Constructing ethno-national differentiation on the set of the TV series, *Fauda*

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Abstract
Cultural industries, television among them, are industries that exemplify harsh working conditions and precariousness. Recently, there has been greater attention paid to the specific experiences of ethnic and racial minorities in the creative industries in general and on television specifically. However, the study of minorities in television has generally focused on content analysis and not on the daily experiences of workers in the precarious television labor market itself. This paper offers an in-depth examination of the work process and conditions of ethnic–national minority (Israeli–Palestinians) versus majority creative workers (Jewish Israelis) in a television production, using observations conducted on the set of the Israeli TV series, *Fauda* ("*Chaos*" in Arabic) as a case study. Our study's conclusions emphasize the way groups' experiences reproduce social hierarchies based on ethnicity, nationality, and gender.

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Introduction: Ethnicity, race, and cultural industries

Our study wishes to offer an in-depth analysis of the creative experience of ethnic–national minorities in the cultural industries, while focusing on the joint work of Palestinian–Israeli television creative workers and Jewish–Israeli creative workers, on the set of the highly acclaimed television action drama, *Fauda*. The set of this television series is an appropriate case study, because the series' narrative deals directly with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, in a setting governed by a Zionist–Jewish hegemony.

The study of cultural industries, also known as creative industries, such as television, theater, film, and the music industries, has been of immense theoretical interest for communication scholars over the past decade (Deuze, 2009, 2014; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Oakley and O'Connor, 2015). Lately, cultural industries research has focused on the growth of casual, precarious labor (Deuze, 2014; Draper, 2014; Hesmondhalgh, 2010; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008, 2010). Greater attention has also been paid to the specific experiences of minorities in the cultural industries. Studies have shown that women, ethnic, and other minorities are underrepresented and disadvantaged in creative employment (Banks, 2007; Blair, 2003; Bourdieu, 1999; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; McRobbie, 1998, 2002; Morini, 2007; Towse, 1992; Ursell, 2000).

The study of race and ethnicity in the cultural industries, such as television, was, and still is, primarily concentrated in text analysis (Saha, 2018). Text analysis is indeed a major component of critical race theory in cultural studies. The latter help identify the ways racial and ethnic minorities are being constructed as inferior vis-à-vis the general trend of White superiority in the global media (Kellner, 2011).

However, cultural industries scholars such as David Hesmsondhalgh and Anamik Saha (2013) have stressed the need for research in cultural production itself, with greater attention directed to race and ethnicity. As such, some studies have sought to expose how institutional racism in the media leads to the marginalization of minority media professionals, and the detriment of work on their personal lives (Ainley, 1998; Campion, 2005).

Another major theme in the study of race and ethnicity in the cultural industries examines how these minorities, sometimes working with members of other communities, have carved out fertile spaces in the fields of cultural production (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013: 185). One of these most influential studies is Herman Gray's study of how the rise of the cable reconfiguration in American television production has led to the development of programs such as *A Different World*, which represented Black life in refreshing and interesting ways. It is important to note, however, that African American television programming still remains a precarious achievement in a world of mainly white television (Gray, 1995).

Similar dynamics have been identified in other industries (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013). For example, recent projects have illuminated the specific experiences of ethnic and racial minorities in different creative industries such as inequalities in British Asian Theater (Saha, 2017), the British Asian publishing industry

(Saha, 2016), the working conditions of Arab–Australian artists (Idriss, 2016), and the experience of racial minorities in the New Orleans film industry (Mayer, 2017). It is evident that belonging to an ethnic or racial minority group carries additional meanings and consequences when working in an already precarious setting (Saha, 2018).

However, it seems that as far as the study of television, most recent scholarship still concentrates mainly on textual analysis. For example, some recent studies have examined race and ethnicity in the age of convergence television, or the "post-network" era, in which television is distributed via multiple platforms such as traditional networks, cable, and satellite and digital platforms (Jenner, 2017). However, this research still concentrates on representations of race and ethnicity rather than the study of creative settings and their implications on the representation of race (e.g., Chopra-Gant, 2007; Christian and White, 2017; Griffin, 2011). These studies indicate that representations of race and ethnicity are still very limited in this age of post-network television, which is governed by economic interests and confines representations of "blackness," for example, to niche markets and audiences, while, simultaneously marking blackness in simplistic terms as a contradiction to whiteness (Griffin, 2011).

One exception to this focus on representation and textual research can be found in a recent study by Lia Wolock and Aswin Punathambekar on race and ethnicity in post-network American television (2015). Wolock and Punathambeker conducted interviews with industry workers who worked on two television ventures that aimed to represent South Asian Americans. Wolock and Punathambeker (2015) went on to explain how industry professionals misread South Asian Americans' social position, in the age of post-network television. These professionals seemed to understand racial identity as belonging to the realm of the national, that is, they shift the racial difference to that of the nation (2015: 13).

Another study focusing on the industry and its dynamic and not on textual analysis is Alfred Martin's study of creativity and race (2015). Martin took this research a step further by examining the minority creators themselves. In his study of the creation of Black gay characters within Black-cast sitcoms in the US, he interviewed the shows' scriptwriters, and showed how their positionality as Black (and in one instance also gay) influenced their writing (2015: 648).

However important these studies are, there is still a lack of empirical engagement with the work of minorities in general and ethnic and racial minorities in particular (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013). One of the reasons for this lacuna may be the lack of access into the production process of cultural industries and television (Paterson et al., 2016).

In light of this deficiency, our study offers a unique ethnographical glance into the daily interaction between a group of Palestinian–Israeli creative workers and Jewish–Israeli creative workers on the set of the globally successful television series, *Fauda*. *Fauda* is an Israeli television action–drama about an IDFs (Israel Defense Forces) undercover unit and their experiences in the occupation of the West Bank. Exploring the work and interaction of an ethnic–national minority

(Palestinians in Israel) vis-à-vis the Jewish hegemony in a cultural industry may capture the ways power operates locally through media production, reproducing social hierarchies and inequalities between various ethnic groups of creative workers at the level of daily interaction (Mayer, 2009: 1).

