

## **“I repeatedly tell you, the future is yours—the righteous, not the liars”: Hope in Saleh Diab’s political speeches in East Jerusalem**

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### ABSTRACT

The article examines hope as employed in short political speeches given by a Palestinian resident and activist, Mr. Saleh Diab, to a small audience of Jewish-Israelis, during the weekly Sheikh Jarrah protest in East Jerusalem. Informed by linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics, hope is viewed contextually as a resource or affordance that enables indexical connection-projection from the narrative time of the present to a future that is yet unforeseeable (yet-to-become, Derrida 1990/1992). The analysis of future-facing utterances highlights the indexical semiotics that underlie hope, connecting collaborative political action performed here-and-now in the occupied Palestinian neighborhood to its future ramifications. Examining Saleh’s employment of hope points at its essential moral and affective entanglement. The article seeks to contribute to a sociolinguistic understanding of hope, as collaboratively and consistently sustained (specifically within the Israeli-Palestinian context), and more broadly to supply a clearer view of the sociolinguistics of grassroot political activism resisting oppressive regimes. (Narrative, time, indexicality, Israel-Palestine, Sheikh Jarrah, protest, demonstration, political discourse)<sup>1</sup>

### INTRODUCTION

It is safe to postulate an intrinsic relation between the notions of hope and time. This much is intuitive, and confirmed by the Oxford English Dictionary online, which defines hope as an ‘expectation and desire for a certain thing to happen’, with synonyms such as expect, wish, anticipate, and look for. In his seminal overview of the concept of hope, Crapanzano (2003) argues that these relations clearly emerge as forged by religious concepts, rituals, and ways of life (mostly Christian prayer and ensuing temporality). In religious practice such as prayer, temporality is presupposed (2003:11). ‘Hope’, Crapanzano (2003:9) writes, ‘shares the same direction as expectation—toward the future-present. It penetrates further into the future than expectation (*attente*). It is more ample, more full of promise’.



Yet the time-hope entanglement is never plain nor linear (Antelius 2007; Silva & Lee 2021). This is, in part, because the aforementioned ‘expectation or desire’ would not arise within the natural and untroubled passing of time. In other words, if what happens or will happen is NORMATIVELY EXPECTED to have happened as part of the ‘natural’ course of events, then hope is usually not employed or articulated. Instead, hope enters discourse as a sociolinguistic resource and politicolinguistic affordance that serves to cope with trouble; hope therefore MARKS TROUBLE. In narrative terminology, hope concerns a ‘complication’ in the course of events (Labov & Waletzky 1967/1997), one that is either experienced or expected.

Humans endure all kinds of trouble, big and small, specific and all-encompassing. In narratology, trouble is what upsets the equilibrium and sets the narrative in motion (Propp 1968). More accurately, it sets narration in motion. In Labov & Waletzky’s (1967/1997) classic work, ‘complicating acts’ supply narrative trouble that comprise the plot: indeed, the very elements that qualify the discourse as narrative. At other times, however, trouble is of a colossal quality, to the point of challenging the very possibility of grasping individual or collective eventful time-flow, UNDERMINING THE VERY NOTION OF NARRATABILITY. In Lear’s (2006) book *Radical Hope*, trouble is of a magnitude that involves complete and permanent material and cultural devastation. A *Fait Accompli*. The book interrogates hope in the context of the genocide of Native Americans, and as the author stresses, the question of genocide is most poignantly manifest in the ‘REAL LOSS OF A POINT OF VIEW’ (2006:13, original emphasis here and hereafter). By this Lear contends that the loss of a way of life is a loss of the symbolic and pragmatic means of coping (or the ability to cope) with hyperdramatic change. He observes that the members of the Native American Crow tribe, which he studies, ‘have lost the concepts with which they would construct a narrative’ (2006:31).

Lear’s anthropological conceptualization of radical hope is tied to radical devastation on a sweeping scale. ‘Radical hope’, Lear (2006:105) writes, ‘anticipates a good for which those who have the hope as yet lack the appropriate concepts with which to understand it’. In other words, hope is radical not because it is profoundly huge or extremely optimistic, or because it follows a calamity. It is radical rather because those holding on to it, as did Plenty Coups, the last chief of the Crow Nation, have no means (‘concepts’)—narrative, cognitive, affective—to estimate what the future, into which hope is projected in the form of action, will be like. To clarify, the issue is not about un-knowing the future, but about a devastation of a quality that disables ways to make sense of the question of what the future could be like. It is a collective disruption and severance, that from the narrational vantage point of the present, cannot be amended or healed. Or, as described earlier, it is not an element that enriches or even complicates narratability, but one that undermines it.

Such an overwhelming break—as the historical limbo in which members of the Crow Nation found themselves—calls to mind Jacques Derrida’s (1990/1992) treatise on ‘Force of Law’, subtitled ‘the mystical foundation of authority’. Derrida

examines sweeping and transformative political change. He is occupied not so much with change itself but with questions of authority and narrative (future), as reflected in the duration that lies *AHEAD* of the change. That is, in the duration that stretches between ‘a future that has no place as of yet’ and the time at which it ‘can acquire one’ (1990/1992:36). At stake for Derrida is law, violence, and that intermediate time-event zone, where a large social, political, and legal transformation is about to be taking place, which will then alter, retroactively, the legal, moral, and social standing of the time-event of the present. Derrida explains:

The supposed subject ... [will stand] before a law not yet determined, before the law as before a law not yet existing, a law yet to come, *encore devant et devant venir* ... Every ‘subject’ is caught up in this aporetic structure in advance. Only the yet-to-come (*avenir*) will produce intelligibility or interpretability of this law. (1990/1992:36)

Note the concluding sentence:<sup>1</sup> If it is only the yet-to-come that will be intelligible or narratable, how then will the void between the now and the then be filled? This void is filled *INDEXICALLY*, which is why Derrida does not simply write ‘only the future will produce intelligibility or interpretability’, but the ‘yet-to-come (*avenir*)’. This formulation suggests that the ‘yet-to-come’ is not severed from the present, but that it is hoped and anticipated for, and in effect *PREPARED FOR AT THE PRESENT*. Like ripples that travel from the epicenter through space and time, something is occurring now, which threads or casts into what may (be)coming, hence, indexicality. As a philosophical and analytical concept, radical hope then comes into the picture as seeking to unstable and negotiate—radically and fundamentally, Derrida would argue—the horizon of action and interpretability as pursued at the present. I add that this view is supported by a long line of anthropological studies of ritual, which highlight an indexical view of the performative meanings and effects of the future-facing actions that participants undertake during rituals (Engler 2009; Robbins 2001).

