

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

Palestine Liberation Music and the Emergence of Palestinian Hip-Hop

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Abstract:

The study examined the process of Palestinian hip-hop's emergence throughout the history and its role as a powerful political resistance weapon in the framework of the 'social register' theory proposed by Asif Agha in 1999 and the 'footing' theory proposed by Erving Goffman in 1979. Two objectives were stated for this study: to apply the 'historical formation' and the 'social interactive' perspective proposed in Agha's 'register theory' in the social register of Palestinian hip-hop music; to show the effectiveness of Palestinian hip-hop music as a political weapon. The research methods employed in this study are self-designed online surveys taken by a total of 89 people living in Palestine or Israel, original Palestinian hip-hop music lyrics and online Palestine liberation music archives. The results of the study suggests that Palestinian hip-hop is indeed a strong political weapon as a social register and that the in the future of Palestinian hip-hop would possibly become more and more prosperous. In addition, the analysis of the study shows the feasibility of applying anthropological theories into real-life cases.

Keywords: Palestine, hip-hop, liberation music, Israel

1. Introduction

The topic of political struggles has long been a focus in a variety of fields of study including politics, sociology, anthropology, and history. Meanwhile, a seemingly invisible bias has appeared; researchers tend to thoroughly analyze the time, place, and people involved in political struggles, but cultural registers are often disregarded. Among all the cultural registers that affect political struggles, liberation music is no doubt one of the most influential ones. Joseph Massad (2005), a Jordanian professor specializing in modern Arab Politics, writes about the role of liberation music in political struggles and revolutions:

From the 'Marseillaise' and the 'Internationale' to revolutionary Soviet songs and the 'nuevacanción' in Latin America and from national anthems to nationalist songs in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe to songs of the anticolonial struggles for national liberation in Asia and Africa, songs have played an important role in mobilizing the masses (Massad, 2005, p.175).

Notably, the irreplaceable role of liberation music in political struggle can be vividly shown in the case of the Palestine political struggle. Initially, Palestine liberation music emerged in 1950s post-revolutionary Egypt. Palestinian hip-hop experienced uprisings when significant events of promoting the liberation Palestine broke out including the defeat in the 1967 Six-Day War and the rise of Palestinian guerilla, a nationalist militia aiming to liberate Palestine. In the late 1990s, the register of liberation music has exhibited a new form, blending the American rap music style and Arabic lyrics, called Palestinian hip-hop. This brand-new genre gained popularity from the Palestineregion because it uniquely mixed lively hip-hop with progressive lyrics. Compared to the previous Palestine liberation music genres, Palestinian hip-hop also became especially famous in the rest of the world, especially in the West. According to Ted Swedenberg, a famous professor specializing in Middle East Anthropology, Palestinian hip-hop to date has 'received far more attention in the West than any other musical genres from Palestine' (Swedenberg, 2013, p.17). But, why exactly did Palestinian hip-hop gain such huge popularity in expressing the voice of political struggle?



Figure 1: G-Town, A Popular Palestinian Hip-Hop Band in Shu'afat, Jerusalem, Performing Political Resistant Hip-Hop Casually on the Street (Audio.Urcm.Net, N.D.)¹

In this paper I provide an analysis of how Palestinian hip-hop serves as both a powerful and popular tool of political resistance in Palestine. Moreover, I shall analyze this cultural phenomenon through the framework of Agha's 'social register' theory and Goffman's 'footing' theory (Agha, 1999 & 2004; Goffman, 1979). According to Agha's definition of a 'register' as 'a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture internally, with particular social practices and people who engage in such practices,' Palestinian hip-hop is a typical social register (Agha, 1999, p.216). In the case of Palestinian hip-hop, the practitioners are Palestinians and ethnic Palestinian musicians; audiences are the global public; and the cultural theme is Palestine liberation. Although most scholars like David A. McDonald (2013) and Chuen-Fung Wong (2009) analyze Palestinian hip-hop's political role through specific music groups or points of time, I believe that it is necessary to include Joseph Massad's approach to trace back to the origin of Palestine liberation music and show from there how Palestinian hip-hop emerged from that early state. As Agha (2004), an influential expert on the study of registers, argues, the study of a social register should pay attention to the 'reflexive historical formation' viewpoint and figure out the dynamic developmental process of the register (Agha, 2004).

Research methods employed in this study include analysis of specific liberation songs and surveys which targeted people living in Palestine and Israel.² Since the central theme of the paper is to analyze Palestinian hip-hop as well as the political role of other Palestine liberation music, I shall only focus on the lyrics of the songs. In the first section of the paper, I shall lay out the process of how the initial Palestine liberation music genre—pan-Arabism liberation music in post-revolutionary Egypt—emerged into the recent genre of Palestinian hip-hop. In addition, I shall demonstrate how Palestine liberation music in all eras plays a role as a political weapon through the analysis of music lyrics. To show changing dynamics I divide the developmental process of Palestine liberation music before the emergence of the Palestinian hip-hop through three significant historical events revolutionary Egypt, the 1967 six-war defeat, and the rise of Palestinian Fedayeen. Then, I shall show the effectiveness of Palestinian hip-hop as a political tool through the use of an interactive form of discussion. I will first lay out the evaluations of Palestinian hip-hop given by all kinds of audiences including local and international public, local government bodies, international journalists, and scholars; then I will provide Palestinian hip-hop artists' responses to audience criticism and reaction.

City of Residence/Gender Identity	Palestine	Israel
Male	9	46
Female	5	26

Table 1: Basic Information of the Survey Takers

2. Palestine Liberation Music: An Everlasting Theme

2.1. Pan-Arabism Liberation Theme in Revolutionary Egypt

Although Palestinian hip-hop only started to exist in the late 1990s, Palestine liberation songs have emerged since the 1950s. The earliest Palestine liberation music originated in Revolutionary Egypt along the discourse wave of liberation, nationalism, and pan-Arabism, strengthened by the success of the 1952 Egyptian Revolution (Bursheh, 2013, p.54). Massad (2005) argues, 'by 1952, when the Free Officers ousted King Faruq and unleashed their youthful revolution, the Egyptian entertainment industry (theater, cinema, dance, and song) had no rival in the Arab world and its products even reached non-Arab Iran' (Massad, 2005, p.178). At this time, most artists that produce Palestine liberation music are from Egypt. While music pieces at this time 'celebrated the anti-colonial and revolutionary achievement of Egypt,' they also 'addressed parts of the more widely imagined Arab nation yet to be liberated, most prominently Palestine and Algeria' (Massad, 2005, pp.179-180). Mohamed Diab, an award-winning Egyptian music and movie producer, narrates:

¹Picture archived from audio.urcm.net. <http://audio.urcm.net/G-Town-The-Palestinian-Hip-Hop>.

²The survey is done through pollfish, an online survey platform, see

https://www.pollfish.com/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign1=gsem_Brand_sc-Prospect&utm_adgroup1=pollfish&utm_term=pollfish&utm_sitelink={sitelink}&utm_device=c&utm_create=388962963290&gclid=EAlaIqobChMliIa78rqC8wIVmppmAh30DgONEAAYASAAEgLh4PD_BwE. The questions on the survey consist of multiple answers questions and open-ended questions. General information and the context of the survey can be found in the Appendix.

During those years, those songs were not just heard and sung by people in Egypt, but all across the Arab world. There are recordings in the archives in many Arab countries because at the time Egypt's revolution was the liberation movement that Arab nations looked up to; this too gave the songs of the 1952 Revolution an extended life (Ezzat, 2020).

