as reliable.

Kelly (2020) has identified a sort of formula that solidarity tourists use to share about their experiences: first, declaring astonishment with what they witnessed; second,

storytelling; third, reinforcing the need for solidarity tourism and encouraging others to witness for themselves; and fourth, a call to action for Palestine solidarity. Kelly (2020) argues that this formula inadvertently reinforces the colonial logic that Palestinian narratives of their lived reality are insufficient. The third step in the formula aligns with one of the perceived impacts from this study, which finds that solidarity tourists promote solidarity tourism in their home contexts. Solidarity tourists' promotion of solidarity tourism is consistent with Palestinian hosts intentions to expand the industry and reach more people internationally. However, Kelly's (2020, 2023) concerns with this reinforcing the colonial logic is legitimate, I believe that any shift must be consistent with the broader strategy for national liberation. Solidarity tourism, in spite of all its flaws, has generally advanced the Palestinian national struggle and brought in countless allies against Israeli occupation and settler-colonialism.

Some participants also discussed introducing some tour groups to the boycott, divestment, & sanction (BDS) movement; however, this was infrequent. This is unfortunate as the BDS movement is arguably one of the most promising strategies in advancing the Palestinian struggle against settler-colonialism and military occupation as evidenced from their more than 250 BDS wins in the United States (US Campaign for Palestinian Rights [USCPR], n.d.; BDS, n.d.a). The BDS movement is especially relevant for solidarity tourists who can engage in strategic advocacy once they return home. Most recently, the BDS movement was successful in pressuring G4S, the largest security firm in the world, to completely divest from Israeli apartheid (BDS, n.d.b).

Research Implications

Some hosts shared that some tourists that learn about their work are inspired to continue supporting them by fundraising in their home context, making donations directly, providing support with grant writing, or connecting them to other relevant organizations. However, the frequency and extent of this support is not well-documented and could be an area for research to develop a more holistic understanding of solidarity tourism and how it functions in supporting Palestinian hosts and their communities.

Another path for research could be mapping the impact on the Palestinian national struggle and on the growing levels of international solidarity with Palestine in the face of Israeli settler-colonialism. Scholars could engage international activists for Palestine and develop a better understanding of how they came to advocate for Palestine and what their engagement means to them. I expect a great deal of advocates became engaged as a result of solidarity tourism. An examination of motivations for international Palestine activism and how their advocacy connects to their local contexts may help further advance and strengthen robust and intersectional movements. One such direction may be to undertake research employing a critical feminist perspective and identify ways that solidarity tourism organizing can be leveraged at the intersections of patriarchal oppression and Israeli settler-colonialism.

Practice Implications

Palestinian solidarity tourism hosts aim to advance the broader struggle for self-determination and justice, however, elements of solidarity tourism that specifically aim to train solidarity tourists seem to be minimal. One tactic that has great promise for engaging with solidarity tourists is more direct focus on BDS education and recruitment. I recognize

that there are numerous barriers and obstacles that hosts will have to navigate as they work to increasingly incorporate BDS into their work. However, I believe adopting BDS more broadly and increasing understanding of its potential will serve to advance the Palestinian solidarity movement.

Hosts generally expressed support of BDS, but only a limited number incorporated it into their solidarity tourism programming for fear of losing funding or support from international partners. Hosts and organizations that are considering increasingly incorporating BDS in solidarity tourism should be aware of a shift in support and opposition of BDS in the United States over the last several years. Comparing two polls, the first in 2019, 13% of respondents of a representative poll stated they support the BDS movement while 23% were in opposition (Telhami & Rouse, 2019)¹¹, to June 2022, 20% of respondents support the BDS Movement, and 28% were in opposition (Telhami & Rouse, 2022). The increased opposition could be attributed to the targeting of the BDS Movement and Palestine advocacy throughout the United States. There were 287 bills introduced to target advocacy for Palestinian rights, and only 63 have passed thanks to grassroots and civil liberties opposition (Palestine Legal, 2023). Although the rate of opposition exceeds that of support, the increase in support outpaces the increase in opposition as evidenced by the polls' results. I believe this should be encouraging to Palestinian hosts considering incorporating more BDS into their programs. Similarly, I believe Palestinian hosts would benefit from remaining current with some of the most notable campaigns across the globe,