By referring to indexicality, this study relies on Silverstein’s (1976, 2003) expansion of the Peircean view concerning the physical connection between signifiers and signified. According to Silverstein, all communication may carry indexical significance, thus constituting (‘creating’) reality or reflecting it (‘presupposing’) in various degrees (Noy 2009, 2023:346). In other words, using, for instance, ‘this’ rather than ‘that’ to establish proximity may be viewed as reflecting presupposed physical distance, or may alternatively be viewed as informed by sociocultural dimensions of spatial relations, which may be performative. Likewise, accent or dialect may and often do perform meaning indexically. In short, according to this view indexicality underlies performativity.

Hope is pursued in this way in the political weekly speeches I study, which are given by Mr. Saleh Diab during the Sheikh Jarrah protest in East Jerusalem (I elaborate on this below). While taking place as a form of activism at the present, the speeches help shape the future, the ‘yet-to-come (*avenir*)’, as intelligible, even if it is presently hardly imaginable. Physically, the speeches and the

protest have always taken place in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood, which, even without it being signaled explicitly (via lexical and/or deictic reference), is crucial for an indexical establishing of the protest's 'meaning effects' (Blommaert 2014).

I note that the necessary reverse-side of the coin of 'yet-to-come' concerns that which has already occurred—such as the genocide of the Native Americans that Lear (2006) studies. It concerns not the yet-to-come, but the colossal event in the wake of which the present itself may or may not be narratable (recall Adorno's 1949/1967 dictum: to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric). This complements the Derridean notion of *avenir* by taking a HINDSIGHT perspective. Put differently, it concerns the events in the wake of which the present may or may not be narratable—the 'has-already-come' force of law which, to paraphrase Derrida, is the structure in which 'every subject is caught up'. In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the event is the Palestinian Nakba (Arabic for 'catastrophe', 1948), the horizon of which is all-encompassing (Khalidi 2021). And certainly, on the ground in Sheikh Jarrah everything and anything is traced back, indexically, to the 1948 Nakba.

To briefly conclude, the current question concerns how hope is employed in a context of severed and troubled temporalities, and to what function. This is a question about hope occupying the in-between narrative space between what has already transpired, and the future which is yet to be determined: What kind of intelligibility and narratability can hope support or afford, and what kind of future it may help shape at the moment of the present? All this, as hope is employed in short political speeches given by Saleh, a Palestinian resident and activist, to a small audience of Jewish-Israelis, during the weekly Sheikh Jarrah protest in East Jerusalem.

#### HOPE AND ACTIVIST DISCOURSE

Borba's (2019) work on the geopolitics of hate and hope in the context of Brazilian politics is productive for approaching the practicalities of hope sociolinguistically, as he seeks to capture the 'semiosis of ACTS OF HOPE' (2019:167). Following Miyazaki (2006), Borba suggests that hope concerns both a radical reorientation of knowledge AND action. Hopeful 'semiotic acts', he argues, 'disrupt established oppressive orders by creating a sense of possibility, of a reconfigured present and of a future that has no place as of yet, but can acquire one' (2019:167). Here as well hope is tangled in future-oriented temporality and potentiality, as an accomplishment achieved within specific contexts and settings, often limited in scope ('situated emergence').

As vital as it is, however, the concept of hope has eluded research, in part because it is not often explicitly evoked as an emic term (Crapanzano 2003; Borba 2019). Such is the case in relation to the activists I study (but see Avni 2006). Consider, for instance, Shulman's book *Dark Hope* (Shulman 2007), where the word 'hope' appears nowhere but in the title and in a concluding remark. A veteran activist, Shulman describes what keeps him engaged in bleak

struggles: ‘we have each other, determination, and some dogged convictions about what it means to be human’, to which he adds ‘that, and certain dark hope’ (2007:212). It might be that there is indeed very little hope to work with (more on this below), but it may also be that in activists’ discourse, ‘hope’ may take on romantic and superfluous meanings, which run against the practical, action-oriented register of choice. Shulman writes of the peace dialogue sessions in which he participated, which were ‘insufficient’, and where he was ‘tired of the endless words. I wanted to do something more tangible’ (2007:7). This is not an idiosyncratic oddity, but as Katriel (2020) shows in her study of grassroots activism discourse in Israel, IT IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF ACTIVIST DISCOURSE.<sup>2</sup> This in part explains why hope is ‘ignored’ (Crapanzano 2003:5).

Katriel (2020) convincingly argues that there exists a structural tension in the discourse of peace activism in Israel, between more and less symbolic forms of protest. Simply put, between the use of words and speech versus ‘direct embodied action’. For Ta’ayush (Hebrew for ‘coexistence’) activists, such as those behind the protest analyzed in this article, the focus is less on symbolic dimensions, while for other public political struggles and forms of struggle that oppose oppression and tyranny, such as demonstrations, symbolic aspects may be central (the ‘emergence of signs’, Werbner, Webb, & Spellman-Poots 2014). For many involved in grassroots political struggle, Katriel (2020:8) observes, ‘speech does not entail the corporeal sanctions that grounded action may risk, is less of a sacrifice, and carries less weight’. Here is a question not only of discourse but also of meta-discourse and activists’ language ideologies. And while this is true of Jewish-Israeli activists, for Palestinians inside or outside of Israel—Israeli citizens, residents, or aliens—the corporeal risk that speech may entail can likely be very harsh.

The Shiekh Jarrah protest I study also evinces these tensions. On the one hand, it is an enduring ‘on-the-ground’ collaboration of Palestinian and Israeli activists in resisting oppression and occupation; on the other hand, the acts we engage in, and centrally Saleh’s speeches, are precisely that—rhetorical forms of talk, which are arguably the most symbolic of dimension of human action. If Katriel (2020:8) offers that ‘[t]alking in this context is thus both a vehicle and an emblem of the renunciation of violence’, then in Sheikh Jarrah, talking embodies the COLLABORATIVE efforts of calling out and resisting injustice. Yet note that unlike the present research, Katriel’s (2020) observation focuses on discourse within/between Hebrew-speaking Jewish-Israeli grassroots activists, and her work explores mediated forms of defiance/resistance (textual declarations and cinematic documentaries), while Saleh is not Israeli or Jewish, not a native Hebrew speaker, and the speeches are delivered in a context of face-to-face interaction.

