The Land of the Checkpoints

A study of the daily geographies of checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

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Introduction

Welcome to the Land of the Checkpoints

1.1: Introduction

> I'm on a go-along interview with 21-year-old Hajar, a Palestinian with an Israeli identity (ID) card. We drive through Beit Sfafa, a Palestinian neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. The section of Freeway 60 that is located next to Beit Sfafa, the freeway that leads from Beer Sheva to Nazareth, has been rebuilt. I heard there is no ramp available for Palestinians living in Beit Sfafa to enter the freeway. I ask Hajar about this. She assures me that this is not possible. We drive to where this entrance should be and are confronted with a big wall. Hajar is shocked. You can see the road that used to lead onto the freeway, the markings are still on the ground, but this wall blocks it now. So, the Palestinian residents of Beit Sfafa are effectively excluded from using the new freeway.
>
> (fieldnotes, 16 June 2016)

> The system [of closure and traffic restrictions] relied upon an extensive network of barriers that included permanent and partially manned checkpoints, roadblocks, metal gates, earth dykes, trenches, 'flying' or mobile checkpoints, all of which were operated according to a frequently changing assortment of bans and limitations. (…) The various barriers splintered the West Bank into a series of approximately 200 separate, sealed-off 'territorial cells' around Palestinian 'populations centres' (roughly corresponding to the boundaries of the Oslo era, Areas A and B) with traffic in between these cells channelled through military-controlled bottlenecks.
>
> (Eyal Weizman, 2007, p. 146)

The Occupied Palestinian Territories have been coined the “land of the checkpoints” by Palestinian Israeli Knesset member Azmi Bishara. Bishara described Israel as the “state of the checkpoints”, the Israelis as “the owners of the checkpoints” and the Palestinians as the “people of the land of the checkpoints” (Bishara, 2004, in Braverman, 2011, p. 264). Today there are about 100 Israeli checkpoints inside the West Bank and on the ‘border’ with Israel (B’Tselem, 2017a). In this thesis, I analyse how three of these checkpoints in the Bethlehem area produce, via the interplay between its managers, commuters and material devices, specific geographies based on the limitation and control of the movement of Palestinians. But, before zooming in on these checkpoints, I will introduce the broader context of the ‘land of the checkpoints’ and its architecture of occupation.

1.2: The architecture of occupation

1.2.1: ‘A land without a people for a people without a land’

Since the end of the 19th century, when large-scale Jewish immigration from Europe into Palestine began, there has been a continuous struggle between the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine over the land located between what is today Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, and the Mediterranean Sea. In 1917, Jewish people in Palestine represented less than 7 per cent of the total population. When the State of Israel was founded 30 years later, this percentage had grown to one-third of the population (Qumsiyeh, 2011, p. 50). The area, which previously had been under Ottoman rule for several centuries, fell under British rule in 1920 after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire and the installation of the British ‘Mandate for Palestine’ (Sharoni & Abu-Nimer, 2008). Already in 1917, before the British Empire had any jurisdiction over the area, the British government had signed the Balfour Declaration – in which Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour promised Lord Rothschild, a leader of the British Jewish community, to support the establishment of a ‘Jewish homeland’ in Palestine (Pappé, 2004).

In this same period, the influx of Jewish immigration into Palestine soared as a result of the rise of antisemitism in Europe. However, as explained by Simona Sharoni and Mohammed Abu-Nimer (2008), the famous Zionist slogan – 'A land without a people for a people without a land' – did not take into account that there was a Palestinian population that already had been fighting for independence for many years, first from the Ottoman rulers and later from the British. Bursts of violence between Palestinian, Jewish and British forces ensued, as well as large strikes by Palestinian labourers. As a response to the unrest, in 1936 the Peel Commission – officially titled the Palestinian Royal Commission – was formed to investigate the situation. This Commission recommended the partition of Palestine into two states, which led to the 1936-39 Arab Revolt and further unrest and violence (Qumsiyeh, 2011). In the aftermath of the Holocaust and the resistance by European countries and the US to take in large numbers of Jewish refugees, another surge of Jewish immigration to Palestine took place. In 1947, the United Nations (UN) proposed a new partition plan. This plan would grant the proposed Jewish state 57 per cent of the Palestinian territory, although the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine only made up 33 per cent of the population at the time and owned 6 per cent of the land. The partition was rejected by Palestinian leadership, but the UN General Assembly voted in favour of the plan on 29 November 1947 (Pappé, 2006). This sparked an unprecedented wave of violence, which escalated into the Arab-Israeli War following the withdrawal of British troops and the establishment of the State of Israel in May 1948. During this war – which is commemorated on 15 May in Palestine as the *Nakba*, the Catastrophe – 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes and 600 Palestinian villages destroyed. After this, 77 per cent of the area formerly recognised by the UN as Palestine fell under Israeli rule. The remaining areas – later known as the

Palestinian Territories – fell either under Egyptian rule (the Gaza Strip) or were annexed by Jordan (the West Bank) (Sharoni & Abu-Nimer, 2008).[1]

During the Six-Day War in 1967 between Israel and Egypt, Syria and Jordan, Israel occupied the Palestinian Territories - the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.[2] Since then, an intricate 'architecture of occupation' has been developing in which Palestinians living in the Palestinian territories have seen the area they identified as 'Palestine' or 'Palestinian' shrink continuously, and with it, their freedom of movement (Handel, 2009).[3] The two opening quotes illustrate some of contemporary materialisation and effects of this. This architecture of occupation, a term famously coined by Israeli architect Eyal Weizman (2007), has splintered the 'border' between Israel and the Palestinian territories into a multitude of ever-changing borders – both with regard to their location and their degree of porosity. The term 'border' should not be interpreted here as a separation between two sovereign states. In this thesis, I use the term 'border' to refer to the Green Line, or the 1949 Armistice border: the border recommended by the UN in 1947 between Israel and Palestine. This Line is often referred to as the 'Pre-'67 border' between Israel and the West Bank and still seen by many international bodies such as the UN, but also by heads of state such as former US president Barack Obama and

[1] For insightful in-depth analyses of the history of Israel/Palestine, see, amongst others, Edward Said (1979), Ilan Pappé (1999, 2004, 2006), Neve Gordon (2008), Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanafi (2009), and Mazin Qumsiyeh (2011).

[2] When Israel occupied the Palestinian Territories in 1967, it annexed East Jerusalem - even though it has been claimed by the Palestinian Authority as the capital city of a future Palestinian state. Due to its status as a municipality of Israel, East Jerusalem and its residents are facing a particular set of problems that are different from the rest of the West Bank. These include a lack of investment in public services by the Israeli state, an almost complete absence of building permits for Palestinian homes or areas designated for the development of Palestinian neighbourhoods, home demolitions, the specifically precarious status of its residents – who are not citizens of the state of Israel, but were given temporary residency – and the presence of large settlement blocs that are actively supported by the Israeli state in their development (see, amongst others, Baumann, 2016; Braverman, 2007; Yiftachel, 2016).

[3] In this thesis I focus on the West Bank, not on the Gaza Strip. Due to the differences in strategies employed by Israel in the Gaza Strip, the context for Palestinians living there is not comparable to the context of the Palestinians living in the West Bank. Hence, unless clearly signposted, the thesis only discusses the West Bank.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, as the most viable border when discussing a future Palestinian state next to Israel.[4] However, this line has not been accepted by the Israeli state as a definite border (Bier, 2017). Furthermore, as will become clear throughout this thesis, the Israeli architecture of occupation, as well as many of the practices of the Israeli army and Jewish settlers, make it increasingly difficult to identify the Green Line or any other 'border' between Israel and the West Bank (B'Tselem, 2017b).

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 (below) illustrate the complex spatial division of the West Bank. Figure 1.1 offers a map of the West Bank and Figure 1.2 zooms in on the Bethlehem area, the area in which the checkpoints that are the focus of this study are located. These maps have been produced by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OCHA OPT).[5] The Green Line is depicted in Figures 1.1 and 1.2 with the use of a green dotted line. I will refer more often to these maps in the upcoming pages, as they help to visualise the architecture of occupation discussed here.

---

[4] See, for instance, the report on the visit of the Delegation of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People to Brussels in March 2019, in which the delegation called for the establishment of a Palestinian state on the basis of the 1967 borders (United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, 2019), or (now former) US President Barack Obama's call in May 2011 for Israel to return to the pre-1967 borders (Cohen, 2011), and Palestinian President Abbas' expressed wish for a Palestinian state to be established within the pre-1967 borders on Israeli television in November 2012 (BBC News, 2012).

[5] Maps should never be seen as a neutral representation of 'facts on the ground' (Crampton, 2010). As such, the use of a map produced by UN OCHA OPT and not, for instance, one produced by the Israeli state, should be seen in line with the critical position that I take throughout this thesis towards the occupation. For a detailed discussion of the politics of maps in Israel/Palestine, see Jess Bier (2017).

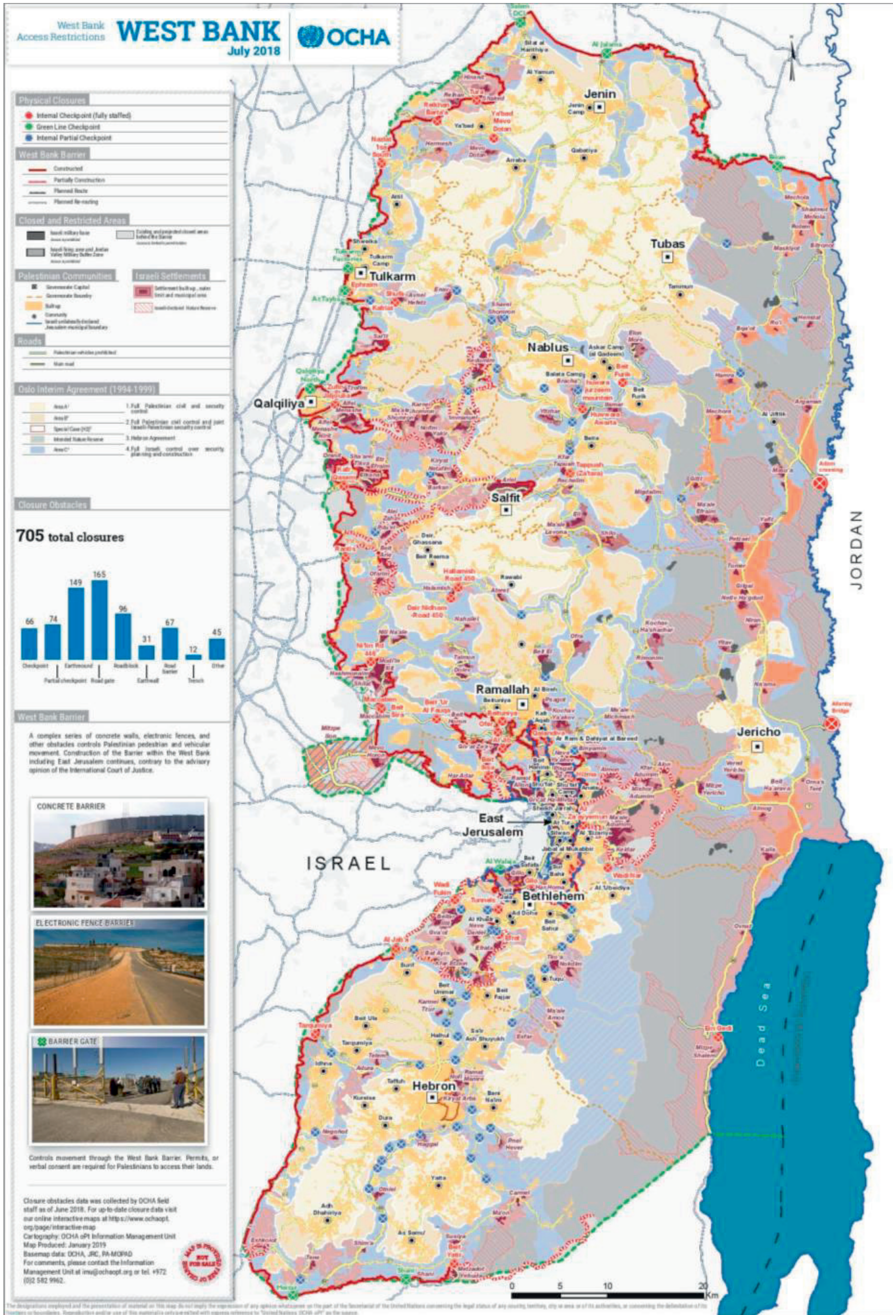

Figure 1.1: A map of the West Bank

(source: OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2019a).

Figure 1.2: A map of the Bethlehem area

(source: OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2019b).

1.2.2: Areas A, B and C

The first reason it has become difficult to identify a clear border between Israel and the West Bank, or one continuous territory that can be called 'Palestine' inside the West Bank, is the separation of the West Bank into three administrative areas following the 1995 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II): Area A, Area B and Area C.[6] In Area A, corresponding to 18 per cent of the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority has full control over civil affairs and the responsibility for maintaining law and order (Gordon, 2009). In Area B, 22 per cent of the West Bank, the Palestinian Authority has control over civil affairs – such as planning and construction – while Israel has the responsibility for police enforcement. This means that Palestinians living in these areas fall under Israeli law enforcement. In Area C, 60 per cent of the West Bank, Israel has full control over police enforcement and public order, as well as civil issues related to planning and construction legislation (B'tselem, 2017b). As such, 82 per cent of the West Bank is under partial or full Israeli control. Areas A, B and C can be seen in Figures 1.1 and 1.2. The light-brown areas on the maps have been designated as Area A, the darker-brown areas as Area B and the rest of the West Bank is Area C. As can be seen on the maps, all light- and darker-brown areas are surrounded by Area C. As such, it has become impossible to travel from the north of the West Bank to the south without exiting Area A and entering Area C several times.

1.2.3: Jewish settlements and their bypass roads

One of the most explicit impacts of the full Israeli control over Area C is the presence of the approximately 600,000 Jewish settlers living in these areas (Allegra, Handel, & Maggor, 2017).[7] As Marco Allegra, Ariel Handel and Erez Maggor explained (2017), the 200 Israeli settlements in the West Bank are the most significant 'fact on the ground' established by the Israeli state in the Palestinian

[6] The Gaza Strip was not divided into separate administrative zones.

[7] Whose presence inside the West Bank is considered illegal according to the Fourth Geneva Convention (refworld.org)

Territories (p. 2). B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, states:

> The settlements are the single most important factor shaping life in the West Bank. Their destructive impact on the human rights of Palestinians extends far beyond the hundreds of thousands of dunams [1 dunam = 1,000 sq. meters], including farm land and grazing areas, that Israel appropriated from Palestinians in order to build them.
>
> (B'Tselem, 2017c)

The built-up areas of the settlements cover almost 10 per cent of the West Bank. The regional councils of the settlements – the local Israeli administrative entities – have control over another 30 per cent of largely unused land that surrounds these built-up areas. This means that 40 per cent of the West Bank is under the control of the regional Israeli councils (B'Tselem, 2017c). The locations of these settlements can be seen in Figure 1.1 and, for a more detailed view of the Bethlehem area, in Figure 1.2. Most of the settlements are relatively small: almost 50 per cent is inhabited by less than 500 people, almost 40 per cent has 500 to 5000 inhabitants, and only 12 per cent has more than 5000 inhabitants (PeaceNow, 2019). The large majority of the Jewish settlements in the West Bank is surrounded by barriers, such as smaller walls, fences or dirt mounds. Similar barriers are regularly erected by the Israeli military around the Palestinian towns close to the settlements. The settlements often have an armed guard controlling the entrance. Palestinians living in the West Bank are not allowed to enter settlements without explicit permission from the Israeli state.

Due to the small size of the settlements, most of the inhabitants have to leave their settlement to go to work or school, do their shopping, and visit their families and friends in Israel or in other settlements. Hence, besides the barriers surrounding the settlements and neighbouring Palestinian towns, hundreds of kilometres of 'bypass roads' between the settlements and to Israel have been established over

the years to allow passage for the Jewish settlers. These bypass roads have been constructed specifically to be used by Jewish settlers and their construction has established a single and continuous – separate – Israeli space[8]. Although Palestinians are only explicitly excluded from using a few of these roads, the way in which they are constructed and securitised often makes it particularly difficult for Palestinians to use them. The new section of Freeway 60 discussed in the fieldnotes excerpt opening this chapter illustrates this. As such, a parallel road system has been created.

Achille Mbembe (2003) identified this creation of a parallel infrastructure as one of the most important strategies in the Israeli colonial occupation of the Palestinian territories, which is characterised by "a network of fast bypass roads, bridges, and tunnels that weave over and under one another (…)" (p. 28). Roads are seemingly benign structures, 'natural' connections between one place and another. However, as Omar Jabary Salamanca (2015) explained, this infrastructure is only meant to be convenient for one part of the population, namely the Jewish settlers. For the Palestinian population of the West Bank, this parallel infrastructure brings about destruction of their routes, where "state-led infrastructure destruction is an attempt at forced de-modernization of the Palestinian society" (Salamanca, 2015, p. 118).

1.2.4: The Wall, dirt mounds, fences and road blocks

Besides the settlements and their barriers, numerous other material barriers have been built by the Israeli government in the West Bank. Perhaps the most infamous of these is the Wall, the (planned to be 750km long) separation barrier the Israeli government started to build in the West Bank in 2002. When the Wall is finished it is expected that 85 per cent will be built on the Palestinian side of the Green Line. As stated by Reece Jones, Christine Leuenberger and Emily Wills (2016), more than

[8] While a single and continuous Palestinian space inside the West Bank does not exist (Handel, 2014).

ten years after the start of the construction of the Wall, there is little consent "between Israelis, Palestinians, and international observers about the Wall's basic justifications, functions, and permanence" (p. 3). Already its name is contested: "is it an apartheid wall, an anti-terror fence, a security barrier, or something else entirely?" (Jones, Leuenberger, & Wills, 2016, p. 3). But, as Jones, Leuenberger and Wills (2016) continue, "the Wall's existence and route has become another 'fact on the ground' that reshapes Palestinian experience of occupation, their limited national sovereignty, their political struggles over Jewish settlements, and their position in peace negotiations with Israel" (p. 3). Large sections of the Wall do not consist of a concrete wall but, rather, of a 4.5 metre high electric fence with a security zone. The sections of the Wall that are actual concrete wall are 8-9 metres high, as is the case in Bethlehem (OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2011). In this thesis, I follow authors such as Jones, Leuenberger and Wills (2016) and Weizman (2007), in using the term 'Wall', with a capitalised 'w', as this term clearly represents the distinct spatial and political nature of this barrier.

Israel has built numerous other barriers in the West Bank, such as dirt mounds, fences, no-go military zones and road blocks. A 2016 report published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs showed that besides the Wall, settlements and their by-pass roads, there was an average of 543 temporary physical obstructions in the West Bank in 2015 alone. This situation has remained relatively stable since (OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2017). These barriers – together with Areas A, B and C; the Wall; and the settlements and their bypass roads – have parcelled out sub-cells inside the West Bank, separating Palestinian from Israeli spaces, but also Palestinian spaces from each other. As argued by Ariel Handel (2014), this has turned the West Bank into a continuous Israeli space with isolated Palestinian islands (p. 505). In this context, Jewish settlers can move around smoothly and quickly in one uninterrupted space while Palestinians are slowed down, marginalised to slow back roads and forced to avoid numerous material barriers. Or put differently, it has brought the privileged points in space,

the Israeli points, closer together, while making the numerous Palestinian islands less and less accessible for its Palestinian inhabitants (Handel, 2014).

The route of the Wall, as well as the locations of the other material barriers, can be seen in Figures 1.1 and 1.2. As can be seen from these maps, the Wall does not follow the Green Line but snakes into the West Bank to include large settlements to the 'Israeli side' of the Wall. This is especially the case east of Jerusalem and west of Nablus (see Figure 1.1). Furthermore, the Wall is not finished. Large sections of the 'border' between Israel and the West Bank are still 'unwalled', specifically in the south of the West Bank and east of Bethlehem. Besides the Wall, settlements, dirt mounds, fences and road blocks, Figures 1.1 and 1.2 also show the locations of another important technology that helps to create 'Israeli-only' spaces and control the mobility of Palestinians: the checkpoints, which are the focus of this thesis project.

1.3: Checkpoints as unpredictable openings

When Israel occupied the Palestinian Territories in 1967, all Palestinians living in the Territories were granted a general permit to enter Israel and Jerusalem by the Israeli state (Keshet, 2006). People who were convicted of a crime or considered a security threat were not granted this permit. This permit could be revoked at any time, but due to the lack of a comprehensive system of material barriers and checkpoints from 1967 until the 1990s, the mobility of Palestinians was still relatively unaffected. This situation changed at the end of the First Intifada (1987-93) when the first permanent checkpoints were built and individual permits were required for Palestinians to enter Israel and Jerusalem (Keshet, 2006, p. 13). Since the beginning of the Second (Al-Aqsa) Intifada in 2000, the number and the locations of checkpoints has continuously grown. Anyone – foreigner, Israeli or Palestinian – travelling within the West Bank or to Jerusalem and Israel usually has

to pass through at least one checkpoint (although, as will also become clear in this study, these groups do not experience their checkpoint passages in a similar way).

Nowadays, checkpoints play a particularly important role in the architecture of occupation in the West Bank (Hammami, 2015). They represent key technologies that are used to monitor, discipline and/or selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians. Checkpoints can take on many different forms, ranging from 24-hour manned airport-like constructions called 'terminal checkpoints', to car checkpoints resembling tollbooths, to sheds between two fences (B'Tselem, 2018a). Of the 100 checkpoints located inside the West Bank and on its 'border' with Israel, 61 have been categorised as 'internal checkpoints' by the Israeli army and they are located deep within the West Bank (see Figure 1.1). The other 40 checkpoints have been named 'border checkpoints' (B'Tselem, 2018a). These checkpoints are located close to the Green Line, although the large majority of these are not on the Green Line but inside the West Bank (Weizman, 2007). Internal and border checkpoints work differently.

Internal checkpoints are often 'not activated' and can be passed through by anyone, either on foot or inside a vehicle. If these checkpoints are not active, there are usually no Israeli soldiers present. Hence, passing through them does not entail any interaction with Israeli forces: one can just continue driving (see, for example, photo dossier on page 141). This type of checkpoint can be 'activated' for specific reasons, such as orders of the Israeli army to slow down Palestinian movement towards a specific area to enforce a closure – which entails a specific area in the West Bank or town is on complete lockdown – or a search by the Israeli army for a specific person or illegal goods such as weapons (B'Tselem, 2017a).

The 40 border checkpoints are securitised by the Israeli army as 'entry points into Israel', although, as noted above, the large majority of these checkpoints is not actually located on the Green Line but inside the West Bank. Border checkpoints are always 'active' and permanently staffed by Israeli soldiers. These checkpoints

can be passed through freely by people with an Israeli ID card, Jerusalem ID card or a foreign passport. Palestinians with a West Bank ID card need special permission of the Israeli state to pass through these checkpoints (these ID cards and the permit system are explained in Section 1.2.2 below). Passing through these checkpoints usually entails engaging with Israeli soldiers and several machines. Internal checkpoints that lead into an 'Israeli space', such as a settlement, work in a similar fashion.

In this thesis I analyse two types of border checkpoints in the Bethlehem area: one terminal checkpoint, (Checkpoint 300) and two car checkpoints (The Tunnels and Al Walaja).

1.3.1: Terminal checkpoints: Checkpoint 300

Terminal checkpoints are a type of checkpoint first introduced in 2005. These checkpoints are described by the Israeli army as 'international border crossings'. They are all located close to the Green Line, although the majority is not positioned on this 'border' but, rather, on the Palestinian side of it (Weizman, 2007). All terminal checkpoints have been categorised as 'border checkpoints'. These checkpoints have been designed in a very specific way to resemble 'neutral airport terminals' and ostensibly 'address certain humanitarian concerns', such as long waiting times under the burning sun or in the freezing cold, a lack of toilets and water, and violent interactions between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers (Braverman, 2011; Weizman, 2007). The deployment of numerous machines, such as turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray machines and fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices, was presented by the Israeli army as reducing contact between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers, and therefore decreasing the possibility of tension between them (Braverman, 2011). The majority of checkpoints is managed only by Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) soldiers, but terminal checkpoints are also managed by private security guards. These private security guards were placed in terminal checkpoints to 'take the army out of the checkpoints' – although IDF soldiers are

still present in terminal checkpoints. By taking the 'army out of the checkpoints' and designing these checkpoints in such a way that they ostensibly resemble 'neutral airport terminals', the IDF wanted to disconnect these checkpoints from the occupation and further legitimise their status as 'neutral border crossings' (Braverman, 2011; Who Profits Research Centre, 2011). While these private security guards have a different legal and hierarchical status, in this thesis I often conflate IDF soldiers and private security guards into one term: 'checkpoint managers' or 'soldier/private security guard'. This is due to the fact that they normally hold the same roles and functions in managing the checkpoints.

Checkpoint 300 is located north of Bethlehem on the road that historically led from Hebron to Jerusalem but that, nowadays, is interrupted by the Wall. In Figure 1.2 on page 9 it is marked by a red dot and white cross, which indicates that it is a checkpoint, and it is named Gilo.[9] Although the checkpoint is a 'border checkpoint', it is not located on the 'border' between Israel and the West Bank but, rather, inside the West Bank. The checkpoint is one of the largest and most often crossed Israeli checkpoints inside the West Bank. According to ActiveStills, an NGO involving Palestinian, Israeli and international reporters, as many as 15,000 Palestinians pass through Checkpoint 300 on busy mornings (ActiveStills, 2018). Checkpoint 300 was first established in the 1990s as a combination of cement blocks, sand bags and Israeli soldiers, with the aim of checking the documents of Palestinians travelling to Jerusalem and further on. It was relaunched as a 'terminal checkpoint' in 2005. As can be seen in Figure 1.3, nowadays, Checkpoint 300 consists of a main building and an entrance for commuters passing through the checkpoint from the Bethlehem side.

[9] Checkpoint 300 is sometimes called Gilo checkpoint, as is the case in Figure 1.2. However, as my interviewees referred to it as 'Checkpoint 300', I will also refer to the checkpoint here with that name.

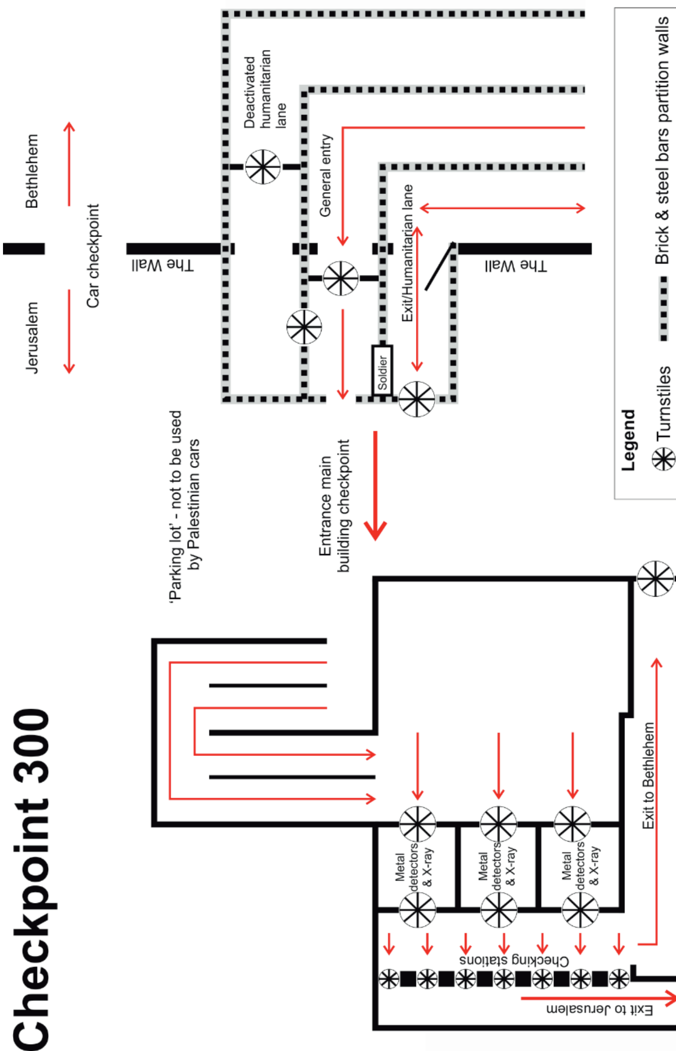

Figure 1.3: A map of Checkpoint 300 based on the author's fieldnotes and drawings during her multiple passages through the checkpoint (source: Iulian Barba Lata).[10]

[10] This map is also used in Chapter 4 of this thesis. I decided to also add it to this chapter because I believe it may help the reader to visualise Checkpoint 300. In Chapter 5 of this thesis, a similar, but slightly modified map of Checkpoint 300 is included, which depicts more accurately the processes discussed in that chapter.

Figure 1.4: The entrance of Checkpoint 300 on the Bethlehem side

(source: Rijke, May 2017).

The main building and the entrance are separated from each other by an empty parking lot. The entrance is made up of three tunnels (Figure 1.4) and it has a ‘humanitarian gate’ (Figure 1.5), an entrance that can be used by specific ‘privileged’ groups – such as women and elderly – to avoid the pressure of large crowds. The checkpoint has been built on the route of the Wall and, to enter or exit the checkpoint on the Bethlehem side, one has to walk through a gate in the Wall (see Figure 1.3). There are numerous machines at the checkpoint: turnstiles (Figure 1.5), metal detectors, x-ray machines (Figure 1.6) and fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. Furthermore, the checkpoint has several ‘welcome signs’ (Figure 1.7).

Figure 1.5: The exit/humanitarian lane (source: Rijke, May 2017).

The checkpoint also has a car lane. This car lane can only be passed through by commuters with a foreign passport, Israeli or Jerusalem ID card while inside a vehicle with an Israeli – yellow – number plate. Palestinians with a West Bank ID card have to pass the checkpoint on foot. Checkpoint 300 is a checkpoint predominately used by Palestinians commuting between the south of the West Bank and Jerusalem and Israel. The large majority of the commuters using the checkpoint comprises Palestinians with a West Bank ID who can only pass through checkpoints as pedestrians. Checkpoint 300 is located in Area C. It leads to Bethlehem, which is located in Area A, the 18 per cent of the West Bank that is under full Palestinian control (see Figure 1.2). This means that Jewish Israeli citizens do not use this checkpoint. The design and workings of this checkpoint is analysed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Figure 1.6: A queue in front of the turnstile that leads to the metal detectors inside the main building (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure 1.7: The sign at the entrance of Checkpoint 300 on the Jerusalem side (source: Rijke, July 2016).

1.3.2: Car checkpoints: The Tunnels and Al Walaja

Car checkpoints are checkpoints that can only be passed through with a vehicle. They have been in place since the first checkpoints were introduced in the West Bank in the 1990s. Their design usually resembles tollbooths and they are managed by IDF soldiers. Internal car checkpoints (except the ones positioned on roads leading towards settlements) can be passed in a vehicle with a Palestinian – green-white – or Israeli – yellow – number plate. Border car checkpoints can only be

passed inside a vehicle with an Israeli – yellow – number plate. The large majority of these border car checkpoints can only be passed by people with foreign passports, Israeli ID cards or Jerusalem ID cards. A very small number of permits allow Palestinians with a West Bank ID to pass through certain border car checkpoints. Passing through a border car checkpoint entails one has to be given permission by the IDF soldier managing the checkpoint to pass.

Al Walaja and The Tunnels checkpoints are both located west of Bethlehem and are considered 'border checkpoints'. Al Walaja checkpoint[11] is indeed on the Green Line and positioned next to the Palestinian town after which it was named, Al Walaja. It is marked by a green dot and a white cross in Figure 1.2, which indicates that it is a checkpoint located on the Green Line. The Tunnels checkpoint, however, is located several kilometres east of the Green Line and, hence, inside the West Bank. It is marked by a red dot and white cross in Figure 1.2. It is located on the road that is also called The Tunnels and that is partly made up of tunnels that pass underneath the Palestinian town Beit Jala. Both checkpoints are located in Area C, the 60 per cent of the West Bank that is under full Israeli control. The Tunnels checkpoint has four lanes with four soldier booths leading in the direction of Jerusalem and two lanes leading in the direction of Bethlehem/Hebron. It has watchtowers and a separate area to which cars can be directed for further inspection (see Figures 1.8 and 1.9). Al Walaja checkpoint is considerably smaller; it has one lane in either direction and a small area on the side for further inspection of cars (see Figure 1.10). Both checkpoints are characterised by an absence of machines: besides cameras there are no visible machines present at the checkpoints.

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[11] Al Walaja checkpoint is sometimes called Malha checkpoint (B'tselem, 2018a). However, as my interviewees referred to it as 'Al Walaja checkpoint', I will also refer to the checkpoint here with that name.

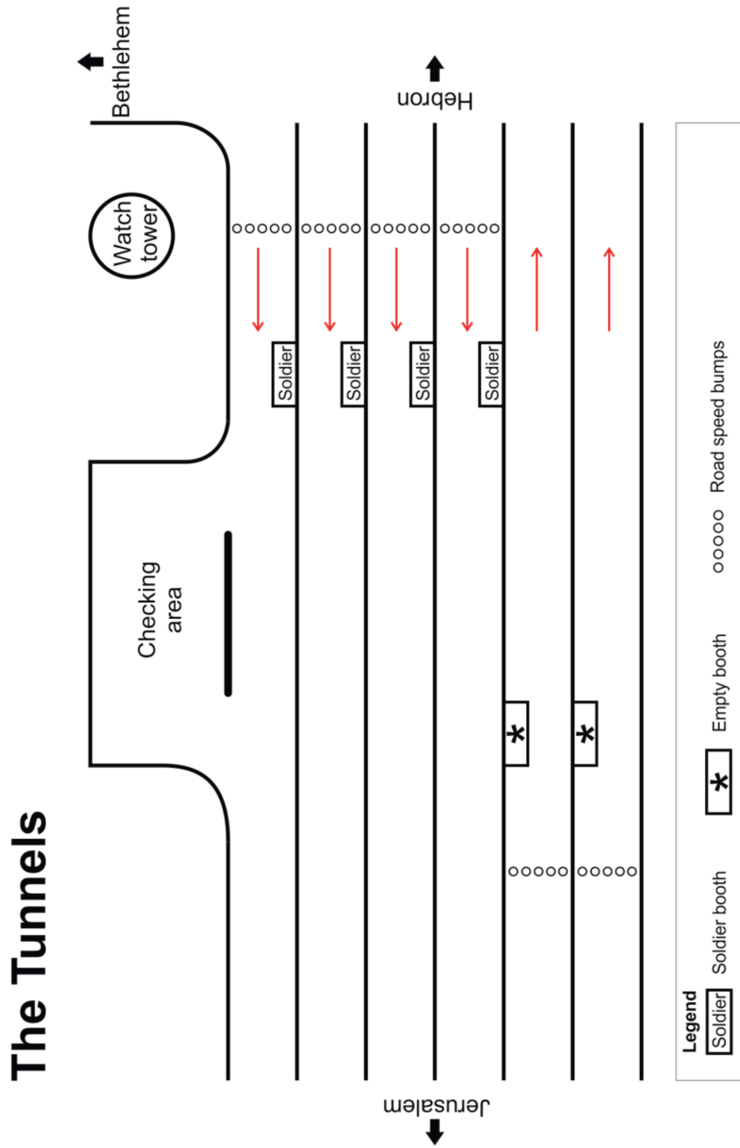

Figure 1.8: A map of The Tunnels checkpoint based on the author's fieldnotes and drawings during her multiple passages of the checkpoint (source: Iulian Barba Lata).

Figure 1.9: The Tunnels Checkpoint (source: Rijke, May 2017).

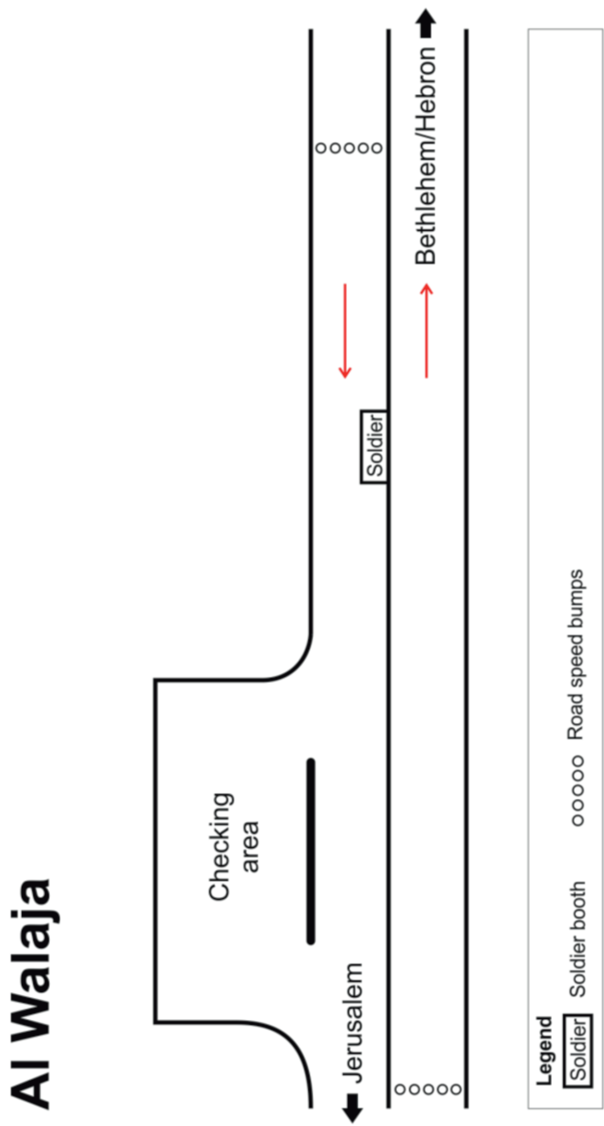

Figure 1.10: A map of Al Walaja checkpoint based on the author's fieldnotes and drawings during her multiple passages of the checkpoint (source: Iulian Barba Lata).

Only commuters with foreign passports, Israeli ID cards or Jerusalem ID cards can use these two checkpoints.[12] The large majority of commuters uses private cars to cross through these checkpoints. Because both checkpoints are border car checkpoints, the cars need to have a yellow – Israeli – number plate. The Tunnels checkpoint can also be passed inside a public Palestinian bus, which drives from Bethlehem to Jerusalem and back again. Only Palestinians who have the necessary paperwork to pass this checkpoint can use this bus. The paperwork of the commuters using the bus is checked at the checkpoint by Israeli soldiers. There is no data available regarding the number of people passing through these checkpoints. However, The Tunnels checkpoint is a very busy checkpoint, often characterised by long queues of cars and resulting traffic jams during rush hour periods. Jewish settlers living in the 'Guts Etzion' settlements and in Hebron, located south of Bethlehem, make up a large proportion of the people crossing these checkpoints. The design and workings of these checkpoints are analysed in Chapter 6.

1.3.2: ID cards

The functioning of checkpoints is made possible because of the thorough and detailed system of ID cards that the Israeli state uses to categorise its residents, including the occupied population. As analysed by Palestinian-American media scholar Helga Tawil-Souri (2011a), the ID card regime is an important part of Israel's approach to its control of Palestinian territory. There are three different ID cards: Israeli ID cards, Jerusalem ID cards (only held by Palestinians living in East Jerusalem) and Palestinian Authority (PA) ID cards (which I also call 'West Bank ID cards' in this thesis). All these documents, including the PA ID cards, are issued by the State of Israel. While all ID cards state the expected information – name, date

[12] There are some exceptions. Palestinians with a West Bank ID card can use The Tunnels checkpoint with special permits, such as permits provided through their employment at international NGOs and certain hospital permits. However, as this regards a very small group, and none of my interviewees were eligible for this, I will not include this group in my analysis.

of birth, place of residence, religion and marital status – there are some important differences. The Israeli ID cards and Jerusalem ID cards are imprinted with the seal of the state of Israel and placed in a blue cover ('blue cards'), while the Palestinian IDs have a Palestinian Authority (PA) emblem and are placed in a green cover ('green cards'). The blue cards are further distinguished; under 'nationality', it is stated whether someone is Jewish, Arab, Druze or Bedouin (Tawil-Souri, 2011a).

The condition of the Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID card is especially precarious (Tawil-Souri, 2011a). When Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967 the Palestinians living there did not become citizens of the Israeli state. Instead, they were given temporary residency cards. These cards are called Jerusalem ID cards and their owners are excluded from voting and traveling abroad with the use of these ID cards. East Jerusalemites can only travel abroad with either Israeli-issued travel permits or with temporary Jordanian passports. Jerusalem ID cards can be revoked at any time – a punitive measure regularly used by the Israeli state (Community Action Centre, 2016). East Jerusalemites are distinguished from Palestinians who are Israeli citizens in their ID cards as the nationality in Jerusalem ID cards does not say 'Arab' but, rather, is left blank. Hence, a hierarchy is created of "true-blue for Jewish-Israelis, Arab-blue for Palestinian citizens of Israel, others-blue for Israeli citizens who are neither Arab nor Jewish, and blue-green for Palestinian Jerusalemites" (Tawil-Souri, 2011a, p. 159). As Tawil-Souri (2011a) notes, "if it's sounding confusing, it's supposed to be" (p. 159).

These ID cards are connected to different levels of freedom of movement (see Table 1.1 below). This is most explicitly represented by whether or not the holder of the ID card needs a permit to enter Jerusalem and Israel. Firstly, the most mobile group are the Jewish Israelis who hold 'true-blue' Israeli ID cards. The Jewish settlers belong to this group. They can travel through border checkpoints[13] without

[13] Again, one needs to keep in mind that the large majority of these 'border checkpoints' are not actually located on the Green Line but inside the West Bank.

a permit and are free to enter settlements. Officially, they are not allowed to enter Area A, the 18 per cent of the West Bank that is under full PA control. This rule is regularly broken, especially by Israeli forces such as soldiers, intelligence operatives and border police. Secondly, the Palestinian Israelis, who hold an 'Arab-blue' Israeli ID card, also do not need a permit to travel through border checkpoints and are allowed to enter settlements, although their entry may be challenged by the security forces guarding the settlement. Technically, this group is not allowed to enter Area A, but this rule is normally not enforced. As Salah[14], a 47-year-old Palestinian man with an Israeli ID card, explained: "Of course I enter Area A. These signs [that state it is illegal for Israeli citizens to enter Area A] are only for Jewish people. Not for Arabs. I am still a Palestinian. Even if I am carrying the Israeli ID, I am a Palestinian" (interview, 12 May 2017). Thirdly, Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID card, the 'blue-green' ID card, also do not need a permit to travel through border checkpoints and they are allowed to enter settlements, again, while running the risk of being scrutinised by security guards. This group is also allowed to enter Area A. However, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, the checkpoint passages of Palestinians holding Israeli and Jerusalem ID cards are often associated with tense and humiliating contact with Israeli forces. All people holding an Israeli ID card ('true-blue' to 'blue-green') are permitted to own a car with an Israeli number plate and, hence, can pass border car checkpoints. Fourthly, the least mobile group in the West Bank are the Palestinians with a Palestinian ID.[15] This group is not allowed to own a car with an Israeli number plate and, hence, has to pass border checkpoints on foot. To pass border checkpoints and to enter settlements, this group needs a permit and a special (biometric) magnetic card, both provided by the Israeli military authorities.

[14] Since all interviewees asked to remain anonymous, fictitious names will be used in this thesis.

[15] Because I focus on the experiences of Palestinians in the West Bank I have not included Palestinians with a Gazan ID card, a group even more immobilised than Palestinians with a West Bank ID card.

	Foreign passport	Jewish Israeli 'True Blue'	Palestinian Israeli 'Arab Blue'	East Jerusalemites 'Blue Green	West Bank 'Green'
Does the ID holder need a permit to pass a border checkpoint?	No	No	No, but s/he may be questioned	No, but s/he may be questioned	Yes
Is the ID holder allowed free entry into a Jewish Israeli settlement?	Yes	Yes	Yes, but s/he may be questioned	Yes, but s/he may be questioned	No

Table 1.1: ID cards and the associated levels of freedom of movement (source: the content of the table is based on Tawil-Souri, 2011a).

1.3.3: Permit regime

There are numerous types of permits for which a Palestinians with a Palestinian ID has to apply when wanting to pass through a border checkpoint or to enter a Jewish settlement. Examples are work permits, student permits, hospital permits, permits for prayer, permits for farmers travelling to their land and separate permits for these same farmers allowing them to carry farming materials with them (Alqasis

& al-Azza, 2015). Applying for a permit is often a difficult, costly[16] and long process (Berda, 2018; Keshet, 2006). The permit system has not been the subject of many academic studies. As argued by Cédric Parizot (2018), most studies focused on the permit system have been executed by researchers and NGOs involved in the juridical support of Palestinians who apply for a permit (see Berda, 2018; Bocco, 2015; Etkes, 2011; Gisha, 2011; Kadman, 2012; Piterman, 2007). He explains this as an effect of "the absence of written rules and the opacity of the system" (Parizot, 2018, p. 22). These studies of the system indicate that the diverse ways in which, as put by Yael Berda (2018), "the permit regime in the West Bank is an extreme case of a sophisticated apparatus to manage population movement" (p. 9). It is embedded in a "bureaucratic labyrinth" (Berda, 2018, p. 11), based on the "massive classification of the Palestinian population" (Berda, 2018, p. 31). Furthermore, as Berda (2018) continues, "the bureaucracy is characterized by (…) 'effective inefficiency', which is a product of the ambiguity of a system that is both civil and military with a severe shortage of personnel" (p. 35). Whether or not a permit will actually be awarded and for how long is never predictable. A permit for a hospital visit in Jerusalem can, for instance, provide someone permission to be in Jerusalem for a day or only for several hours. A common reason for denial is that the applicant has been blacklisted. As Berda (2018) explains, 200,000 West Bank Palestinians have been blacklisted since the instalment of the permit system. This

[16] While certain permits may be received free of costs, such as a permit to pray in Jerusalem during Ramadan or Christmas time, work permits have to be applied, and paid for, by the Israeli employer who wants to hire a Palestinian labourer (Al-Qadi, 2018). The costs for work permits differ pending on the period the permit is valid for. As explained by Cédric Parizot (2018), an employer paid around 1200 NIS, 240 dollars, per Palestinian employee a month in 2010. These costs are usually paid for by the Palestinian employee and can amount to nearly half of their income (Winer, 2018). Due to the high level of unemployment in the West Bank (17.6 per cent in 2018 (Gisha, 2019)), for many Palestinians working in Israel is the only opportunity to earn a living, even though they have to pay the high permit costs. For an in-depth analysis of this permit system see Nasser Al-Qadi (2018a), Yael Berda (2018) and Cédric Parizot (2018).

may occur for numerous reasons and is usually only discovered when someone applies for a permit or tries to pass through a checkpoint (Piterman, 2007).

For these 200,000 Palestinians, it is not possible to pass through a border checkpoint and legally enter Israel or Jerusalem. If they still want to travel to Israel or Jerusalem, they have to bypass these checkpoints. As stated earlier in this chapter, there are still several areas in which the 'border' between Israel and the West Bank is not walled. This is especially the case in the south of the West Bank and in the Bethlehem area (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). These gaps in the Wall are used by Palestinians with West Bank ID cards to enter Israel without the necessary paperwork (Berda, 2018). The largest group doing this are the men who work in the building sector in Israel. How many Palestinians use these gaps to enter Israel is unclear, although it has been stated by IDF officials that as many as 50,000 Palestinians entered Israel illegally every day in 2016 (Pileggi, 2016). Entering Israel illegally can be very dangerous, since one can be beaten, fined, imprisoned or even killed if caught by Israeli forces (Mitnick, 2017).[17] Furthermore, the Palestinians who do enter Israel without getting caught hold an especially precarious position within the Israeli economy: they are not legally protected from maltreatment, they are not insured in case of injury, and if a contractor decides to pay them less, or even nothing, at the end of a job, they cannot go to through any official channels to demand their salary.[18]

1.3.3: Checkpoints as key technologies in the architecture of occupation

As stated already, checkpoints represent key technologies that are used by the Israeli regime to monitor, discipline and/or selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians. This does not mean that they always work in a predictable way.

[17] I have interviewed some Palestinians who enter Israel in this way. However, I was unable to find enough interviewees to include these passages in this study. For an analysis of illegal entries into Israel, see the work of Cédric Parizot (2012).

[18] For an analysis of the important role played by cheap Palestinian labour in the construction sector in Israel, see Andrew Ross' (2009) *Stone Men: The Palestinians Who Built Israel*.

Rather, they are regularly closed altogether or temporarily restricted to specific groups of people – for instance, based on their hometown, age or the type of permit they carry.

As will become clear in this thesis, checkpoints work as a field of (im)possibility by providing limited and relatively unpredictable 'openings' in a broader system of repression and control. More specifically, the checkpoints are one of the technologies employed by the Israeli government that results in making the daily commutes of Palestinian residents of the West Bank never entirely predictable. The following quote illustrates this point well. It is an excerpt of an interview I had with 63-year-old Nathan, an employee of a Palestinian university. When I asked him what effects the checkpoints were having on university students, he recalled a conversation that he had with one. She was about to graduate and had commuted between her home in East Jerusalem and the university in Bethlehem through the border car checkpoint The Tunnels for several years. When he had asked her what this commute had been like, she responded in the following way:

> The worst part is coming in the bus up to the checkpoint and wondering, what will it be like this time? Is the soldier just going to wave the bus through? Is the soldier going to go and take a look at our IDs? Or is the soldier going to take all our IDs and make us sit there for an hour, an hour-and-a-half, while each of them is checked? Are we going to be herded off the bus and made to stand in the sun while all of our IDs are checked? Or are we individually going to be interrogated? Are we going to be strip-searched?
>
> (Nathan, interview, 22 May 2017)

All checkpoints, border and internal, can be subjected to the sudden closures. Commuters may have to queue for a long period one day, while they can pass through the checkpoint swiftly the next. The checkpoints can be managed by calm soldiers/private security guards or violent ones. How any checkpoint may function

on a certain day is never predictable, nor does it provide insight into the workings of the same checkpoint the next day. This produces a permanent sense of arbitrariness, chaos and uncertainty that has become an integral part of life for those under occupation. In this unpredictable context, Palestinians keep on moving and thousands pass through checkpoints on a daily basis. Their experiences are the main focus of this thesis.

1.4: Literature review: Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank

The Wall has been the subject of numerous academic analyses. These have provided valuable insights into the workings of the spatial regime imposed by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank (Peteet, 2017). Examples are the research focused on the rhetoric used to legitimise the Wall (Bowman, 2007; Leuenberger, 2016; Wills, 2016); the work that discusses the impact of the Wall and of the occupation in general on the lives of Palestinians (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009; Eklund & El-Atrash, 2012; Handel, 2009, 2011, 2016); and the work that analyses the different ways in which Palestinians resist the restrictions imposed on their mobility (Amir, 2011; Pallister-Wilkins, 2011; Parizot, 2012; Parson & Salter, 2008). Passing through checkpoints is a daily experience for most Palestinians and Jewish settlers travelling within the West Bank and to Israel. There are several academic works in which checkpoints are analysed as part of the broader geographies of occupation (see, among others, Grassiani, 2013; Handel, 2009, 2011, 2016; Ophir, Givoni & Hanafi, 2009; Parsons & Salter, 2008), but only few have focused specifically on checkpoints.

Academic members of Machsom Watch have conducted the majority of the research that focused specifically on checkpoints. Machsom Watch is an Israeli all-women organisation that opposes the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. One of its main tasks is to monitor and document the workings of the checkpoints in the West Bank (‘machsom’ means ‘checkpoint’ in Hebrew) (MachsomWatch,

2019). These authors discuss their experiences as Watchers (Kotef, 2011; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Mansbach, 2012, 2015), the possible impacts – positive and negative – the organisation itself has on the checkpoints (Braverman, 2012; Kaufman, 2008; Keshet, 2006), and the development of the terminal checkpoints (Braverman, 2011, 2012; Kotef 2015; Kotef & Amir, 2015; Mansbach, 2009). These works, some of which are discussed in the following chapters, provide valuable insights into the workings of Machsom Watch and thorough analyses of the changes in the terminal checkpoints. However, they do not focus on the experiences of Palestinians passing through the checkpoints and tend to underplay the agency of the Palestinian commuters (Hammami, 2010).

Other authors have incorporated the experiences of Palestinians passing through checkpoints in their work (Bishara, 2015; Hammami, 2004, 2010, 2015; Parizot, 2009; Peteet, 2017; Razack, 2010; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b, 2017; see Grassiani 2015 for an analysis of the experience of Israeli soldiers working inside checkpoints). Both Rema Hammami and Helga Tawil-Souri have extensively analysed the experiences of Palestinians passing through checkpoints. They have personally experienced the workings of checkpoints during the Second Intifada, when Hammami used to pass with her Jerusalem ID and Tawil-Souri, a diasporic Palestinian, with her American passport. They have accordingly studied the daily checkpoint passages of Palestinian residents with West Bank and Jerusalem ID cards, both focusing predominantly on Qalandiya Checkpoint in the Ramallah area. In their analyses, they discuss the ways Palestinians experience and resist the checkpoint regime[19]; by regulating the chaotic traffic at the checkpoints (Hammami, 2004, 2010); by using the checkpoint space as an economic hub (Tawil-Souri, 2009); and by normalising the checkpoints in their narratives (Hammami, 2015). These authors provide valuable insights into the diverse ways that

[19] In this thesis I use the term 'checkpoint regime' to refer to the rules and regulations implemented at checkpoints and the intended workings of their machines and spatial formations/design.

Palestinians with Jerusalem and West Bank ID cards engage with the checkpoints in their daily passages. However, their work is mostly based on data collected during the Second Intifada. Checkpoints in the West Bank have changed a great deal since those years, from ad-hoc barriers made up out of dirt piles and concrete blocks to today's complex assemblages of technologies of monitoring and control. This is especially the case for so-called 'terminal checkpoints', such as Checkpoint 300.

