This article focuses on the significance of material objects for Palestinians in diaspora in terms of their collective identity and memory. The loss of the real places of memory necessitates the creation of material representations to restore bonds to a homeland and in retaining cultural identity. This study illustrates how objects as symbols of a person’s collective group (“objects of legacy”) help with the creation of a sheltering and nurturing environment, what British psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott calls a “facilitating environment.” It also highlights the materiality of objects and argues that their meaning and their capacity to prevent failing memory and sustain a
collective identity are generated by their material characteristics and not solely by their social value.

KEYWORDS: material objects, material culture, objects of legacy, collective identity, collective memory, facilitating environments, diaspora

No matter where we were in the world, my parents took Bethlehem [with them]... At home, it was as if we never left Bethlehem. When you entered my house, my aunt's house or my uncle's house, they were the exact reproduction of the house we lived in when I grew up. The way they furnished the house—the pictures they had, the music they sang, the dominos, the misbahas¹—was extremely Bethlehemite. Everybody we hung around with was Bethlehemite and everybody continued marrying Bethlehemites. This was very important in my upbringing. It is very amazing, all those years I have not been there, I also feel like I have never left. (Hiam Sabat, interview with author, 2005)

Since their displacement over sixty years ago the Palestinian diaspora has worked to sustain a sense of “homeland” through objects. Hiam Sabat, a thirty-eight-year-old Palestinian American, was born and raised in Latin America and lived in Europe and the Caribbean before moving to New York. While she has some family in the USA, much of it remains scattered worldwide. In my interview with Hiam, she showed me a book entitled Bethlehem: The Immortal Town, which gives an historic account of tribes and families of Bethlehem. Hiam said she knew all the Bethlehemite families by their names when she was growing up. Hiam also said she had a profound bond with the land, which she describes as “a very deep natural connection without a trace of romance.” Hiam has been to Bethlehem only three times. The Bethlehem she identifies with is not so much the city for what it is or was, but the place her parents—especially her mother and grandmother—constructed with stories as well as relics, to ease their own transition to building new homes.

Hiam’s strong place attachment to her ancestral homeland and her collective identity as Palestinian is manifested through a collection of objects that Hiam surrounded herself with in her apartment, which she shares with her spouse, who is also Palestinian. Hiam also had other objects to show me, such as embroideries, postcards, and a pair of Bedouin earrings. All of these objects represented to her Palestine, her origins, and who she is today. More importantly they were the material confirmation of the existence of Palestinians people. The fact
that Hiam was not born or raised in Bethlehem has not diminished her attachment to her parents’ place of origin. Her parents’ tireless efforts to replicate it coupled with Hiam’s choice to make and maintain an attachment laid the groundwork for her embrace of Palestinian collective identity. The late eminent Palestinian scholar Edward Said writes in *After the Last Sky* that objects from Palestine are passed around to tie people to their shared past and to each other (Said 1999: 14).

This article approaches objects from two different angles. The first approach is psychological and examines how objects function in the formation of collective identity and also how they are interpreted through associations to other people, places, or history. The second approach addresses the objects and their materiality. By bringing together these two perspectives objects are understood not simply as methodological tools to infer social meaning as Arjun Appadurai contends (Appadurai 1986). Instead, I argue that objects also possess key tangible qualities that influence their meaning. Things (and places) also carry memory and identity with them (Malpas 2008). They “gather” the elements of the world through their unique spatio-temporal being in relation to human existence (Malpas 2006, 2008). As Jane Bennett claims, things also enchant people; they provoke different emotions such as wonder, surprise, or disorientation (Bennett 2001). If they did not afford enchantment, a person “might lack the impetus to act against the very injustices that [she or he] critically discerns” (Bennett 2001: 128). I argue that objects transmit memory, foster identity, and galvanize individuals, but the extent of their capacity to do so is shaped by their material characteristics and not solely by their social value.

**THEORIZING OBJECTS**

For those who have experienced dislocation and ethnic cleansing, objects are potent touchstones to remember the past and retell stories. Along with narratives, objects are essential tools for providing cultural continuity over a long period of time. In cases of forced displacement, objects that reinforce “place attachment” become critical for the continuation of cultural memory and cultural narrative for displaced peoples—especially if they are a part of daily rituals like eating, cooking, and religious practice (Altman and Low 1992). The objects provide shared connections to pre-migratory landscapes with post-migratory memories (Tolia-Kelly 2004).