Hope, then, is not only associated with action, but performatively IS ACTION. Hopeful narratives are not merely formal genres, but modes and outcomes of situated social (inter)action. As such, hope serves as a resource, an ‘on-the-ground’ affordance for political activism that enables the preparation in the present, through sociopolitical action, for a yet-unimagined better future, an affordance for

managing traumatic cessation in collective narration. Recall that one of the central concepts of Palestinian resistance is that of *sumud* ('steadfast perseverance'), which originates with the root *s,m,d*, literally meaning 'tightly connected/fastened'. Hence the essential idea of connection to a place, which the Sheikh Jarrah protest reaffirms materially on weekly basis, too, is indexical (albeit different orders of indexicality). Below I turn to introduce Saleh and the Sheikh Jarrah protest, after which I examine two types of articulations of hope and how they are oriented towards present and future narrations.

#### SHEIKH JARRAH PROTEST CHRONICLES

The Sheikh Jarrah protest (SJP henceforth) commenced in 2009 as a recurring weekly demonstration, seeking to resist the accelerated process of removal of Palestinian families from their homes in the East Jerusalem neighborhood. Sheikh Jarrah, together with the rest of East Jerusalem and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, were overtaken by Israel in the 1967 war. East Jerusalem was then formally annexed to Israel, and its 90,000 Palestinian residents were given residency (not citizenship). Fueled by heavily funded, State backed, right-wing settler NGOs, the process of Palestinian house evictions is part of the 'Judaization' of East Jerusalem, entailing the symbolic, material, and demographic displacement and dispossession of Palestinian presence in East Jerusalem (Reiter & Lehrs 2010; Shlay & Rosen 2010; Suleiman 2011, 2017:116–18; Hammami 2012; Noy 2012a,b; Herbergs & Noy 2013:237, 2015; Katriel & Gutman 2015). This is, in itself, part of a larger agenda, which is 'framed by Western-based colonial law' in order to 'facilitate the seizure of territory, privatization of communal land, dispossession of indigenous people, and population transfer' (Zureik 2016:6).

The demonstration was initiated by two activist NGOs: the Israeli Ta'ayush and the local 'Sheikh Jarrah Solidarity' branch of the International Solidarity Movement. Both NGOs addressed, local, regional, and global political and ideological changes of the 1990s and early 2000s. Locally, at stake was the demise of the Oslo Peace Accords (1995) and the disenchantment with the Two State Solution to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (and for that matter with any other viable and non-violent solution to the Conflict). This impasse was a historical blow to Israeli Peace movements (Hermann 2009). Thus viewed, the SJP emerged as part of a post-Oslo/post-Second Intifada wave of peace activism (which coincided with the election of the conservative-populist Netanyahu to the Prime Ministry in 2009; Shulman 2007; Hallward 2011), which may be seen as harboring a POST-HOPE HORIZON.<sup>3</sup> As Katriel (2021:16) concludes, the Israeli anti-occupation movement 'has failed to meet its goal of ending the occupation, which has become more deeply entrenched within mainstream Israeli society over the past two decades'. Peace activists' experience is 'endlessly discouraging' (Katriel 2021:182), or as Shulman (2007, 2018) laments, the Israeli colonial 'octopus seems inexhaustible' (Shulman 2007:114).

Globally, these activist groups reacted to the spread of neoliberal ideologies, and relatedly nationalist conservatism and populist non-democratic regimes. The rise of Netanyahu to the position of Prime Minister at that time, and his exceedingly long term as Prime Minister, supplies a clear example (Benski & Langman 2013). In the words of Crapanzano (2003:5), they oppose contemporary ‘passivism’, which results from ‘today’s aggressive individualism or ... consumerism that cultivates an instant gratification’. For Crapanzano, the current times are ‘at odds with the waiting time of hope’ (2003:5). Savski (2020:380), too, reflects bleakly on global consumerism and neoliberal ideologies, observing that the ‘space for articulating alternative conceptualizations of social organization has been squeezed to the extent that viable alternatives to neoliberal capitalism can now be ‘impossible even to imagine’ (Fisher 2010:2)’.<sup>4</sup>

These activists’ foci were not on promoting political ideology along parliamentary party lines, but on GRASSROOT COLLABORATION with and practical ‘on-the-ground’ support to Palestinian families and small communities enduring decades of regimes of occupation and dispossession. Sometime after the demonstration began, the International Solidarity Movement withdrew, and since then, Ta’ayush activists have been coordinating it, constantly collaborating with a few Sheikh Jarrah activists.

It is worth emphasizing that Israeli-Palestinian collaboration is infrequent, even within the shrinking Israeli left, and with the escalation of the occupation has become rare (even prior to the onset of the Israel-Hamas war). In this light, the unprecedented duration of the SJP (2009–2024) is remarkable. Participants in this and other Israeli-Palestinian collaborations are harshly critiqued and penalized by both the central Israeli regime (much more so Palestinians than Jews) and by individuals and institutions in their respected societies. Jewish-Israeli protestors, who are participating in the SJP, view resisting Israeli occupation and oppression as a civic responsibility. At the same time, they must also address the fact that they are part of the oppressive majority, and their positionalities as activists build on their privileged positionality as Jewish-Israeli citizens. To further complicate the picture, from a Palestinian perspective, cooperation and collaboration with Jewish Israelis, for whatever cause, can be viewed as highly problematic.

Initially, between 2009 and 2013, the demonstration included about a hundred protestors, with much fanfare (Rhythms of Resistance bands), and wide local and global media coverage. As time passed, however, the demonstration turned smaller and quieter. Since around 2013, participation has usually not exceeded two dozen protestors, with considerably less interest on behalf of local and international media. Around 2017–2019, the protestors were mainly Hebrew-speaking Jewish-Israelis in the age range of fifty to seventy-five, who attend the demonstration consistently (‘regulars’). Most are secular, Ashkenazi (of Eastern European descent), middle-class, and highly educated urbanites (which is typical of Jewish-Israeli peace activists, myself included; see Hermann 2009:248). During the hour-long demonstration, protestors hold placards written in English, Arabic, and/or

Hebrew, showing political slogans such as ‘Free Sheikh Jarrah’ and ‘Sheikh Jarrah is Palestine’. A larger banner, held by two demonstrators, is trilingual and reads: ‘No for Occupation’, in English, Arabic, and Hebrew.

