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# LIBRARIANS ★ & ARCHIVISTS WITH PALESTINE

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Public Forum - July 4, 2013 - Old Ottoman Court, Ramallah

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We traveled to Palestine on June 23 as an international delegation of librarians, archivists, and other library workers. We come from the US, Canada, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago, and Palestine. Our trip aimed to learn how Palestinian voices and information about Palestine do—or do not—reach us, and how Palestinians can—or cannot—access information under Israeli settler-colonialism. Moreover, we aimed to develop concrete connections and skill-sharing based on mutual solidarity.

As information workers, we support access to information, and recognize that this is especially complex for Palestinians. We bore witness to the destruction and appropriation of information, and the myriad ways access is denied. We also connected with our colleagues in libraries, archives, and related projects and institutions, holding conversations and learning about the common and unique challenges we face—both in different parts of Palestine and in our home contexts.

In all our travels and work, we respected the Palestinian civil society call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) against Israel and did not partner with any organization that violates this call.

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# PLACES WE'VE VISITED

The following is a list of some of the organizations we visited during our delegation.

## Archives/Special Collections

Kenyon Institute (Jerusalem)  
Dar Isaaf Nashashibi Library & Archive (Jerusalem)  
Arab Studies Society - Orient House [closed by Israel and confiscated] (Jerusalem)  
Prisoners Section, Nablus Public Library (Nablus)  
Mada al-Carmel: Arab Center for Applied Social Research (Haifa)  
Yasser Arafat Foundation (Ramallah)  
Institute for Palestine Studies (Ramallah)  
Badil Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (Bethlehem)

## Municipal Libraries

Nablus Public Library (Nablus)  
Palestinian librarians in municipal and school libraries (Haifa)  
Ramallah Public Library (Ramallah)  
El-Bireh Public Library (El-Bireh)  
Tulkarm Public Library (Tulkarm)

## Family/Personal Libraries

Khalidi Family Library (Jerusalem)  
Ansari Family Library (Jerusalem)  
Budeiri Family Library (Jerusalem)

## Academic Libraries/Archives

Birzeit University Libraries (Birzeit)  
Birzeit Palestine Archive Project (Birzeit)  
Al-Quds University Library (Abu Dis)  
Al-Quds American Studies Department (Abu Dis)  
Khaduri Library (Tulkarm)

## Children's Libraries

Nablus Children Library (Nablus)  
El-Bireh Public Library (El-Bireh)  
Various grade school libraries (Bethlehem)

## Museums

Palestinian Museum (Ramallah)  
Return of Qastel Museum/Saffouriyah Association for Heritage and Return (Nazareth)  
Abu Jihad Prisoners Museum and Archive (Abu Dis)

## Cultural Centres

Madaa Center and Library (Silwan, Jerusalem)  
Yafa Cultural Center (Balata Refugee Camp, Nablus)  
Lajee Center (Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem)  
Alrowwad Cultural & Theatre Society (Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem)  
Khalil Sakakini Cultural Centre (Ramallah)

## Moving Image Collections/Media Centers/Publishers

Wadi Hilweh Information Center (Jerusalem)  
Tamer Institute for Community Education (Bethlehem/Ramallah)  
Subversive Films (Ramallah)  
Shashat (Ramallah)

## Activist Groups/NGOs

Boycott from Within (Jerusalem)  
Anarchists Against the Wall  
Grassroots al-Quds (Jerusalem)  
B'Tselem/The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories (Jerusalem)  
Zochrot (Tel-Aviv)  
Yaffa Youth (Yaffa)  
Tamimi Press (Nabi Saleh)  
Addameer/Prisoner and Human Rights Association (Ramallah)  
BDS National Committee and PACBI (Ramallah)  
Al-Qaws (Ramallah)  
EWASH (Ramallah)  
Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (Ramallah)

## Other Activities

Jonathan Cook walking tour, including of Saffourieh (Nazareth)  
Walking tour with Tamer Nafar from DAM (Lyd)  
Walking tour of Nablus's old city with Beesan Ramadan (Nablus)  
Conversation with human geographer Sa'ed Abu-Hijleh (Nablus)  
Walking tour of Yaffa with Sami Abu-Shehadeh (Yaffa)  
Walking tour of Hebron with Hisham Sharabati (Hebron)



# NEXT STEPS

After the delegation ends, we will work to support access to information in historical Palestine and to end the occupation by:

- ★ seeking out and convening events where we can share our knowledge about the effect of the occupation on libraries, archives, and Palestinian society in our home communities;
- ★ publishing reports, articles, and 'zines that document the challenges faced by—and the amazing work being done by—Palestinian information workers;
- ★ developing an international network of information workers meant to facilitate skill-sharing, solidarity work, and community—among librarians and archivists in Palestine and abroad;
- ★ lobbying national and international library and archival organizations to take tangible steps against the occupation and in support of Palestinian perspectives in information work;
- ★ continuing to learn and adapt our work to changing realities.