The Political Economy of Stone Quarrying in the West Bank (Palestine)

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Dit artikel onderzoekt de relatie tussen de Palestijnse steen- en marmerindustrie en de bezetting. Hiervoor dient David Harvey's (2003) theorie van ‘accumulation by dispossession’ als referentiekader. Door ‘dispossessions’ en ‘accumulations’ te onderscheiden en de relatie van die twee tot elkaar op een kritische manier te begrijpen, komen we tot twee specifieke toepassingen van Harvey's oorspronkelijke ‘accumulation by dispossession’. ‘Dispossession by accumulation’ dient als concept om uit te leggen hoe tijdelijke accumulations in de sector bijdragen aan algemene dispossession van holding power van de bezette Palestijnse gebieden. Op meer individueel vlak legt ‘accumulation by normalization’ uit hoe individueel profijt in de sector bijdraagt aan normalisering van de bezetting. Op deze manier besteedt deze bijdrage aandacht aan de dunne grens tussen het ontwikkelingen van de steen- en marmerindustrie en normalisering van de bezetting. Hierdoor draagt dit artikel bij aan het beantwoorden van de vraag naar de functionaliteit van conflicten (Keen, 2007) en houdt het rekening met globale politiek, bredere academische discussies, en is het gesitueerd binnen het debat over de relaties tussen Israël en de Palestijnse bezette gebieden. Gegevensverzameling vond plaats in de vorm van een literatuurstudie, gevolgd door veldwerk in de bezette Palestijnse gebieden in april en mei 2015. Verscheidene stakeholders verleenden hun medewerking aan het onderzoek, zodat het mogelijk is te stellen dat in de Bethlehem en Hebron districten de meeste relevante respondenten hebben bijgedragen aan de kennisvergaring. In het veld werd gewerkt met kwalitatieve interviews, welke gecombineerd werden met theoretische informatie die was bekomen voor en na het verblijf in de bezette Palestijnse gebieden.
Abstract

This article investigates the relation between the Palestinian stone and marble industry and the occupation. This is done by using David Harvey’s (2003) theory of “accumulation by dispossession” as the frame of reference. Through discerning “dispossessions” and “accumulations”, as well as critically understanding their relations to each other two specific applications of Harvey’s initial “accumulation by dispossession” theory are constructed. On the general level “dispossession by accumulation” is a notion that explains how momentary accumulations in the sector contribute to the general dispossession of holding power of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt). On the individual level “accumulation by normalization” explains how individual profit in the sector contains aspects of (involuntary?) normalization of the occupation. This shines a light on the fragile balance between developing the stone and marble industry and normalizing the occupation. In doing so, this article partly contributes to answering the question of functionality of conflict (Keen, 2007) and takes into account global politics, broader academic discussions and is situated within the critical debate on the relations between Israel and Palestine. Obtaining data for the research was done by a literature study, followed by fieldwork in the oPt during April and May 2015. Various stakeholders cooperated with the research, so it is possible to say that in the Bethlehem and Hebron districts most of the relevant respondents are included in the knowledge base. Qualitative interviews constitute the method used on the ground, and these were coherently combined with the theoretic information obtained before and after the visit to the oPt.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABD : accumulation by dispossession
COGAT : Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories
DBA : dispossession by accumulation
MEA : Ministry of Environmental Affairs
MNE : Ministry of National Economy
MSC : Marble and Stone Centre
oPt : occupied Palestinian territories
PA : Palestinian Territory
PLL : Palestinian Labour League
PPU : Palestine Polytechnic University
USM : Union of Stone and Marble
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the persons and institutions without whom I would have never ever been able to conduct my research as inclusively as it was made possible. First of all I thank Professor Nabil Al-Joulani who provided all kinds of information, organized field trips and interviews. Without the Professor’s instructive input and tireless concern the empirical component of the research would have lacked many aspects. I am grateful to my promotor at Ghent University, Professor Anne Walraet, for supporting my research topic from the start on and providing guidance; and to my local promotor, Muayad Alayan, for making the documentary that inspired me to choose this very research topic as well as for the guidance and help on the ground and after the fieldwork. My sincere thankfulness also goes to Professor Christopher Parker who was of great support regarding practical concerns and to whom I turned with any questions about fieldwork and theoretical aspects. I further thank all my contacts who so patiently and enthusiastically explained everything to me and showed me the quarries, crushers, factories and workshops; as well as all organizations and municipalities (Bani Nayim deserves specific mentioning here) that agreed on helping me out with interviews and provision of resource material. Last but not least I thank my friends and family for all the support, help and getting me back on track after derailing – especially Kelly and Marijke were irreplaceable during the preparations and in the field, as well as my dear friend Hilda who despite a very busy work scheme made the time to review my text.

INTRODUCTION

INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF STONE AND MARBLE INDUSTRY IN THE WEST BANK: CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

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Labour conquest & Jewish stones for Jewish cities
Neoliberal peace: the same wine in new bottles
On accumulation, dispossession and normalization

ACCUMULATION AND DISPOSSESSION IN THE PALESTINIAN STONE AND MARBLE INDUSTRY

Export to Israel or any export at all
Divide and conquer
“This water travels into Israel”
“And then the filter press pressed him”
Israel as the cheapest, nearest and most attractive export destination
Keeping the concepts, reversing the theory?

CONCLUDING REMARKS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ATTACHMENTS

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1 njoulani@ppu.edu
2 Sacred Stones, directed by Muayad Alayan and Leila Higazi, 2011.
INTRODUCTION

Palestinian stones are the one symbol that stands for Palestinian resistance (throwing them) and Israeli expansions (building infrastructure, settlements and outposts) at the same time. The Palestinian stone business (predominantly family enterprises) does not operate in isolation from its political environment. To understand the political economy it is of crucial importance to consider how the stone and marble industry is embedded in and enforces or depends on the occupation – not only in the current timeframe, but through the zionist socialist project, globalization, neoliberalism, the Oslo process, fayyadism, colonization and occupation.


More field-specific research has been done into the effects on health and environment of stone industry outside of the Palestinian Territories (Adewole and Adesina 2011; Aukour and Al-Qinna 2008; Bacarji e.a. 2013; Bridge 2004; Careddu and Siotto 2011; El-Gammal e.a. 2011; Gazi 2012; Golbabaei e.a. 2004; Jullien e.a. 2012; Labuschagne e.a. 2005; Mashaly e.a. 2012; Mendoza e.a. 2014; Milgrom 2008; Reed 2002), and in a limited scope also inside the Palestinian Territories (Al-Joulani and Salah 2014; Al-Joulani 2008; Hanieh e.a. 2014; Morns e.o. 1998).

This article is connected to these fields of knowledge, but adds a different frame of reference to the field of stone industry in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). By working with the integrated approach of ‘accumulation by dispossession’ (Harvey, 2003), I focus on the political economy of the situation of occupation and how this affected and is influenced by the current stone industry in the West Bank. By doing so, this thesis makes a start in closing the gap that exists in the state of the art. It reveals the coherence between the various fields that have been researched so far, in that all of them constitute aspects of dispossession.

I use “political economy” in the sense of Weingast & Witman (2008) as “the influence politics and economy exert in reciprocity on each other.”

Dependant on the source of reference and on who you speak to, the Israil – Palestinian relation is dubbed “under administration of authorities until we find a solution”, or “occupation”.

Apart from a literature study, data for this article is collected through field work in the form of a case study of stone quarries, factories and crushers, conducted from the 19th of April till the 11th of May 2015 in the central and southern part of the West Bank, mainly in the Bethlehem and Hebron districts. A wide range of stakeholders has been interviewed. These include the private sector (owners of quarries, factories and crushers, the Union of Stone and Marble, the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry, workers), the academic sector (Palestine Polytechnic University and Bethlehem University), the public sector (the Palestinian ministry of national economy, licensing manager at the ministry, ministry of environmental affairs, two municipalities), the health sector (insight in the archives of a hospital). Apart from this, close cooperation has been established with the Stone and Marble Centre, a tri-partnership between the Palestine Polytechnic University, the Ministry of National Economy and the Union of Stone and Marble Industry. Existing research projects on the stone industry are taken into account. Interviews were qualitative and half-open, starting with a basic list of the same questions for everybody, expanding the questions dependent on the reaction of each interviewee. Cooperation is lend to setting up a possible future co-operation between the Belgian union movement ABVV and a grassroots Palestinian organization that works on stone industry (foreseen to take place in 2017).

Employment, trade, regulatory environment, health, natural environment, living standard.
The multi-level characteristic of the process of dispossession, and the fragmented (academic) response to it\(^8\), display the need for an integrational approach.

While I zoom in on the economic relations that stone business in the oPt creates with the state of Israel for the sake of "economic peace"\(^9\) I de-exceptionalize the Israel-Palestine conflict by using a tool (ABD) that has been applied to situations of occupation and exploitation in other regions and countries (see on Africa: Arrighi e.a. 2010, Benjaminsen e.a. 2012, Bond 2006; on the Philippines: Holden e.a. 2011; on India: Levien 2011; on Bolivia: Perreault 2012).

Through an understanding of politics as the basic determinant of "who gets what, when and how" (Laswell, 1958) this article argues that looking at the stone industry in the West Bank (oPt) through the lens of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003) shines a light on the fragile balance between developing an industry and normalizing the occupation. Moreover, it shows some dynamics of the impact of occupation, linking together various aspects of dispossession connected to the stone industry, giving way to the exploration of a notion of ‘dispossession by accumulation’ and ‘accumulation by normalization’\(^11\). In doing so, this article partly contributes to answering the question of functionality of conflict (Keen, 2007) and takes into account global politics\(^12\), broader academic discussions\(^13\) and is situated within the critical debate on the relations between Israel and Palestine.

The article is organized as follows. In a conceptual section the instrumentalization of the industry is being explained. In the subsequent section the accumulations and dispossession in the stone and marble industry in the West Bank are discussed and the accumulation by dispossession theory is specified. I argue that ABD successfully explains the political economy of the Palestinian stone and marble industry, when understood as "Accumulation by Normalization" on individual scale; and as "Dispossession by Accumulation" on general scale. The concluding section reiterates how Harvey’s accumulation by dispossession provides us with an adequate frame of reference for discerning how development in the Palestinian stone and marble industry is inseparably connected to normalization of the occupation.