### *Saleh’s speeches*

By the time attendance begun decreasing (around 2013), one of the neighborhood’s residents, Mr. Saleh Diab, was already giving brief updates at the end of the weekly demonstration. Saleh is in his fifties, a devoted Muslim who was born in the neighborhood, where he and his family have been living since. The talks he gives are in Hebrew, which is crucial as most participants (as most Jewish-Israelis) do not speak Arabic. Generally, while Arabic was legally one of Israel’s official languages, as Suleiman (2017:126) notes, ‘politically and socially speaking, the status of Arabic has been undermined in Israel in many ways’. However, since the passing of the Nation State Law in 2018, Arabic’s status has been demoted to language with special status. The condition is worse in East Jerusalem, whose Palestinians are not Israeli citizens and are not studying under the State’s (Hebrew-centered) educational school system (Cohen 2010). Nonetheless, Saleh is multilingual, having successfully acquired Hebrew (and some English) while working for years in grocery stores in West/Israeli Jerusalem. His multilingualism supplies a crucial sociolinguistic and political-linguistic resource for communication with (his) Hebrew-speaking (and sometimes English-speaking) audiences, which transcend national, cultural, socioeconomic, religious, and other differences.

It is interesting (though difficult) to recall why and when Saleh’s speeches emerged, and how they took the special shape and function they presently possess. The process seems to have occurred spontaneously, as some of the general enthusiasm and participation dwindled, and there was a sense that something is lacking (cf. Benski 2005 on emotions in recurring political protests). Earlier during the demonstration, Saleh and other Sheikh Jarrah residents would be given the floor to update protestors as to recent house evictions in the neighborhood. When house evictions temporarily subsided, the speeches nonetheless continued, evolving to assume their present genre as a ‘ritualized political speech event’, which entails considerably more than brief updates about the State and the city’s coercive activities in the neighborhood. This shift, from brief updates covering events of the here-and-now, to a hybrid genre of political speeches, was never explicitly enregistered or documented (Agha 2005). It entailed a lengthier stretch of talk, the independence of the weekly speeches from oppressive activities in case those did not occur in the neighborhood during the past week, a considerable thematic expansion, and the expression of a clear politico-moral agenda, with a firm narrative linkage between the present and the future. Finally, these changes entail considerably more sociolinguistic resources which Saleh is able to exercise. These speeches, with their decade long familiar structure, and their interactional indexical routines (Hymes 1972; Noy 2009, 2015), comprise the ethnographic site of this study.<sup>5</sup>



AN ACTIVIST'S ETHNOGRAPHY IN SHIEKH  
JARRAH

I have been participating routinely in the SJP since its onset in 2009, as part of my activist commitment to human rights and ending the occupation. Yet nearly a decade had passed before it occurred to me that Saleh's political speeches were socio-linguistically remarkable; that these speeches' ethnographic research may tie together aspects of discourse that range from micro-linguistic features, through interactional and ethnographic contexts, to macro-sociopolitical contexts (Ochs 1990; Roth-Gordon 2020). This duration may be a result of the genre shift described above (from delivering updates to political moral speeches), and of my hesitation regarding mixing 'naïve' activism with research commitments. While most ethnographic studies embody an initial move INTO the field (the ethnographic trope of arrival, Pratt 1986), the research implications concerned a move in a reverse direction: turning my enduring weekly participation in the SJP into ethnographic visits and observations of an ethnograph-able field. This in turn required re-negotiating my positionality (which in earlier studies in East Jerusalem was unnecessary; Noy 2012a). Lastly, the SJP take place on Friday afternoons, right before Shabbat (Saturday), a time which may have contributed to its framing for me as occurring outside worktime/weekdays, in this way contributed to the delay of seeing its potential for scholarly work.

Either way, my participant ethnography ensued gradually throughout 2017. I initially inquired with Saleh if it would be alright to record him audiovisually, to which he responded willingly. He didn't really mind my research, likely because he was used to journalists and visitors constantly taking pictures and recording him, not to mention heavy surveillance equipment that the police installed on a nearby utility pole, with multiple recording technologies. Also, Saleh wishes for his words to reach out as far as possible. Nevertheless, I approached him repeatedly, ensuring he understood my request and its context. I later consulted, and asked permission of, a few of the Ta'ayush activities, who responded agreeably. I also informed the 'regular' protestors that I have begun recording, whose response was also positive and encouraging.

I recorded eighteen speeches that Saleh gave between 2018 and 2019 (each between ten to fifteen minutes long),<sup>6</sup> alongside taking notes and reflections. The recordings focused on Saleh, while capturing some of the surroundings, including audience and neighborhood activity. Because the SJP takes place on a sidewalk of a busy East Jerusalem thoroughfare (Nablus Road), the background is sometimes noisy with heavy traffic, drivers honking signaling support (sometimes also calling out to signal acquaintance with Saleh), or alternatively swearing ("you should all be hanged, traitors"); weather is also audibly present on site and on tape, and wind and rain sometimes reduce recording clarity; lastly, various police units are constantly present nearby, occasionally harassing Saleh and the protestors, and they too are a source of interruptions. While 'interruptions', these are part and parcel of the urban scene of the SJP.

“I REPEATEDLY TELL YOU, THE FUTURE IS YOURS—THE RIGHTEOUS, NOT THE LIARS”: TOWARDS A HOPEFUL MORAL FUTURE

The weekly speeches Saleh delivers take place at the end of the demonstrations. As mentioned, they are delivered in Hebrew to a small group of protestors who circle Saleh, supplying a quiet and supportive audience. The protestors offer occasional supportive ‘backchannel’ markers (nodding), sometimes clapping hands, and offering brief clarification comments or questions, which usually result from Saleh’s lack of Hebrew fluency. Attending the speeches steadily for over a decade supplies a ‘participation display’ on behalf of the protestors (Goodwin 2007:30), which, with its persistence and consistence, allows Saleh to become the face and voice of the SJP. Parenthetically, this explains why when right-wing extremist provocateurs are onsite, their acidic attacks are not aimed mostly at Saleh but at the Jewish-Israeli protestors/collaborators.

In terms of content, the speeches consist of supplying information and interpreting local and global affairs. Saleh reports on coercive and violent activities pursued by Israeli agencies and/or by Israeli settlers/paramilitaries, which took place recently in the neighborhood, elsewhere in East Jerusalem and the Occupied Territories, in the region, and beyond. This is complemented by moral interpretation and evaluation of the events. Saleh assesses current political events and international affairs morally, exposing their immoral, violent, and corrupt nature, and that of the actors and regimes (villains) who pursue them, and of the greedy and merciless globalized ideologies that underlie them (Noy 2022). In doing so, he presents information that mainstream media omit, which is part of his project of hope, which ‘lies in the reorientation of knowledge’ (Miyazaki 2008:149). From a political communication perspective, Saleh’s speeches serve to mediate local and global events, critically highlighting their inter-connectedness. The combination of ‘news’, interpretation, and evaluation establishes the speaker as a bona fide political rhetor.