Although these groups are not internally homogenous, their comparison can greatly assist in revealing the matrix of power between ethnic minority and majority groups in the cultural industries. Such an examination can help provide a better understanding of the way precarious working conditions in television are manifested in the experiences of both groups. It also helps reveal the connection between the micro and macro work contexts in the television industry, which may illuminate the broader social implications of precarious working conditions across the creative industries (Mayer, 2009) and between social groups of different ethnicities who work in them.

As such, combining micro and macro explanations about race in the cultural industries might provide us with a more integrative theory of race, ethnicity, and cultural production (Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013: 186), particularly in explaining how cultural production shapes media discourse. Furthermore, studying the production processes on an actual television set also aids in our understanding of how race, itself, is made (Saha, 2018: 7).

The Israeli television production of *Fauda* serves as an appropriate case for a few reasons. First, it exhibits the precarious conditions of cultural industries as a whole and television in particular (Hagay and Davidson, 2014). Second, *Fauda* is part of the Israeli labor market in which, as will be elaborated shortly, ethnic minorities such as Arabs are highly discriminated against (Yashiv and Kasir, 2013) and suffer from the consequences of institutionalized racism (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008). The cast and crew working on the series, which is produced and directed by Jewish–Israelis, include both Palestinian and Jewish creative workers, actors and actresses, and production workers. This diversity of players enables us to reveal the interpersonal dynamics between minority and majority groups in a unique way while taking into account the micro-setting of a television set and the macro-setting of Israeli society.

This article is an important contribution to the study of cultural industries as a whole and the study of ethnic minorities in these industries in particular, for four major reasons. First, there are not many non-Anglo-European empirical studies which engage with the ways the cultural industries function in other parts of the world (De Beukelaer, 2017: 3; Hesmondhalgh and Saha, 2013: 186). Second, this ethnography examines both the national majority's and national minorities' experiences in one location, at the same time. Third, as mentioned earlier, this study is unique given its relatively unbridled access to a high-profile production. Production studies that gain such access are rare (Paterson et al., 2016). Finally, we focus on the barriers set upon national minorities under the exceptional political conditions of an ongoing national conflict, thereby adding to the existing literature of race and ethnicity in the cultural industries.

Palestinian–Israelis in the Israeli labor market and television

Before focusing on the conditions set upon Palestinian–Israelis in the labor market and Israeli television, it is important to illuminate the fact that, in Israel, Palestinian citizens are regarded as a racialized "other" (Jamal, 2008). In Israel, the cultural hegemony marks the elite as "White," that is European–Jewish (Ashkenazi Jews), while all others—Arab–Jews (Mizrahi Jews), Palestinians, Ethiopian–Jewish migrants, or African refugees are marked as "Black" and therefore inferior (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008). This inferiority is highly reflected in Israeli media and television (First and Inbar-Lankri, 2013).

Moreover, the Palestinian "other" is not only racially marked, but also seen as an internal enemy in a state which regards itself as solely Jewish and Zionist (Sternhell, 2009). As a result, Palestinian–Israeli workers, in general, and creative workers in particular, must overcome not only the economic barriers of a precarious industry, but also the barriers thrown up by both racist state and a bloody, protracted, national conflict between Israelis and Palestinians (Alon and Bar-Tal, 2017).

The Arab population in Israel is approximately 20% of the total population (Israeli Bureau of Statistics[IBS], 2016). Notwithstanding, the State is officially defined in exclusively Jewish terms, which has led to the structural subordination of the Palestinian–Israeli population to the Jewish majority (Haklai, 2011; Jamal, 2011; Peleg and Waxman, 2011; Rouhana, 1997; Smooha, 1989, 2000).

Accordingly, Palestinian–Israeli citizens also suffer from structural inferiority in the Israeli labor market (Gharrah, 2015; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov, 1994; Yashiv and Kasir, 2013). Most Palestinian–Israelis are low-skilled workers employed in construction, light industries, and services (Yashiv and Kasir, 2013). The disparity of Palestinian–Israelis in white-collar occupations and in management jobs is even more disparate (Yashiv and Kasir, 2013). There is also a lack of infrastructure and jobs in Arab towns and villages, something which serves as an additional driver of inequality between Jews and Arabs across the State (Yashiv and Kasir, 2013).

Palestinian–Israeli creative workers belong to a wide category of "free professions," which include doctors and lawyers. The number of Palestinian citizens of Israel in the latter professions has risen in the past decade according to IBS and reached 5% of males and 28% of females in 2011, but it is still comparatively low compared to their Jewish Israeli counterparts (Israeli Bureau of Statistics [IBS], 2011). By this logic and, although there are no official statistics on the topic,[1] we can assume that the number of Palestinian–Israeli creative workers in the cultural industries is also low. Taking television as an example, for the representation and presence of Palestinian citizens of Israel in the cultural industries, one can say that both representation and presence are miniscule and revolve around 4% out of the total sum of all representations on the Israeli small screen (First and Inbar-Lankri, 2013: 15).

However, neoliberal changes taking place in Israeli television over the last few years have led to an increase in television drama portraying Palestinians (Harlap, 2017). This increase in representation is part of the television market's broader trend toward rationalization and to appeal more to niche audiences

(e.g., those of higher socioeconomic status), who wish to consume television they regard as more "complex," political or of "quality" (Lavie, 2014). This recent turn has led to an increase in series dealing with such issues, among them the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (Harlap, 2017), and as a result also produced more work for Palestinian–Israeli actors and actresses. It is still important to note that Arab representation on drama series in Israel remain around only 1% (First and Inbar-Lankri, 2013: 16).

When Palestinian–Israeli citizens are portrayed on Israeli television as a whole, and on drama series in particular, they are traditionally depicted as "good Arabs," not threatening the status quo (Jamal, 2013), as villains and terrorists (Mendelson-Maoz and Stier-Livni, 2011) or ridiculous characters which rarely inspire empathy (Shifman, 2008). This confines Palestinian–Israeli actors and actresses to a niche of specific roles and characters.

