

# The Insult

# Outline

- Discussion Questions
- Background: Palestinian Refugees
- MEDIA
- Female Characters

# Discussion Questions: G 2

1. Is it ethical for Wajdi to force Tony to expose the tragedy of Damour Massacre? How do you **judge the lawyers** in the film?
2. What is the educational function of the lawsuit **to the two characters**?
3. Why don't **Yasser and Tony** apologize to each other? Is there anyone in your family never apologize?
4. **Transitional justice** happens in many other countries. How effective is transitional justice in resolving conflicts and comfort the victims?  
(Eg. Public apology for Holocaust)



## Discussion Questions (2)

1. What do we learn from this film about **Lebanese civil war** and its impacts?
2. Compare the different ways in which *Incendies* and *The Insult* present Lebanese civil war.
3. How do we read this story as **a fable** in which the court serves as a battle ground? In what ways does the city play a role?
4. What roles does **media** play in this film?
5. What roles do **women** play?

# Transitional justice

- Transitional justice consists of judicial and non-judicial measures implemented in order to redress legacies of human rights abuses. Such measures "include
  - criminal prosecutions, -- Who is punished? Perpetrators alone?
  - truth commissions, -- Truth & Reconciliation (via Apologies)? South Africa
  - reparations programs, -- Is closure of wounds possible? (comfort women, internment)
  - various kinds of institutional reforms" (source)
- In Taiwan: Ill-gotten Party Assets Settlement Committee & Transitional Justice Commission





# Ref. 德國如何面對歷史傷口 Vergangenheitsbewältigung\*

- e.g. Berlin's "Holocaust memorial"\*
- Topography of Terror
- Memorium Nuremberg Trials
- Walldorf - 1700 Jewish women forced to join the workforce in building Frankfurt airport; only 330 survived



Armistice Demarcation Lines of 1949 (**Green Line**):

--Blue, Grey and Red: Israeli controlled territory from 1949

-- Green & Pink: Egyptian and Jordanian controlled territory from 1948 until 1967 ([image source](#))

# Palestinian Identity: History

- ([Wikipedia](#)) \* **Israel was established in parts of Palestine in 1948**, and in the wake of the **1948 Arab-Israeli War**, the West Bank was ruled by Jordan, and the Gaza Strip by Egypt, with both countries continuing to administer these areas until Israel occupied them in **the Six-Day War (1967)**.
- Historian Avi Shlaim states that the Palestinians' lack of sovereignty over the land has been used by Israelis to deny Palestinians their rights [to self-determination].
- Today, the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination has been affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly, the International Court of Justice and several Israeli authorities.
- A total of 133 countries recognize Palestine as a state. However, Palestinian sovereignty over the areas claimed as part of the Palestinian state remains limited, and **the boundaries of the state remain a point of contestation between Palestinians and Israelis**.
- ...**Palestinians living in Lebanon** are deprived of basic civil rights. They cannot own homes or land, and are barred from becoming lawyers, engineers and doctors. (as of 2010)