In terms of the temporal reach, Saleh’s speeches mostly address recent events, a result of the speeches’ weekly recurrence, where, every Friday, Saleh recaps last week’s events. The rigid weekly recurrence of the speeches, whether seen as a constraint or a resource, bestows Saleh’s narration with a sense of RECENCY AND NEWS-WORTHINESS. Through typically employing present tenses, Saleh’s mediation of the oppressive realities in Palestine and elsewhere feel ‘fresh’. His is performed in part by using explicit temporal terms, such as the repeated expression “this is what’s going on [now]” (*ze ma she koreh [achshav]*). For instance, Saleh describes recent corrupt actions pursued by the Saudi administration (in collaboration with the then Trump administration) in these words: “the Saudis are thieves, that their people die of hunger, and they steal, the king and his children steal all the money”, after which he concludes, “and this is what’s going on. that’s what’s going on” (December 2018). The repeated formula serves as a narrative coda that stresses that the events are current, and also affirms the speaker’s authority in

establishing credible political reality (while also affording a topical transition; see extract (2)).

That most of the speeches concern ‘current affairs’ is significant in terms of their indexical function: it anchors the event of the political speeches, and the SJP more generally, to the present; the speeches’ narrativity evokes the here-and-now: ‘now’ referring to events transpiring in the present and the very recent past, while ‘here’ extends from the physical neighborhood to the global sphere—articulating who are good and who are corrupt morally. It allows discerning the righteous from evil doers (more on this below), and the present, which is the bleak narrative time of violent colonial oppression, from the yet-to-be, that un-imaginable yet morally just future.

Hence while most of the speeches cover current affairs, future-facing utterances are essential, and significantly stand out. These key expressions supply a moral-indexical vector in the sense of a future narrative possibility or a time at which the just and the moral will prevail. Such utterances appear sometimes within the speeches, yet more routinely and ritualistically they appear at their very end. Below I discuss two examples of the former type, and one example of the latter type.

Before proceeding, I wish to comment on the speeches’ language ideology by briefly addressing Saleh’s linguistic resources and sociolinguistic context. One of Saleh’s main challenges concerns communicating in Hebrew, which is not his native language, and which is politically the language of the colonizer. While Saleh’s Hebrew is audibly not fluent, he is multilingual (Arabic, Hebrew, and English), which supplies him with sociolinguistic resources to overcome political barriers and regularly communicate with non-Arabic speaking audiences. Recall that most of the protestors do not understand Arabic, and the enterprise of collaboration at SJP rests therefore on Saleh’s and other local activists’ knowledge of spoken Hebrew, as well as on their willingness to speak it in the public. Speaking Hebrew, indeed delivering hundreds of speeches, establishes Saleh as a bona fide political rhetor, and promotes his political agenda. From the perspective of Israeli peace activism, it makes him a unique and valuable Palestinian collaborator.

Saleh’s limited yet clear Hebrew, may also be seen as tapping into a linguistic register that indexes activism, whereby plain vocabulary and grammatical structures do not present limited literacy, but instantiate a specific language ideology—a metapragmatic or metadiscoursal choice (Bartesaghi & Noy 2015; Noy 2021)—of straightforward talk. Consider Silva & Lee’s (2021) work on hope in Rio de Janeiro, where they highlight the notions of register and enregisterment. Specifically, the authors discuss discourse by the late Brazilian activist Marielle Franco and her movement in Brazilian *favelas*, emphasizing ‘papo reto, or straightforward talk’, which is a ‘non-elite register deployed to confront bureaucratic gatekeeping’ (2021:179). With Saleh, the ‘low’ or ‘plain’ linguistic register may be a result of limited available resources (speaking a language he never studied in school). This register stands out vis-à-vis his audience, which mostly consists of educated, highly literate, native/fluently Hebrew speakers. Moreover, Saleh’s insistence on

speaking, disregarding ‘form’ (non-standard/fluent Hebrew), may also index meta-pragmatically activist register: it suggests that for the rhetor, the crucial dimensions are collaboration and content, and not articulateness.

*“I don’t speak in vain”: Saleh versus Trump*

When Saleh evokes future aspects in his speeches, they stand in contrast with the descriptions he supplies of the bleak and violent realities of contemporary Palestinian lives (“this is what’s going on”). If the future is in any way imaginable, it is because it is the result of resisting oppression and fighting occupation and corruption at the narrative present. It is a future entailing political transformation and salvation: a dramatic improvement in the shape of the end of the Israeli occupation and colonisation. At stake are not ‘petty hopes that characterize everyday life’ (Crapanzano 2003:8), but political change on a grand scale. It is hard to overstate the dramatic quality that such a future promises, in part, because acts of resisting the occupation, as constructed in the speeches, are not a matter of liberating a neighbourhood, an urban quarter, a city, or even a region. They comprise rather a global endeavor concerning postcolonial oppressive relations between those in power—governments, administrations, rulers, and their policies and ideologies, on the one hand—and peoples—ordinary, common, and just or moral people, who are collaboratively and insistently resisting oppression, on the other hand.

The speeches emphasize that the end of the occupation is not located at some unattainable hypothetical point at a distant narrative horizon, but is rather actually graspable, in clear sight, RIGHT NEARBY. Saleh has been stressing this point repeatedly, often by employing expressive speech acts, specifically in the shape of explicit promises such as: “the occupation will end soon” (see extract (3) below). To be clear, the time of the present is essential to Saleh’s discourse, because, now routinized, the weekly events of his speeches have precisely become everyday dissent occasions for the participants. The speeches are not merely IN the political present, but also engender or bring it into being. The speeches embody the possibility and actuality of repeatedly speaking with, and lecturing to, a Jewish-Israeli audience on weekly basis (as mentioned, this itself an exceptionally subversive event).

In extract (1), Saleh accomplished two discursive goals. The first concerns the temporal dimension, and specifically the type of actions taken in the present that may yield sought-after results in the future. The question concerns what kind of conditions in the present can result in a better state of affairs in the yet-to-come (Derrida 1990/1992). The second and related goal concerns the central role that AFFECT plays, and specifically fear. Fear is a theme to which the speeches return. Indeed, it seems that in terms of the discursual formulations of affect, hope is tightly related, if conversely, to fear, and not to hopelessness or despair (cf. Crapanzano 2003:6, who discusses fear in relation to hope).