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\(^8\) Dispossession of Palestinian holding power in negotiations on the political agreement on ending the “temporary” administration of the territories.


\(^10\) The discourse of ‘peace through economy’ is a cornerstone of the Paris Protocol (1994) and holds firm ground in how the stone industry in the West Bank is taking place. Both the Israeli economy (construction business, export) as well as the Palestinian owners of medium to big stone factories are benefitting from trade possibilities. With these possibilities come lots of constraints, which mainly impact the smaller Palestinian stone factories. In the same time, the ‘peace’ aspect of the discourse seems not to be looked after on the political level.

\(^11\) This very term came up when discussing the research with Professor Christopher Parker – research associate at the Ghent University.

\(^12\) In due time reference will be made to the zionist project, fayyadism and neoliberal peace.

\(^13\) Taking into account the Marxist roots, applying Harvey’s theory on a new case study, engaging with Hever’s critical account of Israel’s political economy and Gordon’s notion of ‘outsourcing the occupation’.
INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF STONE AND MARBLE INDUSTRY IN THE WEST BANK: CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Throughout various constellations of administrators of the region, stones and the stone industry had a role to play in realizations of the at the time ruling power. In historically different framesets the stone and marble industry functioned as an instrument to reproduce power relations between the Arab population and the British mandatory rule and the Jewish Agency (1920-1948), between a colonizer and the colonized, between the occupier and the occupied (1967-…). In what follows the stone industry is seen as part of the machinery of colonization and of building a national home for the Jews. And although colonization and occupation in current language use have become somewhat exchangeable, I argue that the neoliberal peace stipulated by the Oslo Accords and continued under fayyadism persists in utilizing the stone and marble industry as an instrument to normalize the situation of occupation. A brief summary of basic information on the industry today is necessary to provide for a better understanding.  

2015 quarries, factories, crushers, workshops

The Palestinian stone and marble industry is comprised of four entities: quarries, factories, crushers and workshops. In quarries the raw material is excavated, using vertical cutting saws. Factories are places where the massive blocks from the quarries are transformed into slabs and tiles with different finishing styles, depending on the end use in construction (floors, walls, houses,…). These products reach various destinations, Israel being the main market. Crushers get their raw material either from the factories, directly from quarries or from house building pits. The end product at the crushers is gravel in a variety of sizes, which is to be used in ready-mix and asphalt production. From the phase of grinding the stones into gravel, the crushing activities are considered to be part of a separate industry, the “aggregates industry”. Workshops resemble factories but with a lesser degree of automation and more skilled handwork going on. The end products are decoration and fine stone products. The stone products do vary depending on the area from where the stone is excavated, with gradation in colour, water absorption, texture and other specificities.

In the West Bank an estimated 300 quarries (mostly situated in the limestone-rich areas of Hebron and Bethlehem) are operative together with 750 factories and 600 workshops. Factories are located close to quarries in order to reduce transportation costs. The majority of companies in the sector are family based, with skills being passed on from generation to generation. It is estimated that the sector employs 15,000 to 20,000 workers, the vast majority of enterprises (70%) containing less than 10 employees, 20% employ 10 till 20 workers, and the remaining 10% employ more than 20 workers.

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14 As the dean of an engineering faculty mentioned compactly during an interview: “So your interest is more in the economic and political matters rather than the technical matters? Then still you need the technical information in order to prove that politics has an impact on it.”

15 There is no need for horizontal sawing because of the natural horizontal layering of the stone in the ground.

16 USM, Interview with an owner of a crusher – April 28, 2015.


Employees are unskilled, skilled and administrative, and the unskilled worker earns an average annual wage of $6,000. Although a high level of automation exists in bigger companies in Hebron, the sector is considered a labour-intensive industry.\(^{20}\) Because of the not renewable nature of the resources, the industry tends to be rather steady instead of rapidly growing or declining: when one quarry closes another one opens. Explicit ups and downs in the industry-development therefor are to be explained in the light of the economic and politic environment.

**Destinations of Palestinian stone and marble\(^{21}\):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Market Share for Stone and Marble Industry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Israel</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Bank</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jerusalem</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaza Strip</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exporting</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key economic data for the Palestinian stone and marble sector (2010)\(^{22}\):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current reserves</td>
<td>$30 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial revenue</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to GNP</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to GDP</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to global output</td>
<td>4% by volume, 2% by value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total annual sales</td>
<td>US $417 million to US $440 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports / domestic sales split</td>
<td>4% / 96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual sector exports</td>
<td>$60 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to Palestinian exports</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of export destinations</td>
<td>56 countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main importer</td>
<td>Israel (71%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{20}\) See annex: rough scheme of commodity chain, with transport indicated as high cost links between the different stages.


Labour conquest & Jewish stones for Jewish cities
Since time immemorial inhabitants of what is now called “Israel” and the “occupied Palestinian territories” built their houses out of stone. From the Ottoman rule (1840-1918) onwards the use of stones has been aligned with plans of political strategy, be it in export destinations or the obligation of using certain types of stone in urban construction. Witness of the latter are the old towns of Hebron, Jerusalem and Bethlehem and the quarries which are presently buried beneath them – like Jrun il-Hummus and Al-Moradeh (on the site of the Nativity street in Bethlehem). In the period of the British mandatory rule of Palestine (1920-1948) policies regarding stone and marble industry were defined by the British imperial interests (economic yield for the needy colonial project as well as political stability) and the aim of building a “national home” for the Jews (as stipulated in the 1917 Balfour Declaration). It is within this timeframe and due to the ideas that the Jewish immigrants of the third Aliyah had embraced, that stone and marble industry in the region increasingly became articulated as supplier of ideological construction material, apart from responding to the material needs of increasing urbanization.

The early years of the Mandate were characterized by economic instability, and the stone (cement) industry was no exception (de Vries, 2002). As did other sectors (citrus orchards, dock workers, leather and flour industry), the stone and marble industry was a laboratory where the Jewish Agency, through Histadrut, pursued its labour Zionist aspiration of conquest of labour, through campaigns based on the doctrine of economic nationalism (Shoham, 2013). This aspiration aimed at introducing as many Jews into Palestine as quickly as possible and to push these into every sort of work (Mansour, 2012).

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23 Interview with the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry – May 4, 2015.
24 Still today in many cities, like in Jerusalem, municipal laws require that all buildings be faced with local (Jerusalem) stone (Goldberger 1995). The ordinance stems from the British Mandate and the governorship of Sir Ronald Storrs, and was stipulated in a master plan for the city, made in 1918 by the city engineer of Alexandria – Sir William McLean.
25 de Vries 2002, 98: “In searching political stability in the country, which purported to facilitate the realization of British imperial interests in the Middle East, the Government of Palestine had two main aims: first to quell labour unrest that might destabilize social relations, aggravate national tensions between Arabs and Jews and affect the economic well-being of the country, second to assure the free operation of those economic forces in the country, particularly Jewish investors and employers, so as to minimize the financial burden on the British authorities and British taxpayers which was affected by the costs of its colonial rule. These aims were encapsulated in what developed in this early phase of the Mandate as a dual labour policy: on the one hand official abstention from direct involvement in the labour affairs of the Arabs and Jewish communities, with occasional mediation attempts between workers and employers (notably practised in the midst of the 1923-25 strike wave); and, on the other hand, harsh treatment of labour disputes, particularly those that threatened to hamper the operation of the Governmental public sector - colonial administration, railways, public works and infrastructure.”
26 The non-governmental institution, created in 1929, that through various programmes and policies facilitated (and continues to do so) Jewish immigration into Israel. http://www.jewishagency.org/inside-jewish-agency/content/4916 (consulted on August 10, 2015).
27 General Federation of Jewish Labour, founded in 1920, with support and subsidies of the Zionist movement. Histadrut comprised almost all Jewish labour organizations, and the most important unit within the party was MAPAI (Milfelet Poale Erets Israel: Party of the Labourers of the Land of Israel), of which Ben Gurion (president of the Zionist Executive), Shertok (political director of the Agency) and Katznelson (director of the Davar newspaper) were influential members.
The principle of conquest of labour was most clearly translated into practice during the strike waves of 1923-1925, the general strike in 1936, and the 1945 strike at the Nesher cement plant and quarry. During these periods of social unrest Histadrut balanced its ideological pledge of striving for the enhancement of workers’ rights (for Jewish workers and through its sub-branch for Arab workers, the PLL: Palestine Labour League) with its fear of British interference (to this aim political unrest and Jewish-Arab animosity was avoided and silenced as much as possible) and its Zionist principle of conquest of labour. Or, as de Vries (2002, 95) observes: strikes were instrumentalized in that their aims were ‘zionized’ and in the enhanced presence of national considerations in strike action and strike management.

However nationally delineated the organization of labour was and despite the replacement of Arab workers by newly immigrated Jews, quarries kept on employing Arab workers. As the Arab workers obtained very low wages for performing much longer hours than the Jewish workers, companies that more strictly implied the conquest of labour principle complained that due to these Arab workers competition was falsified. In 1935 David Hacohen, director of Histadrut’s contracting office to one of these complaints answered that his company’s profitability required the use of cheap Arab labour - a statement that should be understood as admitting (on the record) that the jobs of the relatively well-paid Jewish workers did depend on the employment of at least some poorly paid Arab workers (Lockman 1996, 121).

28 The Nesher cement quarry and plant (established in 1925) underwent a tariff protection by the British authorities, and mainly depended on demand for cement in Syria.
29 Arab workers were asking for better payment, less working hours, the ability to spend their wages outside of the company shop and the possibility of living with their families instead of the shacks on the quarry site. It is worth noting with de Vries (2002, 98) that during the 1920s in general Arab workers abstained from any labour disputes, causes for which can be found in the weakness of the Arab workers’ union organization as well as in the ideologically motivated exclusion of Arab workers from the Histadrut.
30 Established by Histadrut in 1935 in order to organize Arab workers without including Arab workers in the Jews-only General Federation of Jewish Labour.
31 As following excerpts of a letter from the Tel Aviv Workers’ Council to quarry operators and construction companies reveals (letter made public by the Communist Party in Palestine - that opposed zionism - in its newspaper Ha’Or on the 23th of November 1934, together with an Arab section of it in order to inform the Arab workers), the conquest of labour weighed heavier than labour solidarity (De Vries 2002, 202) and Zionism always took precedence over socialism (Mansour 2012, 200):

[...] This agreement guarantees to supply Tel-Aviv with Jewish stone. Most important of all are the workers in the building trade itself. It is in their power to abstain themselves, and to prevent others, from using stones produced by Arabs. It is their duty not to allow the unloading of stones unless they are certain that it is Jewish. Further, a special controller’s seal is to be seen on the invoice brought by the driver. The absence of the seal indicates that the stone is of Arab provenance. Moreover, special inspectors will pass through the town for the said purpose and all comrades are requested to assist them in their task.

