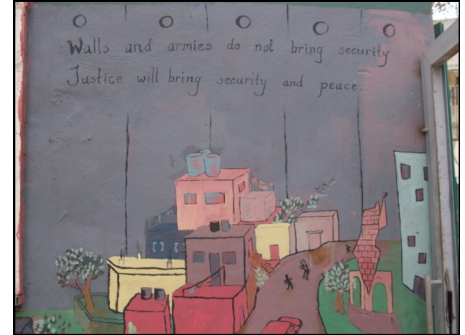


# Jess in Palestine

I went out with CPT (Christian Peacemaker Teams- [www.cpt.org](http://www.cpt.org)). They run two week 'delegations' in Iraq, Columbia, Palestine and Northern Canada where they work with the first nations people. Their remit is to support people in non-violent resistance to war/military occupation/oppression. In Palestine, they're based in a village called At-Tuwani where the whole village has opted to resist the Israeli occupation through non-violent means (radical stuff!) and in the city of Hebron (both places located in the West Bank).



In my photos...the separation wall surrounds the West Bank/carves up Jerusalem. Supposed to be for security reasons- in reality it's a method of control- divides communities, destroys small business and makes travel difficult/impossible for Palestinians, but has inspired some pretty impressive graffiti.



Atta is a Palestinian who we stayed with- he epitomises the struggle. He's had his home demolished THREE times (in the photo he's standing on the rubble, I think). Imprisoned and abused and looks about a million years old, but he's actually only about forty. A lovely family and three gorgeous kids. He's got a new house now and after lots of legal wrangling by charities on his behalf, it, apparently, won't be knocked down. But he's a farmer, and the week we



arrived, he'd just had his whole tomato crop destroyed by soldiers pulling up the irrigation system which was apparently using Israeli water. The school kids in the picture are from the village of At-uwani. They have to be accompanied to school, because their route passes near an Israeli settlement and they've been assaulted by the settlers. Grown men attacking school children. For pity's sake.



The Dheisheh refugee camp was created to house some of the people displaced by the 1948 war - and was a pretty miserable place. It was meant to be temporary, but families are still living there (housing has been improved, but there are still plenty of social issues). There's graffiti all over the camp- the portraits tend to be of Palestinians who have been killed resisting the occupation. The family that we stayed with had a brother who was killed in this way, and another brother who had been exiled to Gaza.



The barley sowing was an act of non-violent resistance that we (and a whole bunch of peace activists from all over) took part in - the Bedouin people have also suffered under the occupation, but you don't really hear about that much. Lots of their land has been annexed by Israel- making farming

impossible. The land that we were sowing historically belonged to the Bedouin, but now it's 'illegal' for them to work it. The sowing was an act of solidarity, and more symbolic than anything else. As soon as the barley sprouts, the Israelis will plough it all back in (like they did last year).



The photo of the South Hebron Hills doesn't really do it justice! We walked for a couple of hours to a small village called Tuba, where we spent the night with cave-dwelling families there. It feels vast and ancient and biblical. In the distance, you can just about see the hills on the opposite bank of the river Jordan. And there's a cheesy photo of the whole gang- but isn't the light amazing!