The atmosphere of promoting Palestine liberation was also strengthened through the Nasser government's direct support of Palestine: in the second Arab summit held on September 5, 1964 in Alexandria, Nasser supported the Palestine Liberation Organization's decision to establish a Palestinian liberation army; in 1969, Nasser signed the Cairo agreement in support of the Palestinian revolution (State Information Service, 2018). Prominent artists at the time included Mohammed Abdel Wahab (Egyptian composer), Fayza Ahmad (Syrian Egyptian singer), Abdel Halim Hafez (Egyptian singer & conductor), Warda Al-Jazairia (Algerian singer), NouhadWadie' Haddad (Lebanese singer), Najat al Saghira (Syrian Egyptian), and Umm Kulthum (Egyptian composer and songwriter) (Bursheh, 2013, p.40).

Among these musicians, Mohammed Abdel Wahab is considered the most innovative, and the appeal for Palestine liberation can be seen in his pieces. His early work 'Sawt al-Jamahir' (The voice of the masses) presents the idea of spreading the liberation movement in Egypt to the whole Arab world. The song starts by defining 'Arab national[ism] as a unified mass movement' (Massad, 2005, p.180):

The voice of the masses is what awakens the generations³

The voice of the masses is the revolt of the determination of the heroes

It is the one that speaks

The one that controls

It is the hero behind every struggle

By referring to the desolate situation of the Palestinian Nakba (the Palestine Exodus), the song gradually presents the goal of liberating Palestine as a central component of the Arab liberation movement:

In the name of our union

We struggle

Tell the aggressors Zionists

That the banner of Arabism has known its stars
since the year 1948.

...There is a line of fire

And the masses shall prevail

Their revolutionary actions in Palestine

As Massad (2005) argues, 'the optimistic tone of the song reflects the triumphalism that flooded the Arab world after the success of the liberation actions during and after the 1952 Egyptian Revolution' (Massad, 2005, p.180). The idea that the liberation of Palestine was inevitable was widespread in the region.



Figure 2: Mohammed Abdel Wahab Performing at a Local Concert (Ahramonline, 2020)

Because of his leadership during the Egyptian Revolution, including nationalizing the Suez Canal Company and pressuring foreign troops to withdraw from Egypt, Nasser became the ideal leader for the liberation of the Arab world, including Palestine. This popularity resulted in a new type of Palestine liberation music that praised Nasser and envisioned the scene of Nasser freeing Palestine. In the mid-1950s, Abdel Wahab wrote the song 'Nasser,' "expressing the optimism of the nascent Palestinian liberation movement with Nasser as its clear figurehead" (Orr, 2011, p.23):

Your people, your people, O Palestine⁴

Will never let go of their revenge

For the liberation army is at the gates

Waiting to return home

Your sun shall rise O Palestine

And the rights of the refugees shall be restored

All the Arab people are your weapon, O Palestine

And their weapons are unity and nationalism

Nasser, your banner is Arab

³ Lyrics archived from <https://lyricstranslate.com/en/sout-el-gamaher-sout-el-gamaheer.html>. Translation done by the author.

⁴Cited from Joseph Massad. (2005). Liberating songs: Palestine put to music. *Palestine, Israel, and the politics of popular culture*, 175-201.

And the next step
O Nasser [Victor], is against Zionism
Nasser, beloved of all, Nasser

By mobilizing of the masses to liberate Palestine against Zionism, this song, along with other songs of the era, built an effective atmosphere which expressed the determination and willpower to liberate and rebuild Palestine.

The liberation music during the post-Egyptian revolution era also pioneered the introduction of Western style music to traditional Arabic themes, which was largely due to the high proportion of Western-educated intellectuals in the Egypt government (Ginat, 2013). Although the 1952 revolution was generally an anti-West activity, Western-educated elites eventually won power after the revolution. They designed comprehensive cultural plans that on one hand 'stressed the revival and preservation of the national heritage' and on the other hand presented 'receptivity to foreign influences' (El-Shawan, 1985, p.147), aiming to '[propose] plans to reconstruct . . . a system of cultural values based on a progressive humanism from a synthesis of national and universal cultures" (Wabah, 1972, p.15). While the music of the song "Filastin" from 1949 features quarter tones mixed into segments with Western scales, the music of the major nationalist songs in post-1958 used almost exclusively Western instrumentation, scales, and style and resembled Western martial music (Massad, 2005, p.179). Massad (2005) writes, 'though the lyrics of 'WataniHabibi' addressed the Arab homeland with the words 'The voice is your voice, Arab and free, and not an echo of West or East,' the orchestra lacked a single Arab instrument' (Massad, 2005, p.179). As Chuen-Fung Wong (2009), a professional ethnomusicologist specializing in Asian music, points out: 'Egyptian popular songs of Abd al-Wahhab (1907–1991) and Umm Kulthūm (1904–1975) in the mid-twentieth century were heavily influenced by European functional harmony, orchestral setting, and other non-indigenous styles and practices' (Wong, 2009, p.269). This cultural hybridization set the precedent for future Palestine liberation musicians to absorb Western music elements in their work.

2.2. The 1967 Six-Day War Defeat

The 1967 defeat was a key point for the development of Palestine liberation music. Because of the military defeat in the war, Palestine liberation music pieces experienced a rapid increase, though 'echoing a mélange of sadness and despair' (Massad, 2005, p.181). The outcome of the Six-Day War of 1967 frustrated supporters of pan-Arab ideology, while it also eliminated Egypt's 'near monopoly' on liberation music production and the imagined emphasis of Gamal Abdel Nasser's leadership during Arab liberation battles (Boulos, 2013, p.55). Therefore, new foci of liberation song production and Palestine liberation musicians emerged in other Arab countries (Massad, 2005, p.182). Key musicians at this time included the Rahbani brothers (Lebanese sibling composers), Fayruz (Lebanese singer, partner with the Rahbani brothers), Joseph Harb (Lebanese song writer), Philemon Wahbi (Lebanese singer & composer), and Al-Shiqeen (Syrian & Palestinian music group).

The Rahbani brothers as composers and Fayruz as a singer together created the most popular political songs of the time. As Wong (2009) argues, their songs were 'loaded with blatant nationalistic messages with constant references to Palestinian places and people under occupation' (Wong, 2009, p.269). The group had been releasing Palestine liberation music before the 1967 defeat, the martial song 'SayfonFalYouch'har' (Brandish the sword) being the most explicit one:

I do not forget you Palestine and the distance pulls me tight⁵
I am in your eyes Nasreen, I am the flower of thorns, I am the rose

...

We will break down the walls, we will take inspiration from that cave

However, it was their 'Paeans to Jerusalem,' "Zahrat al-Mada'in" (The flower of cities), after the defeat in the war that made them stand out to the public (Massad, 2005, p.181). With ominous drumbeats and dotted rhythms, the song indicates a 'strong sense of struggle, terror and war that eventually disrupts the peace in the Land of Peace' (Al-Tae, 2002, p.44). The song starts with a prayer to the holy city:

It is for you O city of the prayer that I pray⁶
It is for you O splendid home, O flower of the cities
O Jerusalem O Jerusalem O Jerusalem O city of the prayer
Our eyes are set out to you everyday

Then, the lyrics present a sharp description of the cruel living environment of Palestinians in Jerusalem after Jewish conquest of the city. In contrast to their previous liberation songs, the lyrics show resentment by mentioning the inequality caused by Israel's occupation of Jerusalem not only to Islamism but also to Christianity by mentioning Mary Mother of Jesus:

When The city of Jerusalem city fell
Love retreated and in the hearts of the world the war was settled
The child is in the cave and his mother is Mary two faces crying
And I'm praying

In the end, the song voices criticism of the Israelis as the violators of peace and inspires the steadfast commitment to end the Jewish occupation of Jerusalem (Al-Tae, 2002, pp. 44-46; Stone, 2007):

The glaring anger is on its way and I am sure of it

⁵ Lyrics archived from <https://genius.com/Fairuz-sayfon-fal-youchhar-lyrics>. Translation done by the author.