[...] You must absolutely refuse to work with stone of Arab provenance. The refusal to unload such stone at the place of work will not only be an important step towards making this industry Jewish, but will also prevent cheap labour from creeping into the other Jewish industries.
32 And the conquest of labour campaign was supported by the British authorities since the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939 aligned the British Authorities with the zionist movement out of opposition to Arab nationalism.
33 At the Nesher quarry in 1939 for example, 60 Jewish workers were employed together with 50 Arab workers. The Jewish wage was 37 piasters, while the Arab workers’ wage consisted of 16 piasters. - Lockman 1996, 129.
34 Lockman 1996, 109: “The quarry workers received 8 to 12 piastres for a workday of twelve or thirteen hours, low even by the miserable standard for unskilled manual labor in Palestine at the time.”
35 The earlier “Office of Public Works and Planning” and later called “Solé Boneh”.
36 The company in this case is “Even Vesid”, jointly owned by the Histadrut and Tahir Qaraman, a Haifa businessman who employed only Arab workers.
One can clearly see then how, despite strikers’ sincere inspiration, labour and social protest in the stone industry during the British Mandate period was instrumentalized to create a working environment conducive to the construction of a Jewish national home (de Vries 2002, 109).  

Neoliberal peace: the same wine in new bottles  
We have seen how the industry was instrumentalized within the Zionist labour project. Now I explain how during direct occupation and the neoliberal peace agenda stone industry plays a role in maintaining the status quo of occupation while being portrayed as part of the PA (Palestinian Authority) development strategy.  

During the first years of the 1967 occupation, Israel pursued an “open bridges” policy, meaning that Palestinian trade with Egypt and Jordan was tolerated due to the fact that those markets were at that time not within Israel’s diplomatic relations, and at the same time serving to prevent cheap exports to the Israeli market (Hever 2010, 8). To date when speaking with Palestinian stone factory owners Jordan is summed up as the first and most familiar destination of export. From 1967 on Israeli quarries were operated in the oPt, providing 20% to 30% of the requirements of building and construction work in Israel, while the revenues of these quarries exclusively flew to the Israeli treasury (Kanafani 2012, 32 and Hever 2010, 52). The increase of Israeli quarries (located in area C) can be connected to the weak regulatory environment in the West Bank.

37 And even when the national economy campaign of conquest of labour and Hebrew stone products did not take off as successfully as Histadrut planned (with the employers clinging on to their own policies in order to employ at least some cheap Arab labour), it sure generated a moral pressure that created a sense of national belonging in public discourse. – Shoham 2013, 470.

38 “Direct occupation”, “neoliberal peace” and “normalization” are not strictly chronologically delineated. Loosely referring to Hever (2010) and Samara (2000) I focus on “direct occupation” from 1967 onwards and especially the early years after the official occupation of the West Bank. “Neoliberal peace” is linked mainly to the period starting from 1993 (Oslo Accords) but also neoliberal policies before that date are taken into account. With “normalization” I mainly refer to the period after the second Intifada (2001 – ..).


40 The “open bridges” policy was situated during Moshe Dayan’s time in government (1960s), during which also the co-optation of traditional elites took place. This trend of politics was continued under Menahem Milson’s Israeli Civil Administration and Palestinian Village Leagues in the 1980s (Khalidi & Samour 2011, 8).

41 Interviews in Bethlehem and Hebron district during April and May 2015.

42 In December 2011 the Israeli High Court of Justice rejected a petition from Yesh Din that challenged the legality of the (at that time) 11 Israeli companies quarrying in the West Bank. Research of WhoProfits found that 94% of the materials extracted by the Israeli quarries in area C are being used for sale in Israel. This is contradictory to International Humanitarian Law (1907 Hague Regulations) in which is stated that an occupying force must protect public property in the occupied territories, including national resources. With this decision the Court legalized the status quo of economic exploitation, and it authorized the companies to continue their activities. The Court only recommended them not to open new quarries in the West Bank, out of concern for overexploitation. Nowadays there are still 9 Israeli companies active in area C, in contradiction to art. 55 of the Hague Regulations of 1907 (http://www.whoprofits.org/content/updated-list-israeli-quarries-west-bank).

43 Sacred Stone; Interview with USM – April 19, 2015; Interview with PPU – April 26, 2015; Interview with Crusher owner - April 28, 2015; Interview with Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industries – May 4, 2015; Interview with director of the division of foreign trade and international relations at the Manufacturers’ Association of Israel – May 10, 2015.
While in Israel costly commitments to rehabilitate the landscape after quarrying, to minimize environmental impact and to prevent health hazards are imposed very strictly (Kanafani 2012, 32 & interviews), obedience to such norms (if existing) can be easily circumvented in the oPt.  

The Washington Consensus (1989) determined the global atmosphere in which the Madrid Rounds would take place in 1991 and later on the Oslo Process (1993). With the Oslo Accords the Palestinian Authority (PA) was brought into life as an interim government that would regulate certain administratively divided areas. The administrative division into areas A, B and C divides operational options according to the location of stone and marble entities. Area C is under Israeli military and civil administration which means that the Israeli Authorities (through the organ of the Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories, “COGAT”) determine regulations and issue permits for establishing and or expanding quarries, factories and crushers. On the ground this means no permission to expand or establish quarries is issued for Palestinian enterprises, what results in skimming technological advancing and hindering access to the good quality stone which is located in area C.

Of importance more specifically for the trade in Palestinian stone and marble, is the Paris Protocol (1994) that catalysed a new mode of instrumentalization of the stone industry in the West Bank. No longer do the quarries illustrate a rough national economic policy as was the case with the conquest of labour campaign. No longer are illegal quarries the necessary suppliers of Israeli construction material. Through subcontracting, cooperation on the base of unequal holding power (Khan 2005), dependency on the Israeli market, the stone industry now can be instrumentalized far more refined than before.

44 Interview with the Ministry of Environmental Affairs, April 28, 2015 – Ramallah.
45 The Washington consensus was a 10-point policy package, coined by Williamson in 1989 at a conference of the Institute for International Economics. Williamson mentioned this term in the frame of a reform agenda for Latin America (Clift 2003, 9) but it became a model for the wider developing world, centred around the core ideas of disciplined macroeconomic policies, the use of markets and trade liberalization (Williamson 2004b, 13). It is to the latter that the “Washington consensus” refers to today – when not indicated otherwise (Stiglitz 2004): the set of economic policies advocated for developing countries in general by the international financial institutions (primarily the IMF and the World Bank) and the US Treasury (Williamson 2004a, 1).
46 While we now speak of a “Post-Washington-Consensus”, the core of the first Consensus (free market centric, fiscally conservative and light-touch regulatory environment) continues to be the determinant criterion for the current PA statehood plan (Khalidi & Samour 2011, 9). The neoliberal framework allows following four agenda points for the PA to focus on: 1) public security and rule of law, 2) institution building, 3) service delivery and 4) private sector growth. It is in this last aspect that is at the heart of the PA’s development strategy according to Samara (122).
47 Until the political solution for the temporary administration of the administrative territories would be obtained – something that was expected to take place within 5 years.
48 Interview and field trips with USM (April 19, 2015), Hebron Industrial Zone (April 21, 2015).
49 But Samara (2000, 120) and Egger (2005, 42-43) nuance this in saying that “in essence the Paris Protocol nor the Oslo Accords did effected in any change in economic relations from the direct occupation era to the post-direct occupation era.”
50 Although sectors like the oil industry and the international aid market (Hever 2010) are more studied fields that link the local industry to the global scenery, the neoliberal principles do trickle down to the Palestinian stone industry as well.
51 Cooperation with settlements is suspected by more than three of the interviewees during the field work.
52 70% of the stone and marble export goes to Israel.
The creation of this high degree of dependency is a major aspect of fine tuning the instrumentalization. Dependency was shown very clearly shortly after the outbreak of the Al Aqsa Intifada\(^{53}\) (September 2000)\(^{54}\) and the measures\(^{55}\) taken as a response to it. This set the scene for an unprecedented economic and social crisis (Egger, 31) – a crisis that to date is not yet remediated fully\(^{56}\). A visible trace of these measures is the barrier on the entrance and exit road to Sioukh\(^{57}\) as well as the artificially made ridges on a strip on the road to force all traffic to go by at walking pace.\(^{58}\)

With the 1994 Paris Protocol aiming at establishing a (unilateral) customs union, free movement of goods and basically a common market between Israel and the oPt\(^{59}\), the Israeli construction and building market is ensured of an abundance of supply with raw material for low prices (since competition between the numerous Palestinian small and medium factories is extremely high\(^{60}\)). The set of policies that spur economic relations and achievements to be the prerequisites for political peace, frames within the most recent economic inducements to pacification, namely the “economic peace” policy (Khalidi & Samour 2011, 8). The effect of this is not only the subjection of Palestinian trade to Israeli restrictions, but also foreign trade worth up to $3.5 billion of which 80-90% is with or goes through Israel (Karim, 43). This affects the one Palestinian export commodity that reaches markets like Brazil and China, namely building stone and marble (Karim 2010, 44).\(^{61}\)

The focus on the private sector as the door to eventual political peace is equally articulated in ‘fayyadism’, a notion that refers to the policy of Salam Fayyad – prime minister of the PA from 2007\(^{62}\) till 2013. His policy entailed “developing a modern Palestine”, building a Palestinian state despite occupation and internal division (Brown 2010 and Khalidi & Samour 2011) which was pursued by continuing the neoliberal principles on which the Oslo Accords are based (Leech 2012). The effect of this was a growing inequality and a Palestinian economy that got much worse (which of course did not only have to do with the economic policy).\(^{63}\)

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\(^{53}\) The Al Aqsa Intifada is also called the “second intifada”, in comparison to the other massive uprising in 1978.