Nevertheless, the Jewish hegemony regards many of the recent portrayals of Arabs and Palestinians on Israeli TV drama as less stereotypical than in the past (Mendelson-Maoz and Stier-Livni, 2011). Some examples of these Arab and Palestinian portrayals include drama series such as *Arab Labor* (2007–2013) and *The Screen Writer* (2015)[2]; *Ananda* (2012–2015)[3]; *Fauda* (2015–), and *Johnny and the Galilee Knights* (2016–)[4] have won critical acclaim, prizes, and audience sympathy.

Due to the recent interest in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict on television, Palestinian–Israeli actors and actresses, and other creative workers are, as was indicated above, gaining a bit more access to the Israeli television screen by playing Palestinian–Israelis, Palestinians from the West Bank or Gaza, Arabs, and even Mizrahi Jews (Harlap, 2017).[5] Being on television and behind the scenes puts these Palestinian–Israeli creative workers in a place of greater social visibility parallel to their social position as a national enemy and a "racialized" other (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008). This visibility gives these creative workers potential social and even political power which is unusual for an ethnic or national minority (Suleiman, 2002). However, one cannot ignore that, in any type of sociopolitical power relations system, resistance of the subordinated—in this case Palestinian–Israelis working in the Jewish hegemonic television industry—is a crucial component of the power relations matrix (Foucault, 1996).

Taking all these relations into account, we wish to study the work experiences of Jewish and Palestinian cast and crew on *Fauda*, a series that is produced by Jews, however, involves both Jewish and Arab storylines. This particular setting will enable us first to reveal whether the common precarious work environment of Palestinian and Jewish cast and crew produces a similar experience for both groups. We also examine the characteristics of the power relations on set, where Jews have the upper hand as producers, creators, and more politically, as part of the national hegemony in Israel.

Ethnography: The case of Fauda

This study is based on observations conducted on the set of the second season of *Fauda,* the series reflects the Israeli narrative, focusing on an undercover IDF unit

which fights Palestinians who resist the Israeli occupation, especially those using terrorist means in the West Bank. The first season of the series won critical acclaim in Israel and worldwide. It was declared as the best international TV drama of 2017 by the *New York Times* and was purchased by Netflix, the globally successful, subscription video-streaming on demand (SVOD) platform (Jenner, 2017).

The second season of the series is a joint production of "Yes," an Israeli satellite television company; Liat Ben-Asuli Productions, an Israeli private television production company; and Netflix. As opposed to the first season, which was regarded by Jewish–Israeli television critics as a balanced portrayal of the Palestinian and Zionist narratives, the second season was criticized for portraying the Palestinians as villains while the Israelis were portrayed as heroic (Rubinstein, 2018).[6]

The series protagonist is Doron, who tries to retire from the unit but keeps being pulled back in, to hunt and kill each season's main Palestinian antagonist. As each season portrays the lives and conflicts of Israelis and Palestinians, their storylines produce work for both Palestinian–Israeli actors and actresses. However, because of the political complexities associated with depictions of the occupation, Israeli television producers will not hire Palestinian actors and actresses from the West Bank. Moreover, because the series is filmed half in Arabic and half in Hebrew, and filmed partly in Arab villages throughout Israel in lieu of those in the occupied territories, there are some Palestinian–Israeli crew members on the set,[7] such as the set manager, an Arab script manager, and grip workers.[8]

Choosing ethnography as a methodology for studying creative industries is not a common practice (Ganti, 2014; Mayer, 2012). However, most ethnographic methods offer insights into the creative industries that are not apparent through close readings of media text or data analysis (Ganti, 2014). Ethnography transcends mere interviews; it is about observing people's daily behaviors in specific settings. The observations that arise can illuminate new social aspects and raise subjective questions that have not yet been explored in this context. More specifically, subjective analysis concentrates on "perceptions, thoughts, sentiments, and desires that constitute the basis of agency" (Ganti, 2014: 18).

However, as was mentioned earlier, obtaining access to a cultural industry's production setting, let alone a television set, is not easy (Munnik, 2016: 147). Three months before the beginning of the shooting of *Fauda*'s second season, we tried to reach the creators of the series via email. We did not get an answer. After waiting a few more weeks, we managed to contact the Executive Producer via her cell phone, through the researchers' personal connections.[9] After a short talk, we obtained permission to enter the set based on the researchers' personal experiences in the industry and after ensuring anonymity and secrecy concerning the plot.

This experience highlights the fact that networks and former connections to the entertainment business are sometimes crucial to obtaining access to the creative industry's decision makers. Nevertheless, even though we used private connections to obtain access, we tried to remain as objective as one can during our observations

and analyses. One of our greatest assets in achieving the latter was that the research team was comprised of a group of people with various social identities.

Between mid-July, 2017 to mid-September, 2017, we conducted 22 participant observations (Schensul et al., 1999: 91) lasting between 2 and 5 hours on the set of the second season of *Fauda*. Our participation wasn't "pure," as we did not take part in the actual work done on set (Kawulich, 2005), but merely helped in some situations or took an active part in situations like the cast and crew's daily lunch.

The observations were conducted by us, the two main researchers (one female and Jewish–Israeli and the other, male and Palestinian–Israeli) and our research assistants (both female, one Palestinian–Israeli and the other Jewish–Israeli). This turned out to be a good balance regarding languages spoken on set. As well, it reflects the cultural and political hierarchies of Israel, and the site of our research. The fact that all researchers were minorities, either female, Palestinian, or both, made the researchers' presence on the set less intimidating.

The data were first analyzed by the two research assistants, who detected recurrent themes and tropes according the thematic analysis method (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The next phase was to review and refine the initial set of themes, defining and naming them, and carrying out a detailed analysis of each (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 22). According to standard thematic analysis methodology, we also paid attention to less recurrent themes, if we thought them important for our study (Braun and Clarke, 2006). We had many disagreements about our observations and analyses, which were a result of our different social and political positionings. This turned out to be very productive as we had to convince each other of our insights, making the analytical process less subjective, as each of us had to step out of her comfort zone and set of beliefs to agree upon a final analysis. The results of this process are now described.

