Palestine's Virtual Borders 2.0:

From a Non-Place to a User-Generated Space

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Abstract

In 2003 the Palestinian state received official recognition on the Web before it was established on the ground. The delegation of the .ps Country code Top level domain (CcTld) to the Palestinian Authority and its inclusion in the UN list of recognized countries and territories created an official Web-space in which a Palestinian state operated side-by-side with other sovereign states. Yet with the rise of Web 2.0 applications, the official representation of the Palestinian state partially disappeared. This study focuses on the shift in the spatial representation of the Palestinian state on the Web, from an officially acknowledged national Web space, followed by its partial disappearance in Web 2.0 spaces, to its reconstruction as a user-generated space. It examines Palestine's virtual borders on various Web 2.0 mapping platforms, along with the listing (and non-listing) of Palestine as a country in the registration procedure of popular Web 2.0 applications. It shows that on most mapping platforms the Palestinian Territory is underrepresented, and that the country's official representation on the UN list of recognized countries and territories is often omitted or modified on social media sites' registration forms. After analyzing the geo-politics of social media's drop-down country lists, this study argues that Web 2.0 spaces are unofficial Web-spaces, in which official representations of countries are not determined by diplomacy or approved by international institutions, but rather by interaction between commercial platforms and their users. Faced with the partial disappearance of their homeland, Palestinian users both in the Palestinian Territory and in the Diaspora thus become placeless participants of Web 2.0 spaces. They attempt to reclaim the virtual representation of their home country as a sovereign Palestinian state by protesting, uploading, tagging and generating content on Web 2.0 platforms. On platforms such as Facebook, Blogger and Google Maps, user activism and user-generated content has led to a spatial transformation from the country's non-listing and non-placement, to its official inclusion. Finally, this article makes a contribution to the theorization of political Web spaces by arguing that the Palestinian case complicates current views on relationships between the Web and the ground. Unlike the common perception that the virtual is grounded in the real, the overrepresentation of a Palestinian state in official Web spaces, in parallel with its underrepresentation in unofficial Web spaces, and users' treatment of virtual spaces as real spaces, indicate that these realms actually tend to merge, at least in the case of contested Web terrains and unsettled struggles for self-determination.

Introduction

Palestinian campaigning on the Web was at its peak during the first half of the 2000s, from the outburst of the Second Intifada in 2000, until the Israeli disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005¹. These political campaigns advocated intensively for the Palestinian right to self-determination in the Palestinian Territory² and protested against the Israeli occupation, military operations against Palestinian civilians and the construction of the Separation Wall, which was seen by Palestinians as a unilateral and unjust act of border-stating on the part of the occupying power³. As with political campaigns elsewhere on the Web during that time, most campaigns were led by international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs)⁴ and sought to achieve resonance in mainstream international and local media, a high rank in search engine results, and a dense network of hyperlinked Websites advocating for the Palestinian cause⁵.

The year 2005 saw changes in both Palestinian politics and Web dynamics. Although unrelated, the outcome of both processes was the decentralization of Palestinian advocacy on the Web. On a political level, events driven by the internal crisis between Fatah and Hamas – Hamas' victory in the Palestinian Legislative Elections in 2006 and consequent takeover of the Gaza Strip in 2007 – sabotaged all attempts to reach Palestinian internal unity. At the same time, Web dynamics underwent major changes that affected the ways in which content was distributed, ranked and linked, and the way in which people were connected on the Web. The rise of Web 2.0 applications – blogging platforms, social networking software and content-sharing applications – allowed users to connect, upload and modify content in ways that were previously the preserve of webmasters, but at the same time created "walled gardens" of content available only to registered users⁶. Web campaigning thus became a laborious task which had to be re-enacted time and again in each of the various closed Web spaces. For example, a picture of a child taken in a Palestinian refugee camp, uploaded to Flickr and tagged with the camp's name, would appear on Flickr's search results but nowhere else

¹ The demarcation of the period of the Second Intifada, or "Al Aqsa Intifada", is debatable. Among the suggested

² The question of naming the Palestinian Territory is also contested. The various official and unofficial names have political connotations and are often used exclusively by certain actors to make a political stand. As noted below, the UN refers to "Occupied Palestinian Territory", Palestinian sources use "Palestine", and the US administration refers to "West Bank and Gaza". Since the variety of names and their connotations will be at the heart of this study, the term "Palestinian Territory" is used by the author in order to avoid political attachments to any of the official and unofficial names presented in this study.

³ Miryiam Aouragh. "Everyday Resistance on the Internet: the Palestinian Context." *Journal of Arab & Muslim Media Research* 1.2 (2008): 109-130.

⁴ Craig Warkentin. Reshaping World Politics: NGOs, the Internet, and Global Civil Society. Rowman & Littlefield Pub Inc, 2001.

⁵ Richard Rogers and Anat Ben-David, "Coming to Terms: A Conflict Analysis of the Usage, in

Official and Unofficial Sources, of 'Security Fence,' 'Apartheid Wall,' and other Terms for the

Structure between Israel and the Palestinian Territories," Media, Conflict & War, 2, 3, 2010.

⁶ Richard Rogers. "Post-Demographic Machines," in: Annet Dekker and Annette Wolfsberger (eds.), *Walled Garden*. Amsterdam: Virtueel Platform, 2009, 29-39.

on the Web; users who had registered accounts on Facebook would have access to groups supporting the village Nihlin, which hosted weekly joint Palestinian-Israeli protests against the construction of the Separation Wall, but non-Facebook users would not; and access to the scarce information coming from Gaza during the media blackout in operation Cast Led in early 2009 was only available to Twitter users. Such changes in Web dynamics and Palestinian politics had a multi-layered effect on Palestinian campaigning on the Web: the fragmented Palestinian polity could no longer campaign univocally and jointly for the Palestinian cause, as the technologies previously used for such campaigning had become decentralized, and the prominent campaign actors, previously identified as international, non-governmental and grassroots organizations, had become individual users.

Despite the weakening effect of Web decentralization on Palestinian Web advocacy, another development in the spatial arrangement of the Web contributed to the creation of a unique Palestinian Web space. In what he terms "the grounding of cyberspace", Richard Rogers describes this development as a shift from the perception of the Web as a "space-less space", in which real geographical locations had no meaning, to the constant and gradual "revenge of geography", as evidenced by the localization of both Web content and devices, which eventually led to the grounding of the virtual in the real⁷. The gradual localization of search engine results and the circulation of local content, together with the rise of platforms dedicated to providing localized geographical data, created a new nationally determined spatial organization of the Web⁸. The Palestinian case is no exception to this trend. For example, in August 2009 Google launched its localized Palestinian search engine platform, Google.ps, thereby granting Palestinians the option of receiving localized search results from the Palestinian Territory. Until then, Palestinian users had to visit Google.jo, Google.eg or Google.co.il for local searches in Arabic⁹.