\(^{54}\) Egger (42-43) reminds us of the fact that the seeds for Palestinian economic dependence were planted already back in 1967 from the Six Day War on, when Israel de facto already ran a customs union with the territories, with recurring closures over time and especially hard ones in the 1980s and 1990s.

\(^{55}\) Egger (31-32): “…tight restrictions on the movement of persons and goods imposed by Israel, curfews, guarded checkpoint, circulation permits, road blocks and other prohibitions (referred to as closures).”

\(^{56}\) Interview with the town profile in the attachments for more information on the town.

\(^{57}\) As noted in the field on April 26, April 30 and May 1, 2015.

\(^{58}\) Interview with the director of the division of foreign trade and international relations at the Manufacturers’ Association of Israel – May 10, 2015; Khalidi & Samour 2011, 8.

\(^{59}\) Interviews in the Hebron and Bethlehem district in April and May 2015.

\(^{60}\) Apart from restricting or skimming trade (by controlling it in every aspect), this type of (unilateral) customs union hinders diversification of export markets, what results in static relations in which the Palestinian economy is supplying labour, agricultural commodities and stones & marble while the Israeli economy supplies consumer goods, equipment and services (Egger 2005, 43).

\(^{61}\) Important political context: in 2007 Hamas and Fatah politically devided their powers, with Hamas attaining the Gaza strip as “its” territory of jurisdiction, and Fatah clinging to the West Bank.

\(^{62}\) Similar wordings are used by Khalidi & Samour (2011, 8) to express the effects of the neoliberal policy reinforced by the Oslo Accords, when he describes the economic outcomes of it as “the steady erosion of Palestine’s development potential”, “the degradation of its human capital”, and “the gradual depletion of its natural resources”.

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It is within this general frame (and the Paris Protocol still serves as the corner stone of any cooperation) that the Palestinian stone industry is dispossessed of the equal bargaining position that is a prerequisite of any relation of true ‘cooperation’. With the words of the director of foreign trade & international relations of the Israeli Manufacturer’s Association: “Even though I know that there are critics who say that the profit-sharing is not necessarily equal. But the question is: what is the alternative.”

For now the transformation has been revealed from a direct nationalistic project to a more diffuse strategy of watching over nationalistic interests through the open bridges policy, illegal exploitation of occupied resources, to subcontracting, joint ventures and cooperation as ways of guaranteeing the holding power (Khan 2005) to the occupant. Now we make the bridge to discussing normalization and how this resonates with accumulation by dispossession.

**On accumulation, dispossession and normalization**

Accumulation by dispossession partly refers back to ‘primitive accumulation of capital’ (Marx, 1867), explaining the inevitable transition from feudalism to capitalism as producers and manufacturers give up ownership of the commodities they produce, to the system of wage labour that became hegemonic in the social formation of capitalist circulation (Harvey, 2006). This concept is compactly circumscribed by Perelman (2000, 14) as serving two ends: (1) to take away people’s ability to provide for themselves, and (2) to annihilate possible alternative survival strategies outside of the wage labour system.

With the ‘accumulation by dispossession’ approach Harvey (2003) emphasises the dispossession that goes on in the process of dividing society into producers (proletariats) on the one hand, and capitalists on the other. Accumulation by dispossession, as Harvey (2003) explains, starts from reflections on primitive accumulation but takes on further steps from there. *Firstly*, accumulation by dispossession considers the fact that capitalism always requires a fund of assets outside of itself in order to confront and circumvent pressures of overaccumulation.

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64 Karim 2010, 40: “The Israeli occupation and its harsh and arbitrary policies negatively impact its performance and make it heavily dependent on the Israeli economy. Despite our recent efforts to decrease trade with Israel, it still constitutes 90 percent of total Palestinian trade. The result is an economy with only limited self-reliance and high donor dependency.”

65 Interview May 10, 2015 – Tel Aviv.

66 According to Khalidi & Samour (2011, 10-11) the lack for alternative for current cooperation in the light of economic relations between Israel and Palestine is publicly endorsed in general.

67 Harvey 2003, 149: “Overaccumulation is a condition where surpluses of capital (perhaps accompanied by surpluses of labour) lie idle with no profitable outlets in sight.”

68 Harvey gives amongst other the example of Joseph Chamberlain who led Britain into the Boer War through annexation of the Witwatersrand, saying that Chamberlain’s conversion to an imperialist logic arose out of the inability to find any internal solutions to the chronic problem of overaccumulation of capital within Britain. (Harvey 2003, 180).
Secondly, while Marx described the practices of primitive accumulation as a necessary stadium for getting the motor of capitalist accumulation started – a stadium that is located ‘outside of’ capitalism (Harvey 2003, Perelman 2000) – Harvey\(^{69}\) underscores that these practices constitute an ongoing process, not at all ‘outside of’ capitalism (Harvey 2003, 144).


The aspects of dispossession within the stone industry in the territories refer to (1) how the occupation of the West Bank resonates in the three areas (A, B, C) when it comes to the exploitation of stone and marble; (2) the water consuming process in a water-scarce region (waste water management, impact on environment); (3) the impact on health: dust from the quarries, crushers and factories (for workers, inhabitants from nearby villages and camps); (4) quarry permissions; (5) trade possibilities; (6) impact on agricultural productivity.

The specificity of the context of occupation leads to an application of ABD which is distinctive of how the theory has been applied before (in a lot of cases clinging narrowly to the causal relationship between resources and conflict\(^{71}\), to relations of production and class division in society\(^{72}\), land grabbing\(^{73,74}\) and agricultural development\(^{75}\)). This means I will seek to detach the explicit association of its Marxian ideology in relation to production and search for an approach that is more exploratory of the overall political economy.

Here the concept of normalization is relevant, dubbed by Gordon (2008) as the “outsourcing of the occupation” and by Samara (2000) as the “marketing of Israel”. In the process of coping and trying to make a living, the exceptional situation of injustice is being (almost) accepted and in some cases made profit of.

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\(^{69}\) Also agreeing with the concept of primitive accumulation being something outside of capitalism, is Rosa Luxemburg (1963, 369), when she historically situates primitive accumulation at the end of the Middle Ages, “when the history of capitalism in Europe began”.

\(^{70}\) Other authors are of the same conviction as Harvey, for example Perelman (2000).


Ibrahim Nassar (2013) describes the concept as follows:

“Normalization can be understood as a process by which normal relations are manufactured in a context of abnormal circumstances - thereby divorcing Israel from its own acts of aggression, occupation and racism, and treating it as a political entity that is somehow independent of its political actions.”

Normalization allows Israel to continue the occupation while continuing to create “normal” economic relations, as if those are totally disconnected to any context. The ‘business as usual’ approach supports the continuation of the occupation (by not contesting it) and gives any Palestinian struggle the label of being disruptive and irrelevant.

I argue that the normalization of the occupation as manifested in the stone industry is part of a long term dispossession: normalizing this frame dispossesses the Palestinian economy in stone and marble from ever enjoying an independent trade and fair access to its own resources, while the Israeli economy benefits from the ‘peace dividend’ that comes from the neoliberal policies installed with the Paris Protocol – while, simultaneously, ignoring the need to address the political dimensions. Khalidi & Samour (2011, 10-11) in this line of thought complain about the ease with which the idea that there is no alternative to the neoliberal framework gained traction and credibility both in governmental and popular spheres.76

Now that the relevant political and historical background has been addressed and some concepts briefly explained, in what follows I nuance the application of the accumulation by dispossession theory on the Palestinian stone and marble industry. The specific Israel – oPt relation being what it is, this context calls for a particular use of ABD in order for it to serve as enlightening vehicle through which one can discern the coherence of different aspects of dispossession.

76 It should be clear that the use of the concept of ‘normalization’ in this article is in no way connected to any normative connotation, but purely applied as a descriptive notion.
ACCUMULATION AND DISPOSSESSION IN THE PALESTINIAN STONE AND MARBLE INDUSTRY

As signalled earlier, my application of ABD is distinguished from the “classical” use of it. Opening up the theory is, however, done by other authors before. Benjaminsen e.a. (2010)\(^77\) for example interpreted green and blue grabbing in Tanzania through ABD without adhering closely to its Marxist inspiration. Berg (2011)\(^78\) explains the naming of resort communities in Canada as a manifestation of accumulation by dispossession; and Perreault (2012) explicitly distinguishes the use he makes of ABD from it being ‘a fix for an overaccumulation crisis’.\(^79\)

The various topics reviewed by these studies prove that the theory of accumulation by dispossession can be applied successfully in a more general sphere of political economy without clinging narrowly to its roots in primitive accumulation, relations of production and class division in society. On the other hand it also ensures that ABD can be of relevance in reviewing specific contexts.

Whenever exploring a new or particular use of an established theory, one needs to be aware of the danger of generalization to the point of loss of meaningfulness. I am convinced that this risk can be avoided through continuous awareness of the initial question that is addressed by the theory. In the case of accumulation by dispossession Harvey Maneuved with this theory as a conceptualization of uneven geographical development (Harvey 2003). As long as the specific use of ABD serves Harvey’s original goal, the danger of over-generalization is reduced to the minimum.\(^80\) With the specific alignment of the ABD theory for its application on the stone and marble industry in the context of occupation in the territories, I do take this into account.

The accumulation I refer to consists of benefits for the more abstract Israeli economy\(^81\) as well as for the individual Palestinian quarry, factory and crusher owners I have talked with during the field work and stone-rich regions Hebron and Bethlehem.

\(^79\) One of the functions Harvey (2003) assumes for accumulation by dispossession is the compensation of the crisis in capitalist accumulation by over-accumulation (a surplus of capital lacking profitable means of employment).
\(^80\) For an example of using Harvey’s accumulation by dispossession as a base but taking it further into a new conceptualization, see Sassen, S. (2010) ‘A Savage Sorting of Winners and Losers: Contemporary Versions of Primitive Accumulation.’ *Globalizations*, 7 (1), 23-50. Sassen does take accumulation by dispossession into account but uses it as a stepping stone to conceptualize the transition from traditional forms of capitalism to more advanced forms – without over-generalizing ABD though, through explicit mentioning of the basic presumptions of his study.
\(^81\) Since in the short period of field work only one Israeli contact was willing to share his thoughts with me, there is no possibility of taking into account specific Israeli entities. More detailed Israeli contacts are strongly recommended in further research.
When extending the process of primitive accumulation into the capitalist accumulation strategy (which touches upon the core of ABD), dispossession must be understood as a fragmented and particular process.\textsuperscript{82} It is on this base that I discern aspects of dispossession within the stone and marble industry in the territories. As mentioned earlier: isolated aspects have been studied before – but it is through the ABD approach that the coherence of these becomes clear and that it is possible to understand these in the broader frame of political economy of the occupation.