Collective memory is by nature socially constructed and is subject to revision and reconstruction (Batchen 2004; Crewe 1999; Halbwachs 1992; Huyssen 2003; Lowenthal 2003[1985]; Schacter 1996). Collective memory is also fueled by “reflective nostalgia, which dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging”—contrary to Hiam’s claim that she does not romanticize her attachment to Palestine (Boym 2001). The Palestinian struggle to exist as a nation
without the supportive structures of statehood necessitates inventing cultural symbols in order to preserve their collective past and reiterate the idea of return.

In psychological research, the relationship between a person’s material objects and his or her self-development and identity has been the topic of numerous studies. Objects express qualities of the self, symbolize ethnic origin, lifestyle, social class, and religion (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton 1981; Hummon 1989). Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton argue that the process of self-cultivation via objects has two dimensions: differentiation and integration. People cultivate themselves by stressing either individuality or relatedness through their use of objects (1981: 33–45).

British psychoanalyst Donald W. Winnicott’s theory of “transitional objects” was the initial conceptual framework I utilized in thinking about how personal objects of dislocated people operate (Turan 2004). As the material reminders of a place of origin, the objects function as “transitional objects” to help displaced people ease their transition from one place to another by providing security and comfort (Parkin 1999; Turan 2004; Winnicott 2001[1971]). However, for subsequent generations in diaspora, the objects do not operate as such, as there is no direct experience of forced dislocation. But they do provide a sense of continuity on both a personal and a generational level. If the personal objects were true transitional objects in the Winnicottian sense, they would be let go once the transition is complete. Instead, the participants of this study hold on to their objects and hand them down to succeeding generations because they perform a developmental function—they are objects of legacy (Turan 2008). The way their objects function is the reverse of separation. They sustain and strengthen attachment to a group and situate their keepers within the group’s collective narrative in diaspora.

As symbols of one’s collective group in diaspora the objects provide a sheltering and nurturing environment, what Winnicott calls a “facilitating environment” (Winnicott 2001[1971]). This type of environment is crucial for the continuity of personal experience (Winnicott 2001[1971]: 144–7). Hiam Sabat’s home, for example, is an environment of this kind. Martha Nussbaum (2001) argues that in politics, a norm of psychological maturity is achieved for individuals in facilitating environments that can be created by fulfillment of basic needs of individuals as well as by granting them rights to liberty and welfare (Nussbaum 2001: 227). She argues that these kinds of environments are created not only by parents, but also by institutions, customs, and laws. Facilitating environments are crucial for a person’s collective identity because they allow the person to express significant aspects of his or her identity and attachments and also construct a life narrative in diaspora. My use of the concept of facilitating environments highlights both the material and the emotional dimensions of collective identity.
BACKGROUND

The article draws on my dissertation fieldwork. I used the snowball technique to locate participants. I first approached a scholar whose research interests focused on the Middle Eastern diaspora communities of New York City— including Palestinians. Palestinians welcome participating in research since they know it will help generate greater attention for their cause (Hammer 2005). In order to be selected, each respondent was required to have at least one family member who had experienced dislocation and possessed objects that tied him or her to the family history and the experience of dislocation. The duration of the interviews ranged from one and a half hours to three and a half hours. I asked the participants to show me the objects central to the collective identity they chose to embrace. The questions addressed the meaning of the objects, their degree of attachment to these objects, as well as the degree of significance of their collective identity in their daily lives.

The conditions that define the experience of Palestinians have not substantially changed since 1948. Their identity as a displaced people is still evolving. The Palestinian participants sustain transnational lives where their identities are, by and large, defined by the wider sociopolitical conjuncture. The core elements of the modern Palestinian identity can be traced back to the Nakbah. According to Rashid Khalidi in 1948 about 1.4 million Palestinians were dispossessed and more than 10,000 homes were confiscated (Khalidi 1997: 179). Estimates of worldwide Palestinian population range from 7.7 million to 9 million (Hammer 2005: 230)—many of which still live in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Gaza, and the West Bank. There has been no detailed study of the number of Palestinians in the USA, their location, or the aspects of their collective identity. According to the US Bureau of the Census in 2006 there were approximately 70,000 Palestinians residing in the USA although as many are hesitant to identify themselves as Palestinian, the number is thought to be higher than the official estimate (Kayyali 2006: 46).