⁶ Translated lyrics from <https://sarahelshair.blogspot.com/2015/09/jerusalem-flower-of-all-cities.html>. For a detailed description of the song, see Al-Tae, N. (2002). Voices of peace and the legacy of reconciliation: popular music, nationalism, and the quest for peace in the Middle East. *Popular Music*, 21(1), 41-61.

The bright anger is arriving, I will overcome the sadness
 From everywhere, it will arrive riding the steeds of fear
 As the overwhelming face of God, there is no doubt about it, it will arrive

The gates of our city will not be locked anymore, for I am heading there to pray
 I will knock the gates and I will open them
 And you, O Jordan river, will wash my face with holy water
 And you, O Jordan river, will erase the trace of the barbaric feet



Figure 3: Fayruz and Rahbani Brothers after a Performing Show
 (بعدك على بالي 'You Are Still in My Mind,' N.D.)

As the Fayruz-Rahbani brothers team became popular in Syria and Lebanon, they were invited to Egypt to perform songs by Cairo Radio, where they created another well-known piece: 'Rajioun' (Returning). 'Rajioun' is a semi-dramatic work in which Fairouz's voice is in dialogue with a chorus of male and female voices, expressing the collective conscience of the team and the Palestinian public (Stone, 2007). Unlike the factual descriptive style of 'Zahrat al-Mada'i' (The flower of cities), this work employs a more figurative narration. The lyrics begin with an empathetic rhythm expressing the nostalgic flow of Palestinians:

You are from our homes from the scents of the night breeze⁷
 Carrying the fragrance of the land of her whims, the nostalgia of the heart blooms
 You are from our fields, O Messenger, from our good land
 How is our house, do you say, or did you leave, like us?

Gradually, the song uses exclamatory and interrogative sentences to present the harsh situation faced by Palestinians and indicates their great anger about losing their home:

No shelter, no place to rest, shall we lie in the yards?
 There is no home, no sound, and in vain the hours pass
 We tasted the horror and walked the night without food
 The cold has become too cold, where do we sleep?
 Do we sleep and sail a good wreck?
 Do we sleep and the paths of truth darkness?
 And our beloved home is inhabited by a stranger
 We are refugees in tents
 Do we sleep?
 We won't sleep!

In the end, the song shows the determination of Palestinians to recapture their land and return despite the great challenges against them:

In the rain we shall return
 In the hurricane we shall return
 In the sun, in the wind, in the fields, in the courtyard
 We shall return, shall return, shall return
 By faith we shall return to our homelands
 In the sand and shadows in the reefs and hills
 We shall return, shall return, shall return

Besides 'Zahrat al-Mada'in' and 'Rajioun,' the Fayruz-Rahbani brothers team also released several other popular liberation songs including 'Bissan,' 'Sanarji'uYawman' (We shall return one day), and 'Ghurba' (Exile) (RISE UP AND SING; Massad, 2005, p.183). Due to the significance of Fayruz and the Rahbani brothers' Palestine liberation pieces, the renowned Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish proclaimed that the team's works were 'the restored homeland' and 'the motivation for Palestinians to march forward on the long caravan road' (Mahmoud, 1986).

⁷ Lyrics archived from <https://lyricstranslate.com/en/fayruz-rajioun-lyrics.html>.

2.3. *The Rise of Palestinian Fedayeen*

Drawing inspiration from guerrilla movements in Vietnam, China, Algeria, and Latin America, Palestinian nationalists founded the Palestinian fedayeen, a combination of guerrillas of a nationalist orientation consisting of Palestinian people (Milton-Edwards, 2019, pp.94-95; Burgat&Delvoie, 2003, p.117). Eventually, the Palestinian fedayeen won many liberation battles, including the Battle of Karamah and the several victories during the two Intifada uprisings (Poché, 2001).⁸ Due to their great performance, Palestine liberation music experienced another rise in popularity in the 1980s (World Music Network, 2011). A new genre, possessing the characteristics of being explicit and motivating, quickly became popular among the Palestinian fedayeen and the public in Palestine (Massad, 2005). The general motivation of these songs was to 'mobilize the Palestinian people for uprisings against the Israeli state, disseminated quickly through audio cassettes and other mass media' (Wong, 2009, p.270).

The most famous song at the time was the militant nationalist anthem 'Yafalastiniya' (O Palestinians), written by the Egyptian musician and singer Sheikh Imam (Emery, 2006). As Joseph Massad argues, 'this underground song [O Palestinians] became popular in Palestinian refugee camps and among the Palestinian fedayeen, as well as in dissident circles in Egypt and elsewhere in the Arab world' (Massad, 2005, p.187). The lyrics employ repetition, always starting with the phrase 'Yafalastiniya (O Palestinians),' showing an intense emotion regarding the 'sufferings of the Palestinians' and drawing on the 'stock themes of exile, nostalgia, and revolution' (Massad, 2005, p.187). The song first expresses its anger with the brutality of Zionists:

O Palestinian, the gunman threw you out⁹
 With Zionism your doves were murdered in your arms
 O Palestinian, I want travel to your land
 With fire in my hands, and my hands in your hands
 Against the serpent. And death to the ways of Hula!

Then, the song draws on the determination of Palestinians to start revolution to topple the Zionist regime:

O Palestinian, you have been away from your homeland for too long
 And in the deserts, you are the refugees and victims
 The land misses its peasants and its streams of water
 Revolution is your end, and victory is the first step!

O Palestinian, the revolution is certain
 With rifles we will force a new life
 No matter how long the road may be
 Rapid footsteps will make it come true

Finally, the song refers to the recent U.S. defeat in the Vietnam War to show that America and the regime it supports are not always undefeatable,¹⁰ inspiring the public to be fearless against challenges and strive for their goal of liberating Palestine:

O Palestinian, Vietnam is your good luck charm
 Victorious rose from a hundred thousand incursions
 The candle is lit and the whole situation was lost
 They went back confused, may this happen to you too!

Following the trend of writing martial nationalist music, a huge number of music groups and individuals sprung up at the time, including Sabreen (Palestinian music group), Marcel Khalife (Lebanese singer & composer), Abu Arab (Palestinian lyricist & singer), and Al Ashiqin (Palestinian music band). Among these, Sabreen was the most well-known group at the time.¹¹ Although their initial individual music pieces, 'An al-Sumud' (About steadfastness) and 'Dukhan al-Barakin' (The smoke of the volcanoes), did not gain much fame for them, their later albums *Mawt al-Nabi* (Death of the Prophet), *Jay al-Hamam* (Here comes the doves), and *Ala Faya* (Where to?) made them especially popular. Sabreen's music presented a new style of political resistant music, in which 'musical features such as imbalanced phrases, unsteady rhythms, and inconstant beats were iconic of the experience of occupation among Palestinians' (Al-Tae, 2002, p.51). Different from Palestine liberation music before, these albums focus on the peace of Palestine and the process of building the peace (Massad, 2005, p.192). Besides being a popular Palestine liberation music group, Sabreen pioneered a new music genre, boldly blending Arabic styles with other musical styles from African music to American jazz and blues. (Massad, 2005, p.192). This attempt undoubtedly contributed to the emergence of Palestinian hip-hop: a mix of American-style rap and traditional Arabic music discourses.