¹¹ The percentage for the 2019 poll was adjusted to be comparable to the 2022 poll. Of the 49% of participants of the poll who had heard about the BDS movement, 26% were in support of BDS. To calculate total BDS support and opposition, I multiplied the percent of support strongly and support somewhat by the percent of participants that were aware of BDS.

such as the BDS Movements' Apartheid Free Zones (see BDS Movement, n.d.c), American Friends Service Committee's Apartheid Free Communities (see Apartheid Free, n.d.), Independent Jewish Voice's Together Against Apartheid (see Together Against Apartheid, n.d.), and other similar campaigns.

RQ6: What do hosts recommend to improve solidarity tourism in Palestine?

Palestinian hosts named a number of changes that may improve solidarity tourism in Palestine. I divided their proposed changes into four broad categories: a) international advocacy efforts, b) Palestinian government development of solidarity tourism, c) training, and d) local changes in Palestine. A number of their suggestions leverage existing groups and structures to enhance and advance solidarity tourism in Palestine such as the use of municipal twin cities to promote solidarity tourism between Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, and Beit Jala and the more than 120 twin cities around the globe (Bethlehem Municipality, n.d.; Beit Jala Municipality, n.d.; Beit Sahour Municipality, 2018). Similarly, participants noted that the Palestinian embassies around the world should be playing a larger role in promoting and educating people internationally about the Palestinian struggle. There are 87 Palestinian embassies and consulates around the globe (Embassy Worldwide, n.d.).

Many of the hosts interviewed were and continue as community organizers, and because of the lack of formal training in tourism, one of the changes they felt would improve solidarity tourism is training. Training on specific topics related to the occupation, training in effective communication and framing, and training to remain current with information and shifts in the sociopolitical context were perceived as potentially helpful in advancing and improving solidarity tourism. This is necessary to more accurately reflect the realities under Israeli occupation including Israel's use of newer military strategies

such as the use of remote-controlled robotic guns throughout the West Bank (Saballa, 2021; McNeil, 2022).

Another change hosts named was increased coordination between Palestinians working in solidarity tourism and better planning to recruit more tourists and raise awareness for tourists who are not on a solidarity tour but that are visiting Palestine as part of mass tourism (including pilgrimages). This would be welcome, especially considering that Kassis (2013) found more than 40 percent of tourists in Bethlehem did not even realize they were in Palestine and 57 percent did not know that Bethlehem was under Israeli military occupation. This lack of awareness is not by chance, and clearly facilitated by the segregated checkpoints and entryways into Bethlehem. Tourists are allowed to travel through the checkpoints reserved for Israeli settlers and citizens, which may simply look like highway booths (and some Israeli guides will say that is what they are) with a number of soldiers standing around. On the other hand, Palestinians from the southern parts of the West Bank typically have to use checkpoint 300 which is more akin to entering a high security prison, with armed soldiers, metal entryways and cages, metal detectors, and multiple areas where soldiers examine travel permits (see Booth & Taha, 2017).

Research Implications

Hosts recommended increased coordination with other Palestinian hosts; research may be helpful into the potential of a coalition for Palestinian hosts engaged in Palestinian solidarity tourism. Wolff (2001) proposes the key elements for a successful coalition. An investigation examining the level of applicability and appropriateness of these elements and offering culturally appropriate adjustments would be a welcome addition to the literature and would aid practice in this area and others relating to Palestine. Another

potentially important area for investigation is to better understand how tour group leaders connect with Palestinian hosts and tourists and how they recruit people to these trips. Information on how group leaders connect with Palestinian hosts can be leveraged by hosts to expand their outreach and impact and clearly ties back to practice.

Hosts also mentioned bidirectional learning through their engagement in solidarity tourism, referencing the transnational connections between experiences and struggles. This is one area that may be important for future investigation. Scholars can better examine the role of the intersectional analyses of hosts and their awareness of struggles of the tourists' contexts and how this impacts effectiveness of a trip. Similarly, it might be helpful to identify where hosts get their information from, so as to be able to better develop trainings that meet their needs and provide them at relevant locations and institutions.