A second event vital to Palestinian memory is the “intifada,” an “anticolonial uprising” as Edward Said calls it, against Israeli occupation that began in 1987. This movement held public protests, engaged in essentially unarmed confrontations with Israeli soldiers, and organized labor and merchant strikes (Farsoun 1997: 235–9). The intifada started in refugee camps and rapidly spread to the other urban areas. Mainly directed by young people, it involved acts of rebellion such as throwing stones (Farsoun 1997: 239). The intifada came to an end after the Oslo peace accord was signed in September 1993 (Morris 2001: 594). In 2000, a second wave of intifada started after Israeli politician, who would soon become Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon visited the Dome of the Rock, a religious symbol for Muslim Palestinians. The two intifadas have heightened a sense of Palestinian pride and also popularized mass-produced symbols such as kaffiyahs, which ever since have served as a signifier of resistance.
In the following section, I present four Palestinian participants who live in New York City and their objects. It should be noted that my interviews were conducted in 2005 and 2006 when the aftermath of the second intifada had freshly rekindled an even stronger sense of Palestinian identity. Each segment starts with a brief note explaining the background of the person who showed me an object or objects to contextualize the person’s meaning making systems. These profiles concentrate on what was said about a particular object as well as how respondents interpret their own identity and background. The names of the individuals in this article are all pseudonyms.

MARIAM HADDAD’S FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS AND CROSS PENDANT

Mariam Haddad, a thirty-three-year-old Palestinian American, was born and raised in New York. As she points out, she is 5/8 Lebanese and only 3/8 Palestinian, but she added, “If you are Palestinian, you tend to identify as such because you have to defend it.” She showed me a photograph of her great grandfather. Mariam remembers seeing the photograph on the wall of the house she grew up in. She said:

I grew up in a New York City apartment packed with books. My father was a professor so there was not anything extraordinary except this photograph. There was this man in this black and white picture, kind of a magical mysterious thing. It was my great grandfather but I thought it was my grandfather. Every night before I go to bed my father used to tell us a jidda [Arabic for “grandfather”] story, it was always an adventure he was on. In my head, that was him who lived in this fantasyland, Palestine, on his horse. To me, this picture was something from the Middle Ages. He was this completely different character. We lived this very civilized life in New York. In my childhood conception of Palestine, there was this man on a horse, in this very traditional ethnic dress. I thought it was from 1700s, you know, I had no concept of time. He lived in this mythical land. As I grew up, I realized this was my great grandfather. But still it seems to me that he occupies an entirely different world. I do not to know much about him, whether he was in the Ottoman Army or not. I don’t know what he was doing. But he looks very Arab.

This photograph presents the concept of Palestine to her. She told me:

There was this photograph, and then what you saw on television; kids throwing stones, etc. It was hard for me to reconcile the reality with what I had in my head. I never felt like I had roots. My friends used to say “I am Scotch,” “I am Irish,” “We are Polish” or “My grandparents survived the Holocaust.” I never felt like I had anything real. I felt like we came out of nowhere. We couldn’t go
to Lebanon for a long time either. We were disconnected from it because of the war. And then there was this one picture, this man on a horse in this real place. That was the evidence that I came from somewhere else.

I asked Mariam what her favorite Palestinian object was, she said it was a cross pendant given to her by her grandparents. It was a Jerusalem cross with garnets. She did not understand what it meant as a kid but she loved it dearly. Mariam’s relationship to religion is ambiguous, as puts it, but she really loves the cross and she was obsessed with it during her childhood. She used to say to her friends that her grandmother was from Nazareth, the birthplace of Jesus.

The last object Mariam showed me was another photograph, which depicts her grandfather and her grandmother shortly after they married. Mariam loves this photograph because it portrays “real people in a real place who got married in a church in Palestine.” For Mariam, her objects operate in more than one way. They act as a bridge between her and her grandparents. They also work as signs of her Palestinian origins which help her navigate New York where tracing one’s origins to foreign lands is common and often celebrated.

The photographs are the material claim of her roots. Mariam did not grow up around her grandparents and she clearly felt their absence in her childhood, particularly when among her peers who were in contact with their grandparents. The twofold need she feels—first to be descended from actual people, and second, to be from a foreign place with a specific history—reinforces the significance of her objects in her life.