(1) January 2018<sup>7</sup>

1 We got accustomed [to resisting the occupation] (1.3) they don't frighten us (1.1) we've  
 2 broken the fear long ago (1.0) and we:, <continuing the path that we believe> we the path  
 3 we want (1.3) [...] I am not afraid, I am not afraid to die (1.2) and so this is why I tell you, I  
 4 repeatedly tell you (1.4) the future and the future<sup>8</sup> is yours (1.0) the righteous, not the  
 5 liars (1.1)

Saleh metaphorizes the durational quality of the resistance narrative by the term “path” (line 2), implying an indexical connection and continuation between actions or states in the past and present and their future results. The present is that moment in time at which fear has been cultivated to the ultimate point of not fearing death. The tense is present indefinite, suggesting that at stake is not a one-time action, but rather that Saleh's performative utterance ‘exceeds the time and space of its pragmatic context’ (cf. “I won't be interrupted” by Marielle Franco, in Silva & Lee 2021:8). Fear has been “broken ... long ago” (line 2), which is an achievement that culminates in the present, and that enables a hopeful perspective to be carried from the present into the future. The relationship between temporalities is INDEXICAL, CAUSAL, AND MORAL, whereby the current situation (overcoming fear of death) leads potentially to a transformative future of high moral grounds (“the righteous” overcoming “the liars” in lines 4–5). Repeating reference to present actions is where future seeds and prospects lie.

Note the bilingual repetition of the word “future” (line 4). The first token, in Hebrew, sounds natural and in place, while the superfluous English token supplies a sense of branding: at stake is not merely that time that lies ahead, or in “the future” (Hebrew: *ha'hatid*), but also the very notion of the Future (English: *ha-fucher*, pronounced like the word *future* is in English).

Saleh references the future intriguingly by employing a metadiscourse construction of voice—his own: “why I tell you, I repeatedly tell you”. Through emphasizing the recurring quality of his speeches and references to the future, Saleh can index past speeches and construct self-reported talk (Tannen 1989; Noy 2007). This serves also in situating the speeches' audience as both WITNESSES of and participants in this political process. Saleh may also be engaging in memory work, the importance of which for pro-Palestinian activism, and activists more generally, has been recently highlighted (Reading & Katriel 2015; Rouhana & Sabbagh-Khoury 2024). Memory is essential for the sense of continued narration. The words “the future and the future is yours”, may then be heard as a self-quotation. These are utterances, indeed, performatives, that the speaker has repeated in the past. Here Saleh reports on his own words, his own idiom concerning the future (for more on reported speech in these speeches, see Noy 2022).

Idioms are recognizable only within a speech community and only for its members. As a result, the use of idioms INEVITABLY ALSO INDEXES THE SPEECH COMMUNITY in which they are recognizable, and in which they carry ‘meaning effects’

beyond their referential value (Blommaert 2014). This is what Saleh's idiom expresses: it shifts from the first person (rhetor-narrator) to the second person (audience), or from the speaker's experience and emotion to the moral role that audience members play in resisting oppression.

More generally, observe the uses of first person (single and plural) and second person (plural), when Saleh addresses his own voice ("when I tell you") and having overcome fear ("I am not afraid"). The speaker is dramatically delineating, rather than blurring, the distinction between himself and the protestors, between the rhetor and his audience. He is telling his audience that *THEY* are the ones who are righteous. This is a remarkable feat, coming from a marginally situated, oppressed/colonized subject, to his audience, who are members of the oppressing/colonial society.

In extract (2) Saleh similarly refers to himself reflexively, as a speaker who addresses, and who has been addressing for years, his audience, with the theme of the nearing end of the occupation. Again, through constructing reported talk, he taps into the community's collective memory, as he has indeed employed this expression on multiple Fridays. Typically, he then supplies what he sees as 'proof' of/for the claims and promises he made regarding the nearing end of the Israeli occupation. Here as well Saleh treats the issue of fear (fear as an affect), yet not his or the protestors', but the villains' fear.

(2) December 2018

1 when I tell you "the occupation will end soon!" , I don't speak in vain (1.1) I prove [it] to  
 2 you [by] something small (1.5) the American army, is leaving fr- Syria (2.8) and what says,  
 3 the great fool Trump? "we don't consider anyone" (2.3) now (1.3) yesterday, [he] was in  
 4 Iraq, Trump was yesterday in Iraq, he went to visit, the [American] army in Iraq. why- why  
 5 wasn't this revealed? why didn't [they] say about this in the news? it's a sign of fear (1.4)  
 6 that they're afraid (2.6) that's what goes today (2.0) today America is going down (3.2)

This segment, too, begins with an explicit metadiscoursal framing of talk, referring the audience to similar past mentions of the nearing end of the occupation. Saleh's audience knows (remembers) this to be true. This is rhetorically powerful because much of the content of the speeches entail information about the perpetuation of unabated harmful actions executed by Israeli authorities.

Yet here *VALIDATION* of the future-facing hopeful assertion is supplied. The speaker offers to "prove" the assertion via "a small thing" (lines 1–2), reassuring the audience that what he has been declaring repeatedly about the yet-to-become is valid. For this, he introduces his evaluation vis-à-vis Trump's remark. The new topic is framed as supplying proof for his assertion: the argument concerns the weakening of the United States as a global super-power villain. This is what, Saleh argues, underlies and supports the present iteration of the argument regarding the nearing end of the occupation.

The rhetorical structure of the argument is this: while Trump declares with much arrogance and chauvinism that the United States does not take anyone else on the global stage into account, apparently because of its status as an isolationist global super-power, in effect the United States is weak and is “going down” (line 6). Following the reported talk by Trump, Saleh informs his audience that Trump has very recently visited troops in Iraq, and yet, while Trump’s declaration attesting to the might of the United States has become well known, his visit to Iraq was concealed (“why wasn’t this revealed? why didn’t [they] say about this in the news?”, lines 4–5). This is read by Saleh as a sign of fear, which suggests weakness. In the equation Saleh draws, Trump’s declaration is a speech act, yet the conditions for its success are not met, and so the declarer’s action stands in contrast with his arrogant speech action. This takes the air out of Trump’s boast, revealing that the United States is in fact ridden with fear. By and by, an analogy is constructed, whereby while Trump’s assertion turns out to be unsupported, and in fact the United States is ridden with fear and “going down”, Saleh’s assertion is not “in vain” (line 1) and proof that validates it is supplied. In this way, Saleh evokes a verbal formula of his own making, which indexes past tokens which are familiar to members of the audience, and which carries them into the present time of the narrative interaction.

The segment’s conclusion or narrative resolution (“today America is going down”, line 6) is an illustration of the kind of mediation or coverage that the speaker supplies. Saleh delivers a reading of current political events on the global stage, which indexes the present—the continuous sense of “now”—supporting his argument and filling the general designation “this is what’s going on” with specific content. The events that are described are dramatic, whereby the downfall of America implies a tectonic moral shift in terms of moral world order.