**Export to Israel or any export at all**

In general people are proud to work in the industry. There is perception that it is a successful economy, and that is true when one takes into account that 70% of Palestinian export is based on the stone industry.\textsuperscript{83} But it is important to remember where the decision is made concerning what actually can be produced. And when giving this a deeper though, one realizes that the occupation has the effect of making the occupied economy so much more one-sided. This is true, not just within the manufacturing sector; there is no investment in technology, or education or anything – stone and marble industry, in essence, is just using what you have, what can be found in the soil.\textsuperscript{84}

Since the Oslo Accords (1993) and the Paris Protocol (1994) the stone and marble industry in the territories transformed into an enhanced industrial playing field. We see this transition exemplified in the Murra Company, which is a company in Bethlehem that is now one of the smaller entities. The company was established in 1972 and used to quarry only for building purposes in the neighbourhood.\textsuperscript{85} Nowadays the company tries to survive on second-hand equipment bought from companies in Hebron or Ramallah, and the quarry it used to operate is closed due to the prohibition of the use of explosives. The owner explained that no attempt at exporting is worth undertaking, since competition in export is already so high. In effect, this can be understood as the dispossession that the occupation constitutes for the smaller entities in the Palestinian stone and marble industry: no trade with Israel means (almost) any trade at all.\textsuperscript{86}

This gives disclosure to a very particular division of stone and marble operations. In Israel there is almost no quarrying activity. When asking about it one gets confusing answers, from confirmation of Israeli quarry activities inside Israel, to denial of it. How it actually works is: digging up stone resources does take place in Israel and in area C, but not in order to excavate big blocks out of it – as is done by Palestinian companies in the territories - it is just digging for obtaining raw material for cement or to build roads with.\textsuperscript{87} When however it happens that by chance good quality stone is present, then this qualitative product will not be put in cement or roads. Then some processing happens comparable to the quarry operations in the territories: stone blocks are being cut out and transported to (Palestinian) stone factories in order to process building stones. In general though, the main objective of Israeli quarries is crushing.

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\textsuperscript{82} As mentioned earlier: “a privatization here, an environmental degradation there, a financial crisis of indebtedness somewhere else” (Harvey 2007, 178).

\textsuperscript{83} Interview with a documentary director – April 19, 2015 in Bethlehem.

\textsuperscript{84} Interview with a film producer on April 19, 2015.

\textsuperscript{85} The activities of this company before 1993 have been described to me as being “organic, part of the natural response to needs of the city.”

\textsuperscript{86} Although the Murra Company was the only entity interviewed that didn’t export to Israel, this conclusion is supported when you consider that all other interviewed companies were thriving on the export to Israel.

\textsuperscript{87} The Trans-Judea Quarry carries this goal even in its company name: operated by the Elyakim Ben Ari company, the material from this quarry is used for building highway 35, the “Trans-Judea Highway.”
This is why one sees – when travelling from Jerusalem towards Tel Aviv or Jaffa for example (that is from the central hilly parts to the coastal region) – many portable crusher installations on construction sites of bridges, roads and tunnels: raw material is simply being excavated and used on the spot.

The same modus operandi is applied for the construction of settlements. The settlement of Har Gilo for example, between Bethlehem and Jerusalem is located on a place that originally was called ‘Slayeb’. This place was famous for its reddish / soft pink stones and houses built in with slayeb stones can be easily recognised because of this pink colour (including the hostel from where I conducted research for the most part). The Har Gilo settlement used the stone resources till the maximum. This means that whenever nowadays accidentally some of this high quality stone is dug up, it is sold for a very high price to Palestinian stone factories in order for them to process it into highly demanded building slabs.88

This diversification of stone operations between Israel and the territories is linked to the situation of occupation in various ways. First of all entrepreneurs find it too cumbersome to operate in Israel due to the high cost of the measures that need to be taken in order to abide to the various regulations that are strictly controlled.89 Due to weak regulatory status in the territories, operation costs are much lower there. Secondly, subcontracting90,91 makes it possible to access Palestinian stones without having to operate Israeli quarries in the territories. Thirdly the regime of divide and conquer ensures a crowded supply side with a grade of organization in the sector too low to uphold any meaningful bargaining power. Last but not least the division of stone operations between Israel and the territories adds to the degree of dependency of the Palestinian market to the Israeli one. With approximately 70% of exports going to Israel, alternative forms of production and consumption are being suppressed92 – and not trading with Israel restricts economic surviving rates substantively (as the example of Murra above seeks to explain). Companies like Murra’s, who did not keep up with adjusting to new policies (permits, regulations) and trade environment (finding entries to the Israeli market, establishing the required contacts to enter the market) are dispossessed of most of their development possibilities (since those can only be found in trade with Israel).

About this “labour-division” in stone and marble operations between Israel and Palestine some93 voice the opinion that this constitutes an aspect of common accumulation. Accumulation then is perceived to be situated both in the Israeli and Palestinian economy.

88 Conversations with the hostel owners, with stone factory owners in Hebron and Behtlehem district during April and May 2015..
89 Interview with the director of foreign trade & international relations of the Israeli Manufacturer’s Association; Marble and Stone Centre (PPU).
90 Subcontracting happens between Palestinian companies and Israeli exporters, manufacturers, producers and contractors (as explained to me in an interview with the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industries on May 4, 2015).
91 “When Israeli businessmen realized how profitable it was to invest in certain sectors of the occupied territories’ economy they teamed up with Palestinians. This led to the evolution of a subcontracted Palestinian business class, which dominated and even replaced the weak nationalist bourgeoisie that had been privileged under Jordanian rule.[...] Accordingly, the natural equation of labour to capital found in most societies was deformed in the occupied territories, since both working class and the capitalist sectors became integrated, separately, in the Israeli centre”. - Samara, 119
92 Harvey (2007, 35) uses these words to explain ‘dispossession’.
93 Interview with the Manufacturer’s Association of Israel, Tel Aviv – May 10, 2015.
Since the stone industry would serve common interests of Israel and Palestine there is said to be mutual benefit, cooperation and exchange.\textsuperscript{94, 95} It is this “interdependence and exchangeability” approach on which Flapan (1979) supported his dismissal of the argument that European settler capitalism in Palestine was colonial or exploitative in nature. And it is this approach as well that supports the idea of neoliberal peace, agreed upon in the Oslo Accords and the Paris Protocol, understanding economic cooperation as the catalyst to political regulation of the “interim administration of the territories” (the occupation).\textsuperscript{96}

The inducement of Israel as the most attractive export destination, increasing costs of transaction (costs that are lowered when trading with Israeli contacts), the divide and conquer strategy that accumulates control at the side of the occupying force, all these above mentioned aspects of accumulation and dispossession have one treat in common. It seems that \textit{momentary} accumulation is followed by \textit{long term} dispossession of the chance at creating a political solution for the “temporary administration of the territories”.\textsuperscript{97}

This iron casted relation of dependence leaves the sector with no other option than to adhere to the “business as usual” approach and to attempt at gaining as much as possible temporary accumulations (at least on Palestinian side). In this situation of uneven holding power (Leech, 2012) there in fact cannot be made any true reference to something called “interdependence and exchangeability”, since there is simply no alternative to it.\textsuperscript{98, 99}

However tangible this momentary accumulation within the stone and marble sector is for some (Israeli constructors, producers, manufacturers, exporters, and Palestinian quarry- and factory-owners who export to Israel\textsuperscript{100}), when linked to the recognition that the occupation has far outstretched its “temporary” character, and the awareness that the “business as usual approach” normalizes the occupation to the point where this abnormal situation becomes the only (perceived) viable economic strategy, this neoliberal accumulation itself is revealed as an aspect of \textit{long term} dispossession.

\textsuperscript{94} Manufacturer’s Association of Israel.
\textsuperscript{95} See on the “interdependence and exchangeability” approach: Abdo (1992), 53-55.
\textsuperscript{96} And although it might be clear that I am not in support of the idea that the economy is the first step to concluding a political agreement on ending the occupation, when Egger (52) explains that improved economic conditions are of importance to create an environment to peace negotiations – this rings true to me in some degree.
\textsuperscript{97} The prevalence of long term dispossession over temporary accumulation is captioned by Khalidi & Samour (2011, 17) as follows: “Soft physical borders cannot protect Palestinian national security, and soft economic borders can only perpetuate Palestinian dependence on Israel and allow personal prosperity for some but communal impoverishment for all.”
\textsuperscript{98} “The Palestinians, as the weak party, need more protectionism and economic delinking from the Israeli economy. Although globalization threatens to subsume national-level processes and increase dependency, poverty, and social tension in Third World countries in general, it is even more dangerous for the Palestinian economy, already captive to the Israeli economy.” – Samara 2000, 128.
\textsuperscript{99} Some (like Khalidi & Samour 2011, 19) go one step further and distinguish between (1) local active consent (“direct collaboration”), (2) persuasion and (3) force regarding the support for the establishment of neoliberal hegemony. Personally, however, I am very careful when it comes to the use of terms like collaboration or active consent – precisely because of the lack of any choice on whether or not to “support” normalization. This is why “normalization” here is not used in a normative way, but only in a descriptive manner.
\textsuperscript{100} The villages of Bani Nayim, Sioukh and Beit Fajjar in particular are provided with an income due to the industry.
By extending the status quo, this accumulation appeases the initial promise of political regulation of the “temporary” administration of the territories – hereby dispossessing an entire nation of its legally agreed upon steps towards national independence.101, 102

Khalidi & Samour (2011, 12) express the hollowness of the 1994 power transfer to the PA: “the burdens, obligations and financing of the occupation seem to simply be transferred to local shoulders.” Bahour (2015)103 explained how in the given context it are the Palestinian entrepreneurs from whom is expected that they are more than only entrepreneurs: since they do accumulate wealth (normalization or not) and no governmental structure can provide redistribution of wealth (the governmental level might not even be the appropriate instrument for it – taking into account the Israeli tax-withholdings), Palestinian entrepreneurs almost have to be super-natural or at least exceeding the normal, rational behaviour of business actors.104

Apart from the high degree of dependency, the induced costs of transport are exorbitantly high. Due to separate roads for Palestinian (green number plates) and Israeli traffic (yellow number plates), stone products need to be down loaded and up loaded again (the so called “back to back system”) in different trucks (a costly operation since those trucks are rented), only certain routes can be used, opening hours of checkpoints are limited.105 It’s noteworthy, too, that diesel is only available at consumer rather than industrial cost. 106 This makes every operation where fuel is involved very costly.