A limited number of studies have focused on the workings of the border car checkpoints (Bishara, 2015; Parizot, 2009). These border car checkpoints are used by Jewish Israelis and by Palestinians with West Bank, Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards. As such, they illustrate the interplay between the slow and laboured checkpoint passages of Palestinians and the fast and smooth passages of Jewish settlers. Cédric Parizot (2009) has analysed the Meitar/Wadi Al-Khalil checkpoint, which is located in the south of the West Bank and mostly used by Jewish settlers, Israeli Bedouins and West Bank Palestinians. He discusses the differences between the passages of these three groups and how the Palestinian and Bedouin commuters engage with the checkpoint regime. Amahl Bishara (2015) has analysed how Israeli Palestinians smuggle West Bank Palestinians through car checkpoints into Israel in their yellow-plated cars. She argued that this defiance was possible because of the checkpoint knowledge of these smugglers regarding who is more likely to be stopped at these shared checkpoints and who is not. Bishara's interviewees learned to manipulate the checkpoints' regime through the use of their 'privileged' position as Israeli citizens and the knowledge of the implementation of categorisations – profiling – by checkpoint managers. Both these research projects shed light on the diverse ways in which commuters engage with the regime of shared car checkpoints. However, neither of these authors has included the experiences of Jewish settlers using these checkpoints, nor have they analysed these shared car checkpoints in relation to other pedestrian checkpoints predominantly used by West Bank Palestinians.

1.5: Aim and research questions

With this thesis I aim to address five gaps in the academic debates in political geography concerning the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, its accompanying architecture of occupation and, most specifically, its checkpoints. There exists a rich and established body of literature on bordering and border technologies in political geography (see, amongst others, Adey, 2009; Amoore, 2006; Martin, 2010, 2012; Van Houtum, 2010; Vaughan-Williams, 2009, 2010). I engage with this body of literature briefly in Chapter 2 of this thesis, but I position my thesis more explicitly in the debates concerning walling/checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories specifically (Amir, 2011, 2013; Braverman, 2011, 2012; Hammami, 2004; 2010, 2015; Kaufman, 2008; Keshet, 2006; Kotef, 2011, 2015; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Mansbach, 2009, 2012, 2015; Pallister-Wilkins, 2011, 2015a, 2016; Parizot, 2009, 2012; Parsons & Salter, 2008; Peteet, 2017; Razack, 2010; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b; Weizman, 2007) and, more generally, in the broader academic debates in the fields of political geography, political science, critical international relations and border studies concerning walling as a favoured border policy (Brown, 2010; Jones, 2009, 2012; Rosière & Jones, 2012; Till, et al., 2013; Vallet, 2014). In the following paragraph, I will introduce what I perceive to be the five gaps in these academic debates that I wish to address in this study.

The first gap I address with this project is related to the fact that the workings of checkpoints and the various experiences of the commuters passing through them have not been analysed in recent studies. As stated in the previous section, most of the existing research on checkpoints has been executed by academic members of Machsom Watch (Braverman, 2011, 2012; Kaufman, 2008; Keshet, 2006; Kotef, 2011, 2015; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Mansbach, 2009, 2012, 2015). These authors provide important insights into the development of the checkpoints, but they have not included the experiences of Palestinian commuters in their analyses (Hammami, 2010). Other authors have incorporated such experience of the

Palestinians in their work (Hammami, 2004, 2010, 2015; Peteet, 2017; Razack, 2010; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b), but they largely refer to the years of the Second (or al-Aqsa) Intifada (2000-05). The checkpoint system currently in place, which is not static and keeps developing (this will become especially explicit in Chapter 7 of this thesis), only became operational after the Second Intifada. Furthermore, while these authors provide essential insight into the experiences of Palestinian commuters during this period, they focus predominately on the ways Palestinians resisted the checkpoints in general but also the specific checkpoint regimes in place at different checkpoints. In this thesis, I wish to build upon these two bodies of work by analysing the workings of three contemporary checkpoints. I aim to demonstrate how Palestinian commuters not only resist but are also forced to engage with and, in the process (re)produce, the checkpoints' regime in various ways. Inspired by the analyses of Polly Pallister-Wilkins (2011, 2015a, 2016) and Nigel Parsons and Mark Salter (2008) of the role played by barriers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, I use a biopolitical framework (Foucault, 1977, 1978, 2007, 2013) to analyse checkpoints as technologies that monitor, discipline and selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians. Furthermore, engaging with Michel Foucault's understanding of power as relational and productive (1977, 1978, 1982, 2007) will allow me to analyse the checkpoints' workings as the outcome of the many different forms of engagement and intervention by the commuters, the checkpoint managers and the checkpoints' regime.

The second gap I address in this thesis is the general lack of inclusion of machines in the analysis of checkpoints, most notably regarding the terminal checkpoints. As stated earlier in this chapter, one important aspect of terminal checkpoints is the presence of many machines, such as turnstiles, cameras, x-ray machines, metal detectors, and fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. The introduction of the terminal checkpoints has been critically analysed in relevant academic work (Amir, 2013; Braverman, 2011; Kotef & Amir, 2015; Mansbach, 2009), but these authors have only partially taken into account the role of the new spatial arrangements and

machines. The authors who did study the machines inside the checkpoints (Braverman, 2011; Mansbach, 2009) focused on what they argued the machines were failing to do – namely to create less tense and violent checkpoints. Their work provides unique insights into the rationale behind the terminal checkpoints and the workings of their machines. However, neither Daniela Mansbach (2009) and Irus Braverman (2011) included in their respective analyses the experiences of the Palestinian commuters subjected to these machines and the diverse ways in which they engage with them. Also, by focusing on the ways in which the machines are failing to work as they were ostensibly intended to by the Israeli military, these authors do not critically assess what these machines actually do. In this thesis, I therefore put particular emphasis on the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards *and* the machines inside the checkpoints.

A third gap is that, to my knowledge, analyses of the checkpoints have never included in a single project the experiences of Palestinians with West Bank, Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards as well as those of Jewish settlers. By including Palestinians with all three types of ID cards in the research project, I analyse the role played by the intricate system of categories that is implemented by the Israeli government. Furthermore, by including Jewish settlers, I can study the influence they have on the workings of the checkpoints. This allows me to investigate the different ways in which commuters engage with the checkpoints and how they enact their different degrees of freedom of movement. Moreover, by including the experiences of Jewish settlers with the checkpoints, I investigate not only the differences between their experiences and those of the Palestinians but also how these experiences are interconnected.

A fourth gap in the academic debates stems from the absence, at the time this thesis project was conceived, of academic publications focused on Checkpoint 300, The Tunnels checkpoint or Al Walaja checkpoint, three important checkpoints

within the Israeli architecture of occupation. Checkpoint 300 is one of the busiest checkpoints in the West Bank, with up to 15,000 Palestinians passing through Checkpoint 300 each morning (ActiveStills, 2018). There are no data available on the number of commuters using The Tunnels and Al Walaja, but they are important gateways from the south of the West Bank to Jerusalem and Israel for Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards, as well as Jewish settlers. Furthermore, these three checkpoints are not characterised by the occurrence of spectacular violence. Due to this, these three checkpoints are especially suitable to analyse the 'ordinary' daily precarious geographies of Palestinian commuters. Moreover, Checkpoint 300's re-launch as a terminal checkpoint in 2005 means it is a site where one can study the functioning of these particularly planned checkpoints, and their biopolitical categories and machines. The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, on the other hand, have almost no machines. By including these three checkpoints in one research project, I can analyse the influence of machines on checkpoint passages, as well as the differences between checkpoints used solely by Palestinians and checkpoints used also by Jewish settlers.

A fifth gap I address with this thesis regards one of the methods of data collection I have used: namely go-along interviews (Ivison & Renold, 2013, 2014; Kusenbach, 2003; Ross, Renold, Holland, & Hillman, 2009). The use of go-along interviews, which require a researcher to join her/his interviewee on "an outing" (Kusenbach, 2003, p. 463), meant that I joined my interviewees on their daily commute in which they had to pass through a checkpoint. By using go-along interviews, a method that has not been taken up on a large scale in research projects focused on checkpoints or on the occupation in the Palestinian Territories in general (see, e.g., Griffiths, 2017), I intended to directly experience the checkpoint passages together with my interviewees. While it may be possible to discuss how people interact with and co-constitute places with in-depth interviews, combining these with go-along interviews allowed me to observe and experience these interactions *through* those same places. By putting myself into the midst of things, I was able, while

continuously reflecting on my positionality – which I discuss extensively in Chapter 3 – to observe and experience the workings of the checkpoints in ways that would have be impossible otherwise. It also allowed me to experience what it meant to be engaged with the checkpoint regimes and their machines. As such, I experienced the-difference-that-my-body-made when screened by the checkpoint technologies and when qualified as a reflection of my gender, age and ID status (holding a passport from a European Union member-state).

In line with the objective of addressing these gaps:

The aim of this study is to analyse checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as spatial political technologies that, through an interplay of human and non-human interactions, produce a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

The following research questions have been formulated in order to address this aim:

1. How do the checkpoint managers implement biopolitical categories in the governing of mobile Palestinian and Jewish Israeli bodies?
2. What role do the machines and the spatial arrangement of the checkpoints play in the checkpoint passages of the Palestinian and Jewish Israeli commuters?
3. How do the Palestinian commuters, in particular, engage with, reproduce, but also redefine and/or resist the workings of the checkpoint regimes?

1.6: Structure of the thesis

To address this aim and the research questions posed here, this thesis is organised into seven chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 introduces the theoretical framework, where I position the thesis within the relevant academic

debates. The third chapter then offers a methodological reflection and a discussion of the methods I have chosen in order to address the main research questions. Three empirical chapters follow, in which I present the data I have collected and provide answers to the different research questions posed. These three chapters are followed by Chapter 7, which will offer concluding remarks and, again, position the thesis arguments within relevant academic debates. In this last chapter, I bring the analyses of the empirical chapters together and provide an overview of the answers I have formulated to the research questions posed.

There is some overlap and repetition in this thesis, as is typical of theses by publication. This especially refers to the methodology sections and the discussions of the relevant academic literature. Nevertheless, I have two full chapters dedicated respectively to the theoretical framework and to the methodology in order to provide a more in-depth discussion of these elements in the drafting of the thesis.

In Chapter 2: *Theorising Checkpoints: Biopolitics, Walls and Materialities,* I introduce the theoretical framework that underpins the rationale and design of my study. This theoretical framework is predominately informed by Foucault's conceptualisation of biopolitics (1977, 1978, 2007, 2013). More specifically, I discuss Foucault's definition of power as relational (1977, 1978, 1982, 2007) and his arguments regarding the control of population, security and the importance of circulation (2007). I add to this framework Giorgio Agamben's (1998) formulation of the sovereign exception. After this, I discuss the literature on fortified borders and checkpoints in the fields of political geography, political science, border studies and critical international relations (IR). These sections lead me to explain why I frame checkpoints as spatial political technologies (Altin & Minca, 2017; Behrent, 2013; Foucault, 1977, Katz, Martin, & Minca, 2018; and Minca, 2015a) aimed at monitoring, disciplining and selectively limiting Palestinian mobility. Parts of this chapter have been published as an essay on *Society & Space* (2017) and as a book

chapter in *Urban Walls: Political and Cultural Meanings of Vertical Structures and Surfaces* (2019), both co-authored with Claudio Minca.

In Chapter 3: *Being in the Field: Methodological Reflections*, I turn to my fieldwork experiences. Here, I discuss the methods I have used while collecting data in Bethlehem during three periods of fieldwork – namely in-depth interviewing, go-along interviewing and observations. In this chapter, I explain why I have chosen these methods specifically to respond to the research questions formulated, and embed the methods in the relevant literature. Here, I introduce the three checkpoints that I have chosen to study and discuss the interviews I have had with Palestinians and Jewish settlers. Furthermore, I elaborate on what it meant to do fieldwork in a militarised area, the choices I made to ensure my safety and that of my interviewees, and the ethical dilemmas with which I was confronted while in the field. Finally, the chapter offers some reflections on the limitations of this thesis.

These opening chapters are then followed by three empirical chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 are focused on Checkpoint 300. I dedicate two of the three empirical chapters solely to this checkpoint because Checkpoint 300, as argued earlier, is an especially important checkpoint in the broader architecture of the occupation given that it is one of the most frequently crossed checkpoints in the West Bank and functions as a gateway for many Palestinian commuters travelling from the south of the West Bank to Jerusalem and Israel. Furthermore, its relaunching as a terminal checkpoint in 2005 by the Israeli authorities made it an especially interesting case in order to study this type of particularly planned checkpoints and their associated regimes. The third empirical chapter, Chapter 6, analyses two border car checkpoints because a very important group of commuters does not use Checkpoint 300: Jewish settlers. This in-depth analysis of checkpoints that are used by Jewish settlers, Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards is necessary to better understand the workings of the checkpoints and the influence that Jewish

settlers have on their functioning. As such, these three empirical chapters will allow for a discussion of the effects of the intricate system of different ID cards and their associated levels of freedom that categorise the residents of Israel/Palestine.

Chapter 4: *Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint Regimes as Spatial Political Technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* offers an analysis of Checkpoint 300 through an examination of three checkpoint passages and the roles played by the machines that are present. In this chapter, detailed attention is paid to these specific checkpoint passages and to how the checkpoint regime engages with different bodies – and vice versa – addressing explicitly the use of the go-along interviews. The chapter discusses how the machines inside Checkpoint 300 work to make the checkpoint an arbitrary and violent place. By including the machines in the biopolitical analysis of the checkpoints, I analyse how the checkpoint regime is influenced, produced and challenged via the implementation of machines such as turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray machines and biometric scanners inside the checkpoints. Furthermore, the chapter describes how Palestinian commuters engage with the arbitrary functioning of the machines, at times accepting them, other times manipulating or rejecting their (non-)workings. As such, the chapter addresses the second and third research questions. This chapter has also been co-authored with Claudio Minca and has been published in the peer-reviewed journal *Antipode* in 2019.

Chapter 5, entitled *Checkpoint 300: Precarious Checkpoint Geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,* addresses how checkpoint managers in Checkpoint 300 use three biopolitical categories – gender[20], age and ID card status – to continuously grant or take away the

[20] I refer several times in this thesis to the use of 'gender' as a biopolitical category applied by the Israeli forces at the checkpoints. However, I do not analyse the role played by 'gender' as a social construction and/or a part of the identity of Palestinian commuters or Israeli soldiers. For an analysis of the role played by gender/gendered identities at the checkpoints, see the work of Rema Hammami (2019), Hagar Kotef (2011), Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir (2007), Daniela Mansbach (2012) and Julie Peteet (2017).

‘privileges’ that are awarded to specific groups of Palestinians. Moreover, it describes how these Palestinian commuters engage with this arbitrary system of ‘privileges’ by accepting, manipulating or twisting them. As such, it discusses how a set of selective and mutable mobilities are produced and reproduced inside Checkpoint 300 through the ways the checkpoint managers use several biopolitical categories, as well as the diverse ways Palestinian commuters engage with this regime. Hence, this chapter addresses the first and third research question posed. This chapter has been co-authored with Claudio Minca and was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Political Geography* in 2018.

In Chapter 6, entitled *‘Checkpoint Knowledge’: Navigating The Tunnels and Al Walaja Checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,* the two other sites are discussed, namely the car checkpoints known as The Tunnels and Al Walaja. These two border car checkpoints are used by Palestinian commuters with Jerusalem or Israeli ID cards and by Jewish settlers. Chapter 6 shows how these checkpoints have been designed by the Israeli army in a low-tech way: besides cameras, there are no visible machines present. The only mechanism used to slow down cars is the bumps on the road, and, of course, soldiers and the guns with which they are armed. In this chapter, I discuss how the workings of the car checkpoints are influenced by the fact that Jewish settlers use them. This chapter analyses what influence the absence of machines has on the workings of the checkpoints, on the implementation of the biopolitical categories by the checkpoint managers and the interactions between the checkpoint managers and commuters. It indicates that even though the design of car checkpoints resembles benign tollbooths, through a tense interplay of human and non-human interactions, they produce arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility. Furthermore, similar to the other two empirical chapters, it describes the diverse strategies the Palestinian commuters use to try to positively influence their passage. As such, the chapter addresses all three research questions posed. This chapter has been submitted as a single-authored article to the peer-reviewed journal *Geopolitics* and is currently under review.

A concluding chapter follows the three empirical chapters. In this chapter, I address again the main research questions and critically discuss the project's outcomes and implications. I have included several 'photo dossiers' between the chapters with photos I have taken during the fieldwork periods and fieldnotes. These photo dossiers will hopefully illustrate the broader architecture of occupation that I described in the chapters.

The Wall

Figure P.1: The Wall and its graffiti in Bethlehem (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure P.2: The Wall and its graffiti in Bethlehem (source: Rijke, May 2017).

I had a coffee in Bethlehem tonight with my landlady Layla and Jane, a British woman staying in the same house as I am. We walk home and take a road that passes by a very dark section of the Wall. This area used to be a thriving area, but nowadays the Wall has cut the road in half and the once fancy shops are empty buildings [see Figure P.1]. At night there are no street lights and it is a little bit creepy. Layla says that she would normally not take this road alone, especially in the dark, but because we are together it is okay. We chuckle a bit, ensured that it will indeed be okay with the three of us. Suddenly we hear voices on the other side of the Wall, Hebrew speaking voices, they must be Jewish settlers! We look at it each other and then Layla whistles and laughs, a little embarrassed. Jane follows

suit and she whistles, and then she meows, loudly. The voices go silent. We laugh out loud and speed up our pace a little, like young school girls who have misbehaved. Tonight, in this moment and in this dark space next to the Wall, we were not intimidated.

(fieldnotes, 10 May 2017)

Figure P.3: A section of The Wall north of Ramallah made up of a 4.5 metre high electric fence with a security zone (source: Rijke, July 2016).

Figure P.4: The Wall in Bir Ouna, with The Tunnels highway passing over it (source: Rijke, May 2017).

Chapter 2

Theorising Checkpoints

Biopolitics, Walls and Spatial Political Technologies[21]

[21] This chapter includes excerpts from two publications:
Minca, C. & Rijke, A. (2017). Walls! Walls! Walls! *Society & Space*
Minca, C. & Rijke, A. (2018). Walls, walling and the immunitarian imperative. In: A. Mubi Brighenti & M. Kärrholm (eds). *Urban Walls: Political and Cultural Meanings of Vertical Structures and Surfaces*. London: Routlegde, 79-93.

2.1: Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the theoretical framework that has informed this thesis. I will introduce the work of Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, two theorists whose work constitutes the underlying – though not always explicit in the empirical chapters – base of my study. Firstly, I will describe Michel Foucault's work on biopolitics, surveillance, circulation and power (1977, 1978, 1982, 2007, 2013). This will allow me to explain how I use a biopolitical framework to analyse checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a means of surveillance: as technologies that monitor, discipline and selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians.

Foucault argued that it was important to address the questions 'how is power exercised?' and 'what happens when individuals exert power over others?' (Foucault, 1982, p. 337). Foucault defined power as relational: "an action upon an action, on possible or actual future or present actions" (Foucault, 1982, p. 340). Hence, power should not be analysed as something abstract, the focus should be on the *exercise* of power. This exercise of power operates in various ways:

> It incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; it releases or contrives, makes more probable or less; in the extreme, it constrains or forbids absolutely, but it is always a way of acting upon one or more acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action.
>
> (Foucault, 1982, p. 341)

As such, this understanding of power as relational and productive will allow me to analyse the checkpoints' workings as the outcome of the many different forms of engagement and intervention by the commuters, the checkpoint managers and the checkpoint regimes.

After discussing these aspects of Foucault's work, I will describe how his work has been received, focusing most notably on Giorgio Agamben's response to Foucault's

work and his formulation of the sovereign exception (1998). Adding Agamben to my theoretical framework will allow me to investigate the manifestation of sovereign exception inside the checkpoints, as well as the ways in which Palestinian commuters engage with this. By framing the arbitrary workings of the checkpoints as neither accidental nor incidental, but, rather, as inherent to their spatial regimes and an expression of the sovereign exception, the workings of this exception and the coping mechanisms of the Palestinian commuters will be studied as a part of the same spatial regime of power.

After discussing the work of Foucault and Agamben, I will review the literature on fortified borders and checkpoints in the fields of political geography, political science, border studies and critical international relations (IR). In this process, I will position checkpoints in the larger debates concerning walling. Moreover, I will indicate the importance of analysing the daily experiences of the checkpoint commuters when trying to understand the ways checkpoints are produced and reproduced in the interactions between the soldiers/security guards, the commuters and the checkpoints' regimes – that is, the rules and regulations implemented at the checkpoints and the workings of their machines and spatial formations/design. To conclude the chapter, I explain why this theoretical framework has led me to conceptualise checkpoints as spatial political technologies aimed at organising and producing the bodies subjected to them.

2.2: Foucault: Biopolitics, circulation and resistance

2.2.1: Sovereign, disciplinary and biopower

Michel Foucault was the first to introduce contemporary understandings of the concept of biopolitics in the 1970s. Foucault did not coin the term 'biopolitics'. Although there is some debate concerning the origins of the term, Rudolf Kjellén, a Swedish (geo)political scientist, is said to have used it first in the beginning of the twentieth century (Minca, 2015b, p. 169). Foucault's work is wide-ranging. His early work focused on the history of healthcare and the social construction of the

categories ‘sick’ and ‘healthy’ (*Madness and Civilization,* (1976) and *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (1963)), on the development of the Western prison system (*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977)), and on how man (*sic*) became the object of knowledge production (*The Order of Things* (1970)). His perhaps most famous work is *The History of Sexuality* (1978, 1985, 1986, 2018), which comprises four volumes – the fourth (2018) so far only published in French – in which Foucault analyses sexuality in the Western world. Foucault passed away in 1984 and several of his lecture series have been published post-mortem on topics such as knowledge construction (1970-71), security, territory and population (1977-78), governmentality (1979-80) and practices and care of the self (1981-82). Here, I will engage with a specific part of Foucault’s work, namely his work on biopolitics, surveillance, circulation and power, drawing from some of the aforementioned publications.

In a short chapter entitled ‘Right of Death and Power over Life’ in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1* (1978), Foucault argues that the ancient right of the sovereign to “*take* life or *let* live” was partly replaced by a power to “*foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death” [original italics] (p. 138). Here and in subsequent publications (2007, 2013), Foucault discusses this development through the genealogy[22] of three contingent and overlapping forms of power: sovereign power, disciplinary power and biopower. *Sovereign power*, which Foucault characterised as the sovereign’s right to bring death, was partly replaced – it never fully disappeared – by two other forms of power, namely disciplinary power and biopower. *Disciplinary power*, also called the ‘anatomo-politics of the human body’ by Foucault (1978), centres on “the body as a machine: its discipline, the optimization of its capabilities, the extortion of its forces, the parallel increase of its usefulness and its docility, its integration into systems of efficient and economic controls” (p. 139).

[22] As explained by Una Crowley (2009), a genealogical analysis is a methodology based on “a historical perspective and investigative method, which offers an intrinsic critique of the present” (p. 341).

Biopower, on the other hand, is "focused on the species body, the body imbued with the mechanics of life and serving as the basis of the biological processes" (Foucault, 1978, p. 139). Hence, where disciplinary power targets the individual body, biopower targets the body as part of a population – what Foucault (2013) calls the 'species body': "it is, in a word, a matter of taking control of life and the biological processes of man-as-species (*sic*) and of ensuring that they are not disciplined, but regularized" (p. 67).

These different forms of power, which Foucault argues should be analysed as relational and productive, are implied in diverse mechanisms and political technologies in society. Discipline targets the body for political subjection, breaking down individuals into components, which enables a governing body to classify them and separate the 'normal' from the 'abnormal'. Discipline aims to make individuals visible, legible; one of the main objects of discipline is 'to fix' spatially, making it an "anti-nomadic technique"[23] (Foucault, 1977, p. 218). The prison design of the Panopticon was used by Foucault to illustrate a space in which one can observe the disciplinary mechanism of power in its ideal form (1977, p. 205). The Panopticon design, which was introduced in the 18th century, ensured that every prisoner was kept in a single cell, without any contact with others, while being constantly visible to the invisible supervisor. Foucault described the Panopticon as a generalisable model, a way of defining power relations everyday life in Western Europe since the 18th century (Foucault, 1977). Other institutions that Foucault discussed to illustrate the workings of disciplinary power are schools, factories and military barracks. The objectives of these institutions are total control, visibility and the creation of passive, productive and self-disciplining subjects (Foucault, 1977).

[23] Foucault elaborates on this characteristic of discipline: "discipline fixes; it arrests or regulates movements; it clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals wandering about the country in unpredictable ways; it establishes calculated distributions' (1977, p. 219).

Biopower functions differently: the aim is not to produce obedient individuals or complete control, but, rather, a 'healthy' population. As Foucault (2007) explained, "The apparatus of security [the term used by Foucault for the techniques used to produce a healthy population] 'lets things happen'" (p. 45). Biopower is therefore not focused solely on distinguishing the 'abnormal' from the 'normal', or on creating 'productive' and 'obedient' subjects. The focus of biopower is the delimitation of phenomena within acceptable limits. An example was the establishment of the 'normal level of mortality from smallpox' in the eighteenth century with the help of statistics. As Foucault argued (2007): "It is a matter (…) of revealing a level of the necessary and sufficient actions of those who govern" (p. 66). If the level of mortality from smallpox rose beyond a specific threshold in the population, the government intervened. If it stayed at or below that threshold, no intervention was necessary. As such, biopower focuses on making a population – not individuals – legible through the production of knowledge, in the form of data on death, fertility, hygiene, vaccinations, but also unemployment and per capita income.

Foucault illustrated the three forms of power mechanisms with examples of how three different communicable disease epidemics were treated in France. The first, leprosy, illustrates how sovereign power and its connected juridical mechanism works. Lepers were excluded from society in the Middle Ages, with a strict division between those who were lepers and those who were not. Here, a 'pure community' was strived for (Foucault, 1977). The plague regulations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were completely different. These entailed strict partitioning grids, with regulations stating when people could exit their homes, what food they could have and prohibiting contact with neighbouring homes. People were required to present themselves to inspectors at all times, ensuring permanent registration and perfect visibility. These regulations illustrate the disciplinary system. Thirdly, biopower and its connected security mechanism are illustrated by the governmental response to the smallpox epidemic and its

related inoculation practices in the eighteenth century. Here, the aim was not to completely control the area – and the people in it – in which the disease was present, or to separate the sick from the healthy, but to know how many were infected, who was infected, the mortality rates, and to inoculate the population through large-scale medical campaigns. So, while leprosy was met with exclusion (sovereign power) and the plague with quarantine (disciplinary power), smallpox was targeted through epidemics and medical campaigns (biopower) (Foucault, 2007). However, as stated before, these forms of power should not be seen as exclusionary and all feed into each other. This is discussed further in sub section 2.3: Using Foucault and Agamben in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

2.2.2: Circulation and resistance

This partial replacement of sovereign power by disciplinary power and biopower was connected to the development of 'governmentality' – a term coined by Foucault which combines government and rationality (2007). In his lecture series *Security, Territory, Population* (1977-78), Foucault described governmentality as a form of government in which sovereign power, disciplinary power and 'governmental management' (biopower) have "the population as its main target and the apparatuses of security as its essential mechanisms" (2007, p. 108). Governmentality is thus a logic of governing. He further specified governmentality as:

> The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections, calculations, and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific, albeit very complex, power that has the population as its target, political economy as its major form of knowledge, and apparatuses of security as its essential technical instrument.
>
> (Foucault, 2007, p. 108)

The purpose of governmentality is not the act of governing itself, but the welfare of a population, improvement of its condition, health, wealth and longevity. These

processes were further described by Foucault (2007) in relation to the planning of a town in order to illustrate how the different mechanisms of power deal with "questions of space" (p. 11). Here, he argued that, for biopower to work in towns in Europe in the eighteenth century, circulation was essential: "it was a matter of organizing circulation, eliminating its dangerous elements, making a decision between good and bad circulation, and maximizing the good circulation by diminishing the bad" (Foucault, 2007, p. 18). This was exemplified in his description of the change from walled medieval towns to towns that had been designed to allow for circulation of bodies, commodities and fresh air. Apart from increasing the health and wealth of the population, circulation in these towns was also necessary for allowing surveillance: "It is simply a matter of maximizing the positive elements, for which one provides the best circulation, and of minimizing what is risky and inconvenient, like theft and disease, while knowing that they will never be completely suppressed" (Foucault, 2007, p. 19).

According to Foucault (1978), resistance is inherent to power relations: "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (p. 95). These 'points of resistance', as Foucault (1978) called them, are various and multiple, like the power relations to which they are inherent: "these [points of resistance] play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations" (p. 95). They can mobilise groups or individuals, but also fracture unities or bring about regroupings.

This exercise of power is not "a naked fact" (Foucault, 1978, p. 345). Rather, it is influenced by and influences the space in which the relationship takes place. As Foucault stated: "The relations, the set of relations, or rather, the set of procedures whose role it is to establish, maintain, and transform mechanisms of power, are not 'self-generating' or 'self-subsistent'; they are not founded on themselves" (2007, p. 2). An analysis of these relationships entails acknowledging that they are influenced by and always put into operation systems of differentiation (e.g., differences in

privilege, economic status, linguistics, etc.) and the material means that are used as enforcement (e.g., the threat of the use of weapons, but also systems of surveillance, archives, rules, etc.) (Foucault, 1978, p. 344).

Furthermore, the effects of these mechanisms should not, according to Foucault, be described solely in negative terms. Since power mechanisms are framed too often as only repressing, censoring, concealing and masking, Foucault (1977) wished instead to analyse how these mechanisms *produce* realities, subjects and truths. This does not mean that the mechanisms analysed do not have destructive effects but, rather, that while analysing these mechanisms one should focus on what they produce. This can include violence and/or resistance. A focus on power as productive has been the red thread in this thesis, in which I analyse checkpoints for what they do in relation to their commuters as well as what these commuters do in their daily passages, during which they (re)produce, challenge and change the workings of the checkpoints.

But before I turn to how Foucault's notion of biopolitics has informed my thesis, I will discuss how his work has been received. Here, I focus specifically on the work of Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben, the second theorist whose work constitutes the underlying base of my study.

2.3: Reception: Agamben and the sovereign exception

In the introduction to their *Biopolitics* reader, Timothy Campbell and Adam Sitze (2013, p. 3) argued that today we are witnessing numerous crises that call for scholarly analyses of the relationship between 'life' and 'politics'. They provide several examples, such as anxieties about overpopulation in 'undeveloped regions', struggles concerning healthcare, the global distribution of essential medicines, the global trade in human organs and the War on Terror with its normalisation of distant drone strikes, racial profiling and the creation of exceptional juridical

spaces. As explained by Campbell and Sitze (2013), while the work of Foucault had been used, especially since the end of the 1980s, by feminist and postcolonial authors like Donna Haraway (1989), Paul Gilroy (1994) and Anne Laura Stoler (1995), it was not until 1998, when the English translation of Giorgio Agamben's *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* was published, that Foucault's work on biopolitics began to be seriously taken up within academic fields such as anthropology, geography, sociology and many more (see, for example, Adey, 2009; Anderson, 2010, 2011, 2012; Braun, 2007, 2008, 2014; Fassin, 2011; Ingram, 2008, 2010, 2013; Lemke, 2011; Martin, 2010; Moran, Pallot, & Piacentini, 2012, 2013; Mountz, 2011; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015b, 2018a, b; Rabinow & Rose, 2006; Reid-Henry, 2013; Rose, 2007; Salter, 2007).[24]

In his highly influential *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998), Giorgio Agamben argued that the Foucauldian development of biopolitics needed to be corrected, or at least completed. Here, Agamben combined Foucault's discussion of the inclusion of life into politics with Carl Schmitt's notion of 'the sovereign' – he who decides upon the state of exception (for an in-depth analysis of Schmitt's spatial conceptualisations see, among others, Minca & Rowan, 2015). As suggested by Agamben following Schmitt, the state of exception occurs when 'a sovereign' suspends the juridical order's validity and legal protection of individuals.

The ability to act like a sovereign is manifested in this possibility to *decide* on the state of exception – someone can decide to suspend the juridical order, but also decide not to do this, and it is this possibility to act or not to act that is at the core of the sovereign exception. When the sovereign exception is enacted, this is done through legitimate exceptions to the legal rules. As put forward by Claudio Minca (2017a),

[24] For a more in-depth discussion of the use of Foucault's work in geography, please see, amongst others, the edited volume by Jeremy Crampton and Stuart Elden entitled *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (2007) and the work of Felix Driver (1985, 2002) and Chris Philo (1992, 2000, 2012).

> A space of exception is created when, despite the existence of juridical order, a situation of perceived emergency strips an individual or a group of legal protection and, in some cases, even enables the killing of them without committing a crime.
>
> (p. 2)

Important here is the addition 'without committing a crime'*.* Individuals in positions of authority, such as border guards, but also police, prison guards, teachers or government officials, can act outside of the juridical order at any moment in time, but the space of exception is only created when the decision to suspend the juridical order is not punished as a criminal act.

Enactments of the sovereign exception are deeply relational and occur within specific power relations and spaces. According to Agamben (1998), the purest form of biopolitics – the total inclusion of life into politics – could be found in the (Nazi concentration) camps: "the camp is the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West" (p. 181). But the sovereign exception can occur in various places and to varying degrees, not always as total and violently as in the Nazi concentration camps. Here, I follow Claudio Minca's (2006) argument that the sovereign exception must be localised in a specific place: "the repetition of the exception must, necessarily, be spatialized, for its very existence depends upon its (concrete) location outside of the juridical order" (p. 389).

Agamben's reworking of Foucault's arguments, but also the original arguments of Foucault and the reworking of Foucault's work by others, such as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000), Achille Mbembe (2003), Roberto Esposito (2008, 2011, 2012) and Rosi Braidotti (2013)*,* started to appear as the key analytical frame to use in analyses of the relationship between politics and life in numerous (predominately Anglophone) academic fields in the social sciences and the humanities. The scale at which this happened can be seen as an indication that perhaps we are experiencing a 'biopolitical turn' (Minca, 2015b, p. 165). Even just

within the spheres of cultural and political geographies, we can see a broad range of authors using Foucault's work, such as those analysing affect and biopower in the War on Terror (Anderson, 2010, 2011, 2012), biopolitics and global health (Braun, 2007, 2008, 2014; Ingram, 2008, 2010, 2013), prisons and camps (Moran, Pallot, & Piacentini, 2012, 2013; Mountz, 2011), airports (Adey, 2009; Martin, 2010; Salter, 2007), and biopolitics and humanitarianism (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015b, 2018a, b; Reid-Henry, 2013).

Important cultural and political geographical work has also engaged with Agamben's work (Amoore & de Goede, 2008; Anderson, 2010, 2011; Coleman, 2007; Cunha et al., 2012; Ek, 2006; Elden, 2007; Minca, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2017b). The application of Agamben's theory has been met with criticism. This includes the deployment of the 'state of exception' concept and its usefulness in the analysis of contemporary refugee camps in, for instance, Europe and the Middle East (see, for instance, Katz, 2015; Martin, 2015; Owens, 2009; Ramadan, 2013) since Agamben largely focussed on Nazi concentration camps in his work. Here, although I do not wish to argue that checkpoints represent spaces of exception similar to the Nazi concentration camps, I do find the analytical lens of the state of exception useful to investigate the manifestation of sovereign exception inside the checkpoint, as well as the ways in which Palestinian commuters engage with this by accepting, reinstating and twisting the checkpoint regimes comprising their rules, regulations and the intended workings of their machines and spatial formations/design. By framing the arbitrary workings of the checkpoints as neither accidental nor incidental but, rather, as inherent to their spatial regime and an expression of the sovereign exception, the workings of this exception and the coping mechanisms of the Palestinian commuters can be studied as part of the same spatial regime of power. Next, I will discuss the work of two authors, Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir (2009) who have analysed the occupation of the Palestinian Territories with the use of Foucault's insights and their work has been particularly influential on my own

analysis. Furthermore, I will elaborate on the role played by (withheld) violence and the sovereign exception in the occupation.

2.4: Using Foucault and Agamben in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

2.4.1: Sovereign, disciplinary, and biopower

The occupation of Palestine has been analysed with the use of Foucault's and Agamben's insights in numerous studies by geographers, political scientists, anthropologists and sociologists (see Alatout, 2006; Bornstein, 2008; Gordon, 2009; Gregory, 2004; Hanafi, 2009; Long, 2006; Pallister-Wilkins, 2015b, 2016; Parsons & Salter, 2008). I engage with some of these works later in this chapter. Here, to further discuss how the work of Foucault has informed my study and to explain the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories with the use of a Foucauldian framework, I wish to pay specific attention to the work of Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir (2009).

Azoulay and Ophir (2009) discuss Foucault's conceptualisation of the triad of power and then reflect upon the expressions of sovereign power, disciplinary power and biopower in the Occupied Territories. Firstly, sovereign power, which Azoulay and Ophir identify in Foucault's work as expressed through the power mechanisms that establish general law, has not established a general law in the Territories. Instead, it functions in the occupation through a 'ruling by decree'. As Azoulay and Ophir (2009) argue:

> The Occupied Palestinian Territories are not a legal vacuum. The abuse of life at the hands of the ruling power is not due to some withdrawal of the law, but occurs thanks to a savage proliferation of legalities and illegalities and the creation of an extensive juridical patchwork that has no lawfulness

> of its own and that keeps changing the law itself, the regime's authorities and immunity, and the subject's own status before the law.
>
> (p. 114)

Due to the frequent adoption of decrees in order to modify the juridical order, the overwhelming majority of the actions of the occupying regime in the Palestinian Territories can withstand juridical scrutiny. This been further explained by Yael Berda (2018) in relation to the permit system:

> The Israeli state views the permit system as a regime of privileges that hinges legally on the authority of central command to issue decrees. Contrary to a regime of rights, which obliges the state to avoid infringement of individual rights, a regime of privileges allows the sovereign to grant (or withdraw) services for certain populations, in an instantaneous administrative decision, so the subject is dependent on the grace and goodwill of the ruler.
>
> (p. 40)

Because of the continuously changing nature of the decrees issued, Azoulay and Ophir (2009) argue that Palestinian subjects cannot – and are not supposed to – internalise the law nor behave accordingly.

Secondly, disciplinary power is identified by Azoulay and Ophir (2009) as functioning most explicitly inside institutionalised sites of friction where Palestinians and Israeli forces meet, such as checkpoints. While Foucault's disciplinary apparatuses were framed as being aimed at creating docile, reliable and productive subjects belonging to a specific 'population', Azoulay and Ophir (2009) argue that the disciplinary apparatus active in the occupation does not have this same aim. More specifically, the disciplinary power as exerted at these points of friction is never predictable. Due to the constantly unpredictable workings of the disciplinary apparatus at sites such as checkpoints, the only two things the Israeli

government intends for Palestinians to learn in their interactions with Israeli forces is "the absolute submission of the Palestinian to the agents of the Israeli ruling power and the need to relearn again and again what is expected in order to either please or avoid them" (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009, p. 115). Palestinians cannot – and are not supposed to – learn how to be reliable subjects, because the rules applicable to them change too often and too arbitrarily. As such, again and again, Palestinians are positioned as unruly and punishable subjects who break the (ever-changing) rules.

Thirdly, biopower, which is expressed through the governmental apparatus and in Foucault's formulation is there to produce and assure the wellbeing of a specific population, focuses in the Israeli occupation on counting and classifying of Palestinians in the interest of the Israeli state. However, the counting and classifying is not aimed at the wellbeing of the Palestinian population but, rather, on ostensibly keeping the (Jewish) Israeli population 'safe'. To reach maximal control, the occupation uses an intricate system of classification through which it tracks movement and locates individuals. In the process, it has created as many demographic distinctions as needed to make the population as legible as possible. In this system of counting and classifying, the checkpoints and permit system are essential for the creation of the necessary data.

Azoulay and Ophir (2009) argue that this triad of sovereign, disciplinary and biopower can only be kept in place through the use of large-scale 'withheld violence' (p. 101-102), violence whose outbreak is imminent but not yet manifest. It may be actualised at any moment, but it may also never erupt. It delays, creates queues, undermines plans and its occurrence does not depend upon the obedience of its subjects. Even when one follows all the orders given by the agents of the Israeli regime, violence may still erupt. Similarly, when one does not follow the orders, violence may not erupt. As stated by Azoulay and Ophir (2009):

> In areas and periods when violence suspends its victims all the more forcefully, such as in the crammed pens at checkpoints – full to bursting – where the crowd inches its way to the checkpoint posts (…), the formal difference between eruption and threat is entirely erased, and the body is incessantly vulnerable to all types of harm.
>
> (p. 109)

2.4.2: Sovereign exception

Azoulay and Ophir (2009) demonstrated how the occupation of the Palestinian Territories has been organised in such a way by the Israeli state that it allows for the exercise of sovereign power (Agamben, 1998). In this context in which the juridical order is based on (sovereign) 'ruling by decree', disciplinary power is aimed at creating an always unreliable and punishable subject, and biopower only produces a legible population, agents of the Israeli regime can strip individuals of their legal protection, without committing a crime or being held accountable afterwards. This becomes especially clear when going through the information that has been collected on investigations of civilian Palestinian fatalities in the West Bank from 2011 until 2015 by B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.[25] Between 2011 and 2015, 106 incidents in which a Palestinian civilian was killed by an Israeli soldier were investigated by the Military Advocate General's Corps. The soldiers involved in the incidents were indicted in only two cases: one soldier was convicted to seven months' jail time,

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[25] B'Tselem does not offer more recent data because since 2016 they "stopped referring complaints regarding harm to Palestinians by security forces to the military law enforcement authorities. This decision was made in view of the ineffectuality of trying to promote justice and protection of human rights through a system whose success is measured by its ability to continue to whitewash offenses". As far as B'Tselem (2019) is aware, "no investigations were opened in cases occurring after September 2015 in which Palestinians were killed (…), with the exception of one case, the killing of 'Abd al-Fatah a-Sharif by Elor Azaria". Azaria, an Israeli soldier, who shot and killed an incapacitated al-Fatah a-Sharif in Hebron in 2016, was convicted to 18 months' jail time. He was freed after serving nine months (Kubovich & Landau, 2018).

the other to 18 months, although this conviction was shortened to nine months. In all other cases, the soldiers involved were acquitted. Their act of killing Palestinian civilians was not considered a crime. As stated by B'Tselem (2017d),

> Israel evades its responsibilities in matters concerning the actions of its security forces in the Occupied Territories, and has instead set up alternative systems that merely create a semblance of law enforcement – both in criminal law and civil law. As a result, those responsible for harming Palestinians go unpunished, and the victims receive no compensation for the harm they suffer. The few, isolated exceptions serve only to amplify the illusion that the law enforcement systems in place are functioning properly.

In this thesis, I will analyse how the checkpoints' regime allows for the exercise of sovereign power. The exercise of sovereign power by checkpoint managers is often as 'eruptive' (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009) and deadly as the cases investigated by B'Tselem; a recent example is the killing of Ahmad Manasra'. [26] In my thesis, however, I analyse much less eruptive examples. As will become clear in the upcoming chapters, smaller and less deadly examples of the exercise of sovereign power by checkpoint managers actually shed light on the less visible but equally oppressive daily precarious geographies to which Palestinian commuters are subjected. Before diving further into the literature on these checkpoints, I will turn to the academic debates focused on fortified borders/walling.

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[26] On 20 March 2019 two Palestinian cars were involved in an accident while passing through Al-Nashash checkpoint, located south of Bethlehem. When one of the drivers exited his car to check for damage, he was shot by an Israeli soldier from the watch tower located next to the checkpoint. Manasra', who was on his way to pass through the same checkpoint, witnessed this and got out of his car to help the man who was shot. He brought this man to the nearest hospital – whether or not this man survived the shooting is unclear – and returned to collect the man's wife and daughters who had remained inside the car. When Manasra' got close to this car, he was shot with eight bullets by the same soldier and died on the spot (Al Jazeera News, 2019a). The killing of Manasra' has not been subjected to a military investigation.

2.5: Walls and their openings

Bordering practices and the associated mobilities of bodies on the move have been analysed in depth with the use of a biopolitical framework by scholars within the fields of political geography, political science, border studies and critical international relations (IR). The biopolitics of border security in particular is often analysed by this body of work from a 'surveillance' perspective, in which the collection of data through registration and the implementation of biometrics is used to identify those who need to be scrutinised and potentially stopped (see, e.g., Adey, 2009; Amoore, 2006; Martin, 2010, 2012; Murakami Wood, 2013; Pero & Smith, 2014; Van Houtum, 2010; Vaughan-Williams, 2009, 2010). Authors like Nick Vaughan-Williams (2010) and Rebecca Pero and Harrison Smith (2014) argue that, for biopolitical borders to be able to make this distinction – to be able to govern moving bodies – they need to allow circulation of these very bodies, together with the related commodities, information and money. Part of this literature has focused on specific sites, such as airports (Adey, 2009; Martin, 2010; Salter, 2007), while other work has paid attention to the presence of borders in our everyday spaces (Amoore, 2006; Warren, 2013). Furthermore, the term 'border' itself has been critically assessed through the analysis of the multiplication of borders (Vaughan-Williams, 2009) and the relational character of the process of 'bordering' (Van Houtum, 2010*).* A full-fledged overview of this rich academic field is beyond the scope of this chapter. With my research project, I aim to contribute in particular to the debates concerning walling/checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories specifically and, more generally, to the broader academic debates in the fields of political geography, political science, critical international relations and border studies concerning the re-emergence of walling as a favoured border policy. After briefly engaging with these broader debates concerning walling, I will introduce the work of several authors who have analysed border walls and their porous – or permeable – nature with the use of a biopolitical framework. They use this framework to underline the importance of this porosity

to the workings of border walls as surveillance technologies. Furthermore, I will discuss the academic literature on the Israeli checkpoints in the Palestinian Territories, focusing on the work that addresses the daily experiences of the commuters engaging with the checkpoints.

It is estimated that border walls have been erected since 1990 BCE, with Hadrian's Wall and the Great Wall of China as examples (Leuenberger, 2014). While the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, border walls have since re-emerged as a favoured policy among some politicians in Western liberal democracies, in Europe and far beyond, to keep out unwanted migrants and possible terrorists (Vallet, 2014). These walls are simultaneously material and symbolic manifestations of political boundaries and designated configurations of state power (Till et al., 2013). As illustrated by a rich body of academic work (see, among others, Brown, 2010; Jones, 2012; Leuenberger, 2014; MacCannell, 2005; Vallet & David, 2012), the walling of borders to block the arrival of unwanted 'alien' bodies of all kinds and provenances has a long history. However, despite these numerous and relevant precedents, there is a general consensus that the post-9/11 years have witnessed a global proliferation of new border walls (Vallet, 2014).

Recent academic debates have revolved around why so many border walls are globally being built now and what the most immediate effects are. For example, authors such as Elisabeth Vallet (2014) and Wendy Brown (2010) suggest that post-9/11 walls are different from those of the past, which were often built by nation-states to claim territorial sovereignty and keep other countries' governments from invading their territories. The new border walls are instead largely built as a response to the uncontrolled movement of individuals and non-state actors. In fact, the 9/11 attacks in New York (2001), and later the attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), or more recently in Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016), have shown how non-state actors may intervene violently as 'enemy-others'. This fear of the 'enemy-other' is connected in particular by Brown (201) in her book *Walled States,*

Waning Sovereignty to nation-states' increased difficulty with governing their sovereign territory. Accordingly, the calls for new border walls may be understood as a response to the decline of sovereign power in a "globalized world [that] harbours fundamental tensions between opening and barricading, fusion and partition, erasure and reinscription" (Brown, 2010, p. 7). Such 'enemy-others', in these narratives, materialise in the figure of terrorists as well as of irregular migrants. The border walls, therefore, are meant to (presumably) control these uncontrolled movements and prevent unwanted enemy-others from 'entering' (on this, see, also Jones, 2012; Jones & Johnson, 2014; Vallet & David, 2012). As Reece Jones (2012) argues in *Border Walls*, with the implementation of the War on Terror after 9/11 and the fear of uncontrollable 'enemy-others', walling has become an expression of many nation-states' urge to promote and enforce the management of a population that is as homogeneous as possible, and located within clearly demarcated borders, an urge that predates several post-9/11 political landscapes and has been developing long before 9/11 (Feigenbaum, 2010; Jones, 2012).[27] Also, according to Marc Silberman, Karen Till and Janet Ward (2012), 'walling' is a material manifestation precisely of the wish to constantly and repeatedly reproduce a clear line between people who belong and people who do not.

Remarkably, despite these border walls consisting of intricate combinations of visible techniques (e.g., bricks, chain-link fences and barbed wire) and less visible ones (e.g., such as infrared cameras and underground sensors) in practice they often remain rather porous and relatively unsuccessful in fully controlling the movement of such real-and-imagined-enemy-others (see Jones & Johnson, 2014; Till et al., 2013). As noted already in 2005 by Dean MacCannell, building impregnable fortifications is only possible in the imagination. The 'effectiveness' of

[27] Famous pre-9/11 walls that are still active today are the demilitarised zone between the two Koreas (in use since 1953), the many walls – 'peace lines' – built in cities in Northern Ireland such as Belfast and Derry to separate Loyalist (Protestant) neighbourhoods from Republican (Catholic) neighbourhoods (of which the first were built in 1969), and the barrier separating Greek and Turkish Cyprus (installed in 1974) (Di Cintio, 2013).

the 'new' border walls in fencing off 'migrants' remains indeed questionable, since any reduction of the registered presence of refugees – highly publicised by pro-wall governments – normally corresponds to an increase of unregistered passages via smugglers' routes or, alternatively, the deflection from the usual migrant routes towards more viable itineraries (Topak, 2014). So, if walls are not successful at stopping (irregular) movement, what do they do?

2.5.1: Border walls as surveillance technology

Biopolitical analyses of these border walls can shed light on this question. As Claudio Minca and I have argued elsewhere (see Minca & Rijke, 2017, 2018), whether or not walls are porous seems perhaps less important than understanding how they operate as an 'apparatus'[28] conceived to perform materially and metaphorically the supposed radical difference between 'inside' and 'outside'. In fact, when leaders emphasise in their speeches the powerful materiality of border walls, they convey an almost epidermic sense of reality: the wall will be there, visible, touchable, real, impenetrable, monumental. If we look at the proliferation of border walls from the perspective of their visual but also almost tactile presence, we may wonder whether these 'assemblages' – wholes made up of a multiplicity of human and non-human entities (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980; DeLanda, 2006) – are actually about 'migrants' and 'refugees' or if they instead represent a spatial technology aimed at symbolically governing the body politic of the concerned countries: a sort of 'self-fencing', a practice to preserve the idea of a possible and final territorial integrity. Border walls, from this perspective, can be a theatrical

[28] Apparatus, or in French '*dispositif',* is a term that is used both by Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben. Foucault uses it throughout his work to "designate a configuration or arrangement of elements and forces, practices and discourses, power and knowledge, that is both strategic and technical" (Burchell, 2006, p. xxiii). As put slightly differently by Agamben (2009): "I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings" (p. 14). In this thesis, I use the English term 'apparatus'.

performative presence of a strong, protective nation-state, claiming to be capable of keeping the 'enemy-other' out.

Taking this one step further, one could argue that the relative porosity of border walls is key to their functioning. As argued by Polly Pallister-Wilkins (2011, 2015a, 2016), walls need movement and circulation. While walls may be associated with blocking movement, she argued that walls play an important governance role by allowing movement: "filtering, bridging, disciplining, and constructing populations and practices of intervention in the milieu of circulation" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015a, p. 440). Hence, walls are important tools to control porosity, which is harnessed here, according to Pallister-Wilkins (2015a), for the purposes of governance. As a disciplinary tool, walls enclose and arrange elements within their confines, while they function biopolitically as a means to identify and categorise populations. The walls Pallister-Wilkins (2015a) has analysed include the Israeli Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This wall, she argued, "enables Israel to comprehensively regulate Palestinian circulation, discipline and govern the occupied population using topographical, spatial and material forms of control working in conjunction with the forces of circulation" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2015a, p. 451).

Along the same lines, Stephane Rosière and Reece Jones (2012) argued that border walls are rarely in place just to stop movement. More specifically, they stated that "the effectiveness of these barriers is linked not to preventing movement but rather to creating an efficient system of selection that determines which types of mobility to allow" (Rosière & Jones, 2012, p. 232). Border fortifications are illustrative of the hierarchy of flows in force. While the unhindered flow of certain people and goods are essential for many transnational corporations and nation-states, unwanted people and goods should be controlled – although not necessarily completely stopped. To illustrate this, they discussed the border between the United States (US) and Mexico, which is (becoming increasingly) fortified while it remains the most often-crossed border in the world. Rosière and Jones (2012)

coined the term 'teichopolitics'[29] to describe this biopolitical "practice of modern states and their regulation of individual lives and populations through an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugations of bodies and the control of populations" (p. 219).

Nigel Parsons and Mark Salter (2008) also argued for the importance of including the 'biopolitical practices of mobility regulation' when analysing the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories. In their view, "previous work on the Israeli-Palestinian issue has focused too heavily on the sovereign or disciplinary aspects of the conflict (laws, decrees, incarceration, and surveillance)" (Parsons & Salter, 2008, p. 702). While Parsons and Salter (2008) did recognise the importance of these mechanisms in the occupation, they argued that the role played by biopolitics and the allowance of circulation and flows in the occupation has not been fully acknowledged. Here, they used the Israeli Wall – what they call 'the barrier' – as an example. They stated that the barrier does not fully close off the Palestinian Territories:

> It radically constricts the flow of population (and goods). Palestinians can still pass through the barrier – the issue is then not enclosure, but control of porosity. Crucial to the workings of the barrier is the biopolitical control it reinforces in other kinds of Israeli state power such as identification, residency, and authorisation.
>
> (Parsons & Salter, 2008, p. 703)

To study walls as porous security technologies, one has to keep in mind that walls are not just cement, brick and barbed wire but also that, as argued by Pallister-Wilkins (2016), "they include openings, checkpoints and gates that allow for the movement of people and goods" (p. 154). As Pallister-Wilkins (2016) continues, openings in walls do not "only channel and check, but also capture, categorize and

[29] As Rosière and Jones (2012) explain, they have used term 'teichopolitics' because the ancient Greek word 'teichos' means city wall (p. 219).

create particular sets of data about the populations they govern, which makes them productive technologies, producing the very datasets that come to make up knowledge about particular populations" (p. 156).