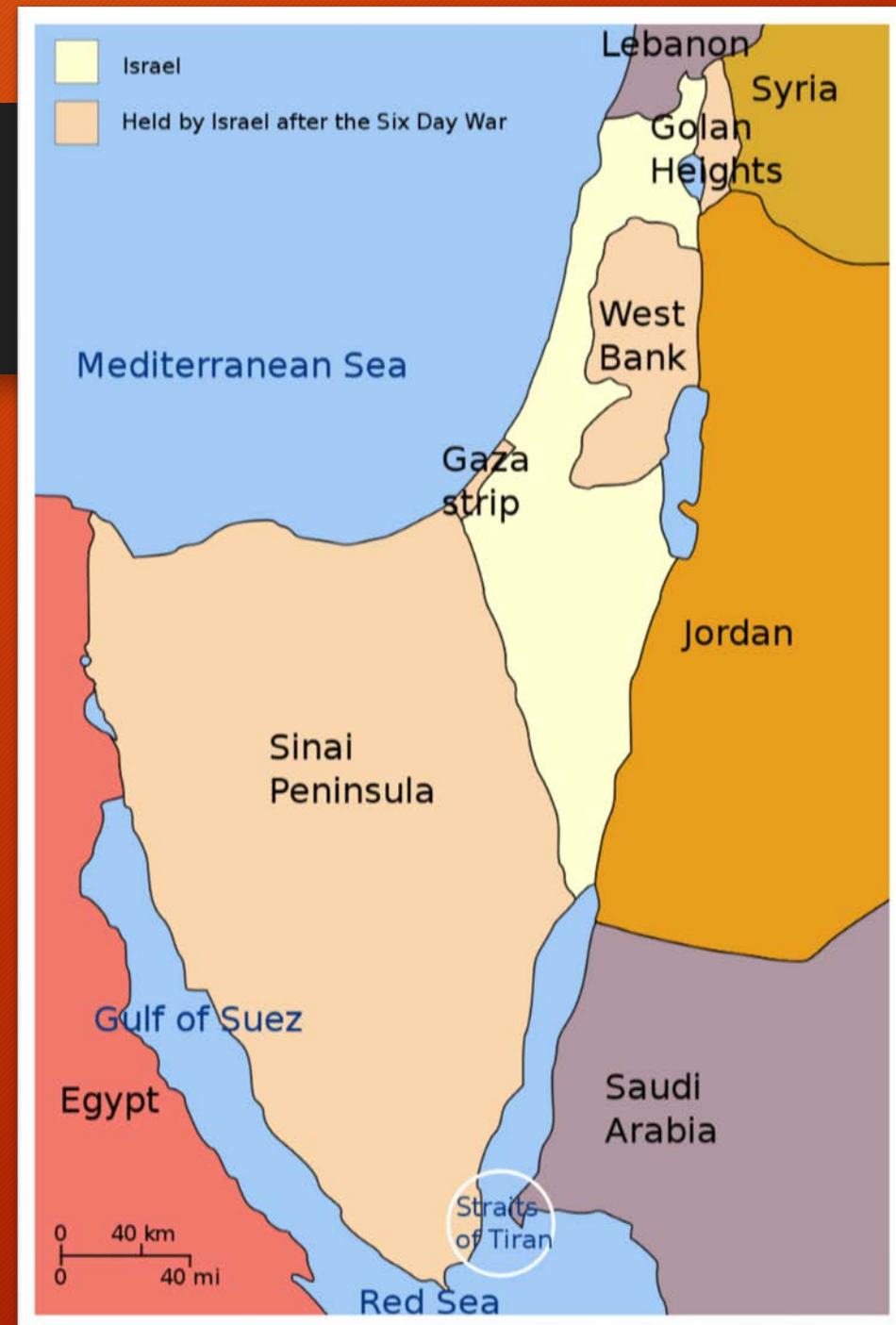




# Palestians: Where are they?

1. The war in 1948 resulted in the disappearance of 350 villages, whose 725,000 occupants became refugees. These refugees traveled to neighboring countries, such as Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq (in the Diaspora). 500,000 internally displaced Palestinians were moved to refugee camps in what is now the West Bank (then part of Transjordan), and about 200,000 were relocated to the Gaza Strip. Only 160,000 Palestinians stayed in Israel.
2. The war in 1967 produced another wave of 355,000 refugees, who moved mainly from the West Bank to Jordan (source)
3. Black September 1971  
→ Lebanon

Israel and the territories  
Israel occupied in the Six  
day war (source)