⁸ The first Intifada began in 1987 and ended with the Oslo Accords in 1993. The second Intifada, also known as the 'al-Aqsa Intifada' (named after a mosque in Jerusalem), broke out in 2000. Also notice that overall, in the two Intifadas the Arabs lost.

⁹ Lyrics archived from <https://revolutionaryarabicpoetry.blogspot.com/2011/07/o-palestine.html>.

¹⁰ The U.S. government in general supports Israel in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

¹¹ For a review of their songs in English and a detailed biography of DAM, see Boullata, K., Hiltermann, J., & Jadallah, D. (1993). *Improvisation and Continuity. Middle East Report*, 32-34.



Figure 4: Sabreen Performing in Jerusalem in 1900 (Youtube, 2012)

2.4. The Emergence of Palestinian Hip-hop

Palestinian hip-hop emerged in between the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s (Nissenbaum, 2005). The appearance of Palestinian hip-hop as a social register is largely due to the impact of the social environment and external factors at the time. As Agha (2004) argues, 'registers are historical formations caught up in group relative processes of valorization and counter valorization, exhibiting change in both form and value over time' (Agha, 2004, p.25). The first generation of Palestinian hip-hop musicians were the ethnic Palestinians living in Israel. The reason was, as Nissenbaum (2005) argues, that 'Arab citizens living in Israel were generally having greater freedom and opportunity than Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip' (Nissenbaum, 2005). Possessing this more democratic and free atmosphere, when the wave of hip-hop swept the world in the 'Golden Age,' several Arab musicians in Israel quickly realized the emotional power that could be transmitted through this new genre and decided to employ it (Alridge & Stewart, 2005). The first figure to notice this was Tamer Nafar, who later built the first Palestinian hip-hop band DAM.¹² He once talked about the process of getting inspired by U.S. rapper Tupac Shakur:

My reality is hip hop. I listened to the lyrics and felt they were describing me, my situation. You can exchange the word 'nigger' with 'Palestinian.'...When I heard Tupac sing *'It's a White Man's World'* I decided to take hip hop seriously (El-Sabawi, 2005).

Meanwhile, DAM's first hip-hop pieces were not about Palestine liberation but about the rampant crime and drugs in Lyd, a small city in Israel where the group's members were living (Swedenburg, 2013, p.20).¹³ As Tamer Nafar, the founder of DAM, narrates in *Slingshot Hip Hop*, the most influential documentary of Palestinian hip-hop, 'the situation here [in Lyd] is like a refugee camp in Israel, and we want to express the situation' (Salloum, 2008, 0:6:45). DAM's reference to politics shifted dramatically after the second Intifada in 2000, especially when thirteen Palestinian protesters were killed by Israeli Police (Swedenburg, 2013, p.20). A few months after the event, DAM released 'MinIrhabī?' (Who's the Terrorist?) on the internet, which suddenly made DAM popular. The song was downloaded more than 1 million times by 2008 and still remains the most popular Palestinian hip-hop album (Democracy Now, 2008). The song gained popularity not only because of its great hip-hop rhythm but also the narrative of its lyrics. Unlike previous Palestine liberation music, the lyrics of the song presented an extremely logical statement in every musical paragraph, which is 'often seen in professional research papers.'¹⁴ The song starts with a chorus where the lyrics prove the statement that 'although Israelis say that the Palestinians are terrorists, Israelis themselves are actually the terrorist[s]':

Who's the terrorist? I'm the terrorist?¹⁵

How am I a terrorist while I live in my country

Who's the terrorist? You're the terrorist!

You've taken everything I own while I'm living in my homeland

Then, the song further strengthens the point that 'Israelis are terrorists' by showing Israeli's perverted logic through specific cases:

I mean you hit me and wept, and beat me to complaining about it

When I reminded you that you started it, you sprung up and said:

'You let the little kids throw stones;

Don't they have a family to keep them under lock at home?'

What? You must have forgotten that you buried our parents under the rubble of our homes!

And now while my agony is so intense you call me the terrorist?

In the next section, the song shows the fact that 'it is the Israelis who have caused Palestinians to fight and protest because Israelis have seized almost every good thing from Palestinians' through sharp contrasts of the living conditions of Palestinians and Israelis, which further questions the Israelis' statement that Palestinians are terrorists:

Our mothers are weeping, our fathers are in anguish

Our land is disappearing, I reiterate, who are you?

You grew up spoiled while we grew up in poverty

Who grew up with freedom and who grew up in confinement?

Became a freedom fighter, you made him a criminal

And you, my terrorist, are calling me the terrorist!

¹²DAM means 'persist' in Arabic and 'blood' in Hebrew.

¹³Lyd belonged to Palestine before, but after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Lyd was occupied by Israel. Meanwhile, Palestinians like DAM's members did not want to leave so they continued to live there.

¹⁴This was pointed out during discussion with Professor Asif Agha, University of Pennsylvania.

¹⁵Translated lyrics archived from <https://genius.com/Dam-me-en-erhabe-whos-the-terrorist-english-version-lyrics>.

The last verse again emphasizes the theme by making sharp analogies and satirizing what the Israelis 'want' Palestinians to do and to become:

When will I stop being a terrorist?
 When you hit me and I turn the other cheek
 How do you expect me to thank who harmed me?
 You know what?! You tell me how you want me to be!
 Down on my knees with my hands tied?!
 My eyes to the ground, surrounded by bodies?
 Houses destroyed and families driven out?
 Orphaned children, our freedom chained up?!
 You oppress, you kill, we bury
 We'll remain patient and suppress our pain
 The most important thing is that you feel secure
 Relax and leave the pain to us, what's our blood?
 The blood of dogs; wait, no! When a dog dies there's the Animals' Rights organi[z]ations!
 That means our blood is less valuable than the blood of a dog?!
 No! My blood is precious
 And I'm going to defend myself if you call me a terrorist.



Figure 5: DAM Performing in a Local Concert
 (New Frame, N.D.)¹⁶

Discovering the great popularity of hip-hop works about Palestinian liberation and resistance, DAM quickly changed their focus to this theme. They produced a great amount of works, including 'Posha'imChafifi m M'pesha' (Innocent criminals), 'G'areeb Fi Biladi' ('Stranger in My Own Country'), and 'MaliHurriye' ('I Don't Have Freedom'). These songs made them more famous, so they became the most popular Palestinian hip-hop group.

Following the fame of DAM, a large number of Palestinian hip-hop bands emerged in the region, including not only Israel but also the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Famous hip-hop figures include MWR (music group), Ramallah Underground (RU), G-town, Ibrahim Ghunaim (also known as MC Gaza), Palestine Rapperz (PR), Palestine Streets (originally called badbuck band), and SamehZakout (SAZ). Basel Abbas, a well-known Palestinian hip-hop artist, describes the flourishing Arab hip-hop scene as being as 'diversified (or fragmented) as Arabs themselves are. It [Palestinian hip-hop] expresses as much frustration, polarization and diversity as Arabs themselves enjoy and suffer' (Abbas, 2005, 42). Though these groups have different perspectives and foci, they create music about the same political struggles. MWR presented life in Palestine and the troubled relationship between their land and Israel (MWR official Facebook account) whereas Palestine Streets focused on the cause of the Palestine-Israel Conflict and the situation of the refugee camp where they live (Shinkicker, 2017). As Tamer Nafar narrates in *Slingshot Hip Hop*, 'when people ask us what is Palestinian hip-hop, we say that Palestinian hip-hop is our CNN' (Salloum, 2008, 0:0:22). Meanwhile, these hip-hop musicians all discuss real-life situations in the Palestine area with strong emotions¹⁷, as shown in MWR's representative piece 'AshanakArabi' (Because I'm an Arab):

Why are we living in a time without happiness and hope?¹⁸
 When you're looking for a job they gonna fire you
 They turn you down and say you're not qualified
 And why? 'cause you're an Arab!
 Wherever you go they want you to show your ID -
 Without cause
 Why can't we be equal
 Why are we not treated as humans?
 Instead of setting free the most beautiful doves of peace
 They invent effective devices to kill

¹⁶Link of the picture: <https://www.newframe.com/political-songs-jasadik-hom-dam/>.