*“I promise you. I always promise you. the occupation soo::n will end”: Hopeful conclusions*

The second structural location in which future-facing utterances are routinely employed is at the end of the speeches. Thus positioned, these utterances serve to reference the time of the future while also marking the end of the weekly speech and protest. Hence articulating the barely imaginable benign future at the end of the speeches is also a matter of narration: it indexes a temporality that is part of the temporal structure of the speeches themselves. That too, is a temporal dimension. Future-facing utterances at the end of the speeches vary in kind, interestingly juxtaposing a range of references, from addressing the end of Israel’s colonial occupation and dramatic victory (as seen above), to next week’s speeches, to wishes for a pleasant weekend and even pleasant weather. End-of-speech utterances also include expressions of gratitude that are directed at the protestors for participating in the demonstration and attending the speeches.

- (3) April 2018; Saleh is talking about the fall of the United States vis-à-vis Iran  
 1 this- this is what's going on now. the Americans are the weakest today (1.4) and they can't  
 2 [overcome] Iran. if they fight with Iran, it's the end for the Americans (2.4) it- it's something  
 3 we see it now right in front of our eyes (3.1) a:::nd, one more thing [smiles], I promise you  
 4 [smiles], I always promise you. <"the occupation soo::n will end">. and America also will go  
 5 (1.0) and the victory [is] for us, and have a Shabbat Shalom

Indexically tying the future to the present is oftentimes pursued by COMMISSIVES, most notably promises. The speeches' familiar rhetorical pattern is evinced in extract (3), where Saleh draws his audience's attention to having already repeated the verbal formulae. Only now the idiom is framed as an explicit commissive speech act ("I promise you", line 3). Commissives allow Saleh to transition from describing current events, where some proof of the crumbling of global and regional villains and colonial order is visible, to describing what will happen later, in the future, or more accurately, what is the future or the horizon. The transition is from representative ("this is what's going on now") to commissive speech acts ("I promise you").

That time in the future, the 'yet-to-come' (or *avenir*, Derrida 1990/1992), is a time of triumph. In extract (3), victory is mentioned alongside the ending of evil (occupation), yet sometimes at the end of his speeches Saleh refers more generally to future victory. He does so in such expressions as, "and the future is ours, and don't forget it, the victory is for us, and may you have a Shabbat Shalom". Moral triumph is always a COLLECTIVE ACHIEVEMENT; it is a reward that is intended "to us" and "for us"—for those who have been and are presently working at pursuing that possible/projected future.

This view of the future is hopeful because it entails the fall of the corrupt and with it the end of oppression and occupation on a dramatically large scale (because oppressive regimes are globally interconnected). The hopeful argument exceeds the description of transformation in the moral value of events, from negative to positive, and concerns HISTORY ITSELF. It concerns the political and moral REGAINING of time and history. Time is not merely a passive or static "container" that may be "filled" with events, but is rather a dynamic projection; time is narrativized so that those who indexically project from the present to the future will eventually possess it. Ending his talks on this positive note is one of Saleh's strategies of interjecting a discourse of hope, juxtaposing in one concluding utterance the historic and the monumental ("America also will go (1.0) and the victory [is] for us", lines 4–5) with the everyday and immediate ("may you have a Shabbat Shalom", line 5).

Indeed, when describing the eventual moral resolution, that "future that has no place as of yet" but "can acquire one", as Derrida (1990/1992:36) puts it, Saleh often stresses that the powerful and corrupt will find their place "in the garbage of history" (*mazbalat a-ta'rikh*). The fate of the villains is that they will be erased from history and forgotten, suggesting that both the past (history) and the future (yet-to-be) are negotiated morally and politically at their essence. The



outcome is pursued at the present, collaboratively. Here, again, Saleh's words embody hope and hopefulness, which serve as a sociolinguistic/political-linguistic resource for looking ahead together with the solid aim of re-shaping a brighter future at truly bleak times.

#### CONCLUSIONS: THE PROJECT OF HOPE

Addressing Crapanzano's (2003:4) critical call for the study of 'the discursive and metadiscursive range of "hope"', and Silva's invitation to 'investigate how people grapple with hope ... to endure scenarios of uncertainty, precarity or despair' (Daniel Silva, personal communication, July 29, 2020), this article examined situated articulations of hope at the Sheikh Jarrah protest in East Jerusalem. Specifically, at stake are formulations of prospects and projections, which are an element, arguably central, in the political speeches that Saleh, a Palestinian neighborhood resident and activist, has been giving unfailingly every Friday afternoon for over a decade.

The hopeful speeches negotiate severed and troubled temporalities in the context of the enduring Palestinian tragedy in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They are historically situated in-between the collective and conflictual narration of the YET-TO-COME (*avenir*; Derrida 1990/1992), and the duration that stretches since THAT WHICH HAS-ALREADY-COME OR TRANSPIRED: El-Nakba/Naksa. This is a challenging narrational abyss to inhabit, a truly uneasy location from which to attain political voice, subjectivity and agency, and project hope unto an attainable future. Hope, or RADICAL HOPE (Lear 2006), may be seen here as an AFFORDANCE or opportunity to create in the present something that would last into a future that is still unimaginable.

I wish to conclude by fleshing out several points that emerge from the analysis, a few of which I briefly note so as to expand on in another opportunity. In Saleh's political speeches, hope is ENCOMPASSING. It is interconnected to larger contexts and struggles that extend well beyond the neighborhood, East Jerusalem, and even the region, and indeed beyond the Palestinian plight. While the focus remains on immediate matters (house evictions in Sheikh Jarrah), which was the speeches' original *raison d'être*, Saleh's struggle is a global fight against oppressive, postcolonial, and immoral regimes (a scalar issue, see Blommaert 2015; Silva & Lee 2024). Saleh's hope is one that is global, and his struggle is hopeful in the sense that it is generous, in that it is not preoccupied with the displacement and dispossession of Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah alone.

This leads to the next point, which highlights the CENTRAL ROLE MORALITY PLAYS in the semiotics of hope. Hope is an ethical issue of doing right versus wrongdoing, of striving towards a more just world future. Hope is there for those who most need it: the oppressed, wherever and whoever they are. The hopeful future, as Saleh sermonizes, 'belongs' to the common people. The future is achieved, to paraphrase

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address (1863), 'by the people, for the people', yet working for it morally is pursued in the present.