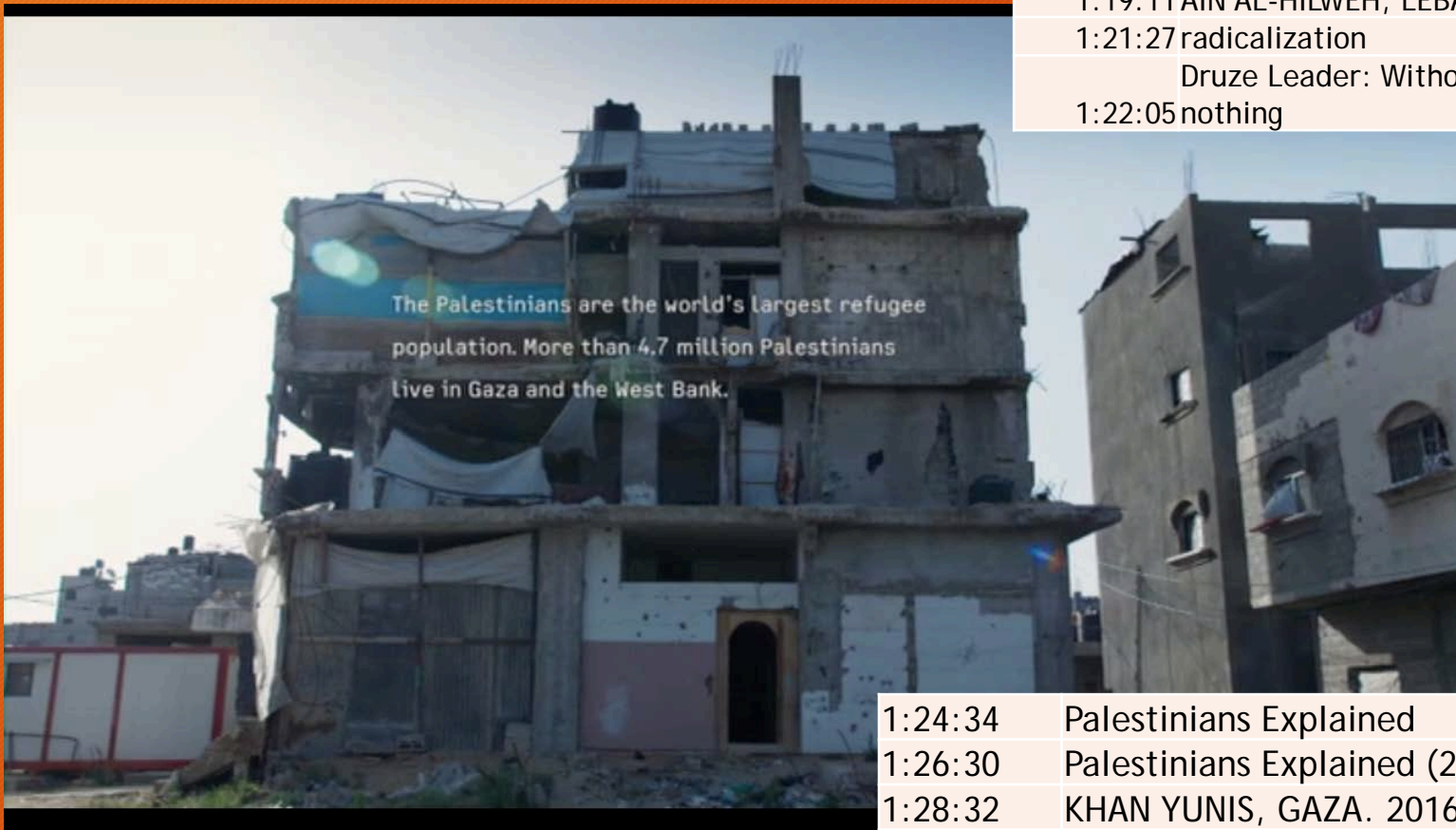


# Palestinians, Refugee Camp, Check Points & "Laissez Passer"



After the war in 1967, Jerusalem was reunited and the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem became part of Israel. As a result of the unresolved status of Jerusalem, though, Palestinian residents have no official nationality. They all have **Jerusalem residency cards**, which are distributed by Israel and totally conditional. They also have a special traveling document called the **laissez-passer**, which restricts their movement.

