

seemed ludicrous to shoppers when juxtaposed to pictures on the TV screen,³ and the cement holding together the terms, Palestinian-terrorist and Israeli-victim, loosened. It was this visible violence of the occupation that gave the *kufiya* its currency in U.S. media in 1988 and made it recognizable as a "traditional" sartorial emblem for Palestinians living under occupation.

I will return to this story, but now let us turn to a very different history, the genealogy of the *kufiya* as a sign in Palestine. Its symbolic power has been generated in the Palestinian people's confrontation with an occupying force that denies it *any* legitimate relation to a nation and territory called Palestine. In order to suppress Palestinian national feeling the Israeli authorities have imposed a veritable "routine of repression" (Johnson 1988) in the Occupied Territories that includes massive land confiscations, demolition of houses of those suspected of "security violations," deportations, town arrests, detentions without trial, the peremptory closings of schools and universities, and the suppression of expressive culture. The production and circulation of books on Palestinian culture and history is severely hamstrung; the censor has banned thousands of titles on such subjects from the Occupied Territories, aiming to "eradicate expression that could foster Palestinian nationalist feelings, or that suggests that Palestinians are a nation with a national heritage" (Benvenisti 1983: 1; 3; 130–31). Restrictions on overt manifestations of nationalist sentiment are so tight that it is even a criminal offense to display the four national colors (red, black, green and white). The Israeli apparatus ensures that the educational curriculum teaches Palestinian children little about their people's history (Graham-Brown 1984: 37–81). Poets, painters, journalists, and even folk artists are routinely harassed and arrested. University students are frequently searched and sometimes jailed when caught with their assigned readings for courses on Palestinian history and culture. Such has been the routine in the Occupied Territories for nearly 25 years.

It is against a background of repression and disruption that Palestinians assert their identity through symbols of national coherence. Those indirect expressions of the nation which manage to slip by the censor have become privileged objects of national feeling. Denied a sovereign state, passport, flag, national rites and historical monuments, West Bank Palestinians cling all the more tenaciously to the few available and usable symbols of unity and authenticity. Since