The official representation of the Palestinian state on the Web however still complicates the grounding of the virtual in the real. In 2000 the Palestinian state was granted official status on the Web with the delegation of the .ps national Country code Top Level Domain (CcTld)¹⁰, before it was established on the ground. Although the creation of an official Palestinian Web space virtualized the establishment of the Palestinian state, it stemmed directly from the Palestinian geo-political needs on the ground. In its current state, the Palestinian Territory is divided: the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are isolated

⁷ Richard Rogers. "The Politics of Web Space". [Unpublished MS], 2008.

http://www.govcom.org/publications/full_list/rogers_politics_web_space_2008_pre.pdf (accessed 29 September 2009).

⁸ Esther Weltevrede. "Thinking Nationally with the Web: A Medium-Specific Approach to the National Turn in Web Archiving". MA thesis, University of Amsterdam, 2009.

⁹ http://google.ps (accessed September 29, 2009).

¹⁰ The Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA). *IANA Report on Request for Delegation of the .ps Top-Level Domain.* 22 March, 2000. http://www.iana.org/reports/2000/ps-report-22mar00.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

from each other, and movement restrictions make it impossible for Palestinians from different cities to physically meet.

Palestinians are therefore currently reliant on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to maintain normal daily activity: ICTs are used by schools to keep education programs running, by hospitals and universities to maintain contact with the outside world, and by individuals who wish to maintain social contact, to inform, debate, and engage in political activity¹¹. Since 2007, political exchange between the Gaza Strip and the West bank has been totally reliant on ICTs, as Israel forbids Hamas ministers from Gaza to travel to the West Bank. Parliamentary sessions and voting are held simultaneously in Ramallah and Gaza, connected through video conferencing¹², and other ministerial and political deliberations between Ramallah and Gaza are always mediated via telephone, the Internet, or satellite.

Since considerable parts of Palestinian reality are currently connected through ICTs (and thus not physically), many view ICTs, and especially the Web, as *the* place where a Palestinian state currently exists: a space that is not bound by boundaries, checkpoints, access routes or airways. An official representation of Palestine on the Web was thus seen by Palestinian officials as affording great and unprecedented potential for creating a "promised cyberland", an idealized and imagined cyberspace to be used as a model for the anticipated state on the ground¹³.

The complex relationships between the virtual and the real are evident in the long process that preceded the delegation of the .ps CcTld. The Palestinian National Authority had started inquiring about the possibility of obtaining the .ps CcTld in 1997. The request was refused by the ICANN, since at the time Palestine was not included on the UN list of recognized countries and territories – a requirement for the delegation of a national CcTld. As an interim solution, an international top level domain, Palestine.int, was delegated to the Palestinian Government Computer Center in 1998 and was mainly used by Palestinian governmental sources. A year later, the country was included on the UN list of recognized countries and territories under the name "Palestinian Territories, Occupied". In 2000 the country name and the .ps country code were included on the international standard list "Codes for the representation of names of countries and their subdivisions" (ISO 3166-1)¹⁴ (see Table 1). ICANN accordingly delegated the .ps CcTld

¹¹Makram Khoury-Machool. "Palestinian Youth and Political Activism: the Emerging Internet Culture and New Modes of Resistance." *Policy Futures in Education* 5, no. 1 (2007): 17–36.

¹² Al Ayyam, "Through 'Video Conferencing', The New Palestinian Government Sworn in Before the President", March 30, 2006, (in Arabic),

http://www.al-ayyam.ps/znews/site/template/Doc_View.aspx?did=35395&Date=3/30/2006 (accessed September 29, 2009). For an English translation see http://www.jmcc.org/new/06/mar/hamasgov2.htm (accessed September 29, 2009).

¹³ Anat Ben-David. "The Promised Cyberland. Does the Palestinian State Already Exist on the Web?" Paper presented at the Amsterdam New Media Summer Talks, University of Amsterdam, 11 August 2008. See also Govcom.org, "Mapping the Palestinian Web-Space Sept-Nov 2007". http://www.govcom.org/pisp_maps1.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

¹⁴ International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Maintenance for ISO 3166 Country Codes. *English Country Codes and Code Elements*. http://www.iso.org/iso/english_country_names_and_code_elements (accessed September 29, 2009).

to the Palestinian Authority. For the first time, a country received official representation on the Web before it was established on the ground.

The creation of the official Palestinian Web thus reflects the complex relationships between the Web and the ground, which involve both grounding and virtualization of new kinds. The undetermined status of the Palestinian state on the ground is virtualized in a sovereign space on the Web, and Palestinian national aspirations are projected onto it. At the same time, the status of the Palestinian Web space is grounded in international diplomacy, not in the country's de-facto status on the ground (a point to which I will return).

The .ps domain is thus an official and internationally acknowledged Web space, subject to international standards and regulation, and maintained by Palestinian governmental bodies. This, however, contrasts with the representation of the Palestinian Territory in unofficial Web spaces comprised of "wall garden" Web 2.0 applications. These unofficial spaces are subject to the platforms' terms of use rather than to international and national regulations; their form is determined by the platforms' administrators rather than international standards, and their content is determined by individual users.

Therefore, despite the official legitimization granted to the Palestinian state on the Web, through the delegation of the .ps CcTld and the ISO 3166-1 list, the representation of a Palestinian virtual state partially disappears in many social networking software and on Web-based mapping platforms, thereby returning the status of the virtual cyberland into a non-virtual, grounded place. In these Web-spaces, Palestinian users and their sympathizers become placeless participants by default. For each platform available on the Web, they struggle to make Palestine's borders visible and to legitimize the listing of its official name on country lists by generating content, modifying data, uploading geocoded information onto maps, and signing online petitions.

This study thus focuses on the shift in the spatial representation of the Palestinian state on the Web, from an officially acknowledged national Web-space, followed by its partial disappearance in unofficial and decentralized "wall garden" Web 2.0-spaces, to its reconstruction as a user-generated space. Whilst the official and unofficial are seen to coexist on the Web¹⁵, the study shows that in the Palestinian case, official and unofficial representations actually form separate Web spaces. It examines Palestine's virtual borders on the various online mapping platforms and the listing (and non-listing) of Palestine as a country in the registration procedure of popular Web 2.0 applications, to show the tension between the country's non-placement in ready-made and commerciallydetermined applications, and its reclaiming by user-generated content.

This study also suggests that this tension could be read as a spatial shift from the depiction of Palestine as a "non-place", to borrow Marc Augé's term for transient, transparent and a-historical places¹⁶, to a "lived space", which is Henri Lefebvre's

¹⁵ Richard Rogers. Information Politics on the Web. The MIT Press, 2004.

¹⁶ Marc Augé. Non-places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity. Verso, 1995.

concept of the social and material construction of spaces¹⁷. Finally, this study revisits debates surrounding the relationships between the virtual and the real, and links them to the tension between the official and unofficial on the Web. It claims that the Palestinian case challenges understandings of the grounding of the virtual. The argument put forward here is that the virtualization and projection of an idealized Palestinian state on the Web, coupled with its grounding in international diplomacy and regulation in official Web spaces, as well as users' attempt to change Palestine's status to an official "Web country" in unofficial Web spaces, indicate that in the Palestinian case, at least, the two realms are actually merging.