Fauda: **The setting**

The filming of *Fauda* took place mostly in Arab villages in Israel, which were located next to the undeclared border between Israel and the West Bank (i.e., the Green Line).[10] As we were told by one of the Jewish production assistants, these locations were chosen because their architecture and settings resemble the villages in the West Bank. We were also told that filming the series in villages that are set deeper within the Green Line, in Israel, would not be a good idea because their architecture and surroundings are too familiar to the Israeli television viewer.

Our observations took place mostly in Kafr Qasim (كفر قاسم) and Kafr Bara (كفر برا). Both villages have poor infrastructure and poor sociodemographic conditions. A few observations were conducted in Petach Tikva and Rishon Le-Zion, big Jewish cities in the center of Israel. However, the scenes shot in these cities were either outdoor scenes in abandoned areas or "special services interrogation scenes," which were filmed in abandoned buildings in the outskirts of the cities.

Most of the scenes shot in Kfar Qasim and Kfar Bara were shot in residential blocks or in private houses where the owners and tenants of the apartments and houses received compensation for allowing the production to use their property. The payment for the use of private housing properties ranged between 1000 and 2000 NIS per day (approximately $300–500). Conditions in these private houses or apartments were better than usual, as there was an indoor toilet facility and the cast and crew did not need to spend the entire day under the piercing sun.

Moreover, the families who hosted the cast and crew were welcoming and sometimes even pampered the cast and crew with home-cooked dishes. However, the atmosphere filming in their private houses was also a bit disturbing, because it felt as if one was an intruder in another's personal environment. The interactions between the host families and both Palestinian and Jewish–Israeli the cast and crew, were unexpected. It almost felt like the inhabitants of the home were part of its furniture.

Working conditions

The working conditions on the set of *Fauda* were tough. The second season's filming, on which we conducted our observations, took place between July and mid-September. These are the three hottest months in Israel and the Middle East. The mean temperature is 33°C and can rise up to 40° or more. Humidity is high and the air is heavy. The sunlight is scorching. During most of our observations, there was no air-conditioning on set. Sometimes a special mobile air-conditioning device was brought to the set in order to cool the room in which the actors were resting, dressing, and putting on makeup. Sometimes, the mobile air-conditioning device was used to cool the areas in which the cast and crew, including actors, creators, and the tech-crew, took their lunch breaks.

Our first observation took place in Kafr Qasim, in a private house which was the set for a few indoor scenes. The house was white, built out of bricks which resembled Jerusalem stones.[11] It was also three stories high, with a large porch in front and a large terrace on the second floor. In front of the house were tall palm trees. The scene was of a meeting of a young Arab couple at their house after the husband was interrogated by the Israeli security forces. There was no air conditioning on set and the temperature was around 36°C with humidity around 70%.

Believing us to be influential as scholars, Palestinian and Jewish cast and crew asked us if our study would help in bettering the working conditions in the television industry. We were given many examples regarding the implications of the precarious working conditions in television. Speaking with the Jewish makeup artist on set, for example, we were told that, in the current conditions of the television industry, people must work as they are told or else they would not be given any work to do. She also disclosed to us that the blood-like makeup she uses on the many wounded and dead of the series is very expensive and that she must pay for it out of pocket.

The male Jewish assistant director explained over lunch that "people shouldn't complain, it is still more worthwhile to work in television than working as a social worker, which is a much more important job and they earn less money than we do." These two Jewish crew members adopted two strategies for coping with these precarious work conditions. The first spends her own money, so she is not a burden on the production budget, taking into account that she relies on networking strategies for further occupation in the industry (Christopherson, 2008). The second strategy, which they both take, is to internalize the neoliberal myth that working in the cultural industries is rewarding (O'Brien, 2015).

In relation to precariousness, the Palestinian actors and actresses who spoke to us stressed the importance of being professional on the set. One female Palestinian actress told us that her behavior on the set is her "ID in the industry." This actress exhibited warm relationships with the director and photographer, hugging them and being intimate in a manner which is not accepted or customary for most Muslim women (Lahav-Raz and Reznik, 2014); however, it is very accepted on television and film sets in Western cultures. One could say that this was part of her impression management on set, which she used to create networks for further work in the industry. This strategy is common in the creative industries where women use their stereotypes in society and manage their emotions in a way that helps them appeal to the masculine gaze of the cultural industry (O'Brien, 2015).

Another, older Palestinian actress, who is also a documentary film director herself, talked to whoever wanted (or did not want) to listen about her documentary films, in an attempt to stress her influential status in the Israeli film industry. She appeared timid and insecure regarding her acting. Much like the Jewish female makeup artist, this actress developed a similar coping strategy for the uncertainties of the precarious television industry, ensuring that the production company and creators of the series would have a good impression of her.

In sum, the atmosphere on the set reflected, as expected, precariousness. Workers are expected to make personal, financial, and sometimes even moral sacrifices to secure work in the industry. In the next sections, we further elaborate on how the overall precarious and tough material conditions on the set of *Fauda* carried different consequences for different group members.

Hierarchies: Industrial hierarchies

Upon entering the field, we noticed that most cast and crew members, Jews and Palestinians alike, were constantly talking about the heat and looking for places to escape the piercing Mediterranean sun. However, there was an evident differentiation between the conditions of the crew and the conditions of the cast members on set, therefore, before diving into the ethnic and racial differentiations on set, it is important to first describe this hierarchy.

The crew members and grips (mostly Arab and Jewish men) spent most of their time outside, working in the sun to set up the set, while the actors and actresses could rest in the single, air-conditioned room designated for cast–member use.

The room was equipped with a mobile air-conditioning device, which was not very effective, but did make the heat more tolerable.