Hope is not only an ethical or moral issue, but also an AFFECTIVE ONE AT ITS CORE (Berlant 2011). The concept of hope may be productively approached as a NARRATIONAL AFFECTIVE AND MORAL ENTANGLEMENT. As we have seen, fear and fear-ing is a recurring theme in Saleh's speeches (as it is in the actual lives of Palestinians in the occupied territories), where it indicates weakness and immorality: if one's actions are moral, there is no cause for fear. Saleh himself has "overcome fear", which enables him to see hopefully into the future while also guiding others—us, his audience of Jewish-Israeli peace protestors—in this process. As Spinoza (1930) wrote, 'fear cannot be without hope nor hope without fear' (cited in Crapanzano 2003:18).

Furthermore, the ability to articulate hope in the speeches is closely tied with the notion of VOICE, with the actual utterable and narratable expression of the oppressed ("I repeatedly tell you"). Voice is not a given, and 'having' a voice is a collaborative political accomplishment in and of itself. Indeed, it is foremost a political action. It is a hopeful or a hope-bearing voice. The relations between public and political articulations of hope, that is, the ability to voice and assume authority for collective enunciation, could be studied in various contexts, especially with regards to the socio- and politico-linguistic value of hope, and who can utter it and under which circumstances (Silva & Lee 2024). In this study, voice is accomplished collaboratively with the help of the Ta'ayush activists and the regular protestors, who become the rhetor's Friday audience and witnesses on a weekly basis.

To be able to voice hope, Saleh's multilingualism and rhetorical resources are vital, including his willingness and ability to communicate time and again in Hebrew with non-Arabic speaking, Jewish-Israeli peace activists. Multilingual assets serve to effectively bridge linguistic divides, but also divides that entail nationality, religion, class, culture, education, and those between the colonized and colonizer. As a result, Saleh not only becomes the face-and-voice of the Sheikh Jarrah protest, but as an 'oppressed' subject (Freire 1994) also guides his audience in the process of articulating hope and making it relevant for the future, at the present-moment of narration ("the future is yours, the righteous, not the liars").

At the risk of observing the obvious, I draw attention to the relations between the sociolinguistic value of hope and the actualities of Palestinian lives. Addressing the situated value of hope demands seriously weighing-in the political interconnections between language, economy, and materiality. Oppressive action does not begin or end in language but is essentially tied to current global capitalism and neoliberalism and their forms of oppressive postcolonial regimes. To arrive at a clearer and fuller picture, it seems pertinent to keep in mind the non- and paradiascoural realities, and the different interests that actors hold in Sheikh Jarrah, and specifically within the scene of the protest. For residents (who hold revokable Israeli residency and not citizenship), it is a question of tangible violence and dis-possession, not to mention life and death (Saleh sometimes mentions Muslim

martyrdom or *Istishhad*). It is quite a different question for the protestors, who are middle-class Israeli citizens.

Finally, the question of iteration: that the speeches have been recurring hundreds of times through troubling occasions, their endurance and persistency, may be seen as indexing hope. A PERFORMANCE OF HOPE. In their work on argumentation and rhetoric, Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:478) famously contended that repetition can contribute to making ‘the argument more present’. In the context of peace activism and activists’ discourse in the protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Katriel (2021:478) writes that ‘repetitiveness [may] signal the persistence of ritualized gesture through which an unacceptable presence may be chipped away’. That we all arrive at the same time to the same place (a rundown and noisy Sheikh Jarrah sidewalk), that we protest together, that Saleh speaks publicly and politically, is not obvious. It is hopeful. It is through these occasions that the future, that history-as-will-be-written, is pursued indexically, and that hope is concretized.

\* \* \*

After fifteen years of unyielding weekly demonstrations, the Sheik Jarrah protest was halted in October (2023) because of the Israel-Hamas war. This was done at the request of neighborhood residents, who feared retributions by Israeli settlers and the State. Additionally, a court ruling (April 2024) ordered the eviction of thirty-five houses and families from Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighborhoods, including Saleh’s family’s home. In meetings and on our WhatsApp chat group, Saleh is as generous, encouraging, and hopeful as ever.

#### APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

, .	pauses and end of sentence intonation
?	rising/question intonation
[. ]	transcriber’s additions
[...]	omissions of a few words
(1.3)	pauses of one second or longer
(.)	a brief interval
<i>word</i>	transliterated Hebrew words
<u>word</u>	louder voice
< words >	slower speech
> words <	faster speech
↑	raising intonation
“ ”	reported speech

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Derrida’s notion of the ‘yet-to-come’ clearly echoes Bloch’s (1986) notion of ‘Not-Yet-Being’ as elaborated in his book *The Principle of Hope*, which Derrida must have known.

<sup>2</sup>I also note that in Hebrew the ‘hope’ (*tikvah*) is semiotically charged because the national Israeli anthem is called *Ha-Tikvah* ‘The Hope’.

<sup>3</sup>The Second (Al-Aqsa) Intifada concerns the Palestinian uprising against Israel (2000–2005), which is seen as a result of the aftermath of the break up of the Oslo Peace Accords (1993–1995). Among the consequences of the Second Intifada is the deepening of Israel's colonial regime in the Occupied territories (Junka-Aikio 2016). As such, it gave rise to different forms of nonviolent and noninstitutional/-grassroot political activism.

<sup>4</sup>Berlant (2011) supplies another rich and powerful account of the current lack of hope.

<sup>5</sup>In Summer 2021, Shiekh Jarah protest surged, and was one of the focal points of the beginning of a broad civil unrest throughout Israel and the Occupied Territories, called the 'May Events', or the 'May, 2021 Israel-Palestine Crisis'; see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021\\_Israel%E2%80%93Palestine\\_crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2021_Israel%E2%80%93Palestine_crisis).

<sup>6</sup>These recordings consist of the first round of recordings, which was later expanded by a second round. The differences stem from the fact that during the first round, the group of protestors was small, and the protest was usually uneventful. That changed around the 'May, 2021 Israel-Palestine Crisis', at which time the protest grew and varied, Saleh often used a loudspeaker/megaphone, right-wing provocateurs were harassing protestors, there was more and consistent friction with and aggression on behalf of the police, and the duration of the weekly protest nearly doubled. This research builds on the first batch of ethnography.

<sup>7</sup>Transcription notations are given in the appendix. The speaker is Saleh unless indicated otherwise, and the text is translated from Hebrew by the author.

<sup>8</sup>Saleh repeats the word 'future' twice: once in English (*ha-fucher*, which is infrequent) and once in Hebrew. The former is borrowed into Hebrew from English, likely through Arabic (Hawker 2013).

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