Soft boundaries and self-determination

Border-stating and -mapping are considered to be a practice of power enacted by sovereign (or colonial) states in order to delineate the territory, people and objects under their rule¹⁸. As James Scott put it, the purpose of such mapping is to provide a simplified and legible grasp of the ruled¹⁹.

Throughout the twentieth century, the Palestinian Territory and its residents were subject to constant reading and mapping by various external powers (Ottoman, British, Jordanian and Israeli). The Israeli authorities use various surveillance technologies to manage the Palestinian population through mapping, monitoring and registration practices which, according to Elia Zureik, determine the boundaries of the Palestinian nation from without²⁰. Another example of an external mapping practice, designed to benefit a future and viable Palestinian state, was proposed by the US research and development organization RAND. This organization suggested an arc-shaped restructuring of Palestinian villages and cities and the construction of underground tunnels to physically connect the West Bank and Gaza and enable Palestinian sovereignty on a continuous terrain²¹. Such mapping not only offers a geographical re-arrangement to solve a political problem, but also proposes a new aesthetics for how this solution could be achieved. Instead of redrawing borders and lines, new shapes and forms are suggested.

RAND's geographical re-arrangement of the Palestinian Territory could be seen as an attempt to avoid the question of the state's future fixed borders, which has been one of the thorniest issues at the heart of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Although Israel does not recognize the June 4, 1967 boundary ("the Green Line") as its official border, this boundary was an administrative and de-facto boundary between Israel and Palestinian civilians at first, and then between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority, after the

Middle Eastern Studies 28, no. 2 (2001): 205–227.

¹⁷ Henri Lefebvre. *The Production of Space*. Wiley-Blackwell, 1992.

¹⁸ Benedict R.O. Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London and New York: Verso, 1991. See Also Patrick Carroll. *Science, Culture, and Modern State Formation*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2006.

¹⁹ James. C. Scott. Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed. Yale University Press, 1998.

²⁰ Elia Zureik. "Constructing Palestine through surveillance practices." British Journal of

²¹ RAND. *The Arc. A Formal Structure for a Palestinian State.* 2005. http://www.rand.org/palestine/ (accessed 29 September 2009).

signing of the Oslo interim peace accords in 1993²². The Oslo Accords avoided the question of final Palestinian borders, a topic both sides agreed to discuss during the implementation phase which, as of 2009, never took place. Israel's boundaries with the West Bank and Gaza are therefore still described as "soft borders", or as "a boundary in flux", subject to constant change²³. The route of the Separation Wall, for example, supposedly runs through the Green Line boundary, yet annexes parts of the West Bank around Jewish settlements and East Jerusalem to ensure Israeli sovereignty and security for its residents in these areas²⁴. While Israel's unilateral disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005 changed its border with Gaza, the state retained control on its airspace and territorial waters, population registry, imports and exports, and movement between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank²⁵.

Contrary to external mapping of the Palestinian Territory, Palestinian claims to their territory are evident in self-mapping practices²⁶. When it comes to the right to self-determination in a specific territory, the point of view from which mapping commences is relevant to the power relations between the map-maker and the mapped. The tension between how the map is viewed from the outside and how it is seen from within, and the controversy around the fixed borders which would replace the current soft boundaries between Israelis and Palestinians, should an agreement be reached, is also evident in Web 2.0 spaces. There, the disputed borders are constantly shifting, depending on the platforms that make them available on virtual maps, and on the information included on those maps by users. As I show further on, similar to the controversy around offline political maps, in Web 2.0 spaces the right to Palestinian self-determination is manifest in self-mapping practices and user-generated maps of the Palestinian Territory, which face direct competition with mapping and tagging practices generated by (pro-)Israeli users and other interest groups.

Palestinian borders 2.0

The Web now offers many mapping platforms equipped with technology to modify, add and tag geo-coded information onto virtual maps²⁷. However the decentralization of the mapping authority from the platform to the users remains limited. Users can upload data, tag and add information to maps, but can change neither the maps themselves nor the algorithms hidden in their back-end. The mapping technology underpinning each platform remains a commercially-protected "black box", not in its usual sense of settled

²² Government of the State of Israel, and Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO)."Declaration of Principles On Interim Self-Government Arrangements." September 13, 1993.

²³ David Newman and Clive Schofield. Boundaries in Flux. The 'Green Line' Boundary Between Israel and the

West Bank - Past, Present and Future. International Boundaries Research Unit, 1995. ²⁴ David Makovsky. "How to Build a Fence." Foreign Affairs 83 no.2 (2004): 50-64.

²⁵ B'Tselem. Israel's Control of the Airspace and the Territorial Waters of the Gaza Strip.

http://www.btselem.org/english/Gaza_Strip/Control_on_Air_space_and_territorial_waters.asp (accessed 29 September 2009).

 ²⁶ Rochelle Davis. "Mapping the Past, Re-creating the Homeland: Memories of Village Places in pre-1948 Palestine."
In *Nakba: Palestine. 1948*, ed. Ahmad H. Sa'di, and Lila Abu-Lughod, (NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 53–76.
²⁷ Matthew A. Zook and Mark Graham. "Mapping DigiPlace: Geocoded Internet Data and the Representation of Place." *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 34 no.3 (2007): 466-482.

contents and dynamics that require no further mention²⁸, but as a process which has a known input (a searched place), a known output (its location on a digital map), and an unknown mechanism which determines which areas will be depicted and how they should be named or searched for, especially around disputed areas. Users, then, can only respond by generating content showing different results, or by protesting. For example, in 2005 the Indian Government protested against Google Earth's depiction of the part of Kashmir, which it claims as its own, as belonging to Pakistan²⁹. Users also reported that Google Maps accessed from China depicted a different border between China and India, than the same map accessed from India³⁰.

As with other disputed areas around the world, the placement (or not) of the Palestinian Territory on various mapping platforms has revived and publicly opened the decadeslong dispute over Israel's borders with its Palestinian neighbors – a dispute that until now was debated around offline, often military classified maps³¹.

Our examination of Palestinian borders online started in August 2008 with a single observation: a search for "Palestine" on Google Maps was directed to Palestine, Texas, USA³². While searches for more specific areas and city names such as "West Bank", "Gaza" and "Ramallah" led to their correct areas on the map, these were gray, blank, and did not contain any geo-coded data or information usually available for other place markers. Moreover, geo-coded Wikipedia entries and photos with exact longitude-latitude coordinates of places within the Palestinian Territory, which can be uploaded as an additional layer to Google Maps, did not appear in Google Map's depiction of the West Bank and Gaza, while entries for Israeli cities and places did (see Figure 1). Thus, in August 2008 the Palestinian Territory on Google Maps was defined by its "blank" data or, so to speak, as a "non-place".