2.5.2: Walling and Israel/Palestine

Before moving further forward, it is important to relate the Israeli Wall and its accompanying architecture of occupation to the post-9/11 walls discussed above. As described earlier in the introductory chapter of this thesis, the architecture of occupation – the Wall, checkpoints, settlements and their bypass roads, earth mounds and trenches and no-go military zones – is an inherent part of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. This occupation is, as stated by Ariel Handel (2009), predominantly about "Palestinian space shrinking as Israeli space keeps growing" (p. 179). This architecture of occupation is in many ways different from the post-9/11 walls: it is not only located on a 'border' but scattered all over the West Bank; it is comprised of many types of barriers; its development started long before 9/11; it is aimed at controlling and slowing Palestinian movement *within* the West Bank as well as towards Jerusalem and Israel; and one of its most explicit outcomes is the growing presence of Jewish settlers in the West Bank.

However, while the checkpoints studied in this thesis will be positioned firmly in the occupation of the Palestinian Territories and its specific politics, I do believe a discussion of the body of work that analyses post-9/11 walls and their inherent porosity is fruitful for the context of this research. It represents a debate to which this thesis speaks for two reasons. Firstly, as argued by Reece Jones (2012), the Wall built by Israel, and its accompanying architecture, does have broad similarities with other post-9/11 wall building projects. Its presence has been justified by reinforcing fear within Israeli society of an uncontrollable and barbaric 'enemy-other' – personified in the figure of the Palestinian suicide-bomber. Moreover, it has been framed as representing a 'border' between a civilised Israel and a violent outside – where the outside is not only represented by the Palestinian Territories,

but all countries bordering Israel. Indeed, all Israel's 'borders' are (partially) walled.[30] Secondly, as the research of Pallister-Wilkins (2011, 2015a, 2016) and Parsons and Salter (2008) indicates, like the post-9/11 walls, the architecture of occupation is also inherently porous, and the checkpoints analysed in this thesis represent limited and unpredictable openings that need the flow and circulation of people for the registration and implementation of the security apparatus.

2.6: Checkpoints as spatial political technologies

Following the theoretical debates in political geography introduced in this chapter on bordering practices, walling and border fortifications, I use a biopolitical framework to analyse checkpoints as openings in the larger architecture of occupation aimed at monitoring, disciplining and selectively limiting Palestinian mobility. While doing this, I address the questions posed by Michel Foucault (1982): "how is power exercised?" and "what happens when individuals exert power over others?"(p. 337). I do so by focusing on the daily experiences of commuters passing through checkpoints, how the checkpoint regimes engage with them, and how they engage with and influence the workings of the checkpoints.

As such, I analyse the experiences of Palestinian commuters, as well as of Jewish settlers, and the workings of the checkpoints as an expression of the power mechanisms at play, in which all entities involved in the checkpoints' workings act in response to each other. Inherent to this analysis, I pay attention to the material means – the machines – involved in the checkpoints' workings, and the diverse ways Palestinian commuters engage with and, in the process, influence the workings of the checkpoints. To do this, I frame the checkpoints as 'spatial political

[30] Borders is placed in between inverted commas because the location of its borders with the Palestinian Territories, Syria and Lebanon are disputed (Collins-Kreiner, Mansfeld, & Kliot, 2006).

technologies', aimed at producing a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility affecting the people subjected to them.

'Technology' is a term that frequently appears in Foucault's writing. Historian Michael Behrent (2013) explains that Foucault used the term 'technology' to indicate the dual role played by power relations in his work. On the one hand, technologies are described as procedures to control and manage human beings, "based less on overt violence than on the subtle manipulation of human behaviour" (Behrent, 2013, p. 84). On the other hand, Foucault used the term 'technology' to discuss power as being both productive and creative: "a relationship that moulds, adapts, triggers, and stimulates individual behaviour, particularly by shaping bodily conduct" (Behrent, 2013, p. 60). An example of a technology analysed by Foucault as such is the aforementioned Panopticon (Foucault, 1977).

Foucault most explicitly spoke of political technologies in *Discipline and Punish* (1977). In the first chapter of the book, he stated he wanted to "study the metamorphosis of the punitive methods on the basis of a political technology of the body in which might be read a common history of power relations and object relations" (p. 24). Later in the same chapter he continued that:

> There may be a 'knowledge' of the body that is not exactly the science of its functioning, and a mastery of its forces that is more than the ability to conquer them: this knowledge and this mastery constitute what might be called the political technology of the body.
>
> (Foucault, 1977, p. 26)

This technology, as argued by Foucault (1977), is diffuse, "made up of bits and pieces" (p. 26), and "operates [as] a micro-physics of power, whose field of validity is situated in a sense between great functionings [of institutions and state apparatuses] and the bodies themselves with their materiality and their forces" (p. 26). As further elucidated by legal scholar Jonathan Simon (2013), "a political

technology of the body is a craft, system, or method for organizing bodies to produce specific effects that have a political value or purpose" (p. 62).

I have found inspiration in the work of Claudio Minca and Stuart Elden that takes up the concept of 'political technology'. Minca used this concept when analysing 'the camp', which he defines as: "a spatial political technology aimed at governing, disciplining, and qualifying 'migrants'" (Altin & Minca, 2017, p. 31; see also Katz, Martin, & Minca, 2018; and Minca, 2015a). In his discussion on the importance of analysing camps as inherent to our modern-day geo-political economies and not as exceptions, he argued that "camps were – and in many contemporary cases remain – part of a set of broader political technologies, aimed at controlling mobility and 'governing life' through coercion and direct or indirect violent means" (Minca, 2015a, p. 76). Furthermore, Minca (2015a) addressed the importance of analysing camps as *spatial* political technologies, arguing that one should analyse camp geographies as "an ever-present spatial formation in the management of custody and care characterizing many authoritarian regimes as well as contemporary democracies" (p. 74). While Minca focuses in his analysis on different moving bodies and different technologies (i.e. migrants and refugee camps) than I do in this study, I found his work insightful when deploying the term 'spatial political technology' in my analysis of checkpoints as spatial formations aimed at controlling mobility. In a different way, Elden (2013) argued in *The Birth of Territory* that territory should be understood as a political technology, "or perhaps better as a bundle of political technologies" (p. 322). Instead of seeing territory only as 'the land', Elden proposed to understand it as a sociotechnical construction. For him, territory comprises land in a political-economic sense, as in land use and possession of land, but it also comprises "techniques for measuring land and controlling terrain. Measure and control – the technical and the legal – need to be thought alongside land and terrain" (Elden, 2013, p. 323).

Hence, following Minca (2015a) and Elden (2013), I argue that framing checkpoints as political technologies entails analysing them as made up of specific practices and techniques aimed at organising and producing the embodied subjects subjected to them – at measuring and controlling. To do this, I focus on the everyday interplay between the checkpoint managers machines and the commuters subjected to them. I focus on how the checkpoints' regime controls and selectively limits Palestinian mobility and the role played by 'withheld' and 'eruptive' violence in the workings of checkpoints (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009). Adding to this, in framing these political technologies as *spatial* political technologies, I add an explicit spatial element to the analysis and focus on how checkpoints produce selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

To further develop my project's theoretical framework, I wish to address the inclusion of material entities in the analysis. As described in this chapter, Foucault included material means as one of the factors that has to be analysed as a part of the power dynamics at play and as a factor influencing political technologies acting on bodies. To further develop this argument, I turn to the work of Reviel Netz (2004) and Randal McGuire (2013). While neither engages directly with the work of Foucault, their analyses of barbed wire and the wall between the US and Mexico, respectively, shed light on the important role played by non-human actors in the creation of specific geographies of mobility.

In *Barbed Wire, an Ecology of Modernity,* Netz (2004) discussed the development of barbed wire from its initial design to control the movement of cattle and enclose grazing areas, to its use in war and camps to control the movement of humans (p. xii). In this process, one could argue that barbed wire became an important political technology, originally designed with one rationale in mind – to keep cows from walking away and to protect them from other animals and humans – but developed into doing much more than it was initially intended for: a technology used, for instance, to enclose the victims of murderous regimes such as Hitler's Third Reich

and the Soviet Union under Stalin. Netz's (2004) analysis of barbed wire illustrates the important role that non-human actors play – in which the interplay of human and non-human agency produces a specific set of relationships.

This interplay is a continuous process and can produce unexpected outcomes. As described by archaeologist McGuire (2013) in his analysis of the wall in an American/Mexican border town, the local people living in this area continuously illegally breach the wall by climbing over it, tunnelling under it, throwing items over it or touching hands and sharing stories through the gaps between the bars. In these transgressions, the wall is, in McGuire's (2013) words, 'rematerialised' and changed from an unbreachable barrier to a hindrance that can be (partly) overcome. As a response, the US government started rebuilding the border barrier, and in 2011 a new nine-metre-high steel construction was constructed (McGuire, 2013, p. 474). But the people living in the area still found ways to breach each new wall. As such, McGuire's (2013) analysis showed how the US border police, the inhabitants and the materiality of the wall are caught up in an endless interplay that produces selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

Checkpoints, as in the cases of barbed wire and the wall between the US and Mexico, are characterised by relationships that incorporate the possibility and the actualisation of violence against the commuters – by constraining their mobility and by subjecting them to a regime of uncertainty and arbitrariness. They are the outcome of the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli commuters, Israeli checkpoint managers *and* the machines and other materials present in the checkpoints. In my analysis, I focus on how these *assemblages* of biopolitical categories, material devices and barriers, procedures of control, calculative rationalities and selective practices – in other words, checkpoints – *do things*. Inspired by McGuire's (2013) analysis, I pay specific attention to the messiness related to the daily practices of the checkpoints analysed. I not only look at how the checkpoints and their machines violently clash with Palestinians but also at

how Palestinians continuously engage with, and often transgress, the intended workings of the checkpoints and their machines and, in the process, produce an endless array of unexpected outcomes.

In the next chapter, I will discuss the methods used in this PhD project to collect the necessary data in order to answer the research questions that were posed in the introduction of this thesis.

Photo Dossier II

Settlements

Figure P.5: Har Gilo (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure P.6: A small Jewish settlement located southeast of Bethlehem (source: Rijke, May 2016).

Figure P.7: A Jewish settlement located in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem (source: Rijke, June 2016).

I keep having to remind myself that so much of the built-up area around Bethlehem are not Palestinian towns. When you drive around, in almost any direction you look, you see settlements with their typical red roofs. Guts Etzion is not ‘a settlement’, as I used to think, but an entire area and it’s huge!

(fieldnotes, 20 May 2016)

Figure P.8: Beitar Illit settlement located southwest of Bethlehem and one of the largest Jewish settlements in the West Bank (source: Rijke, May 2016).

Omer takes me to Wadi Fukin, a village located south of Bethlehem. This area is not walled and many people enter Israel illegally here. On our way back to the car we bypass the Jewish settlement Beitar Illit. It is built on the hill that overlooks Wadi Fukin. Beitar Illit is one of the biggest settlements in the West Bank, with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Wadin Fukin only has a population of around 1000. They are building more homes in Beitar Illit. Omer explains that the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu stated that Beitar Illit should double in size and that he will support this. I don't know what this would mean for the Palestinian inhabitants of the area, but it can't be good…

(fieldnotes, 7 June 2017)

Figure P.9: The Palestinian village Wadi Fukin on the left with a new constructed section of Beitar Illit on the right (source: Rijke, May 2019).

Chapter 3

Being in the Field

Methodological Reflections

3.1: Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the fieldwork that I have done to collect the necessary data. I describe the sites I have studied and the methods that I have used to do so, explaining why I chose these methods specifically to answer the research questions formulated in Chapter 1 of this thesis. I will also discuss the ethical dilemmas and trade-offs that are inherent to doing research in highly-militarised areas such as the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

This thesis is based on data collected in 2016, 2017 and 2019 during a 7-month period of fieldwork spent in the Bethlehem area. The first fieldwork trip was preceded by a three-week stay at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba, Israel, in April 2016, during which I finalised my research proposal and prepared my fieldwork. When I arrived in Bethlehem in May 2016, it was not for the first time. I had already spent three months there in 2013 to collect data for my master's thesis[31] and one month in 2014 to prepare my PhD proposal. On the basis of the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter, I implemented a combination of qualitative methods. These methods were positioned within an ethnographic research approach, in which the study of the daily activities of checkpoints commuters was enriched by a broader analysis of their interactions with the architecture of occupation in the Bethlehem area. A combination of participant observation, semi-structured interviews and go-along interviews was chosen to investigate the power relations at play at the checkpoints, and the diverse and arbitrary geographies that stem from them.

[31] During the fieldwork for my master thesis, I analysed the 'Wall Museum', a project in which approximately 100 posters depicting stories of Palestinian women and children were attached to the Wall in Bethlehem. In that study I analysed what the Wall Museum meant for the women who had participated in it, how it connected to *sumud*, an Arabic word that can be translated as 'steadfastness' or 'resilience', and whether participating in the project had changed the relationships the women had with the Wall (see Rijke & Van Teeffelen, 2014).

This combination of methods was inspired by the work of Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013, 2014), who analysed how gendered histories of place are repeated and ruptured in the conscious and unconscious relations of teenage girls in a semi-rural post-industrial area of Wales, and Gillian Rose, Monica Degen and Begum Basdas (2010), who investigated the influence of different mobilities on the materialisation of shopping malls. These methods provide researchers with a mix of data on the contexts analysed: responses from interviewees, observations made during go-along interviews, participant observations, photos and videos produced by the respondents themselves. Such an interrelated mix of data, as will be elaborated on later, enabled me to analyse what checkpoints 'do' relative to different bodies at different moments. The data collection was not restricted to *specific* moments (e.g., the planned interviews or the mornings I observed the checkpoints); rather, it was a continuous process throughout the periods I was in Bethlehem.

Doing fieldwork in a highly militarised context, during which moments of 'eruptive violence' were positioned in an ever-present atmosphere of 'withheld violence' (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009), inevitably implies ethical considerations. Most specifically considering safety – of the people I interviewed, but also myself – and the power imbalances between us. Moreover, it meant that I was affected by the context of the fieldwork, something I will also address in this chapter.

In the following sections I explain the choice of methods and embed these in the relevant literature. I explicitly position myself in the research (Haraway, 1988, Harding, 1986), choosing to remain visible throughout this thesis. I will elaborate on my positionality and experiences in the field and on how these have informed the research project in the upcoming sections.

3.2: Sites

The initial decision to focus on the Bethlehem area was based on several considerations. Most importantly, it is an area that houses several large checkpoints. In this research project, I focused on three of these, namely Checkpoint 300, Al Walaja and The Tunnels. It is also an area where the Wall is explicitly visible in parts of the city. It is positioned in such a way that Rachel's tomb, a religiously significant site for Judaism, Christianity and Islam, is on 'the Israeli side' of the Wall. Moreover, the area south of Bethlehem is an area that is particularly densely populated with settlements and their accompanying material barriers. Jewish settlers refer to this area as 'Guts Etsion'. Furthermore, my earlier connections to Bethlehem meant that I was familiar with the city, its surroundings, the three checkpoints and already had a social network on which I could rely. Figure 1.2 on page 9 shows the presence of the Wall, settlements and checkpoints in the Bethlehem area.

3.2.1: Selection of the checkpoints

Several factors motivated the decision to focus specifically on the Checkpoint 300, The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints. Checkpoint 300 is one of the busiest checkpoints in the West Bank and a terminal checkpoint. This means that it is a highly controlled and specifically designed checkpoint. Also, my previous experience of living in Bethlehem meant that I was aware of the chaotic and arbitrary nature of Checkpoint 300. The inclusion of The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints was necessary to shed light on the workings of so-called 'shared checkpoints'. These checkpoints are used by Jewish Israelis and Palestinians with an Israeli or Jerusalem ID card. By analysing Checkpoint 300 and the two car checkpoints in the same research project, it became clear that, although these checkpoints are designed in a dramatically different way, they are very similar. All three can be analysed as spatial political technologies that produce arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility. Due to the differences in design between these

checkpoints, the influence of the design and architecture of the checkpoints on their functioning, especially regarding the presence/absence of machines, became more explicit.

Furthermore, while Qalandiya Checkpoint, a terminal checkpoint that is located between Ramallah and Jerusalem and that is infamous for the occurrence of spectacular violence, has been analysed in depth by authors such as Helga Tawil-Souri (2009, 2010, 2011b, 2017) and Rema Hammami (2004, 2010, 2015), when I started working on this thesis, there was no other academic work focussed on these three checkpoints.

Next, I will discuss the main methods I have used during my fieldwork to collect data, namely checkpoint observations and two types of interviewing techniques: semi-structured interviews and go-along interviews.

3.3: Checkpoint observations

How and when I observed the checkpoints was largely determined by their spatial regime and accompanying architecture. I spent up to eight hours each week during rush hour (from 4:00 to 8:00 am) standing inside Checkpoint 300 to observe its workings. This meant that several times a week I would arrive at the checkpoint at 4:00 am and I would stay until 7:00 or 8:00 am. Due to the design of Checkpoint 300 (see pages 18, 158 and 198 for maps of the checkpoint), I was able to stand just inside the checkpoint, in front of the first turnstile in the humanitarian lane/exit lane. This is a special lane for select groups of Palestinians, such as women, children and elderly, in order to avoid the large crowds in the main entrance lane (see Chapters 4 and 5 for a more in-depth discussion of this lane). There, I was only a few steps away from the exit of the checkpoint that leads to the Bethlehem side of the Wall and into Area A. This position also allowed me to step out of the checkpoint away from the checkpoint managers – which at times I felt was

necessary to avoid tense interactions with them. From this location, I could observe the passage of Palestinian commuters through the first turnstile. When I wished to go further into the checkpoint, I could pass the first turnstile and venture inside the main building of the checkpoint. Then I could observe the queues waiting to enter the metal detector and x-ray rooms, and pass through the second and third set of turnstiles. These led to the booths in which the IDF soldiers who checked every commuter's paperwork were seated, through which I could pass, but from which I also could turn around and return to the Bethlehem side of the checkpoint. Hence, on most mornings I was able to walk around the whole checkpoint building, although at times the size of the waiting crowds made it difficult and even impossible to enter the main checkpoint building or the area in front of the first turnstile.

During these observations, I was able to witness the intricate workings of the checkpoint regime and the selective geographies of mobility that are produced and reproduced on a daily basis. By being present inside Checkpoint 300 for at least eight hours each week, I could observe the interactions between Palestinian commuters and checkpoint managers and the arbitrary nature of the workings of the checkpoint. Moreover, I could witness how the Palestinians commuters responded to, reproduced and manipulated the checkpoint's workings. More specifically, I was able to observe both routine and moments of exception, moments when the checkpoint functioned according to the rules and regulations, and moments when these rules and regulations were suspended. I observed mornings when all went smoothly, and mornings when I experienced the 'withheld violence' (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009) inside the checkpoint as almost tangible, or was the witness of occurrences of the checkpoint soldiers' 'eruptive violence' directed at Palestinian commuters. What type of morning it would be would never be clear until I arrived at the checkpoint, nor was the atmosphere at the checkpoint stable once I got there – one moment and one interaction could change a smooth and quiet morning into a violent one. I was able to observe both the intricate daily

workings of the checkpoint and the way the Palestinian commuters reacted. These reactions ranged from accepting the decisions made by the checkpoint managers to manipulating the checkpoint regime and its machines, to even rejecting them completely. By sharing these observations during the go-along and in-depth home interviews, I was able to reflect with the interviewees on the checkpoint's workings and their own engagements with its regime.

During part of my checkpoint observations I went to Checkpoint 300 together with the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel team (EAPPI). The EAPPI, an organisation that provides an international presence in the West Bank (2019), is one of the international organisations active in the West Bank. One of the EAPPI teams' activities is going to large checkpoints during rush hour to observe the workings of the checkpoint and produce reports afterwards. The EAPPI was generally accepted as a presence inside the checkpoint by the private security guards and the IDF. For about half of my checkpoint observations I went to Checkpoint 300 together with the EAPPI, as this had several advantages for me. Firstly, it made me less 'visible' to the checkpoint managers. While I had been invited by Ben Gurion University to work on my research, I decided not to make my role known to the Israeli soldiers and private security guards present inside the checkpoints, fearing I would be denied entry. Going to the checkpoint with the EAPPI meant that I was seen as being part of this organisation, and hence, also accepted. The ethical implications of being associated with such an organisation will be discussed later in this chapter. Secondly, joining the EAPPI also meant that I did not have to observe the checkpoint alone. Getting up in the middle of the night to stand in a closed-off, tense and highly militarised space for several hours can be an intimidating task. By going to the checkpoint together with two or three other people, I tried to minimise the risks associated with being in such a context. When I got further into my fieldwork, I felt more comfortable with going to the checkpoint alone, which I ended up doing quite regularly. However, during the first period of

my fieldwork and also when the checkpoint regime got more violent during Ramadan in 2017, I was happy I did not have to do this alone.

During my checkpoint observations, I often wrote down notes on my mobile phone and took pictures. While taking pictures, I had to make sure that I was not caught by an Israeli soldier/security guard since photography was not permitted inside Checkpoint 300. However, a more pressing ethical issue arose. I had visited the checkpoint before and had seen foreigners photographing the long queues. I was very hesitant to do this because it felt inappropriate and insensitive. While some my interviewees encouraged me to take pictures 'to show the world what is happening' (a comment I heard more often during my checkpoint observations), other interviewees told me that they did not want me to photograph them – they indicated that they felt this would dehumanise them further. To address this ethical problem, I ensured that I either did not photograph people's faces or explicitly asked a person's consent to take their photograph. If they responded negatively, which did happen at times, I would put the camera (or my mobile phone) away. The decision to take photographs was based on my belief that the photographs would help me to illustrate the context analysed in this thesis.

As I discuss more at length in the section on 'limitations of the study' on page 135, this form of intense observation was not possible at the car checkpoints. I tried to find a spot to observe these checkpoints from a distance. However, to be able to see anything of the workings of the checkpoints meant getting close enough to be spotted by the soldiers at work. I also did not wish to disclose my research objectives to the soldiers managing these checkpoints and the risks of either getting stopped, arrested or hurt were too large to walk around in the area. To observe these car checkpoints, therefore, I passed through them at least once a week, alone or during go-along interviews.

Besides these specific moments of observation, I was also confronted with checkpoints during my travels in the West Bank. Travelling anywhere inside the

West Bank, to East Jerusalem or Israel entails passing through at least one checkpoint or taking elaborate detours instead. My own passages were, of course, dramatically different from the passages of Palestinians – something I will elaborate on later in this chapter.

Bringing it even closer to home, due to the location of the house in which I was staying, Checkpoint 300 was an inherent part of my daily life. The checkpoint was located only a few minutes' walk from my home, and the car lane was positioned at the end of the street that my balcony faced. This meant that the checkpoint was never far away. There were many sounds specific to life in Bethlehem, such as the *muezzins* making the call to prayer and the shouts of the drivers of service (shared) taxis looking for passengers. There were also the sounds of the occupation: the sirens of military vehicles, the buzzing of drones, the explosions of tear gas and sound bombs, or the sound of guns being fired (or fireworks, and one quickly learns to recognise the difference). However, the checkpoint itself had its own specific soundscapes. The honking of the cars lining up to pass through the checkpoint, for instance, was a continuous presence in my daily life. The car horns functioned like a clock – they would start at around 3:30 am, and stop at around 5 or 6 am, depending on the speed of the soldiers. Then they would start again at around 4 pm, and stop again at around 7 or 8 pm. The honking would start for the last time of the day at around 10 or 11 pm and last for about an hour, all indicating the rush hour comings and goings at the checkpoint. Other sounds also poured out of the checkpoint, such as the shouts of people trying to pass through and the orders given by soldiers over the intercoms. Silence during these expected moments of rush hour also became a signal, as it often indicated that something had happened and that the checkpoint was closed. Living this close to the checkpoint and the Wall, but also moving around in the West Bank, meant that the architecture of occupation was an inherent part of my daily life. So, as stated earlier, 'doing research' was not something that happened at certain moments. In many ways, I was always doing research.

To record my experiences, I kept a fieldwork 'diary'. In this diary I wrote down my observations at the checkpoints and during the interviews, but I also wrote about my life in Bethlehem. This is important to do meticulously as one easily forgets the finer details of observations (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). While certain moments may seem trivial at the time, these moments can later be essential when working through one's observations. A morning inside the checkpoint when 'nothing happens' becomes insightful when looking at violence as something that may or may not occur. At the end of each day or at least every other day, I would write notes in my diary, either in short key words, or in a long narrative style. This diary was initially meant to remain private and I did not censure myself. The notes, which I usually wrote down in a mixture of English and Dutch, were at times filled with emotions, such as anger, sadness and frustration with the occupation. They also contained worries about the fieldwork, about my own position and about how I dealt with being 'in the field'.

Since the observations recorded in this diary turned out to be instrumental in my analysis, sections of these notes have been included in this thesis. They have been translated into English when necessary. They have been rewritten to ensure anonymity, and the language has been altered when deemed necessary. I used several 'locations' for this diary during the fieldwork, such as my phone, notebooks and my laptop. I made sure that in the end all was chronologically organised on my laptop. Besides recording observations that might be important for my research, this was a way to create a space in which I could reflect on my own vulnerabilities and failures. It also helped me to become aware of the implications of the unequal power relations between me and my interviewees, of my own positionality and my own personal viewpoints. This became especially important when reflecting on my

interviews with Jewish settlers. In this way, the diary was a way to keep myself from falling for the 'god trick' (Haraway, 1988)[32].

Apart from this diary, I also wrote weekly reports to my supervisors while I was in the field. At first, they were intended to keep my supervisors updated on my progress and possible struggles, but in the end these reports were important weekly moments in which I structured my thoughts, formulated questions and described my observations. The tone of these reports was different from my diary, as they were not meant to remain private. Moreover, they were also in many ways an exercise of analysis. They made me 'translate' my daily observations, questions and frustrations into a more 'academic' tone and they were instrumental in starting to formulate my arguments. Parts of these weekly reports are reproduced in this thesis between the chapters, accompanying the photo dossiers of the architecture of occupation.

3.4: Interviewing

Besides observing and passing through the checkpoints that I analysed, I conducted 61 interviews with 25 Palestinians and 11 Jewish settlers. I used two interviewing 'styles', namely semi-structured interviews (Hesse-Biber, 2007; Ivinson & Renold, 2013, 2014; Rose, Degen, & Basdas, 2010), usually at the home of the interviewee, and go-along interviews (Kusenbach, 2003; Ross, Renold, Holland, & Hillman, 2009). I often spoke to an interviewee twice, conducting both a semi-structured

[32] Donna Haraway (1988) used the term the 'god trick' to critique the belief in objectivity in science: "seeing everything from nowhere" (p. 581). With this term, and her work on situated knowledges in general, Haraway critiqued the premise of a researcher being an objective observer, collecting data that represent the truth about what is 'out there'. The diary I kept made sure I stayed aware of my emotions, opinions and, hence, my positionality.

interview and a go-along interview. I have interviewed 14 interviewees once. The other 22 interviewees were interviewed at least twice.[33]

Besides these 61 interviews, I have also interviewed two internationals living in Bethlehem, one Dutch and one New Zealander; one Israeli scholar who is specialised in analysing Israeli settlements; and two members of Machsom Watch. I have also joined Machsom Watch on a checkpoint watch of Qalandiya Checkpoint and on a daylong observation of the old city of Jerusalem on a Friday during Ramadan in 2016. Except for the Israeli scholar and the two women from Machsom Watch, all interviewees wished to remain anonymous, hence pseudonyms are used.

The Palestinians and Jewish settlers I interviewed were selected because they regularly travelled to Jerusalem or Israel, and passed through either Checkpoint 300, The Tunnels checkpoint or Al Walaja checkpoint on their routes. All Palestinians lived in Bethlehem or in the surrounding villages, namely Beit Sahour, Al Walaja, Al Khader and Beit Jala, with the exception of three men living in Jaba', a village located southwest of Bethlehem. Of the 25 Palestinians, ten were women and 15 men. They travelled through the checkpoints for various reasons: some worked for different types of employers (Israeli, Palestinian or international), some travelled as students, and some for leisure. All of the settlers I interviewed lived in Har Gilo, a settlement located south of Jerusalem and north-east of Bethlehem (see Figure 1.2).

The hill on which Har Gilo has been built has been used as an army base since Palestine was a part of the Ottoman Empire, first by the Turkish army, then by the Jordanian army and now by the Israeli army. The settlement Har Gilo was established in 1972 as a so-called 'field school', an institute focused on nature conservation that provides education, executes research projects and is active in

[33] See Appendix 1 for a table with an overview of the main characteristics of these interviewees.

conservation (Lazaroff, 2009). The first inhabitants of the settlement were employees of the field school. The field school was closed in the 1990s, but the settlers never left. Today, over 1,200 residents live in Har Gilo, which also still functions as an army base.

I decided to interview settlers living in Har Gilo because of its location and demographics. Har Gilo is located 1.8 km south of Jerusalem and just on the Palestinian side of the Green Line. To travel to Jerusalem or Israel, the inhabitants of Har Gilo have to pass through a checkpoint. The two closest and convenient checkpoints are The Tunnels and Al Walaja. Furthermore, its inhabitants constitute a diverse group. While, at first, only employees of the field school moved to Har Gilo, a second wave consisted predominantly of people who moved to Har Gilo to get away from overcrowded Jerusalem and wanted to live in a more rural area. As explained by Dror Etkes, the Israeli scholar I interviewed who specialises in analysing Jewish settlements, during the last decade a group of Jewish Israelis moved to Har Gilo because of the financial benefits of cheap housing. Secular Jews make up most of the population of the settlement (interview, Dror Etkes, 1 June 2016).

Har Gilo is located on the route of the Wall and next to the Palestinian towns Beit Jala and Al Walaja (see Figure 1.2). Both towns have been negatively impacted by Har Gilo and the Wall. Al Walaja is particularly affected: it has lost most of its agricultural land and when the construction of the Wall is finished, the village will be completely surrounded by the Wall. Furthermore, Al Walaja is especially known for regular home demolitions by the Israeli army due to an almost complete absence of building permits provided by the state of Israel (Al-Qadi, 2018b).

I used my personal network in Bethlehem to set up my first interviews with Palestinians. I then used the snowball technique and asked my interviewees if they could introduce me to others. I also conducted informal interviews during my checkpoint observations and recruited more interviewees through those. It was

more difficult to set up my first interviews with settlers from Har Gilo. I did not know anyone who lived in Har Gilo, or in any other settlement, nor did I know anyone otherwise connected to Har Gilo. When Har Gilo was a field school it was a member of the Society for Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI). I emailed the SPNI and I was provided with the email address of a resident who was happy to be interviewed. After this, I used the snowball technique to recruit more interviewees.

The interviews with the two Israeli women of Machsom Watch, the Israeli scholar, and the New Zealand and Dutch nationals living in Bethlehem were less informative for the research project presented here. However, they did shed light on the ways in which 'different bodies' were treated by the checkpoint technology. They also provided me with the opportunity to reflect on my own experiences passing checkpoints as an 'other body' and they made it possible for me to understand the larger dynamics at play concerning the Israeli politics, the settlement policies and the role the checkpoints play in this.

3.4.1: Semi-structured interviews

After my initial contact with interviewees, I first conducted a semi-structured in-depth interview. This interview would usually take place at the home of the interviewee. During this interview I discussed the daily commute of the interviewees and also, more generally, the influence of the multitude of barriers in their lives. In-depth interviewing is a method recognised for helping researchers gain insight into the daily experiences of their respondents (Hesse-Biber, 2007) and was propagated by Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013, 2014) and Gillian Rose, Monica Degen and Begum Basdas (2010) as a useful method to combine with the use of mobile methods.

During the in-depth interviews, I discussed the daily checkpoint experiences of my interviewees, how they engaged with the checkpoint managers and to what extent they experienced their checkpoint passages as predictable. More specifically, the interviews enabled me to examine with my interviewees how the checkpoints

worked, and which rules were in place and how often these were followed or suspended. We discussed their interactions with the soldiers and private security present, and the strategies the interviewees used to try to positively influence their checkpoint passages. This made it possible to discuss the checkpoints as openings in the larger regime of enclosure in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the role played by arbitrariness inside the checkpoints, the categories used and suspended by the checkpoint managers and the endless interplay between the checkpoint managers, checkpoint machinery and my interviewees. We also talked about how the checkpoints had changed over the years. Moreover, I discussed my checkpoint observations with the interviewees, which enabled me to not only further assess the checkpoints but also my own analysis.

These in-depth interviews were semi-structured, which meant that I used a topic list during the interviews to ensure certain issues were discussed.[34] This topic list was critically assessed and adapted while in the field. The majority of the interviews were recorded, always with the consent of the interviewees. Four interviews were not recorded, due to the fact that these interviews were unplanned and I did not have my mobile phone or recorder with me. During these four interviews I made notes and afterwards I wrote up a detailed description of the interview as soon as possible.

After the in-depth interview, I asked my interviewees if I could join them on their daily commute during a go-along interview. Most interviewees agreed to this, but I was unable to have go-along interviews with all, usually due to interviewees' personal reasons or because of the nature of their commute.[35] Of the 25 Palestinians I interviewed, I joined 12 once and four twice on their daily commute, and I joined five of the 11 Jewish settlers once on their daily commute.

[34] See Appendix 2 for the topic list.

[35] I was unable to join two Palestinian interviewees on their commute because this entailed entering Israeli illegally.

3.4.2: Go-along interviews

Go-along interviews entailed that I joined my interviewees on their usual routes in which they had to pass through one of the three checkpoints analysed here (Kusenbach, 2003; Ross, Renold, Holland, & Hillman, 2009). Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013, 2014) described how the use of mobile methods allowed them to explore experiences associated with everyday practices, places, routines and rituals. They used go-along interviews, together with photo-elicitation, in-depth interviewing, film-making and participant observations to analyse how gendered histories of place influence the way girls use those places.

Ivinson and Renold (2014) also argued that by putting themselves 'in the midst of things', they were able to observe the ways their interviewees engaged with different places on their routes, while they also experienced those routes themselves, which would have not been possible through static in-depth interviewing alone. This possibility for the researcher to experience the route taken was also argued by Gillian Rose, Monica Degen and Begum Basdas (2010) to be one of the advantages of go-along interviews, which they called 'walk-along interviews'.[36] By experiencing the interviewees' routes, a diverse set of data can be generated, where the conversation taking place is not the only data collected, but also the movement, sounds, smells and rhythms. Whereas with in-depth interviewing the researcher can discuss the ways people interact with and co-constitute places, Rose, Degen and Basdas (2010) argue that with the use of walk-along interviews, researchers can simultaneously discuss and observe it.

The interviews were done travelling by car, public transport and/or on foot. The ID card held by the interviewee generally determined the mode of transportation. As stipulated in the introduction, Palestinians with a West Bank ID are not allowed to

[36] Rose, Degen and Basdas (2010) joined their respondents on foot on their usual route in shopping malls. As the modes of transportation have been diverse in my research project, I prefer the term go-along interviews, following authors such as Margarethe Kusenbach (2003) and Richard Carpiano (2009).

drive their Palestinian cars (green-white number plates) inside Jerusalem or Israel. They are not allowed to own an Israeli car (yellow number plate), so they are forced to pass through checkpoints on foot and use alternative transportation. Hence, the interviews with Palestinians with a West Bank ID entailed going on foot through Checkpoint 300 and using public transport to get to our intended destination. My interviews with Palestinians with Jerusalem or Israeli ID cards and Jewish settlers entailed driving through the checkpoints in their private cars, predominately using the Al Walaja and The Tunnels checkpoints. I also joined one Palestinian interviewee with a Jerusalem ID card while she passed through Checkpoint 300 in her car on her way to work in Bethlehem, but most of my interviewees preferred to take the detour from Bethlehem to drive through The Tunnels or Al Walaja checkpoint.

I was living in Bethlehem, which has been categorised as Area A, so I met the Jewish settlers I was interviewing either at their homes in Har Gilo or on the road leading up to Har Gilo, which is located in Area C. I met the Palestinians with a West Bank, Jerusalem or Israeli ID card either at Checkpoint 300, their place of work or their home. I did not use a list of preconceived questions or topics during the go-along interviews. Since I had done an in-depth interview with them before the go-along interview, I had prepared myself at times to pay extra attention to certain issues concerning their interactions with checkpoints. The route was decided on by my interviewees, as long as the route would lead through one of the three checkpoints. Moreover, I did not record these interviews since carrying a recorder or using my mobile phone as one while passing through the checkpoints could draw too much attention. During the interviews I wrote down key words or sentences on my phone, and afterwards I wrote extensive notes.

The go-along interviews allowed me to observe and experience the daily engagements of my interviewees, both Palestinian residents and Jewish settlers, with the checkpoint regimes. During these go-along interviews, I was able to

further discuss the checkpoint experiences that my interviewees had already brought up during the in-depth home interviews, and observe their passages directly. While remaining firmly planted in my own positionality, something I elaborate on later in this chapter, I could witness the interactions first-hand and experience them directly. These experiences consisted of feeling the cold and warm temperatures to which commuters are exposed while passing through a checkpoint on foot, the tiredness in my body from waking up early and queuing, the surprise when the checkpoint lanes turn out completely full upon arrival and frustration when turnstiles remained closed for no apparent reason. Seeing the interactions between my interviewees and the checkpoints' managers and machines enabled me to discuss with my interviewees the rules and regulations, and the many exceptions used. Moreover, by joining both Palestinians and Jewish settlers on their passages, I was able to compare the differences in their experiences and the workings of the different checkpoints. I could compare the smooth, air-conditioned car ride through a checkpoint with a Jewish settler on a 10-minute commute from Har Gilo to Jerusalem, with the hot, tiring commute of two Palestinian interviewees from Al Walaja, the village located right next to Har Gilo, to Jerusalem, that took over 90 minutes on a quiet checkpoint morning. This enabled me to analyse the checkpoints within the larger occupation regime. Moreover, I got to experience the differences between how my white body was approached and how my Palestinians interviewees' bodies were, shedding light on the differences that bodily appearances make when being engaged with by the checkpoint technology.

As such, the go-along interviews also allowed me to experience the differences in my own positionality and how I was assessed by my interviewees and the checkpoint managers. Inside the car with the Jewish settlers or Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID I felt relatively invisible. My white skin, blond hair and blue eyes meant that I was presumably often identified as a settler by the checkpoint managers, which was also noted by my interviewees. For instance, as 27-year-old

Palestinian Catholic clergyman named John, who had special permission to pass through car checkpoints with his wife due to her Jerusalem ID card, told me: "You would be good to have in the car when passing the checkpoint" (interview, 22 May 2017). During my fieldwork period, I was never stopped in a car while driving through these two car checkpoints. While at times I experienced this as frustrating, wanting to observe from up close what happens when one is stopped, it also meant that the contrast with Checkpoint 300 and what Palestinians have to deal with when passing through that checkpoint became all the more acute.

Inside Checkpoint 300, I never felt invisible. As I stated before, I joined the EAPPI during my checkpoint observations, but during my go-along interviews I was alone with my interviewees. While passing through Checkpoint 300 on a go-along interview, I was never challenged by a checkpoint manager.[37] As a white woman with a Dutch passport, my passages were not only different from the passages of my Palestinian interviewees; my presence also influenced the checkpoint's workings. As clearly stated by one of my Palestinian interviewees when discussing Checkpoint 300: "it is easier to pass through the checkpoint when you are here with us" (Mahmoud, interview, 18 July 2016).

Hence, including my experiences in the analysis enabled me to investigate the workings of the implementation of biopolitical categories at the checkpoints, the role played by machines in the checkpoint passages and my own personal experience of the exercise of sovereign power. By discussing these experiences with my interviewees and comparing my experiences to theirs, I gained more insights into the workings of the checkpoints as limited openings in a larger system of enclosure. Because I wanted to include these insights into the analysis, I share

[37] I was challenged several times by soldiers at Qalandiya Checkpoint regarding the reason for my passage, including once with an interviewee, although after a short explanation I was always allowed to pass. While it remains unclear why I was treated differently at Qalandiya Checkpoint, this could be connected to the fact that it is a place that is more often characterised by 'eruptive' violence than Checkpoint 300 (Mulder, 2016; Murphy, 2016).

my personal observations in all three empirical chapters. This is most explicitly done in Chapter 4, where I analyse the interplay between the checkpoint managers, commuters and machines at Checkpoint 300 through an in-depth discussion of three checkpoint passages. One of these checkpoint passages was my own 'last' checkpoint passage in 2017.[38] In this description of my checkpoint passage, I reflect upon what I observed during several mornings that I was present inside Checkpoint 300 from 4:00 to 8:00 am. My experiences are not positioned within this research as being equally important as the experiences of my interviewees. Furthermore, the majority of the experiences that are discussed do not revolve around my personal passages but around what I observed of the passages of others while inside the checkpoint. By placing myself in the midst of things, I was able to observe and experience the workings of the checkpoints in ways that would have been impossible otherwise. As such, these reflections shed light on the workings of the checkpoints analysed and will be present throughout the thesis.

3.5: Language

The majority of the interviews were conducted in English. A translator had to be present at six of the 61 interviews. Doing ethnographic research while not speaking the native languages well enough to be able to conduct interviews in those languages means that one becomes dependent on translators. In my case, the large majority of my interviewees were comfortable enough in English to conduct the interview in that language. While many Palestinians and Jewish Israelis do speak English as a second language, the proficiency of the majority of my interviewees in English sheds light on their position within Israeli and Palestinian society. It indicates their levels of education, the possible regularity of their interactions with

[38] When I wrote Chapter 4 in 2017-18, I did not expect I would return to Bethlehem again. However, I did return in 2019.

foreigners and their cultural backgrounds (several of my interviewees had either lived in a country where English was the first language for a specific period during their lives or, in case of the Jewish settlers, had migrated to Israel from such a country). This means that the majority of my interviewees belonged to a specific socio-economic segment of Israeli and Palestinian society – a segment that has usually received some form of higher education, has a job and a certain level of economic security. If I had interviewed more Palestinians who, for instance, worked as day labourers in Israel, it would have been very likely that I would have needed a translator to be present more often (see page 133-135 for a discussion of the limitations related to the selection of interviewees in this research project). Translation is never a neutral or clear-cut process (on the politics of translation, see, amongst others, Burja, 2006; Eco, 1995; Minca, 2016; and Temple & Young, 2004), and it is essential to reflect on the translation process and the role of the translator in the research project.

Five out of the 45 interviews with Palestinians were conducted in Arabic. During these interviews an Arabic-English translator was present, because while I do speak some Palestinian Arabic, my proficiency is not enough to conduct interviews. Three of these interviews were translated by the same translator, 46-year-old Omer. Omer was more than 'just' a translator because he also acted as a 'fixer': he regularly recommended people I could approach for an interview, set up several interviews for me and drove me around in the Bethlehem area to show the different types of material barriers present. Omer, a Palestinian police officer active in Bethlehem, was very knowledgeable about the politics of occupation, the permit system, the checkpoints and other barriers present inside the Palestinian Territories. As described by Janet Burja (2006), local translators can offer crucial assistance besides the act of translating when working in dangerous or sensitive areas.

Omer indeed offered me crucial assistance, including arranging interviews with people who illegally crossed into Israel, a practice that can be severely punished by the Israeli army. I had already tried by myself to find interviewees to discuss this topic and although many people knew someone who crossed illegally, they did not want to be interviewed. Omer was able to set up several interviews with people who crossed illegally and mediated during these interviews, at times changing my questions – while always letting me know in English that he had done so – or suggesting how to approach the topic.[39]

Omer and I also had many informal conversations during which I made notes and I have recorded two interviews with him, one in 2016 and one in 2017. We knew each other through a shared friend before he started acting as my translator/fixer. Due to this, we had already discussed my research project and objectives on multiple occasions. He often offered me extra information during the interviews to explain certain statements made by interviewees, always clearly indicating when he was speaking for himself and when he was translating. I was very comfortable with the assistance provided by Omer, but I remained aware of the influence he had on my research project through his translations and his recommendations regarding whom to interview. While I conducted most of my interviews in English and have arranged the large majority of my interviews through other means (either using other contacts inside Bethlehem or by approaching Palestinian commuters by myself while inside Checkpoint 300), the influence of Omer on my research project should not be underestimated (on this see, for instance, Burja, 2006; Rabinow, 1977). By remaining relatively independent from Omer, I tried to ensure that his influence was not too significant. However, it remains difficult for me to establish the exact extent of it.

[39] He, for instance, suggested never to use the term 'illegal crossing', but to talk about 'sneaking into Israel'.

I used different translators for two interviews with Palestinian interviewees. During these interviews I felt less comfortable with the quality of the translation. Long Arabic sentences were translated into very short English answers and at times the translator would answer the question posed, instead of translating my question into Arabic for the interviewee. Because I had recorded these interviews, I was able to ask a Palestinian friend to translate certain sentences for me afterwards to check the quality of translation. Although the translations were not necessarily incorrect, as translation is always a process, these translators offered less extended translations than Omer usually provided me with. Luckily, these interviewees did not travel regularly through the checkpoints analysed, so these two interviews were less relevant to my research project.

One of the 16 interviews with Jewish settlers was conducted in Hebrew, with a Hebrew-English translator present. While 25-year-old Esther, the interviewee, did speak some English, she felt her English was not proficient enough to speak comfortably. I had been put into contact with her by another interviewee, 21-year-old Palestinian Hajar. Hajar, who holds an Israeli ID card, was a former colleague of Esther's. After I told her I was interviewing residents of Har Gilo, she suggested setting up an interview with Esther. When Esther explained she preferred to speak Hebrew, this created a complicated situation. I did not speak any Hebrew and I did not have any personal contacts that would be able or willing to travel to Har Gilo and translate from Hebrew to English. I came to an ambiguous solution. When it seemed that I could not conduct the interview, I asked Hajar for a suggestion. She suggested that she could do the translation herself since she spoke fluent Hebrew and English. As a Palestinian, she had never entered a settlement before, but she carried an Israeli ID card, which meant that she was legally allowed to do so, and she ensured me it would not be a problem.

Entering Har Gilo was indeed not an issue, but during the interview a conflict arose between Hajar and Esther. Halfway through the interview Esther was discussing

attacks of Palestinians on Jewish settlers and she said that she felt less safe in the area after these attacks. Here, Hajar asked me if she could ask Esther a question. I agreed and Hajar asked Esther why she thought Palestinians attacked Jewish settlers. They got into an argument, in which Esther stated that she thought these people were mentally ill, while Hajar argued that the occupation had driven these Palestinians to despair. After letting them argue for a while, something they did in English – perhaps to ensure I would understand? – I tried to resume control of the conversation and asked Esther another question. Hajar translated my question and Esther gave a long response in Hebrew. Hajar gave a short translation, after which Esther corrected her and gave a much more elaborate answer herself in English. After this incident, there were several more instances in which she corrected Hajar's translation. During this interview it became clear that the relationship between Esther and Hajar had a negative influence on the translation, since after the conflict between them, Hajar seemed less inclined to translate Esther's answers. Although I asked Hajar to translate Esther's responses more fully, and Esther corrected Hajar's translations several times, this tense dynamic could not be circumvented anymore.

There was no translator present when I observed the checkpoints. I did not want to ask Omer to join me on my checkpoint observations because he did not have a permit to pass through a checkpoint for the entirety of my fieldwork periods. This made it impossible for him to join me inside the checkpoints. And even if he did have the necessary paperwork, I was keenly aware of the fact that he would not have had the same freedom of movement as I had. While I was able to walk around inside the checkpoint and observe its workings for hours, Omer, or any other Palestinian translator, would not have been treated in a similar manner. During my checkpoint observations, the language barrier did play a role in my interactions with commuters because the labourers queuing up at 4:00 am were less proficient in English than my interviewees. Fortunately, often when I wanted to talk to someone with whom I could not communicate in English, another Palestinian

commuter would volunteer to translate for me. However, there were times in which I was unable to communicate with someone and my observations could not be complemented with informal interviews. It was also difficult to understand the small comments between the queuing commuters, or what was happening in moments of chaos. But after spending enough time in the checkpoint, I did gain a certain proficiency in 'checkpoint Arabic', knowing how to ask why someone was turned away; since when a certain gate had been closed; if soldiers had used pepper spray, etc.

3.6: Questioning checkpoints: ethics

While any research project entails a critical discussion of the ethics involved, I believe the nature of this research project necessitates an elaborate discussion. This pertains to doing research in a conflict area, and hence issues concerning my safety and that of my interviewees. It also concerns my position as a researcher, which, at times, became unclear due to my political and ethical ideas about the occupation. Furthermore, it entails discussing my decision to interview a group with whose politics I disagreed, namely Jewish settlers.

3.6.1: Safety

> This morning the checkpoint is absolutely packed; I haven't seen it this bad in a long time. When I get to the first turnstile, Abdel [a 19-year-old merchant who sells produce at the checkpoint] walks up to me and quietly tells me not to tell the soldiers what I am doing here or that I often take pictures. I ask him why he is saying this, he knows I never talk to the soldiers. He explains he thought that they could ask me and I could get in trouble. I immediately become nervous and try to see which soldiers are here and if I have seen them before. I don't recognise them, and I decide

> to lay low today and observe the checkpoint from the Palestinian side of the Wall, just to be sure.
>
> (fieldnotes, Tuesday 6 June 2018)

Analysing the experiences and emotions of the researcher in the field can deepen the understanding of the context studied. This is especially important for researchers working in violent contexts, as explained by Antonius Robben and Carolyn Nordstrom (1995). They argue that this can show how the lived experiences of violence of the informants and the researcher are connected to the ways of knowing and reflecting about violence. Life in a conflict zone can be experienced as deeply confusing as this is a context that is filled with worries and uncertainties. The majority of the researchers who do research in these contexts might not be used to these extremes. But also when speaking of the researchers who might be more familiar with volatile contexts, attention to fieldwork conditions and how to cope with these is necessary. As Robben and Nordstrom (1995) argue:

> The emotional intensity of the events and the people studied, the political stakes that surround research on violence, and the haphazard circumstances under which fieldwork is conducted (...) weave their way through the whole of the anthropological encounter.
>
> (p. 3)

Generally speaking, when I felt possible risks were involved in the decisions I took, I learned to trust my 'gut instinct'. Since I had already spent several months in Bethlehem before starting this PhD project, I had learned to hear the difference between gunshots and fireworks, to distinguish teargas from the smell of burning garbage, to assess whether or not certain areas were safe to enter or better avoided. However, this 'gut instinct' only goes so far, and uncertainties are always associated with doing research in violent contexts. I therefore used several 'tactics'

to limit the possible risks by which I was confronted during the fieldwork. Firstly, during my fieldwork in general, but especially during my checkpoint observations, I always had to assess the 'atmosphere' of the context I was stepping into. Was it tense? Did people seem worried? Was it busy? Was it loud? Was it too quiet? Were soldiers present? Private security guards? How did they seem? Were they looking at me? These questions were not only important for my own safety, but also for the people I engaged with at the checkpoints.

I quickly learned to always ask Palestinians when in doubt. In relation to the checkpoints this often meant turning to the 'merchants of the checkpoint economy' (Tawil-Souri, 2009), who were selling phone cards, coffee and sandwiches, as the excerpt from my fieldnotes at the beginning of this sub-section shows. If they warned me that a morning was especially tense or violent, I would stay out of sight of the checkpoint managers and of the crowd of waiting commuters on the Bethlehem side of the checkpoint. This was not only important inside Checkpoint 300. Whenever I was in doubt about the risks associated with a certain action, such as visiting Qalandiya checkpoint at 4:00 am or entering places that were known for sudden outbursts of violence, like specific areas in East Jerusalem and Hebron, I always discussed this with several Palestinian contacts – often with Omer, who, as a police officer, was able to give me an overview of the possible risks. But I also discussed this with the Palestinian family with whom I lived, with Palestinian friends, with my regular taxi driver and, at times, with certain interviewees. Based on their feedback I would decide whether or not to proceed. I did, for example, visit Qalandiya checkpoint at 4:00 am, but decided not to go by myself. Instead, I joined two members of Machsom Watch on their checkpoint watch. Furthermore, I did not travel to Qalandiya from Bethlehem during the night, but spent the night in a hostel in Jerusalem. I was then picked up from the hostel by the members of Machsom Watch who I was joining that morning. In this way I did not have to use public transport at night by myself.

Secondly, I always had an in-depth home interview with an interviewee before joining them on a go-along interview. This meant that we had already discussed the interviewee's route. As such, I could make sure that the route that would be taken during the go-along interview would not expose me to too much danger, which would have been the case with interviewees entering Israel illegally. While I did interview Palestinians who illegally entered Israel on their commute, I did not have go-along interviews with them due to the risks associated with this. Furthermore, having the in-depth interview before the go-along interview also ensured that I had already met the interviewee before stepping into their car or walking with them through a checkpoint. While stepping into a stranger's car could be a risky exercise for any researcher, as a female researcher, I was especially aware of my possible vulnerability. I had agreed with my supervisors before going on fieldwork that if I felt unsafe with an interviewee, I would not propose a go-along interview. Though I never felt unsafe with an interviewee, I did always assess the risks associated with a go-along interview before proposing it.