**SAMY MALIK’S SCARF**

Samy Malik is a twenty-nine-year-old Palestinian American. His family was forced to leave Palestine in 1948 and they fled to Lebanon. In the early 1970s, his parents moved to the USA. During Samy’s childhood, his family did not place much emphasis on Palestine. It was part of their cultural heritage but was never framed as a political issue. However, while at college in the late 1990s, Samy became aware of what was going on in Palestine and started to identify as Arab. He eventually visited Lebanon and then Jerusalem for the first time.

Samy showed me a scarf that he bought in a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon and that he currently displays in his living room. The scarf has four colors—black, white, green, and red; the colors of the Palestinian flag. To him the scarf represents Palestine, which has become more of an idea than an actual physical homeland. “It is a country of refugees,” he said, “This is my identity. Sure, if I was not proud, I would not put it up. But at the same time, I am not flaunting Palestine. I am not saying we are being victimized, I am just saying this is who I am, and welcome to my apartment.” Samy’s experience of the scarf is not independent of the larger collective narrative. For him,
the scarf is not only a souvenir from his visit to a refugee camp, but a representation of the concept of a homeland, which has convoluted political realities.

Samy was born in the USA and developed his attachment to Palestine through his parents. Samy’s attachment to Palestine is mostly a political phenomenon and a deliberate choice. Although his parents’ identity as refugees is a salient aspect of his identity, there is clearly room for his individuality and his background as an American. Samy uses material artifacts that announce and amplify his political activism to express his attachment to and identification with Palestine—regardless of his claim that he is “not flaunting” it. The scarf also is a tool he uses to differentiate himself from the mass of people in New York, and at the same time to connect with other Palestinians. In contrast to Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton’s (1981) argument that considers differentiation and integration processes mutually exclusive, Samy’s scarf functions as a tool of both differentiation and integration.

BASHAR KHANAFI’S TATTOO AND TEAPOT

Bashar, a thirty-one-year old Palestinian American, showed me a teapot that he inherited from his grandmother among other objects, such as a dagger collection, various Palestinian flags, and paraphernalia. He grew up in Brooklyn, New York, and visited his grandparents in Palestine every other summer. When I asked Bashar Khanafi how he identified himself, he replied:

I am Palestinian. You want to know my ethnicity? I am an Arab. You want to know where I am from? I am American. I am a first-generation American. I am proud of being American but I am what my blood is.

Several years ago, Bashar got a tattoo on his back with the Palestinian flag and a slogan, which says “power, blood, and soul fighting for Palestine.” I asked him why he had the tattoo, he said: “Because I am a troublemaker. Because, one, I am very fortunate, two, I am educated, three, I have a great family, and I don’t fight every single day.” He responded to my question about the significance of the slogan, “It is like a mission. It is to be recognized as a human being. In order to be recognized as a human being, you have to struggle.” He considered himself lucky to be in America with an American passport. His activism is demonstrated with the readymade symbols of the Palestinian struggle, albeit at a comfortable distance, and a rebel image as a young Brooklynite. Although he claims that his tattoo is to remind him how he is different from Palestinians who live in the occupied territories, it is a sign through which he feels connected to Palestine and its people. At the same time, in Brooklyn where he lives, the tattoo provides him a unique sense of individuality.
Bashar’s tattoo is different from Samy’s scarf because Bashar treats his body as an object. He reinvents his skin as a canvas on which his love and dedication for Palestine is engraved. Samy’s scarf is on public display, but Bashar’s tattoo is private—of course with the exception of being at the beach or having a medical examination—so private that he cannot see it himself unless he looks at it in the mirror. I asked him why he wanted to have the tattoo on his lower back instead of his forearm. He told me, “If it was on my arm, I would see it everyday and get tired of it. Now, I have it on my back, I forget that I have it, so when I see it in the mirror, it is like new.” Bashar has an intention to remember his people’s struggle and he is courageous enough to use his skin to commemorate it but he does not want to take a chance of being confronted for that on a daily basis. Bashar’s strong sense of solidarity with the Palestinian people is a private undertaking, not a public one.

Bashar also showed me a teapot that was handed down to him by his grandmother. He did not use the teapot because he was not a “tea person.” When I asked him if he liked the teapot, he said he did not because of the pattern. Although the teapot comes from Palestine, it does not reflect a strong masculine and defiant character that he is trying to express, unlike his daggers and other political things he keeps. For that reason, the teapot is not incorporated in Bashar’s daily life due to its function and material property. Its meaning is defined by its inherent quality and its lack of a statement, political or otherwise. The teapot, in that sense, does not “enchant” Bashar.