²⁸ Langdon Winner. "Upon Opening the Black Box and Finding it Empty: Social Constructivism and Philosophy of Technology". *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 18 (1993): 362-378.

²⁹ Times of India, "India Protests Google Kashmir Map", November 20, 2005.

³⁰ Sky Full of Clouds blog, "Google Maps on India and China". August 9, 2009.

http://skyfullofclouds.wordpress.com/2009/08/09/google-maps-on-india-and-china/ (accessed August 12, 2009). ³¹ Note that Israelis often complain that for decades, Israel's name was erased from these offline maps.

³² A similar search for Bethlehem was redirected to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. However, the redirection perhaps has more to do with the platform's American-centrism, as evidenced by the default US map on the opening page of Google Maps. http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Palestine&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=27.976484,79.013672&ie=UTF8&ll=31.777796,-

^{95.646973&}amp;spn=0.117035,0.308647&z=12&iwloc=A (accessed September 29, 2009).



Figure 1. The Palestinian Territory as blank areas on Google Maps. Screenshot taken from http://maps.google.com, 13 August 2008

Coined by Marc Augé, the term *non-place* refers to transient and transparent urban places devoid of history and identity, such as hotels, ATM machines, airports and supermarkets³³. Although the Web itself has already been claimed to be such a non-place³⁴, I would like to suggest that the representation of the Palestinian state is a non-place within geographically-determined Web spaces, a transparent place defined by its constantly shifting entry and exit points.

Palestinian users and their sympathizers are thus left with a placeless representation of their homeland and the territory of their national aspirations. As one blogger commented³⁵:

"Denying the whole Palestinian nation the right to be on the map can only be a gross error if one believes Google's slogan of "Do no Evil", but given Google's influence and presence on the Internet, this error can lead to the public believing that Palestine and its population of over 4 million does not exist, and that they have no right to existence."

Further examination reveals that the Palestinian Territory is underrepresented on most mapping platforms available on the Web. In Yahoo! maps, for example, the place marker is named "Occupied Palestinian Territories", and terms such as "West Bank" and "Gaza City" lead to their pinpoint location on the map³⁶. It was not however possible to query for "Jerusalem" within the West Bank, and the city is located on the Israeli side of the Green Line. To avoiding having to define Palestine as a country, Expedia goes so far as to define it as a "Region in Asia"³⁷. Zooming in on this area, the West Bank appears on

³⁶ http://maps.yahoo.com (accessed September 29, 2009).

³³ Marc Augé. Idem.

³⁴ Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin. Remediation: Understanding New Media. 1st ed. The MIT Press, 2000.

³⁵ Kawther Salam. "Did Google Push Palestine into the Sea?", The Kawther Salam Blog, June 6, 2007,

http://www.kawther.info/K20070606B.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

³⁷http://www.expedia.com/pub/agent.dll?qscr=mrdr&fmap=1&lats1=31.413122577872088&lons1=35.05315236771 991&alts1=1162®n1=2&plce1=Palestine+%28region%29%2C+Asia& (accessed September 29, 2009).

the map with the word "disputed" added in brackets. On Mapquest's drop-down menu one cannot select the country's name (or its derivatives) such as Palestine, or Palestinian Territories. Instead, West Bank and Gaza are offered as two different countries. Zooming in once again, the map shows only four Palestinian cities, written phonetically according to their Arabic names. Jerusalem however is not listed within the West Bank and is phonetically written in Hebrew³⁸.

On other mapping platforms the Palestinian Territory is granted more recognition, although the hidden back-ends of these platforms do not make it possible to infer whether or not this recognition is deliberate. For example, in National Geographic's Map-Machine, Jerusalem appears twice on the map, once on the Israeli side and once in the West Bank³⁰. MSN's Livesearch maps return different place markers for the query "Al Quds", Jerusalem's Arabic name which is East of the Green Line, and for the query "Jerusalem", which is on the Green Line⁴⁰. The mapping platform which seems to recognize Palestine the most is Multimap, based on MSN's Virtual Earth mapping technology, which returns the following question to the query of the keyword "Palestine": "*Did you mean: Palestine, West Bank, Palestinian Territory (Occupied)?*"⁴¹. Under this full definition, a zoom-in view of the map not only shows all Palestinian cities and villages in the West Bank (disputed); Wikipedia geo-coded entries appear on it as well. Jerusalem is given two names: West Jerusalem on the Israeli side, and East Jerusalem on the Palestinian side.

The conflict around the legitimacy and recognition of (East) Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state is one of the core issues that stand in the way of reaching a Palestinian-Israeli final agreement. Both sides claim the city as their own "eternal capital". Greater Jerusalem exemplifies the problem of soft boundaries between Israel and the Palestinian Territory: East Jerusalem neighborhoods and their surrounding villages are included under the municipal jurisdiction of Israel, yet their inhabitants are Palestinians. Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are not considered Israeli citizens; instead, they have been granted the special status of "permanent Israeli residents"⁴². As shown above, the ambiguity of this area's national identity is evident on most mapping platforms. Again, based on a commercially-protected mapping algorithm which does not make explicit whether the borders depicted are politically determined or arbitrarily shown, Jerusalem is either placed on the Israeli side, or included in the West Bank with various ambiguous positions. This ambiguity is also evident on Flickr's services to upload geocoded photos to maps (relying on Yahoo! Map technology)⁴³. Although Flickr's map includes Palestinian cities and place markers, there are many ambiguities as to the precise location of Jerusalem as an Israeli or a Palestinian city. When the word "Jerusalem" is

³⁸ http://europe.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&country=PS&addtohistory=&city= (accessed September 29, 2009).

³⁹ http://maps.nationalgeographic.com/map-machine#s=r&c=31.255074185421936,%2035.54351806640626&z=8 (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴⁰ http://www.bing.com/maps/ (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴¹ http://www.multimap.com/maps/?qs=palestine&countryCode=+ (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴² Menachem Klein. "Old and New Walls in Jerusalem." Political Geography 24.1 (2005): 53-76.

⁴³ http://www.flickr.com/map/(accessed September 29, 2009).

searched in Flickr's location search, the user is asked to choose from two place markers: *Jerusalem, Israel* or *Jerusalem, West Bank, Occupied Palestinian Territories*. However, after selecting the national affiliation of Jerusalem, the user is redirected to the *same* set of geolocated photos for the "two Jerusalems" (see Figure 2). Zooming into the precise location of Jerusalem on those maps, the ambiguity regarding the location of the city in relation to the Green Line becomes apparent. A query of "Lie Lie Lie Palestinian name for Jerusalem, leads to a map on which most of the geolocated photos are placed east of the Green Line. The set of photos is very different from the one returned when the searching for Jerusalem is with Flickr's location search (the photos are essentially taken by Palestinians, or at least in the Palestinian parts of Jerusalem). A query with the English word "Jerusalem" for all geo-tagged maps, on the other hand, shows a distribution of geo-tagged photos.