Thirdly, I always tried to avoid as much as possible any interactions with Israeli soldiers, border guards, private security people or police officers. This was important during my checkpoint observations, as I will discuss in the next section, but also during my daily life in the West Bank. While they were a rare sight in the centre of Bethlehem, as Bethlehem has been designated as Area A, the house I lived in was actually located on a small strip of the north of Bethlehem that has been designated as Area C. This was because of the location of Checkpoint 300, the Wall and because of Rachel's Tomb, an important religious site in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Several times during my fieldwork I was confronted with Israeli soldiers or border guards in the area in which I lived. For example, during the days preceding Ramadan when Checkpoint 300 was spatially extended unto the area located right next to it to deal with the large crowds of Muslim worshippers travelling to Jerusalem on Fridays to pray in the Al Aqsa mosque (see the photo dossier on pages 260-264), and the time when Israeli soldiers were posted on the

streets around my home in 2016 after an explosive had been thrown over the Wall in the area. During these periods, I tried to take alternative routes to avoid any interaction with these soldiers, but this was not always possible – especially not during the week soldiers were posted on the streets in 2016. Hence, during that week I avoided leaving home after dark, and if I did leave my home after dark, I only did this together with others.

Lastly, it was important to ensure my interviewees complete anonymity and safe storage of the recordings and notes of the interviews. To ensure the safety of the data, I recorded the interviews anonymously while keeping a separate document in which I wrote down the identity of the interviewees in a coded manner understandable only to me. I also used code words in my notes and transcriptions when it concerned a topic that could endanger my interviewees.

3.6.2: My position as a researcher

As I stated earlier, part of my checkpoint observations was undertaken in the company of the EAPPI. The EAPPI teams I joined always asked for permission from their headquarters before I could go with them to Checkpoint 300. I never wore a vest of the EAPPI or partook in their activities (which inside Checkpoint 300 mostly entails counting the Palestinians passing through), and I was very explicit when speaking to Palestinians about who I was and what I was doing. However, I cannot deny that Palestinian commuters and the Israeli soldiers and security guards probably often thought I was a member of the EAPPI. What impact this had on my checkpoint observations is difficult to say. The decision to join the EAPPI enabled me to stay inside the checkpoint without being questioned by the soldiers/security guards present, but it may have also caused Palestinians to view me as an NGO worker/activist instead of a researcher.

Inside the checkpoint, I usually tried not to engage with the soldiers, but there have been several times that I did step out of my role as 'observer' and tried to talk to the soldiers in an attempt to positively influence a negative situation – behaving

more like an NGO worker/activist perhaps rather than a researcher. These were occasions when a 'neutral' role was ethically unacceptable to me. However, this decision was not easy to make. Firstly, this was not in line with the goals of my research project. I was there to observe and collect data, not to intervene in the situation at hand. While my presence inside the checkpoint undoubtedly influenced the workings of the checkpoint, even when I was only passively observing, I was not there to change the checkpoint. These actions may have blurred the categories of researcher and activist (further) – something I elaborate on later in this chapter.

Secondly, as has been critically discussed by several Machsom Watch members, one can wonder if mediating between soldiers and commuters at the checkpoints actually contributes to normalising the system in place. Especially inside terminal checkpoints, such as Checkpoint 300, which have been introduced as 'humanitarian', one must be aware of the role played by checkpoint observers in normalising the presence of the checkpoints themselves. As put by Machsom Watcher Yehudit Keshet in her 2006 book *Checkpoint Watch: Testimonies from Occupied Palestine,* "recognition [by the army] of CPW [Machsom Watch] and its concerns also posits the army as a humane defender, with nothing to hide. As one officer said, where else in the world would an army allow civilians to monitor its operations in the field?" (p. 117). However, while fully aware of these issues, on certain mornings, it seemed wrong to ignore the pleas for help based on such an ethical deliberation. An example is this incident on 5 June 2017:

> It is almost 7 am and there is still a long queue for the humanitarian lane. The gate of the lane is closed and the security guard is sitting with the soldier inside the booth. They do not seem interested in dealing with the people in the humanitarian lane. The EA's [volunteers working for the EAPPI] tried tapping on the window and speaking to them, but when the soldier and guard only shrugged, they gave up. I hear a baby crying and some women in the front of the queue turn to me and ask me to do

> something. This morning has been particularly bad, violent and frustrating, and I decide I need to do something other than just watching... I walk up to the booth and knock on the window. The window is opened by someone and I address the security guard, assuming he is in control. He responds in Hebrew. I turn to the soldier and ask if he speaks English. He responds positively and I tell him there are many people who have the right to pass through the humanitarian lane and that there is a baby that has been crying for a long time. He says the young men need to get out of this lane, and then he will rethink opening the gate. I walk back and tell the people in the queue; fully aware of the fact I am actually helping the checkpoint regime now... It feels wrong, but the baby is not just crying anymore and has started wailing. The people in the front of the queue tell me they are trying to get the young men out of the lane, but that the young men do not listen to them. I apologise and walk back to my spot, feeling even more helpless and now also an accessory to the regime.
>
> (fieldnotes, Monday 5 June 2017)

Here it becomes clear how the role of the researcher may become blurred when conducting ethnographic research, and even more so when conducting research in a conflict area. Observing the mistreatment of people, the injustices and violence directed at them, was at times difficult to cope with. However, while I could, for instance, have made the choice to become a member of the EAPPI and intervene more directly in the workings of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories, I always remained aware of the fact that I wanted to be there as an academic. I knew I would be writing about these instances and that I was not there to intervene but to observe and learn, and this helped to keep my focus in place. But at times this was still a difficult position to take. Would my writing improve the situation for the Palestinians I was observing? What did it mean for me to acknowledge that I was there to get the information I needed from my

interviewees, to use this data to further my own career, and not give anything tangible 'back'? How does an academic give back in a meaningful way? These questions were not new, nor did they surprise me, as I had already conducted a research project in Bethlehem in 2013 and at the time had struggled with the same difficulties concerning my privileges as a white Dutch woman. However, these were still questions with which I needed to deal. On a more personal level, there were no clear answers to these questions. But these questions did nonetheless help me to remain aware of the power imbalances between my interviewees and me (Rose, 1997).

One way in which I tried to respond to these power imbalances was with the way in which I handled the interviews. I would bring a topic list to the in-depth interviews, but I would often let the interviewee steer the conversation. Besides the fact that this opened my eyes to many more dynamics that were at play than I had thought of beforehand, I also did not assume I would know better which issues were important to discuss with regards to the architecture of occupation. This was even more explicit in the go-along interviews, when the interviewee took me 'along'. They determined the route, the method of transportation, the speed and the time and date we met. I did not bring a topic list with me and let the interviewee 'lead me' with regards to not only the route but also the conversation. I did try to bring up issues we had previously discussed during the in-depth interview.

I also made sure that I remained aware of my own positionality and how I was possibly 'read' by my interviewees. This entailed keeping in mind how an interviewee could 'position' me and how this could affect the relationship I had with this interviewee. In this regard, there were important differences to keep in mind between the Palestinians and Jewish settlers I interviewed. The Jewish settlers often reminded me of the fact that Europeans were experienced as being too critical of the settlements and the state of Israel, and consequently were seen as pro-Palestinian. I did not explicitly contradict their assessment but generally

responded that I was interested in how they experienced the many material barriers in their lives. In all cases, this seemed to take away any suspicions.

In relation to my Palestinian interviewees, especially the ones I met inside the checkpoint, I always had to remain aware of possibly being seen as an NGO worker. This could mean that they felt 'obliged' to answer my questions, perhaps creating a false relationship of reciprocity based on the premise that I was there to 'help' them and this entailed they should also 'help' me. It could also mean that they expected me to do something for them after the interview. Although I was always explicit about my role, this did not mean this problem did not occur.

A good example is a conversation I had with Mahmoud. An EAPPI volunteer had introduced me to Mahmoud and Sara. After our initial meeting I felt that it was clear to Mahmoud and Sara why I wanted to speak to them and what my position was. Mahmoud spoke fluent English and at times translated for Sara who was less comfortable in English. After I had interviewed them several times (see Chapter 4), Mahmoud asked me if I could get his daughter a job in the Netherlands. I explained that unfortunately I could not arrange something like that and that getting asylum in the Netherlands was very difficult at that time. He then asked if I could get her a job for my 'employer' in Bethlehem, to which I again responded negatively. I explained that I was not employed in Bethlehem. I told him that I would be happy to ask around if any of my Palestinian contacts would know something, but that I myself did not have such connections. Upon hearing my response, Mahmoud seemed very disappointed. Here, it became clear that Mahmoud had hoped, perhaps even expected, that I would do something for his family after he had invested his time in me. This could have been because I was introduced to Mahmoud and Sara by an NGO-worker, but perhaps also by my white skin and Dutch nationality. While I felt I had tried to be as explicit as possible to Mahmoud and Sara about my role, these expectations were deeply entrenched in the long-standing colonial/neo-colonial relationships between humanitarian aid workers and

Palestinians that have been in place for over 60 years (see, amongst others, Hanafi & Tabar, 2003; and Turner, 2012).

3.6.3: Interviewing settlers

These questions concerning 'giving back' to an interviewed population have often been discussed in the social sciences, and the importance of posing these questions and reflecting on one's position in relation to one's interviewees is evident. The importance of creating a space for the voices of the oppressed (Brooks, 2007) and creating an empathetic relationship with interviewees (Blee, 1998) is by now taken for granted in most fields in social sciences research. However, a less discussed topic concerns interviewing so-called 'unloved groups' (Fielding, 1990). Which group represents an 'unloved group' is very much determined by the context of the research project, as well as the position of the researcher executing the project. For me, the Jewish settlers I interviewed represented an 'unloved group'.

I wanted to include interviews with Jewish settlers in my research project to understand the checkpoints' regime, especially when comparing the fluid and fast movement of the settlers with the slow and laboured movement of Palestinians. I often wrote in my fieldnotes how smooth and easy it was to travel with settlers through the checkpoints, and how the bodily experience was so different from my go-along interviews with Palestinians: an air-conditioned and short car ride from Har Gilo to Jerusalem felt very different from the warm and tiring go-along interviews I had with my Palestinian interviewees. These two opposed commutes are at the core of the architecture of occupation and regimes of mobility, and hence needed to be analysed together. However, this did not mean that I was not confronted with ethical issues, or my own emotions, while interviewing Jewish settlers.

When I was preparing my fieldwork, when I was in the field and when I started to write when I got home, it became clear that interviewing settlers involved several ethical dilemmas. I do not claim I always necessarily agreed with my Palestinian

interviewees, but I had never before interviewed a group of people who quite regularly expressed racist viewpoints. Nor a group with whom I fundamentally disagreed politically.

Firstly, I struggled with the question whether or not I ran the risk of normalising the presence of the settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In the interviews, I was not interested in why they were living there, what their opinion was of Palestinians and how they saw the future of Israel/Palestine. This was, after all, not the focus of my research. In one way, this meant that I was not concerned with being used as a platform to distribute potential racist propaganda in my publications (Blee, 1998). The narratives the settlers used to justify their presence in the Palestinian Territories would not appear in my publications, as I would only write about how they experienced the checkpoints. However, at the same time, by not questioning their choice of living in a settlement and discussing their experiences with checkpoints in a similar manner as I had discussed this with Palestinians, I worried my attitude towards the settlers was too 'apolitical', and as such, would normalise their presence in the Palestinian Territories. Because of this, I felt 'in conflict with my own politics' as I believe settlements are a very important part of the architecture of occupation and that they should be dismantled. In the end, even though I did not question the presence of the settlers in the Palestinian Territories, I do believe that by focusing on the daily experiences of my interviewees, my research shows the injustice that is inherent to the checkpoints' regime and the role that the presence of the Jewish settlers plays in this.

Once I started to find settlers who were willing to be interviewed, they were often keen to tell me their stories, even if I was not interested in how they legitimised their presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. In the interviews, the settlers I interviewed often felt misunderstood. They wished to show me that they were not all 'religious extremists', opposing themselves to 'those real settlers in Hebron'. As 46-year-old Ariel explained, "in Hebron is the hard-core of Israel which believes

that this is all ours. We are not like this. They think all of it, even the Al Aqsa [mosque], should be ours" (interview, 9 July 2016).

The wish for their insights to be shared was also stated by 42-year-old Miriam. I explained to her the aim of my research – trying to understand the ways Palestinians and Jewish settlers interact with the material barriers. She responded that she thought it was important for their experiences to be recorded, because the experiences of Jewish settlers with the architecture of occupation had not been recorded so far. As she explained, "we are not seen as interesting. The community outside [of Israel] sees us as the rulers. So it is not interesting to see how we live and see things. It is much more interesting to see how the victims live inside this conflict situation" (interview, 6 June 2016). While I wanted to interview Jewish settlers to better understand the workings of the architecture of occupation – a research project inherently inspired by a wish to better understand the lives of the occupied – interviewing settlers remained an ambiguous part of my research. Even entering the settlement was something I had to get used to. As I wrote in my diary:

> I hate walking on this road [towards Har Gilo]. Cars drive too fast, there is no sidewalk and it is never clear who is who... I am scared people miscategorise me as a settler, but then I also have trouble categorising people myself. The lines blur here... it is so much more comfortable when there are only Palestinians.
>
> (fieldnotes, 4 June 2017)

This comment should be seen in the context of multiple violent incidents between Palestinians and Jewish settlers in the time that I have been travelling to Israel/Palestine. Being miscategorised as a settler did not only mean that I felt embarrassed when walking past Palestinians, but also that I felt less safe. While I have never felt unsafe in Bethlehem, or at least not in the presence of Palestinians

in Bethlehem, the fact that the categories blurred on this road made me uncomfortable. As I stated in my diary in 2016:

> While I am becoming more used to the road that leads up to Har Gilo, this relative comfort immediately disappears when I walk past a Palestinian. Then I find it important to show them I am not an Israeli, to say good morning in Arabic, to take pictures, to act like a foreigner or tourist. Then, all of a sudden, I am uncomfortable again.
>
> (fieldnotes, 24 June 2016)

In my interviews I did not aim to discuss the settlements or the viewpoints of the Jewish settlers regarding Palestinians. However, most of the settlers introduced these topics themselves. They often also asked my opinion. Depending on how the interview had developed, I tried to be as truthful as I could. At the same time, I was steering the conversation towards the topics I was interested in, namely the experiences of the settlers with checkpoints and the larger architecture of occupation.

An example is a discussion I had with 46-year-old Ariel. I had already interviewed Ariel and his wife Hanna a number of times and I felt pretty comfortable around the couple. We had discussed my checkpoint observations and the fact that I was living in Bethlehem. They had mostly responded with curiosity. The morning of 10 July 2016, I joined Ariel on his way to work during a go-along interview. In the car we discussed whether or not Palestinians with an Israeli or Jerusalem ID could buy a home in Har Gilo. He said that legally they would be allowed to, but that it would be considered strange. He continued saying that he believed that 'people should stick with their own kind'. He used the example of Israeli Jews migrating to the Netherlands and stated that it would be best for all if these Jews would live in their own village. I responded that in the Netherlands it is usually seen as negative if people of different religious or ethnic backgrounds live segregated lives. He found

this remarkable and explained that he considered it much better if people did. Here, I decided to let it go and said that I was sure other people agreed with him on this. I wrote in my notes that “I do not agree with him on this, but that does not matter so much right now” (Fieldnotes, 10 July 2016).

I then asked Ariel about the wall that had been built around Har Gilo. Ariel started to describe how the residents of the settlement had reacted, and we continued discussing the various dynamics of the architecture of occupation. Ariel’s beliefs provide an insight into his relationships with walls, barriers and checkpoints. Interestingly, he thought they were not necessary. Ariel and I did have more heated discussions, more often than not about the influx of Muslim refugees in Europe and the increase in the number of terrorist attacks. He thought the latter was a direct effect of the former. During these discussions I did not hold back as I felt I had the right, as a European, to explicitly state my opinions. We often agreed to disagree, but also continued speaking about other things and, in the end, I interviewed Ariel and Hanna five times, four times in 2016 and once in 2017.

However, there were other times when I experienced discussions as being much more difficult. An example is an interview I had with Rachel and Daniel, a couple living in Har Gilo. During the interview, they kept justifying the existence of the checkpoints by referring to ‘violent Palestinians’. At the end of the interview 54-year-old Rachel, upon hearing I lived in Bethlehem, tried to convince me to live somewhere else, since ‘all Palestinians would kill me’. I tried to stay friendly but also explicitly disagreed with her, especially since it concerned my own experiences and safety. Afterwards I wrote in my diary how difficult this interview had been: “they have such problematic ideas. And I really struggled with this. It might be because the checkpoint has been so incredibly bad the last couple of weeks, but I seriously had to pinch myself to keep a straight face” (fieldnotes, 17 June 2017).

These interviewees used ‘my safety’ to illustrate their fears. There was one incident that really affected me. After having interviewed 64-year-old David for over an

hour, he asked me how I envisioned a future for Israel/Palestine. I truthfully responded that I considered that a one-state-nation, where all inhabitants are treated as equals, seemed like the best-case scenario. David argued that this was impossible:

> One of the problems here is the Muslims... they are a violent people. You can see it in Daesh [the Arabic term often used to indicate the terrorist group ISIL/ISIS]... but in all groups. They are much more violent than others. I don't know if it is a gene or not.
>
> (interview, 11 July 2016)

The explicit racism that was expressed made it difficult for me not to respond in an angry way. Not only because of the nature of the comment, but also because I am married to a Tunisian-Dutch Muslim, making these comments even more personal. I abruptly ended the interview and let myself out. Afterwards, I worried whether I had behaved unprofessionally, storming off like that, but I felt that I had stayed true to my values. Later, David contacted me, seemingly unaware of what had happened during these last minutes of the interview and suggested that he could get me in touch for an interview with a Palestinian man who had worked in Har Gilo. I accepted his suggestion and did not bring up his racist comment again.

3.7: Methods of analysis

I collected many pages of data using the methods described here. These included hundreds of pages of fieldwork notes, dozens of audio files and over twenty weekly reports. The first step of data analysis was the transcription of the interviews. During this process, I became more acquainted with my data, started to recognise recurring themes and formulated new questions to ask during interviews. This process became even more explicit in my weekly reports. Examples of these

reports and my fieldnotes can be found between, and also at times in, the following chapters.

Hennie Boeije (2010) described data analysis as a process of segmenting and reassembling that should be alternated with data collection. Segmenting data entails fragmenting the data and categorising these fragments. In this way, central themes become clear. Data are reassembled through recombining the categories of the segmentation process. To do this, I created a Word document per theme, in which I combined all the data I had pertaining to this theme. I would add segments of interviews, but also segments of my weekly reports and fieldnotes to this document. In the end I had 11 documents, with the following themes: Barriers; Checkpoints; Coping with fear by settlers; Different ID cards; Gender inside checkpoints; Mixed spaces; Permits; Phones; Profiling by soldiers; Ramadan versus not Ramadan; Transport.

Not all themes were equally informative for my thesis, but creating these documents helped me to 'organise' my thoughts. An important next step of data analysis is coding. Order is created through coding and the necessary categories for the process of segmentation become clear. To code the data, I used the software programme Atlas.ti. I used two ways of coding: 'open coding', during which I created codes while I was rereading my interviews and fieldnotes, and 'selective coding', in which my weekly reports and other initial thoughts and ideas were used to create codes in a more 'top-down manner'. Thus, the coding was not determined solely by the content of the interviews and fieldnotes, but also by my theoretical framework. In the end, I had 164 codes.[40] These codes helped me to structure my data.

I have coded all my data even though I have not used all of it. This means that several codes in the code list do not reappear in the empirical chapters. An

[40] See Appendix 3 for the code list.

example is the code 'fear/lack of fear'. This was a code that predominantly came up in the transcriptions of the interviews with settlers – 274 times, making it the code that I used most often. However, in the analysis and then the writing of the articles that represent the body of this thesis, the fear experienced by settlers turned out to fall outside the research aim of this project. The fear the settlers experienced was often part of the narratives they used to legitimise the presence of the checkpoints, soldiers and the occupation in general. During the interviews this often came up, although I did not ask the Jewish settlers about these legitimisations. Other codes have been essential in writing the upcoming three chapters, most notably the codes 'Checkpoint 300', 'Checkpoint The Tunnels', 'Checkpoint Al Walaja', 'interaction soldiers', 'behaviour soldiers inside checkpoint', 'how to behave in a checkpoint', 'arbitrariness checkpoints', 'confusion checkpoint', 'gender', 'ID card', 'age', 'turnstiles', 'materiality checkpoint', 'Me: feeling inside checkpoint', and 'how to recognise an Arab/Jew'. Because I used Atlas.ti, I could see which larger themes came up in the interviews and my observations, and in which parts of the data the codes were present. The downside of using a programme like Atlas.ti can be that the text fragments that were not coded are excluded from further analysis. However, during the writing of the chapters, I regularly reread the documents I had uploaded completely to ensure I did not exclude any section of the data too quickly in earlier phases.

3.8: Limitations

During the fieldwork, I was faced with several challenges that have impacted this research project. Some of these challenges have already been discussed in this chapter – most notably those issues concerning safety and language. Here I will address some of the difficulties I faced while trying to find interviewees, organising go-along interviews and while conducting checkpoint observations.

3.8.1: Finding interviewees

As described earlier, I have predominantly used my personal network in Bethlehem to find Palestinian interviewees. After finding several interviewees in this way, I used the snowball technique to find new interviewees. This was a successful method as it allowed me to contact people I did not already know and because I was able to interview 25 Palestinians. This exceeded my expectations – in my research proposal I had initially expected to interview only ten.

However, the use of the snowball technique also meant that it was difficult for me to reach certain groups of checkpoint commuters who were not part of the same social network as my interviewees. As a result of this, I did not succeed in arranging an interview with someone who was part of the largest group of checkpoint commuters in Bethlehem, namely Palestinian labourers who queue up at 4:00 am to work at Israeli construction sites. Although I was not able to formally interview someone belonging to this group, I did conduct several informal interviews while inside Checkpoint 300. These interviews were usually very short, most notably due to the fact that the commuters were on their way to work and because checkpoint managers were often watching us as we talked. Moreover, the language barrier that I was confronted with inside the checkpoint (see page 115-116) often limited conversation. The subjects we were able to discuss included the times the checkpoint had opened, whether or not the humanitarian lane was open, how long the commuters had to wait that morning and if the checkpoint managers were particularly difficult that morning.

The real challenge concerning the recruitment of interviewees came up while searching for Jewish settlers to interview. I also used the snowball technique, but this technique was less successful than it had been with Palestinian interviewees. While I already had several Palestinian contacts in Bethlehem before starting the research project, I did not know anyone inside Har Gilo. At first, the contact I had gained via the SPNI (see pages 105), 42-year-old Miriam, had provided me with the

contact information of several residents of Har Gilo who would be open to being interviewed. However, even after having some contacts inside Har Gilo, it remained challenging to find people who were willing to be interviewed. More specifically, after the initial phase of finding interviewees via Miriam and the interviewees I met through her, I was not able to find more interviewees via this starting point. The metaphorical snowball stopped rolling down the hill.

Unfortunately, I was unable to find a new starting point to initiate the snowball technique again. This was partly due to the fact that I did not live in Har Gilo, which meant that I was less likely to spontaneously meet interviewees in my daily life. Furthermore, I still knew only a small number of settlers compared to the Palestinians I was in contact with. Hence, compared to the ease that I experienced in finding new Palestinian interviewees, finding a new social network of Jewish settlers was very difficult. Also, as I was reminded of by several of the settlers I interviewed, the residents of Har Gilo may have also been afraid of being criticised for their choice to live in a settlement. As told by Miriam herself during our first interview: “the subject you are trying to research is a very touchy one... It will be difficult to find people who would be willing to speak to you. It is inevitably a political subject and they would be worried about your political position” (interview, 6 June 2016).

Miriam had been quite pessimistic during our first interview, stating that it would be very difficult to find more than a few people. In the end I was able to interview 11 Jewish settlers. In my research proposal I had initially expected to also interview only ten Jewish settlers and while this number was still much smaller than the number of Palestinians I interviewed, I was still happy that I was able to speak to this many people in such difficult circumstances.

Regarding both Palestinians and Jewish settlers, in certain periods during my fieldwork it was more difficult to find interviewees or to plan interviews. This pertained to the month of Ramadan in the case of the Palestinian interviewees,

and Passover in the case of the Jewish settlers. There were also periods of heightened tension, such as the Nakba day[41] in 2016 and 2017. I was aware of the difficulties I could face during these periods. There were also less predictable events that negatively influenced my ability to find new interviewees. An example is the 40-day hunger strike by 1500 Palestinian prisoners (BBC News, 2017) and the visit of US president Trump to Bethlehem (Baker & Fisher, 2017). Both events occurred in 2017 and, during both, tensions rose.

Unfortunately, because I expected that interviewing the checkpoint managers would draw too much (un)wanted attention to me from the Israeli army, I was not able to interview the soldiers and private security guards who managed the checkpoints. This means that the checkpoint managers are only present in this research through the comments of my interviewees and my own observations.[42]

3.8.2: Go-along interviews

Although I had intended to have both an in-depth interview and a go-along interview with all interviewees, I was not always able to. I was unable to join nine of the 25 Palestinians I had interviewed for a go-along interview for a variety of reasons. In some cases, it was the result of personal reasons of the interviewee, such as a lack of time. With others, it was because the commute we had discussed during the interview was no longer taking place due to retirement or a change in career. In two cases, it was because they entered Israel illegally, bypassing checkpoints.

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[41] In May each year the Nakba is commemorated. The Nakba – Arabic for 'catastrophe' – is the term used by Palestinians to commemorate the exodus of 750,000 Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. This war resulted in the creation of the state of Israel. During the yearly commemoration of the Nakba, there are numerous demonstrations in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These demonstrations, which are usually centred around the demand for the end of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, are often met with violent responses from the Israeli army (Sa'di & Abu-Lughod, 2007).

[42] See Erella Grassiani's (2013) *Soldiering Under Occupation, Processes of Numbing Among Israeli Soldiers in the Al-Aqsa Intifada* for an in-depth analysis of the experiences of Israeli soldiers serving in the occupied Palestinian Territories.

I was not able to join six of the 11 Jewish settlers on their daily commute. As said before, it was difficult to find Jewish settlers to interview, and it turned out to be equally difficult to schedule a go-along interview with the settlers who had already agreed to an in-depth interview. It is not clear to me why this was so difficult to set up. Interviewees either provided personal reasons, such as a lack of time, or did not respond to my request for setting up a go-along interview.

I was unable to have a go-along interview with the six interviewees (five Palestinian, one Jewish settler) who had preferred to have a translator present during the in-depth interview. These interviewees often gave personal reasons for not being able to have a go-along interview with me or did not respond when I contacted them. The language barrier may have negatively influenced the willingness of the interviewees to have a go-along interview with me.

3.8.3: Checkpoint observations

During my checkpoint observations, I was confronted with several challenges. It was usually relatively easy to gain access to Checkpoint 300. There have been only a handful of occasions when it was impossible for me to observe the workings of Checkpoint 300 at all due to an intense atmosphere and a large crowd. However, it was not always possible to enter the main building of the checkpoint. This was most often the result of large crowds waiting to pass through the checkpoint. This happened especially on the mornings that the humanitarian lane was closed. Then I could only enter the main checkpoint building via the general entry tunnel, and the large crowd could make this an impossible exercise. On these mornings, I usually could still observe the first turnstile from the humanitarian lane. Even when it was closed, I could still see this section of the checkpoint through the gate. However, on some occasions even this was impossible due to the checkpoint managers. On such mornings the checkpoint managers would send me – or us, when I was there with the EAPPI – away. I would usually then position myself on the Bethlehem side of the checkpoint, out of sight of the checkpoint managers. From this position it was

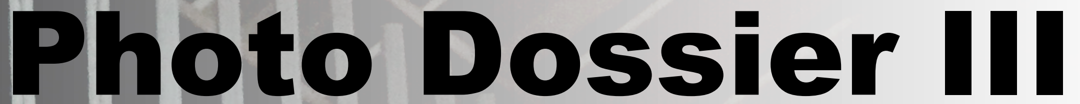
still possible to see part of the workings of the first turnstile. The times when the checkpoint managers sent me away were usually at the end of rush hour. This meant that before that I could observe the checkpoint for several hours.

As discussed earlier, I was not able to observe the car checkpoints in a way similar to how I observed Checkpoint 300. It was impossible to observe the workings of the car checkpoints in such an intensive way. This was mostly due to their architecture: I could observe Checkpoint 300, a pedestrian checkpoint, from areas that were specifically meant for pedestrians, while the car checkpoints could only be approached by car. Furthermore, the atmosphere at the time of my fieldwork was quite tense. During the time of my fieldwork, there were multiple occasions when Palestinians, but also once a Jewish settler, were shot when walking up to a car checkpoint (Al Jazeera News, 2018; Ma'an News Agency, 2016; McKernan, 2017). The West Bank in general is highly militarised, but this is especially the case for checkpoints. Hence, it seemed ill-advised to stand around and observe the car checkpoints. I did collect data on the two car checkpoints. I interviewed several Palestinians who used these checkpoints and all the settlers I interviewed used these checkpoints. Moreover, I passed through these car checkpoints as often as possible, usually once a week. However, I have collected considerably less data on their workings than I have collected on the workings of Checkpoint 300.

3.9: Up next

In the upcoming chapters, the data that has been collected with the use of the methods described here will be analysed. In these chapters I will describe how the checkpoints function as spatial political technologies that produce selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility. Firstly, in Chapter 4, entitled *Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint Regimes as Spatial Political Technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, three checkpoint passages are analysed that shed

light on the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards and the machines operating inside Checkpoint 300. In this chapter, specific attention is paid to the role played by machines inside Checkpoint 300 and how these machines work towards the functioning of the checkpoint as an arbitrary and violent site. It also addresses how Palestinian commuters engage with these machines, at times accepting, at other times manipulating or rejecting their workings. Chapter 5, entitled *Checkpoint 300: Precarious Checkpoints Geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*, provides an analysis of three categories that are used by the checkpoint managers and Palestinians inside Checkpoint 300, namely gender, age and ID card status. In this chapter, the arbitrary system of 'privileges' that is at play inside Checkpoint 300 is discussed, together with the ways in which Palestinian commuters engage with this system: accepting, manipulating or twisting the categories used by the checkpoint managers. In Chapter 6, entitled *'Checkpoint Knowledge': Navigating The Tunnels and Al Walaja Checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,* Al Walaja and The Tunnels checkpoints are discussed. In these low-tech car checkpoints, two geographical regimes of mobility meet: one aimed at the fast movement of Jewish settlers, the other at the slow and controlled movement of Palestinians. I will discuss how these low-tech car checkpoints produce, through the interplay of human and non-human interactions, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility for the Palestinian commuters using them. The absence of machines inside these checkpoints is addressed, as well as the diverse strategies used by Palestinian commuters to enhance their chances of passing the checkpoints unhindered. As such, all three empirical chapters describe how the checkpoints, as spatial political technologies, are the outcome of the interplay between their managers, commuters and machines, and how, through this interplay, arbitrary, mutable and selective geographies of mobility are created.



Other Barriers

Figure P.10: The entrance of Beit Jala, which has an internal car checkpoint with a gate that can be closed by the Israeli army and a sign that warns (Jewish) Israeli citizens that they are entering Area A (source: Rijke, May 2016).

I'm in an airport shuttle bus from the airport in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. All of a sudden I see a sign on another road: 'This road leads to Area A and is forbidden for Israeli citizens'. Instead of driving straight to Jerusalem and staying inside Israel, this driver is taking a route that leads through the West Bank. Now that I am aware of this, I can see many different barriers around me. At certain points the Wall, but also more signs signifying the entry into Area A, checkpoints, road blocks and settlements. This act of driving through the West Bank by the Jewish Israeli driver is an explicit example of the erasure of the Green Line. Perhaps to avoid traffic, or to claim this space, the Jewish Israeli driver has entered the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

(fieldnotes, 26 April 2019)

Figure P.11: The Tunnels road, which is off limits for Palestinians with a West Bank ID. This also applies to the majority of the people living in Beit Jala, the Palestinian village that the road passes underneath (source: Rijke, July 2016).

Figure P.12: One of the barriers inside Hebron (source: Rijke, July 2016).

Figure P.13: A barrier temporarily placed by the Israeli army on the busy road in Bethlehem that leads to Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, June 2016).

Figure P.14: A permanent barrier blocking one of the roads that leads to Al Walaja village (source: Rijke, May 2016).

Chapter 4

Inside Checkpoint 300

Checkpoint Regimes as Spatial Political Technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories[43]

[43] This chapter is published as:
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Abstract

As a part of the architecture of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, the Israeli government introduced in 2005 a series of so-called terminal checkpoints as "neutral border crossings", to minimise the impact of these barriers on Palestinian lives through a different design and the use of several machines, such as turnstiles and metal detectors. In this article, we analyse terminal Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem, framing it as a spatial political technology aimed at controlling the movement of Palestinians. More specifically, we investigate the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards and the machines operating inside Checkpoint 300. We conclude by suggesting that Checkpoint 300 is a porous barrier whose regime is produced, reproduced but also challenged by such interactions, and that, despite the new "neutral design", Checkpoint 300 is a place still filled with tension and violence, often exercised by the machines and their "decisions".

Keywords: checkpoints, political technologies, architecture of occupation, Palestinian mobility, Occupied Palestinian Territories.

4.1: Introduction

In 2003, the IDF (Israel Defence Forces) launched the programme 'Another Life' in the Occupied Palestinian Territories aimed at "minimizing the damage to the Palestinian life fabric in order to avoid the humanitarian crisis that will necessitate the IDF to completely take over the provision of food and services to the Palestinian population" (Weizman, 2007, p. 149). As explained by Israeli architect Eyal Weizman, one of the objectives of this programme was to reduce the disruption of the ordinary lives of Palestinians caused by the proliferation of checkpoints in those territories. In the aftermath of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories (West Bank and the Gaza Strip) in 1967, the mobility of

Palestinians was in fact still relatively unconstrained. While Palestinians needed personal permits to enter Israel and East Jerusalem[44], this restriction on mobility was of relatively low impact (Keshet, 2006). However, this changed dramatically after the first checkpoints appeared in the early 1990s. Since the 1990s, in fact, an increasingly dense network of checkpoints was established to intensify the control over the movement of Palestinians, a process accelerated after the construction of "the Wall" started in 2002, during the Second (or al-Aqsa) Intifada (2000-2005). The Wall – in certain points a 9-metre high concrete barrier – has been the focus of rich and detailed scholarly work (see, among others, Azoulay & Ophir, 2009; Handel, 2009, 2016; Jones et al., 2016; Sorkin, 2005). Inspired by existing debates, here we approach the Wall as part of what Weizman (2007, p. 6) has famously defined as the 'architecture of occupation', made of checkpoints, fences, Israeli settlements, bypass roads, road blocks and no-go military zones. Due to this architecture of occupation, Palestinians are often unable to travel inside the West Bank or to East Jerusalem and Israel without taking several detours and passing through checkpoints. These daily journeys may entail long queues, the arbitrary implementation of rules by checkpoint 'managers', humiliating and, at times, violent encounters with IDF soldiers/security guards.

As a part of 'Another Life', the IDF had originally planned to introduce a set of newly conceived checkpoints, the terminal checkpoints, located on the 'border' between Israel and the West Bank[45], and accordingly minimise the number of checkpoints inside the West Bank. This second step, however, was never implemented; in 2005, two years after the programme was launched, B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Centre for Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,

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[44] East Jerusalem was annexed by Israel in 1967.

[45] A clear border between Israel and the Palestinian Territories is in practice difficult to identify since Israel, following the Oslo Accords, partly or completely controls 82% of the West Bank (Area C, 60% is under full Israeli control; Area B, 22% is under partial Israeli control), but also due to the checkpoints and the presence of over half a million Israeli citizens living in illegal settlements inside the West Bank (B'Tselem, 2017c).

registered 53 active checkpoints inside the West Bank and on the Israeli border (B'Tselem, 2005), while in January 2017 it reported a total of 98 checkpoints, of which 59 inside the West Bank (B'Tselem, 2017a). While the number of checkpoints was not reduced, numerous new terminal checkpoints were nonetheless opened as 'international border crossings', although usually located inside the West Bank. In comparison with the checkpoints that were already active in the West Bank, which had often been created in a seemingly ad-hoc style, these terminal checkpoints were specifically planned, large airport-like structures. They were introduced to ostensibly address humanitarian concerns – such as long waiting times under the burning sun or on freezing cold days, and lack of toilets and water and minimise the encounters between Palestinians and Israeli forces thanks to the deployment of elaborate technological devices, something confirmed by the high-ranking Israeli military personnel interviewed by Israeli geographer Irus Braverman (2011, pp. 279-280). One important aspect of this reconceptualisation of the checkpoints was in fact the introduction of new 'machines', such as turnstiles, cameras, x-ray machines, metal detectors, fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. Along the same line of thought was the introduction in 2006 of private security guards, portrayed as professional officers who would operate border crossings with the objective of "taking the army out of the checkpoints" (Braverman, 2011, p. 150). The terminal checkpoints were thus supposed to represent neutral border crossings, with fixed 'passage regulations' (Handel, 2009). However, as noted by Israeli scholars Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir (2015), they remain places of tension and arbitrary power enactments directed at Palestinian bodies.

This article is focussed on one of the busiest checkpoints in the West Bank, Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem. According to ActiveStills, an NGO involving Israeli, Palestinian and international reporters, an average of 15,000 Palestinians currently passes through Checkpoint 300 each morning (ActiveStills, 2018). In previous work we have discussed the biopolitical interventions of Checkpoint 300 to differentiate the Palestinian population via the relatively arbitrary use of specific categories like

gender, age and ID status (Rijke & Minca, 2018). Here, we analyse 'terminal' Checkpoint 300 as a political technology operationalised via the use of specific material devices: turnstiles, metal detectors, fingerprint- and iris scanning machines, and we reflect on how these intervene in the workings of the whole checkpoint machinery. We look in particular at the ways in which Palestinians commuters and Israeli soldiers/security guards interact with these material devices, since we consider such interaction essential to the functioning of the checkpoint as a spatial political technology. After briefly engaging with the existing literature on terminal checkpoints in the West Bank, we describe our methodology and some of the key machines inside Checkpoint 300 together with their specific functions. We then present our direct experience of three 'passages' and reflect on how the power of those machines is exercised on different bodies at different moments and how, in interacting with the machines, Palestinian commuters accept, manipulate or reject their workings. But before stepping into Checkpoint 300, it may be useful to introduce the broader context of what has been famously named the 'land of the checkpoints'.

4.2: The land of the checkpoints

The Occupied Palestinian Territories have been coined the "land of the checkpoints" by Palestinian Israeli Knesset member Azmi Bishara (2004), who has also described Israel as the "state of the checkpoints", the Israelis as "the owners of the checkpoints" and the Palestinians as the "people of the land of the checkpoints" (in Braverman, 2011, p. 264). Checkpoints in the West Bank take many different forms (Tawil-Souri, 2009), ranging from airport-like constructions, to car barriers resembling tollbooths, to sheds located in between two fences (B'Tselem, 2017a).

The checkpoints' regime in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the introduction of the terminal checkpoints has been critically analysed by relevant

academic work. The appearance and functioning of terminal checkpoints are described by political scientist Daniela Mansbach (2009) as a move by the Israeli government to normalise the control of Palestinian movement and uncouple the checkpoints from the military occupation. The intention of 'civilising' the checkpoints is connected by Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir (2007) to the Israeli government's intention to create the illusion of the end of the occupation. While the material design of terminal checkpoints and the introduction of new technological apparatuses have represented very important changes in how checkpoints work, most of the research focused on checkpoints in Israel/Palestine – led predominately by Israeli and Palestinian academics such as Rema Hammami (2004, 2010, 2015), Yehudit Kirstein Keshet (2006), Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir (2007, 2015), Ilana Kaufman (2008), and Helga Tawil-Souri (2009, 2010, 2011b) – has taken only partially into account the role played by the new spatial arrangements and the machines. However, two Israeli authors, Daniela Mansbach (2009) and Irus Braverman (2011), have analysed in detail the architectural changes inside the checkpoints designated to become terminals. Both authors highlight the failure of such changes in developing seemingly 'neutral' and 'civilised' border crossings. Braverman (2011) focuses in particular on 'welcome' signs, queues, turnstiles, and electronic sensors, and on how they have been put in place to make the checkpoints seem more 'neutral' and 'civilised'. Braverman argues that, while the increased presence of 'things' in the checkpoints may be in line with the Israeli goal of 'decreasing the tension in the checkpoints' and 'civilising' them, it dehumanises the Palestinians moving through them. Due to this, she concludes, the terminal checkpoints are places filled with tension and violence, far from representing 'neutral and civilised border crossings'. Mansbach's (2009) and Braverman's (2011) studies are both based on data collected during interviews with high-ranking Israeli military personnel and female Israeli activists of Machsom Watch – a volunteer organisation of Israeli women opposing the occupation of the West Bank – and on their own direct involvement with Machsom Watch. Their

perspective provides a unique insight into the rationale behind the terminal checkpoints and the workings of their new machines, while at the same time it opens up space to consider the diverse experiences and the complex interactions of the thousands of Palestinians who pass through these checkpoints on a daily basis.

In this article we thus place particular emphasis on the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards and the machines operating inside Checkpoint 300. Here, the power of machines such as turnstiles, metal detectors and fingerprint- and iris-scanning technologies cannot be separated from the power of the soldiers and security guards and the *things* they are armed with – such as guns, pepper spray, teargas canisters and handcuffs. As Braverman (2011) puts it: "the threat of violence is always implicit in the physical state of things at the border crossing" (p. 267). Indeed, the material devices analysed here often produce dramatic and subtle *violent* effects on those who are exposed to them.

Looking at the checkpoint from this perspective, we found inspiration in Reviel Netz's analysis of barbed wire. In his *Barbed Wire, an Ecology of Modernity* (2004), Netz discusses the development of barbed wire from its initial design to control the movement of cattle and enclose space, to its use in wars and camps to control the movement of humans (p. xii). In this process, barbed wire has become an important spatial political technology, originally designed with one rationale in mind – to keep cows from walking away and protect them from other animals and humans – but developed into doing much more than it was initially intended for; a technology used, for instance, to enclose the victims of murderous regimes such as Hitler's Third Reich and Stalinist Soviet Union. Similar to the power geographies generated by barbed wire, checkpoints may be conceived as specific spatial formations generating new political geographies and new relationships of power for all those who are involved, in different ways, with their workings. A spatial political technology is a technology that produces, via the interplay of human and

non-human agency, a specific set of relationships. At Checkpoint 300, these relationships incorporate the possibility and the actualisation of violence on the commuters, by constraining their mobility and subjecting them to a regime of uncertainty and arbitrariness. The machines and the other materials making the checkpoint, we claim, are constitutive elements of how this political technology works and is effective. In addition, this is a *spatial* political technology, in the sense that it is based on specific spatial arrangements and that it produces a specific political geography (related to the broader architecture of occupation). In line with Netz's (2004) understanding of barbed wire, we thus treat checkpoints as geographical formations capable of implementing specific strategies of control and limitation on the mobility of people and things. We focus here on what makes the 'checkpoint regime' an effective and complex political technology: the workings of the machines and material barriers; the combination of calculative rationalities (see, among other, Crampton & Elden, 2006; Elden, 2006, 2007) and procedures of control and management; and the selective spatial practices of movement management and resistance to this very management.

What is more, checkpoints also represent limited and unpredictable 'openings' in the occupation of the Palestinian Territories: according to Nigel Parsons and Mark Salter (2008), "the barrier does not incarcerate the OPT [Occupied Palestinian Territories]; rather, it radically constricts the flow of population (and goods). Palestinians can still pass through the barrier – the issue is then not enclosure, but control of porosity" (p. 703). Accordingly, we wish to conceptualise Checkpoint 300 as a spatial political technology aimed at controlling movement, as a porous barrier made of the endless interplay among Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards and control machines. In previous work on Checkpoint 300, we have shown how many Palestinians are able to negotiate, and in part subvert, the impact of the arbitrariness implemented by the occupation forces. Here, we propose to analyse how the checkpoint regime, with its brute

materialities, is produced, reproduced and challenged by Palestinians commuters and Israeli soldiers/security guards. As such, we wish to complement Mark Griffiths and Jemima Repo's (2018) recent work on Checkpoint 300, where it is discussed as a biopolitical technology aimed at ordering and managing the lives of Palestinians, rendering their bodies instrumental to the realisation of the colonial project of the Israeli state in the Occupied Territories. Also inspired by Randall McGuire's (2013) analysis of the wall in an American/Mexican border town, we thus not only look at how the checkpoint and its machines violently clash with Palestinians' bodies, but also at how Palestinians continuously engage with and often transgress the intended workings of the checkpoint and its machines and, in the process, produce endless unexpected outcomes.

4.3: Inside Checkpoint 300

This research is based on a six-month period of fieldwork spent by the first author in the Bethlehem area in 2016 and 2017[46] during which she has used multiple methods to collect data, including in-depth home interviews, go-along interviews and participant observation. In particular, she has spent an average of eight hours each week at Checkpoint 300, often during rush hour from 4:00 am to 8:00 am, and has passed through multiple checkpoints in the West Bank on numerous occasions. For this article, we have adopted a mobile methodology to three strategically selected moments/passages of Checkpoint 300, all from the entrance on the 'Bethlehem side' to the exit on the 'Jerusalem side'[47]. The go-along interviews, during which the first author joined her interviewees on their commute to work or school through the checkpoint, were especially important in analysing the

[46] In addition to a four-month period in 2016 and a two-month period in 2017, the first author spent one month in 2014 and three months in 2013 in Bethlehem; these periods have helped formulating the questions discussed here.
[47] These terms should be interpreted loosely here as Checkpoint 300 is not located on the "border" between the Bethlehem municipality and the Jerusalem municipality, or on the Green Line, but inside the Bethlehem municipality.

interactions taking place inside the terminal checkpoint, as they provided her with a diverse set of data, and allowed her to connect the conversations with the interviewees to the smells, the sounds and the rhythms accompanying and affecting each passage. Following Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013) and Gillian Rose et al. (2010), we have combined go-along interviews with in-depth interviews and participant observation. Ivinson and Renold (2013) have used go-along interviews, together with photo-elicitation, in-depth interviewing, film-making and participant observation, to analyse how gendered histories of place are repeated and ruptured in the conscious and unconscious relations of teenage girls in a semi-rural post-industrial area of Wales. The use of go-along interviews allowed them in particular to explore everyday practices, routines and rituals in which a complex combination of fear, discipline but also sense of independence and love for the outdoors came together. Go-along interviews, according to Rose et al (2010), offer the researcher the possibility to directly experience the route taken by the interviewees: while during in-depth interviews it may be possible to discuss how people interact with and co-constitute places, go-along interviews allow to observe and experience these interactions *through* those same places. By putting herself 'into the midst of things', the first author was thus able to observe and experience the workings of the checkpoint in ways that would have been impossible otherwise. For Mark Griffiths, who, as a researcher, attended 'political tours' in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the use of mobile methods reveals to the researcher – while firmly planted in her/his own positionality – something about the embodied experience of life-under-occupation (2017).

By joining her interviewees on their daily commute, the first author had the opportunity to be present during the interactions here examined, witnessing their effects first-hand, but also experiencing them on her persona. This included feeling the pressure of the crowd and the hard materiality of the turnstiles on her own body, hearing the sounds of turnstiles and metal detectors, feeling cold and hot temperatures during the passages, fatigue in her legs and back after standing still

for long periods, frustration when a turnstile did not turn without any apparent reason, and tension in getting close to heavily armed soldiers or private security guards. However, the embodied experiences of the first author were positioned within existing 'power geometries', where different bodies were caught up in the midst of things in different ways (Tolia-Kelly, 2006). As a white woman with a Dutch passport, she engaged and was engaged with by the machines and related disciplinary regime inside Checkpoint 300 in ways that were always different from those experienced by her Palestinian interviewees. This different treatment also influenced the checkpoint's workings, as clearly stated by one of her interviewees: "it is easier to pass through the checkpoint when *you* are here with us" (Mahmoud, interview, 18 July 2016). While the first author experienced several mornings when her presence did not seem to make the soldiers more lenient or the passages easier, on many other occasions she was informed by interviewees or other commuters that she had positively influenced their own passage. Aside from these important practical implications, it is perhaps important to state that the first author was always aware of the fact that, while for the commuters the checkpoint regime was a fact of life they could not avoid, going through Checkpoint 300 for her was a deliberate choice related to her research project and that she could, in any moment in time, simply leave and return to Europe. While it is difficult to say how this awareness affected the material here discussed, at the same time it is key to recognise that this subjective condition certainly influenced the ways in which she experienced the workings of the machines and of the whole checkpoint regime on her body and persona.

The following pages discuss in detail three 'passages' through Checkpoint 300: (1) a quiet go-along interview with Mahmoud and Sara; (2) a crowded morning shared with Nisreen; and, (3) the first author's final passage in June 2017. The first author approached Mahmoud, Sara and Nisreen after learning from her contacts in Bethlehem that they travelled through Checkpoint 300 on a daily basis. Mahmoud and Sara were interviewed three times in 2016, once at home and twice on a go-

along interview. Nisreen was interviewed three times in 2016, once at home and twice on a go-along interview, and once in 2017, at home. These interviews often included sharing dinner or breakfast and were conducted in English, a language both Nisreen and Mahmoud were fluent in, while Sara at times used her husband as a translator. The three passages here analysed certainly do not tell us 'everything' about the checkpoint regime (Griffiths, 2017); however, they are illustrative of specific engagements with the checkpoint regime: Nisreen being a woman travelling by herself and Mahmoud and Sara being a couple – their experience of the passages being different from, for instance, that of the large groups of men who line up at 4am hoping to find a contractor to employ them for the day. We have elaborated on the implementation of categorisations like 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card' by the checkpoint regime and their implications for the commuters elsewhere (Rijke & Minca, 2018). Here, we discuss these three passages, out of many possible others, because we believe that, despite their specificity, they help in showing how the checkpoint works as a spatial political technology exercised on different bodies and in different moments. Before engaging directly with these passages, however, it is helpful to spend some time on the checkpoint design in relation to the different 'stages' characterising each passage, and the devices that contribute to make it work as a spatial political technology: the entry lanes, the turnstiles, the metal detectors/x-ray machines and the checking stations.

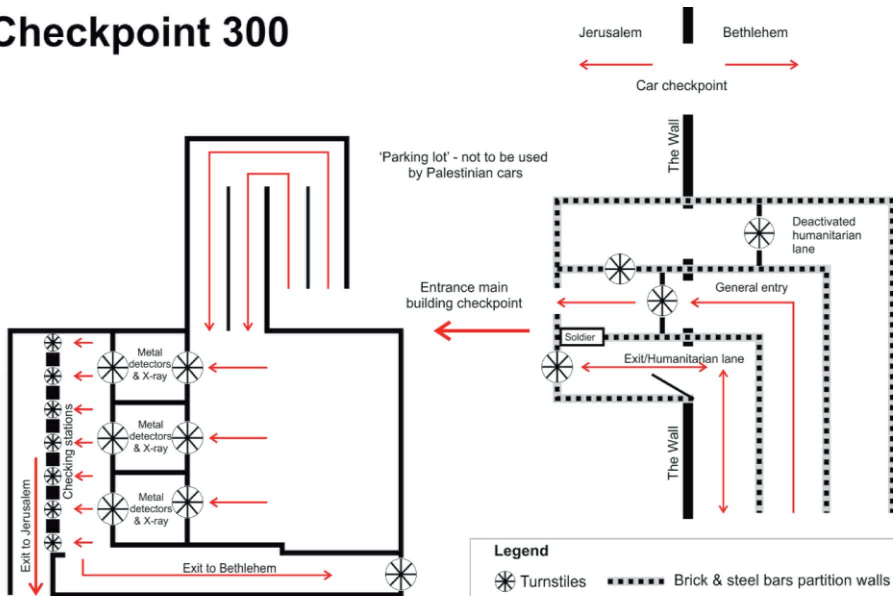

Figure 4.1: A map of Checkpoint 300 based on the first author's fieldnotes and drawings during her multiple passages of the checkpoint (source: Iulian Barba Lata).

4.3.1: Entry Lanes

At arrival on the Bethlehem side, there are three tunnels located next to each other (see Figure 4.1). The tunnel on the right is the deactivated humanitarian lane. Terminal checkpoints have 'humanitarian lanes' that, at specific times, can be used by select groups of Palestinians, such as women, children and elderly, who are allowed to use the lane to avoid the pressure of large crowds in the main entrance lane (on the workings of the humanitarian lane in Checkpoint 300, see, again, Rijke & Minca, 2018). The first author has seen this humanitarian lane in use in 2013 and 2014, but since then it has been de facto closed. Next to the humanitarian lane is the general entry lane. This is a broad and well-lit tunnel used by the majority of the people entering the checkpoint from the Bethlehem side. During rush hour this lane can receive thousands of people at the same time. The third tunnel, located

next to the Wall, is the exit lane. This lane is used by people exiting the checkpoint on their way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.

Since the original humanitarian lane is closed, the exit lane also functions as a humanitarian lane. The three tunnels are made out of steel bars, stones and a corrugated zinc roof (see Figure 4.2). These tunnels constrain the flow of commuters, shaping and directing their mobility. As it has been argued by Peter Adey (2008) in his analysis of the affective role played by the design of airports:

> The architect … [tries] to give the passenger 'no option' … The passenger is faced with a situation in which forwards or backwards are the only directions they may go. The airport creates an environment that invites an automatic response from the passenger. (…) Obstacles such as walls, glass and metal barriers produce a maze-like effect that restrict the passengers' (…) response.
>
> (p. 444, see also Adey's other work on airports, 2009, 2010)

Similar to the role played by walls, glass and metal barriers inside airports, the tunnels leading into Checkpoint 300 give the commuters no other options on their route to the first turnstiles: one can only move forwards or backwards.