Practice Implications

Research question 6 details changes hosts recommended to improve Palestinian solidarity tourism. I will discuss some of those suggestions. One of the most promising changes involves developing a coalition to oversee and offer guidance and support for those involved in solidarity tourism in Palestine, especially related to advertising and promotion. In addition, as noted by most of the participants, giving more attention to framing of the Palestinian experience and struggle would be beneficial in improving the effectiveness of solidarity tourism in Palestine. The proposed coalition could also include some sort of certification to endorse certain tour groups and provide some guidance for people wanting to visit through solidarity tourism. Although solidarity tourism is by no means monolithic, there may be some benefit for a Palestinian coalition to develop some of the core elements of solidarity tourism (e.g., BDS education, advocacy in home context, etc.)

that they would like people to engage with. Additionally, clarifying the overall strategy employed in solidarity tourism and how it relates to the broader struggle for justice and equity may also help with solidarity tourism practice. Similarly, towards increasing effectiveness of solidarity tourism, there could be more focus for solidarity tour groups on strategies for advocacy coordination internationally. This could include some time to reflect on potential actions and groups that are doing work that people can join when they return home. This could also include training on a number of social change strategies, including the boycott divestment and sanctions movement as discussed earlier. Finally, being connected to or following some of the international campaigns to advance Palestinian solidarity may help smooth the transition from solidarity tourism travel to action.

LIMITATIONS

My findings should be considered in the context of the limitations of my study. First, when asking hosts directly about their experiences, feelings, and thoughts, I did not always get a direct answer; many times, hosts discussed their general perceptions of the question, rather than how it applied to them personally. Some questions to hosts about their personal experiences would have been better received if asked about the general host experience as it may be uncomfortable and difficult to share personally, especially in a collectivist society. Similarly, when asking participants about their political and religious affiliations, there was a general discomfort that was followed by a statement indicating they are not politically affiliated, nor do they discriminate against any religious identities in their work. Participants' reluctance to discuss religious or political affiliation may be tied to the global critique of Palestinians as divided between Hamas and Fatah. Participants may

be intentional in refusing to further reinforce such divisions, especially considering how they have been used to divert attention from Israeli settler-colonialism and apartheid (Bushkar, 2023; Bishara, 2023). Additionally, this may be further explained by the collectivist culture of Palestine where high-context communication is more prevalent (Zaharna, 1991). High-context communication is used in collectivist cultures and involves incorporating the larger context and environment, while low-context communication is common in individualistic cultures and can focus on a topic/idea/experience independent of the environment (Liu, 2016).

Although I employed a synthesized member checking approach, the process was far from ideal. Eight participants reviewed results; however, none of the participants added comments or suggested changes. I do not believe that this means the results were perfectly aligned with their experiences, but rather that synthesized member checking may not be the most effective approach in the Palestinian context working with Palestinian hosts. Most participants were at capacity with all the elements of their work and adding a request for them to critically review this report and provide feedback may not have been feasible. For future researchers, I would recommend attempting to meet with participants by hosting focus groups or personally connecting with participants again to share findings. Although they may not have provided feedback, hosts expressed appreciation that results were shared. Thus, I also recommend that researchers send reports of their findings to participants, even if they do not complete a member-checking process.

I was unable to engage in participant observation. I suspect participants may have been guarded because of my affiliation to a local organization that engages with solidarity tourism, and the fact that programs and itineraries are a result of their intellectual efforts

and one of the products that help fund their work. However, I have years of experience as a facilitator and host that I draw upon in this dissertation. Similarly, COVID-19 was still a global issue, and tourism had not yet recovered to pre-Covid levels. In the first half of 2021, the Bethlehem governorate had no recorded hotel guests, in spite of Bethlehem typically representing more than 60% of all inbound tourism in Palestine (PCBS, 2021a).