Figure 2. After selecting either "Jerusalem, West Bank", or "Jerusalem, Israel" the same set of photos appears on Flickr's location search. Screenshot taken from http://flickr.com/map on 13 August 2008.

As with the Arabic tagging of geo-coded photos of Jerusalem on Flickr, localized usergenerated data is used to claim the territory of Palestine on the various mapping platforms. For example, Palestine Remembered, an NGO devoted to commemorating all Palestinian historical places, has reversed the underrepresentation of the Palestinian Territory by creating an extension for Google Earth, with a comprehensive geo-coded listing of at least 5,600 Palestinian place markers⁴⁴. In this extension, Israeli cities and settlements are erased from the map.

Protests were also found in other Web spaces, especially in the blogosphere and in social media applications, where users appealed directly to the various platforms' administrators to include the Palestinian Territory on these maps. Such protests were in many cases successful. The Palestinian Territory and its allied Wikipedia geo-coded entries were eventually included in Google Maps towards the end of 2008 (see Figure 3). In Operation Cast Lead in January 2009, during which the Israeli Authorities enforced a media blackout in the Gaza Strip, most international media relied on mash-ups building

⁴⁴ http://www.palestineremembered.com/Articles/General/Story1913.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

on Google Maps to report on the Israeli military's operations in Gaza, and on Hamas rockets fired into southern Israeli cities⁴⁵. The reversal of Google Maps' policy, albeit not publicly declared, is also evident in Google's AdWords localized advertising services. As an Israeli blogger commented in August 2009, AdWords did not show Israeli ads in areas outside the Green Line, such as the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and the Jewish Settlements in the West Bank⁴⁶.



Figure 3. The West Bank and Gaza appear on Google Maps in 2009, including relevant Wikipedia geo-coded entries. Screenshot taken from http://maps.google.com on 12 August 2009.

Yet with the decentralization of the Web, the effects of such campaigns are limited to one Web space and to one platform at a time. I now move on to describing the inclusion and exclusion of Palestine as a world nation in the Web's most popular social media applications. Here, too, users have to struggle for the legitimization and recognition of the Palestinian state over and over again.

The geo-politics of Web 2.0 drop-down country lists

The partial disappearance of the Palestinian Territory from online mapping platforms is also evident in the country's listing in various Web 2.0 applications. After the Web overrepresentation of a state which had not received an official status on the ground, as previously shown with the .ps national CcTld and the official ISO list, the Palestinian state has partially disappeared in most Web 2.0 applications. Palestinian users both in the Palestinian Territory and in the Diaspora are thus faced with the recurring absence of their physical location and homeland, every time they subscribe to an international online service.

⁴⁵http://maps.google.com.au/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=109184941581299272392.00045fb68e6feba 9b17d4&t=h&ll=31.479916,34.494324&spn=0.24419,0.290451&z=12 (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴⁶ Uri Breitman. "Adwords' Israel is the Israel of the 67' borders" (In Hebrew), Freedom of Search blog, August 2, 2009, http://freedomofsearch.blogspot.com/2009/08/67.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

As part of the process of signing up for most Web 2.0 applications, users are often required to fill in their country name. In many applications, however, some countries are not listed, turning users from these countries into placeless participants. Whilst the ISO-3611 country list follows the United Nations' nomenclature for as many as 240 recognized countries and territories, none of the popular social media applications use the ISO list as it stands. Table 2 shows the ISO country names, compared to eight popular Web 2.0 applications, as of August 2008⁴⁷. Except for the movie resource site IMDB, which seems to use the ISO list, all applications show various changes to the list, either by delisting some countries, or by changing their names. For example, the ISO list applications name them as South and North Korea, respectively. Timor-L'este is often translated into East Timor and in many lists Serbia and Montenegro appear as one country, instead of their listing as separate countries in the ISO list.

The standard list is however not the only official list available on the Web. Other official lists, offered for example by the European Union⁴⁸ or the US administration, can also serve as a model for Web 2.0 drop-down country lists. The US CIA World Factbook country list, for example, proposes a different nomenclature to that of the UN, in order to reflect US foreign policy⁴⁹ (see Table 3). The CIA list refers to Burma (and not to Myanmar), and has separate entries for West Bank and Gaza (and not the Palestinian Territories, Occupied). It also includes Kosovo (the ISO list does not), since the USA is one of the 62 countries that have already recognized Kosovo's independence, whilst a UN resolution on this matter is still pending. The nomenclature of country lists, then, reflects official international policies. But does that translate into Web 2.0 spaces?

Since there is no one identical country list among the Web 2.0 applications examined, and since none of the lists are identical to the international diplomatic lists proposed either by the UN, the US or the EU, one can assume that these applications do not presume to operate in official Web spaces. Yet the variety of edits and delisting of certain countries from these lists indicate that even in an unofficial, socially-oriented Web space, political choices are made. Users have accused the professional networking site LinkedIn, for example, of following US sanction policies, as their country list does not include Iran, Sudan or North Korea. Syria was deleted from the list for a while, and then relisted⁵⁰. The country list offered by Flickr, on the other hand, shows extended political sensitivity as it adds the options "Disputed Territory" and "United Nations Neutral Zones", to the selection of countries.

⁴⁷ Web 2.0 Innovations. "2008's Most Popular Web 2.0 Sites". http://www.web2innovations.com/most-popular-web-2.0-sites.php (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴⁸ European Commission. "European Union in the World", http://ec.europa.eu/world/where/index_en.htm (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁴⁹ CIA, the World Factbook. "US Government Profiles of Countries and Territories Around the World",

https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/wq.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

⁵⁰ Jillian York. "Linked In Alienates Syrian Users. Why Now?" The Huffington Post, April 20, 2009,

 $http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jillian-york/linkedin-alienates-syrian_b_188629.html (accessed September 29, 2009).$

Whilst the Web is known for hosting both official and unofficial sources in a single space⁵¹, the analysis of drop-down country lists shows that the official does not penetrate Web 2.0 social media spaces. Web 2.0 spaces are instead unofficial and flexible political sandboxes in which countries are easily added and removed, based on the interaction between the applications, their administrators, and their users. Such is the case with the official representation of the Palestinian state on the Web. The status granted to the Palestinian state by the UN and by ICANN in one Web space, loses its status in social media spaces.

In most of the drop-down country lists examined the Palestinian Territory is often not listed as a country, a location, or a region (see Figure 4). The ISO 3166-1 standard name "Palestinian Territories, Occupied" rarely appears in these forms and the word "Occupied" is often removed.