Compensation of accumulations through dispossessions can as well be exemplified in the indirect transfer of technology from Israel to Palestine that initially took place. When in the beginning of the 1970ies Israel started opening up trade with the Palestinian stone industry, technologies and methods were introduced into the territories in order to deliver products that suited the needs of the Israeli market. Nowadays, however, the modernization of technology is hampered by the relation between Israel and the territories.

101 A culmination of normalization can be seen in the cooperation that takes place between Palestinian quarry owners and illegal settlements in area C, in order to facilitate the transfer of stone and marble into Israel: no long queuing times, transaction costs are being lowered. – source: interview with the Manufacturer’s Association of Israel.

102 An interesting and utterly relevant side-note in this exists about the nature of the Paris Protocol, which is – under further notice – still the basic legal instrument on which economic relations between Israel and the territories are based.102 The roots of current accumulation by normalization might be found in this instrument itself, as Samara (2000) points out

103 Bahour is a Palestinian-American businessman and entrepreneur, who became involved in developing the economy of the future Palestinian state (http://www.aim.ps) - Oral presentation on April 12th, 2015 in Ramallah, on the topic of the importance of economic development and resistance.

104 Mohammad Mustafa, chairman and CEO of the Palestine Investment Fund (www.pif.ps) and economic advisor to PA president Mahmud Abbas, expressively states that there is awareness about the fact that the nature of the problematic “temporary administration of the territories” is not economic, and thus the solution will not be found in an economic “peace program”, in so called “interdependency and exchangeability”.

“Anyone serious about a better economy must first treat the political issues, starting from their very roots.

105 Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry: “Our trucks stopped to enter to Israel. We began to work on the basis of back to back. But the amount of our trade with Israel increased. From the Bethlehem area we are sending 120 to 150 trucks per day. Part is crossing from the tunnel, another part from Jaba’a, near Achzlon. The trucks are allowed to cross there from 11 to 17 o’clock daily. They are stopping them without security checking in fact but they have to show the bills and these things.”

106 As one crusher owner in the Hebron district explained: “the price for diesel used to be 1 shekel for 1 liter, now it is 1 liter for 6 shekel”. He pays 5000 shekel everyday just for keeping his crushers running, and that amount together with other costs to 200.000 shekel every month. (one shekel = 4,3 euro)
Only one big stone company is allowed to import modern technologies and equipment – while the rest of the sector is left with outdated methods and creativity. The denial of the import permit for a geological survey system for example, contains a twofold dispossession: 1) waste, time and money increases while inquiring the spot to start a new quarry, 2) investors are scared away when they hear that no such system is applied in prospecting new spots of investments. The restrictions on equipment have the effect that in the village of Sioukh pieces of stone are being disposed of in empty quarries (to be picked up by crushers to process into aggregates), while in Qatar for example the same size of “by product” are not thrown away but processed into finer high value stone products. The inability to use (due to lack of import possibilities) finer sawing and cutting machinery thus deprives the sector in Sioukh of one further step in manufacturing stones.

The same combination of initial accumulation followed by dispossession is found in market access. Initially Palestinian stone products could technically only reach European or other international destinations via Israeli exporters (due to contacts and standards). Export through Israel thus constituted an aspect of accumulation both for Palestinian producers (who otherwise would simply lack any access to those markets) and for Israeli exporters (due to the margin of profit). Nowadays Palestinian access to international markets is possible but conditional and very costly (high prices of transport, time and money consuming), which has the effect that politically now Palestinian stone products reach the international markets only through Israeli export. The Palestinian producer gets about 10% profits (in contrast to the late 1970ies, early 1990ies now Palestinian producers are able to establish international contacts) while the Israeli exporter gets a margin of profits of 100%. Reference has been made to Israeli exporters labelling Palestinian products as “Israeli stones”, but no proof of this practice has been found during the research.

The strategy of searching and finding Palestinian commitment to normalization is supported by the fact that most Palestinian business is running on economic “survival” or “coping” mode, with the crisis that followed the second Intifada (2001) freshly in mind. The configuration of the sector as consisting family businesses also helps in preventing / appeasing any popular resistance from inhabitants living close to industry sites – as nobody wants to file complaints against friends or family members.

The only sub-sector where there competition between Israeli and Palestinian companies exists is the quarrying for aggregates. Were it not for the inaccessibility of area C for Palestinian crushers, the dual use list that prohibits certain machineries and products, the transport costs and the consequently altered competition between the two, this might have actually been the scene for non-occupation economics.

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107 Interview with factory owners in Beit Jala on May 3, 2015.
108 Interview with the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry, May 4, 2015.
109 Several contacts referred to the fact that recovery is not yet fully obtained since that crisis following 2001.
110 Interview with the municipality of Bani Nayim on May 5, 2015.
The initially bright and shiny “accumulation” is overshadowed by aspects of dispossession that form a coherent system of enhancing normalization of the occupation. The argument that Israeli needs do increase the Palestinian production of stone and marble products because of increased demand thus pales when taking into account the coherence of dispossessions – the inaccessibility of area C being one of the most decisive factors (covered below in more detail). One almost starts to think that if it were not for the occupation, the Palestinian stone and marble sector would be exporting its main share of goods not to Israel but to other markets.

Taking into account the coherence between disposessions but also between both accumulations and disposessions, makes us beg the question whether dynamics of accumulation by dispossession within the Palestinian marble and stone industry can be extrapolated to the scale of political economy. Will the current accumulations be followed by dispossession which will be contingent upon a political ending of the “temporary” occupation? Should we then speak of (long term) dispossession by (momentary) accumulation? I will return to this in more detail below when exploring the notion of “accumulation by normalization”.

It is not surprising that apart from policies that are aimed at the sector specifically, other policies indirectly do have an impact on the Palestinian marble and stone industry. Since 2006 Israel regularly withholds tax money it collects instead of the PA (tariffs on foreign imports and value added taxes). Tax money withholdings are applied as means of pressure every time the PA makes a move that does not please Israel, for example the attempt to become a full member of the UN back in 2011. Taxes had been frozen lately from December to April 2015, and apart from the questionable character of this practice in the light of international law and even in the light of the Paris Protocol (that prescribes transparent taxing) – various stakeholders have mentioned the negative impact on the industry of the 60% salary on which government employees were put.

Since 2009 a start has been made in organizing the sector through a cooperation between the Ministry of National Economy (the public sector), the Palestine Polytechnic University (the academic sector) and the Union of Stone and Marble (the private sector) which culminated in the creation of the Marble and Stone Centre (headquarters located in Hebron, at the premises of the University). From personal conversations and visits it is my impression that this initiative has an important role to play in the field of industry-innovation (with various projects on creating new niche-industries with the by-products of the current industry), efficiency-building and environmental care.

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111 The disposessions at least compensate for the accumulations, in that they have the effect of extending the status quo of occupation.
112 Karim 2010, 42.
113 Timesofisrael.com, April 20, 2015.
114 The centre works three-fold: it offers an academic diploma after a two-year curriculum of study in management and technology in stone and marble; it runs a testing lab to test and certify the quality of stones; and it arranges training workshops and courses. It is funded by UNIDO.
The degree in which all valuable efforts of the centre will be effective at some point however, is strongly dependent on the occupying power (the permit for import of the planned geological survey system for example) and on investments (production of plastic pipes and construction slabs on the base of stone slurry achieved successfully the end of scientific testing procedures – now the waiting is for investors who can catalyse the starting up of a niche industry).

Note how organization on the side of the workers is missing. When asking about workers unions, most respondents avoided the answer. One person admitted – in a private conversation – that no worker in this one particular company adhered to any workers union, adding that workers are not aware of any worker’s organization nor are they aware of their own rights.¹¹⁷

**Divide and conquer**

As mentioned earlier, the inaccessibility of area C (the largest part of the West Bank) constitutes a major restriction on the development of the industry.

The division not only determines where and how stone quarries can be operated, but as well limits the space where the amounts of waste from the stone cutting plants can be discharged of.¹¹⁸ This creates extra pressure when taking into consideration that population growth increases, and with that housing needs do expand. Quarries that were established 30 years ago in industrial zones now find themselves surrounded closely by houses and schools.¹¹⁹ Dispossession takes the form of companies not able to continue their operations after they emptied their quarries¹²⁰. Two companies in Hebron and Bethlehem district found a solution in opening quarries in respectively Jordan and Oman – but this option is only open for the big players. The other (indirect) dispossession consists of restrictions on living infrastructure. The Shuhada School in Bani Nayim for example has to refrain from building a second floor since the heavy transports that pass by cause too much vibrations of the soil for the building to be stable enough to contain more than one floor.¹²¹

A side-note on this aspect is that dispossession through policies aimed at the stone and marble industry do trickle down to the whole community. Next to indirect dispossession linked to the stone industry, there are indirect accumulations connected to it as well. Financial institutions are for example indirectly benefitting from the setting in which the Palestinian marble and stone industry is operating. As many factory and quarry owners get paid in cheques but are in need of cash (for the electricity and the labour wages), they seek solutions for their lack of liquidities in loans from the banks, that on their turn make profits on the backs of these entrepreneurs.

It is undeniable that with the administrative division into areas COGAT – and thus by extension the occupying power – is holding the Palestinian economy in a stranglehold. Laswell’s (1958) definition of politics as the determinant for “who gets what, when and where” seems to fit smoothly.

