

Title of Project: The Embroidered Object as a Living Archive for Palestinian Memory, Storytelling, and Possibility

Researcher's Names: Kristine Sheets, PhD; Souhaila Nassar

Location: Hodgkin-Keats Room, Hodgkin Building, Guy's Campus, King's College London

Dates/Times: Monday - Friday, 11/08/2025-15/08/2025 and Monday, 18/08/2025 from 2:00PM-4:30/5:00PM (updated 28/07/25)

Participation is free, but we please ask that you participate (anonymously) in focus group interviews after the sessions.

Invitation and Brief Summary:

This research explores how people of Palestinian heritage preserve their culture, share collective memory, and form identities while living outside Palestine. Simple, everyday habits or activities, like embroidering, create settings in which friends and family members can share cultural stories and knowledge with one another.

By understanding how this happens, we can see how people grieve memories of collective trauma, such as the 1948 al-Nakba, as well as the ongoing al-Naksa. At the same, it also teaches us how we build identities around these memories, process and heal from collective trauma, and develop a psychology of resilience across generations.

Purpose of the research:

The goal of this research is to answer the following questions:

1. How are Palestinian embroidery circles practiced in the diaspora, who participates in them, and what stories are shared in these settings?
2. What embroidery motifs are being associated with stories of family or collective memories, how are they preserved and/or reproduced in diaspora, and why?
3. How do the offspring of al-Nakba survivors use embroidery to understand their families' pasts?

Who are we looking for?

We are looking for the offspring of individuals who left Palestine to a host country during the 1948 al-Nakba. Ideally, we are looking for young adults (18-20 years old). You do not need to have any knowledge of tatreez, to be from or have been to Palestine, or to have any direct knowledge of your family or Palestinian history to participate.

What would taking part involve?

You will be asked to participate in a week-long embroidery workshop, taught by different Palestinian artists from around the world and conducted simultaneously with our sister workshop in Lebanon. Our goal is to teach you not only the basics of tatreez, but to inspire you in creating and embroidering your own motif.

Each day of the workshop includes a different theme, from the very basics to the complex patterns we see on Palestinian dresses and contemporary embroidered pieces. **These days will occur everyday from Monday to Friday, 11/08-15/08/2025, with a final meeting on Monday, 18/08/2025, to celebrate and showcase our work.** *You will not need to attend every day to participate fully in the program.*

Each session will include a short focus-group interview at the end, the data of which will contribute towards the aforementioned research project. Interviews will be audio and video recorded, upon your agreement.

What are the benefits of taking part?

Those who participate will be the first to trial a comprehensive and experimental hybrid (in-person and online) workshop that uses Palestinian embroidery as a cultural-specific form of community building, historical preservation, and mindfulness. Information gathered from this workshop will contribute towards the development of a curriculum, whether for Palestinian children or others, that uses embroidery to promote these values.

Additionally, they will have the opportunity to learn Palestinian embroidery from leading experts in the craft, while connecting with learners in our sister workshop in Lebanon. Ideally, you will create and take home your own embroidered textile.

Although no specific benefits may incur upon completing the interviews, the information and stories obtained will help spread awareness of Palestinian history. Those who participate decide which stories to share and which memories are preserved and contributed to the collective narrative of Palestine.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

The purpose of this research is to explore how Palestinian embroidery shapes how the offspring of al-Nakba survivors understand and work through the past. Because Palestinian history is marked by intergenerational trauma, it is possible for topics to arise that may cause emotional discomfort. This could include but are not limited to: memories of the Nakba, of war, or of expulsion from Palestine; memories of hardship during migration; negative experiences of racial/ethnic/religious discrimination while

living in diaspora; or any other negative experiences occurring within a family.

The likeliness of these topics arising in conversation depends on you, your experiences, and what you feel comfortable sharing. Please do not feel pressured to share anything that may trigger or discomfort you, as your wellbeing takes precedence in this study.

If you experience distress when recalling personal or familial trauma, the researcher will provide you with the option to end any interviews and/or participation in its entirety, as well as provide you with contact details for individuals and/or organizations who will provide support and care that are specific to your needs.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

If you no longer wish to participate, it is your right to cease involvement at any point and without reason. You may also request your information to be removed partially or in its entirety, so long as you do so at least six months before the publication of the research findings (exact date pending). If this occurs, you will be asked to sign a form that states your intention to end participation in the research process, with the option to erase any of the information obtained during interviewing.

How will my information be kept confidential?

We will process personal data for the purpose of carrying out research in the public interest. We endeavour to be as transparent about its processing of your personal data and this information sheet should provide a clear explanation of this.

Interviews and embroidery workshops that take place in person will be audio recorded. Interviews that occur on Zoom will be digitally recorded. All recordings will take place with participant knowledge and consent, transcribed onto a digital document, then uploaded to an encrypted file. Any recordings will be deleted once transcribed.

Unless requested otherwise, all participant names will be kept confidential and pseudonyms for names will be used within any and all publications. Personal information such as age and geographic location will remain, as this information is necessary in understanding how these different factors contribute to your unique experience.

Participants may choose to allow the researcher to keep possession of all transcribed audio recordings once the assignment is completed. This choice will be presented in the form of written consent.

Participants may choose to allow the researcher to keep contact details, through which the researcher may contact them upon project completion and provide them with a copy of the final, written project, as well as store their contact information for future research projects. This choice will be presented in the form of written consent.

What will happen to the results of this study?

All data and results of this study will be disseminated either through academic publications and/or conferences. The outcomes of this project will be available to participants upon completion and may be obtained by contacting the researcher.

There is an optional possibility to share your artwork as part of a touring installation with various venues around the United Kingdom. Upon completion of this tour, the artwork will be returned to you via post. More information on this part of the project will be shared during the workshop.

Further Information and Contact Details:

Please contact the researcher if you wish to take part in the study and/or require further information to proceed. You may contact them at the following details: **sheetskristine@gmail.com**. Thank you again for your interest in this project.