On some platforms such as MySpace, the Palestinian Territory is simply not listed⁵². Others use different variations: separate entries for West Bank and Gaza (as with the CIA list), "Occupied Palestinian Territories", "Palestinian Occupied Territories" or "Palestinian Territory". Users respond to the underrepresentation of their homeland and put pressure on platforms to list Palestine as a country by forming groups, signing petitions and warning that they will stop using those platforms if Palestine is not added as a country. For example, Blogger, Google's blogging platform, eventually accepted these requests and "Palestinian Territory" was added to the list⁵³. After long debates, and recurrent listing and delisting, Facebook is currently the only platform that lists "Palestine" under its sovereign country name. The history of the fight over country code listings may be read from Facebook group activities, which showed a raging battle over the claiming of Palestine as a "real" Facebook place⁵⁴. The delisting of Palestine as a country from Facebook led to a flurry of Facebook groups petitioning and demanding the Facebook administrators to re-list Palestine. Other groups demanded that it remain delisted, as it is not (and to them should not) be a country. The tag cloud in Figure 5 is a sample of the heated debates that have been taking place on Facebook over the listing of Palestine as a country. The tag cloud is made up of a sample of groups on the issue and the size of the clouds represents the number of members in each group. Groups such as "Against Delisting Palestine from Facebook" and "Official Petition to get Palestine Listed as a Country" gathered more than 16,000 and 11,000 members respectively.

is.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9171691133 and http://is-

⁵¹ Richard Rogers. Information Politics on the Web. Idem.

⁵² MySpace also does not list a variety of dependent island-countries such as French Polynesia and Isle of Man. The non-listing of the Palestinian Territories together with these islands can be read as recognition of Palestine as a dependent, rather than sovereign, territory.

⁵³ For the bloggers' protest, please see: http://www.pledgebank.com/palestineblogs. For Google's response please see http://buzz.blogger.com/2006/03/updated-places-in-profiles.html (accessed September 29, 2009).

 $^{^{54}}$ See, for example, the following group: Re-List Palestine as a country/hometown. http://is-

is.facebook.com/posted.php?id=2324912280&start=60&hash=2cdd049c56786512cc4ffca521510422 (accessed September 29, 2009).

International Organization for Standardization	it myspace.com.		YouTube		Larths Begest Movie Database*		Dehotobucket
Please Select	Please Select	-	Please Select	-	Please Select	-	Please Select 💌
PAKISTAN	Norway	ĺ.	Turks and Caicos Islands	ĥ	Norway	1	Northern Mariana Islands
PALALI	Oman		Tuvalu	- 1	Occupied Palestinian Territory		Norway
	Palau		Ukraine	-	Oman Pakistan		Pakistan
PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, OCCUPIED	Panama		United Arab Emirates	_	Palau	- 1	Palau
PANAMA	Papua New Guinea		United Kingdom		Panama	- 1	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Peru		United States Minor Outlying Islands	-	Papua New Guinea Paraguay	- 1	Panama Panua New Guinea
PARAGUAY	Philippines		United States Virgin Islands		Peru	- 1	Paraguay
PERU	Pitcairn		Uruguay	-	Philippines	- 1	Peru
PHILIPPINES	Poland		Vanuatu	- 1	Pitcaim Privacy policy	- 1	Philippines
FHILIFFINES	Puerto Rico		Venezuela		Portugal		Poland
PITCAIRN	Qatar		Vietnam Wallis and Estura	_	Puerto Rico		Portugal
POLAND	Russian Federation		West Bank		Qatar de l'entre	- 1	Puerto Rico
PORTUGAL	Rwanda		Western Sahara	1	Reunion	- 1	Riunion
PUERTO RICO	Saint Kitts and Nevis		Yemen	1	Romania	- 4	Romania
	Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	-	Zimbabwe	4	Russian Federation		Russian Federation
flickr	Linked in.		digg		E Blogger		facebook
Please Select	Please Select	-	Please Select	•	Please Select	-	Please Select 💌
Nauru	Nicaragua	Ĩ.	Niue	ĩ	Netherlands (Nederland)		Northern Mariana Islands
Nepal	Niger		Norfolk Island		Netherlands Antilles		Oman
Netherlands Antilles	Nigeria		Northern Mariana Islands		New Caledonia		Pakistan
New Caledonia	Niue		Norway		New Zealand		Palau
New Zealand	Norfolk Island		Oman		Niger		Palestine
Nicaragua	Northern Mariana Islands		Pakistan		Nigeria		Papua New Guinea
Niger	Norway	100	Palau Delecticies Territory		Niue		Paraguay
Nigeria	Other		Palestinian Territory		Norfolk Island		Peru
Niue Norfolk leland	Pakistan Ralau		Panama Papua New Guinea		Northern Mariana Islands		Philippines Poland
North Korea	Palestinian Territory		Paraniay		North Korea.(조선)		Portugal
Northern Mariana Islands	Panama		Peru		Norway (Norge)		Qatar
Norway	Papua New Guinea		Philippines		Dakistan (Julia)		Republic of the Congo Romania
Oman	Paraguay		Pitcaim		Palau (Belau)		Russia
Pakistan	Peru		Poland		Palestinian Territory		Rwanda
Palestinian Occupied Territories	Philippines		Portugal		Panama (Panamá)		Saint Kitts and Nevis
a aroundir oodupied remones	Li Pitcairn		Puerto Rico		Papua New Guinea		same vincent and the urenadines
	Poland	4	Qatar	4	Paraguay		
	Portugal Ruorto Rico	Ŧ	Remania	Ŧ	Peru (Perú)		
	and the Prints		11000000	100	Philippines (Pilipinas)		*

Figure 4. The listing of the Palestinian Territory in the registration forms popular Web 2.0 applications. Image designed by Marieke van Dijk and Tjerk Timan.

tagcloud23-10-15-08-08	Digital Methods Initiative ^{15 August} 08				
	Map generated by tools.digitalmethods.net				
Against Delisting Palestine fr	om Facebook (162				
cial relition to get ralestine instea as a country (11000)					
If Palestine is removed from Facebook Im closing my account (6781)					
Action against Facebook delisting PALESTINE as a country/Hometown (4837)					
Palestine is not of country. Delist it from Facebook as one! (3482) No Such Thing as Palestine?REALLY!? (3297)					
Re-list Palestine as Country/Hometown!!!! (2036) Palestine is a country ABOVE YOUR NOSES (1212) Get the Palestine network off facebook (1145) I am Palestinian (843)					
Proud To Be PALESTINIAN (665) Arguing on Facebook is the Only Way to Solve the Israel/Palestine Problem (663) AGAINST this group: (470) PALESTINE FACEBOOK ADVOCACY WEEK (330) All Scouts on Facebook – (248)					
Facebook Has No Right To Say I Live In Palestine (207) WHO LOVES PALESTINE ON FACEBOOK (161) Facebook admin, why did u delete free palestine fans page? palestine the (124)					
if face book didn't get PALESTINE to country list i'm leaving facebook (113) miss facebook palestine 2007 (55) Official Petition to Have Palestine Removed as a Country On Facebook (44)					
Palestine is not a country!Delist it from Facebook as a country! (41) Palestine is not a country: Delist it from Facebook (36) Palestine is not a country.	stine is not a country; delist it from facebook as a country (19)				
how many ppl love palestine on facebook!!!? (14) Leave israel/Palestine debate out of faceboo	k (13) Hey Facebook, add Palestine as a Hometown! (6) Why is Palestine and Serbia are not considered in facebook Hometown List (1)				

Figure 5. A tag cloud of Facebook groups debating the listing and delisting of Palestine as a "Facebook country". Tags were resized according to the groups' number of members. Generated by http://tools.digitalmethods.net, on 15 August 2008.