4.3.2: The turnstiles

Each passage includes four turnstiles, which represent an important component in the management of people's movement through Checkpoint 300 (Braverman, 2011). Together with fences and walls they create a 'funnel effect', as they "channel a human mass from a wider, somewhat disordered space, through a narrow, covered, box-like passageway, and then out into an open space" (Peteet, 2017, p. 100). These turnstiles are made out of steel arms (see Figure 5.3). According to technical engineer Tal Arbel, cited in Eyal Weizman's *Hollow Land* (2007), the turnstile arms here are 55cm long, that is about 20-25cm shorter than

the standard turnstile arms commonly used in Israel. As Arbel explains, the Israeli Ministry of Defence asked the manufacturer to reduce the length of the arms, so that they can easily press against the body of Palestinian commuters, ensuring that nothing is hidden under their clothes (Weizman, 2007).

Figure 4.2: The general entry tunnel of Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, May 2017).

Consequently, the turnstiles are structured in ways that ensure that Palestinians only pass one-by-one. Practically, this also means that they press against each and every body, entrap larger individuals and elderly using walking equipment, separate parents from their children, and workers from their equipment (on this see also Griffiths & Repo, 2018). In Checkpoint 300, the turnstiles have three arms.[48]

Turnstiles are one of the devices introduced to maintain the distance between Israeli soldiers and commuters and reduce the friction inside the checkpoints (Braverman, 2011). Soldiers in fact lock and unlock the turnstiles from inside their control room, without having to be in (physical) contact with the commuters. The control rooms are bulletproof fortress-like constructions with thick walls and opaque windows located behind the turnstile or even completely out of sight, making it impossible for Palestinians to see the soldiers or communicate with them. On top of each turnstile there are two lights: green meaning 'go!', red meaning 'stop!'. Hence, technically, no contact is necessary between Palestinians and Israeli soldiers, since the turnstiles should 'tell' the commuters whether they are allowed to move on or they need to stop. However, the lights often do not work as expected; green at times could mean: stop! or red: go!; other times they are just off. The frequent 'failure' of the lights entails that other 'expressions' of the turnstiles are read by commuters to know when they can move forward, such as the 'click' one hears when the turnstile is activated or the rotation of the arms when pressing against them. However, these two 'expressions' depend on one's proximity to the machine, forcing commuters into physical contact with the turnstile before they can determine whether or not it is activated.

[48] In other checkpoints in the West Bank, such as Qalandiya Checkpoint, the turnstiles have four arms, making the space between the arms even smaller.

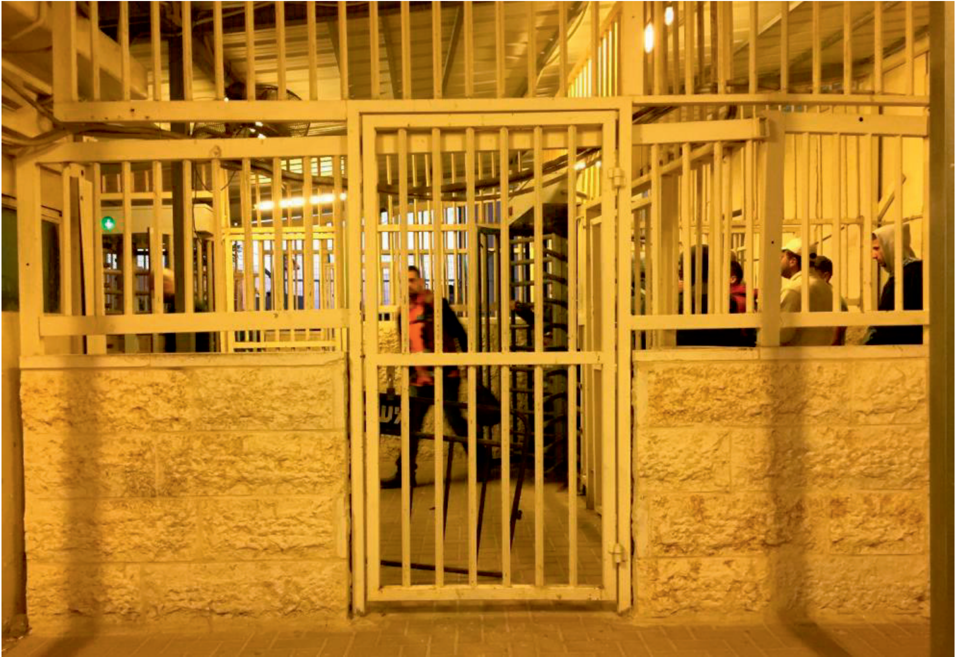

Figure 4.3: First turnstile passages at the end of the general entry lane (Rijke, May 2017).

4.3.3: Metal detectors and x-ray machines

After entering the main building – with its pink and green walls, benches, (fake?) plants, cameras and an air bridge that provides soldiers/private security guards an overview of the whole building and allows them to keep everyone at any moment at gunpoint – one passes through the second turnstile and is confronted with a metal detector and an x-ray machine. These machines allow soldiers to see what everyone is carrying and alert them to the presence of metal objects, in this way replacing any direct contact between Palestinian commuters and Israeli soldiers/security guards with the "ostensibly less intrusive act of seeing" (Braverman 2011, p. 281) (on body scanners at border crossings see Amoore & Hall, 2009; Bellanova & Fuster, 2013; Martin, 2010; Redden & Terry, 2013). From here, the soldiers/guards are visible, since the control rooms in this part of the

checkpoint are well-lit and the windows transparent. However, this does not mean that one can easily communicate with the soldiers/guards since most of them speak only Hebrew, a language that many Palestinians do not master (Kotef & Amir, 2015). This difficulty in communication is enhanced by the fact that inside the control rooms there is a loudspeaker used by the soldiers/security guards to give the Palestinians commands, but seemingly no technology installed to hear possible responses, which explains why Palestinians have to shout or communicate via signs. The indirect interaction reliant on sensory technology is described by the Israeli army officials as being more humane (Braverman, 2011, p. 282), since a commuter can be alerted by 'the machine' that s/he is carrying something with her/him, and in this way avoid being touched by anyone. The decision about whether or not someone may continue without problems is made solely by the machine. If one responds 'correctly' to the loud beep of the metal detector, by turning back and removing the suspect item, the machine will remain silent, a sign that the commuter is allowed to continue. This process can take place several times, without any interaction with the soldiers inside the control room.

4.3.4: Checking stations

After passing through the metal detector, and the third turnstile, commuters have to show their permit/ID card/passport/entry card at one of the checking stations. As explained by Hanna Barag, a member of Machsom Watch:

> There are 12 checking stations and they are never all open, even when it is very busy. This is one example of how the inefficiency, the long lines, the long waits for Palestinians, is an outcome of purposeful behaviour of the Israeli government.
>
> (interview, 30 July 2017)

This was confirmed during the first author's passages when she never found all the stations open.

To travel to Israel and East Jerusalem every Palestinian with a West Bank ID needs a magnetic ID card and a permit[49], both issued by the Israeli District Coordination Office (DCO). A magnetic ID card is only granted to individuals who are not blacklisted as a security threat by the DCO, or who have no misdemeanour on their or their immediate family members' record (Berda, 2018). Once the magnetic ID card is obtained, one can apply for a permit. Our interviewees often joked about the presumed existence of some 101 different permits Palestinians can apply for (Omer, interview, 23 June 2016)[50] including work permits, permits to go to school, to the hospitals, the mosque or the church, but also to reach one's land or visit a foreign embassy in East Jerusalem to apply for a visa (Alqasis & Al-Azza, 2015). All checking stations have fingerprint scanners and sensors that read the magnetic ID cards, and one station has an iris scanner.

It is thus time to move to the three 'passages' during which we have observed how these machines exercise their power on the bodies of any individual passing through the checkpoint, but also how the commuters differently respond to the machines, again, sometimes going along with their rationale, other times tricking them, or completely subverting their workings.

4.4: The passages

4.4.1: Mahmoud & Sara – 28 June 2016

Arriving on the Bethlehem side of the checkpoint I am early for my interview. When walking up to the entrance, I pass by several street vendors selling coffee, tea,

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[49] Five different ID cards/passports categories are present in the OPT: (1) Palestinian West Bank ID cards; (2) Palestinian East Jerusalem ID cards; (3) Palestinian Gaza ID cards; (4) Israeli passports (held by some Palestinians); (5) other passports (also held by some Palestinians). These categories are connected to different levels of freedom of movement. For more see Helga Tawil-Souri's in-depth analysis of the ID cards politics in the Occupied Territories (2011a).

[50] All names used are fictitious, since the interviewees asked to remain anonymous.

sandwiches, cigarettes, but also tools, household items and canned food. At 6:20am I meet Mahmoud and Sara for a go-along interview. It is the third week of Ramadan and the checkpoint seems calm this morning. The sun is shining, and it is already getting warm. This is the second interview with this married couple and when they get out of a 'service taxi' (a shared taxi) I recognise them immediately. They are travelling from their home in Al-Khader, a village south of Bethlehem, to their work in the old city of Jerusalem. They are both in their fifties and have been working in Jerusalem for almost twenty years. After brief greetings, we enter via the general tunnel, which is almost empty.

Mahmoud and Sara are in a rush. The tunnel goes uphill (see Figure 4.2) and soon Sara is out of breath and slows down. Mahmoud softly tells her to hurry up, *'yalla'*, since they cannot be late for work. They live approximately 12 kilometres away from their work but have left their home at 6am to ensure they arrive at their destination by 7:30am. We approach the end of the tunnel, walk through an opening in the Wall, and are confronted with the first turnstile. On a quiet morning such as this one we pass through the turnstile one by one and, since the turnstile lights do not work, we push our bodies against the arms and move on without any friction. We continue and cross the empty, un-used parking lot located between the first section of the checkpoint and the main building (see Figure 4.1).

We then enter the main building where there is only one man waiting at the second set of turnstiles. While lining up for the turnstile, we are unable to see the next room due to a sharp corner. We can see, however, at least one camera watching us. The turnstile lights seem intact but are off. We hear someone passing through the metal detector, beeping twice, and then all becomes quiet. Mahmoud is impatient and pushes against the turnstile. The arms, however, do not move. The man and Mahmoud shout to the soldier. After a few minutes, the soldier shouts something back and the man, Mahmoud and Sara start moving back. Mahmoud explains that they asked the soldier if the turnstile would open and he answered

negatively. Here, the design of the checkpoint not only creates confusion and delays, but also leaves one at the mercy of the invisible person in the control room.

This morning, the soldier responded after only a few minutes, but I experienced situations in which the turnstiles remained deactivated and I had to wait for much longer before it became clear which one I could use, again without seeing the soldier in control. We try another turnstile. It is locked when we push against its arms, but after a few seconds we hear a clear 'click'. Mahmoud immediately moves forward, pushing the turnstile without hesitation. I follow him and Sara and enter the next room. Here our belongings must be scanned by the x-ray machine and our bodies by the metal detector. Mahmoud quickly walks through the metal detector, which beeps loudly, to a big pile of trays located on the other side. He walks back with one tray, provoking another loud beep, and puts his belongings (belt, phone, coins) on the tray. There is no reaction from the soldiers in the control room. I put my own items into Mahmoud's tray, and walk through the metal detector. No beeping, the machines have appraised us and deemed our possessions acceptable. We move on.

We pass the third turnstile, which is unlocked, and walk up to the stations where our documents will be checked. Only four stations out of twelve are open today, but it is a quiet morning and the queues are short. After a few minutes, it is our turn. Mahmoud and Sara pass easily, they both have work permits, and after pressing their finger and magnetic card on the scanners, the soldier inside the booth flicks her hand: their data have been read and accepted by the scanning technologies, and they can move forward to the final turnstile. I do not submit any biometric data but simply hold up my passport, show my entry card, and pass the final turnstile. As a white European woman this proves to be an unproblematic final check. We exit the building and take the bus to Jerusalem. It has required only 8 minutes to go through the checkpoint, but due to the indirect and busy bus route – Palestinians with a West Bank ID are not allowed to drive their cars in Israel and

East-Jerusalem – we need another 45 minutes to reach our destination just outside the old city where Mahmoud and Sara work.

4.4.2: Nisreen – 14 July 2016

On Thursday July 14th, ten days after the end of Ramadan, I meet 54-year-old Nisreen at 6:15am for a go-along interview. She travels through the checkpoint five times a week to go to work and has been doing this since the first checkpoints appeared on the road between Bethlehem and Jerusalem in the 1990s. Nisreen lives right next to the checkpoint, so we meet on her front porch and walk together to the entrance. While we arrive at the same time I did with Mahmoud and Sara, this morning the general entry tunnel is full of people waiting to pass. We walk calmly, while several men run towards the general entry tunnel, hoping to get in line as quickly as possible. When asked if the tunnel is full because more people want to pass the checkpoint that day, Nisreen responds that there is an equal amount of people every day. Long queues, she says, usually depend on the soldiers and on how many checking stations are open. Nisreen does not enter the general entry lane, but directs me towards the exit/humanitarian lane. We thus bypass hundreds of men waiting and dozens of young men climbing the bars that separate the two lanes to skip the queue. We reach the door giving access to the exit/humanitarian lane where three Israeli soldiers are checking people's ID cards or permits, their (heavily armed) bodies blocking the opening of the door. We, two women, are allowed to pass easily.

We cross the empty parking lot and enter the main building. Again, it is very busy. The queues for the three turnstiles leading to the metal detector/x-ray machine are long and messy. When we get to the front we are confronted with the second turnstile. This time, all three metal detectors/x-ray machines are in use and the turnstiles are seemingly activated and deactivated based on the amount of people in the metal detectors/x-ray machine room. We wait a few minutes for the room to clear, but then we hear the familiar click and the turnstile allows us to pass. We

enter and, again, there are no trays available, so Nisreen has to walk back and forth through the metal detector, causing a loud beep both times, to get one. No response from the soldiers. During my first interview with Nisreen, a few weeks ago, she mentioned how unpredictable the metal detectors are: "the soldiers can play with the sensitivity of the machine. The same shoes, the same item of jewellery, sometimes they beep and sometimes not" (interview, 23 June 2016). While she felt that the level of sensitivity of the metal detector was higher during periods of increased tension between Israelis and Palestinians (such as in October 2015, when 68 Palestinians and 10 Israelis were killed [Benoist, 2016]), she also indicated that often there seems to be no specific reason for the increase in sensitivity: "this is the checkpoint. Every day a surprise" (interview, 23 June 2016). The metal detector's 'unpredictability' sheds light on what happens when machines do not work as expected. While this does not necessarily mean that they are failing or behaving in conflict with their rationale, since they nonetheless assess the bodies of the commuters, their unpredictability significantly affects the commuters' mobility and daily whereabouts: one day one may pass without problems and the next day the machine may 'decide' otherwise – its loud beep forcing people to move back and forth, often several times, shedding their possessions in the process, to be able to pass.

When asked what she does when the machine beeps, Nisreen explains that she normally continues: "I beep very often and if he [the Israeli soldier] does not tell me to turn back, I don't turn back. If they don't say anything, I don't even look at them" (interview, 23 June 2016). However, at times the soldiers decide that the beep of the machine does matter, and consequently ask her to move back and forth until the metal detector remains silent. To avoid this, she preventively checks with a magnet if her clothes or jewellery could possibly activate the metal detector, avoiding to wear these items on busy mornings or during tense periods. She even takes the magnet with her when shopping:

> Especially when I go to buy boots, I take the magnet and check them. If the magnet 'catches', it means that there is something in the sole that will make the machines beep. If they are nice and comfortable, I might still buy them, but if I am already doubting and the magnet catches, I won't.
>
> (interview, 23 June 2016)

The unpredictability of the metal detectors is something I experienced as well. While on certain days the same shoes, watch or belt would not elicit a beep, on other days everything seemed to activate the detector. When the sensitivity of the machine is higher, confusion dominates the experience of Palestinians engaging with this section of the checkpoint since they need to pass through the machine over and over again until deemed acceptable.

This morning, the machine does not find anything suspect and we move on without beeping, passing the third turnstile, towards the checking stations. Surprisingly, the queues are very short here. Nisreen says that she does not understand why the first part of the checkpoint was so full this morning, perhaps there were problems at the metal detectors and x-ray machines? While in line, next to us a Palestinian man is having trouble getting his finger scanned. He is wearing clothes covered in paint and rubs his finger before he presses it against the scanner, over and over again. Nisreen suggests that he may have paint on his finger, or calluses. After several attempts he is denied passage and has to return back through the checkpoint. Despite having his permit and magnetic ID card with him, the machine has 'decided' that he is not allowed to pass since he cannot be 'read' biometrically. He will need an appointment with the DCO to submit new fingerprints. When we get to the front of the queue the soldier checking the paperwork does not even look at us. Nisreen puts her magnetic card and finger on the scanners and looks at the soldier, while the soldier still ignores her. After a few seconds, she pushes against the final turnstile and goes through, having been categorised by the scanning devices as biometrically acceptable to travel to Jerusalem. I walk up to the

station and hold my passport and entry card up to the glass. Again, the soldier does not look up. After a few seconds, Nisreen indicates I should just pass the turnstile, which indeed is activated. I join her on the other side, puzzled by the lack of interest of the soldier as my passage was not submitted to and assessed by the scanning technologies in place. Again, my white body and EU passport are enough to allow me to pass. We exit the checkpoint and take the bus to Jerusalem, where Nisreen works.

4.4.3: First author's last passage – 24 June 2017

This morning I am on my way back home to the Netherlands. While I have been returning several times to Bethlehem since 2013, I have now completed my fieldwork and leaving Bethlehem feels somehow like a farewell. I am able, with my EU passport, to return to a country with no occupation, no Wall, no checkpoints, no guns, tear gas, night raids or constant arbitrary changes in my daily life. I am leaving behind dear friends who do not even have the possibility of passing through this checkpoint and visiting Jerusalem. While I have always been aware of my privileges, especially when experiencing how I was treated by the checkpoint regime compared to my Palestinian interviewees, my return to a safe and predictable life in Europe marks in a painful way the insurmountable differences produced by my passport and white body.

I enter the general lane, walk up the hill pulling my suitcase, and quickly run out of breath. Walking through the tunnel I cannot help but recall this lane during the past weeks: whether due to an increased number of permits issued, the mood of soldiers, the limited metal detectors and/or checking stations operating – nobody seemed to know – almost every morning between 4:00 am and 8:00 am during the Ramadan the checkpoint was overcrowded. One specific morning comes to mind: on Thursday June 8th, I arrived at the checkpoint at 4am and the general entry tunnel was completely full. I continued to the first turnstile via the exit/humanitarian lane and during the four hours in which I observed this turnstile,

it was locked on numerous occasions. Why the turnstile was locked and when it would be unlocked was never communicated to the commuters 'in waiting'. The pressure of the crowd was very high. I could see how tightly packed the queue was, hear the shouts of the men frustrated by the situation, feel the heat produced by their bodies, thousands of them, stuck in such narrow space. The unpredictable functioning of the turnstile, combined with the chaotic atmosphere due to the long queue, resulted in a frantic pressure of the crowd once the turnstile was finally unlocked, with the bodies of the men in the front heavily pushed against the steel fence and the turnstile. Despite the limited space between the turnstile arms, on mornings such as these, two, three or even four Palestinians pushed through at the same time. The turnstile was slowed down dramatically by these attempts, while the soldier inside the control room was shouting through the loudspeaker '*wahid wahid'* ('one by one' in Arabic) – one of the few Arabic sentences used by soldiers/security guards at the checkpoints (Kotef & Amir, 2015); then the turnstile was locked again for a few minutes. On mornings like these it became painfully clear how the unpredictable functioning of the turnstiles, arguably introduced by the Israeli army to "decrease human friction and promote orderliness" (Braverman, 2011, p. 279), together with their unyielding steel nature, enhanced the chaos and friction. However, many commuters were able to trick the machine by not following the instructions to pass one at a time, and in the process overcome the first hurdle of the checkpoint spatial regime.

Let us return to my 'last passage': I continue through the first turnstile and cross the empty parking lot. The main building is completely empty. Unsure about which one of the turnstiles is activated I walk up to the first one and push against the arms a few times. I don't know if there is anyone inside the control booth of this turnstile, since I can't see it, so I decide to call out. After shouting 'hello' and 'is anybody there' a few times without getting a response, I give up and try the second turnstile. Here, I hear the click indicating that the turnstile is activated, and that I am watched by the cameras and the soldier in charge. Manoeuvring myself through

the turnstile, I reach the room with the metal detector and the x-ray machine. I hoist my suitcase on top of the belt of the x-ray machine and walk through the metal detector, which beeps loudly. I decide to keep on moving, ignoring the machine and trying my luck to see if the soldiers will let me pass. As stated by Nisreen, often the beep does not elicit a response from the soldiers. This lack of interaction was described by another of our interviewees as 'dehumanising'. Saba, a 52-year-old resident of Bethlehem, who used to regularly commute through Checkpoint 300, explained that in this section of the checkpoint

> It is like you are walking in a maze, like you are a testing animal… like I am inside a lab… I don't see anyone… If the bell of the metal detector rings, I have to go back by myself, no one tells me to go back! I feel humiliated.
>
> (interview, 10 June 2017)

He claimed that he often continued to walk when he beeped if they did not stop him, refusing to be disciplined by responding correctly to the machine. Nisreen used the same strategy. I could also normally continue after beeping, something seemingly determined by my white skin and EU passport (a similar experience described by (white British) Mark Griffiths in Hebron [2017]). On those occasions, I was assessed by the metal detector, hence the beeping; but this assessment was ignored by the soldiers. However, ignoring the metal detector is a riskier exercise for Palestinians, as Saba recalled occasions in which he was denied passage through the checkpoint or even deprived of his permit.

This morning, the soldiers remain silent and I move on. I take my suitcase off the x-ray machine belt and engage the third turnstile. All checking stations seem empty, but as I get closer, I can see a soldier in one of the stations, focusing on his phone and seemingly not expecting any commuters. I approach the station and hold up my passport and entry card. The soldier looks at them, glances at me and wishes me a nice day. Again, I do not have to submit my biometric data to the scanning devices, my EU passport and Israeli entry card categorise me as a priori 'acceptable

to pass', without further assessment. Pushing against the final turnstile, I walk freely towards the exit door.

4.5: Concluding remarks

In this article we have analysed Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem as a spatial political technology by focussing in particular on the interactions between Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/security guards and the machines operating inside the checkpoint. Passing through a checkpoint is a daily exercise many Palestinians cannot avoid on their way to work, school, their families or their mosque/church. Terminal checkpoints were originally introduced by the Israeli government as 'neutral border crossings' aimed at minimising the impact of these barriers on Palestinian lives through a different design and the use of several machines, such as turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray machines, fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. The presence of these machines was supposed to increase the distance between soldiers and Palestinian commuters and accordingly decrease the tensions amongst them. However, as we have shown in this article, Checkpoint 300 is still a place filled with tension and violence, often exercised by the machines in operation and by their 'decisions'.

By incorporating the 'agency' of the machines in our analysis, we have shown that Checkpoint 300 is a porous barrier whose regime is produced and reproduced by an endless interplay among Palestinian commuters, Israeli soldiers/guards and a series of technological devices. The brutal materialities of the checkpoint regime, we argue, significantly affect the daily lives and the mobility of the Palestinian commuters, with the machines' 'responses' marking the body of the individuals subjected to their decision: from beeping to remaining silent, from reading their biometrical identities to refusing to do so, from the contact of the turnstiles' arms to their subtle but liberatory 'clicking'. More specifically, the three 'passages' described in this article show how the material agency of the machines is exercised on different bodies and in different moments. The quiet morning with Mahmoud

and Sara revealed that, even when the passage is smooth and with no major disruptions, the machines affect the bodies of the commuters and crucially determine the modalities of their passage and, accordingly, their daily lives. Our passage on that occasion was smooth because metal detectors and scanning devices worked according to the expected 'rationale' and allowed us to pass after having thoroughly 'assessed' us and our bodies. The morning with Nisreen instead has shown moments of tension between the machines, the soldiers/security guards and the commuters. While during that passage the machines seemed to 'behave' in line with their own presumed rationale, Nisreen tried to influence their 'response' in order to increase her chances to pass (by pre-scanning her jewellery and clothes/boots), but also challenged them by walking through the metal detector and ignoring its beeping. On that occasion, also the soldiers selectively chose not to 'listen to the machines' and allowed her to go through.

The last passage of the first author before returning home represents instead a self-reflection on the many mornings spent inside Checkpoint 300 observing its deeper workings. On some of those mornings, when the pressure of the crowds was large and the feeling of chaos and tension palpable, the brutal operations of the machines was painfully visible: the unyielding steel of the turnstiles when thousands of bodies were pressed against them; the loud, often seemingly random, beeping of the metal detector when people had to keep on going back and forth, trying to discover what the machine deemed unacceptable for their passage; and the moments in which the scanning devices at the checking stations decided not to allow one specific individual to pass and her/his whole exercise through the previous stages of the checkpoint was nullified. These three passages (but also many other passages observed during fieldwork) have highlighted diverse ways in which Palestinians interact with, reproduce, but also challenge the workings of the Checkpoint 300. During these interactions, they generate, as observed also by Randall McGuire on the US/Mexico border (2013), endless unexpected outcomes – again, ranging from behaving as 'intended' by the machines, to trying to minimise

the chance of clashing with them or even actively reshaping their effects, for example by having up to four individuals pressed against the arms of the first turnstile. This possibility of twisting the workings of the machines is known to the people who daily travel through the checkpoint. It is also known to the soldiers inside the control booths, who may simply ignore it or, alternatively, quickly intervene by deactivating the turnstile. But in those minutes of confusion and actual disruption of the workings of the machine, while the commuters are still passing the turnstile, feel its steel on their skin and manoeuvre their bodies through its limited spaces, in those moments it is the commuters who 'speak' to the machine and manipulate their rationale, and with that, the political technology incorporated by the checkpoints' regime as a whole.

The 'wilful inefficiency' we observed inside Checkpoint 300 is explained by Julie Peteet (2017) as one of the key characteristics of the Israeli checkpoints, creating a "population in a perpetual state of anxious anticipation" (p. 119). Mikko Joronen (2017) even suggested that making Palestinians wait is an important form of government that upholds the status quo of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. Such arbitrariness and inefficiency are not eliminated by the presence of the machines at Checkpoint 300, but rather produced by and reproduced also via their operations. This is perhaps the most powerful 'special effect' of a spatial political technology like the one here analysed. On the one hand, checkpoints are installed to control and manage the mobility of a specific population of commuters subjected to their disciplinary regime. There is a whole geography produced by the presence of such barriers in the Occupied Territories. On the other hand, while the calculative rationalities guiding the realisation of specific spatial arrangements in the checkpoints and the machines installed to support such rationalities are in place, their unpredictable inefficiencies and the arbitrary interventions on the part of soldiers and guards in their workings expose the body of the commuters to a regime of uncertainty and fear. Many passages may thus be unproblematic and

surprisingly fast; others, for unpredictable reasons, may become long and painful experiences, and can even lead to rejection or sanctions.

This is precisely how spatial political technologies work: their spatialities are marked by strict and rather explicit rules of conduct while at the same time they remain open to the soldiers' arbitrary intervention, to malfunctioning machines, or even to explicit manipulation on the part of the commuters. The fact that Checkpoint 300, despite the introduction of the machines' 'neutral' assessment, remains porous and subject to acts of resistance and manipulation is precisely what makes it a powerful instrument in the implementation of the architecture of occupation, an architecture in which the presence of uncertainty and arbitrariness is as important as the hard materialities (walls, barriers, etc.) that populate the Occupied Territories.

Checkpoint 300

Figure P.15: One of the Palestinian shops at the entrance of Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, May 2017).

Figure P.16: The queue before the entry lane at Checkpoint 300 on a busy morning (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure P.17: The old humanitarian lane at Checkpoint 300, which the author has not seen in use since 2014 (source: Rijke, May 2017).

This morning in Checkpoint 300 the general entry lane is completely full and the humanitarian lane has not yet been open. However, this does not mean people do not go through the turnstile in this lane. I have noticed a presumably unintended possibility that arises due to the design of the turnstile: when someone has entered the exit lane through the turnstile on their way from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, and s/he does not complete the turn of the turnstile until the arms lock, the turnstile remains open for people travelling from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. The turnstile remains open as long as the commuters travelling to Jerusalem also do not complete the turn. The space that is created is small – only a few dozen centimetres. But by pressing their bodies through this small opening, dozens of Palestinian commuters pass through the turnstile this way while bypassing the long queue in the main lane. This possibility is known to the people who often travel through the checkpoint. However, this possibility is also known to the soldiers inside the control booth, who, once they realize what is happening, try to quickly close the created opening. They do this by either exiting their control room and turning the turnstile, or, more often, by opening their window and getting a Palestinian commuter to do it. But even though the opening often only lasts for a few minutes, dozens Palestinians pass through this way and, in the process, manipulate the rationale of the machines and intentions of the Israeli checkpoint regime as a whole.

(fieldnotes, 8 June 2017)

Figure P.18: The car gate at Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, April 2017).

Chapter 5

Checkpoint 300

Precarious Geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories[51]

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Abstract

For many Palestinians passing an Israeli checkpoint is a daily ritual they cannot avoid on their way to work, school, family or their mosque/church. Although the checkpoints are key sites where the impact of the architecture of occupation is felt on a daily basis, the experience of Palestinians at these sites has been the focus of a relatively limited number of research projects. In this article, we analyse the daily experiences of Palestinians passing Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem in relation to the implementation of three biopolitical categorises that influence their passage, namely 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card status'. In our discussion, we reflect on the ways in which the selective and ambivalent use of these categorisations on the part of the soldiers and private security forces managing the checkpoint is an example of how arbitrariness is a tool to create the conditions for the daily exercise of sovereign power over individual Palestinians and endlessly reproduce the asymmetrical relationship between the occupier and occupied. While these rules and exceptions are confronted by Palestinians with various forms of resistance, their impact of this subversive engagement remains relatively limited. In the conclusion, we indicate the importance of studying the messiness related to the daily practices of the Palestinians' life-under-occupation and the impact of the multitude of material barriers, such as the checkpoints, that make up the architecture of occupation in the West Bank.

Key words: checkpoints, biopolitical technologies, exceptional sovereign power, architecture of occupation, Occupied Palestinian Territories.

5.1: Introduction

> Bethlehem: Sunday, July 17th 2016, 4:00 – 8:00 am. I am at Checkpoint 300, observing the people passing through on their daily

> commute. The main lane moves quickly, but the humanitarian lane has been closed most of the morning. After a couple of hours, the queue in the humanitarian lane is very long, including women, old men and children, but also young men. Young men are generally excluded from this lane, but some are given a special permit. The private security guard on duty suddenly gets angry with these young men, shouts at them in English through the gate that they do not belong to this lane, and that, due to their presence, the lane cannot be opened. I hear people shouting back, complaining that there are women and children there, that these people have the right to pass. The ID of one of the men in the front of the row is checked by the security guard, but he is told that, being 63 years old, he is too young to use this lane. The man replies that he was allowed to pass last week, but the guard does not listen and walks away. I leave with the impression that, at Checkpoint 300, no rule seems to be implemented twice in the same way.
>
> (fieldnotes, 17 July 2016)

Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem is one of the most intensively crossed checkpoints in the West Bank, used mainly by Palestinians hailing from the south of the West Bank on their way to Jerusalem and Israel. According to ActiveStills, an NGO involving Israeli, Palestinian and international reporters, an average of 15,000 Palestinians pass through Checkpoint 300 each morning (ActiveStills, 2018). Checkpoint 300 has been categorised as a 'terminal checkpoint' by the Israeli army in 2005 (Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem Society, personal communication, 2017) – a term used for large checkpoints that are meant to function as official, 'neutral', airport-like border crossings – although the majority of the terminal checkpoints, including

Checkpoint 300, are not located on the Green Line, but inside the West Bank.[52] Checkpoint 300 is an example of a new generation of installations described by Daniela Mansbach (2009) as an attempt to 'demilitarise' the checkpoints and normalise the Israeli control of the mobility of Palestinians. The fieldnotes excerpt suggests that different categorisations are at play at Checkpoint 300. While some individuals, classified on the basis of their age and/or gender, may normally be afforded the privilege of using a special 'humanitarian lane'[53] to avoid the pressure of large crowds, in practice this 'privilege' is not always granted by the soldiers/security guards. Even when granted, however, the passage may be affected by close (possibly emotional) interactions with the soldiers/security guards and their related 'moods'. At the same time, these categorisations are performed by Palestinians when interacting with each other and with the soldiers/security guards, with men allowing women to pass before them, the elderly being assisted through the gates, but also with young men trying to skip the queue by climbing the steel-barred fences, something that precisely age and gender seem to make possible.

Numerous analyses of 'the Wall', the (planned to be 750km long) separation barrier built by the Israeli government in the West Bank (see, among others, Peteet, 2017; Weizman, 2007), have provided valuable insights into the workings of the spatial regime imposed by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. Some research is focused, for example, on the rhetoric used to legitimise the Wall

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[52] The Green Line, also called the 1949 Armistice border, was recommended by the UN in 1947 as the border between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Although its legitimacy as a border remains debated (see, amongst others, Bicchi & Voltolini, 2018), it is, internationally, the most recognised border between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. This border situates East Jerusalem inside the Palestinian Territories (United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine, 2017).

[53] In the design of Checkpoint 300, a separate lane and gate were added to function for humanitarian purposes. However, this separate gate was closed during the first author's two fieldwork periods in 2016 and 2017. The people entitled to the humanitarian lane now enter the checkpoint through the 'exit lane', still avoiding the large crowds of the regular lane. Here, we therefore use the term 'humanitarian lane' to indicate this use of the 'exit lane'.

(Bowman, 2007; Jones, Leuenberger, & Wills, 2016), while other work discusses its impact and that of the occupation regime on the lives of Palestinians (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009; Eklund & El-Atrash, 2012; Handel, 2009, 2011, 2016) or the different ways in which Palestinians resist the restrictions imposed on their mobility (Amir, 2011; Parizot, 2012; Parson & Salter, 2008). However, while passing through checkpoints is a daily experience for most Palestinians travelling within the West Bank and to Israel, this specific experience has been analysed by a relatively limited number of studies. There are in fact numerous academic interventions in which checkpoints have been investigated as part of the broader geographies of occupation (see, among others, Grassiani, 2013; Handel 2009, 2011, 2016; Ophir, Givoni, & Hanafi 2009; Parson & Salter 2008), but only few of these have focused specifically on checkpoints. Most recent research concerning checkpoint experiences in the West Bank has been conducted by members of Machsom Watch, an Israeli all-women organisation that opposes the occupation of the Palestinian Territories (Braverman, 2011, 2012; Kaufman, 2008; Keshet, 2006; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Kotef, 2011, 2015; Mansbach, 2009, 2012, 2015). However, as stated by Palestinian anthropologist Rema Hammami (2010, pp. 37-38), their otherwise valuable work tends to underplay the agency of the Palestinian commuters passing through the checkpoints. Other authors, such as Hammami herself, have incorporated the experience of Palestinians passing through checkpoints in their work (Hammami, 2004, 2010, 2015; Peteet, 2017; Razack, 2010; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b), but they largely refer to the years of the Second (or al-Aqsa) Intifada (2000-2005), when the checkpoint system currently in place was not yet fully operational. In this article, we try to fill this gap – in a dialogue with the existing rich body of literature on the Wall and the West Bank – by analysing checkpoint practices from the perspective of Palestinians passing through Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem, one of the most important checkpoints in the region.

Inspired by Eyal Weizman’s spatial analysis of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories presented in his influential *Hollow Land: Israel’s Architecture of*

Occupation (2007), we consider checkpoints as (bio)political technologies aimed at producing a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility affecting the people subjected to them. Furthermore, in line with Reviel Netz's (2004) understanding of barbed wire as a spatial political technology, we focus on how the assemblage of biopolitical categories, material devices and barriers, procedures of control, calculative rationalities and selective practices that we call 'checkpoints' *do things*. We treat checkpoints as geographical formations capable of producing spatial effects that respond to specific strategies of control and limitation of the mobility of people and things. Elsewhere we have looked at how the checkpoints' materialities affect the bodily performances of both Palestinians and Jewish settlers in the Bethlehem area – when forced to pass through them. Here we address in particular the biopolitical categories used by the 'managers' of Checkpoint 300 to classify and qualify Palestinian individuals and their related mobility during their passages. More specifically, we reflect on how the categories of 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card status' adopted by the Israeli authorities to qualify Palestinians are key to the everyday implementation of the checkpoint (ir)rationalities. In the following sections, we first comment on existing research on the West Bank checkpoints and introduce the broader context of our research. We then discuss in detail the workings of Checkpoint 300 and the methodology used to analyse it. The three following sections are dedicated to how the categories of gender, age and ID card status are respectively incorporated as biopolitical technologies in producing selective rationalities of mobility (or lack thereof) related to the checkpoint. We conclude by reflecting on how the somewhat inconsistent, arbitrary and selective nature of such categories, together with the ways in which the Palestinians engage and negotiate with them, are constitutive of a set of specific checkpoint geographies of power. The interplay between the calculative rationalities incorporated by these biopolitical categories and the endless 'exceptions' implemented via everyday interactions between soldiers/security guards and Palestinians at the checkpoint, we argue, is at the origin of the unstable

and unpredictable geographies produced by this powerful political spatial technology.

5.2: Architectures of occupation

After the occupation of the Palestinian Territories, the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, restrictions on Palestinian movement were gradually put in place by the Israeli state (Weizman, 2007, p. 142). All Palestinians were granted a general permit to enter Israel and East Jerusalem, with the exception of people convicted of crimes or considered a security threat. This permit could be revoked at any time but, due to the lack of a comprehensive system of material barriers and checkpoints, the mobility of Palestinians was still relatively free. This changed after the start of the first Gulf War (1990-1991), when the first permanent checkpoints were built and individual permits were required for Palestinians to enter Israel (Keshet, 2006, p. 13). Since the beginning of the Second Intifada in 2000 (Ophir, Givoni, & Hanafi, 2009), the number and the locations of checkpoints has grown exponentially. Today, it is estimated that about 100 checkpoints operate inside the West Bank (an area of 5,640km^2, including East Jerusalem) and on the 'Israeli border' (B'Tselem, 2017a). Next to these checkpoints and the Wall, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has registered in 2015 an average presence of 543 physical obstructions in the West Bank, a situation that has been relatively stable since the end of the Second Intifada (OCHA Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2017). This apparatus of barriers is a key element in the 'architecture of occupation' of the West Bank described by Weizman, consisting of a combination of road blocks, checkpoints, fences, the Wall, illegal Israeli settlements and the related bypass roads. Weizman's analysis (2007) shows how this multiplicity of barriers splinters the border between Israeli and Palestinian territories into a multitude of ever-changing borders, and contributes to a series of geographical practices aimed at controlling the daily lives of Palestinians.

Checkpoints play a particularly important role in this architecture of occupation in the West Bank (Hammami, 2015). They represent material barriers through which 'Israeli-only' spaces are created, spaces from which Palestinians are fundamentally evicted and which are the main grounds for the expansion of the state of Israel via the development of new illegal settlements (see Fourth Geneva Convention, 1949). These settlements materialise on Palestinian land precisely by being fenced off through the construction of the Wall, multiple checkpoints and 'settler-only roads'. The checkpoints are a means of surveillance as well, since they represent key spatial technologies to monitor, discipline and/or selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians. As noted by several authors (Amir, 2013; Hammami, 2015; Handel, 2009, 2011, 2014; Kotef, 2015), blocking the movement of Palestinians is not the purpose of these checkpoints. Instead, the checkpoints are rather porous barriers, and the deliberately arbitrary management of this porosity appears as one of their main functions (Parson & Salter, 2008). Although checkpoints may be closed, or temporarily restricted to specific groups of people – something regularly happening – they work precisely as a field of possibility (or impossibility) by providing limited and relatively unpredictable 'openings' in a broader system of repression and control, created through many closures *and* selective 'windows' (on the strategic porosity of 'walls', see Minca & Rijke, 2017).

This does not mean that the West Bank checkpoints are in place to simply monitor and somehow routinize Palestinian lives (Hammami, 2015). On the contrary, they are one of the technologies used by the Israeli occupation forces to ensure that the capacity of Palestinian residents to reach their daily destination is never entirely predictable. The checkpoint openings, the sudden closures, the long queues, the swift passages, the alternation of violent outbursts and quiet days provide a permanent sense of arbitrariness, chaos and uncertainty that has become an integral part of life-under-Israeli-occupation and is in line with its "strategy of obfuscation" (Weizman, 2007, p. 8). Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir have carefully detailed the way in which this arbitrariness, connected to withheld violence, is used

by the Israeli occupation regime to create an unreliable, and thus punishable, subject. This subject is unable to internalise the rules of the regime as these rules change too often and in an unpredictable way. Checkpoints are in their view exemplary sites in which this kind of interaction between the occupier and occupied takes place, where the only thing Palestinians can internalise is their submission to the Israeli sovereign power (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009, p. 115). In analysing the impact of such arbitrariness on the lives of Palestinians, Israeli geographer Ariel Handel (2009) has engaged with the concept of 'use value'. By adopting this concept, he has qualified the difference between the average mobility of a Jewish settler, who is able to move unrestrictedly and without the risk of being stopped along the road, and a Palestinian resident, who is instead never sure that s/he will not be stopped on her/his way home. This sense of uncertainty and 'low use value', according to Handel, is the main reason for Palestinians to become less and less mobile. The random nature of these interventions is indeed a constitutive element of the architecture of occupation, something that not only affects Palestinians' mobility in very tangible ways, but also, Handel suggests, represents a pervasive form of control over their daily lives. This regime of arbitrary intervention, discussed in detail in the pages to follow, is largely based on the working of the checkpoints, and plays a key role in the biopolitical monitoring of the daily mobilities of Palestinians.

This checkpoint regime can also be seen, at least in part, as a manifestation of what Mitch Rose (2014) has described as negative governance. For Rose (2014), reflecting on the biopolitics implemented by the Egyptian state over the village of Nazlat al-Samman, negative governance is a unique modality of governance according to which:

> By exposing villagers to the precariousness of life itself, the state does not attempt to control life but use life (in its inherent frailty) as a strategic asset. Biopolitics in Nazlat al-Samman is a calculated divestment of the

> state's legal authority (and responsibility) to manage, delegate and order the social, economic and political dynamics of the village.
>
> (p. 214)

While we do not intend to claim that the checkpoint is a space of deliberate non-intervention, at the same time we believe that the checkpoint regimes, as key elements of the architecture of occupation, crucially contribute to the exposure of the Palestinian population to the precariousness entailed by the ever-present possibility of intervention on the part of the Israeli authorities and their bureaucratic administration, but also by the equally ever-present possibility of non-intervention; this regime renders impossible any clear plan, any expected passage, any normality in the daily spatialities of commuters. To speak again with Rose (2014), "if the Egyptian state governs anything, it is the prohibition of governance. If it calculates anything, it is the benefits derived from not calculating" (p. 215). The uncertainty concerning the operations of the checkpoints may thus be seen as a manifestation of sovereign power enacted 'on the spot' by soldiers/security guards, a strategy based on the possibility of, alternatively, either following the official rules or disregarding them, either to govern or to withdraw from governing, often for no apparent reason (on the biopolitical enactments of exceptional sovereign power 'on the spot', see Agamben, 1998; Minca, 2007; for a different reading, see Butler, 2004; Jones, 2009).

Checkpoints are thus assemblages of control and surveillance capable of activating specific (bio)political technologies aimed at performing, precisely via a system of rules *and* exceptions, a set of asymmetrical relations between the occupier and the occupied (see Parsons & Salter, 2008, but also Azoulay & Ophir, 2009). Whereas Israelis and Palestinians may spend most of their lives trying to avoid interacting with each other − though this is easier for Israelis than for Palestinians confronted with the Israeli army or settlers at unexpected moments in their daily whereabouts

– the checkpoint is one site in which they are forced to come together and interact. It is a place where the soldiers' sovereign power may be enacted via a set of relatively arbitrary decisions on whether or not someone's attempt to pass should be fast and unproblematic, or instead entail hours-long wait, or include the random possibility of having to answer a series of questions or to get undressed for a body check. At times, in line with the same regime of uncertainty, the passage is simply denied, or the checkpoint closed altogether.

However, in spite of this climate of arbitrariness and insecurity, Palestinians keep on moving and pass through checkpoints every day. As noted above, the agency of Palestinians in engaging with the regime imposed by the architecture of occupation is often underplayed in the analyses of scholars and organisations such as Machsom Watch. While the writings of Machsom members provide valuable insights into the impact of the checkpoints and the occupation in general (Braverman, 2012; Kaufman, 2008; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Kotef, 2011; Mansbach, 2012, 2015), and on the rationale behind the material changes in terminal checkpoints (Braverman, 2011; Mansbach, 2009), Palestinians are portrayed in these accounts as bystanders whose views and practices are only rarely analysed. The experience of Palestinians passing through checkpoints in the West Bank is instead examined in detail by Palestinian scholars Rema Hammami (2004, 2010, 2015) and Helga Tawil-Souri (2009, 2010, 2011b). Both Hammami and Tawil-Souri have personally experienced the workings of checkpoints during the Second Intifada, when Hammami used to pass with her Jerusalem ID and Tawil-Souri, a diasporic Palestinian, with her American passport. They have accordingly studied the daily passages of Palestinian residents through numerous checkpoints in the Ramallah area, and Qalandiya Checkpoint in particular, by highlighting how they resisted the status of passive victims of the architecture of occupation, for instance by self-regulating the traffic at checkpoints (Hammami, 2010, 2004), or by exploiting the social and economic spatialities produced by the very presence of checkpoints (i.e. by offering services and products of all kinds to the commuters,

see Tawil-Souri, 2009) or by normalising the checkpoints in their narratives, that is, "submerging the self into the moral community of the checkpoint crossers thus enabling individual experience of Israeli sovereign violence to be domesticated as part of Palestinians' collective normal" (Hammami, 2015, p. 1).

While these authors in particular provide valuable insights into the daily experiences of Palestinians, as noted above, their work is mostly based on data collected during the Second Intifada. Checkpoints in the West Bank have changed a great deal since those years, from being in most cases ad-hoc barriers made up out of dirt piles and concrete blocks to become today's complex assemblages of technologies of monitoring and control. This is especially the case for so-called 'terminal checkpoints', like Checkpoint 300. Accordingly, while we wish to engage with some of the key arguments formulated by Hammami and Tawil-Souri, at the same time we intend to include in our analysis the implications of the (bio)political technologies incorporated by the new 'terminal checkpoints', in line with Weizman's accounts of the architecture of occupation. The decision to focus on Checkpoint 300 was motivated by the fact that it is one of the most used checkpoints in the West Bank and a site where the intricate assemblage of intervention and lack of intervention is exercised through the use of the three categories here analysed. Also, while existing research concerning Qalandiya Checkpoint (Braverman, 2011; Hammami, 2010, 2015; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b), a site often characterised by violence, is already rich and detailed, we are not aware of previous work focussed on Checkpoint 300, a site where the relative absence of frequent 'spectacular violence' makes it especially suitable to analyse the 'ordinary' daily precarious geographies produced by this form of sophisticated negative governance.

In particular, we explore here Checkpoint 300 as a spatial political technology by discussing the three abovementioned categories of 'age', 'gender' and 'ID card status' used by the security forces to classify individuals at checkpoints and to

determine who has the right to pass and under which modality. In the coming sections, we reflect on how these categories and the related rules applied to qualify the Palestinian bodies at the checkpoint are regularly subject to exceptions, giving space to *ad hoc* enactments of sovereign power on the part of the guards, as discussed above, but also to negotiations and forms of resistance on the part of the individuals subjected to them. In doing so, we study Checkpoint 300 for 'what it does' to Palestinian commuters, as well as for how Palestinians themselves incorporate in diverse ways its assemblage of materialities, practices, technologies and biopolitical measures.

Most of our analysis is based on research developed in 2016 and 2017, during a six-month period of fieldwork spent by the first author in the region. The data discussed here have been collected using multiple methods largely inspired by the work of Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013, 2014) and Gillian Rose, Monica Degen and Begum Basdas (2010). Ivinson and Renold have analysed how gendered histories of place are repeated and ruptured in the conscious and unconscious relations of teenage girls in a semi-rural post-industrial area of Wales. They have used go-along interviews, in-depth interviews and observations to explore the affective geographies of fear, independence, discipline and a love of the outdoors and horses (Ivinson & Renold, 2013, p. 374). Rose, Degen and Basdas (2010, p. 340), in their analysis of the influence of different mobilities on the materialisation of shopping malls, have argued for the combination of go-along interviews and in-depth interviews as this generated a diverse set of data, including movements, sounds, smells, rhythms, etc. We have thus combined intense and extensive participant observation – with numerous days spent at checkpoints and equally numerous 'passages' – with go-along interviews, in-depth interviews and email interviews. Thanks to this combination of methods, we have linked the conversations with the respondents to the first author's observations during her go-along interviews and participant observation. More specifically, the first author has interviewed twenty Palestinians multiple times – 9 women and 11 men, whose

age ranged from 21 to 73 and who all regularly pass through Checkpoint 300 – often joining them on their commute to work or school, and discussing the experiences related to these commutes during in-depth interviews in their homes. These Palestinians, who all lived either in Bethlehem or in the surrounding villages, travelled regularly to Jerusalem on their way to work or school. In addition, the first author has spent up to eight hours each week at Checkpoint 300, often during rush hour from 4:00 to 8:00 am, and regularly crossed several checkpoints during her stays in the West Bank.[54] This was particularly important since, as a white European woman, she has experienced *prime facie* the-difference-that-bodies-make when screened by the checkpoint technologies and when qualified as a reflection of her gender, age and ID status (holding a European passport) in engaging with the checkpoint regime of normalised exceptions.

5.3: Checkpoint 300

Checkpoint 300 is an assemblage of monitoring and security technologies made out of complex materialities (turnstiles, x-ray machines, metal detectors, walls, steel bars), politically-situated embodied subjects (Palestinian commuters, Palestinians working in the 'checkpoint economy', such as the men who sell food, coffee, cigarettes or phone cards (Tawil-Souri, 2009), Israeli soldiers and private security guards, international and Israeli observers, etc.), and an array of discourses, practices and spatial arrangements – which include the validation and implementation of 'age', 'gender' and 'ID card status' as selective categories key to the working of the checkpoint's regulatory regime.

[54] In addition to a four-month period in 2016 and a two-month period in 2017, the first author spent one month in 2014 and three months in 2013 in Bethlehem collecting data for a different research project; these periods also have helped formulating the questions discussed here.

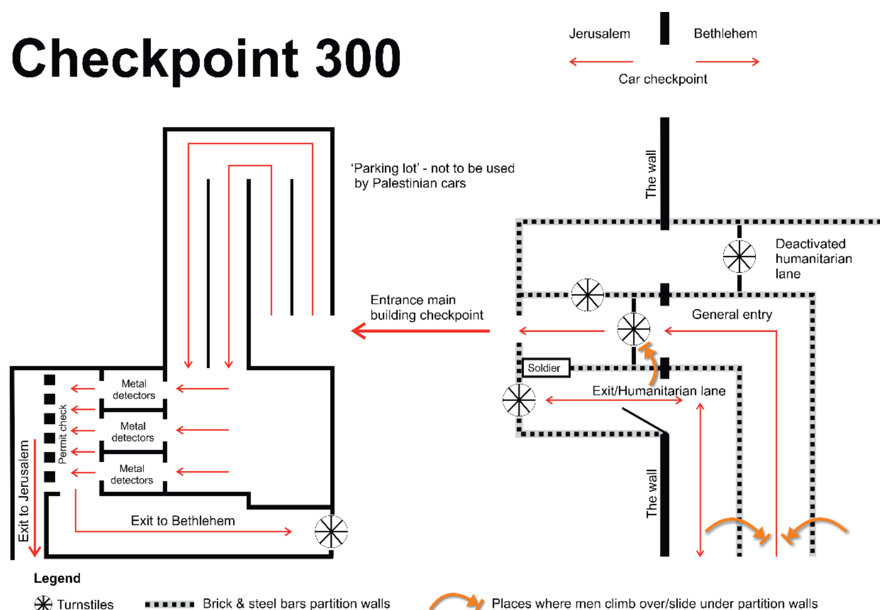

Figure 5.1: A map of Checkpoint 300 based on the first author's fieldnotes and drawings during her multiple passages of the checkpoint (source: Iulian Barba Lata).

Checkpoint 300, like other checkpoints in the West Bank, started in the 1990s as a mix of cement blocks, sand bags and the presence of Israeli soldiers, aimed at checking the documents of Palestinians directed to Jerusalem and further on. It is located on the road that historically leads from Hebron to Jerusalem, although the Wall currently interrupts it, on the northern entrance of the city of Bethlehem. The development of Checkpoint 300 into a terminal checkpoint in 2005 brought about significant changes in its architectural design and in the rhetoric used to legitimise its presence, since it is now portrayed as a 'neutral border crossing' that should not be associated with the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. In addition, the opening of a terminal checkpoint also entailed the involvement of Israeli private security guards, qualified as professional officers operating the border crossings (see Braverman, 2011; Mansbach, 2009; see Gordon, 2008, for a more thorough

analysis of the changes in the Israeli military rule of the Occupied Territories).[55] These security guards were gradually introduced at Checkpoint 300. In 2013, when the first author encountered them for the first time, they were a silent, heavily armed presence behind the Border Police, the force in charge of the checkpoint, and the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) soldiers. In 2016 and 2017, however, they seemed to be the authority managing the checkpoint, as the Border Police had disappeared and the IDF soldiers only checked IDs and permits (Braverman, 2011; Who Profits Research Centre, 2016).