¹⁷The Palestine area here refers to the place consisting of both Palestine and Israel.

¹⁸Translated lyrics archived from <https://lazyproduction-arabtunes.blogspot.com/2013/08/mwr.html>.

Instead of looking for a way to peace
 They ask why the youth is wasted
 Why are we living in a time without happiness and hope?
 A policeman sees me, immediately arrests me, asks me
 Some racist questions, and why? Because I'm an Arab.
 Let me live. I'm just trying to live.

Eventually, Palestinian hip-hop music spread around the world, which resulted in ethnic Palestinians living outside the Palestine area producing liberation hip-hop, including Da Alc'z (rapper in the UAE), Excentrik (rapper in San Francisco), the Hammer Brothers (hip-hop group in New York), Shadia Mansour (rapper in London), and Philistines (hip-hop band in Tennessee) (SHINKICKER, 2021). These international hip-hop bands produced great pieces of work including 'Dheisheh' (Excentrik), 'Free Palestine' (the Hammer Brothers) and 'El KofeyyeArabeyyeh' (The 'Kuffiyeh' is Arab) (Shadia Mansour) to support the Palestinian resistance in their home country by 'translating the content to international society and aiming to gain public opinion support,' according to an interview with Will Youmans, a well-known ethnic Palestinian hip-hop artist in the US (Safieh, 2013, p.75). Palestine liberation music produced by ethnic Palestinians living abroad and native Palestinians became more popular internationally. Eventually, Palestinian music has motivated people from international society, ranging from politicians to professional scholars, to pay attention to Palestinian lives in the Palestine Area or even to take actions to help solve the issue of the Palestine-Israel Conflict. Thus, the initial aim of this genre has been partly achieved.

3. Audiences' Evaluations of Palestinian Hip-Hop

Asif Agha emphasizes the significance of paying attention to the interactive process between register practitioners in his renowned piece *'Registers of Language'*: 'the study of registers requires attention to reflexive social processes, whereby such models [of registers] are formulated and disseminated in social life and become available for use in interaction by individuals' (Agha, 2004, p.23). This framing is important to analyze the dynamic of Palestinian hip-hop. In the case of Palestinian hip-hop, it is the interaction between Palestinian hip-hop musicians and their audiences, which is also the dynamic between the speakers and the addressers (hearers) in Erving Goffman's¹⁹'footing' theory (Goffman, 1979). Thus, I shall first present the evaluation of audiences in categories, and then in the next part, I shall present the response of Palestinian musicians to these evaluations. In order to present as many perspectives as possible, the paper follows Goffman's definition of speakers and addressers: addressers being whoever hears the sound or raises attention because of the sound and speakers being whoever does the activity of speaking (Goffman, 1979). In addition, when analyzing audiences in the Palestine area, I split discussions into two cases, the case in the Israel-controlled area and that in the Palestine-controlled area, since the situations in the two areas are quite different.

3.1. Evaluations from Local Public

3.1.1. Evaluations from Palestinian Public

As Agha (2004) argues, 'at any given phase, or historical stage, a register formation involves a social domain of persons that is acquainted with the model of speech at issue.' Before Palestinian rappers became famous, their smallest sphere of social domain consisted of local public audiences and other hip-hop artists. While Palestinian hip-hop musicians living in the Gaza Strip and the Palestine-controlled West Bank usually have only Palestinian audiences, Palestinian hip-hop artists living in Israel potentially have Israeli audiences. Thus, in the following arguments, I will divide the local public audiences into Israelis and Palestinians but not categorize the two different Palestinian hip-hop groups living in the Palestine-controlled area and the Israel-controlled area.

Palestinians pay great attention to Palestinian hip-hop, evaluating the genre positively with great fervor. Among the 14 Palestinians (78.57%) who answered my survey, 8 of them (57.14%) actively listen to Palestinian hip-hop. Among the 8 Palestinians who listen to Palestinian hip-hop on their own, one even mentioned that he listens to Palestinian hip-hop 'every night.' The response of the 8 Palestinians to the question 'which is your favorite Palestinian hip-hop group' also reflects two of the significant characteristics of Palestinian hip-hop artists: distributed and diverse. 4 out of 8 interviewees mentioned that they cannot connect with a specific group because there were so many good groups; the other four interviewees wrote 4 different answers to their favorite group: Hassan Abed, DAM, BLTNM, and 47soul. The reason for these Palestinians to listen to Palestinian hip-hop seems more united; 7 out of 8 answered that Palestinian hip-hop is a powerful political weapon whereas the remaining one interviewee answered that he listened to Palestinian hip-hop because it shows a sense of regional identity because he 'does not want to involve in politics.' Their satisfaction at listening to Palestinian hip-hop pieces because they show a sense of political struggle and identity can also be reflected in their responses to the question 'what do you feel after listening to a Palestinian hip-hop piece':

- (after listening to 'ma illihoriyih' [I don't have freedom]) , i feel the injustice practiced by the [I]sraeli occupation
- Satisfied and excited
- I feel satisfied and excited
- My land

¹⁹Erving Goffman is considered one of the most influential American sociologists of the twentieth century. For his contribution and influence in the academic field, see Fine, G. A., & Manning, P. (2003). Erving Goffman. *The Blackwell companion to major contemporary social theorists*, 34-62.

• [I] am very glad and happy for listening 'inn ann' ..this song express what we are live it under the occupation²⁰ For the future of Palestinian hip-hop, 5 out of the 8 Palestinians mentioned that it would thrive whereas the other 3 answered 'I'm not sure.' Thus, overall, Palestinian hip-hop yields a positive attitude among the Palestinian public.

Three Palestinian interviewees wrote that they did not hear of Palestinian hip-hop, after they listened to DAM's famous piece 'Who's the Terrorist?', 2 of them responded that they felt proud about the genre and would be paying attention to Palestinian hip-hop from now on.²¹ The remaining three interviewees wrote that they have heard of Palestinian hip-hop but do not listen to it. Nevertheless, the reasons for them to not listen to the genre are all because of religious factors but not because of political factors. More specifically, their reasons were all related to the conservative mindset built by Islam. Thus, their refusal to listen to the genre cannot be concluded as evidence of a negative evaluation.