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¹¹⁷ “When the boss fired them, the workers here they don’t know right.”
¹¹⁸ Interview with the PPU – MSC on April 20, 2015.
¹¹⁹ Marble and Stone Centre (PPU).
¹²⁰ In Sioukh account was taken of empty quarries that were about to expanded deeper in the ground in search for new layers of stone.
¹²¹ Interview with Prof. Dr. Al-Joulani and the director of the Shuhada school.
It is the Israeli political power that accumulates control over the Palestinian stone and marble sector: the sector can be both strong and vulnerable at its wish and thus is made a perfect extension of the Israeli market. For the Palestinian quarry and factory owners this means loss of control – not to market dynamics or to the PA – but to Israeli policies. This induces inequality between established enterprises in area C and newcomers who are unable to get permits, as well as unequal development possibilities between enterprises in area C and the ones in area B who reach enhancement of technology and expansion operations (as opposed to their colleagues in area C). Of course there is the one exception, meaning that one player with head and shoulders rises above the playing field. However, as an instructive conversation with a crusher-owner in Ramallah clarified, even this “king” is spending energy, time and money on dealing with obstacles that entrepreneurs who operate without the context of occupation do not have to look into.

The division also increases competition between the industry and agriculture. Area C being inaccessible, expansion of the industry is mainly sought in area B (area A being too densely populated). When asking about the olive yards in Sioukh, one stone quarry and factory owner explained to me that in a few years no olive yards will be found here anymore – all will have ceded for the industry. Impact also comes with the dust that is released from the unpaved roads in the quarry zones, noted in Bethlehem (town and industrial zone), Bani Nayim, Sioukh and Beit Fajjar.

“This water travels into Israel”

The factories make intensive use of water in the process of cutting big stones into stone slabs and stone slabs into desired smaller pieces (cooling down sawing machinery, or as high pressure precision tool). The water is being recycled through pools, silos or filter presses – and of these three pools and silos are the most common.

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122 “A principal aim of the Israeli occupation was and continues to be to “adjust” the economy of the territories to fit in with the interests, needs and structure of its own economy.” – Samara 2000, 118.
123 Strong on conditions of Israeli policies determining the configuration of the playing field: one or two big players and hundreds of smaller entities that compete against each other. Weak when a vulnerable point is needed to implement measures against Palestinian upheavals of protest, like back in 2001 with the second Intifada for example.
124 Interview with a member of the Ministry of National Economy on April 20, 2015.
125 Interview with crusher owner in Ramallah – April 28, 2015.
126 An interview with the Ministry of National Economy revealed: as 95% of Palestinian land is agricultural land, land first has to be converted from agricultural to industrial area. Whenever you find good stone in area B, you need to send an application to the ministry of environment, one to that of agriculture and one to that of economy. Also the municipality needs to give its approval. When the area is suitable for agriculture, then no approval will be granted. Applications for lands next to existing quarries or crushers do have more chance on a successful application. In theory is one olive tree is found on the spot of land, this means that no new quarry can be opened. In reality however a balancing exercise is pursued: the profit from the olive tree is balanced against the future profit of a new quarry. An interview with ARUJ clarified that most quarries only turn to the ministry of economy for a permit, and when obtained operations are started – without any approval from environmental point of view.
127 Dust on olive trees, dust in the air, dust on the windows of houses, dust in houses.
128 Some contacts suggested to pave the roads and this being a joint responsibility of the community and the quarry owners – while quarry owners explained the practical impossibility of this due to the need of changing the roads according to quarry needs.
129 Interview with the Union for Stone and Marble – Bethlehem, April 20, 2015.
The filter press does separate water from waste by compressing the solid waste into dry cakes. But the installations are needy in costly electricity.\textsuperscript{130, 131} The use of water is linked to the occupation in the sense that the aquifer in the West Bank is shared by both Israeli and Palestinian use, with the Israel using more than 93% of the available water.\textsuperscript{132}

However innovative the filter press (with 80\% recycling of used water) might be, what is done with the dry waste afterwards does annihilate the effect. Apart from that environmental concerns are not on the priority list of most of the business people I spoke with.\textsuperscript{133} A double dispossession takes place at the water recycling aspect in the Hebron district.\textsuperscript{134} First of all the factories are producing lots of polluted waste water (water with sludge). This is discharged directly into the sewage system or into a river without treatment\textsuperscript{135}, since there is no waste water treatment plant in Hebron. Then this polluted water travels into Israel, for which from the Palestinian factory-owners compensation is sought. This is translated in refraining the transfer of tax money that the occupant-tax collector collected on Palestinian VAT. On the other hand, however, no permission for building the waste water treatment plant (which should be based in area C) is issued – unless this plant would be also treating the waste water of the illegal Israeli settlements in area C.

Another aspect of accumulation on the back of the need for water consists of the Palestinian industry being compelled to buy water privately instead of using the common aquifer underneath the West Bank.\textsuperscript{136}

“\textit{And then the filter press pressed him}”\textsuperscript{137}

When it comes to health, a look into the archive of Al-Ahli hospital in Hebron together with a very instructive conversation with some of the staff revealed that there are mainly two types of accidents taking place in the stone and marble industry.\textsuperscript{138} Firstly there are the cutters who endure upper injuries: they injure hands, fingers and arms and many workers have their fingers completely severed. Secondly there are the (generally lethal) cases of falling down from high objects. The real problem, however, are the professional diseases (lung fibrosis, chest diseases, asbestosis).

\textsuperscript{130} Also, from environmental point of view this extra step in efficient recycling is being annihilated when dumping the dry cakes in open areas where they are left to sink in the ground with the rain or become dust and travel by the wind – interview with Professor Nabil Al-Joulani.

\textsuperscript{131} Labour accidents do happen when cleaning the filter press or falling into recycling pools – as I was able to note from looking into the archive of the Al Ahli hospital in Hebron on April 26, 2015.

\textsuperscript{132} Interview with the Palestinian Museum of Natural History – Bethlehem, April 23, 2015.

\textsuperscript{133} Explanations for the non-enforcement of environmental regulations (Law No. 7 for the year 1999 concerning the environment) are twofold: first of all an explanation is sought in “mentality” (Union of Stone and Marble, Marble and Stone Centre, Manufacturer’s Association of Israel) and secondly there simply is a lack of money to be able to obey the rules. Evidence of this is the fact that in the rare occasions where waste water was filtered, this was done through funding by a GEF Small Grants Program (source: interview with ARIJ) and the two rehabilitated quarries were only made possible by funding through WorldVision and USAID (Bani Nayim).

\textsuperscript{134} Interview with the Ministry of National Economy in Bethlehem on April 20, 2015.

\textsuperscript{135} “We have to survive. If we have to pollute the environment to survive, then we are obliged to do so.” – Ministry of National Economy, April 20, 2015.

\textsuperscript{136} For concrete number on water source and use: see the town profile information on Sioukh, Beit Fajjar and Bani Nayim in the attachments.

\textsuperscript{137} Interview with hospital staff in Al-Ahli hospital – Hebron, April 26, 2015.

\textsuperscript{138} A research opportunity created by the support of Professor Nabil Al-Joulani.
The first two types of accidents mentioned here are already hard to count – since no real number of accidents will ever be obtained due to patients covering up the real cause of accidents when they do not have coverage of insurance – but the second type is even more obscure. Professional diseases may take years to become fully diagnosed. This is evidence of the potentially harmful work conditions involved in this industry.

Impact on the health on both workers and people living nearby, is the dust. The factor in the industry that produces the highest amount of dust, are the roads leading to and from stone quarries, and the heavy transports on it.\(^{139}\)

Relating this to the occupation directly is not easy. Indirectly the health impact has a role to play in the fact that in Israel itself regulations regarding health and environment are strictly controlled, making it attractive for Israeli companies to shut most of their businesses there and instead operate through joint ventures or subcontracting with Palestinian entrepreneurs.

**Israel as the cheapest, nearest and most attractive export destination**

Steady supply to Israel is guaranteed through joint ventures and partnerships. One such an equal partnership is the Yatir Quarry which is owned by the Kfar Giladi Quarries (owned by Kibbutz Kfar Giladi) and Lime and Stone Production (on its turn owned by Readymix Israel – a subsidiary of Cemex).\(^ {140}\)

Trade possibilities are proudly presented by Palestinian entrepreneurs as covering more than 50 export destinations worldwide.\(^ {141}\) The fact is however, that 70% of export continues to go to the Israeli market.\(^ {142}\) As explained earlier: various coherent policies have the effect that the Israeli market is the cheapest, the nearest, the most attractive. This is achieved for a big part by increasing all transaction costs\(^ {143}\) to destinations other than Israel. One effect encountered in the field of Israel being the main export destination, is the fact that the majority of Palestinian business people in the sector do not speak English, but are fluent in Hebrew.

The induced preference of the Israeli market facilitates the exploitation of unequal bargaining power. Most agreements between Palestinian suppliers and Israeli colleagues do only exist orally, without any confirmation on paper. The Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industries\(^ {144}\) estimates that about 300 million shekel worth of cheques have not been paid to the producers.\(^ {145}\)

\(^ {139}\) MSC – PPU.
\(^ {140}\) All nine Israeli quarries in area C (quarrying for crushing material, as explained above) are part of complex constructions with partnerships and subsidiaries, links to kibbutz and settlements. More information on the Yatir Quarry, Meitarim Quarry, Beit Haggai / Lahav Quarry, Adora / Trans-Judea Quarry, Salit Haadumim Quarrying and Factory for Stone Works, Nahal Raba Quarry, Natuf Quarry, Beit Illit Quarry and Kochav Hashahar Quarry can be found on [www.whoprofits.org](http://www.whoprofits.org).
\(^ {141}\) Brochure of the Union of Stone and Marble, 2015.
\(^ {143}\) Egger 2005, 43.
\(^ {144}\) Information from an interview on May 4, 2015.
\(^ {145}\) A cheque is written and said to be paid in 5, 6 months up to one year. When time for paying arrives, the Israeli colleague appears to be bankrupted. No official records have been written down about the sum of money, so it is very unlikely for the producer to ever see those shekels.
Keeping the concepts, reversing the theory? “Dispossession by Accumulation” and “Accumulation by Normalization”

In the course of the above I repeatedly referred to the notion of “accumulation by normalization”, words that I first encountered when discussing some theoretical aspects with Professor Christopher Parker. Before embarking on the exploration and explanation of this notion, there is the need for clarification of the pivotal point of this thesis: the specific application of Harvey’s theory on the Palestinian stone and marble sector.