To pass through a checkpoint, most Palestinians need a permit. The permit system predates the checkpoint system. As noted above, after the First Intifada (1987-1993) a new regime of controlled mobility was enforced, according to which every Palestinian had to apply for a personal permit (Keshet, 2006). To apply for a permit, Palestinians need a magnetic ID card, granted by the Israeli District Coordination Office (DCO). Possession of the magnetic card indicates that one is neither seen as a security threat nor that she/he has a misdemeanour on her/his record or on the record of their immediate family members. When a misdemeanour is recorded, such as trespassing into Israel without the proper magnetic card or permit, it can take years before one is allowed to re-apply for the card and the permit. As explained by Omer,[56] a 46-year-old Palestinian police officer in Bethlehem, a common joke in the West Bank is that 101 different kinds of permits exist, one for each type of movement of Palestinians inside the West Bank and into Israel (interview, 23 June 2016): work permits, student permits, hospital permits, permits for farmers travelling to their land and separate permits for these same farmers allowing them to carry farming materials with them (Alqasis & al-Azza, 2015). However, even with this much-coveted permit (on the many difficulties

[55] The private security guards present inside the checkpoints are hired through the Crossing Points Directorate, a management body operating under the instructions of the Israeli Ministry of Defence. For a detailed discussion of the presence of private security companies at the checkpoints, see Who Profits Research Centre, 2016.
[56] All names used are fictive, since the interviewees asked to remain anonymous.

Palestinians face in trying to obtain a permit, see Berda, 2018 and Keshet, 2006), the passage is not without complications and never assured.

5.4 Rights/rites of passage

There exist numerous ways in which people passing through a checkpoint are categorised by the Israeli architecture of occupation. One of the clearest categorisations is employed via the permit system discussed above. Here, the differentiation is made between Palestinians who need a permit to pass a checkpoint, those who do not need a permit and those unable to get one. Individuals who do not need a permit are Palestinians with a foreign passport,[57] Palestinians with an Israeli passport or a Jerusalem ID card, foreign nationals and Israelis.[58] Technically, Palestinian men with a West Bank ID card above 55 years of age and women above 50 should also be able to pass a checkpoint without a permit, but in practice the application of this rule is often arbitrary and reliant on the mood of soldiers/private security guards, something we discuss more in detail later in the article. There is also a group of Palestinians unable to get a magnetic card and permit since they are blacklisted; according to Yael Berda (2018), two hundred thousand residents of the West Bank have been included in this list after the instalment of the permit system. Blacklisting may occur for numerous reasons and often without any explanation or warning. Due to this, individuals usually only discover that they have been blacklisted when applying for a permit or trying to pass through a checkpoint (Piterman, 2007). The second differentiation at play

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[57] Although this only applies to Palestinians who do not have a West Bank or Jerusalem ID, indicated by the fact that they have an Israeli entry card.

[58] However, Israeli citizens are not allowed to use Checkpoint 300, as it leads to Area A. After the Oslo Accords the Palestinian Territories were divided into three areas: Area A (18% of the West Bank), B (22%) and C (60%). It was agreed that Israel would withdraw from Area A immediately after the negotiations and in the future from Area B (controlled by the Palestinians and the Israelis) and C (controlled by the Israelis). This has not happened as yet, which means that Israel is partly or completely in control of 82% of the West Bank (B’Tselem, 2017b).

concerns the different permits Palestinians may apply for, based on their reasons for travel. The permits also stipulate where and when they can pass. Checkpoint 300 is available to people with many different permits (e.g., work permits, student permits, hospital permits and permits to travel to Jerusalem to pray). As argued by Berda (2018) with reference to the permit system in Israel/Palestine:

> Contrary to a regime of *rights*, which obliges the state to avoid infringement of individual rights, a regime of *privileges* allows the sovereign to grant (or withdraw) services for certain populations, in an instantaneous administrative decision, so the subject is dependent on the grace and goodwill of the ruler.
>
> [italics added] (p. 40)

In this very possibility of acting and non-acting resides, according to Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben, the nature of the sovereign exception (1998). This system of permits and the related categories reflect in many ways the modus operandi of a colonial administration, largely based on a topography of categories that aim at rationally incorporating the colonised and their spatialities, but also on a hierarchy of 'privileges' assigned, often arbitrarily, to specific subjects or categories. A robust and pervasive bureaucratic colonial administration is in fact essential to implement a regime of uncertainty based on the permanent possibility of intervening in the lives of the governed bodies, but also of non-intervening (on the role of categorisations of the colonised population in the colonial administration, see, among others, the work of Timothy Mitchell [1988] and Ann Stoler [1992]).

In line with this philosophy of occupation, the permit system is complemented by a vast array of categorisations adopted by the checkpoint assemblage to differentiate Palestinians and grant certain groups privileges over others. While here we elaborate on three of these differentiations, namely 'gender', 'age' and 'ID status', these are not the only categories at play. Palestinians in the West Bank are in fact

qualified via over 40 categories by the Israeli occupation regime, based on factors such as gender, religion, hometown, occupation, and education. These categories are used to create what Julie Peteet (2017) has defined as an "always legible Palestinian subject" (pp. 81-82).

Such categorisations are not only implemented by the Israeli regime at the checkpoints, but are also critically embodied by Palestinians, inside and outside the checkpoints, at times in ways that may fit the strategies of the occupation forces, other times in rather unexpected ways, making room for lines of flight that challenge and resist the biopolitical regime implemented by/through the checkpoint assemblage. In the pages to follow, whilst we focus specifically on the categories of gender, age and ID card status, we do not imply that these categories function as separate, as they become co-implicated and fluid when operationalised by the Israeli soldiers/private security guards and engaged with by the Palestinians, or that they are only implemented and embodied inside the checkpoints.

5.4.1: Gender

> Checkpoint 300, Thursday, July 14th 2016, 6:15am. I am on a go-along interview with Nisreen, a 54-year-old woman who travels from Bethlehem to Jerusalem via Checkpoint 300 five days a week to reach her work. We have passed the first part of the checkpoint without too much delay as we, two women, were able to use the humanitarian lane. The normal entry lane is busy, with men climbing the metal bars to skip the queue. We walk towards the metal detectors and x-ray machines and, again, there is long queue. Nisreen decides to move to the front and says '*yislamu*' [short for *yislamu ideek*, which can be translated as "may your hands be blessed"] to the Palestinian man standing at the front of the queue. The man steps aside and we are allowed to pass. I ask Nisreen about this and

> she responds that it is easy for women to skip the queue since men allow them to go first. However, if there are too many women standing in line, as may be the case on Friday mornings when they travel to Jerusalem to pray in the mosque, sometimes they have to wait, like the men.

(fieldnotes, 14 July 2016)

Figure 5.2: A Palestinian woman making her way to the humanitarian lane, bypassing the long queue in the main lane on the right (source: Rijke, May 2017).

This fieldnotes excerpt shows one way in which gender is incorporated by the checkpoint spatial regime and negotiated and practiced by Palestinians *on site*. According to the categorisations used by the Israelis forces, women are allowed to use the humanitarian lane, a lane also dedicated to children, elderly men, international visitors (mainly tourists and foreign aid workers) and Palestinians with

specific permits, such as those released to visit hospitals and attend school. Using this lane means circumventing the general entry lane and, during rush hour, thousands of men waiting at the checkpoint. After passing the first turnstile, and entering the main checkpoint building, the two lanes merge. One still has to pass through three additional turnstiles, an x-ray machine, a metal detector and a booth where ID cards and permits are verified – regular commuters are also checked biometrically with fingerprint and iris-scanning technology. However, while the abovementioned groups are supposedly entitled to use the humanitarian lane, this option heavily depends on the soldier/security guard in control at that specific moment in time. Soldiers/security guards are perceived by Palestinians to randomly open and close the humanitarian lane, making it uncertain for women entering Checkpoint 300 whether they will actually be able to use it. Nisreen explained that:

> The humanitarian line is supposed to be open all the time. Sometimes there are sick people… infants... and they are so small... Sometimes we have to wait for 15 minutes, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, and the humanitarian lane remains closed while there is no one [no soldier/security guard operating the lane]. This is really a problem.
>
> (interview, 23 June 2016)

This arbitrary management of the humanitarian lane provides the guards with the possibility of revoking the right of using it at any time and to act biopolitically 'on the spot' by selecting individuals based on their gender when the 'normal' rules apply, but also by arbitrarily suspending these very rules and dismissing this category and its related privileges when women are, or a specific woman in a specific moment is, not admitted to the humanitarian lane. This 'privileged' lane is thus a constitutive element of the political technologies performed by the checkpoint assemblage, and gender is one of the categories enabling such a selective use of sovereign power and the enactment of the related asymmetrical

relationships. Remarkably, this political technology operates also with the contribution of some Palestinians invoking their privilege when available and claiming the right to be selected as a special category based on their bodily presence and appearance.

The category 'gender' is also incorporated by Palestinians passing through Checkpoint 300 outside the framework created by the Israeli checkpoint spatial regime. Three groups tend to skip the queue, something that is arguably possible due to their gendered identities. The first is composed of women who skip the main queue before the first turnstile in case the humanitarian lane is closed, but also the queue after the first turnstile. They are generally allowed by men to do so and, at times, we noticed, even encouraged. As explained by Nur, a 58-year-old woman who, prior to her recent retirement, used to travel to Jerusalem on a daily basis for work, "this is the good thing about our culture, the men would let the women go first" (interview, 1 May 2017). But their attempts may also be challenged by the Palestinian men when some feel that there are 'too many women', although it remained unclear in our interviews what was actually experienced as 'too many'. As Nisreen suggested, women passing through Checkpoint 300 are used to negotiate with Palestinian men in order to skip the queue, and in case they meet resistance they tend to insist for this privilege, either verbally or by simply moving ahead, hence forcing the men to step aside 'out of shame'. In other words, while the ability of women to skip the queue seems to be partly dependent on the willingness of the Palestinian men to allow this to happen, at the same time, women also claim this space by somehow instrumentalising their gender identity and the associated privileges.[59]

[59] For a more thorough analysis of the ways Palestinian women resist the occupation in their daily lives, see, amongst others, the work on *sumud* by Caitlin Ryan (2015) and Alexandra Rijke and Toine Van Teeffelen (2014).

Figure 5.3: The ‘Monkeys’/’Spidermen’ climbing the steel bars to skip the queue in the main lane (source: Rijke, June 2017).

The second group skipping the queue are the men who climb the steel bars forming the first corridor where people line up, an action that requires significant acrobatic skills and is allowed and tolerated precisely because they are young men (it would be unthinkable, in that context, for a woman to do the same). This act of climbing the steel bars indicates one manifest way in which gender is incorporated in the queue by these young men to negotiate their passage. By doing so, they move to the front of the first lane, and are thus allowed to by-pass, at times, thousands of queuing Palestinian men. This climbing is often presented by Palestinians as an indicator that it was a ‘bad morning’ at the checkpoint. An example of a bad day is given by Yasser, a 57-year-old man from al-Walaja, a village approximately 5km east of Bethlehem, who works in Jerusalem 6km away from Checkpoint 300. Although his journey from al-Walaja to the centre of Jerusalem is about 11km long,

it can take up to 2 hours on an average morning, more on bad days. When discussing the irregular workings of Checkpoint 300, Yasser noted that while Wednesday morning that week was particularly busy, since the checkpoint had been closed for West Bank Palestinians for four days due to an Israeli holiday, his passage was smooth and relatively fast. However, he explained, Thursday was horrible, with very long waits and men climbing the bars: "this shows how bad it was, men climbing over each other, on the bars… this only happens on bad days" (interview, 4 May 2017). Called 'monkeys' by some, 'spidermen' by others, these men are often cursed at but otherwise seemingly tolerated by their fellow Palestinians, as explained by 19-year-old Abdel (informal conversation, 17 July 2016). John, a 27-year-old clergyman living in Bethlehem claimed that he prefers the term 'spidermen' as he felt this made these men sound like superheroes: "I hate it when I see them, the spidermen, because I know it means I will be late for work. Checkpoint 300 is such a bad place" (interview, 22 May 2017).

However, the large majority of men only skip the queue (so blatantly) in the first section of the checkpoint, located on the 'Palestinian side' of the Wall.[60] It is a site with no cameras that Israeli soldiers/security guards rarely enter and where the many rules applied to the other side of the Wall seem absent. This is clearly reflected in the behaviour of the Palestinians, since here they can be seen drinking coffee, smoking and, in some cases, indeed climbing the steel bars. Here one finds Palestinians selling coffee, *ka'ak* (a type of bread eaten for breakfast with *za'atar*, eggs and falafel), cigarettes and phone cards; here, as a foreigner, one is able to hang out, take pictures and talk to the Palestinians without being told off by soldiers/security guards, something more likely to occur inside the main building. Arguably, the first lanes are located on the fringes of the checkpoint assemblage. However, the act of skipping the queue does represent a way for Palestinian men

[60] While the Wall in Bethlehem is located on the Palestinian side of the Green Line, according to the Israeli territorial partition, one side is Palestinian, the other is Israeli. The first lanes of Checkpoint 300 are located on the Palestinian side of the Wall.

to employ the privileges associated with their gender, age and fitness, since climbing the steel bars is physically challenging. While these acts by both Palestinian women and men do not modify the overall security framework of the checkpoint assemblage, they do however contribute to negotiating the biopolitical conditions enforced by the regulatory regime, incorporating some of its implications while resisting others.

There is also a small group of men who at times skip the queue on the other side of the Wall, right in front of the soldiers/security guards. These, often young, men enter the checkpoint through the humanitarian lane, despite not being entitled, something they can only do if the first gate is open and the security guards and/or soldiers are out of sight. While others with the right to use this gate would proceed to the turnstile – which is opened from a control room once the soldiers/security guards decide someone is entitled to use this lane – these young men either slide under the fence that separates the humanitarian lane from the general entry lane – an opening of only a few dozen centimetres – or, alternatively, push themselves through the turnstile of the humanitarian lane without it being opened, again, through an interstice of a few centimetres. They seem caught in a game with the soldiers/security guards on duty, sneaking closer, one foot at the time, trying to assess whether or not they will make it without being seen or if, instead, they will be caught, and sanctioned accordingly.

While these men's behaviour is often a source of frustration for other Palestinians standing in the general lane, since it is considered rude and selfish, as explained by Abdel (informal conversation, 17 July 2016), who works as a merchant in the 'checkpoint economy' (Tawil-Souri, 2009) at Checkpoint 300, at the same time their actions work in an unexpected way against the regular functioning of the checkpoint assemblage. Due to their unruly behaviour, the humanitarian lane is often closed down during busy mornings.

Figure 5.4: A man sliding underneath the gate separating the exit lane/humanitarian lane from the main lane to skip the queue (source: Rijke, June 2017).

The most obvious effect of this is that the people with the ‘right’ to use this lane are unable to do so. However, this behaviour also challenges, at least in part, the workings of the official categorisations and the ability of soldiers/security guards to use the openings/closing of the lane as a way to exercise their arbitrary power. In fact, in this case all are denied entrance and the door is closed with a clear reason,

that is, again, the unruly presence of these young men, something that is quickly communicated to the people trying to use the humanitarian lane by their peers. While we do not wish to romanticise the acts of these young men – since their actions often have negative consequences for other (weaker and more vulnerable) Palestinians – we recognise, however, that their unruly and opportunistic actions do hamper and thwart the workings of the categorisations system of the checkpoint and of its humanitarian lane used as a tool to endlessly reproduce conditions of exception allowing the guards to exercise their sovereign power. What emerges here is the fact that, if we understand the checkpoint precisely as a spatial political technology, we may learn much more about the complications of – and the co-implications of different subjects in – the workings of the checkpoint biopolitical machinery. This is the case also when another biological category is adopted to differentiate the Palestinians at the checkpoint: their age.

5.4.2: Age

> Checkpoint 300, Friday morning, June 10th 2016, 8:00 am. It is the first Friday of Ramadan, a period during which tens of thousands of Palestinians travel to Jerusalem on Friday to pray at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. I have heard yesterday that 83,000 Ramadan permits provided to Palestinians during this month to visit Jerusalem have been cancelled due to an attack in Tel Aviv on June 8, during which two Palestinian men shot seven Israeli citizens, killing four. Men over 45, boys under 13 and all women should still be able to pass without a permit on Friday during this month. Male Palestinians between 13 and 45 years old will not be allowed to pass. After having been at the checkpoint since 5am, it becomes clear that this rule is not implemented consistently. Even 80-year-old men have been turned away for being ‘too young’ to travel without a permit. I also

> understand that while boys under 13 should pass without a permit, they are not allowed to do so without a parent. Hence, if their father is under 45, and the only parent they came with, both cannot pass.
>
> (fieldnotes, 10 June 2016)

Age is used as a category to differentiate between Palestinians inside the checkpoint in two different ways. First, age determines whether someone needs a permit. While during Ramadan the rules may be slightly altered, normally, children up to the age of 12, men older than 55 years of age and women over 50 with a West Bank ID card should be allowed to pass Checkpoint 300 without a permit. However, this does not mean that Palestinians in these categories are always able to pass, since the application of these rules is relatively arbitrary, with changes in their implementations occurring even during the same day, with no warning or explanation. The first author experienced this when travelling with Layla, her 52-year-old Palestinian landlady, from the south of the West Bank to the north, trying to go across Jerusalem (hence, passing through two checkpoints) to shorten the trip. In the morning, Layla was allowed to travel without a permit, with no problems or comments; in the afternoon, however, she was unable to take the same route back again, as she was stopped at Qalandiya checkpoint on her way from Ramallah to Jerusalem. She was told by the soldier in charge that she could not travel without a permit that day, since it was a Saturday, a rule she had not heard before. When she explained that she was entitled to pass and that she had already passed that same day, she was told this was incorrect and sent away. Whilst she was luckily able to take a detour, bypassing the so-called ‘border checkpoints’, such as Checkpoint 300, and travelling on roads east of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and still get home, this is not always the case for all Palestinians forced to pass checkpoints. This example reveals how the ability to travel without a permit for certain age groups is never certain, and it is instead an aleatory privilege awarded, from time to time, by the Israeli checkpoint guards empowered by their

capacity to qualify 'on the spot' different categories of Palestinians. Whether or not this privilege is granted remains entirely unpredictable, making any checkpoint passage without a permit a precarious experience but also an opportunity to create a space of exception to the rule on the part of the individual soldier/security guard in charge in that precise moment. This possibility of *acting and/or not acting* on the part of individual soldiers/security guards, we argue, is constitutive of the checkpoint assemblage, if conceived of, as we do here, as a spatial biopolitical machinery.

The age of men is also used as an indication of whether or not they are allowed to use the humanitarian lane. While women of all ages are in principle entitled to its use, men must be over 60 (EAPPI, 2014). We have already discussed the arbitrary ways in which the humanitarian lane is used at Checkpoint 300 in relation to women. This arbitrariness is even more evident when it comes to older men. For instance, men over 60 are often accused by the soldiers/security guards of being too young to use the humanitarian lane. As we regularly observed on busy mornings at Checkpoint 300, which age is deemed to be 'old enough' by soldiers/security guards for men to use the humanitarian lane is neither clearly communicated nor consistently implemented. As explained by Youssef, a 62-year-old man who had been denied the use of the humanitarian lane the morning the first author spoke with him inside Checkpoint 300, "if you look only a little bit energetic as a man, like you could stand in the main line without collapsing, they will not let you pass through the humanitarian lane" (interview, 5 June 2016). As with the category 'gender', also the category 'age', and the arbitrary implementation of the rules connected to it, show how the checkpoint's spatial regime aliments a sense of confusion and precarity as a strategic management tool capable of endlessly, and unpredictably, reproducing, at the most minute scale, the fundamental asymmetrical relationship between the occupier and the occupied. This very process is what makes it virtually impossible for Palestinians to plan their daily routes and the duration of their travels.

However, some of the interviewed Palestinians actively resist the arbitrary and unpredictable nature of the checkpoint regime. For example, they try to avoid the precariousness of travelling without a permit by actually applying for one, even when over 50/55 years of age. As Ibrahim explained, while he is able to travel without a permit to his work in Jerusalem due to his age, he nonetheless applied for a permit, because passing Checkpoint 300 was a lot easier and more predictable with a permit than without it (interview, 7 August 2016). This was also argued by Sarah, a 64-year-old woman living in Bethlehem. In 2017 she wanted to visit the Holy Sepulchre church in Jerusalem during Easter time with her two sisters, both also over 50 years old. Sarah had a permit, one that she had received through her church, but her sisters did not. When arriving at the checkpoint, the soldiers told them they could not go through:

> They [her sisters] are old, they should have been able to go through without a permit, but they were told to go back. I told the soldier I did have a permit, so I could go through, but my sisters had to return to Bethlehem.
>
> (interview, 1 May 2017)

When asked why she carried a permit despite her age, Sarah explained that she had not actively applied for it as she received it through her church, but she was nonetheless happy to have it. While she should be able to go through without the permit, sometimes she had to show it, “I always have it, just in case” (interview, 1 May 2017). Despite the fact that applying for a permit means providing the Israeli military regime with additional personal information on top of the information already supplied to receive a magnetic card, and to subject oneself to the possibility of being denied a permit or being permitted to pass only during restricted timeframes, for some Palestinians included in the abovementioned ‘privileged’ categories obtaining a permit is a way to become less vulnerable to the moods of private soldiers/security guards. In other words, for some of these

individuals, *not* using the possibility of passing through without a permit represents a form of resistance to the arbitrariness of the whole checkpoint machinery, which selects certain (normally more vulnerable) age categories to then subject them to a daily regime of uncertainty by implementing, *ad hoc* and for no predictable reason, a set of endless exceptions to the rule.

5.4.3: ID card status

> Saturday, June 11th 2016. Today I have to pass through Checkpoint 300, but a general closure of the West Bank was announced after the Tel Aviv attack of June 8, so I am not sure if I will succeed. When I arrive at the checkpoint, it is quiet and empty, but the turnstiles do turn, and I hesitantly enter the main building. Here I am asked by a soldier where I am from while passing the x-ray machine and the metal detector; after I say 'The Netherlands', I am allowed to pass. Later that day I will realise that what is defined as a 'general closure' of the West Bank does not necessarily mean that no one can move, since there are many Israeli cars driving around the Bethlehem area, but more specifically that Palestinians with a West Bank ID are not allowed to move freely. What emerges is a clear geography of ID cards.
>
> (fieldnotes, 11 June 2016).

A third differentiation at play inside Checkpoint 300 is produced by passports/ID cards. For the checkpoint selective machinery, four different categories of individuals based on passports and ID cards exist: (a) foreign passport holders; (b) Israeli passport holders; (c) Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID; and (d) Palestinians with a West Bank ID. These documents have a significant impact on the freedom of movement experienced by individuals. People with a foreign passport are the most

mobile group, since they are able to enter all places in Israel and the West Bank, including Area A and the illegal Israeli settlements. Passing through a checkpoint often entails for them simply showing their passport and visa. Israeli passports are 'technically' barred from entering Area A in the West Bank, which also entails that they should not be able to pass checkpoints leading to this area, such as Checkpoint 300. However, as explained by Hajar, a 21-year-old Palestinian student with an Israeli passport, as long as she avoids passing through a checkpoint leading to or from Area A, she can, unofficially, travel anywhere in the West Bank with her Israeli passport (interview, 12 June 2016).

Since Israel annexed Jerusalem in 1967, the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem have become residents of Israel. However, these Palestinians do not have an Israeli passport, but a temporary residency ID card, which excludes them, for example, from voting in the national elections, or travelling abroad, the latter only being permitted with either Israeli-issued travel permits or temporary Jordanian passports (Tawil-Souri, 2011a). This residence status can be revoked at any time, a punitive action often used by the Israeli authorities, making it illegal for those Palestinians to continue their life in Jerusalem (Community Action Centre, 2016). Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID card can pass any checkpoint without a permit, at any time or day. As explained by Samira, a 54-year-old Palestinian woman with an East Jerusalem ID card who works at the Bethlehem University:

> I can cross any checkpoint. Sometimes they will ask for our ID's [when driving into Bethlehem], asking why we are going there. And all that …. But not always. The question [the soldiers ask] is 'where are you coming from?'. I think they are checking that you are not a Jewish [Israeli] going into Bethlehem by mistake. So, you have to know how to answer. If I say that I am from Jerusalem, that is not enough, you can be from anywhere inside Jerusalem. So, when I say I am from Beit Sfafa, which is all Arab, then it is okay.

(interview, 22 May 2017)

Last in line come the Palestinians with a West Bank ID card, who, as discussed earlier, need a permit and magnetic card to go through a checkpoint.[61] These different ID cards are used, as more thoroughly analysed by Helga Tawil-Souri (2011a), as "a widespread low-tech surveillance mechanism and a principle means for discriminating (positively and negatively) subjects' privileges and basic rights" (pp. 69-70).

An example of the different status awarded to Palestinians through ID cards is expressed in car ownership. People with an Israeli passport and Jerusalem ID card can own a car with an Israeli/yellow license plate, while people with a West Bank ID card can only own a car with a West Bank/green-white license plate. Cars with green-white license plates cannot be driven in Israel, including East Jerusalem, or on 'settler-only roads' in the West Bank, while cars with yellow license plates can be driven everywhere. Due to this, people with an Israeli passport or Jerusalem ID card can drive their own car through a 'border checkpoint', such as Checkpoint 300, while this is not possible for Palestinians with a West Bank ID card who have to walk through the checkpoint and find alternative transportation on the other side, such as busses or shared taxis. This makes the commute for Palestinians living in the West Bank and working in Jerusalem longer and more insecure, something Ahmed, a 62-year-old man living in Al Walaja and working in Jerusalem, experiences on a daily basis:

> It is a very big problem for a Palestinian to go from his house to work in Jerusalem every day. He can't use his car. If he has a meeting at 2 o'clock, he knows many things can happen to him on the way. Many things stop and change.

[61] Palestinians with a Gaza ID card are the least mobile inhabitants of Israel/Palestine. They are not included in this analysis since we focus on Checkpoint 300, located in the West Bank.

(interview, 7 August 2016)

This is even more the case for Palestinians living further away from Jerusalem, such as Hamzah, a 73-year-old man living in Jab'a, a small village located approximately twenty kilometres south of Checkpoint 300. Hamzah recently took up a job as a security guard for a building site in East Jerusalem. He now travels to East Jerusalem five times a week, which entails taking several different types of public transport:

> I take a service [taxi] from the village [Jab'a] to Nahaleen, another service [taxi] from Nahaleen to Bethlehem, another service [taxi] from Bethlehem centre to the checkpoint [Checkpoint 300], where I cross and take the bus to work. This takes me about an hour, but this also depends [on whether or not] all the roads are open.

(interview, 23 June 2016)

Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID card and a car with a yellow license plate can thus pass Checkpoint 300 in their vehicle through a dedicated gate, avoiding crowds, pressure, turnstiles, metal detectors and cameras inside the main building. In addition, they can use all checkpoints in the West Bank. For Palestinians travelling from the Bethlehem area to Jerusalem with a Jerusalem ID/Israeli passport, the quickest and easiest checkpoint to use, besides Checkpoint 300, is The Tunnels, a checkpoint west of Bethlehem limited to cars and buses. The majority of West Bank Palestinians who travel to Israel on a work permit are barred from using this checkpoint, that is instead regularly used by Jewish settlers.

While differentiations between groups of Palestinians may be seen, again, as a way to assign one group certain privileges against the other and to reinstate through this mechanism the ever-present asymmetrical relationship between occupier and occupied, such privileges are at times used by Palestinians with Jerusalem ID cards to help Palestinians with a West Bank ID card. As several of our interviewees

explained, Palestinians with a West Bank ID try to illegally pass with Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID by car:

> Sometimes, when 300 is really packed, and it would take me over two hours to get to work, I try to pass the checkpoint in a car with a yellow plate, joining a friend, or even catching a ride with a stranger. Sometimes it is okay, and the soldiers don't check or say anything. Other days, they don't let you pass and you have to go back. There is no consistent policy, every soldier applies his own rules, depending on his mood.
>
> (Nisreen, interview, 23 June 2016)

This was echoed by Nur, who is occasionally picked up by a friend with an Israeli car when visiting a hospital in Nazareth. While she can often pass without problems, helped by the fact that her friend is a Jewish Israeli woman, at times she is sent back, without clear explanation or warning (interview, 1 May 2017). Omer, a 46-year-old police officer, also explained that this makes it very difficult to know what to expect. He told us that once his mother, a woman in her sixties, wanted to visit Jerusalem with an American friend. She had trouble walking due to pain in her knees. For this reason, he hired a yellow-plated taxi to drive her through Checkpoint 300, ensuring she did not have to walk the long distances inside the checkpoint:

> I drove behind the taxi in my own car and stopped at the gate [where the cars drive through], waiting to make sure they could cross. But they were not allowed to do so. So, I drove them to the pedestrian entrance and they had to walk through. Sometimes, the soldiers allow her to go through by car… but other times, no.
>
> (interview, 21 June 2017)

Omer's mother also talked about this incident in an earlier interview, claiming that the soldiers put their guns up when she tried to talk to them in order to persuade them, "we are not terrorists! Women of our age! They should just let us pass!" (interview, 1 May 2017). While some of our West Bank interviewees believed they could positively influence the chance of getting through the gate in a yellow-plated car, this remained a game dependent on multiple random factors such as the mood of the soldiers/security guards at the checkpoint, the political climate in the country and even the weather. Once again, similarly to the spatialities generated by gender and age, the checkpoint logic based on ID card qualifications is an ambivalent and complex instrument in generating specifically uneven power relationships, but also (precarious) spaces to resist and subvert them. In other words, if soldiers/security guards use 'randomness' as a strategic tool to exercise their sovereign power inside the checkpoints, there emerges also a field of possibility for Palestinians to circumvent the elaborate regime of selection and control inside Checkpoint 300.

5.5: Conclusion

For many Palestinians, passing through an Israeli checkpoint is a daily ritual they cannot avoid on their way to work, school, family or their mosque/church. Although the checkpoints are key sites where the impact of the architecture of occupation is felt on a daily basis, the experience of Palestinians at these specific sites has been the focus of a relatively limited number of research projects. In this article, we have tried to analyse the daily experience of Palestinians passing through Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem in relation to the implementation of three categorisations that define their right to pass, namely 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card status'. To do this, we have studied these experiences as being part of a checkpoint machinery, considered as a spatial (bio)political technology key to the realisation of the broader geographies of occupation in the West Bank.

This article has shown the importance of 'randomness' and arbitrariness in the checkpoint operations as a tool for Israeli soldiers/security guards to create the conditions for exceptional sovereign power to be exercised, literally, on the bodies of the Palestinians subjected to a series of constantly mutable categorisations. Indeed, the very workings of the checkpoint allow for endless exceptions to or suspension of those very categories, contributing in these ways to the realisation of a spatio-temporal regime of uncertainty and unpredictability. However, the rules and their exceptions, we found out, are confronted by the Palestinians in multiple ways; by resisting them, by tricking them, by challenging them, but also by using them to take advantage of their peers, as in the case of Palestinian young men or women skipping the queue. Our main point is that checkpoints 'do things', they produce, via the agency of their human and non-human components, specific geographies based on the limitation and control of the movement of Palestinians, but also on the most diverse and creative forms of engagement with those restrictions on the part of many Palestinians subjected to such a spatial regime.

Similar to the ecologies generated by the invention and the popularisation of barbed wire described by Netz (2004), checkpoints may be studied as specific spatial formations aimed at implementing new political geographies and new relationships of power, for all those who are involved, in different ways, with their 'special effects'. One special effect, we argue, is that in the case of Checkpoint 300 many of the Palestinians are indeed able to negotiate, and in part subvert, the impact of the arbitrariness implemented by the occupation forces. This capacity to play in their own favour some of the ambivalence and the unpredictability of the rules based on the categories here considered, while very important in order to recognise the Palestinians' agency in their engagement with the checkpoint, is, however, limited. Terminal checkpoints are presented by the Israeli regime as a new type of checkpoint which is supposed to function in an 'airport-like' ways, controlled by professional security guards and aimed at normalising the daily passages as part of an established routine – a strategy linked to the overall idea of

the permanent nature of the occupation (Braverman, 2011, 2012; Mansbach, 2009). However, Checkpoint 300 is a place where confusion and uncertainty remain paramount, where it is never clear how Palestinians are actually differentiated into groups that are afforded varying degrees of mobility.

With this contribution, we hope to encourage further research on the workings of checkpoints, in the West Bank and beyond, in order to investigate their repressive spatialities in detail, but also to highlight the ways in which the people subjected to their effects are impacted in their everyday routines. We believe in particular that more work should be dedicated to the messiness related to the daily practices of the architecture of occupation in the West Bank, also to reflect on how specific categories, like the ones considered in this paper, are implemented on the actual bodies of individuals and are constitutive of the broader political geographies affecting the mobility of Palestinians. Checkpoint 300 is in many ways a monument to the biopolitical regime implemented by the administration of the Occupied Territories, a regime typically marked by the incorporation of rational categories to qualify the subjected population, but also by the possibility of not implementing, in any given moment and place, those very same categories.

Other Checkpoints

Figure P.19: The entrance to Qalandiya Checkpoint (source: Rijke, June 2016).

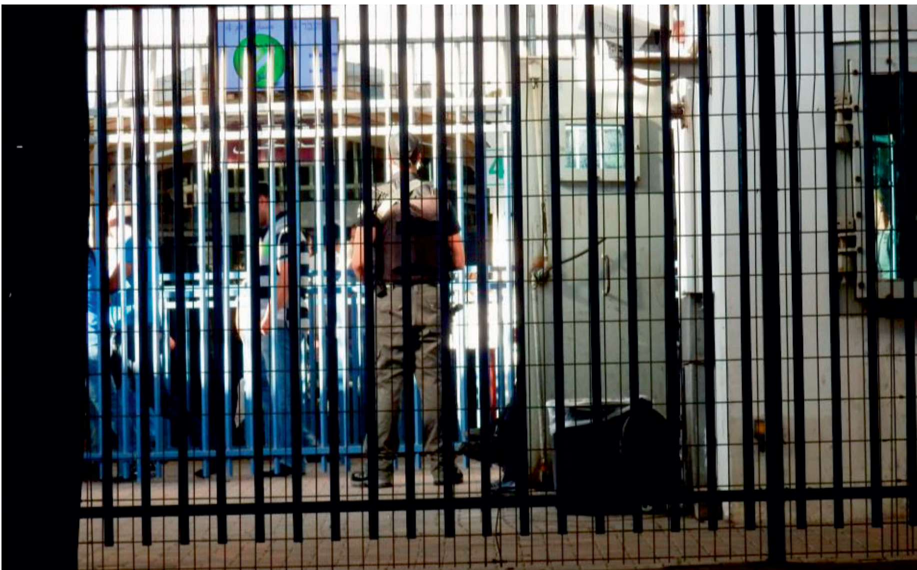

Figure P.20: A private security guard observing the commuters passing through Qalandiya Checkpoint (source: Rijke, July 2016).

Figure P.21: An 'active' internal checkpoint in Hebron (source: Rijke, August 2016).

Figure P.22: Al Jab'a checkpoint, a border car checkpoint located southwest of Bethlehem. This checkpoint is closed for Palestinians with West Bank ID cards (source: Rijke, June 2016).

I am on a 'checkpoint tour' organised by Machsom Watch. The tour takes us to the north of the West Bank and we drive through an internal 'active' car checkpoint close to Qalqilya, a large Palestinian city in the north of the West Bank. The women of Machsom Watch explain that this checkpoint can be used by both Israeli and Palestinian cars. All Israeli cars drive through without checks. If a soldier finds a Palestinian car somehow suspect, this car can be sent to a specially designated area. There, the driver has to close the windows while leaving one window a little bit open. A hose is placed into the car through this opening. This hose sucks some

of the air out of the car and this air is given to a dog to smell. If the dog barks, the car is searched. If the dog remains quiet, the car can pass unsearched. Apparently the dog can also bark if you have a sandwich, coffee or groceries in your car.

(fieldnotes, 28 July 2016)

Figure P.23: A small 'active' internal pedestrian checkpoint in the Qalqilya area. This checkpoint separates a Palestinian family from their land. With a permit, they can pass through the checkpoint to work on this land. In the photo, the young son of the family has just passed through the checkpoint with a wheelbarrow (source: Rijke, July 2016).

Chapter 6

Checkpoint Knowledge

Navigating The Tunnels and Al Walaja Checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories[62]

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Abstract

When Israel occupied the Palestinian Territories in 1967, restrictions on Palestinian movement were gradually put in place. Today an intricate 'architecture of occupation' has been established – made up of numerous material barriers, the continuous expansion of illegal Israeli settlements on the West Bank, and the establishment of an elaborate checkpoint system (Weizman 2007). For most inhabitants of the West Bank passing through an Israeli checkpoint is a daily ritual they cannot avoid. In this article, I will discuss two car checkpoints in the Bethlehem area: The Tunnels and Al Walaja, and the experiences of the commuters subjected to them. I will indicate that these checkpoints are representative of spaces where two opposing geographical regimes meet: providing Jewish settlers swift passage, while controlling and potentially stopping Palestinian commuters. I will address how numerous biopolitical categories are implemented by the checkpoints managers to ensure the existence of these regimes, and how the design of the checkpoints as low-tech checkpoints is essential to this. Moreover, I will address how Palestinian commuters employ their 'checkpoint knowledge' to try to positively influence their passages: incorporating the rules and regulations as much as possible or trying to manipulate and twist the checkpoints' practices and biopolitical categories.

Key words: Checkpoints, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Spatial Political Technologies, Foucault, Checkpoint Knowledge, Architecture of Occupation.

6.1: Introduction

> I am on a go-along interview with Hajar, a 21-year-old Palestinian student with an Israeli passport. This morning we are driving from her home in Beit Jala to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and, on our way, we will pass The Tunnels checkpoint. We get in line to pass the checkpoint and Hajar

> smiles at me nervously. While Hajar and I should have no trouble passing the checkpoint, and she had told me during a previous interview she was almost never stopped, she is worried now. We were passed by very slowly and extensively watched by a couple of Israeli border police when exiting her street and she said she felt that today nothing would go as usual. Although I know we are allowed to pass the checkpoint, she is making me nervous now, too. As she explained, it all comes down to the mood of the soldiers. While Jewish settlers seem to always fly through the checkpoint, if the soldiers feel like making the lives of Palestinians difficult, they can and they will.
>
> (fieldnotes, 16 June 2016)

Since Israel occupied the Palestinian Territories (the West Bank and the Gaza Strip) in 1967, the restricted movement of Palestinians has increasingly been separated from the unrestricted movements of the 600,000 Jewish settlers. During the first decades of the Israeli occupation, control on Palestinians' movements was still easily circumvented. However, an intricate 'architecture of occupation' has developed in the West Bank after 50 years of occupation (Weizman, 2007). These years saw the construction of 'the Wall', the separation barrier the Israeli government is building since 2002 in the West Bank, a growing number of Jewish settlements and their related bypass roads, and the implementation of an elaborate checkpoint system. In this process, the presence of Palestinians living in the West Bank has become separated and hidden from the daily lives of Jewish settlers. The Palestinians living in Jerusalem and Israel who carry Jerusalem or Israeli identity (ID) cards have the same legal level of freedom of mobility as Jewish settlers do and share the same spaces. However, as will become clear in this paper, they do not experience this as such: while the mobility of Jewish settlers is enhanced as much as possible by the Israeli state and its 'settlement project'

(Allegra, Handel, & Maggor, 2017), the mobility of Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards is controlled and frequently hindered.

Several academics have analysed the checkpoints in Israel/Palestine (see, amongst others, Braverman, 2011, 2012; Griffiths & Repo, 2018; Hammami, 2004, 2010, 2015, 2019; Kotef & Amir, 2015; Mansbach, 2009, 2012, 2015; Rijke & Minca, 2018, 2019; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b). In these analyses, the workings of the checkpoints are discussed, the Palestinian experience of passing through them analysed, and the influence of the presence of Israeli observers is considered. These analyses provide important insights into the checkpoints' regime. However, these studies are focused on pedestrian checkpoints predominately used by Palestinians with a West Bank ID. Few authors have analysed the car checkpoints that both Jewish Israelis and Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards use (Bishara, 2015; Parizot, 2009). The work of anthropologists Cédric Parizot (2009) and Amahl Bishara (2015), with which I will engage thoroughly in the upcoming pages, illustrates the interplay between the slow and laboured checkpoint passages of Palestinians and the fast and smooth passages of Jewish settlers, as well as the diverse ways in which commuters engage with the spatial regime of shared car checkpoints.

In this article, I wish to add to this body of work by analysing two car checkpoints, The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints[63], in the Bethlehem area as spatial political technologies. To my knowledge, these two checkpoints have not yet been the focus of a study. They are used both by Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards and by the Jewish settlers living in the 'Guts Etzion area' – the name used by Jewish settlers for an area east of Bethlehem that is especially densely populated by Jewish settlers. These two checkpoints are examples of places where two opposing regimes of mobility are brought together: one focused on the speedy and smooth

[63] Al Walaja checkpoint is sometimes called Malha checkpoint (B'tselem, 2018a). However, my interviewees referred to it as Al Walaja checkpoint, so I will also refer to the checkpoint here with that name.

movement of Jewish settlers, the other on the limitation and control of Palestinian movement. I intend to indicate how this has been translated into the design and functioning of these two ‘low-tech’ car checkpoints, in which Israeli soldiers make the decision about who is stopped and questioned and who can pass through unhindered. In this article I will indicate how this decision, which is based on the implementation of several biopolitical categorisations, was experienced by my Palestinian interviewees as being made in a highly unpredictable and arbitrary way. Moreover, as I will show with several examples, Palestinians engage with the checkpoints’ soldiers and regime in specific ways, employing their ‘checkpoint knowledge’ to try to positively influence their checkpoint passages: some tried to behave in ways that they expected the soldiers wanted them to behave, others ‘played’ with the biopolitical categories employed in the checkpoints in order to pass unhindered.

To do this, I will first position the checkpoints in the larger architecture of the Israeli occupation, in which I address their role as arbitrary openings in a larger system of enclosures. Then I will discuss the biopolitical analytical framework that is used in this article and briefly introduce Foucault’s arguments concerning the importance of surveillance and circulation. Here, I elaborate on Foucault’s term ‘political technologies’. After a concise description of the methods used to collect the data presented, I will discuss the car checkpoint experiences of the Palestinians and Jewish settlers interviewed. In these sections, I will describe the way in which the checkpoints function and how the interviewees engaged with them. Finally, I will offer some concluding remarks in which I indicate how analysing checkpoints as spatial political technologies entails paying attention to how they produce, via the agency of their human and non-human components, specific geographies resulting in smooth passages for Jewish settlers and in the limitation and control of the movement of Palestinians. Furthermore, I will argue that these checkpoints are reproduced and challenged by diverse and creative forms of engagement on the part of Palestinians subjected to the checkpoints’ spatial regimes.

6.2: Checkpoints and the settlement project

Checkpoints play an important role in the architecture of occupation (Weizman, 2007). There are 98 checkpoints inside the West Bank and on its 'border' with Israel.[64] These range from large, meticulously designed 'terminal checkpoints' filled with numerous machines, such as turnstiles, cameras, X-ray machines, metal detectors, fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices (Rijke & Minca, 2018, 2019); to two fences with a cabin in the middle; to the 'tollbooth'-like car checkpoints analysed here.

Checkpoints are a technology that, together with the Wall and numerous other material barriers, help create Jewish-Israeli-only spaces. These spaces, which are inhabited by the 600,000 Jewish settlers living in the West Bank (Allegra, Handel, & Maggor, 2017), have been separated from the neighbouring Palestinian spaces through the use of material barriers and the creation of bypass roads. The settlements cover almost 10 per cent of the West Bank and control another 30 per cent, bringing the total percentage of land under direct control of the regional councils of the settlements to 40 per cent of the West Bank (B'Tselem, 2017c). Most of these settlements are relatively small. Almost 50 per cent of the settlements are inhabited by less than 500 people, almost 40 per cent have between 500 and 5000 inhabitants, and only 12 per cent of the settlements have over 5000 inhabitants (PeaceNow, 2019).

Due to their small size, the inhabitants have to leave their settlement to go to work or school, do their shopping and visit their families and friends. Therefore, the Jewish settlers required direct connections to other settlements and to Israel (Allegra, Handel, & Maggor, 2017). Over the years, hundreds of kilometres of

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[64] The term border should be interpreted loosely here – there is no agreed upon 'border' between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The Green Line, also called the 1949 Armistice border, is internationally the most recognised border. However, Israel does not recognise this line. Furthermore, due to the presence of numerous checkpoints, the building of the Wall and the presence of 600,000 Jewish settlers 'inside' the Green Line, in practice it is difficult to identify the Green Line or any other 'border' (B'Tselem, 2017c).

bypass roads have been constructed to achieve this (Handel, 2014). While only a minority of the roads is explicitly illegal for West Bank Palestinians to use, the way these are constructed and securitised is intended to limit their use. These roads, for instance, do not always have ramps leading to the Palestinian towns located next to them and, when they do, these ramps are often heavily securitised and their usage regulated by checkpoints.

In this way, a parallel road system has been created, in which Jewish settlers can move smoothly and quickly in a continuously connected space and Palestinians are slowed down, marginalised to slow backroads, having to take long detours and to pass through numerous checkpoints. The major effects of the Israeli road structure in the West Bank on Palestinian life and the possibility of a future Palestinian state have been analysed in detail by authors such as Julie Peteet (2017), Eyal Weizman (2007), Ariel Handel (2009, 2011, 2014, 2016) and Hagar Kotef (2015). As argued by Marco Allegra, Ariel Handel and Erez Maggor (2017), the bypass roads are an important mechanism in the "normalization of the Jewish presence in the West Bank (…) i.e., the ongoing incorporation of the settlements into Israel's social, economic and administrative fabric underlying the development of Israel's settlement policy" (p. 1). By connecting the settlements not only to each other, but also to Israel through the creation of a continuous thoroughfare, the bypass roads work towards erasing the Green Line. The settlements are no longer placed 'outside Israeli society', but are deeply entrenched in Israeli economic and political life. The bypass roads in many places look like any other highway in Israel, with multiple lanes, petrol stations, signs and lighting, hiding their position 'behind' the Green Line (Salamanca, 2015). As such, they work towards a seemingly united Israel that includes the Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

That these bypass roads are in fact not the same as other highways in Israel is evidenced by the presence of numerous soldiers, the large concrete blocks that are positioned at bus stops, the sight of Palestinians towns and Palestinian cars, and

the checkpoints. While the majority of these checkpoints are aimed at controlling and possibly hindering the movement of West Bank Palestinians, some are also positioned on routes taken by Jewish settlers and Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards. The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints are examples of such checkpoints. As stated earlier, only a relatively small group of academics has analysed the workings of this type of checkpoint and the experiences of the commuters being subjected to them. Here, I wish to discuss the work of Amahl Bishara (2015) and Cédric Parizot (2009).

In her article entitled 'Driving while Palestinian', Amahl Bishara (2015) analysed how Israeli Palestinians smuggled West Bank Palestinians through car checkpoints into Israel. In her work she did not specifically focus on checkpoints, but she described several experiences she had while driving around in the West Bank and into Israel. One of these experiences detailed passing a checkpoint. Here, she explained that one of her interviewees, a Palestinian woman with an Israeli ID card, had smuggled West Bank Palestinians without the proper permit through car checkpoints. For this act of defiance, she used her knowledge about who is more likely to be stopped and checked while passing through these car checkpoints. Examples of such checkpoint knowledge are, for instance, which road to use when approaching the checkpoint and where to position whom in the car: the younger, least modestly dressed woman in the front while avoiding positioning young men in such a visible place. This knowledge, gained, as she stated, "by the skin of one's teeth, uncomfortably and in fear" (Bishara, 2015, p. 43), made it possible for her interviewee to circumvent the Israeli regime of enclosure.

Cédric Parizot (2009) focused on one specific checkpoint in his analysis, namely the Meitar/Wadi Al-Khalil checkpoint, which is located in the south of the West Bank. In his analysis, he compared the experiences of Jewish settlers, Israeli Bedouins and West Bank Palestinians who use the checkpoint. These three groups all pass through the checkpoint and, as such, share the same space. This is most explicit, as

Parizot explains, with the Jewish settlers and Israeli Bedouins, who both drive through the checkpoint using the same car lanes. However, Parizot argued that they are subjected to different regimes of control and mobility. The Jewish settlers experienced their time spent passing through the checkpoint as "temporal pollution" (Parizot, 2009, p. 15) – as undesired time – a means to achieve an end without any intrinsic value. Their checkpoint passage was simply part of a steady and predictable journey. While the Israeli Bedouins legally should have the same freedom of movement as the Jewish settlers, this group, who Parizot stated are treated in an equally precarious way as Palestinians with a Jerusalem ID, experienced their passages in a very different way. They were subjected to uncomfortable, humiliating and at times violent interactions with Israeli forces. For West Bank Palestinians, the least mobile of the three groups, the checkpoint passages were central to their lives. Although they considered the passages a waste of time, they did represent very significant moments in their daily lives. Whether or not one would be able to pass was never certain and this meant the same was true for their ability to reach their work, school or family.

In this article, I wish to add to these works by analysing the checkpoint experiences of Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards and Jewish settlers. I will engage with the work of Bishara (2015) and Parizot (2009) throughout my analysis, indicating the differences between the experiences of the Jewish settlers and the Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards who I have interviewed, and the ways these latter used their 'checkpoint knowledge' to 'improve' their checkpoint passages.

6.3: Surveillance in the architecture of occupation

Besides helping to create Jewish-Israeli-only spaces, the checkpoints are also a means of surveillance. They have not been constructed to completely stop Palestinian movement (as Amir, 2013; Hammami, 2015; Handel, 2009, 2011, 2014;

and Kotef, 2015 have also argued). Instead, they represent key spatial political technologies that monitor, discipline and/or selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians. As Polly Pallister-Wilkins (2016) argued, the working of the barriers in the West Bank as a security apparatus is dependent upon the existence of checkpoints. One should always keep in mind when studying barriers/walls that "they include openings, checkpoints and gates that allow for the movement of people and goods" (Pallister-Wilkins, 2016, p. 154). As also stated by Parsons and Salter (2008), the Israeli barriers are not in place to stop movement; they are there to control porosity, and in the process represent an important biopolitical technology in the occupation (p. 703). These openings, Pallister-Wilkins (2015a) argued elsewhere regarding Israeli's architecture of occupation "enable Israel to comprehensively regulate Palestinian circulation, discipline and govern the occupied population using topographical, spatial and material forms of control working in conjunction with the forces of circulation" (p. 451). Following these authors, I wish to examine how the checkpoints function as biopolitical security technologies that the Israeli state uses to control porosity and the flow of population.

Analysing checkpoints as political technologies – a term I take from the work of Michel Foucault (1977) – entails analysing the checkpoints as made up of specific practices and techniques aimed at organising the bodies subjected to them (Behrent, 2013; Elden, 2013; Katz, Martin, & Minca, 2018; Minca, 2015; Simon, 2013). It entails focusing on methods of calculation, the controlling of mobility and the role played by 'eruptive' and 'withheld' violence (Azoulay & Ophir, 2009) in their workings. It also sheds light on power as productive and creative, "as a relationship that moulds, adapts, triggers, and stimulates individual behaviour, particularly by shaping bodily conduct" (Behrent, 2013, p. 60). This does not mean that the mechanisms analysed do not have violent effects but rather that, when analysing these mechanisms, one should focus on what they *produce*. It also brings into frame the interplay of human and non-human interactions. As stated by

Foucault (1982), the exercise of power is not "a naked fact" (p. 345), but it is influenced by and influences the space in which the relationship takes place. Analysing these relationships entails acknowledging that they are influenced by and always put into operation systems of differentiation – differences in privilege, economic status, linguistics, and so forth – and the material means that are used as enforcement – the threat of weapons, but also systems of surveillance, archives, rules and more (Foucault, 1982, p. 344). Here, I wish to include a spatial element by framing the checkpoints as *spatial* political technologies (Katz, Martin, & Minca, 2018; Minca, 2015), and by analysing how these produce selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

This choice of words is deliberate, because while the checkpoints are porous openings in the larger architecture of occupation, they do not always function in a predictable and stable way. More precisely, the commute for Palestinians is never entirely predictable. Whether a passage will be smooth or long; whether the Israeli soldier managing the checkpoint will be polite, rude, or violent; whether or not a permit will provide passage; or whether or not the checkpoint will be closed all together – one can never be sure. As it has been argued by Arielle Azoulay and Adi Ophir (2009), due to the constant arbitrary workings of the checkpoints' regime, the only two things Palestinians can learn in their interactions with Israeli forces inside these points of friction is "the absolute submission of the Palestinian to the agents of the Israeli ruling power and the need to relearn again and again what is expected in order to either please or avoid them" (p. 115). The Palestinian moving bodies are disciplined to know they can never predict how their commute will go and that they will have to incorporate any unexpected changes in their daily routine. This arbitrary functioning of the checkpoints is not an unintended by-product of the Israeli occupation. Instead, their arbitrary management appears to be one of the main functions of the checkpoints. As stated by Yael Berda (2018), the occupation regime should not be seen as a regime of rights but rather as a 'regime of privileges'. She explained that the Palestinian subject is dependent upon

the goodwill of the ruler. Compared to a regime in which a subject can call upon certain rights, privileges can be withdrawn in an administrative decision, without prior notice or explanation (Berda, 2018, p. 40).

This regime of privileges is based upon the use by the Israeli occupation regime of numerous categorisations to differentiate between Palestinians – such as ID card, gender, religion, hometown, occupation, marital status (Peteet, 2017). Within the checkpoints, the permit system is the most important tool of categorisation. The first differentiation is made between commuters who need a permit to pass a checkpoint, those who do not need a permit and those who are unable to get one. Individuals who do not need a permit are Palestinians with a foreign passport, an Israeli passport or Jerusalem ID card, foreign nationals and Jewish Israelis, including Jewish settlers. Palestinians with a West Bank ID card need a permit and a magnetic card, on which their (biometric) data is registered.[65] The Palestinians who need a permit are further categorised according to the type of permit with which they are travelling. The last category is a group of Palestinians who are unable to get a permit or a magnetic card due to the fact that they have been blacklisted by Israeli authorities. According to Berda (2018), 200,000 residents of the West Bank have been included in this list. Blacklisting may occur for numerous reasons and often without any explanation or warning.

Despite these obstacles, Palestinians keep on moving, and thousands pass through checkpoints every day and employ diverse strategies to try to improve their passages. Analysing their experiences compared to those of the Jewish settlers is the main focus of this article.