3.1.2. Evaluations from Israeli Public

Although it may seem impossible, there are Israelis listening to Palestinian liberation hip-hop in Israel-occupied areas that once belonged to Palestine, sometimes being even more supportive than the Palestinian hip-hop group's Arabic audiences (Swedenberg, 2013, pp. 17-23). Their support for the genre shows that the music is good, and they love to listen to it. 'Posha'im Chafi m M'peshah' (Innocent criminals), one of the most famous pieces of DAM, 'appealed for better understanding and urged Israelis to see Palestinian-Israelis as if they were inside their shoes' (Swedenberg, 2013, p. 21). When the music video of this piece was broadcasted on prime-time Israeli television, the song was heavily downloaded, which also gained DAM huge popularity in Israel (Avidan, 2003, p. 43; Swedenberg, 2013, p. 21). Israeli audiences' supports of Palestinian hip-hop can be reflected through a summer concert performed by DAM in 2005 in Jerusalem; according to McDonald, the Jews were those in the crowd who were familiar with the repertoire of DAM and danced to the music, while the native Palestinians in the audience were mostly not similarly engaged (McDonald, 2013). The results in my survey can also reflect the supports of Israeli audiences; among the 72 Israelis that filled out my survey, fifteen of them (20.83%) mentioned that they listen to Palestinian hip-hop.²² Moreover, for the question 'how often do they listen to Palestinian hip-hop,' their answers reflect great enthusiasm about the genre: 2 respond for watching daily, 5 for once or twice a week, 3 for once or twice a month, and only 2 for rarely listen to it or sometimes listen to it.²³ The supportive Israeli audiences think that Palestinian hip-hop is a strong weapon of showing political struggle (60 percent of the 15 interviewees chose this option in this multiple question). Meanwhile, these Israelis who listen to Palestinian music are, apparently, not supporting Palestine to 'get their land back'; they listen to the genre because they sympathize with Palestinians when they hear the powerful political messages in the music of how hard Palestinians are living under Israeli pressure. When they envision the future of Palestinian hip-hop, most Israelis express the theme that they think the genre will thrive in the future. One answer is a typical representation of all the other answers written by all the Jews that listen to Palestinian hip-hop:

[P]alestinian rap would thrive in the f[uture] [and] [I] expect [P]alestinian rap to to inspire and make changes [in] political ways.

Nine of the Palestinians (12.5%) who had never heard of the genre mentioned that they would listen to this genre of music in the future after I showed them a part of the music video of 'Who's the Terrorist?' where the lyrics described the hard situation faced by Palestinians now. This can also reflect the potential acceptance and non-negative evaluations of Palestinian hip-hop by Jews.

Most Israelis still believed in Zionism and sharply criticized Palestinian hip-hop. These people consist of 68 percent of the 72 survey takers. After listening to the descriptive part of the music video of 'Who's the Terrorist?', these Israeli responses can be divided into two categories, one using a more tempered voice to refute the ideas presented in 'Who's the Terrorist?' that Israelis are terrorists, and the other one directly denigrates the genre. The typical answers of both kinds are laid out below:

Category 1 (more tempered voice):

- Typical [A]rab lies, as always[,] they [try] to justif[y] violence, but as all can see in [S]yria, [I]raq, [Y]emen and so on, they don't need so called occupation to kill. more than that [I]srael is much more soft with them, than any other country. This is a land of [J]ewish nation by all facts!
- [I] feel that the Israelis are right. [R]ight, the Palestinians suffer every day, but not because [their leaders are terrorists].²⁴

Category 2 (directly denigrate):

- Stupid
- Disgusting
- They [Palestinians] are stupid!
- [I] don't listen to their boss and don't waste my time wtf

Although most Israelis hold the belief of Zionism, there is a sizeable number of Israelis that accept or even approve of Palestinian hip-hop, reflecting the potential for local Palestinian hip-hop groups to obtain more Jewish-Israeli audiences.

²⁰ The other three responses were either irrelevant or 'I don't remember.'

²¹ The remaining one interviewee's responses were irrelevant.

²² Notice that 3 of them identify themselves as ethnic Palestinians. As mentioned before, the city they are now living in belonged to Palestine but was occupied by Israel after 1948.

²³ The other responses are irrelevant for this question.

²⁴ The part that I showed of *Who's the terrorist?* narrates that Palestine governors are fearful traitors that don't think about their own country.

3.2. Evaluations from Local Governing Bodies

Although ethnic Palestinian hip-hop artists living outside the Palestine area, mainly in Western countries, do not face much obstruction from their local governments, evaluations received by Palestinian hip-hop musicians from local governments of the Palestine area, including the Israeli government and organizations like Hamas, are fiercely negative. These organizations think that Palestinian hip-hop has offended their authority. Moreover, these negative voices of political parties in Palestine often result in the imposition of sanctions and other inhibitory actions from the local government on Palestinian hip-hop musicians.

Evaluations from the local Palestine government in the Gaza Strip and the Palestine-controlled West Bank area were fiercely negative to the Palestinians hip-hop musicians, which can be reflected from the huge challenges posed by the government to Palestinians hip-hop musicians. The negative evaluation of the Palestinian hip-hop musicians can be shown through the governing body's constraints for the musicians to propose activities and travel abroad. In order to organize an activity in the non-Israel occupied West Bank, the organizer must gain a certificate from the Palestine Authority, the local government body, and follow a strictly enforced 2 A.M. curfew (Ralston, 2019). As in the Gaza Strip, the governing organization Hamas regularly shut down events because 'alternative music undermines Muslim traditions' (Ralston, 2019). The challenge to cross the border is hard for Palestinian hip-hop musicians living in the Palestine-controlled area. As Ralston (2019) demonstrates:

Exacerbating the problem are the restrictions on movement that Palestinians face, which means that many cannot travel abroad for gigs, or, significantly, meet with industry professionals. Special permits are required to enter Israel, which are rarely granted, especially not quickly. Palestinians have long had no access to airports in the Palestinian territories: those in Jerusalem and Gaza ceased operations around the turn of the millennium, so most Palestinians must travel to

Jordan in order to fly anywhere, which costs around US\$500 (£400) one-way (Ralston, 2019).

Although it seems like the 500-dollar ride to Jordan would work out, it is crucial to point out that the poverty rate in the Palestine-controlled areas is over 53 percent, and thus it is sometimes even hard for musicians to buy the most fundamental instruments (Bibbo, 2020). Hamada Nasrallah, lead singer of Sol, a seven-piece folk band from Gaza, explains that he once had to sell his belongings to afford a guitar, which was then destroyed in the Israeli bombing of Said al- Mishal Centre in August 2018 (Ralston, 2019). Thus, Palestinian hip-hop musicians can almost never travel abroad.

Palestinian hip-hop musicians living in Israel also experience sharp hostilities and huge challenges from the Israel government. This hostility is a part of the government's intention to eliminate Palestinian identity in Israel (Ralston, 2019; Times of Israel, 2019). Israel policies often prohibit organizations of Palestinians hip-hop activities and also directly shut up established Palestinian hip-hop activities by referring these activities as 'eroding the sovereignty of the Israel government' (Barghouti, 2021; Ralston, 2019; Watson, 2000). Rania Lias, the director of Yabous Cultural Center, a non-profit cultural center in Jerusalem focused on maintaining Palestinians' cultural identities like Palestinian hip-hop, describes her experiences of proposed activities being shut down by Israel polices and emphasizes the idea that the proposed activities had no involvement with the PA:

Several times we've announced readings, concerts, and exhibitions, and they've been stopped by Israeli forces. They come one hour before the event with soldiers and an order saying that, according to the information they have, we are organizing an event that is against the security of Israel... According to my knowledge, there is no involvement for the PA (Ralston, 2019).