Participants were centered around the Bethlehem area, it is possible that hosts from other parts of Palestine like Hebron, Nablus, Jerusalem, or Gaza would have different perspectives and experiences. Similarly, there may be unique experiences and obstacles faced by Palestinians involved in solidarity tourism within Israel. Thus, the implications and findings of this study may not be appropriate for other settings in Palestine, nor other international contexts. Although they may not apply in other settings, these findings may be relevant to scholars interested in solidarity tourism.

As with most fields in Palestine, I suspect the field of solidarity tourism is dominated by male Palestinians. There is no data specific to solidarity tourism nor tourism in general regarding participations by sex. In 2019, female Palestinians had double the unemployment rate of male Palestinians in the West Bank (PCBS, 2020b). In 2020, there were four times the number of male Palestinians in the labor force than women (PCBS, 2021b). With this in mind, I aimed to overrepresent female host perspectives, and ended up with 5 female participants and 10 male participants, approximately double female Palestinian participation in the labor force. However, considering my positionality as a Palestinian man, I believe there was reluctance to connect me to women who were hosts. At the same time, conversations with women may have been less open regarding the impact of gender on their engagement in solidarity tourism. Thus, the collaboration of

women as Co-investigators or principal investigators in future research may be essential to facilitating more open conversations regarding the role of gender in experiences of solidarity tourism. Additionally, it may be prudent for scholars to advance this area of research with an explicitly critical feminist epistemology, considering the complexities and intersections of Israeli settler-colonialism and patriarchal oppression.

CONCLUSIONS

With this study, I sought to expand on the foundations that other scholars have provided in terms the theory and practice surrounding solidarity tourism in Palestine. By centering the experience of Palestinian hosts, I was able to derive insights into their motivations for participating in solidarity tourism, the processes by which they become involved, the nature of their involvement, and their beliefs regarding the direction and role of solidarity tourism. My findings suggest that solidarity tourism plays an important role for participants, who see it as meaningfully contributing the Palestinian struggle for liberation and self-determination. Further, the participants offered important suggestions for strengthening solidarity tourism and its impact on this national struggle. Although it is not immune from the colonial pressures that accompany Israeli occupation, solidarity tourism can play an important role in fostering continued global engagement in, and support for, Palestinians' struggle for liberation.

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APPENDIX

Day 0

I arrived at Tel Aviv airport early this morning after an overnight flight. I had been warned that the Israeli border control may refuse my entry if I accidentally share that I'm there to be in solidarity with Palestinians. I got to passport control, and they asked me questions about whether I had been there before, my father's name, my mother's name, and my origins, disregarding my US passport. They asked why I was there, where I was going, where I was staying and other logistic information to determine if I was an ally to the state of Israel or not. After some back and forth and answering the same question multiple times, they permitted my entry. I found my ride to Jerusalem where our delegation spent the first night.

Day 1

We officially started our solidarity tour. We were all in the lobby by 8 a.m. and with the time difference in the US that meant I was exhausted and starting my day when I typically would be ending it back home. We started with a walking tour of the old city of Jerusalem where our Palestinian guide, a resident of Jerusalem, highlighted the different quarters and pointed out the houses of Palestinians that have been forcibly taken over by Israeli settlers and the violence they perpetrate to occupy Palestinian homes. He then described how Palestinians with Jerusalem IDs, although similar to the Israeli blue IDs in their ability to travel between the West Bank and Jerusalem, are required to regularly prove that Jerusalem is the center of their life or else lose their residency status. We were shocked at the idea that Israel can revoke the residency status of Palestinians in Jerusalem, who have had generations of history living in the same place, if they fail to prove that

Jerusalem is the center of their life. We learned that more than ten thousand residencies had been revoked before 2012.

After walking through the Old City of Jerusalem, we met with 4 Palestinian Jerusalem residents who shared about their life and struggles, stories that echoed and added depth to what we heard during our walking tour. We had lunch at a local Palestinian restaurant that seems to be under constant threat of being pushed out by Israeli policies and settlers.