[65] I do not include Palestinians with a Gazan ID card, the least mobile inhabitants of Israel/Palestine, in this analysis because I focus on The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, which are located in the West Bank.

6.4: Checkpoint analysis

This analysis is based on research developed during a seven-month period of fieldwork spent in the Bethlehem area in 2016, 2017 and 2019. As part of a larger research project focused on the workings of checkpoints in this area (Rijke & Minca, 2018, 2019), I aimed to explore the dynamics of The Tunnels and Al Walaja car checkpoints. To do this, I conducted 34 interviews. I interviewed eight Palestinians either with a Jerusalem or Israeli ID card and eleven Jewish settlers, nearly all of them twice. The interviewees, 13 women and six men, whose age ranged from 21 to 65 years old, regularly passed through the two car checkpoints analysed. The Palestinians I interviewed lived either in Bethlehem or in the surrounding villages. All the Jewish settlers lived in the Har Gilo settlement, located south of Jerusalem and east of Bethlehem. Both the Palestinians and Jewish settlers I interviewed travelled regularly to Jerusalem on their way to work or school. Besides these interviews and to further observe the workings of these checkpoints, I regularly crossed these checkpoints independently during my stays in the West Bank.

The data I discuss here were collected using methods that have been largely inspired by Gabrielle Ivinson and Emma Renold (2013, 2014) and Gillian Rose, Monica Degen and Begum Basdas (2010). The combination of go-along interviews – where I joined my respondents on their way to work or school – and in-depth interviews and observations allowed me to analyse the way these car checkpoints work and the impact they have. The go-along interviews have been especially valuable for observing their workings. I experienced the differences that the two opposing geographical regimes created while travelling through the checkpoints with my interviewees. Going through the checkpoints together allowed me to observe the different experiences of the Palestinian interviewees and the Jewish settlers I interviewed. For instance, while the Jewish settlers never stopped talking to me when we were driving through the checkpoint, at most absently waving at

the soldiers; my Palestinian interviewees often fell silent when we were passing through.

Furthermore, by assessing my own positionality as a white woman with a European passport, the different experiences of different bodies became all the more clear. I was never stopped at these checkpoints, something undoubtedly influenced by my white skin and blond hair. My interviewees often commented on this when we were discussing who was more likely to be stopped in these car checkpoints. John[66], a 27-year-old Palestinian, for example, remarked: “you would be good in the car when passing the checkpoint!” (interview, 22 May 2017) and 46-year-old settler Ariel, who commented that “we would not be stopped with you in the car” (interview, 9 July 2016).

6.5: The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints: where two geographical regimes meet

The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints are both located west of Bethlehem and are considered ‘border checkpoints’ by the Israeli army (B’Tselem, 2018a). Al Walaja checkpoint is on the Green Line and positioned close to the Palestinian town it has been named after, Al Walaja. The Tunnels checkpoint is located several kilometres west of the Green Line, inside the West Bank. It has four lanes with four soldier booths leading in the direction of Jerusalem, two lanes leading in the direction of Bethlehem/Hebron, as well as watch towers and a separate area where cars can be directed to for further inspection (see Figure 6.1). Al Walaja checkpoint is considerably smaller; it has one lane in both directions and a small area to the side where cars can be further inspected.

[66] All names used are fictitious, as the interviewees asked to remain anonymous.

Figure 6.1: The Tunnels Checkpoint (source: Rijke, May 2017).

The checkpoints can be considered to be 'low-tech'. Besides cameras there are no visible machines present – there is not even a traffic arm to stop the cars from driving up to the checkpoints. The only mechanisms used to slow down cars is the bumps on the road and the soldiers and the guns with which they are armed. Often, especially during rush hour, there are several vehicles waiting to drive through the checkpoints. When arriving at the front of the queue on the way to Jerusalem and Israel, a vehicle is confronted with one or two armed soldiers. There are no soldiers in the direction of Bethlehem and Hebron.

Only commuters with Israeli or Jerusalem ID cards are allowed to use both these checkpoints.[67] Since they are 'car checkpoints', they can only be passed while inside

[67] There is a small group of Palestinians with West Bank ID cards who can pass through The Tunnels checkpoint in a bus. This is due to the type of permit they hold – such as work permits for employees of international organisations or special hospital permits. Because

a vehicle. This vehicle has to have a yellow – Israeli – number plate. Vehicles with green-white – Palestinian – number plates are not allowed to pass through these checkpoints.[68] The Israeli and Jerusalem ID cards mean these commuters can travel to Israel and Jerusalem without having to acquire permits. Hence, unlike checkpoints used by West Bank Palestinians, The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints do not revolve around checking the permits of the people traveling through them. This does not mean that these checkpoints do not control and discipline the passages of (some of) its users. More specifically, these checkpoints bring together two, arguably opposed, geographical regimes: providing Jewish settlers swift passage, while simultaneously stopping and controlling Palestinians with Israeli and Jerusalem ID cards – who can be stopped by the soldiers for a short chat, an ID check or a search of their car, but who can also be denied passage or even be detained.

To ensure the fast passage of the settlers, not every car is stopped inside these checkpoints. As explained by 47-year-old Fadwa, a Palestinian woman who holds an Israeli ID card, “it is impossible to check everyone at the Tunnels because Jewish people also use it and they [the soldiers] do not want to delay them” (interview, 12 June 2016). This means that there is always the possibility of not being stopped and checked. Although Palestinians carrying Israeli or Jerusalem ID cards should legally enjoy the same level of freedom of movement as Jewish settlers do, their checkpoint passages are often associated with tense and humiliating contacts with Israeli forces, something Cédric Parizot also found in his analysis of the checkpoint passages of Jewish settlers and Israeli Bedouins (Parizot, 2009). Most of my

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this is a relatively small group and none of my interviewees were able to pass through the checkpoint in this way, I do not include the experiences of this group in my analysis.

[68] It is not allowed to drive a Palestinian car and Palestinians with a West Bank ID card are not allowed to drive inside Jerusalem or Israel. Because of this, Palestinians with a West Bank ID have to pass through pedestrian checkpoints and find alternative transport.

Palestinian interviewees were stopped and checked regularly at these checkpoints. As explained by 27-year-old clergyman John:

> When you see the long line of cars at the checkpoint, you realise you are going to be late for work. You see the soldiers checking a lot of the cars and you start brainstorming: Do I have something in my car? Tools? Any food? Did I think of my ID? That is something you always have to worry about.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

The Jewish settlers I interviewed did not experience their checkpoint passages in the same way. As 64-year-old Jewish settler David notes, "I am never stopped. The only time I have to stop is because they stop a car in front of me" (interview, 4 June 2017). Another example is Hannah, a 44-year-old Jewish settler, "I usually just wave at them, tell them 'Good morning' or 'Good day' and continue on" (interview, 5 July 2016). This was also the experience of 25-year-old Esther, "I just say 'Hi' to the soldiers, and go through" (interview, 22 June 2016).

While at first sight it could be expected that Palestinians with Israeli and Jerusalem ID cards are stopped and checked to ensure that they do possess the right papers, Salah, a 47-year-old Palestinian with an Israeli ID card, mentioned a possible other reason behind the random stops. Salah, who was born in Jerusalem with a Jerusalem ID, had gained the Israeli ID card through his employment with the Israeli police during the 1990s. He travelled from his home in Beit Jala to Jerusalem five days a week, usually passing The Tunnels checkpoint on his way. Salah stated he was stopped often: "I am stopped many, many times. You can say one out every of three or four times" (interview, 12 May 2017). He explained what he thought was behind the random stops:

> Often the soldiers know me, they see me pass through the checkpoint every day. But they still want to stop me. It's a matter of psychology. They

> want to give you the feeling that everybody can expect to be stopped, they don't want you to feel free.
>
> (interview, 12 May 2017)

Here, one can see how the checkpoints work towards disciplining Palestinian commuters to believe that they can never predict how their commute will go by subjecting them to specific techniques aimed at controlling their mobility.

However, all cars that can pass through these checkpoints are Israeli. This means that the soldiers must differentiate one Israeli car from another, and they have to do this quickly to ensure that the Jewish Israeli drivers are not slowed down too much. As stated before, these checkpoints are low-tech. Hence, there are no machines present to aid the soldiers in making the decision about who to stop and who to let pass without delay. While this may seem unexpected, especially when compared to other Israeli checkpoints where there are many machines present (Griffiths & Repo, 2018; Hammami, 2019; Rijke & Minca, 2018, 2019), this is actually necessary to guarantee the Jewish settlers' smooth passage. Subjecting Palestinian commuters to any interaction with scanning devices would also mean subjecting Jewish Israelis to these same interactions and, hence, delaying them. One way in which the decision is simplified for the soldiers is through the use of stickers on the windshields of the cars of Jewish settlers. These stickers, which settlers can voluntarily decide to put on their car, indicate which settlement they live in, and, hence, that they are Jewish Israelis. However, not all of the settlers I interviewed had this sticker on their windshield and some of them with this sticker were occasionally stopped.

6.6: Who to stop?

The Palestinians and Jewish settlers I interviewed explained that they suspected that the soldiers at the checkpoints used several categories to decide who to stop.

One of the most important categories implemented is whether or not the person trying to pass through the checkpoint is identified as Palestinian/Arab or Jewish Israeli.

6.6.1: Jewish versus Arab

The first response my interviewees provided when asked what influenced the chances of someone being stopped was whether or not someone looked 'Jewish' or 'Arab'. As 43-year-old settler Ruth explained, "You can recognise them. This is how the soldiers make a difference at the checkpoint. With women, you can see if they wear a headscarf. And... I don't know... I think you can recognise most of them" (interview, 16 July 2016). When asked if it had to do with a darker skin tone, Ruth responded, "I don't know... not all of them are darker. But there is something... You can see if someone is Israeli or not. You can be wrong, but usually you can tell" (interview, 16 July 2016). Samira, a 54-year-old Palestinian woman with a Jerusalem ID card, said she was rarely stopped. When asked about this, she explained:

> What I noticed is that if you look very Arab, if you are a veiled woman, of if you are a man with really Arabic features, you will be stopped. Every time I look in the car of the people getting stopped, it is definitely that they are stopped because they look Arab. I think that if they don't stop you, you don't look suspicious enough, or they don't think you're Arab. That's my interpretation. I am always mistaken by Arabs and Jews as not being Arab. I don't know why, maybe it is the short grey hair.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

My interviewees indicated that factors other than 'looks' were also used to differentiate between 'Jewish' and 'Arab' commuters. One of these was the car someone drives: certain car brands were seen as more likely to be driven by someone 'Jewish' or by someone 'Arab'. This was explained by 46-year-old settler Ariel. Ariel, who was occasionally stopped at the checkpoints, said that this was

because of the type of car he drove. He owned a plant nursery in a town close to Jerusalem and often needed to transport plants and other gardening materials. Due to this, he owned a large truck: “Sometimes I need to take plants with me, so because of that I have a big car. Occasionally they stop me and take me out of the line because they want to see what is inside the car” (interview, 9 July 2016). Lya, a-62-year-old Jewish settler, also brought this up when I asked her how she thought the soldiers decided which cars to stop and which ones to let pass: “When someone drives a Subaru, they would be a Palestinian. The Subarus and Peugeots – they are good for builders. They are sturdy cars. Everybody in the building business would have them” (interview, 17 June 2017). This was confirmed by 54-year-old Palestinian Samira. She was almost never stopped at the checkpoint and while, as already stated, she felt her short grey hair helped, she also suspected the brand of car she owned helped: she owned a Volvo. According to Samira, this was a brand of car that was almost never owned by Palestinians. While most brands may have had a more neutral reputation, she mentioned that the Mercedes that her colleague owned was not really Palestinian or Jewish, certain brands were more obvious: “Truck? Palestinian. Peugeot? Palestinian. Volvo? Jewish” (interview, 13 June 2017). And while she had not purchased the car because of this (No, I just like it” (ibid.)), she did feel the difference it made.

6.6.2: Gender

Another categorisation that my interviewees identified as being employed by the checkpoint regimes was gender. As has been described in detail by Rema Hammami (2019), the Israeli occupation regime treats Palestinian men and women differently: “the Palestinian male body is the archetype of the terrorist-other of the Israeli military and the larger Zionist national imaginary, this masculine corporeality is almost always already the paradigmatic threat” (p. 91). Opposed to this threatening male body is the female body: “female corporealities and performativity have a greater chance of success in passing through the scan [at the checkpoints]” (Hammami, 2019, p. 92). Inside large terminal checkpoints, such as

Checkpoint 300, the checkpoint managers provide, or deny, only women the 'privilege' of using a 'humanitarian lane' (Rijke & Minca, 2018). With regards to the car checkpoints, gender is employed by the checkpoint managers to decide who is suspect and should be checked. This was exemplified by Abeer, a 27-year-old Palestinian with a Jerusalem ID who lives with her husband and two young daughters in Bir Ouna. Bir Ouna is located west of Bethlehem and on the West Bank side of the Wall. Half of the town is administratively designated as Jerusalem. Due to this, Abeer and her family, with their Jerusalem IDs, can live here. Abeer often passes through The Tunnels on her way to Jerusalem for work or to visit her family. She explained that although she was regularly stopped anyway, it was best to travel with her daughters and without her husband. If her husband was with her in the car, chances of being stopped were bigger. Travelling alone with her daughters often meant she passed through The Tunnels without getting stopped. John, a 27-year-old Palestinian, brought up the same subject:

> Usually if they see a lady driving, then it's easier. If they see a guy driving, then they definitely stop you at the checkpoint. It depends on the mood of the soldiers, it's not a law... my experience is that if my wife or my mom is driving, it is easier. If we are just with guys in the car, it is a definite stop.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

Here we can see how certain categories, such as 'Jewish' versus 'Arab/Palestinian' and gender, have been incorporated as biopolitical technologies to produce selective rationalities of mobility. While the checkpoints are at most barriers that can cause unwanted delay for the Jewish settlers, they represented places for Palestinian commuters where a set of asymmetrical relations between the occupier and occupied are performed. Although these Palestinian commuters have the same legal rights as the Jewish settlers to freely enter Jerusalem and Israel, the passages of my Palestinian interviewees always came with the lingering possibility of having to engage in tense interactions with checkpoint managers, being stopped, being

searched and even being denied access altogether. However, the Palestinian commuters I interviewed did not passively accept this. More specifically, they selectively used these same biopolitical categories while passing through the checkpoints. As put by Samira, “There are many things that we have learned. There is so much that we know that they don’t know we know... after a while you get the hang out of it” (interview, 22 May 2017).

6.7: Checkpoint knowledge

Many of my Palestinian interviewees used their ‘checkpoint knowledge’ to try to positively influence their chances of passing through the checkpoints without being stopped. This usually meant behaving/driving in a way they described as being the least suspect, or ‘the least Palestinian’. An example is, again, 27-year-old clergyman John, who said when I asked him if he thought certain strategies could increase the chances of one passing through the checkpoint unstopped:

> Phone... the passenger should play with his phone, pretend to have a phone call. Close the windows. Closed windows help more. It means... I don’t know what it means... so, close your windows, the passenger should play with the phone and try not to have eye contact with the soldiers. The chauffeur says hi. Don’t stop or make them feel that you are worried. Don’t slow down too much. Just keep on driving.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

John employed all these strategies, and while he could not explain to me what some of these strategies implied, during the many years of travelling through these car checkpoints he had learned that they somehow worked. Hajar, a 21-year-old Palestinian with an Israeli ID card, was more specific about the reasons for her strategies. When I asked her if she was ever stopped at the Tunnels checkpoint, the checkpoint she regularly passed through on her way to the university in Jerusalem,

she responded that she was almost never stopped. I asked her why this was the case, and she stated:

> I know how to be around them [Israeli soldiers], how to deal with them. They never think I am an Arab. The most important thing is to be confident, to smile and say hi. You should never wait for them to tell you what to do, do not hesitate. Slow down, but not too much, you have to keep on driving.
>
> (interview, 12 June 2016)

These types of strategies were also employed by 54-year-old Nisreen. Nisreen holds a West Bank ID and is thus technically barred from using The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoint. She also holds a US passport, but, without the obligatory entry card, she is not allowed to use this passport to pass a checkpoint. However, this does not mean that she does not try, and, at times, succeeds. She explained that sometimes, when the pedestrian Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem was particularly busy, she would travel through The Tunnels checkpoint with a Palestinian friend of hers who carries a Jerusalem ID card. While her friend could travel through The Tunnels, Nisreen is barred from using this checkpoint with her West Bank ID. The trick was to be mistaken for a foreigner. Nisreen explained the tactics she used:

> Wearing a hat! If you are wearing a hat, 99 per cent of the time they think you are a foreigner. So, I just wear a hat when I go through the Tunnels with my friend, and they don't stop us. With a hat and an English magazine in my lap, in their mind I am a foreigner. This way, they won't check for the entry card, showing them the [US] passport is enough.
>
> (interview, 23 June 2016)

When I asked her why she did not do this every day, she explained that she had been sent back a few times. The repercussions of getting caught were large. Her friend could get fined for transporting her through the checkpoint, Nisreen could

lose the permit she had through her employer in Jerusalem, and it was difficult for her to get back from The Tunnels checkpoint to Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem:

> Getting out of the car [belonging to her friend at The Tunnels checkpoint], you have to walk until you can catch a ride with the bus that drives back to Bethlehem. Then [catch] a taxi from the bus stop in town back to the checkpoint here [Checkpoint 300].
>
> (interview, 23 June 2016)

These are examples of the strategies used by Palestinians that imply enacting certain biopolitical categories in such a way that they could possibly be mistaken for being Jewish Israeli, or a foreigner, and not 'Palestinian/Arab'. Amahl Bishara (2015) indicated the same, when she described several strategies her interviewees used to smuggle West Bank Palestinian through car checkpoints. One of these implied embodying certain stereotypes her interviewees suspected the Israeli soldiers would have of how a Palestinian woman would behave and dress:

> Upending age hierarchies, the youngest of the group claimed the most visible driver's side passenger seat. She was ready to dress the least modestly and, thus, to look the "least Palestinian," according to what the group expected Israeli soldiers' stereotypes to be.
>
> (Bishara, 2015, p. 42)

Not all interviewees tried to be identified as someone who was not 'Palestinian'/'Arab'. Salah, for instance, used a different strategy. As was described earlier, 47-year-old Salah was stopped very often on his way through The Tunnels. When I asked him if he employed certain strategies to improve his chances of not being stopped, he responded:

> You shouldn't be clever inside the checkpoints. If the soldier gives you a very small sign with his hand that you have to stop, you have to stop immediately. Otherwise you're in trouble. So, you have to obey, whatever

> they say. They can keep you aside for whatever they want. They can start checking your car, very slowly, checking your ID, calling the main post to check about you. This will all take a long time. If you are in a hurry, if you want to go to work, it's like you are ruining your own day. In the end, it depends on the soldier. So, the best way is to obey them.
>
> (interview, 12 May 2017)

While the different strategies implemented by John, Hajar, Nisreen and Salah may seem contradictory, these quotes actually illustrate the diverse ways in which Palestinians engage with these checkpoints' biopolitical categories and related spatial regimes. Where some commuters – like John, Hajar and Nisreen – choose to use creative ways to try to negate the effects of the arbitrariness at play inside these checkpoints by enacting certain biopolitical categories, others – like Salah – argued the best way to engage with the checkpoints was to follow the soldiers' instructions as precisely as possible. In this process, all tried to positively influence their chances of getting through unchallenged.

The people I interviewed experienced this decision-making process of the soldiers regarding who was to be stopped and who was not as highly unpredictable and arbitrary. As they explained, they often felt it was determined by the mood of the soldiers, or the 'goodwill of the ruler' (Berda, 2018). As exemplified by 47-year-old Salah:

> It depends on the soldier. If he is in a bad mood or in a good mood, you never know how they will work. Sometimes they know you because they see you every day, but they still want to stop you. Sometimes they only ask for your ID, sometimes they want you to open your trunk to check your car.
>
> (interview, 12 May 2017)

John, the 27-year-old clergyman, said the same thing: "It depends on the soldiers' mood. If they decide that this car is good, they let it pass. If they think no, then you get stopped. Why? We do not know" (interview, 22 May 2017). This was also stated by 54-year-old Samira when I asked her if her journey from Bethlehem to Jerusalem had become predictable. Samira, who had told me that she was almost never stopped, said that her journey would never really be predictable:

> Maybe they will stop you, maybe not. There is nothing official about this. Sometimes you find that things go easier, and then it will get harder. They can stop you and send you back. We take it one day at the time.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

Why or when you would be stopped was difficult to say, according to Samira. Due to this unpredictability, she felt like she had no control over the commute from her home to the university in Bethlehem:

> It should take me about seven minutes to reach the university from my home. But there is something more to this seven-minute drive... Driving through the checkpoint, I feel that I'm doing something much more complicated than a simple seven-minute drive. You never have a sense of control over those seven minutes. If I am going anywhere else and it is seven minutes away, I have a better sense of the distance. When driving through the checkpoint, it feels like there is a break... There are two pieces of time: the time before and the time after. And you cannot connect these two.
>
> (interview, 22 May 2017)

Here, it becomes clear that even though Palestinian commuters can employ several tactics to try to improve their chances of getting through the checkpoints unhindered, the checkpoint passage never becomes fully predictable. Amahl Bishara (2015) found the same in her research: "Palestinians' systematized

knowledge of closure has to take into account the lack of systematicity of military rule and the possibility of arbitrary brutality" (p. 42). As such, these checkpoints produce selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

6.8: Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have indicated how The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints in the Bethlehem area function as spatial political technologies. While on the one hand they help to create Israeli-only spaces by excluding Palestinians with a West Bank ID from using them, on the other, they monitor, discipline and selectively limit the mobility of Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards. While Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards have the same legal right as Jewish Israelis to enter Jerusalem and Israel, their checkpoint experiences are often determined by uncertainty and possible tense interactions with Israeli soldiers. As such, these checkpoints are examples of places within the West Bank where two opposing geographical regimes meet: one aimed at ensuring the fast and smooth movement of Jewish settlers, the other aimed at controlling and possibly hindering the movement of Palestinians.

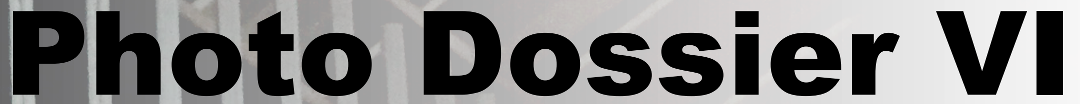
The existence of these two geographical regimes influences the design and spatial regime of these checkpoints. More specifically, to ensure that these regimes can exist simultaneously, the checkpoints have been designed as low-tech, with almost no technological support present. As a result, Jewish settlers are not slowed down by having to engage with (biometric) machines, but this also means that there are no machines available to control and possibly delay the movement of the Palestinian commuters using these checkpoints. The decision of who is stopped and who can pass unhindered is thus made solely by the soldiers.

The Jewish settlers interviewed indicated that they were almost never stopped and checked, while many of the Palestinian interviewees were stopped regularly and all

experienced these checkpoints as potential obstacles on their way to work, school or family. Various biopolitical categories were employed by the soldiers at these checkpoints when making the decision of who to stop and who to let pass unhindered. In this paper, I discussed two categories, namely ethnic distinction: 'Jewish' versus 'Arab' and gender, which were identified as being employed by the Israeli soldiers managing the checkpoints to determine who could be a potential threat – the Palestinian (male) Other – and hence needed to be stopped.

Palestinian commuters used various tactics based on their 'checkpoint knowledge' to try to make their passages as smooth as possible. Part of the interviewees explained that they employed and performed the same biopolitical categories that they expected the soldiers to use to sort cars and those inside them in order to enhance their chances of getting through unhindered. This entailed behaving in such a way that they could either be helpfully miscategorised as 'Jewish' or as a foreigner. Other interviewees explained that they tried to behave as they expected the soldiers wanted them to as much as possible: as the obedient and non-threatening 'Palestinian Other'.

However, although this 'checkpoint knowledge' may enhance the chances of Palestinian commuters to pass through the checkpoints unhindered, they remain depended upon the goodwill of the ruler: the mood of the soldier. While some may be stopped regularly and others almost never, for Palestinian commuters the passage through the checkpoints is never entirely predictable: they are never fully in control of their commute. The arbitrariness at play in the decision of who to stop and who not – which for my interviewees included stopping commuters who pass through these checkpoints every day – shows how the checkpoints are a tool for Israeli soldiers to reinforce the asymmetrical relations between the occupier and the occupied. As such, these checkpoints produce, via their spatial regimes, design and managers, specific geographies based on the limitation and control of the movement of Palestinians.



Checkpoint 300
during Ramadan

Figure P.24: The blocks installed at the entrance of Checkpoint 300 installed to control the crowds on Fridays during Ramadan (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure P.25: A booth for the soldiers checking the paperwork of the commuters (source: Rijke, May 2019).

Figure P.26: Palestinian women queuing up at Checkpoint 300 on a Friday during Ramadan (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Figure P.27: Palestinian men queuing up at Checkpoint 300 on a Friday during Ramadan (source: Rijke, June 2017).

Today is a Friday during Ramadan and hundreds of thousands of Muslim Palestinians will travel to Jerusalem to pray in the Al Aqsa Mosque. At the entrance of the checkpoint the men are separated from the women. I follow a group of women. It is still dark, and I spot the Israeli soldiers when I get closer to the blocks. They let me pass unchallenged. The group of women I am following seem confused as to where to go. They try the normal lane, but the turnstile does not move. They turn to the old humanitarian lane, but this turnstile also does not move. A young Palestinian woman walks towards us and says that the car lane is the exit for women. The group walks in that direction. The soldiers must have seen us walking back and forth but decided not to tell us where to go.

(fieldnotes, 10 June 2016)

Chapter 7

Conclusion & Discussion

Passing through a checkpoint is a daily exercise most Palestinians and Jewish settlers cannot avoid on their way to work, school, family or places of worship. In this thesis, I have analysed the ways in which Checkpoint 300, The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints in the Bethlehem area produce, via the interplay between its managers, commuters and material devices, specific geographies based on the limitation and control of the movement of Palestinians. In this final chapter, I return to the main research questions and critically discuss the project's outcomes and implications.

The central aim of this thesis was:

To analyse checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as spatial political technologies, that, through an interplay of human and non-human interactions, produce a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility.

The following research questions were formulated to address this aim:

1. How do the checkpoint managers implement biopolitical categories in the governing of mobile Palestinian and Jewish Israeli bodies?
2. What role do the machines in and the spatial arrangements of the checkpoints play in the checkpoint passages of the Palestinian and Jewish Israeli commuters?
3. How do the Palestinian commuters, in particular, engage with, reproduce, but also redefine and/or resist the workings of the checkpoint regimes?

The theoretical framework I used to analyse the data collected and to answer these research questions was predominately informed by Michel Foucault's conceptualisation of biopolitics and Giorgio Agamben's formulation of the sovereign exception. More specifically, taking into account Foucault's formulations of power as relational and productive, and his arguments regarding the importance of the circulation of bodies for the implementation of a state's security apparatus, I framed checkpoints as political technologies. This entailed analysing checkpoints as

made up of specific practices and techniques aimed at the bodies subjected to them. This framework allowed me to focus on the interplay between human and non-human interactions, and thus the role played by machines in the checkpoints. Moreover, it meant investigating the daily experiences of the commuters subjected to the checkpoints and the role of eruptive and withheld violence. Inspired by the work of Claudio Minca, Irit Katz and Diana Martin (Katz, Martin, & Minca, 2018; Minca, 2015a), I added a spatial element to this analysis by framing checkpoints as *spatial* political technologies that produce a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility. Including Agamben's sovereign exception to this theoretical framework allowed me to analyse the arbitrary decisions of the checkpoint managers not as incidental or accidental, but as inherent to the checkpoints' spatial regime and an expression of the sovereign exception.

This thesis is based on a seven-month period of fieldwork spent in the Bethlehem area in 2016, 2017 and 2019. While in the field, I combined extensive checkpoint observations with go-along interviews and in-depth interviews. I conducted 61 interviews with 25 Palestinians and 11 Jewish settlers. I also spent up to eight hours each week observing Checkpoint 300, often during rush hour from 4:00 to 8:00 am, and regularly crossed The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, as well as several other checkpoints, during my stays in the West Bank. Thanks to this combination of methods, I was able to link the conversations I had with my interviewees to my experiences during the go-along interviews and the many hours I spent observing the checkpoints.

Although the three preceding empirical chapters already included concluding remarks, in this chapter I wish to draw some general conclusions and address the research questions posed at the outset of the thesis. More specifically, through a discussion of the findings presented in the empirical chapters I will illustrate the two main general conclusions of this thesis: firstly, I will explain how checkpoints as spatial political technologies produce arbitrary, mutable and selective regimes of

mobility. Secondly, I will argue that checkpoints should be seen as the outcome of the endless interplay between their managers, the commuters, biopolitical categories, material devices, procedures of control and calculative rationalities. After this, I will reflect on the implications of this thesis and discuss some insights that could be useful for future research. I will end the chapter, and as such this thesis in general, by going back to where it all started for me: Checkpoint 300.

7.1: Research questions

7.1.1: The implementation of biopolitical categories in the governing of mobile Palestinian and Jewish Israeli bodies.

In Chapters 4 and 6, I described how checkpoint managers used several biopolitical categories in Checkpoint 300, The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints to discipline and differentiate between Palestinian and Jewish Israeli mobile bodies. In Chapter 4, the daily experiences of Palestinians passing through Checkpoint 300 were analysed in relation to the implementation of three categories that define their right to pass, namely 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card status'. These categories were seemingly based upon official rules and regulations and were used by the authorities to differentiate between who could, for instance, use a separate 'humanitarian lane' and who could travel without a permit. In Chapter 6, it was described how the soldiers at The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints employed various biopolitical categories when deciding who to stop and who to let pass unhindered. While the official rules stipulated that every commuter carrying an Israeli or Jerusalem ID card should be allowed to pass the checkpoints, the Palestinian commuters were often stopped, subjected to tense interactions with Israeli soldiers and, at times, denied passage. As such, at Checkpoint 300 biopolitical categories were used to differentiate between different groups of Palestinians, while these categories were employed at The Tunnels and Al Walaja

checkpoints to differentiate between Jewish Israelis and Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards, as well as between different Palestinians. Furthermore, while at Checkpoint 300 the commuters had to be seen and recognised by the checkpoint managers to try to claim certain 'privileges', the biggest 'privilege' that Palestinian commuters hoped for at The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints was to be 'misrecognised' as Jewish Israelis and pass the checkpoints 'unseen' and unhindered.

Although the employment of biopolitical categories in Checkpoint 300 is based on different processes of recognition and differentiation compared to those applied at The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, this research project has shown that all three are part of the same larger checkpoint machinery and work in similar ways towards the realisation of the broader geographies of occupation in the West Bank. More specifically, these biopolitical categories are essential tools that help create the conditions for the daily exercise of the sovereign exception and the implementation of the 'regime of privileges' in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Berda, 2018), in which asymmetrical relationships between occupier and occupied are endlessly reproduced.

All the Palestinian commuters interviewed indicated that they never knew beforehand if they could pass the checkpoints unchallenged: if they could use the humanitarian lane, if they could pass without a permit, if they had to answer questions, if they had to show the contents of their car, if they had to wait for hours, or if the checkpoints would be closed altogether. While the consequences of the arbitrary decisions on the part of the Israeli soldiers did not have the same impact on all groups of Palestinians interviewed (Palestinians with West Bank ID cards are in a much more precarious position than Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards), all interviewees explained that they experienced randomness at play inside the checkpoints in regard to the ways in which the checkpoint managers implemented such categories. In this research project, it became clear that these

experiences of randomness inside the checkpoints were located in the moments in which an Israeli soldier or private security guard managing the checkpoint decided that a certain rule or regulation did not apply to the Palestinian commuter trying to pass through. These moments proved to be exemplary for the ways in which the checkpoints' regimes allow for the exercise of sovereign power. This can, for instance, be seen when a private security guard decides that a woman is not allowed to use the humanitarian lane, even though these lanes have been created for them, or when a soldier decides that a 70-year-old Palestinian man with a West Bank ID card cannot pass the checkpoint without a permit, although the rules stipulate that all men over 55-years-old are allowed. Another example is when a soldier demands to see the documents and contents of the car of a Palestinian with an Israeli ID card, although this person is a citizen of Israel and has the legal right to enter Jerusalem and Israel unchallenged. As such, the regime inside the checkpoints – and in the occupation in general – allows for the unsanctioned exercise of sovereign power and the structural occurrence of arbitrariness in the implementation of the biopolitical categories. This shows that the checkpoints' regime has created a context in which Palestinians often feel subjected to what my interviewees understood as the 'mood of the soldiers' and the arbitrary, mutable and selective regimes of mobilities that are produced inside the checkpoints.

7.1.2: The roles of the machines in and the spatial arrangements of the checkpoints for Palestinian and Jewish Israeli commuters.

In Chapters 4 and 6, I have demonstrated in which ways the checkpoints' spatial formations and the presence, or absence, of machines generated particular political geographies and relationships of power. The specificities of the spatial design of Checkpoint 300 as a terminal checkpoint were discussed in Chapter 4, with a focus on the presence of several machines, such as turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray machines, and fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. The presence of these machines was supposed to increase the distance between soldiers and

Palestinian commuters and thus ease the tensions amongst them. However, as became clear in Chapter 4, Checkpoint 300 is still a place filled with tension and violence, often exercised by the machines in operation and their 'decisions'. In Chapter 6, I described how the low-tech design of The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, with almost no machines present, enabled the simultaneous existence of two opposed regimes of mobility. A high-tech design would have meant subjecting the Palestinian commuters to (biometric) machines, which would have meant that the Jewish settlers would also have to do this and be slowed down.

The differences in the spatial arrangements of these three checkpoints had an important influence on the methodology. Analysing the workings of Checkpoint 300 entailed focusing on the ways in which Palestinian bodies were subjected to engaging with several machines. It meant looking at the moments when crowds of thousands of (predominately) men were pushed against the metal bars and turnstiles, the moments when commuters had to go back and forth through the metal detector until it remained quiet, and the moments when a biometric scanning device refused to read someone's finger and forced them to turn back. Hence, analysing the workings of Checkpoint 300 entailed investigating the workings of its machines and how the Palestinian commuters engaged with them. The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints had a different 'logic'. Due to the fact that Jewish settlers also used these checkpoints, there was an almost complete absence of machines. No x-ray machines, no barriers, and no biometric scanning devices. These checkpoints have been designed in such a way that they allow for the smooth and quick passages of Jewish settlers, while still allowing the soldiers to control and potentially stop the Palestinian commuters. Hence, analysing these checkpoints required investigating how the spatial arrangement of these checkpoints allowed for the existence of these two opposed regimes of mobility. As such, it meant focusing on how the commuters were disciplined by the spatial arrangement of the checkpoints in the absence of machines.

While the spatial arrangements of these checkpoints were different, the analysis of these checkpoints illustrated how the spatial arrangements and machines, in their presence or absence, were constitutive to how the checkpoints produced arbitrary, mutable and selective geographies of mobility: in all three checkpoints, the regime allowed for the use of arbitrariness as a tool to create the conditions for the unsanctioned daily exercise of sovereign power on the part of the soldiers/private security guards over individual Palestinians. More specifically, Chapter 4 showed how the unpredictable inefficiencies of the machines in Checkpoint 300 and the arbitrary interventions on the part of the checkpoint managers in the workings of these machines, exposed the bodies of the commuters to a regime of uncertainty and fear. Furthermore, Chapter 6 indicated how, because of the absence of machines in The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints, the decision of who was stopped and who could pass unhindered was made solely by the soldiers. This has created a checkpoint regime in which these soldiers were able to act biopolitically 'on the spot' by selecting individuals on the basis of their racialised or gendered identities when the 'normal rules' applied, but also by deciding when to suspend these very same rules and their associated 'privileges'.

Hence, the checkpoints have been designed in different ways for different groups of commuters, and their spatial arrangements and machines heavily influence the passages of these commuters. As such, the exercise of the sovereign exception and the associated arbitrary and unpredictable workings of these checkpoints are the outcome of the intricate interplay between its managers, the material devices and procedures of control.

7.1.3: Strategies employed by Palestinian commuters

Palestinian commuters use diverse strategies when engaging with the checkpoint regimes. They employ their 'checkpoint knowledge' to try to positively influence their passages: incorporating, and as such 'reproducing', certain implications, while redefining and resisting others.

As shown in Chapters 5 and 6, Palestinian commuters enacted, and 'reproduced', certain biopolitical categories to (try to) claim the associated privileges. This was the case with the women who skipped the queue by instrumentalising their 'gendered identity' in Chapter 5, but also with the Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards who tried to be 'miscategorised' as being either Jewish Israeli or having a foreign identity in Chapter 6. Their 'checkpoint knowledge' provided them with the necessary tools to enact these biopolitical categories, for instance, by engaging with other commuters or the checkpoints managers in a specific way, or by driving their car up to the checkpoint in exactly the right speed – not too fast, but also not too slow. Furthermore, as became clear in Chapter 4, the 'checkpoint knowledge' of Palestinian commuters passing through Checkpoint 300 also meant that many knew how to respond to the checkpoints' spatial design and machines: which lane to use based on one's categorisation, how to find out when a turnstile has been activated and how to prepare for the metal detector.

The most explicit way of resisting the checkpoints' regime is by not passing through them, but this is a privilege not many Palestinians have. However, the Palestinian commuters interviewed provided examples of numerous, more subtle, ways of how they redefined and resisted certain workings of the checkpoints. In the process, the commuters challenged the abilities of the checkpoint managers to exercise their arbitrary power. For instance, this was exemplified in Chapter 5 through the decision of the young Palestinian men to skip the queue by using the humanitarian lane, which often resulted in the closing of this lane altogether – and, in the process, the taking away of the ability of the checkpoint managers to use the opening and closing of this lane to exercise their arbitrary power. Another example in Chapter 5 was the decision of women and men respectively over 50 and 55 years of age to still apply for a permit, although at their age they should legally be allowed to pass the checkpoint without one. In this act, again, the commuters took away the ability of the checkpoint managers to arbitrarily decide whether or not they could claim the privilege of passing the checkpoint without a permit. Another

example was Nisreen's decision, discussed in Chapter 4, to check her clothes and jewellery with a magnet before going to the checkpoint, ensuring that whatever she was wearing would not beep. In this way, she would not be in a position in which a soldier could decide to make her go back and forth until the machine remained silent.

While at first glance it may seem strange that there is some leeway for people to resist the checkpoints' workings, this research has actually shown that this leeway was inherent to the ambivalence and unpredictability at play inside the checkpoints. The arbitrary workings of the checkpoints generated and continuously reproduced the asymmetrical relationship between the occupier and the occupied. However, these same arbitrary workings also created (precarious) spaces to resist and subvert the checkpoints' regimes. This was, for instance, exemplified in Chapter 5, when the checkpoint managers would, at times, allow the young men to use the humanitarian lane to skip the queue. Because the checkpoint managers would arbitrarily allow these young men to do this, these very young men continuously tried and, at times, succeeded in bypassing the checkpoints' lane logic. Or, as was discussed in Chapter 4, when the soldiers ignored the beeping of the metal detector, Nisreen and Saba' would try to do the same and, in the process, resist the intentionality of the machine. Or, as was shown in Chapter 6, since not every car was stopped at The Tunnels and Al Walaja, it was possible for Palestinians passing through these checkpoints to try to get through unchallenged. The level to which Palestinian commuters could redefine and resist the checkpoints' workings was limited. In the end, almost all of my Palestinian interviewees remarked that 'it all came down to the mood of the soldiers' and their willingness to allow the commuters' twisting and subverting of the checkpoints' logic. However, in these small, sometimes almost fleeting, moments in the everyday checkpoint passages, the commuters 'spoke back' to the checkpoints' regime and, in the process, resisted their rationale and the occupation in general.

As I have argued in this thesis, this is precisely how checkpoints work: they are marked by strict and explicit rules of conduct, while at the same time they remain open to the soldiers' arbitrary intervention, to the malfunctioning of machines, but also to the manipulation of the commuters. This makes them powerful instruments in the architecture of occupation – in which uncertainty and arbitrariness are as important as the walls, fences and roadblocks.

7.2: This thesis' scholarly contributions

With this thesis I intended to address five gaps in the academic debates in political and human geography concerning the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, its accompanying architecture of occupation and its checkpoints. Furthermore, as I will elaborate on here, the contributions I discuss in the following paragraph may also be useful for the broader academic debates concerning walling, border crossings and other sites of state violence in the fields of political geography, political science, border studies and critical international relations studies.

The first gap that I intended to address with this thesis was related to that the lack of contemporary scholarly research on the various everyday experiences of commuters having to pass through checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. What work did analyse these checkpoints largely referred to the years of the Second Intifada (2000-05), underplayed the experiences of the Palestinian commuters (Braverman, 2011, 2012; Kaufman, 2008; Keshet, 2006; Kotef, 2011, 2015; Kotef & Amir, 2007; Mansbach, 2009, 2012, 2015) or focused explicitly on the ways in which Palestinian commuters resisted the status of passive victims (Hammami, 2004; 2010, 2015; Peteet, 2017; Razack, 2010; Tawil-Souri, 2009, 2010, 2011b). While these authors provide important insights in the workings of the checkpoints and the agency of Palestinian commuters, they did not incorporate the

various ways in which Palestinians engaged with the checkpoints. By analysing the ways in which Palestinian commuters engaged with checkpoints on a daily basis with a biopolitical framework inspired by the work of Michel Foucault, I have shown how these checkpoints work as a means of surveillance that monitors, disciplines and selectively limits the mobility of Palestinians. Furthermore, with the use of Foucault's understanding of power as relational and productive, I argued that, in certain moments, these commuters reproduced the checkpoints' regimes, while in other moments, they manipulated and resisted these same regimes. As such, I focused on what the checkpoints did in relation to the commuters, but also what the commuters did in their various and diverse engagements with the checkpoints during their daily passages. In this way, I was able to avoid reducing Palestinian commuters in this analysis to passive victims and heroic resistance fighters, neither over-romanticising nor simplifying their resistance (see on this, amongst others, Abu-Lughod, 1990, 2000; Mahmood, 2005, or, from a different perspective, Abulhawa, 2019).

Secondly, by including 'things' in the analysis of the workings of the checkpoints, I intended to highlight the important role played by the spatial design of the checkpoints and the presence, or absence, of machines. Again, with a biopolitical framework inspired by the work of Foucault – who stated that the exercise of power is never a naked fact (1978) - but also with insights taken from the work of Reviel Netz (2004) and Randal McGuire (2013), I investigated the important role played by machines and the specific set of relationships that were produced by the constant interplay between the commuters, checkpoints managers and these machines inside the checkpoints. McGuire's (2013) analysis of the border wall between the USA and Mexico showed the importance of focusing on the messiness related to the daily practices of people engaging with militarised border crossings, while Netz (2004) discussed the historical role played by barbed wire in generating and reproducing specific relationships of power. Within their analyses of checkpoints, Irus Braverman (2011) and Daniella Mansbach (2009) have

investigated the role of the spatial arrangements and machines inside the terminal checkpoints. My work on the diverse experiences and interactions of the Palestinian commuters with machines inside the checkpoints contributes to this body of literature.

In the same line, Rema Hammami (2019) has recently published an analysis of the interplay between Palestinians, the Israelis managing the checkpoints and the machines present inside these checkpoints. Here, she argued for critically assessing the functioning of the numerous machines present inside the checkpoints, as they are too often framed as representing “total mastery and control” (Hammami, 2019, p. 95). Hammami’s (2019) analysis stems mostly from her own checkpoint passages as a Palestinian with a Jerusalem ID, and focuses predominately on Qalandiya Checkpoint (although she has also used testimonials of former soldiers collected by the Israeli protest movement Breaking the Silence[69] (p. 88)). She describes how the checkpoints developed from ad-hoc sheds to the intricate terminal checkpoints in place today. She criticises academic scholars who have not taken into account the agency of Palestinian commuters in their analysis of the checkpoints, a critique she had already formulated in earlier work (2010). As she states, “What checkpoints may intend to do versus what they actually accomplish can only be grasped through a close reading of their operations of power in the everyday dynamics of embodied confrontation and interaction between Israeli soldier and Palestinian subject” (Hammami, 2019, p. 96). What I have aimed to do in this thesis by investigating the daily workings of Checkpoint 300, Al Walaja and The Tunnels checkpoints echoes and adds to Hammami’s analysis: investigating the interactions between Israeli checkpoint managers, Palestinian commuters and the machines. By

[69] In my thesis I have not used testimonials of Breaking the Silence because there are no testimonials available on their website on the three checkpoints analysed in this research project. Furthermore, the large majority of these testimonials have been given by soldiers who have served at the checkpoints during the period of the Second Intifada (2000-05), a period during which the current checkpoint system was not yet fully operational. To read the testimonials and a more comprehensive explanation of Breaking the Silence’s work, please visit: https://www.breakingthesilence.org.il/

observing the checkpoints, particularly Checkpoint 300, for hours and hours, I was able to witness the ways in which Palestinian commuters and Israeli soldiers/private security guards engaged with the machines, how they at times behaved in accordance with the machines' intended roles, but also the ways in which both groups challenged the intended workings of these machines. The insights gained through these observations demonstrate the added value of including machines not only in the analysis of checkpoints in Israel/Palestine but also of border crossings elsewhere (see, for instance, on the use of machines at border crossings Amoore & Hall, 2009; Bellanova & Fuster, 2013; Martin, 2010; Redden & Terry, 2013).

A third gap that I intended to address with this thesis was the lack of research on the checkpoint experiences of Palestinians with West Bank, Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards, and of Jewish settlers. A limited number of scholars have analysed the experiences of multiple groups passing through checkpoints in Israel/Palestine. The work of Cédric Parizot (2009) and Amahl Bishara (2015) proved to be especially insightful, since they shed light on the diverse ways in which commuters engage with the spatial regimes of shared car checkpoints. However, these authors did not interview all four groups that have to pass through checkpoints: Palestinians with West Bank, Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards, and Jewish settlers. In my project, I interviewed all of these four groups. Including Palestinians with three different ID cards and, hence, three different levels of freedom of movement associated with these ID cards, helped me to investigate the role played by arbitrariness and the exercise of sovereign power in the checkpoint passages of all these groups. While, as stated earlier, the potential consequences are much larger for one group than for the other, analysing the experiences of all three groups of Palestinians showed the important role of the checkpoints as powerful instruments in the architecture of occupation, in which arbitrariness is used as a tool to create the conditions for the daily exercise of sovereign power over Palestinians with all three ID cards. Furthermore, joining these settlers on their checkpoint passages, and seeing the

stark contrast between their checkpoint passages and the checkpoint passages of Palestinians allowed me to analyse the car checkpoints as spaces where two opposing regimes of mobility came together, as well as the important impact settlers had on the spatial design of these checkpoints. These processes take place at many border-crossing sites in the world (see, for instance, Jones, 2009; Vaughan-Williams, 2010) and, my research project shows how insightful it can be to focus on the experiences of commuters with different levels of freedom of movement when studying these contexts. While the experiences of the least mobile group may seem the most important when investigating unjust bordering regimes, a more in-depth understanding of these bordering processes can be created by including the experiences of groups with more freedom of movement in the analysis.

A fourth gap I aimed to address with this research project was a focus on three checkpoints that had not been analysed previously in academia.[70] These three checkpoints are important within the architecture of occupation due to their locations on key routes and the large numbers of commuters having to pass through them. Furthermore, focusing on these checkpoints meant researching checkpoints that were not characterised by spectacular violence. Actually, many of the mornings in which I observed Checkpoint 300 and most of the times I passed through The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints were uneventful. However, again showing the importance of long extended periods of observations, uneventful observations are also insightful. Passing through checkpoints is often a boring exercise and analysing these boring mornings provides insights into the functioning

[70] Since I started with this PhD project, one other publication has come out that focused on Checkpoint 300 by Mark Griffiths and Jemima Repo (2018). In this article, they analyse Checkpoint 300 as a biopolitical technology aimed at ordering and managing the lives of Palestinians. Chapter 5 of this thesis, '*Checkpoint 300: precarious checkpoint geographies and rights/rites of passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories*', was published in the same issue of the journal Political Geography as the article written by Griffiths and Repo. In the fourth chapter of this thesis, titled *Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint regimes as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories,* I have engaged more explicitly with the work of Griffiths and Repo.

of the checkpoints not as sites of explosive violence but, rather, as sites where one can study oppression in everyday life and its subtle expressions of violence. Furthermore, once in a while, and one can never know when or why, a checkpoint passage is eventful, spectacular and explicitly violent. This may be because of 'newsworthy' events such as extremely long waiting times or the death of a commuter, but also because of less obvious things, such as a tense interaction with a checkpoint manager or a machine that refuses to let someone pass. As such, these checkpoints still determine in explicit and extreme ways the lives of the commuters subjected to them – which is precisely due to the lack of predictability regarding the occurrence of these types of eventful and violent passages. To recall 54-year-old Samira's words: "You never have a sense of control (…). When driving through the checkpoint it feels like there is a break... There are two pieces of time: the time before and the time after. And you cannot connect these two" (interview, 22 May 2017).

Recently, the media have depicted numerous examples of 'outrageous' border practices: the images of the bodies of desperate refugees who have drowned when trying to reach the safety of the European Union (Tondo, 2019) or the US (Aljazeera.com, 2019b), the stories of children torn from the arms of their parents and kept in cages by the US Border Patrol on the US-Mexico border (theguardian.com, 2018), and reports of the over 5,000 unarmed Gazans being shot by Israeli soldiers for coming 'too close' to the fence separating the Gaza Strip from Israel during the first seven months of the Gaza border protests against the siege of Gaza (b'tselem.org, 2018b). It is incredibly important to analyse these shocking bordering practices, and, as such, expose these horrific expressions of state violence (see, amongst others, Kovras & Robins, 2017; Topak, 2014; Van Houtum, 2010; Vaughan-Williams, 2015). Adding to the analyses of these extreme bordering practices, with this thesis I hope to demonstrate that it is also important to investigate the less 'newsworthy' sites of state violence and militarised border

crossings, as these sites shed light on the less visible, but equally oppressive daily precarious geographies to which commuters are subjected.

Lastly, I aimed to address a gap regarding the use of go-along interviews. This method has not been taken up on a large scale by geographers in research focused on checkpoints and the occupation in the Palestinian Territories, or on border crossings in other areas in the world – with the exception of the work of Mark Griffiths (2017) on 'political tours' in Hebron and Martin Doevenspeck (2011) on the border between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In my research project, this was an especially useful method since it allowed me to observe and experience the checkpoint passages with my interviewees. While in-depth interviews provided me with the narratives of my interviewees regarding their engagements with checkpoints and the architecture of occupation in general, by passing through the checkpoints with them, I could observe their engagements directly. Using go-along interviews meant that I discussed and observed their routines with the interviewees – ranging from the time they had to leave their homes in the morning, the mode(s) of transportation they used and the routes they took. Furthermore, it allowed me to observe how the checkpoints engaged with their bodies, as well as with mine. However, it may not always be possible to use this method in research projects focused on militarised border crossings. This is because whether or not this method can be used is highly dependent upon the possibility of the researchers being able to pass through these crossings relatively freely and without putting their interviewees at risk. This may be one of the reasons for the lack of implementation of this method in these types of research projects, something Doevenspeck (2011) also reflects on briefly in light of his arrest by the Rwandan military during his fieldwork. However, if it is possible to use this method safely, it can prove to be especially insightful.

7.3: Limitations of this study and suggestions for future research

The choices I have made with regards to the theoretical framework and the selection of data analysed also come with certain limitations. As discussed in Chapter 3, I was faced with several challenges during the fieldwork that have impacted this research project. This mostly concerned issues with regards to safety, the ability to find interviewees and to execute go-along interviews and checkpoint observations. Here, I wish to reflect upon the use of a biopolitical framework inspired by the work of Foucault, Agamben's sovereign exception and suggest possible ideas for future research.

Using a biopolitical framework inspired by the work of Foucault meant that I was able to analyse the checkpoints as selective openings in a system of enclosure and as important technologies of surveillance. It also allowed me to investigate the use of biopolitical categories by the checkpoint managers to selectively limit the movement of Palestinians. This could be further developed through a critical in-depth analysis of the permit system. While the permit system is an essential part of the regime that controls the mobility of Palestinians in the West Bank, my in-depth analysis of three checkpoints did not allow me to also include an analysis of the permit regime. The permit regime has not been the subject of many other academic studies (Parizot, 2018). Cédric Parizot (2018) explained this by pointing to the lack of transparency and written rules in the permit system (p. 22). However, this lack of transparency itself is important to study as part of the oppressive nature of the permit system for Palestinians. It is the lack of transparency and of written rules that ensures that Palestinians cannot know what to expect when they apply for a permit, how they are expected to behave to ensure they will receive a permit, or why they have been blacklisted. Important work that illustrates the complex and opaque workings of the permit system has been done by researchers working for NGOs or as legal advisors (Berda, 2018; Bocco, 2015; Etkes, 2011; Gisha, 2011; Kadman, 2012; Piterman, 2007). An in-depth study of the permit

system with a theoretical framework based on the work of Foucault and Agamben could provide important insights into the workings of the checkpoints' regime and into the unsanctioned exercise of sovereign power by Israeli forces and the structural occurrence of arbitrariness in the process of applying for and receiving a permit, as well as in the checkpoint passages.

Furthermore, the decision to use a biopolitical framework also meant that I did not focus on other factors that influence the checkpoints which could have been included with the use of, for instance, affective geographies or more-than-human geographies/Science and Technology Studies (STS). As such, for future research, the study of checkpoints could be further developed by an in-depth, critical analysis of the affective interactions at the checkpoints between commuters and checkpoint managers, but also between commuters and machines.