The Israel government's negative evaluation of Palestinian hip-hop groups can also be reflected through the challenges they've posed for Palestinian hip-hop musicians to travel outside Israel. This challenge is especially fierce to a special group of Palestinians in Israel, who were initially born in Jerusalem but later became residents in Israel after Israel's occupation of Jerusalem in the Six-Day War. After the occupation, Israel offered these Palestinian citizens Israeli citizenship, but most of these Palestinians refused, losing the opportunity to gain legal identities (Ralston, 2019). These people are thus called 'laissez-passer' (Slocum-Bradley, 2008). Although these people can freely pass through Israel, because they do not have an official visa, they can hardly cross the Israel borders (Ralston, 2019). This lack of citizenship has stopped them from buying musical gear from the outside (gear in Israel is especially expensive) as well as going abroad to perform as they become popular on internet platforms (Ralston, 2019).

3.3. Evaluations from the International Society (Scholars, Journalist, Colleges Institutes)

The voices from international societies almost all possess positive evaluations and consist of dramatic support for Palestinian people. This support is due to Palestinian rap's apparent 'strangeness' and 'novelty' to the international public, according to Ted Swedenberg (Swedenberg, 2013, p.17). Richard Poplak, the world-famous political journalist, argues the reason for him to report on this music genre: '[H]ip-hop in Palestine seemed, at least on the surface, like a freakish pop-cultural glitch' (Swedenberg, 2013, p.17). Mark Levine, professor of history at University of California-Irvine specializing in Middle East music, points out:

It's so hard to get through the reality of Palestinians' day-to-day life to an American audience. But how you can do it is through the back door. And Palestinian hip-hop is the easiest back door because of its cultural importance. So if Palestinians can do hip-hop and sound so good at it maybe they are a bit like us. And so maybe we should listen to their story (Al Jazeera English, 2009).

The main supportive voices from international societies can be reflected from three categorized groups—the general public, professional scholars, and reporters.

The international public evaluates Palestinian hip-hop pieces as a powerful weapon, which can be most strongly reflected from their comments posted under online platforms' video channels about Palestinian hip-hop. Among these online platforms that spread Palestine hip-hop music themes, YouTube is the most influential one. Under the music video of 'Who's the Terrorist?', one of the most popular Palestinian hip-hop pieces created by DAM, there are hundreds of comments left by viewers from all over the world presenting their positive attitude on the music itself and their will to support Palestine people, the ones that received most likes are laid out below:

マトリヨ一子 :

'from Japan!!

I hope free Palestine person'

Dalia94 :

[W]ow this is such a good rap <3

shota Bodega :

[N]o matter what they say, [I am going to] support [P]alestine

Edu Velazquez:

Freedom, Justice and Peace for Palestinian. End the Apartheid, end the genocide.

Je Suis Kashmir:

#FreePalestine

Love and support From Indian occupied #Kashmir²⁵

Under a popular documentary about Palestinian hip-hop, global netizens presents their affirmation of Palestine hip-hop as a powerful political tool and their will to know more about Palestinian hip-hop and Palestine liberation:

PeaceSalaam:

That is called peaceful resistance, u can resist in music, arts, poetry, photography, films, dance& etc. it is nice to see that the young Israeli youth could relate & sympathize with the Arab youth's struggle, more support is needed & hopefully the youth of both sides can bring change for more peaceful future!

ParadigmShift302:

Yo, whoever made the beat on the intro of the video gets props.²⁶

Less tracks about houses and girls and more about freedom and unity.

packersfan117:

[I]f you can't fight with bullets, fight with music. [T]hey both work well[.]

omerta926:

[K]eep struggling brothers! even if the whole world is against you.

Dick Saurus:

'[Y]ou are shooting with you gun, but I am shooting in my mouth.'

These comments from different perspectives show a definite support and positive evaluation from the international public.

Palestinian hip-hop, a genre blended with the themes of political resistance and popular music, naturally compels a huge number of journalists to write about and evaluate the music genre. Although these news pieces are from different perspectives, they all reflect an evaluation of Palestinian hip-hop as a useful tool for political struggle through live case studies and interviews. In his piece 'Hip-hop on the Frontline,' Mark Espiner (2004) argues that 'the [Palestinian] rap form allows a powerful voice for political invective' (Espiner, 2004). Aclynn Ashly (2017) argues that Palestinian hip-hop is a powerful weapon by explaining the development of hip-hop groups in Palestine (Ashly, 2017). Mahmood Jrere (2021) presents the powerfulness of Palestinian hip-hop's role for political struggle by narrating a whole interview with DAM (Jrere, 2021).

Besides the general public and journalists, professional scholars are also a significant audience of Palestinian hip-hop, evaluating the genre as a powerful political tool. Famous pieces of analysis spreading the theme of Palestinian hip-hop as a powerful political means include 'Liberating Songs: Palestine Put to Music' (Joseph Massad), 'We Ain't Missing': Palestinian Hip Hop—A Transnational Youth Movement (Sunaina Maira), 'Palestinian Rap: Against the Struggle Paradigm' (Ted Swedenberg), and 'Identity, Diaspora, and Resistance in Palestinian Hip-hop' (Randa Safieh). These works emphasize the powerfulness of Palestinian hip-hop through interviews with Palestinian hip-hop artists and the analysis of political meanings behind lyrics.

In international society, public citizens, journalists, and scholars generally evaluate Palestinian hip-hop as a powerful political tool and support the genre in various forms. Meanwhile, their mass positive evaluations of the genre also motivate other significant social figures such as politicians to pay attention to the genre and eventually to the Israel-Palestine conflict. The efforts of these social figures to promote the genre as well as the issue of Palestine would also affect Palestinian hip-hop and making Palestinian hip-hop the most striking Middle East genre outside the region (Swedenberg, 2013, p.17).

²⁵Comments from Youboob83. (2006, April 4). *PALESTINIAN HIPHOP - 'WHO'S THE TERRORIST?!'*[Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgSVXjNLFgo>.

²⁶ The intro part of the video focused more on Palestinian hip-hop and Palestine liberation whereas the later parts consisted of more description about Palestinian public's lives in the Palestine area which is quite irrelevant to politics.

4. Palestinian Hip-Hop Musicians' Response

4.1. Response to Local Public

Palestinian hip-hop artists' responses to the two different audience groups——Israelis and Palestinians——can be best reflected through their 'code switching' strategy: to '[n]avigate the aesthetic and ideological dispositions of two very distinct audiences' (McDonald, 2013, p.118). As Diana N. Davletbaeva, a famous sociolinguist in Kazan University, Russia, describes, code-switching practitioners 'try to make their speech clear and comprehensible for all members of the audience so that the agenda they are promoting is easily understood' (Davletbaeva et al, 2016). In the case of Palestinian hip-hop musicians, the methods toward this aim include two parts: the change in language and the Calatrava proportion of aggressive contents. The employment of these techniques can be best shown by the famous group DAM, which is located in Israel. As mentioned above, after the eruption of the second Intifida in September 2000, DAM released its first hit 'MinIrhābī?' (Who's the Terrorist?), which gained them fame in the Arab world, making them the most famous Palestinian hip-hop music group at the time. However, only months after, they released a new Hebrew song 'Posha'im Chafim M'pesha' (Innocent criminals). This piece appealed for better understanding of Palestinians from Israelis and is much less aggressive than 'Who's the Terrorist?'. DAM first played this piece at Hishguzim Night, an Israeli hip-hop festival, in summer 2001 and then managed to broadcast it on prime-time Israeli television. Eventually, the song's vivid description of Palestinians' miserable conditions gained great empathy among Israeli audiences, thus gaining DAM 'much popularity and notoriety' in Israel (Swedenberg, 2013, pp.20-21). From then on, DAM continued to create two different kinds of lyrics in order to satisfy the needs of the two different local audiences. David A. McDonald, a famous ethnomusicologist in Indiana University, narrates DAM's ingenious use of code-switching:

In performance, DAM explicitly confounds nationalist histories of the State of Israel based on Jewish homogeneity, throwing into relief a long history of interaction and indoctrination with and within the Arab world. Likewise, through the performance of an explicitly transnational African-American popular music, these young rappers create spaces where traditional conceptions of Palestinian nation and resistance are reconfigured to include media, aesthetics, and technologies from the cosmopolitan/non-Arab mediascape (McDonald, 2013).