Up until this point I have highlighted the different aspects of accumulations and dispossession linked to the Palestinian stone and marble sector. The political economy within a situation of occupation demands critical thought regarding the relation between the accumulations and dispossession. Earlier studies inspired by Harvey’s theory delineate “accumulation” as the constant determinant. Dispossessions have been framed as leading to accumulation. Semantically this is very straightforward “Accumulation by Dispossession”: a link of causality is present.

When interpreting the relation between dispossession and accumulation in the stone and marble sector, I come to the conclusion that here “Dispossession” – and not “Accumulation” – constitutes the constant determinant. The various accumulations as summed up before (directly or overshadowing previous aspects of dispossession) are contributions to the continuation of the status quo of the “temporary” administration of the territories, and thus to the dispossession of Palestinian holding power in the negotiations of a political regulation for this situation. It is not within the reach of this thesis to take upon the task of nuancing the willing or forced character of this contribution, but it is clear that the specific relation between Israel and the territories require that we speak of “Dispossession by Accumulation”. Dispossession clearly takes place in the long term, by normalizing the occupation and minimizing chances of a successful political position involving negotiations on the ending the “temporary” administration. The temporary accumulations (that are undeniably real and on which I have stumbled upon continuously in the field) are leading up to the general dispossession.

146 Sometimes referring to them simply as “accumulations” and “dispossessions”.
148 The Nassar-exception, profit of Israeli exporters, indirect transfer of technology, increasing demand of stone products, access to international markets, banking profits, personal and regional better living standards, common interests and exchange.
Harvey’s theory of accumulation by dispossession thus is successfully applied to the Palestinian stone and marble industry and shines a light on the fragile balance that exists between developing the industry and normalizing the occupation. The instructive value of this approach however, depends on the critical appreciation of the relation between the detected aspects of accumulation and dispossession as well as the connection to the broader political economy that is imbedded in the context of “temporary” administration (occupation). This is why it is more rational (and necessary, even when one just takes into account semantics) to speak of “Dispossession by Accumulation” instead of Harvey’s original order of words.

This begs the very important question whether this specific and reversed application of Harvey’s theory can still be perceived as “Harvey’s”, and whether such a modified version of the theory of accumulation by dispossession has lost its value due to over-modification or over-generalization. Both parts of the question are answered when taking into account the fact that modification and specification of Harvey’s theory does at no point alter Harvey’s initial aim, namely the “conceptualization of uneven development”. Although opinions may differ on this point, it is my belief that both methodologically and ideologically the conceptualization of the development in the stone and marble industry and the connection to the normalization of occupation are too closely linked to Harvey’s original ABD-approach for us to speak of a mere derivative theory.

“Accumulation by normalization” then, is the notion I use when keeping Harvey’s initial focal point: accumulation as the constant determinant. This is the approach that offers insight into the coherence between development of the industry and normalization – on the more individual scale.\(^{150}\) It is by accepting / agreeing to / contributing to the extension of the status quo of occupation, that temporary accumulations are being obtained.

Taking all conceptual and field work aspects into account, I conclude that Harvey’s theory of accumulation by dispossession can be successfully applied on the Palestinian stone and marble industry. ABD is helpful in discerning the normalization of occupation that is playing on the general political economic level\(^ {151}\) and on individual profit-seeking (survival-seeking or “coping”? ) behaviour. This is done by detecting the various aspects of accumulation and dispossession and by critically deriving their relation to each other. This results in Harvey’s original theory of “Accumulation by Dispossession” being transposed into 1) “Dispossession by Accumulation” and 2) “Accumulation by Normalization”.

\(^{150}\) The accumulations undergone by Palestinian business people and their Israeli counterparts, by communities and individual workers.

\(^{151}\) Extension of the status quo of occupation by dispossession of Palestinian holding power in negotiations about a political agreement on ending the occupation.
CONCLUDING REMARKS: “It is our lifestyle to struggle. We struggle when we produce, we struggle when we export. We struggle.”

By discerning the different aspects of accumulation and dispossession within the stone and marble industry in the West Bank, we are urged to ask at least one urgent question. Is it “despite” or “thanks to” the peace process that those parts of the occupied territories that have come under the jurisdiction of the PA have remained (Samara 2000, 117) dominated by Israeli economic policies?

The answer to this question is multi-faceted and discerning present and past accumulations and dispossession as well as the coherence between these increases the chance on reaching a balanced and inclusive answer. This research so far reaches the conclusion that the accumulations for the Israeli construction market as well as for its exporters, together with the accumulations for Palestinian stone quarry, factory and crusher owners are obtained by normalization of the occupation – and are as well prolonging this “temporary administration of the territories”. Factors of accumulation and dispossession in the stone and marble sector in the West Bank thus on a more general political economic scale do attribute to the dispossession of Palestinian holding power (Leech 2012, 18) in the political regulation of the relation of occupation.

To maximize the instructive value of the aspects of accumulation and dispossession that are discerned in the stone and marble sector by the ABD-approach, I suggest the use of “dispossession by accumulation” (general) and “accumulation by normalization” (individual).

Due to the limited timeframe in which fieldwork took place, the barrier of language and the lack of coherent objective data, this research is very limited and the conclusion can only be preliminary.

Further research is strongly recommended, based on a longer field research period and a broader substantive base of objective and reliable data. This last aspect will be easier now than back in the days when collection of resources for this article took place – since various research institutes and initiatives simultaneously now investigate relevant topics in the Palestinian stone and marble sector; results of which are expect to be available for consultation in the near future.

In future research it would be preferential to explore the link between the Palestinian stone and marble industry and settler colonialism, to outline the connection with international donors, to obtain more Israeli resources, and to focus on the roots of normalization in the Paris Protocol.

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152 Interview with a stone factory owner in Hebron, on April 21, 2015.
153 When interviewing a co-workers of ARIJ (Applied Research Centre of Jerusalem) it was revealed that the Centre was on track of conducting inquiries in towns with major stone industry, in order to records issues connected to the work in the sector.
154 I got informed that the Belgian Union Movement ABVV is looking into possibilities to cooperate with a Palestinian grass roots organization that acts on the topic of social rights and illegal exploitation of stone and marble in the oPt. Cooperation would take place from 2017 on.
155 The fact that initial confirmations of planned interviews by e-mail were not followed by any real interviews with Israeli respondents, was explained to me by the director of foreign trade & international relations of the Israeli Manufacturer’s Association in that the topic is quite sensitive to speak about.
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Attachments

1. Map
2. The entities within the stone and marble sector

Quarry

Crusher

**Beit Fajjar** (data from the year 2010) is located in the Bethlehem Governorate, 10.3km (horizontal distance) south of Bethlehem City. The economic activities are constituted for 80% out of marble and stone industry, with a 60% rate of unemployment. The town is located for 85.7% in area B, and for 14.3% in area C.

Beit Fajjar is provided with water by the West Bank Water Department, through the public water network established in 1975, and about 98.5 percent of the housing units are connected to the water
network, 0.7 percent are dependent on rainwater harvesting cisterns, 0.5 percent are dependent on tanks, and 0.2 percent are dependent on other resources for water, while the source of water supply is unknown for the remaining units (0.1%) (PCBS, 2007). The quantity of water supplied to Beit Fajjar in 2009 was about 420,000 cubic meters/year, therefore the estimated rate of water supply per capita is about 106 liters/day (Beit Fajjar Municipality, 2010). Here it should be noted that many Beit Fajjar citizens do not in fact consume this amount of water due to water losses, which are about 30 percent. The losses happen at the main source, major transport lines, distribution network, and at the household level (Beit Fajjar Municipality, 2010), thus the actually rate of water consumption per capita in Beit Fajjar is 74 liters per day. This is a low rate compared with the minimum quantity proposed by the World Health Organization, which is 100 liters per capita per day. Also, located in Beit Fajjar are 1500 rainwater harvesting cisterns and a public water reservoir with a capacity of 500 cubic meters (Beit Fajjar Municipality, 2010).

Sioukh (data from 2009) is a town in Hebron Governorate located 6 km northeast of Hebron City in the southern part of the West Bank. 35% of its inhabitants find employment in Israel, 10% is employed in the agricultural sector and 20% works in the industry. Although the report says that Sioukh is considered to be an “agricultural town”, it is well-known for its high qualitative stones.

Almost 80% of the housing units in Sioukh have been connected to a water network since 1978. Currently, the Palestinian Water Authority is the main provider of water in the town. There is a water reservoir in Ash Shuyukh with a capacity of 500 m3 that is used in the summer season, in addition to cisterns, which are used as an alternative water resource, and a water spring that is used mainly for agricultural activities. Despite such water resources, Ash Shuyukh town water services suffer from many problems including the continuous water shortage especially in summertime, an old and rotting network, and the lack of enough water tanks owned by the municipality. The network was rehabilitated in 2008/2009; however, it needs extension to reach new neighbourhoods and the industrial and stonecutting areas.

Bani Nayim (data from 2009) is located in Hebron Governorate, seven km east of Hebron City in the southern part of the West Bank. In 2007 it had an industrial sector that attributed to 5% of the towns economic activities, and the trade and commercial sector made 50% out of it. The unemployment rate of 30% in 2007 is the effect of the Second Intifada restrictions.

In 1980, Bani Nayim connected to a water network and nearly 75% of housing units are currently connected to it. The water is provided by the Palestinian Water Authority, which purchases it from the Israeli Water Company (MEKROT). Alternative water sources include cisterns, tanks and four wells in the town, in addition to a water reservoir with a 500 cubic meter capacity. Bani Na’im town suffers from many water services issues including:

1. Water shortage during the summer;
2. No water accessibility in the higher altitudes in the town;
3. Insufficient water reservoir.
3. Scheme of industry dynamics

Quarries

Crushers  Transport  Israel (local market)

Factories

Transport  Local market (I Gaza)

Transport  Crushers

Export  Gulf Countries / Jordan

Israel  Western countries

5. Stone and Marble Centre

USM

Stone and Marble Center (PPU)  Government (Palestine, Israel)
6. Water recycling system

Silo