WARDA RALEH’S DRESS, PASSPORTS, AND BED
Warda, a forty-year-old Palestinian, shares her New York City apartment with her roommate. In it she exhibits a collection of objects including a Palestinian dress hung on the wall, a set of ceramic plates from different regions of Palestine, and a number of cushions on her couch that she bought at a refugee camp. Warda explained the dress her mother had sent to her:

This dress is not the traditional Palestinian dress of my region. It is from the Ramallah region, the embroidery is much prettier. That’s why it became a national dress. None of my relatives wore that dress. My grandmother didn’t wear a dress like that. I wanted to have one of those. This is not from my region but I have it up as a national dress. It’s an object to talk about. When people come over, it’s a funny thing to do. It’s an interesting object. I think of it as unique. That’s the thing, when you come to a place like America, where you want to show your identity, you come up with something. So I would say these are invented things.
Warda’s interpretation of the dress is not independent from its material properties such as form and fabric. She does not wear the dress because it is made of polyester and says she does not even like the dress, although she thinks it lends authenticity to her home setting for her guests. To Warda the value of the object is its message more than its practicality or its actual history. A second set of objects Warda showed me were kept in her bedroom. She explained:

I would say probably the most controversial object for me is my passport. I keep all my passports. I had many passports. Sometimes I had a Jordanian passport. Sometimes I had a Palestinian passport. It depends on the political situation. They are more symbolic. I also have a bunch of keys that I keep from all the places that I lived, including those in New York. Somehow I cannot let go of those keys. I am trying to do an art project with them.

Warda’s passports signify an uprooted existence. They are objects of departure and loss. They encapsulate her mobile existence as Edward Said writes describing the existential condition of being Palestinian, “The Palestinian is very much a person in transit: suitcase or bundle of possessions in hand” (Said 1999: 130).

The last object Warda showed me was a metal bed frame, which has an exceptional story. When Warda moved to New York, she needed to buy a bed. She got an IKEA catalog, chose a bed from the catalog, and went to the store to get it. When she was paying for it at the checkout, she saw another bed that was on display in the backroom area. She suddenly paused and said, “I want to return the one I have and instead I’m buying that one.” Her friend told her she must be crazy to buy the bed she just laid eyes on after spending all that time looking at the first bed, waiting in the line, especially because it did not even match the rest of her furniture. Warda told her that she did not care if the bed did not match the rest of her stuff; it only mattered to her that it reminded her of her grandfather’s bed, a place that she and her siblings were not allowed to sit when her grandfather was around. She said: “Is it Palestinian? No, but it looked like just the one my grandfather had.” Weeks later, she was talking to her sister in Australia. Her sister said she had also just bought a bed: “Oh, it’s a Swedish bed from IKEA. When I saw it, I had a fight with my husband because he wanted to buy a different kind of bed. It is black. You should see it. You too would go and buy it. It is just like our grandfather’s bed.” Warda told her that she bought the same bed. She also told me that the two sisters later found out that their brother who lived in France had also bought the same bed from IKEA.

The bed, first of all, appeals to three siblings because it was a forbidden object. The siblings were only permitted to use it when their grandfather was absent. The bed also represents significant
childhood place attachment. Three siblings, none of whom continued
to live in their town of origin, are rebuilding a bond to their childhood memories, and to their deceased grandfather by sleeping on a bed that mimics the original. Therefore, this material object restores a sense of continuity that had been lost in migration. Warda’s first encounter with the bed in the store resembles the Proustian encounter with a madeleine, a bite of which brought back his childhood (Proust 1998: 60–4). The instance at the IKEA store is a perfect example of involuntary memory. Although the bed is a mass-produced object that does not have any personal history or cultural meaning, it still is part of the facilitating environment in which Warda finds a sense of comfort and continuity.

CONCLUSION

These examples demonstrate that objects are used as elements of sheltering and nurturing “facilitating environments” by diaspora groups. Winnicott’s facilitating environments are real places displaced people create in their homes using their objects to recollect past instances and claim their collective identity, which is often associated with a sense of political consciousness and collective action. These real environments are either semi-private visible places like living rooms, where Samy’s scarf is on display, or more private places like Warda’s bedroom or even Bashar’s back. This shows that there are two forms of collective attachment undertaken; one private, the other public.