In a way, the struggle for the legitimization of the Palestinian state is translated into its symbolical representation as a "Facebook country", where users from both sides of the conflict identify the inclusion or exclusion of the country in a social media platform as a legitimization of this country's right to existence on the ground. The debate is thus projected from unofficial to official Web space, and from virtual to real, to the extent of identification of the two realms.

The virtual and the real indeed take part in the same political process. As with technologies on the ground that form soft boundaries between Palestinians and Israelis (such as fences, separate roads and checkpoints), platform-based impediments prevent Palestinian and Israeli Facebook users from changing the representation of the conflict on the ground. Even after the inclusion of Palestine as a home country, one cannot join the Palestine network and the Israel network at the same time.

Conclusions: The revenge of geography in Palestinian user-generated spaces

On the Web, Palestinian boundaries are constantly shifting. This is driven not so much by political macro-actors, as by an interaction between commercially-determined and globally-oriented Web-spaces, and their constant modification and protest by (pro) Palestinian users. In Web 2.0 applications, the transition from non-inclusion to an official representation of the Palestinian state characterizes a new spatial arrangement in which people, objects and technologies produce political spaces on the Web. This transition could be read as a shift from the spatial arrangement of Palestine as a "non-place", as described earlier with the disappearance of the Palestinian Territory from Google Maps in 2008, to the inclusion of "Palestine" as Facebook country as a user-generated "lived space", to borrow Henri Lefebvre's concept of socially and materially produced spaces⁵⁵. From the delegation of the .ps domain, to the inclusion in Google Maps and enlisting of the country's name in Blogger and Facebook, this interaction between users and technologies leads to the (re)claiming of Webs paces as Palestinian spaces, one platform at a time.

The Palestinian case thus complicates the concept of the grounding of the virtual in the real. The official representation of a virtual Palestinian state in the national .ps CcTld and its inclusion in the ISO country list could be read as a virtual realization of a political aspiration, which is not materialized on the ground. Moreover, whilst an allocation of any national Web-space is part and parcel of the gradual localization of the Web, the delegation of the .ps domain to the Palestinian Authority is grounded more in international diplomacy than in the situation on the ground. The complex relationship between the virtual and the real is also evident in Web 2.0 applications, which show partial disappearance of the Palestinian state, since the country does not appear in many of the maps or in the drop-down country lists. On the one hand, Web 2.0 applications construct non-diplomatic, geographical and social media spaces in which the representation of the Palestinian state is grounded in its current non-state status. This

⁵⁵ Henri Lefebvre, Idem.

grounding is being virtualized again by user-generated content, which turns these spaces into politically claimed national spaces. The treatment of a virtual representation of a Palestinian state as an indication to its right to existence on the ground – as evidenced in the heated debates around the depiction (and non-depiction) and listing (and non-listing) of Palestine as a state in most Web 2.0 applications – shows that as long as the dispute around the question of Palestine is not settled, the virtual and the real will continue to merge.

The Palestinian case also complicates views of 'side-by-sideness' of official and unofficial sources on the Web. National Web representations which are given official international recognition do not seem to have effect in social-media spaces. These spaces are constructed primarily through bottom-up processes, where the interaction between the internal politics of Web 2.0 applications and the users' responses to them is responsible for their shaping as political spaces.

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Table 1. ISO 3166-1 English Country Names and Code Elements

Afghanistan Åland Islands Albania Algeria American Samoa Andorra Angola Anguilla Antarctica Antigua And Barbuda Argentina Armenia Aruba Australia Austria Azerbaijan Bahamas Bahrain Bangladesh Barbados Belarus Belgium Belize Benin Bermuda Bhutan Bolivia, Plurinational State Of Bosnia And Herzegovina Botswana Bouvet Island Brazil British Indian Ocean Territory Brunei Darussalarr Bulgaria Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia Cameroon Canada Cape Verde Cayman Islands Central African Republic Chad Chile China Christmas Island Cocos (Keeling) Islands Colombia Comoros Congo Congo, The Republic Of The Democratic Cook Islands Costa Rica Côte D'ivoire Croatia Cuba Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Diibouti Dominica Dominican Republic Ecuador

Egypt El Salvador Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Entrea Estonia Ethiopia Falkland Islands (Malvinas) Faroe Islands Fiii Finland France French Guiana French Polynesia French Southern Territories Gabon Gambia Georgia Germany Ghana Gibraltar Greece Greenland Grenada Guadeloupe Guam Guatemala Guernsey Guinea Guinea-Bissau Guyana Haiti Heard Island And Mcdonald Islands Holy See (Vatican City State) Honduras Hong Kong Hungary Iceland India Indonesia Iran, Islamic Republic Of Iraq Ireland Isle Of Man Israel Italy Jamaica Japan Jersey Jordan Kazakhstar Kenya Kiribati Korea, De Republic Of Democratic People's Korea, Republic Of Kuwait Kyrgyzstan Lao I Republic People's Democratic Latvia Lebanon Lesotho Liberia

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya Liechtensteir Lithuania Luxembourg Macao Macedonia. The Former Yugoslav Republic Of Madagascar Malawi Malaysia Maldives Mali Malta Marshall Islands Martinique Mauritania Mauritius Mayotte Mexico Micronesia, Federated States Of Moldova, Republic Of Monaco Mongolia Montenegro Montserrat Morocco Mozambique Myanmar Namibia Nauru Nepal Netherlands Netherlands Antilles New Caledonia New Zealand Nicaragua Niger Nigeria Niue Norfolk Island Northern Mariana Islands Norway Oman Pakistan Palau Palestinian Territory, Occupied Panama Papua New Guinea Paraguay Peru Philippines Pitcairn Poland Portugal Puerto Rico Qatar Réunior Romania Russian Federation Rwanda Saint Barthélemy Saint Helena Saint Kitts And Nevis Saint Lucia

Saint Martin Saint Pierre And Miquelon Saint Vincent And The Grenadines Samoa San Marino Sao Tome And Principe Saudi Arabia Senegal Serbia Seychelles Sierra Leone Singapore Slovakia Slovenia Solomon Islands Somalia South Africa South Georgia And The South Sandwich Islands Spain Sri Lanka Sudan Surina Svalbard And Jan Mayen Swaziland Sweden Switzerland Syrian Arab Republic Taiwan, Province Of China Tajikistan Tanzania, United Republic Of Thailand Timor-Leste Togo Tokelau Tonga Trinidad And Tobago Tunisia Turkey Turkmenistan Turks And Caicos Islands Tuvalu Uganda Ukraine United Arab Emirates United Kingdom United States United States Minor Outlying Islands Uruguay Uzbekistar Vanuatu Vatican City State Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic Of Of Viet Nam Virgin Islands, British Virgin Islands, U.S. Wallis And Futuna Western Sahara Yemen Zambia Zimbabwe