The inclusion of Agamben's sovereign exception to this study meant that I could critically analyse the occurrence of arbitrariness in the checkpoints, something all my Palestinian interviewees mentioned as one of the most important characteristics of the checkpoints' regime. Instead of seeing the arbitrariness only as a by-product of the checkpoints' workings, Agamben's work allowed me to analyse these arbitrary workings of the checkpoints as neither accidental nor incidental but, rather, as inherent to their spatial regime and an expression of the sovereign exception. A more in-depth engagement with the work of Agamben could be insightful for further research focused on checkpoints. While I chose to specifically engage with Agamben's concept of the sovereign exception, other (related) concepts of Agamben, such as 'the ban', could provide further important insights into the workings of the checkpoints (see, for instance, Minca, 2007, 2011, 2017; Minca & Rowan, 2015, and Minca & Vaughan-Williams, 2012).

I have positioned this research project explicitly within the academic discussions regarding the occupation of the Palestinian Territories and Israel's architecture of occupation. This decision was based on the fact that these academic debates are

well established, rich in quality and there are many factors that speak to the unique nature of the occupation of the Palestinian Territories. However, I believe that my research project also speaks to the broader academic debates in the fields of political geography, political science, critical international relations and border studies concerning walling and militarised border crossings, as I have tried to indicate in this concluding chapter. While the context of the Occupied Palestinian Territories is in many ways unique, the insights taken from this thesis could prove to be useful when studying checkpoints and militarised border crossings elsewhere in the world. For instance, as this study has shown, analysing checkpoints and/or militarised border crossings as the outcome of the various interactions between their managers, machines and commuters can provide insights into their endless interplay and into the diverse ways in which commuters engage with the checkpoints'/border crossings' regimes. Moreover, by analysing arbitrariness as neither accidental nor incidental but, rather, as inherent to the spatial regime of the checkpoints/border crossings and an expression of the sovereign exception, the workings of this exception and the coping mechanisms of the commuters can be studied as a part of the same regime of power.

Furthermore, in the analysis, I have foregrounded the experiences of Palestinian commuters passing through the checkpoints. While I have included the experiences of Jewish settlers in this study, their experiences do not receive the same amount of attention as the experiences of the Palestinian commuters do. Firstly, my focus on Checkpoint 300, a checkpoint that is not used by Jewish settlers, in two empirical chapters in this thesis meant that I excluded Jewish settlers from these chapters. Secondly, while Jewish settlers did use the two other checkpoints I analysed, I experienced difficulties with trying to find Jewish settlers willing to be interviewed. However, with the data I was able to collect on their checkpoint passages I could include the experiences of the Jewish settlers in the study to further understand the checkpoints' regime by comparing the fluid and fast movement of the settlers with the slow and laboured movement of Palestinians. As

such, by including the experiences of Jewish settlers I was able to show the injustice that is inherent to the checkpoint regime and the role that the Jewish settlers play in this. In a further line of enquiry, the checkpoint experiences of Jewish settlers could be studied in more depth by foregrounding their experiences and the influence they have on the checkpoints, but also by including, for instance, settlers living in settlements that are located deeper inside the West Bank.

I also decided to solely focus on the experiences of Palestinians who pass through the checkpoints, although the checkpoint regime and architecture of occupation in general also highly affects the lives of Palestinians who do not pass through the checkpoints, because they are unable to, they decide not to or because they bypass the checkpoints and enter Israel illegally. Adding to this, I have also decided not to interview the family members of the commuters who pass through the checkpoints and the effects this has on their family lives (see, for instance, Griffiths & Repo, 2018). Studies focused on these experiences can add to a broader understanding of the architecture of occupation and the impacts of the checkpoints in Palestinian society.

The limited space and focus of a thesis also meant that I had to exclude certain data from the analysis. This was the case with data that concerned the checkpoint passages. I have analysed gender as a biopolitical category employed by the Israeli soldiers/private security guards and reproduced and/or challenged by the Palestinian commuters. For a deeper analysis of the gendered experiences of the commuters passing through the checkpoints, see, for instance, the insightful work of Rema Hammami (2019), Hagar Kotef (2011), Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir (2007), Daniela Mansbach (2012) and Julie Peteet (2017).

I also had a lot of interesting data on the more general architecture of occupation that I did not include here. This is especially the case with regards to the different ways people experienced their freedom of movement in Areas A, B and C. The borders between these areas are, for instance, not always visibly displayed, but

known to most residents. While the large majority of the Jewish settlers I interviewed avoided entering Area A, my Palestinian interviewees regularly crossed the boundaries between the different administrative zones. These 'border crossings' highly affected their behaviour on the road. For instance, when driving from Area B or C into Area A, this is immediately clear because most Palestinian commuters will unbuckle their seatbelt, while, by contrast, an unknown foreigner is immediately told to buckle her seatbelt when bypassing the (at times) invisible border that separates Area A from areas B and C. My Palestinian interviewees explained this act of unbuckling one's seatbelt when entering Area A; they argued that the Israeli police focused on giving fines to Palestinian commuters in Areas B and C – especially to those easily identifiable in a car with a Palestinian license plate. In Area A, the Palestinian police in charge did not fine motorists breaking the law as consistently. The significance of the seatbelt in this scenario remains unclear to me: does unbuckling one's seatbelt at the exact moment in which the car passes into Area A represent the freedom to decide whether or not to buckle it? Or perhaps the unwillingness to adhere to Israeli rules and regulations? Further research into these types of 'bordering practices' could address these kinds of questions. The different administrative zones also impacted the lives of people living in the West Bank in many other ways, such as the fact that some Palestinian mobile phone cards do not work properly in Area C or that one can only connect to a 3G network when close to a Jewish settlement. The research that I present here is solely focused on border checkpoints, but it could be further developed with an in-depth analysis of these 'internal border crossings' (see, for instance, Handel, 2009).

7.4: "Aren't we Palestinians lucky?" - Checkpoint 300, May 2019

In conclusion, I would like to return to where it all started for me: Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem. When I left Bethlehem in June 2017, I did not expect to return before finishing this PhD project. I had collected enough data to write the thesis

and should have focussed on doing exactly that: writing the thing. When I left in 2017, a big sign had been posted at the checkpoint. It was all in Hebrew and seemed to suggest some renovations. I asked around, but my contacts were all quite unsure about what it meant. In May 2018, I heard from a friend living in Bethlehem that Checkpoint 300 had started to change quite dramatically. I soon decided that I wanted to see the 'new' Checkpoint 300 before I submitted my thesis, my curiosity overtaking my practical reservations against going on a 'fieldwork trip' right before submission. The trip proved worthwhile:

> Bethlehem, Monday 6 May 2019, 11am. When I walk up to Checkpoint 300 everything seems normal. The extra barriers that will be used on Fridays during Ramadan have already been installed and the 'checkpoint economy' is active as usual. When approaching the checkpoint, I can see a large building that has been built on the other side of the Wall, dwarfing the Wall: the new checkpoint. The long tunnel that used to lead to the entrance of the checkpoint is blocked and three new openings have been created in the Wall. I enter the one that has a sign that says 'entrance' (see Figure 7.1) and I am confronted with two turnstiles.
>
> The ceiling of this hallway is very high – I am indeed inside the building that is dwarfing the Wall. There are no soldiers in sight. There is a sign that says: 'Welcome to the Rachel's Tomb Crossing', one of the alternative names the Israeli army uses for Checkpoint 300 (see Figure 7.2). The checkpoint seems empty. I hesitantly move forward; it feels strange to enter this completely unfamiliar place.

Figure 7.1: The new entrance of Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, May 2019).

Figure 7.2: ‘Welcome to Rachel’s Tomb crossing’ (source: Rijke, May 2019).

After pushing against one of the turnstiles I enter a long hallway that is filled with music! Yes, music! Arabic music, to be precise. I walk up the hallway and see where the music is coming from: there are two TV sets that are blaring loud music while playing a clip in which the use of the new biometric scanners is illustrated, the so-called ‘speed gates’. I am flabbergasted. Music and video clips inside Checkpoint 300! The terminal checkpoints have often been compared to airports and this comparison has never been as adequate as it is right now. This clip looks exactly like a clip that could be used in Schiphol Airport to explain the passport scanners (see Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3: The ‘speed gate’ clip (source: Rijke, May 2019).

I continue and I feel unsure about how to move forward. There are two large doors that lead to another corridor with four double doors. They all seem closed. There are no indications of where I should go and due to my horrible sense of direction – I have the ability to get lost in my own neighbourhood – I am completely disorientated. I must be on the former parking lot? I try one of the doors. It does not open. While standing there, a Palestinian man walks up behind me and pushes against another door. It is also closed. We try the third and get lucky, it opens. There are no lights or any form of signage to know which door would be open – one has to push against the door to find out. Walking through the third door I am finally back in familiar territory – we are in the hall with the metal detectors. But there are considerably more metal detectors now. Eight instead of three! The rooms with the initial three metal detectors have been made smaller and new metal detectors have been added. I see that the light on top of one of the turnstiles is green, so I push against it. It does not move. The man and I try several turnstiles until we find one that is active. The lights on top of this turnstile are off. I guess the issue of the malfunctioning lights has not been addressed yet. After passing through the turnstile, I see two Israeli soldiers sitting inside a booth next to the metal detector and X-ray machine. I realise that these are the first Israelis I have met so far – in the first sections of the checkpoint I have only seen cameras. I walk through the metal detector, which remains silent and pass through another turnstile.

Here, I stand still for a moment to take in what I see in front of me. There is a large sign that says 'for biometric card holders only' in English, and also something in Hebrew and Arabic – I assume it reads the same. There are large Israeli flags everywhere (see Figure 7.4). This is probably related to the Israeli 'independence day' that is celebrated every year in May – an

event that is commemorated by Palestinians as the Nakba day. But it could also be a new way to ‘decorate’ the checkpoint?

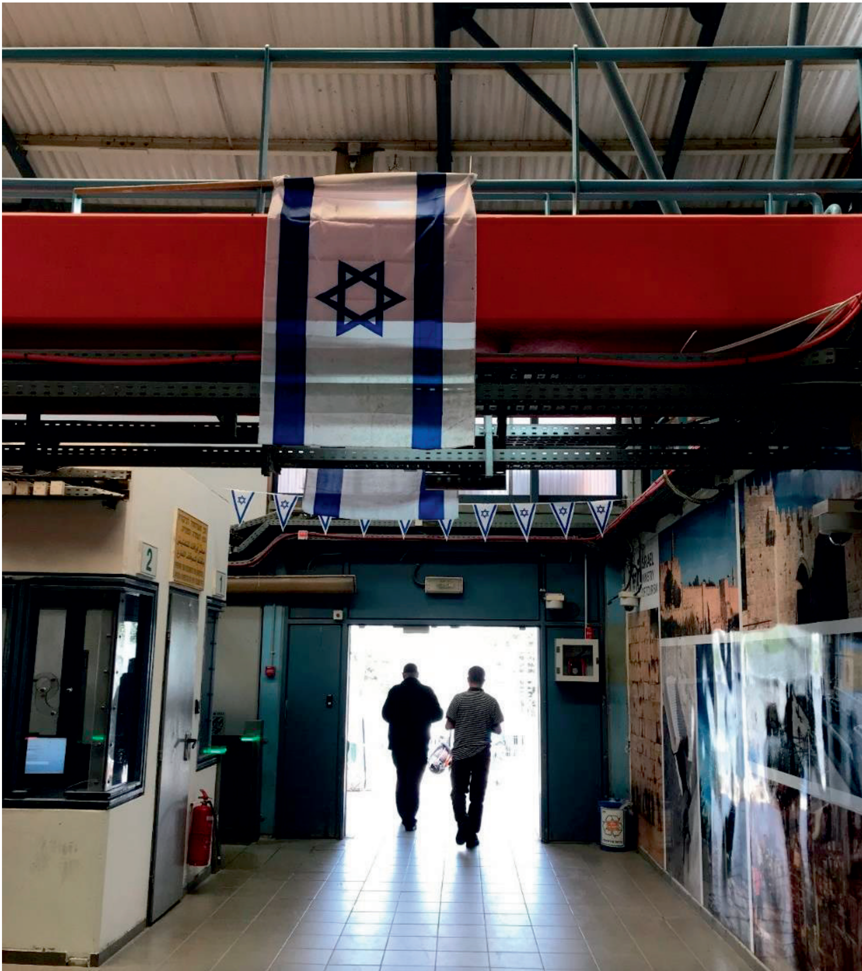


Figure 7.4: Israeli flags inside Checkpoint 300 (source: Rijke, May 2019).

There are three openings underneath the sign that have hand and face scanners, similar to a type of passport scanners I have seen in some airports. Next to these three openings there is a fourth opening with a booth with a soldier. Since I do not hold a biometric card, I queue for the booth. There is a short queue and there are private security guards observing from the other side of the scanners. There are Palestinian men passing through the biometric card readers. I have never seen this type of scanner work as fast as this at the airport. The Palestinian men put their card on the scanner, look in the camera and a few seconds later they can pass. Are these better scanners? Or perhaps less accurate? While I am waiting to get to the front of the queue (the foreigners and Israeli ID card/Jerusalem ID holders who cannot use the biometric scanners are now the slower commuters!), I also see that the machines often seem to stop working. The Palestinian men who are trying to pass through the biometric card readers then turn to another machine and I see several of them walk continuously back and forth between the machines. They seem confused, and I am confused, too. This does not seem very efficient. Perhaps this 'malfunctioning of the machines' is happening because these machines are still new? Or maybe there is a disconnect between the machines and the commuters? Or, instead, these 'malfunctioning machines' ensure that the functioning of the checkpoint remains unpredictable? Or all of the above? I get to the front of the queue. The soldier glances at my passport and gestures that I can pass, quickly as always; I do not have to provide any biometric data. I try to linger a bit to continue observing the machines but one of the private security guards is glaring at me in a rather intimidating way, so I exit the checkpoint – bypassing many more gates with biometric scanning devices and large Israeli flags (see Figure 7.4).

(fieldnotes, 6 May 2019)

I had expected Checkpoint 300 to look different, but I was surprised to see how drastically it had changed. As I described in Chapters 1 and 5, the spatial design of the terminal checkpoints was based on the intention to minimise the encounters between Palestinian commuters and Israeli forces by placing numerous machines in between them. In the old Checkpoint 300, the checkpoint managers were still visibly present throughout the whole checkpoint and many of my observations of the workings of the checkpoint included tense interactions between Palestinian commuters and these managers. In the new Checkpoint 300, the soldiers seem to have disappeared in large sections of the checkpoint. The managing of the turnstiles is now done from a distance and the scanning device now checks (some of) the permits. I wonder if the arbitrary functioning of the machines still plays such a major role as it did before Checkpoint 300 was renovated. The malfunctioning of the lights on top of the turnstiles and the scanning devices does seem to suggest this.

Some of the people with whom I spoke said that the checkpoint was much faster now. A few days after my first encounter with the new Checkpoint 300, I went there early in the morning for a more systematic observation. When I saw 20-year-old Abdel, a merchant who sells produce at the checkpoint and has always been happy to chat with me throughout the years, he joked to me that our hard days in Checkpoint 300 were over. We were joined this morning by two Scandinavian women of the EAPPI and Abdel seemed proud to tell them that I had experienced the horrible mornings in the old checkpoint, that I knew 'the real checkpoint', something they would not be able to experience. And indeed, this morning passage through Checkpoint 300 was smooth and quick.

Does this make it 'better'? Can we speak of a checkpoint as something that can be 'better', when it has been put on Palestinian land by the Israeli state? Should we assess the 'functionality' of these type of technologies when they have been implemented by an occupying force? When I discussed the new checkpoint with a

Palestinian friend of mine, she rolled her eyes and asked me, sarcastically, 'Aren't we Palestinians lucky?'. She continued on and argued that these are especially dangerous times. As she explained, Palestinians in the West Bank have internalised the occupation and stopped resisting it. The occupation has thus been normalised, and these checkpoints, with their concrete walls, scanning devices and large Israeli flags, are a part of this. I cannot help but think that she is right. Perhaps there will not be as many awful mornings at the checkpoint as there were before the renovations. However, I do not believe that the means for the exercise of sovereign power – the implementation of violence, arbitrariness and malfunctioning machines – have disappeared. These elements will only be more subtle and less visible from now on. As such, I would argue that the 'new' checkpoint actually further enshrines and legitimises the Israeli control of the Palestinian Territories, and its violence and injustice – a process already started with the introduction of the terminal checkpoints in 2005. As Hagar Kotef and Merav Amir stated in 2007, the design of the terminal checkpoints "reinforce[s] the illusion that they are normal sites marking the border between two sovereign entities and concealing the fact that Israeli rule applies on both sides of the terminal" (p. 982). While the terminal checkpoints had been designed in such a way that machines were placed in between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian commuters, in the old Checkpoint 300 there were still regular tense interactions between commuters and heavily armed soldiers and/or private security guards. As such, I always thought that the aim of the Israeli army to 'take the army out of the checkpoints' would not be met. However, the new Checkpoint 300 does seem to live up to these 'promises' of the Israeli army. Checkpoint 300 now looks like an actual 'border crossing' (Kotef & Amir, 2007, p. 982).[71] Due to this, their violence is less easily witnessed or documented than it was before and, as such, these checkpoints work towards making their own presence, and the occupation in general, the normal state of

[71] The other terminal checkpoints seem to have been renovated as well: I visited Qalandiya Checkpoint in May 2019 and it had been renovated in a similar way.

things. However, in this process the role played by checkpoints in the architecture of occupation has remained the same: to produce a set of selective, arbitrary, unjust and mutable geographies of mobility.

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Appendix 1

Interviewees

#	Pales.[72]/ Jewish Israel	Gender	Hometown	Age	ID card	Type of interview	# interviews
1	Pales.	Female	Bethlehem	65	West Bank ID	Go-along interview	1
2	Pales.	Female	Ramallah	27	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	2
3	Pales.	Female	Beit Jala	21	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	2
4	Pales.	Female	Beit Jala	47	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	1
5	Pales.	Male	Al Khader	56	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	3
6	Pales.	Female	Al Khader	52	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	3
7	Pales.	Male	Jab'a	73	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
8	Pales.	Male	Jab'a	47	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
9	Pales.	Male	Jab'a	45	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
10	Pales.	Male	Jab'a	21	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
11	Pales.	Female	Bethlehem	54	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	5
12	Pales.	Male	Al Walaja	54	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
13	Pales.	Male	Al Walaja	57	West Bank ID	In-depth	1

[72] Pales. = Palestinian

14	Pales.	Male	Al Walaja	62	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
15	Pales.	Female	Bethlehem	58	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
16	Pales.	Female	Bethlehem	62	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	2
17	Pales.	Female	Bethlehem	64	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	2
18	Pales.	Male	Al Walaja	57	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	3
19	Pales.	Female	Bir Ouna	28	Jerusalem ID	In-depth & go-along	2
20	Pales.	Male	Bir Ouna	30	Jerusalem ID	In-depth & go-along	2
21	Pales.	Male	Beit Jala	54	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	2
22	Pales.	Female	Jerusalem	54	Jerusalem ID	In-depth & go-along	3
23	Pales.	Male	Bethlehem	27	Jerusalem ID	In-depth & go-along	2
24	Pales.	Male	Nahaleen	46	West Bank ID	In-depth	1
25	Pales.	Male	Bethlehem	46	West Bank ID	In-depth & go-along	4
26	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	42	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	2
27	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	44	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	3
28	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	41	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	3

29	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	25	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
30	Jewish Israeli	Male	Har Gilo	46	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	3
31	Jewish Israeli	Male	Har Gilo	64	Israeli ID	In-depth	2
32	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	43	Israeli ID	In-depth & go-along	2
33	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	53	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
34	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	62	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
35	Jewish Israeli	Male	Har Gilo	55	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
36	Jewish Israeli	Female	Har Gilo	54	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
37	Jewish Israeli	Male	Jerusalem	52	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
38	Jewish Israeli	Female	Jerusalem	84	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
39	Jewish Israeli	Female	Jerusalem	71	Israeli ID	In-depth	1
40	New Zealand	Male	Bethlehem	63	Foreign passport	In-depth	1
41	NL[73]	Male	Bethlehem	57	Foreign passport	In-depth	1

[73] The Netherlands

Appendix 2

Topic list used during in-depth interviews

Background information (home town/city/settlement, age, profession, short family history)

Discuss route taken in daily life

- why travel/where to/how often
- route taken – which checkpoint used? Why? Has this changed? Why?

Discuss main checkpoints

- how does interviewee see them?
- how has this changed?

Interaction with barriers more in general – how did this develop through the years

- How? When? What do you do?
- Checkpoints
- Wall
- Settler highway
- Settlements
- Palestinian towns/Area A
- Other barriers?

Palestinian interviewee

Type of permit?

Interaction with soldiers/private security guards

Settler interviewee or Palestinian with Israeli/Jerusalem ID

Ever stopped at checkpoint?

Who gets stopped? Why?

Interaction soldiers/private security guards

Go-along interview

What route would we take?

Make an appointment

Appendix 3

Codes used in Atlas.ti

Code	Times used	Code	Times used	Code	Times used
(lack of) Knowledge environment	76	(lack of) Knowledge permit system and checkpoints	78	Activism/ Demonstrati on	8
Age checkpoint	13	Al Walaja	24	Al Walaja road	55
Arab towns	7	Arab vs Palestinian	8	Arab workers	21
Arbitrariness checkpoints	71	Arbitrariness occupation	39	Area A	29
Area C	37	Army base on Har Gilo	4	Banksy	4
Barriers	107	Behaviour soldiers checkpoint	112	Being ready for attack	20
Beit Jala	64	Bethlehem	13	Blacklisting	13
Border	26	Bus from 300 to Jerusalem	6	Busy traffic	26
Checkpoint	172	Checkpoint 300	191	Checkpoint al Walaja	14
Checkpoint Beit Sahour	8	Checkpoint closed	9	Checkpoint Container	8
Checkpoint Qalandiya	33	Checkpoint the Tunnels	74	Circle of Death	23

Confusion checkpoint	25	Construction Checkpoint 300	6	Costs transportation	7
Cutting in line at checkpoint	28	Data collection by Israel	8	Delay due to checkpoint	59
Dreams	2	Driving yellow plate	11	Effects checkpoints	35
Effects occupation	119	Effects Wall and settlements on Palestinians	46	Elor Azaria	1
Entering Israeli space	5	Entering Palestinian space	53	Entering settlement	17
Ethnic profiling	37	Fear/Lack of fear	274	Feelings about checkpoints	35
Feelings about Israel/Israelis	21	Feelings about settlement/ settlers	83	Feelings about the Wall	5
Feelings inside checkpoint	30	Feelings on the road	84	First Intifada	14
Following the rules	48	Food checkpoints	5	Freedom of movement	115
Frequency route taken	21	Future Israel-Palestine	54	Gender	60
General history	53	Going by car through checkpoint	38	Going to diner Beit Jala	6
Graffiti	1	Gutz Etsion	47	Har Gilo	19
Hebron	7	Hijab	10	History Har Gilo	44

Hole in the wall	20	House demolitions	7	How to behave in a checkpoint	59
How to recognize an Arab/ Jew	65	Humanitarian line	41	ID card	64
Illegally crossing	62	Illegally working	3	Incident	132
Interaction Arab-Jew	180	Interaction soldiers	107	International / Israeli presence checkpoints	22
Jerusalem	28	Lack of light	16	Landscape	33
Language	17	Language in checkpoint	28	Lawlessness due to occupation	18
Lights turnstiles checkpoint	5	Magnetic card	7	Materiality barriers	16
Materiality checkpoint	51	Materiality wall	11	Me: Confusion occupation	26
Me: Effect my presence has	4	Me: Entering Har Gilo	9	Me: Feelings Go-Along	31
Me: Feelings inside checkpoint	38	Me: Feelings interview	20	Me: Interaction soldiers/ Israelis	7

Me: Language interview	22	Me: My behaviour in checkpoint	18	Me: My feelings	99
Me: Time route	9	Me: Travelling around	26	Metal detectors	34
Military presence	63	Mixed space	6	Mixed versus non-mixed spaces	16
Mode of transport	34	Monkeys/ Spidermen	8	Mood soldiers	30
Muezzin	3	Muslim versus Christian Palestinians	33	New - old residents Har Gilo	7
Noise	10	Old exit Har Gilo	6	Only 7 minutes to Malha	2
Permits	105	Personal history	167	Personal info	40
Physical discomfort checkpoint	13	Picture taken Go-Along	4	Pictures checkpoint	8
Plastic windows	4	Private security at checkpoint	31	Problems with phones	8
Ramadan	45	Restrictions Palestinians	78	Road closures	27
Route chosen	91	Route taken during Go-Along	33	Sadness	19
Second Intifada	25	Security car	1	Security guards Har Gilo	13

Separation Israeli from Palestinian space	2	Settlements	9	Settler violence	7
Settlers	1	Shopping Beit Jala	7	Size West Bank	1
Sticker Har Gilo	7	Strategy how to deal with fear	63	Strategy how to deal with insecurity due to barriers	55
Strategy how to deal with occupation	55	Style of driving	18	The Tunnels	48
Third Intifada	57	Time Go-Along	20	Time route taken	40
Translator	29	Urgency checkpoint	8	Visa	3
Wall	83	Wall/No Wall Efrat	7	War on Gaza	1
Warning from security guards	5	What can(not) be seen	17	What you can hear but cannot see	5
Work in Israel	36	Work in settlement	16		

Summary

When the Israeli state occupied the Palestinian Territories (West Bank and the Gaza Strip) in 1967, it gradually put restrictions on Palestinian movement in place. At first, Palestinians could easily circumvent these, but in the last 50 years these restrictions have become an intricate multi-layered 'architecture of occupation' that includes the Wall, no-go military areas, fences, numerous illegal Jewish settlements and their related bypass roads, and an elaborate checkpoint system. This architecture of occupation fragments the border between Israeli and Palestinian territories into a multitude of ever-changing borders and contributes to a series of geographical practices aimed at controlling the daily lives of Palestinians. As a consequence, many Palestinians and Jewish settlers cannot avoid passing through an Israeli checkpoint on their way to work, school, family or their place of worship. Although the checkpoints are key sites where the impact of the architecture of occupation is felt on a daily basis, the experiences of Palestinians and Jewish settlers at these sites have been the focus of a relatively limited number of research projects. In this thesis, I aim to address this gap by analysing how checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories function as spatial political technologies that produce arbitrary, selective and mutable geographies of mobility.

In Chapter 1, I elaborate upon the context in which this research took place, introduce the research questions and reflect upon the intended academic contributions of this PhD project. In Chapter 2, I introduce my theoretical framework, which is largely informed by Michel Foucault's biopolitics and Giorgio Agamben's sovereign exception. Inspired by the work of Foucault, I frame checkpoints as political technologies, made up of specific practices and techniques aimed at organising the bodies subjected to them. This means that I focus on the interplay of human and non-human interactions, and on the daily experiences of the commuters subjected to them. Furthermore, following the insightful work of

Minca (2015a) and Katz, Martin and Minca (2018), I have added a spatial dimension by analysing checkpoints as *spatial* political technologies producing a set of selective, arbitrary and mutable geographies of mobility. The addition of Agamben's sovereign exception allows me to investigate randomness and arbitrariness not as an unintentional by-product of the checkpoints, but as inherent to their spatial regime and as an expression of the sovereign exception. As such, I analyse the workings of the sovereign exception and the coping mechanisms of Palestinian commuters as part of the same spatial regime of power.

Chapter 3 discusses the fieldwork that I conducted to collect the necessary data. I spent seven months in total collecting data in the Bethlehem area, in 2016, 2017 and 2019. During these periods, I conducted in-depth interviews, go-along interviews and made extensive observations. I interviewed 36 Palestinians and Jewish settlers – most of them twice, some more often. In addition, I observed Checkpoint 300 up to eight hours each week, usually from 4:00 to 8:00 am during rush hour. This combination of methods allowed me to connect what my interviewees told me during the interviews to my observations of their checkpoint passages and the workings of the checkpoints in general. Furthermore, in Chapter 3, I reflect upon the ethical issues related to my safety and that of the interviewees while collecting data in a militarised context, as well as my position as a researcher. This chapter concludes with a discussion of some of the limitations of this study.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide an analysis of Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem. In Chapter 4, I discuss the specific design of Checkpoint 300 as a terminal checkpoint, with a focus on the roles played by some of its numerous machines: the turnstiles, metal detectors, x-ray machines, and fingerprint- and iris-scanning devices. While the Israeli army introduced these machines to 'decrease the tension' inside Checkpoint 300, I describe how the checkpoint is still a place filled with tension. Moreover, I discuss the ways in which Palestinian commuters engage with the machines, reinforcing but also twisting some of their expected functions. In Chapter 5, I also

analyse Checkpoint 300, but with a focus on the use of biopolitical categories by the checkpoint managers and the Palestinian commuters, zooming in on 'gender', 'age' and 'ID card status'. In this chapter, I discuss how the checkpoint managers implement these categories. I indicate how these categories are tools that help create the conditions for the exercise of sovereign power – in which a checkpoint manager can decide 'on the spot' whether or not the rules and associated privileges of a certain category apply or are ignored. I, again, describe also how Palestinians adopt some of these categories and their associated privileges, while resisting others.

In Chapter 6, I analyse The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints. These are two car checkpoints in the Bethlehem area used by Palestinians with Jerusalem and Israeli ID cards and by Jewish settlers. These checkpoints bring together two opposed regimes of mobility: one aimed at providing smooth and fast checkpoint passages for Jewish settlers, the other aimed at stopping and checking Palestinians. These two aims can be simultaneously achieved because of the low-tech design of these checkpoints – there are almost no machines present. The soldiers employ several biopolitical categories when they decide which car to stop and which one to let pass unchallenged. In this chapter, I describe the use of two of these categories: 'Jewish versus Arab' and 'gender'. Similar to the use of these biopolitical categories in Checkpoint 300, these categories selectively limit Palestinian mobility, while Palestinian commuters incorporate part of the categories and their associated privileges, and redefine or resist others.

This thesis concludes with Chapter 7. In this chapter I discuss the two main conclusions. Firstly, checkpoints are spatial political technologies that produce arbitrary, mutable and selective regimes of mobility. Secondly, checkpoints should be seen as the outcome of the endless interplay between its managers, biopolitical categories, material devices and procedures of control, on the one hand, and the commuters, on the other. I arrive at these conclusions by addressing the three

main research questions of this project: 1) how biopolitical categories are implemented in governing mobile Palestinian bodies; 2) which roles the machines and spatial arrangement of the checkpoints play in the checkpoint passages of the commuters; and 3) how Palestinian commuters engage with, reproduce, but also redefine and/or resist the workings of the checkpoints. Moreover, in this chapter I discuss the academic implications of this thesis. I specifically address the ways in which this research can contribute to the existing debates concerning Israel/Palestine, checkpoints and walling in political geography, but also the impact it may have on the broader debates about walling, bordering practices and mobility in political geography, border studies, political science and critical international relations. I also discuss some of the limitations of this study and suggest possible ideas for future research. Finally, I conclude the thesis by returning to Checkpoint 300, which was relaunched as an even more ‘humane’ and ‘official border crossing’ in the period I was writing this thesis. I therefore end with a reflection on what this means with regards to the increased normalisation of the presence of checkpoints and the occupation of the Palestinian Territories in general.

Samenvatting

Sinds Israël de Palestijnse gebieden (de Westelijke Jordaanoever en de Gazastrook) bezette in 1967 voerde het geleidelijk restricties in op de bewegingsvrijheid van Palestijnen. Waar Palestijnen deze restricties eerst nog relatief makkelijk konden omzeilen zijn deze de afgelopen 50 jaar ontwikkeld tot een complexe 'architectuur van bezetting'. Onder deze architectuur vallen de Muur, verboden militaire gebieden, hekken, illegale joodse nederzettingen en hun wegen en een uitgebreid systeem van checkpoints. Deze architectuur van bezetting fragmenteert de grens tussen Israël en de Palestijnse gebieden in een mozaïek van steeds veranderende grenzen en is een van de tactieken van de Israëlische staat om het dagelijkse leven van Palestijnen te controleren. Een van consequenties hiervan is dat veel Palestijnen en Joodse kolonisten door een Israëlisch checkpoint heen moeten gaan op weg naar hun werk, school, familie of gebedshuizen. De ervaringen van Palestijnen en Joodse kolonisten met deze checkpoints zijn in relatief weinig wetenschappelijke studies onderzocht, ook al zijn deze checkpoints belangrijke plekken waar dagelijks de impact van de architectuur van bezetting gevoeld wordt. Als een reactie hierop analyseer ik in dit proefschrift checkpoints in de bezette Palestijnse Gebieden als 'spatial political technologies': technologieën die willekeurige, selectieve en veranderlijke geografieën van mobiliteit produceren.

In Hoofdstuk 1 beschrijf ik de context waarin het onderzoek heeft plaatsgevonden, introduceer ik de onderzoeksvragen en reflecteer ik op de beoogde academische toegevoegde waarde die dit proefschrift kan hebben. In Hoofdstuk 2 introduceer ik het theoretisch raamwerk dat ik heb gebruikt. Deze is grotendeels gebaseerd op Foucault's formulering van 'biopolitics' and Agamben's 'sovereign exception'. Geïnspireerd door het werk van Foucault analyseer ik checkpoints als 'political technologies': technologieën die bestaan uit specifieke praktijken en technieken gericht op het organiseren van bepaalde lichamen. Dit betekent dat ik mij

concentreer op het samenspel van menselijke en niet-menselijke interacties binnen de checkpoints, en de dagelijkse ervaringen van de forenzen die hieraan worden blootgesteld. Verder volg ik het werk van Minca (2015a) en Katz, Martin en Minca (2018), en heb ik een ruimtelijke dimensie toegevoegd aan de analyse van checkpoints as voornoemde '*spatial* political technologies'. Door de toevoeging van Agamben's 'sovereign exception' kon ik bovendien de willekeur en onvoorspelbaarheid in het checkpoint analyseren als een inherente eigenschap van het ruimtelijke regime en dus niet als een ongewenst bijproduct. Hierdoor kon ik de werking van de sovereign exception en de strategieën van de Palestijnen om de checkpoints zo soepel mogelijk door te komen analyseren als onderdeel van hetzelfde ruimtelijke machtsregime.

In Hoofdstuk 3 bespreek ik het veldwerk dat ik heb uitgevoerd om de nodige data te verzamelen. Ik heb in totaal 7 maanden doorgebracht in Bethlehem, in 2016, 2017 en 2019. Gedurende deze periodes heb ik diepte-interviews en go-along interviews afgenomen en uitgebreide observaties uitgevoerd. Ik heb 36 Palestijnen en Joodse kolonisten geïnterviewd – de meesten tweemaal, sommigen vaker. Daarnaast heb ik Checkpoint 300 wekelijks minimaal acht uur geobserveerd, meestal gedurende de drukste uren van 4:00 tot 8:00 in de ochtend. Deze combinatie van methodes zorgde ervoor dat ik wat mijn respondenten mij vertelden kon koppelen aan wat ik zag tijdens mijn observaties. Verder reflecteer ik in Hoofdstuk 3 op de ethische vraagstukken die naar boven komen bij onderzoek in een conflictgebied en de veiligheid van mijn respondenten en mijzelf. Dit hoofdstuk sluit ik af met een bespreking van beperkingen die gepaard gaan met dit type veldwerk.

Hoofdstukken 4 en 5 geven een analyse van Checkpoint 300 in Bethlehem. In Hoofdstuk 4 bespreek ik het specifieke ontwerp van het 'terminal checkpoint' Checkpoint 300, met een focus op de rol die de aanwezige machines spelen: de draaideuren, metaaldetectoren, röntgenapparaten en vingerafdruk- en

irisscanapparaten. Hoewel het Israëlische leger deze machines heeft geïntroduceerd om de spanning in Checkpoint 300 te verminderen, beschrijf ik hoe het checkpoint nog steeds een plaats is vol spanning. Bovendien bespreek ik de manieren waarop Palestijnse forenzen omgaan met de machines waardoor sommige van hun bedoelde functies worden versterkt, terwijl andere worden verdraaid. In Hoofdstuk 5 analyseer ik ook Checkpoint 300, maar met een focus op het gebruik van de biopolitieke categorieën 'gender', 'leeftijd' en 'ID-kaart status' door de checkpoint managers en de Palestijnse forenzen. In dit hoofdstuk bespreek ik hoe de checkpoint managers deze categorieën implementeren. Ik geef aan hoe deze categorieën hulpmiddelen zijn die helpen de voorwaarden te creëren voor de uitoefening van soevereine macht – waarin een checkpoint manager ter plaatse kan beslissen of de regels en bijbehorende privileges van een bepaalde categorie van toepassing zijn of worden genegeerd. Wederom beschrijf ik hoe Palestijnen hiermee omgaan; namelijk hoe zij zich in bepaalde gevallen de categorieën en de bijbehorende privileges eigen maken, en in andere gevallen zich hier juist tegen verzetten.

In Hoofdstuk 6 analyseer ik The Tunnels en Al Walaja checkpoints. Dit zijn twee autocheckpoints in het Bethlehem-gebied die worden gebruikt door Palestijnen met Jeruzalem en Israëlische ID-kaarten en door Joodse kolonisten. Deze checkpoints brengen twee tegenovergestelde regimes van mobiliteit bij elkaar: één gericht op de soepele en snelle doorgang van Joodse kolonisten, de andere gericht op het stoppen en controleren van Palestijnen. Deze twee regimes kunnen tegelijkertijd bestaan vanwege het low-tech ontwerp van de checkpoints – er zijn bijna geen machines aanwezig. De soldaten maken gebruik van verschillende biopolitieke categorieën wanneer ze beslissen welke auto's ze stoppen en welke ze door laten rijden. In dit hoofdstuk beschrijf ik het gebruik van twee van deze categorieën: 'Joods versus Arabisch' en 'gender'. Net als bij het gebruik van deze biopolitiek categorieën in Checkpoint 300, beperken deze categorieën selectief de mobiliteit van Palestijnse forenzen, terwijl deze zelf zich deze categorieën en de

bijbehorende privileges gedeeltelijk eigen maken, maar ook gedeeltelijk herdefiniëren of afwijzen.

Dit proefschrift wordt afgesloten met Hoofdstuk 7. In dit hoofdstuk bespreek ik de twee belangrijkste conclusies: dat checkpoints 'spatial political technologies' zijn die willekeurig, veranderlijk en selectieve regimes van mobiliteit produceren; en dat checkpoints moeten worden gezien als het resultaat van het eindeloze samenspel tussen de managers, de forenzen, biopolitieke categorieën, materiële apparaten en controleprocedures. Ik kom tot deze conclusies door de drie belangrijkste onderzoeksvragen van dit project te behandelen. Ten eerste hoe biopolitieke categorieën worden geïmplementeerd om mobiele Palestijnse lichamen te besturen; ten tweede welke rollen de machines en de ruimtelijke ordening van de checkpoints spelen in de ervaringen van de forenzen; en ten derde hoe Palestijnse forenzen omgaan met de checkpoints, hoe ze bepaalde biopolitieke categorieën reproduceren en andere opnieuw definiëren en/of zich daartegen verzetten. Ook bespreek ik in dit hoofdstuk de academische implicaties van dit proefschrift. Ik ga specifiek in op de manieren waarop dit onderzoek kan bijdragen aan de bestaande debatten over Israël/Palestina, checkpoints en 'walling', de toename van grensafscheidingen, in politieke geografie, maar ook de impact die het proefschrift kan hebben op de bredere debatten over 'walling', grenzen en mobiliteit in politieke geografie, grenzenstudies, politicologie en (kritische) internationale betrekkingen. Ter besluit van dit proefschrift keer ik terug naar Checkpoint 300. Terwijl ik dit proefschrift aan het schrijven was, werd dit checkpoint opnieuw gelanceerd als een nog 'humanere' en 'officiëlere grensovergang'. Ik eindig daarom met een reflectie op wat dit betekent met betrekking tot het verder normaliseren van de aanwezigheid van checkpoints en de bezetting van de Palestijnse gebieden in het algemeen.

Acknowledgements

Finishing this thesis has made me reflect on my PhD project and I would to take this opportunity to thank those who have been involved. It has been a great privilege to work on this PhD. I have wholeheartedly enjoyed being able to work on a research project that was so close to my heart with such great people around me. I experienced all the commonly referred to difficulties, such as struggling with the writing, insecurities and tiredness. I also experienced more specific difficulties associated with my topic and fieldwork, such as feelings of powerlessness, sadness, anger and cynicism. However, looking back at the last four-and-a-half-years and seeing the end result now, I would not have wanted to do it in any other way. Of course, this would have not been possible without the support of many people throughout the years.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my interviewees. Without your willingness to share your stories with me, this thesis would not have been possible! Thank you for allowing me into your lives and letting me join you on your commutes. Your openness was essential to this thesis and I am grateful that you trusted me to treat your stories and experiences with the necessary care and respect.

I could not have successfully finished this project without my supervision team. Claudio, you have not only been my promotor and supervisor, but also my mentor. You have been committed to me from the start and you continued to be so when you moved to Australia. Thank you for your support and for pushing me to think further and do better. You have always been in my corner, thinking along with me and supporting me in the choices I made. It has been a privilege to work with you. Hamzah, thank you for embarking on this journey with me. Your support, creativity and kindness helped me to feel more confident while drafting my research plans. While you were unable to see me finish this project because of your own new adventures in Singapore, this thesis would not have developed as it did without

your input. I am eternally grateful for that. Meghann, thank you so much for agreeing to step in and becoming my supervisor during the last stretch. Because of the nature of our relationship as colleagues and friends, you were the first person I thought of when I needed a new supervisor in Wageningen. Thank you for your friendship and for always being there for me.

Besides the supervisory team, I am eternally grateful to the GEO family. Eugenie, thank you for being there. We started out as roommates, but became close friends. While our academic interests may seem very different, we always found we had many things in common. Thank you for all the support, laughter, some tears and for being there for me when I was struggling. I am very happy you get to be my paranymph! Ana, Trista, Yulia, Karin, and again Meghann, thank you for your friendship, all the laughter and the many shared drinks and dinners. René, our GEO-father, thank you for always having an open door, thinking along me with and making me feel like I truly belonged to GEO. Martijn and Clemens, I really appreciated the many discussions we had and your willingness to help me whenever I was struggling with something. You both really made me feel that even though my supervisors where not always present in Wageningen, I always had a support system. Arjaan and Iulian, my original B301 roommates, and later Rodrigo, and of course Eugenie and Yulia, thank you for being great roommates! Our many shared tea and coffee-moments were very much appreciated! Iulian, thank you so much for visualising the checkpoints for me, your maps truly helped me to clarify my arguments. Christine, Claudia, Edward, Emmanuel, Femke, Ismail, Karolina, Maarten, Maurice, Nowella, Robbith, Roy, Said, Zul, thank you all for helping to create the wonderful GEO atmosphere! A special thanks to Keen, Carla, Stephan, Frank, Paul and Maria for all the administrative help! Jean, thank you for helping me stream my thoughts on paper, even though the timeframes I gave you were not always as generous as they should have been.

I also wish to thank the members of the Centre for Space, Place and Society, especially the steering committee I shared many meetings with and the PhD’s who participated in the events organised. Britt, this would have not been possible without you, thank you for the friendship offered! Furthermore, I would like to thank Joost Jongerden, Bram Jansen and Rob Fletcher for the support throughout the years. I would also like to thank my more distant ‘colleagues’, Yolanda Weima, Hanno Brankamp, Henk van Houtum and Mark Griffiths for the great academic conversations we shared. Let’s not stop having those! Alberto Arce, a special thanks to you, your support as my MSc thesis supervisor and lecturer during the master International Development Studies has been instrumental. You always supported my dreams of doing a PhD and told me to contact Claudio. This PhD would literally not have happened without you. Thank you again for everything.

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Besides my interviewees, there have been several people in Israel/Palestine who have been especially important to me. First and foremost, Jack and Mary. You gave me a home away from home and I will always see you as my family. Thank you for the great food, coffee and long evenings on the porch. Rania, my dear, thank you for your friendship! The times we shared eating, drinking and laughing helped me to relax and feel at home. Toine, thank you for introducing me to Bethlehem and always being up for a hike, a shared lunch and long academic discussions. Your passion is inspiring! Usama and Nayef, thank you both for helping me to open doors, getting to places safe and sound and always being up for a laugh. I would also like to thank all the EAPPI teams I have met throughout the years, thanks for letting me tag along on your checkpoint mornings! A special thanks to Esther and Elenore, my two favourite Swiss girls. We have shared some particularly tough mornings, but also wonderful hikes and dinners. I would also like to thank Oren

Yiftachel, Ariel Handel and Irus Braverman for the insightful conversations we had and your willingness to answer all my questions. Your knowledge of the architecture of occupation is inspiring. Renen, thank you so much for being there for me, for laughing, crying and being pissed off with me! My time in Israel/Palestine would not have been the same without you. I would also like to thank the women of Machsom Watch, especially Avital Toch, Hanna Barag and Ina Friedman, for telling me all your stories, letting me join you on your mornings at the checkpoints and helping me with anything I needed. Thanks! Dror Etkes, I would also like to thank you for meeting me and sharing all your knowledge on the Israeli settlements.

Luckily, there have also been plenty of times when I did not have to think of my PhD. This would not have been possible without my friends. Jolien, Jet, Nadine S. and Gerlinde, our friendship goes back to our first year in Wageningen in 2006 when we were ready to learn how to save the world! All these years later we are more critical and realistic, but still passionate, hopeful and dedicated. Our shared conversations over good food and drinks have been essential to me. Thank you for cheering me up when this was necessary and celebrating with me when this was appropriate. A special thanks also to Boukje, Anne and Nadine K. Although we have not lived on the same continent for large parts of our friendships, this never mattered. Thanks for the fun trips to Paris and Geneva, for your unwavering interest in my research and the inspiring passions you have in your lives. Merel, we met a little later in life when we shared experiences in the International Development master. Thank you for your friendship, the many shared cups of coffee and great talks!

A very special thanks to Lisa, my paranymph and my 'other significant other' in life. Your friendship has been very important for me during the PhD, but also before and it will certainly be after. What binds us is our shared passion for academia, music, good food and drinks, books, travelling and just hanging out. I had not

I would also like to thank my family and family-in-law for their support throughout the years. Mam and pap, thank you for your love, for raising me to be a strong and confident woman and for helping me when I struggled immensely after returning home from fieldwork. After you had travelled to Palestine and witnessed what I had witnessed, you understood my passion and kept supporting me. Let's keep building cathedrals. Mark and Gill, Marije, Erik, Samantha, Mar, Jos, Sam, Ethan, Eli, Christian, Julie and Kees, thank you all for all your love and support, before and during the PhD. I am proud to say that you are my family. Chadlia, Habib, Adel, Najia, Zaineb, Hamzah, Sara, Bilel, Meryam, oma, Eja, Sireen, Rowa en alle anderen, dankjewel voor alles! Jullie hebben mij met open armen ontvangen, zijn altijd in voor een geintje en staan klaar voor een knuffel wanneer deze nodig is. Ik ben ontzettend blij dat ik jullie mijn schoonfamilie mag noemen en nu ook officieel een Mahdaoui ben!

Zohair, my love. Thank you for your support in the past four-and-a-half-years. Thank you for encouraging me when I decided to embark on this journey, although it was not the easiest road to take. I feel lucky to have had the pleasure of marrying you twice! Thank you for always being there for me, for visiting me when I was away, for picking me up when this was necessary, for making me laugh when I felt like crying and for always providing me with a non-academic space to breathe. This thesis would truly not have been possible without you in my life.

To end, I wish for a peaceful future for Israel/Palestine. From my very first visit to Bethlehem, I have always wondered if there would be a time in the future when the Wall and its accompanying checkpoints would just be tourist attractions. Checkpoint 300 as a museum, inspired by 'Checkpoint Charlie' in Berlin. I could walk around with my family and explain that a long time ago I was there when this was still functional as a part of the architecture of occupation. I could explain that although now the inhabitants of this area were living peacefully, this was not always the case. At the time of writing, there is no indication that this peaceful

although now the inhabitants of this area were living peacefully, this was not always the case. At the time of writing, there is no indication that this peaceful future will happen. Fear and hate seem to have become increasingly important motivators and the violence and oppression inherent to the occupation is growing. As such, peace in Israel/Palestine and the museum ‘Checkpoint 300’ seems further away than ever, but I do wholeheartedly hope one day they will be more than just a dream.

About the author

Alexandra Rijke was born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. She received her BA degree in International Development Studies from Wageningen University and Research in 2010. As a part of this Bachelor's program she followed two minors at the Utrecht University, one focused on Islam Studies and one focused on Arabic language acquisition. In 2013 Alexandra received her Master's degree in Gender and Ethnicity from Utrecht University. To obtain this research master degree, she wrote her thesis about the experiences of 'mixed' couples – white non-Muslim women in a relationship with non-white Muslim men - in the Netherlands. In this thesis she focused on whether or not these couples experienced racism and the strategies they used to receive acceptance for their relationships.

In 2014 Alexandra received her second Master's degree in International Development Studies from Wageningen University and Research. She wrote a minor and major thesis as a part of this research master. For her minor thesis, she evaluated the impacts of a project that had aimed to further empower female university students in their stance against gender-based violence in Irbid, Jordan. For her major thesis, she analysed the 'Wall Museum' in Bethlehem, Palestine. She focused on what this project meant for the women who had participated in it, how it connected to 'sumud' - defined by Palestinians as steadfastness/resilience - and whether participating in the project had changed the relationship the women had with the Wall.

Alexandra started working on her PhD at the Cultural Geography group of Wageningen University and Research in 2015. During her PhD, Alexandra was involved in teaching, acted as the PhD representative of the Cultural Geography group in the steering committee of the Centre for Space, Place and Society (CSPS) and was one of the founding members and steering committee members of the Politics of Space and Place cluster.

List of publications

Publications from this thesis

Rijke, A. (under review). ‘Checkpoint Knowledge’: Navigating The Tunnels and Al Walaja checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. *Geopolitics.*

Rijke, A. & Minca, C. (2019). Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint Regimes as Spatial Political Technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. *Antipode, 51*(3), 968-988.

Rijke, A. & Minca, C. (2018). Checkpoint 300: Precarious checkpoint geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. *Political Geography*, 65: 35-45.

Non-peer reviewed publications

Minca, C. & Rijke, A. (2018). Walls, Walling and the Immunitarian Imperative. In: *Urban Walls: Political and Cultural Meanings of Vertical Structures and Surfaces,* Andrea Mubi Brighenti and Mattias Karrholm (eds), London/New York: Routledge. 79-93.

Minca, C. & Rijke, A. (2017). Walls! Walls! Walls! *Society & Space*.

Rijke, A. & Van Teeffelen, T. (2014). To exist is to resist: Sumud, Heroism, and the Everyday. *Jerusalem Quarterly* 59: 86-99.

Rijke, A. (2013). Book review Fallgirls: Gender and the framing of torture at Abu Ghraib, Ryan Ashley Caldwell, Ashgate, 217 pp, ISBN 978-1-4094-2969-2. *Women’s Studies International Forum* 38: 150-151.

Conference presentations

Session co-organized: *Camps, Checkpoints and Border Fortifications: Critical Geographies of Containment, (Im)Mobility and Security, I & II*

Co-organizers: Yolanda Weima (York University), Hanno Brankamp (University of Oxford).
American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Washington DC, USA. April 2019.
Title presentation: *Checkpoints as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.*

Seminar co-organized: *Rethinking the Biopolitical, Borders, Walls, Camps...*

Co-organizer: Claudio Minca (Macquarie University).
Wageningen University and Research, Wageningen, the Netherlands. December 2018.
Title presentation: *Rights/Rites of Passage, Checkpoint regimes as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.*

Paper presented: *The Decision: Sovereign Power and Spaces of Exception inside Israeli Car Checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.*

Royal Geographical Society-IBG Annual International Conference, Cardiff, UK. August 2018.

Paper presented: *Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint regimes as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.*

Association for Borderlands Studies World Conference, Vienna, Austria. July 2018

Paper presented: *Checkpoint 300: Precarious checkpoint geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.*

The Value of Life: Measurement, Stakes, Implications - Centre for Space, Place and Society, Wageningen University and Research, Wageningen, the Netherlands. June 2017

Paper presented: *Stepping Out of Line: the Experiences of Mixed Couples in the Netherlands.*

European Social Science History Conference, Vienna, Austria.
April 2014.

Paper presented: *Being out of line: Mixed relationships and their possibility of queering binaries.*

Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies Day, Maastricht, the Netherlands. April 2013.

Alexandra Maria Rijke

Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS)

Completed Training and Supervision Plan

Name of the learning activity	Department/Institute	Year	ECTS*
A) Project related competences			
PhD research proposal writing	WASS/GEO	2015-2016	6
Critical Ethnography Research	Gent University	2015	1.5
Critical Perspective on Social Theory	WASS	2015	3.5
B) General research related competences			
Introduction course	WASS	2015	1
PhD Workshop Carrousel	WGS	2016	0.3
Checkpoint 300: Precarious checkpoint geographies and Rights/Rites of Passage in the Occupied Palestinian Territories	CSPS	2017	1
CSPS & WSG Writing Retreat	WASS/WIMEK	2018	1
Scientific Writing Course	ESG	2018	1.8
Re-learning Public Space: an action research lab in Amsterdam	WASS/WIMEK	2018	2
'Inside Checkpoint 300: Checkpoint regimes as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories'	Association for Borderland Studies Conference	2018	1

'The Decision: Sovereign Power and Spaces of Exception inside Israeli Car Checkpoints in the Occupied Palestinian Territories'	Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference	2018	1
'Rights/Rites of Passage, Checkpoint regimes as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories'	Rethinking the Biopolitical: Borders, Walls, Camps.., WUR	2018	1
'Checkpoints as spatial political technologies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories'	Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting	2019	2
PhD project presentations annual Cultural Geography PhD Symposium	GEO	2015-2019	1
C) Career related competences/personal development			
Arabic Language Course	Volksuniversiteit	2016	5.5
Student supervision and teaching	ESG/GEO	2016-2019	4
Wageningen Geography Lectures	GEO	2015-2019	1
Landscape Conversations	GEO	2015-2019	1
Total			**35.6**

*One credit according to ECTS is on average equivalent to 28 hours of study load