



The Last Word

# It Wasn't Just Property That Was Lost in West Jerusalem

You can silence Nahla Shawkat Assali, Laura Baramki Khoury, Abla Dajani Daoudi, Ramzi Sansur, Claudette Ayoub Habesch, and Huda Imam, the authors in this month's issue of *This Week in Palestine* who share personal stories of how their families lost their homes in May 1948. You can certainly silence me, too! But as long as Palestinian Jerusalemites live and bear children, they, along with many others, will continue to write about the tragedy that befell the residents of the western part of Jerusalem in 1948. They will keep shouting, demonstrating, and crying FOUL.

As these authors wrote their stories, the wounds were reopened; even after 73 years. When I received one of the personal accounts, the author told me that although she had told the story a million times, she still cried when she wrote it. It's totally understandable for the author to feel that way, but the irony is that you would think that no one could better understand the trauma Jerusalem Palestinians had gone through more than the sons and daughters of those who had been subjected to ethnic cleansing earlier during that awful era. How fickle fate can be.

What was lost in the western part of Jerusalem in May 1948 – indeed, in the whole of Palestine – was not just property. However, as painful as it is to lose one's home, along with the furniture and one's intimate belongings, the deeper and longer-term pain comes from losing one's respect, dignity, pride, and life's work; everything important to any decent human being. In May 1948, an entire educated, cultured, cosmopolitan, and vibrant community of Palestinians was decimated. True, many moved on and rebuilt what they had lost, but the scar remains and the humiliation continues. Somehow, this scar is genetic and is passed on from one generation to another.

No one should stop shouting against injustice. No one should conceal the truth even if it brings about further suffering and alienation. They say that history is written by the powerful, and although our voices may seem to come from the wilderness, our persistence will never cease to challenge humanity. More and more people around the world are waking up and being informed about the truth of what happened in Jerusalem in May 1948. The recent outpouring of support for Palestinians from around the globe can only strengthen Palestinian resolve to achieve justice. If not for self-vindication, then to make sure that no such atrocities are repeated ever again.

Long Live Palestine!

**Sani Meo**  
Publisher

