



رابطة الاثنروبولوجيين الفلسطينيين
Insaniyyat | Society of Palestinian Anthropologists

Insaniyyat Newsletter

Summer 2021

Dear Insaniyyat Community,

We hope this letter finds you and yours well during these trying times. The events that began in Ramadan surely tested each and every one of you, but we hope that you, like us, were gratified to find support and solidarity in the Insaniyyat community. The remarkable enthusiasm of a number of Insaniyyat members helped lead the Executive Board of Insaniyyat in issuing a [Statement in Commemoration of Nakba Day](#), offering resources for teaching students and educating the wider public in response to the latest burst of resistance throughout Palestine.

In our now traditional, biannual newsletter, we are excited to recognize the ways that Insaniyyat continues to connect us in the face of isolation, shines a light on our work as we face myriad dominations, and invigorates our faculties for thinking and speaking the truth. Before outlining our various activities, we wish to first express our gratitude to the members of Insaniyyat's working committees for their remarkable gifts, which are all enabling Insaniyyat to arrive as a thriving community for listening to Palestine anthropologically and otherwise, within the homeland and beyond.

Anthropology in the Community Committee (AIC): Devoted to making anthropological knowledge relevant to the Palestinian public outside the academy, AIC is excited to share news of three activities. The first is the [Souq Stories Exhibition](#), which opened on Thursday, 24 June 2021, with support from Ta'awon Youth, Drosos, and the Palestinian American Research Council (PARC). This one-week exhibition—held simultaneously in the seven cities of Jerusalem, Nazareth, al-Khalil, 'Akka, Gaza, Nablus, and Yafa with contributions from photographers and youth organizations in each community—offers the chance for the wider Palestinian public and visitors to experience the daily life of historic Palestinian markets through

ethnographic photos and narratives. To view images from the exhibitions, please follow us on [Instagram](#).

The second event is an ethnographic film workshop to be held in partnership with [Filmlab Palestine](#) and [Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung](#). The training will be organized online (in Arabic) to allow Palestinian media and film students and graduates from various localities to learn about ethnographic filming and visual anthropology. More information will be posted soon on the [activities page of our website](#).

Finally, on **Wednesday, 8 September 2021** at 18:00 Palestine Time, the AIC will inaugurate Insaniyyat's first virtual **Speaker Series**, aimed at creating an engaging space to connect and learn about recent ethnographic research. Mark the date and watch for further announcements!

Conference Committee: The conference committee is very excited about Insaniyyat's upcoming biennial conference titled, "Pessoptimism: Anthropologies of Palestinian Hope and Uncertainty." Thanks to support from both Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and from Palestinian-American Research Center (PARC), the conference aims to bring Palestinian anthropology students and scholars together, along with other scholars who work on Palestine. It will also include a business meeting for electing the next Executive Board and making plans for the next couple of years and beyond. The conference will take place from January 6-8, 2022 (postponed from September 2021) in order to enable maximal (hopefully post-Covid 19) physical participation. There will also be the possibility of online participation for those unable to travel to Palestine. Please visit Insaniyyat's [website](#) to learn more about the conference, including the workshops dedicated to support the work of graduate students.

Insaniyyat Haifa: This natal group, the original kernel of Insaniyyat, is now in its sixth year of monthly meetings, meeting every third Friday at 5pm Palestine time to talk anthropology in Arabic. Meetings have been continuing over virtual spaces, allowing for participation from outside Haifa. Joining the group were Insaniyyat members who signed up to participate from other parts of Palestine, the US and Europe. The theme for the past academic year was "anthropology of the future," with attention to related concepts such as "anticipation," "hope," and "destiny." The discussion addressed these orientations' relevance to us Palestinians,

including their cultural and political implications. After a hiatus of two months in the Spring, we intend for Summer reading in the coming three months to focus the discussion on anthropology and plurality in the Arab world. Please write to us via mail@insaniyyat.org [with *Insaniyyat Haifa* in the subject line] to learn how you can join the reading group.

Al-‘Atabeh Committee: Dedicated to connecting the academic world and Palestine with each other through joint research projects, Al-‘Atabeh has added recent contributions to its ongoing exploration, [Palestine: Fieldnotes on Life in Pandemic Times](#). We wish to invite you to visit “fieldnotes” and consider offering your own contribution. Al-‘Atabeh also recently submitted a proposal and received acceptance to present a panel at the Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, to take place in Montreal from October 28-31, 2021. The panel is co-sponsored by the Palestinian American Research Center (PARC). We hope to see you there!

Fundraising Committee: The fundraising committee has given its expertise, support, and assistance to Insaniyyat’s other committees in successfully seeking grants for their work. Its involvement has been crucial for securing funding for a number of important projects (Conference, Souq, and Ethnographic Film Workshop). The fundraising committee is also working on a strategic plan and looking for opportunities for long-term grants to fund Insaniyyat’s ongoing work.

While Insaniyyat’s various committees take the lead on Insaiyyat’s work, at times ideas arise that do not fall within this framework, and ad-hoc committees form to spearhead such work. The following three projects came about in this way. Each has its dedicated group of members guiding the way.

Voice of Insaniyyat (Podcast): Earlier this year, we celebrated the launching of our podcast, [Voice of Insaniyyat: Ethnographic Voices on Palestine and the World](#), which has so far reached over 800 plays! In the upcoming episode of this podcast, available soon on [Anchor](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [Breaker](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Spotify](#), and [Stitcher](#), Anna Tyshkov hosts anthropologist Ted Swedenburg discussing his book *Memories of Revolt: The 1936–1939 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past* (University of Arkansas Press, 2003). Their

conversation explores questions and methods of oral history and its relationship to power and the peasant class. Swedenburg also shares his personal reflections on his ongoing work on Palestine. Stay tuned and thank you for listening!

The Palestinian Pluralism Project: Insaniyyat is working on publishing a book that explores the composite of communities that has made up the plurality of Palestinian society, in modern and pre-modern times. It follows the premise that Palestine’s indigenous ability for inclusion must not be obliterated by Zionism’s exclusionary logic.

The Reprieve/Tanfeesah Project: Inspired by common experiences and the need for Black-Palestinian solidarity, the Reprieve/Tanfeesah project is exploring how Palestine might serve, in consonance with its ancient role, as a “breathing” space of refuge by offering Black American artists a form of residency with Palestinian cultural institutions and families.

If you want to further learn about or contribute to any of these projects, or explore with us possibilities for new projects that further Insaniyyat’s [mission and vision](#), then please contact Insaniyyat via the contact page on our website: <https://insaniyyat.org>.

Yours,

Khaled Furani

President, Executive Board

on behalf of the Executive Board: Rema Hammami, Vice President; Nadeem Karkabi, Treasurer; Nayrouz Abu Hatoum; Dina Zbeidat; Laura Adwan; Amahl Bishara; Rami Salameh; and Aamer Ibraheem.