Many of the crew members complained that they had to work harder and that the cast were able to still finish work much earlier than them. This apparent differentiation between cast and crew members is also evident in Western film and television (Mayer, 2011) and Asian entertainment markets, such as Bollywood (Ganti, 2014). However, the basic conditions on the set of *Fauda* seemed to be worse than both markets and resemble the conditions of the Turkish television industry (Celik Rappas and Kayhan, 2018). In other words, the Israeli television market, being globally successful as a format distributer (Oren and Shahaf, 2013), is a poor industry which is characterized by a "race to the bottom" regarding salaries and production costs (Hagay and Davidson, 2014). As one female production assistant on the set told us, "No one makes any money out of this industry and sometimes you just have to work for free. This is actually the way I started out in this industry." However, this practice of working for free to gain entrance to the industry is more common with female workers due to the gendered nature of the cultural industries (O'Brien, 2014, 2015). In the next sections, we concentrate on the different working conditions arising from ethnic, national, and gender divisions.

Division and hierarchies on set: Ethnicity and gender

In this section, we highlight the way certain elements of the cast's identity, such as ethnicity, nationality, and gender, implicate the subjective working experiences of all workers on set. Thereafter, we break these identities down and focus more on ethnicity and gender, separately.

One of the most interesting insights of our observations was the way ethnicity and gender causes differentiations in power. For example, we determined that the Arab–Palestinian set coordinator occupied a higher place in the hierarchy vis-à-vis the crew members, as he used his ethnic–national identity to leverage for more power. His position was unique vis-à-vis the ethnic division of labor on the set, where Palestinian actors occupied mainly supporting roles and Palestinian crew were mainly grips or drivers.

The set coordinator, a man in his early 40s, confessed to us that he is also an aspiring television creator and works on the set partially because he hopes to be discovered, a practice that is common in the entertainment industry (Ganti, 2014). However, despite the fact that his aspirations were not fullfiled, he proved to be the central person in all set activities. He ensured the surroundings were quiet while shooting a scene and was the person in charge of the production's interactions with local inhabitants of the Arab villages, where the series was shot. He also ensured the set conditions were sanitary.

Speaking both languages, Hebrew and Arabic, elevated the set coordinator to a position of power. The crew seemed to respect him and obey his commands. This position afforded him greater legitimacy to exhibit authority, which he seemed to

exercise most visibly among the female workers on set; this behavior is in line with the gendered nature of the television industry (O'Brien, 2014, 2015). Moreover, this strategy of power relations, in which a minority member, here a national minority member, patronizes other minority members, such as women, is a common strategy taken by minority workers in their workplace (Kaarbo, 1998; Quiocho and Rios, 2000; Sachdev and Bourhis, 1991).

On one occasion, two female production assistants were used as extras in a scene which was shot on an extremely hot day in a school, with no air conditioning. The Palestinian set coordinator told one of the production managers, who was told by the cameraman that she looks pretty on camera that "Every monkey looks like a gazelle in his mother's eyes." He first said this in Arabic and then translated it when asked by others of its meaning. While this was apparently said with humor, it looked as if the production assistant was offended, and was trying to ignore the overall laughter.

One can interpret the behavior of the set manager toward the female crew members as chauvinistic; however, we suggest a more complex interpretation. As a member of a national minority (Palestinian) who could, for once, have the upper hand over the Jewish majority, the set coordinator was put in a position to exercise his power over the Jewish women on set (O'Brien, 2015). In this way, he was able to resist the Jewish hegemony. This example illustrates, not only the inner occupational hierarchies in the television industry between positions, but also socio-structural hierarchies between women and men in general, as well as between Palestinians and Jews.

Elaborating on the issue of gender, there was a clear, gendered division of labor on the set (Mayer, 2014). This division of labor, as mentioned earlier, is characteristic of film and television industries worldwide (Ganti, 2012; Mayer, 2014; O'Brien, 2015). For example, the men working on the set of *Fauda* were in charge of all physical work, such as the construction of shade canopies and moving cameras around, while the women were "water girls," serving cast and crew with water and light snacks. Many of these young women, as was noted earlier, worked without pay, yet another gendered characteristic of the precarious creative industries (O'Brien, 2015).

Other women on set were production assistants who completed mere secretarial work. Arranging the next day's schedule, printing scripts for the actors and actresses and taking care of administrative work, which is a gendered occupation by itself (O'Brien, 2015). Sometimes this brought about special attention in what we call the power of the socially weak. For example, after a few weeks of shooting, the two female production assistants who worked in the improvised office on each set, received a fan and were therefore addressed by others as the "princesses with the fan." This persona enhanced their stereotypical vision as frail women who need to be pampered; however, this stereotype also earned them a fan and greater comfort (Weitz, 2001). Nevertheless, when both creators of the series appeared onset, the fan was taken for their use. As one of the female production assistants told us, "The fan went to more important people." This, again, not only stresses

the inner hierarchies of the television field between different positions, but also exhibits a structural–social differentiation, which positions women in a place of subordination regardless of field (Christopherson, 2008; Mayer, 2014; O'Brien, 2015).

Other women on the set were the actresses, Jewish and Palestinian. It was evident that the women playing leading parts, whether Jewish or Palestinian, experienced less hardship because they were regarded as "talents" (Ganti, 2014). They seemed to feel more comfortable entering the air-conditioned resting area designated for the actors and actresses. However, we noticed that Palestinian actresses, who had minor or visiting roles, felt less comfortable to enter these designated areas, as did the many Palestinian extras on the set. These visiting actresses and extras, who were mostly male, also seemed to feel more at ease connecting with us, the researchers, as we were also regarded as outsiders on the set.

One cannot rule out that this discomfort with other cast and crew members was also a result of the "double-disadvantage" (Simien, 2007: 265) of being both Palestinian and having a lower professional status in the television industry, and on the set of *Fauda,* in particular. Palestinian actresses, playing a smaller role or as extras, encountered the added disadvantage of intersectionality; that is, these women's interactions with others as a double minority, experienced even greater exclusion and subordination (Davis, 2008: 67). As such, we found that, vis-à-vis their respective experiences, the groups employed different agency-claiming strategies of resistance as we shall explain shortly.