After lunch, our driver and group leader took us to Bethlehem where we met with an organization near the wall and right below an Israeli sniper tower. We were shocked to see a children's playground with a backdrop of this concrete wall, sniper tower, and barbed wire. We learned that this is one of the most tear gassed places in the world and an employee of the organization walked us around the area where he pointed out the leftovers of tear gas canisters, flash grenades, rubber-coated steel bullets, and the shells from live ammunition. He shared about their summer camp and how they have to be flexible and quick to respond to Israeli raids and have had to interrupt their camp and other programs to take shelter from the Israeli military attacks. He brought our attention to the security surveillance cameras and the Israeli soldier presence in the tower. The staff person brought us back to the organization's court yard where we sat in a large circle and the director of the organization told us about their work in the Bethlehem context. They work with children, youth, and women's empowerment. They also explained that their organization is responsive to the changing needs and shifting sociopolitical context of their community. After our trip to this first organization, we drove to one of the refugee camps in Bethlehem and met with an organization's staff who discussed the unique challenges to Palestinian

refugees who live in these camps with narrow walkways between partially finished and damaged concrete buildings. They shared how the Israeli military frequently raids and arrests the children with a 16 year old having been arrested a few nights ago. They walked us through what a military raid at 4 in the morning looks like and the Israeli military courts that prosecute these children and how, if they get a trial, are found guilty 99 percent of the time.

We then had dinner with hosts from the refugee camp, we split into groups of 3-4 and walked with our hosts to their homes in the refugee camp. We learned about our hosts' interests and work, and the conversation didn't focus solely on the difficulties of their lives. Our hosts had a family member who recently got married and they shared some of the photos and about the traditions tied to that celebration. I find myself struggling with the idea of such a joyous occasion in such an oppressive context.

We ended the day with a group debriefing session where we all reflected about what we witnessed and experienced. We had Knafeh, which was amazing! However, there is something complicated about enjoying a sweet like Knafeh when reflecting on a day filled with witnessing and hearing about oppression. Everyone in our group seems exhausted, but on this first day, I'm glad I made the decision to join this trip.

Day 2

We packed up our bags as we'd stay in Bethlehem tonight, near the Church of the Nativity. After loading the bus, we went to the outskirts of Beit Jala (one of the cities in the Bethlehem governorate). The area is known for a local monastery and winery. On our way there, we drove through a narrow road and saw the partially complete concrete wall that would cut off Palestinians from this beautiful green area full of apricots, grapes, almonds,

olives, and other fruit bearing trees. Across the valley was a settlement that was used to station tanks during the second Intifada to shell the Palestinian residents of Beit Jala. We learned that this area is an important part of Bethlehem, and that Palestinians in Bethlehem will be cut off from their land and trees and are likely to be prevented from access after Israel finishes building the wall. After we all get a chance to try some wine at the Cremisan winery, we go to a village called Battir, we had lunch at a restaurant in Battir and learned about Battir's history and resistance from 1948 to most recently being designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After lunch we were guided on a hike from Battir to an area called Al-Makhroun. During the hike, our guide pointed out historical markers and ancient burial sites. We learned about some of the plants and trees that arrived in Palestine with colonial powers such as the use of pine trees to displace Palestinians and uproot their olive groves. The Jewish National Fund planted forests of mostly pine trees, and we learned that many of these forests were used to erase Palestinian villages.

After what felt like forever, we made it to our destination. Al-Makhroun is another green area in Bethlehem only a few Palestinians are allowed to live there. Palestinians in the Bethlehem area farm there and maintain their fruit trees, even though they aren't allowed to build or live there. We had dinner overlooking a beautiful valley and watched a beautiful sunset. The restaurant owner shared how there was another restaurant that used to be across the valley that was demolished by the Israeli military because it's in area C, an area under exclusive Israeli control. He said any buildings constructed after 1967 are subject to demolition by the Israeli military, and the owners have to pay the costs of the demolition when it happens. Now, he pointed out that next to the location of the

demolished restaurant is a new Israeli settlement outpost that is likely to become a settlement as that is how most settlements started. They said that Bethlehem was surrounded by 18 Israeli settlements. After dinner, we are all exhausted. Tonight, we are staying in a hotel near the Nativity Church, which will be where we start our day tomorrow.