# Human Flow (2017) by Ai Weiwei



1:18:37 BEIRUT, LEBANON. 2016/04/07

1:19:11 AIN AL-HILWEH, LEBANON. 2016/04/09

1:21:27 radicalization

Druze Leader: Without memory, you are

1:22:05 nothing

1:24:34 Palestinians Explained

1:26:30 Palestinians Explained (2): check points

1:28:32 KHAN YUNIS, GAZA. 2016/05/11

1:28:52 Gaza could be, could be on Mars

1:29:30 KHAN YUNIS, GAZA. 2016/05/23





# *The Insult*



# *The Insult: The Two Protagonists*

**Yasser Abdallah Salameh**, born June 16, 1955 in Palestine

- *American University of Cairo.*
- Master's degree in civil engineering.
- Worked for Bechtel in Kuwait and in Dubai.
- (1971 age 16 Black September in Jordan 1:00)
- Moved to Beirut in 1982 (age 27).
- A foreman





# The Insult: The Two Protagonists



Tony George Hanna, Lebanese born  
October 7, 1970

- Damour massacre 1976; age 6

## •Civil War First phase 1975–1977

Bus massacre

- Hotels

- Black Saturday

- Karantina

- Damour

- Tel al-Zaatar

# Seven Court Scenes

- Court ❶: evidence inconclusive
- Court ❷: medical history and work history —>(Defense) his professionalism
- Court ❸: Verbal Insult (“Offensive”) and Insult by Action —> (Plaintiff) Which humiliation is this? The one in 1948? 1956? The Six-Day War? ...
- Court ❹: Jordan Case and the Insult → (Defense) Black Sept, “in extreme distress”
- Court ❺: (Plaintiff) The Private Verbal Insult—a wish; you are the aggressor; the key is “Sharon”
- Court ❻: (Plaintiff) Tony’s Past in distress
- Court ❼ 1) It’s natural to react; it’s human → (Plaintiff) Apology needed





# Media: Inflammation, Discussion





# Men's Verbal Violence

Tony:

- Tomorrow we get into an argument,
- I beat the shit out of you,
- I smash your brain,
- but it's OK since I hate myself?

- Wadji: nature? Are we debating nature here?
- I shoot you with a gun,
- I open your chest,
- I smash your brain on the sidewalk,
- I stab Marcelino Zamata\* six times,
- but my nature is good.





# *The Insult: Women*

*(also the judge and lawyer Nadine, too)*

## Shirine Hanna

- views about *Bachir Gemayel's photos*
- *wants to go to Damour*
- *"You insulted the police ...*
- *"But we're stuck,*
- *and you don't want to change."*
- After the first court: *"People who get humiliated end up hating themselves."*
- **About Wadji:** "A famous lawyer, who defended the party's leader,
- decides to take on a trifling case? For free?"

## Manal Salameh

- Wants to move to Norway
- About the conflict: Which came first: the gutter or the prick?
- Wants Yasser to apologize: Show some appreciation. ... *The world's not plotting against you.* ... You insulted a man. Now fix it.
- After the 1<sup>st</sup> trial: No, he understood it was about more than a gutter.

Timecode	Note		
0:01:38	Phalangist assembly	0:44:07	Yasser\s background (1)
0:06:21	conflict (1)	0:44:45	Court (2)
0:08:42	persuading Yasser	0:47:46	Yasser against violating wife's privacy
0:09:08	apology (1)	0:47:57	Court (2)
0:13:43	Wife's persuasion	0:53:36	Court (3) Media 54:54; 55:56
0:15:04	Tony's insult	0:56:50	husband-wife argument
0:18:23	police	0:57:42	Media
0:20:10	Tony\s Wife about Pregnancy	1:00:15	Court (4) the Jordan case
0:22:15	court Court	1:06:25	Court (5): The Verbal Insult
0:25:57	asked about the verbal violence	1:10:23	media
0:26:42	He said things	1:11:04	Tony's response
0:29:30	Tony weeping (1)	1:11:47	Tony under threat
0:30:03	Yasser's repsonse	1:15:33	President
0:30:18	Tony's wife	1:18:39	fixing his car
0:36:18	Lawyer (1)	1:20:28	TV interview
0:39:11	trendy to defend the Palestinians	1:23:13	court (6): revelation
0:40:01	Lawyer (2)	1:24:55	Damour
0:40:59	Lawyer (2)'s interpretation	1:33:40	apology
0:41:02	lawyer (2)	1:36:01	back to Damour
0:41:30	central reason	1:38:29	Media
0:42:14	refugee camp	1:38:58	The Verdict
0:42:37	husband/wife in the hospital		
0:43:04	apology (2)		