In summation, it was evident that there were hierarchies on set which were a result of the material conditions of the industry, and of the *Fauda* set specifically, as well as institutionalized hierarchies that intersected with gendered and ethnic and national–racial hierarchies. We found that the subjective experiences on the set reflected the intersection between each of these factors; this is further developed in the next section.

Double burden: Palestinians

In this section, we further our analysis of the experience of the Palestinian workforce on the set of *Fauda*. Much like the way female cast and crew suffered from the specific implications of the conditions on set due to their subordinated position in society as a whole, so did the Palestinians suffer. For example, while shooting a scene of an interrogation by the Israeli secret service, the Palestinian script director told us, "Shooting these scenes is not a simple task for us"—"us" meaning the Palestinian cast and crew members. On that specific day the heat was unbearable and the material conditions were harsh, with hardly any place to rest. The entire cast and crew seemed exhausted. However, it seemed that the Palestinian cast and crew had it more difficult due to the content of the scenes which were shot on that day.

On that day, we arrived on set in time for the lunch break. The mobile air-conditioner was used for the hall in which the lunch breaks were taken and for the

production office, where production assistants also worked on arranging the next day's shooting. An improvised dressing room shielded by a curtain, where there was a single folding bed on which the actors could take turns resting, was set in a corner of the hall. One of the Jewish actors, who played the leading Israeli interrogator, suffered from a severe disk hernia and was using the bed most of the time.

On the other side of the hall stood a buffet with salads, chicken dishes, meat dishes, vegetable dishes, and fruit. The food was the only thing the cast and crew did not complain about for the duration of the production. The hall was set up as a restaurant with white plastic tables and chairs. Each table was covered with a red disposable tablecloth. The air was not hot, but also not cool; it was choked, much like the rest of the atmosphere.

As we were sitting at one of the corner tables, we noticed that the creators of the series, two Jewish–Israeli, middle-aged men, were sitting at the middle table with the series producer, a Jewish–Israeli woman, the Jewish series director, the Jewish photographer, and a French leading actress, who played the Jewish protagonist's Palestinian lover. The Jewish crew members were sitting at other tables, while the Palestinian set coordinator was walking around talking on his mobile phone and shouting directions in Hebrew, looking very stressed.

There were two young Palestinian actors on the set that day, one of whom had a leading role, and both played Palestinian terrorists. The actors were shooting their characters' interrogations by the Israeli security services and were wearing heavy makeup, which made them look as if they were severely beaten. It was alarming at first sight. The Palestinian actors looked tired. One of them was sitting alone with his eyes closed, apparently dozing off, while the other had his lunch next to an African foreign worker, who was one of the freelance workers on the set and did not seem to have any kind of relations with anyone else on the set. It was as if both found it comfortable sitting next to each other, being both racial "others" on the set (Saha, 2018). This visual segregation reflected, for us, Israeli society's broader trend of racialized segregation, dividing the "Black folk" from the "White" in Israeli society (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008).

Looking at the "lunch scene" from aside, we got the impression that the Palestinian actors were segregated from the rest of the crew; a kind of detachment that seemed to suit everyone on the set. Shooting these violent interrogation scenes was not easy for neither Jews nor Palestinians, forcing both groups to face a mirror which reflected their own positions as victims and victimizers. The Palestinian–Israeli actors played terrorists being broken by the Israeli special services, while at the same time being Israeli citizens themselves in an uneven political relationship. The Jewish–Israelis on set were not only playing the ones with power, they were also part of the Zionist hegemony in Israel in real life. As such, the uneven, structural relationship on set reflected the same relationships in the series narrative.

Neither Jews nor Palestinians felt comfortable with their positions, making them disregard and evade any kind of political conversation on the set. As the

Arab script manager told us, "It's like going out on a date, you don't want to start talking about politics if you want the interaction to be successful." While a Jewish production assistant told us that "everyone [Jewish crew and cast members] is walking on egg shells and trying not to talk politics on the set." One can say that these behaviors were coping and agency-claiming strategies of both minority and majority members.

On that day, due to the narrative of the script, we found that these coping strategies were harder to witness. Moreover, in one of the interrogation scenes, one of the young Palestinian actors was accidently beaten too forcefully by a Jewish actor playing one of the interrogators and was taken to the hospital thereafter. It seemed that no one on set wanted to talk about it and the actor returned to work joking about the whole situation. One could surmise that as the actor was the only one joking about the situation, he exhibited an agency-claiming strategy in which the socially weak use self-deprecation to claim control over the situation.

Another example of the uneven work experiences of Palestinian cast and crew was noticed toward the end of the shooting of *Fauda* in September, while filming one of the most complex scenes of the season in Kafr Qasim. The scene depicted an assassination which took place in a street of the village, which was staged as a market with coffee shops, food and vegetable stands and many extras. The set seemed to exhibit an oriental gaze on what Jewish–Israelis think an Arab market should look like (Said, 2000)—colorful, noisy, dirty, and cramped.

The Arab–Palestinian set coordinator was extremely nervous that day, lashing out on the many extras who were on the set. These extras, both Palestinians and Jewish–Israelis, were happy to take part in such a high-profile series. On the set were four Jewish actors playing members of the undercover unit. There was also a young Palestinian actor, playing the part of an informer, who was working with the Israeli Special Forces. The Israeli actors, all male and army veterans themselves, exhibited warm relationships amongst themselves, while the Palestinian actor sat alone in the corner of the room in the designated resting area. The Palestinian actor was more than happy to talk to one of the researchers who was on set that day, telling her that he regarded himself more Israeli than Palestinian. The female researcher was Jewish–Israeli and one cannot rule out that the actor wanted to please the researcher, both as a result of the institutionalized power relations between researchers and informants, as well as that of Jews and Palestinians (Shelsky and Alpert, 2007).

After spending an hour on the set, the cause of the Palestinian set coordinator's nervousness was revealed. There was a mosque nearby and the set coordinator did not want to offend those praying in the mosque with the noise made by the set—explosions and shooting. He asked the director to wait until the prayer was over and said, "We had enough with the situation last week."