4.2. Response to Local Government Bodies

The two problems posed by local government bodies are the challenge to propose music activities and the challenge to travel abroad the area. These two challenges all reflect the central theme of the local government to prevent Palestinian hip-hop from being famous, especially throughout the world. Palestinian hip-hop artists respond to these issues through social media. Some of the most famous Palestinian hip-hop artists such as DAM, Rumallah Underground, and G-town all gain fame through the influence created by their hit songs posed on the internet, especially on YouTube (Swedenberg, 2013). Among my 23 survey takers that listen to Palestinian hip-hop,²⁷ 17 of them mentioned that they listen to Palestinian hip-hop pieces through the internet whereas only 2 mentioned that they listen to the music through offline concerts.²⁸ Moreover, among the 17 interviewees, 6 of them clearly wrote that they listen to the music through YouTube. These answers show that Palestinian hip-hop artists' employment of internet resources are powerful responses against the challenges posed by local government bodies.

Meanwhile, Palestinian hip-hop musicians are also actively composing songs that criticize the challenge established by the government. For example, in *Slingshot Hip Hop*, DAM improvised a 1-minute long hip-hop piece about this situation (Salloum, 2008, 0:8:0):

This is our life in Lyd
The Government blocks our path
We're still counting bodies

This is our life in Lyd
We're under fire
They'll try to crush us

4.3. Response to Supports from International Fans

Palestinian hip-hop musicians have responded to international support by increasing cooperation with international musicians, showcasing Palestinian hip-hop to a wider audience. This central summary can be divided to two categories including performing Palestinian political hip-hop abroad and forming cooperation with international music groups. Performing abroad is a powerful response to the support given by public audiences from all over the world. Famous Palestinian hip-hop musicians have been performing all over the world nowadays. DAM has been performing in the UK, the EU, South Africa, and Canada (DAM|Official Website); Shadia Mansour, known as 'the first lady of Arabic hip hop,' has been performing in the UK, the U.S., and the EU. Meanwhile, performing abroad is quite limited to groups who have become extremely famous, and most of the Palestinian hip-hop groups could not manage to go abroad because of the harsh censorship of the local government bodies. Thus, these Palestinian music figures cooperate with music groups all over the world in order to better show their (often online) international audiences the strength of their works. Palestinian hip-hop group Ramallah Underground, located in Ramallah, Palestinian Authority's de facto capital, could not go abroad to perform because of the harsh censorship of the Palestinian Authority even though they were extremely famous on the

²⁷Including Palestinian and Israeli survey takers.

²⁸The other answers were irrelevant to the question.

internet. Because their works were so good, they were invited to cooperate with the Kronos Quartet, one of the most famous music groups in California, by David Harrington, the violinist of the Kronos Quartet. Eventually, Ramallah Underground and the Kronos Quartet together composed the song 'Tashweesh' (Interference). The piece was played by the quartet in 2009. Although Ramallah Underground cannot cross borders to perform live at the concert, the recorded version of the part they composed was played. The 'avant-garde yet approachable, Oriental-flavored yet not 'exotic' or traditional sounding' style of the part of the music gave their online international supporters another big surprise.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown how Palestinian hip-hop, as a social register, developed from the pan-Arabism theme music in post-revolutionary Egypt through the sociohistorical perspective in communication studies proposed by Asif Agha (2004), the leading scholar in communication studies. In addition, in this part I have also revealed how Palestinian hip-hop serves a significant role in Palestine political struggles. After narrating from the sociohistorical viewpoint, I employed the interactive model of the socialization of register, also proposed by Agha (2004), to show that Palestinian hip-hop is indeed an effective political weapon. This final argument is largely based on answers of my own online survey of Palestinian hip-hop from people living in Palestine or Israel as well as existing interviews with Palestinian hip-hop artists and their audience. By analyzing Palestinian hip-hop's role in political struggles based on the framework of social registers and footings, this paper demonstrates how a specific cultural register can play a significant role on social events, and it demonstrates how existing sociological and anthropological theories can be applied to explain unique interdisciplinary phenomena.

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Appendix

Survey about Palestinian Hip-Hop and Palestine Liberation Music

The Survey Context

You gender:

Your age:

Thank you so much for taking this survey! This survey will only be used to collect data and would not be leaked in any form since I am a researcher. Also, I have dedicated tons of hours on this research, so please give your best answers if possible. Thanks again for your participation!

Please identify your city of residence and your gender. (Open Ended)

Q1 Do you know listen Palestine liberation music? (Single Selection)

- Yes

- No

Q2 Do you listen Palestinian rap? (Single Selection)

- Yes

- No

- I have heard of, but I do not want to listen because of specific reasons

SITUATION 1: If the answer to Q2 is 'no.'

Q3 Please listen to one of the most famous hip-hop Palestine liberation music pieces: Who's the Terrorist? [by DAM]. And go for the next question. (Description)

(image url: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/pf.survey.video.production/e33398d1-7f67-4d12-b985-bc4548f62282.mp4>)

-

Q4 What is your feeling after watching 'Who's the Terrorist' [by DAM]? Please provide as many details as you could offer because your answer is really crucial to progressing research. As advice, you could analyze based on its lyrics, political meanings, and other aspects. (OpenEnded)

-

Q5 After watching one piece of Palestine liberation music, would you pay attention to Palestine liberation music or Palestinian rap? (SingleSelection)

- Yes, I will.

- No, I won't.

SITUATION 2: If the answers to Q2 is 'yes.'

Q6 How did you first hear of Palestinian rap? (From friends/television/others) (OpenEnded)

-

Q7 How often do you listen to Palestinian rap? (OpenEnded)

-

Q8 What is your favorite Palestinian rap group? (OpenEnded)

-

Q9 Why do you watch Palestinian rap? (SingleSelection)

- The musics express a great sense of political struggle

- It is a kind of regional identity

Q10 How do you listen to Palestinian rap? (Through internet source/ offline concerts or other) (OpenEnded)

-

Q11 Do you think Palestinian rap is a powerful political weapon? (OpenEnded)

-

Q12 Do you think Palestinian rappers now are facing political challenges? If so, please indicate political challenges from where. (OpenEnded)

-

Q13 Please recall one of your experiences listening to a Palestinian rap and give a description of what you feel after listening to it. (OpenEnded)

-

Q14 Do you think that Palestinian rap would thrive in the future? What role do you expect Palestinian raps to play in the future. (OpenEnded)

-

SITUATION 3: If the answer to Q2 is 'I have heard of, but I do not want to listen because of specific reasons.'

Q15 Why do you decide to not to listen to Palestinian genre (SingleSelection)

- The theme of the lyrics is different from what I think

Q16 Please give a more detailed description of what the difference in Political belief is. (OpenEnded)

- Religious factors

Q17 If possible, please give a more detailed description of the religious factors. (OpenEnded)

Limitations of the Designed Survey

- The survey did not ask audiences to directly identify their country identity. For example, there are a small number of Palestinians living in Israel as well.
- The amount of data points can be further increased if possible.