Facebook	Digg	Photobucket	Flickr	MySpace
Missing ISO countries	Missing ISO countries	Missing ISO countries	Missing ISO countries	Missing ISO countries
Aland Islands	Aland Islands	Saint Barthélemy	Guernsey Jolo Of Man	Aland Islands
American Samoa	British Indian Ocean Territory	Serbia	Isle Of Man	French Southern
Antigua And Barbuda	French Southern Territories	ocrom	Saint Barthélemy	Territories
Bahamas	Guam	Edits to ISO country names	Saint Martin	Guadeloupe
Bouvet Island	Heard Island And Mcdonald Islands	land Islands		Guernsey
British Indian Ocean Territory	Isle Of Man Marshall Islanda	Bolivia Eropah Polynosia and Tabiti	Edits to ISO country	Isle Of Man
Guernsev	Micronesia, Federated States Of	Korea, Democratic People's	Bolivia	Martinique
Heard Island And Mcdonald	Northern Mariana Islands	Republic of (North)	Brunei	Mayotte
Islands	Palau	Korea, Republic of (South)	Ivory Coast	New Caledonia
Jersey	Saint Kitts And Nevis Saint Martin	Laos Macau	Croatia Falkland Islands	Palestinian Territory,
Réunion	United States Minor Outlying Islands	Macedonia	French Guyana	Réunion
Saint Barthélemy	Wallis And Futuna	Serbia and Montenegro	Iran	Saint Barthélemy
Saint Pierre And Miquelon	F.F. (190	Myanmar (Burma)	North Korea	Saint Martin
South Georgia And The South Sandwich Islands	Bolivia	Riunion	Laos	Miquelon
Timor-Leste	Congo	Taiwan	Libya	Saint Vincent And The
United States Minor Outlying	Congo	Tanzania	Macau	Grenadines
Islands	Falkland Islands	Venezuela	Macedonia	Sao Tome And Principe Wallis And Eutopa
Edits to ISO country names	Kazakstan	St. Helena	Serbia and Montenegro	walls fille Futura
Bolivia	North Korea		Palestinian Occupied	Edits to ISO country
Brunei	South Korea		Territories	names
Faikland Islands The Gambia	Lao Macau		Pitcairn Islands Russia	Bolivia Zaire
United States	Macedonia		Saint Helena and	Croatia (Hrvatska)
Iran	Moldova		Dependencies	Guyana
North Korea	Palestinian Territory		Serbia and Montenegro	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
South Korea Laos	Tanzania Venezuela		Syria Taiwan	Laos Macau
Libya	Serbia and Montenegro		Tanzania	Macedonia, Republic of
Macau	St. Lucia		East Timor	Micronesia, Federated
Macedonia	St. Pierre And Miquelon		Venezuela	States of
Palestine	St. Vincent/Grenadines South Georgia		Vietnam British Virgin Islands	St. Helena
Paraguai	Taiwan		US Virgin Islands	Slovakia (Slovak
Russia	Tanzania		e e	Republic)
Netherlands Antilles	East Timor		Countries added to ISO	Svalbard and Jan Mayen
Syria Taiwan	Venezuela Vietnam		Disputed Territory	Taiwan
Tanzania	Great Britain		Iraq-Saudi Arabia Neutral	Tanzania, United
Venezuela			Zone	Republic of
Vietnam US Viscia Islanda			Spratly Islands	East Timor
US Virgin Islands British Virgin Islands			Zone	Venezuela Virgin Islands (British)
ibilian virgin islands			Zone	Virgin Islands (U.S.)
				Countries added to ISO
				list Former Vuccelaria
				DoDDs Schools
Blogger	IMDB	LinkedIn		
Missing ISO Countries	No Missing ISO Countries	Missing ISO Countries		
Saint Martin	Edits to ISO country names	Guernsev		
	Bolivia	Iran, Islamic Republic Of		
Edits to ISO country names	Falkland Islands	Isle Of Man		
Bolivia Bospia and Herzegovina	South Georgia Toiwan	Jersey		
Brunei (Brunei Darussalam)	Venezuela	Svrian Arab Republic		
Cocos Islands		Taiwan, Province Of China		
Falkland Islands		E 1. 100		
Iran North Korea		Edits to ISO country names Bolivia		
South Korea		Central African Republic		
Laos		Democratic Republic of the		
Libya		Congo		
Micronesia		Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) East Timor		
Moldova		Korea (North)		
Palestinian Territories		Korea		
Russia		Laos Libua		
Taiwan		Macedonia		
Tanzania		Moldova		
Venezuela		Serbia and Montenegro		
Countries added to ISO list		Sultanate of Oman Palestinian Territory		
Serbia and Montenegro		S.Georgia And S. Sandwich		
0		Islands		
		Slovak Republic		
		Taiwan		
		Caribbean Nations		
		.		
		Countries added to ISO list		
		Other		
		Yugoslavia		
]	

Table 2. ISO 3166-1 and popular Web 2.0 drop-down country lists compared

Table 3. The CIA World Factbook and the European Union's country lists compared to ISO-3166-1, showing different nomenclatures

CIA World Factbook (US)	Euopean Union		
Missing ISO Countries	No Missing ISO Countries		
Åland Islands			
Guadeloupe	Different country names than ISO list		
Martinique	Bolivia		
Réunion	Congo (Brazzaville)		
	Congo (Kinshasa)		
Different country names than ISO list	Ivory Coast		
Bahamas, The	Hong Kong SAR		
Bolivia	Iran		
Brunei	Korea (North)		
Congo, Democratic Republic of the	Korea (South)		
Congo, Republic of the	Kyrgyz Republic		
Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)	Laos		
Gaza Strip	Libya		
Guyana	Macao SAR		
French Southern and Antarctic Lands	Micronesia (Fed. State)		
Gambia, The	Moldova		
Iran	Myanmar (Burma)		
Korea, North	Occupied Palestinian Territory		
Korea, South	Russia		
Laos	Syria		
Libya	Saint-Vincent		
Macau	Taiwan		
Macedonia	Tanzania		
Moldova	United States of America		
Burma	Vatican City		
West Bank	Venezuela		
Pitcairn Islands	Vietnam		
Russia	East Timor		
Saint Barthelemy			
Jan Mayen	Countries added to the list		
Syria	Kosovo under UN Resolution		
Taiwan			
Tanzania			
Venezuela			
Vietnam			
British Virgin Islands			
Virgin Islands			
Countries added to the list			
Spratly Islands			
Kosovo			
European Union			