The "situation last week" was an incident that occurred while shooting a scene using a mosque entrance as a hotel entrance, in the same village. The Muslim clerics in the village let the *Fauda* team use the entrance as long as no female

crew or cast got near the entrance. However, one of the female Jewish actresses sat at the entrance of the mosque during one of the shooting breaks, because it was the only spot with shade. She also removed her long-sleeved shirt and sat there with only a tank top on. The villagers were very angry and offended and blamed the Palestinian set coordinator, who was their contact person within the *Fauda* team and who had promised to respect their holy place.

The situation above exhibits not only the way the narrative and setting of *Fauda* make the conditions on set emotionally harder for the Palestinian crew and cast members, but also, how a clash between different values, those of the Muslim religion and Jewish–Israeli secular standards, led to specific conflicts on the set of *Fauda*, and with different implications for Jews and Palestinians. The fact that a Jewish–Israeli female actress was at the center of the mosque crisis, which led the Muslim clerics to cancel the shooting that day, not only caused harsh financial consequences for the production, but exhibited gendered hierarchies between men and women in Palestinian and Jewish society, and further revealed that the Jewish-Israeli cast and crew did not seem to bother understanding the Palestinian–Muslim tradition they were depicting.

Taking all this into account, it is true that the material working conditions on set were the same for all cast and crew members; however, it seems that these conditions put a "double burden," or "multiple jeopardy" (Simien, 2007: 265) on the Palestinian cast and crew. Palestinians on set, including the actors and actresses, served as a kind of "service provider," reflecting their position in the Israeli labor market as a whole (Yashiv and Kasir, 2013), supplying the production with the conditions and performances necessary to enable the Jewish–Israeli producers to finish the mission and make the narrative look as authentic as possible. As our examples have shown, the Palestinian creative workers are aware of this service. This makes it difficult for the Palestinian team members to also be part of this mission. However, they have no alternative if they want to work in the series or more generally, the Israeli television industry.

For the actors, this is especially challenging due to the complexities of playing the stereotypical part of terrorists while most regard the Palestinian struggle for freedom as a legitimate struggle. As one Palestinian actor noted, "I'd rather play a snake crawling on the floor than another terrorist." One might surmise, given the context, that the actor's choice of words unconsciously signified both a treacherous character for the actor, as well as the treachery one might exhibit toward his own group, in portraying them as terrorists.

Therefore, it is plainly evident that Palestinian cast and crew must bear the precarious and difficult conditions of the television field, alongside hardship associated with participating in a series whose narrative is also politically problematic for them. This brings about both physical and emotional consequences. Palestinian cast and crew suffer from a double burden, at the intersection of belonging to a creative working class under precarious conditions, and identifying as a national and ethnic political minority (Davis, 2008; Nash, 2008; Siemien, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006) that suffers from racism (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008).

Double burden: Palestinian women

Further, as was also indicated earlier, it is also apparent that female Palestinian cast and crew suffer an even greater burden, locating themselves at the intersection of belonging to a precarious working class, under difficult physical conditions and additionally bearing the consequences of belonging to two socially subordinated identity categories, gender and nationality (Nash, 2008; Simien, 2007).[12]

We observed that this intersectionality brought about experiences which resulted in unique strategies of agency and resistance. First, some of the actresses attempted to portray themselves as "Western," by being very open and physical with Jewish crew members, as was exhibited by the young actress mentioned in the beginning of this chapter. This actress also stressed to us, that she feels like a "princess" on set, and that she felt "loved" and "admired." We also noticed that it seemed like she made additional effort to appear as "free" and "easygoing" on set. After each and every scene, instead of staying with her costume, which was usually an Arab traditional dress, she changed to a more "western" outfit—a light dress or jeans with a tank top. This way of dressing was marked by our Palestinian female research assistant as inappropriate for a Palestinian woman, whether Muslim or Christian.

The actress, contrary to the male Palestinian actors on set, was very-friendly and did not stay with the other actors between her shoots. Instead, she went to sit next to the director and photographer while they were shooting other scenes. As indicated before, this is a way of emotional management that women as a whole use while working in the cultural industries (O'Brien, 2015). However, this young Palestinian actress seemed to work harder at managing her emotions probably because of the intersection of her subordinate ethnic–national position and the stereotypes put upon her as an Arab woman who is expected to be conservative. It appeared to us that she tried to get as far as she could from that stereotype.

Second, some actresses resorted to portraying themselves as insecure, as was exhibited by an older Palestinian actress on the set, who solicited compliments from others for her acting. These two strategies seemed to be unique to female Palestinian actresses, who embraced the stereotype of women in general, as either sexual or timid (Lemish, 1997), and used these stereotypes as a basis for a performance which helped them overcome the intersection between their race, nationality, and gender. In other words, they identified with their universal female stereotype as if to avoid their national stereotype as the historical enemy of the State.

Conclusions and discussion

Taking the filming of the Israeli television series *Fauda* as a case study, it was our intention to reveal the matrix of power relations between minority and majority groups in the cultural industries and research the way the precarious working

conditions in television shape the work experiences of both groups. This and more, conducting observations of the set of *Fauda* were a means to show how race is made in the cultural industries (Saha, 2018) and how power relations are reproduced (Mayer, 2009). Concentrating on the joint work experiences of Palestinian–Israeli and Jewish–Israeli cast and crew, we found that the work experiences of the Palestinian, ethnic and national minority, are different in many ways from the experiences of the Jewish majority and reflect their overall inferiority, exclusion, and racialization in Israeli society (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008). Moreover, we found that the intersection between gender and race has a significant impact on the experience of Palestinian–Israeli women on set.

However, first and foremost, our analysis revealed that the precarious conditions of the global television industry (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008, 2010) are also evident in the Israeli television industry. As such, the creative workers attempt to cope with the precarious nature of the industry through different strategies. Some of them, especially women, work for free. Others, especially those who are both women and Palestinian, must set aside their own values for the sake of production. Men, in particular, try to justify their working environment by adopting the capitalist discourse and by declaring the work as better and easier than other professions.