In this type of environment they simultaneously claim both their relatedness to their group and also announce their individuality. The evidence presented in this article suggests that descendants of the displaced intentionally surround themselves with the objects that stimulate remembering. Doing so has future ramifications for sustaining their cultural memory and identity in diaspora. Memory is a social phenomenon but remembering is an individual act. In order to keep the collective memory alive, displaced peoples fashion “facilitating environments” that propel the claiming of identity, feeling a sense of continuity, and constructing a life narrative. Furthermore, the material objects within such environments function as interlocutors of individual versus collective identity and memory.

Some of these objects have a particular history that directly links them to the participants’ earlier selves, other people, or a place. Objects of this sort have social biographies, i.e. they were passed down from a family member and laden with memories. Mariam’s photographs and necklace, for example, are objects of this sort. Yet other objects do not offer that kind of direct connection. They are “invented objects”; the link they provide to a person or a family is purely the projection of the owner. These interviews indicate, however, that invented objects have no less emotional value than inherited objects, nor do they operate any differently. Warda’s bed is a perfect example. The bed is
a piece of factory furniture that does not have a unique existence or history. But it nevertheless links Warda to Palestine and her past. Her initial response to the bed was visceral, she was drawn to a sense of family, home, and heritage encapsulated in the bed. Divya Tolia-Kelly writes of the connection made through material cultures as internal and biological, “a connection through gut, blood, and consciousness” (Tolia-Kelly 2004: 326). By purchasing the bed, Warda is redefining the value and the meaning of the object and bestowing memories upon it.

I argue that the meaning attributed to an object is dependent on its material properties as well as its relational properties to the participants. An association exists between the meaning of the object and its material qualities and function. Moreover, the meaning of an object relies on how much a person is capable of incorporating the object into his or her life.

The stories of Mariam, Samy, Bashar, and Warda illustrate the ways in which traumas of displacement can be contained, represented, and reenacted in objects—and how a particular relationship coexists between the object, the cultural narrative, and the person. All respondents discussed in this article have a strong sense of collective identity and they use their objects to amplify this identity. The Palestinians, a nation without a land, continue to espouse their territorial claims and their identity as victims of displacement, and this is reflected in their strong attachment to their objects, which they continue to invent collectively.

Displaced people do not necessarily control what they remember but they have the power over how they choose to remember. The material artifacts of Palestinians provide insight into their future expectations of recognition as a people, of return, their state of being in the diaspora, the current threats to their existence under the occupation, and their cultural identity. Active remembrance is a guarantee of cultural survival and is used to transform individual memory into public history. The Palestinian objects are not only material proof of their past existence, they are also key to cultural as well as political survival and symbols of their commitment to return.

NOTES
1. Misbaha is a string of beads carried by men in the Middle East. Each bead is used to count the repetitions of prayers, devotions, or a mantra; however, it can also be used to simply pass time or to relax.
2. Overall, I completed forty-one video or audio interviews; with thirteen Greeks of Asia Minor origin in Thessaloniki, Athens, and New York City in 2002, fourteen Armenian Americans and fourteen Palestinian Americans in New York City in 2005 and 2006 in their homes. Each group represents a different case of dislocation as a historical consequence of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire:
The “relocation” of Armenians in 1915; the “population exchange” with Greece in the 1923; and the expulsion of Palestinians from the 1947–8 war that established the State of Israel (known in Arabic as the “Nakbah” or catastrophe). Although some aspects of the Population Exchange of 1915 continue to have discernible influences on the personal and collective identities of the new generations of Greeks of Asia Minor and the 1915 survivors, the imminent threat to the people and the culture no longer exist contrary to the experience of Palestinians.

3. The majority of Palestinians in the USA are believed to be Christians as the Christian Palestinians preceded Muslim Palestinians in immigrating to the USA. Palestinians are not only Muslim; they are also Christian, and Druze.

4. According to Kayyali, most Palestinians who travel had travel documents issued by either refugee agencies or Arab countries in the Middle East. Thus, instead of being identified as “Palestinians,” they were recorded as “Lebanese,” “Jordanian,” “Israeli,” etc.

5. Jerusalem cross is a Christian symbol that consists of a large Greek cross surrounded by four smaller Greek crosses. It is also known as the “Crusader’s cross.”

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