Moreover, it seems that Palestinian cast and crew suffer from a double burden, due to the intersection between their subordinate place in Israeli society and their belonging to a creative class under precarious working conditions (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008, 2010). Furthermore, the necessity of playing villains and passive agents vis-à-vis the Israeli occupation, in contrast to their own beliefs, makes coping with the harsh material conditions of the television industry emotionally harder.

Similarly, we found that female Palestinian cast members must bear the additional consequences of belonging to both subordinated identities in Israeli society—as women and as Palestinians. This intersection brings about a co-constitutive process between both identities (Nash, 2008), which under the harsh conditions of the entertainment industry result in complex experiences and the necessity of unique coping strategies.

These findings provide a theoretical and empirical innovation for the literature on cultural industries, by emphasizing the way gender, ethnicity, and nationality, which are social constructs of the social macro level, differentiate between the common working experiences of creative workers in the same production in a way that reproduces power relations and hierarchies (Mayer, 2009). Furthermore, our study emphasizes the way the inherently precarious conditions of the television industry, as a case study for cultural industries, are enhanced when it comes to gender, national and ethnic minorities working experience in these industries, which are globally ruled by a white and male hegemony (Saha, 2018).

Fauda's narrative, which deals with the Israeli occupation of the West Bank by putting in the center of its story line a battle between a Jewish–Israeli hero and a Palestinian terrorist makes the work on the set of *Fauda* hard for everyone, but

especially for Palestinian creative workers. These workers have to self-justify their willingness in creating a television show which, eventually, stereotypes them and tells the story of the Israeli occupation from the Zionist–Israeli point of view. One might explain this willingness to participate in this creation as a result of the precarious nature of the television industry and the addictive nature of this industry, especially for aspiring actors (Rowlands and Handy, 2012). For this reason, conducting interviews with Palestinian–Israeli television creative workers is highly important, and is the next part of our ongoing project.

One of the challenges of media studies and of sociology of culture is to understand how texts are influenced by their creative and organizational surroundings (Saha, 2018). This study is an attempt to reveal the way texts are produced and how this production cannot detach itself from social and political constraining structures. In other words, race and ethnicity are not only made by the narrative of the cultural text or by the script of the series itself. Subordination and the racialized gaze are remade and reconstructed in the day-to-day work on the set of *Fauda*. This reconstruction happens constantly: when Palestinians must play evil characters and then eat lunch with their Jewish coworkers; when Palestinian women have to manage their emotions; and when Palestinians simply find themselves sitting next to the only African grip worker on set.

However, the social agents working in this social structure, namely those working on *Fauda,* do have a space of freedom in the micro context of the set of the series. One example is when Palestinian set and crew used their constructed inferiority as Arab native speakers as an asset. This strategy enabled them to operate within, but also maintain their own source of power within the subordinate–hegemonic power structure. In this space, both social groups subjectively cope with their daily experiences. These experiences, on the other hand, are, once again, influenced by the macro social level. In that complex interplay between the micro and macro levels, social reality is an ever-changing experience which might threaten to change the borders of social barriers set upon the national minority of Israel.

Nevertheless, the study of the subjective experience of the ethnic–national minorities creative workers (Palestinians), on the set of *Fauda*, vis-à-vis the experience of the work force belonging to the national majority in Israel (Jews), under the unique situation of racism and a bloody conflict, shows how the pressure caused by the macro level leaves only limited space for social and political change. Working on a television show which, eventually, strengthens the Israeli–Jewish narrative about the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, makes the experience of the Jewish creative labor force easier and leaves Palestinians on the set with a double burden of both material conditions and the political condition of occupation.

Declaration of conflicting interests

Funding

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Notes

1. As we see it, this dearth of statistical data arises from the current conditions of this study, which is a product and function of Israel's racist and racialized institutions.
2. Both created by Saieed Kashua, a Palestinian–Israeli writing about his own life experiences and dilemmas, especially concerning his identity and self-perception as a Palestinian–Israeli. Kashua wrote about his decision and experiences in a weekly column in the weekend edition of the Israeli daily newspaper—*Haaretz* (e.g., www. haaretz.com/opinion/.premium-fauda-creators-think-arabs-are-stupid-1.5730664).
3. A series about a love story between a Jewish–Israeli woman and a Palestinian–Israeli citizen.
4. A series about four men, one of them Palestinian-Israeli, who work as male prostitutes.
5. Jews of Arab origins, which are also a minority in Israel, suffering from institutionalized inequality.
6. See in: www.pressreader.com/israel/israel-hayom/20180319/281848644133925
7. Overall, out of the entire cast of 19 characters, there were only seven Palestinian characters played by Palestinian–Israelis, three of whom were female. On the set there were also many Palestinian–Israeli extras. Among the crew, there were four Palestinian–Israeli employees, not including the script manager and set coordinator. There was a strict differentiation between the actors and actresses and the roles they played. Jewish–Israelis played Jewish–Israeli characters while Palestinian–Israelis played Palestinian characters. This was due to the fact that few Jews in Israel speak Arabic. This differentiation also reflects the same racial differentiation in Israel (Shenhav and Yonah, 2008).
8. Grip workers are a name for technicians in the filmmaking and video and television production industries.
9. One researcher used to be an actress in the 1990s.
10. The Green Line is the (pre-) 1967 border or 1949 Armistice border, the demarcation line set out in the 1949 Armistice Agreements between the armies of Israel and those of its neighbors (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria) after the 1948 Arab–Israeli War. It served as the *de facto* borders of the State of Israel from 1949 until the Six-Day War in 1967.
11. "Jerusalem stone" is a name applied to various types of pale limestone, dolomite and dolomitic limestone, common in and around Jerusalem that have been used in building in this area since ancient times.
12. It is important to note that there were only Palestinian actresses on the set and no Palestinian female crew members. As the Palestinian set coordinator told us, the participation of women is not acceptable as crew members on the set, because it is regarded a male job which exposes females to "indecent" behaviors, according to the Muslim religion.

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