

The Gender-Based Violence Prevention Mailing List

An opt-in mailout that includes resources, event announcements and other news and articles related to gender-based violence prevention, sexual violence prevention and healthy relationships using a critical anti-racist, intersectional, and decolonial framework that call out anti-semitism and Islamophobia.

These resources use a power analysis and support critical thinking and action on transforming conditions that enable harm and creating ones that promote healing, care, dignity and liberation.

These resources aim to support 2SLGBTQ+ youth with multiple identities and belonging to BLACK, INDIGENOUS, RACIALIZED and DISABLED communities. They support of Indigenous sovereignty, Indigenous self-determination and LAND BACK.

What's in this issue?

1. Understanding Antisemitism at its Nexus with Israel and Zionism (Resource)
2. Architect of apartheid: *Canada's support for Israel has taken many forms, but perhaps its greatest gift has been its example* (Article)
3. Opinion: Sheikh Jarrah highlights the violent brazenness of Israel's colonialist project (Article)
4. NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh calls for Canada to block arms sales to Israel amid escalating violence (Article)
5. Teshuvah: A Jewish Case for Palestinian Refugee Return (Essay)
6. Angela Davis on Black Lives Matter, Palestine, and the Future of Radicalism (Interview)
7. Palestinian families and children are being killed. Why is it so quiet? (Article)
8. Thousands of pro-Palestine protesters gather at Nathan Phillips Square to condemn Gaza Strip violence (Article)
9. Teaching Palestine/Israel: A Multiple Narratives Approach (Online Curriculum Resource)
10. Jewish Voice for Peace: RESOURCES
11. Why are Palestinians protesting? Because we want to live (Article)
12. Continuously Updated Masterlist of Sources on Palestine (Resources by multiple researchers,

14. B'Tselem – The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories: “A regime of Jewish supremacy from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea: This is apartheid” (Human Rights REPORT)

15. Human Rights Watch: “A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution” (Human Rights REPORT)

1. Understanding Antisemitism (Resource)

This document endeavors to define antisemitism so that it is relevant to the current context worldwide — especially with regard to the relationship between antisemitism, and Israel and Zionism. It is not meant as a legal document but rather as a guide for policymakers and community leaders as they grapple with the complexities at the nexus of these issues. Draft November 22, 2020

SOURCE: [Israel and Antisemitism](#)

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Understanding Antisemitism at its Nexus with Israel and Zionism ¹

Antisemitism

Antisemitism consists of anti-Jewish attitudes, actions or systemic conditions. It includes negative beliefs and feelings about Jews, hostile behavior directed against Jews, and conditions that discriminate against Jews and impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life.

Uniting all of antisemitism's strands is a persistent demonization that casts Jews not only as "others" (i.e., as intrinsically different or alien) but also as irredeemably threatening and dangerously powerful. There are multiple reasons that people may have for opposing Zionism and/or Israel. Such opposition does not necessarily reflect specific anti-Jewish animus nor purposefully lead to antisemitic behaviors and conditions. For example, someone might oppose the principle of nationalism or ethnonationalist ideology, of which Zionism is an example. Someone's personal or national experience may have been adversely affected by the creation of the State of Israel (e.g., Palestinians for whom Zionism/Israel has created inequality and/or led to exile). Indeed, there are Jewish anti-Zionists who hold ethical and religious convictions that oppose a Jewish state. None of these motivations or attitudes toward Israel and/or Zionism necessarily constitute antisemitic behavior. as troublemakers, shysters, capitalists, anarchists, communists, sexual degenerates, etc. The elements that make up antisemitism derive from various historical conditions, and in our current time combine to form pejorative claims that include religion, race, culture and politics. They portray Jews as secretive, manipulative, untrustworthy, controlling, and dangerous — as well as responsible for other people's suffering.

Understanding and addressing antisemitism is important in its own right, and it is a critical part of the broader struggle against all forms of oppression.

Antisemitic behaviors and conditions may emerge from indifference, stereotyping, or the rejection of Jewish perspectives and interests because they are held by Jews. It is even possible to engage in antisemitic behavior, or to promote antisemitic conditions, without holding expressly prejudicial attitudes toward Jews. In some cases, antisemitic behaviors and conditions may coexist with positive attitudes toward certain Jews or Jewish institutions.

Antisemitism can present in different forms; people change it and adapt it to their own social, political, cultural, religious, and historical circumstances. It can be used to target Jews of all races, denominations, gender identities, levels of observance, and political ideologies.

Antisemitism fulfills a social function: It provides an explanation for social disorders. People use it to demonize and fuel the oppression of any minority and all minorities ³, while fomenting division between Jews and other minorities.

As the embodiment/realization of collective Jewish organization and action, Israel is a magnet for and a target of antisemitic behavior. Thus, it is important for Jews and their allies to understand what is and what is not antisemitic in relation to Israel.

Antisemitism, Israel, and Zionism

Israel and Zionism:

Historically, and especially since its establishment as a state in 1948, Israel has served as one expression of Jewish national identity. Zionism is a political ideology that says the Jewish people constitute a modern national collective. During the 20th century, Jews in many European and Middle Eastern countries were assaulted, oppressed, and economically deprived, culminating in the murder of 6,000,000 Jews in the Holocaust. This led most Jews worldwide to embrace Israel and Zionism.

As a sovereign state and a member of the United Nations, Israel has the rights and responsibilities of other sovereign states. It is subject to praise and condemnation, support and opposition, according to the expectations and provisions of its international and domestic relationships and obligations. Zionism asserts that the Jewish people should be able to exercise self-determination in their ancestral homeland. Beyond this core affirmation, the word Zionism often means different things to different people, and should therefore be used with precision. There are numerous varieties of Zionism and many attempts to appropriate the term in service of a particular political perspective.

Zionism makes no judgment regarding the justice or wisdom of particular Israeli governmental policies (e.g., Israel's precise borders or the character of its democracy).

If a person identifies as a "Zionist," such association does not entail *carte blanche* approval of all or even any policies or politics of a specific Israeli government. Similarly, "anti-Zionist" is not an appropriate label for a speaker merely because he or she opposes specific Israeli policies.

Criticism of Israel and Zionism:

Criticism of Zionism and Israel, opposition to Israel's policies, or nonviolent political action directed at the State of Israel and/or its policies should not, as such, be deemed antisemitic.

Using accusations of antisemitism as a tool to suppress criticism of Israel is dangerous on many levels. It distracts attention from *bona fide* antisemitism, infringes on the principle of freedom of expression, and militates against constructive dialogue and debate among people with differing opinions.

Even contentious, strident, or harsh criticism of Israel for its policies and actions, including those that led to the creation of Israel, is not *per se* antisemitic. This includes critiques of specific forms of Zionism that are incompatible with the equal dignity or self-determination of others (e.g., forms of Zionism which are opposed in concept to the existence of a Palestinian state or to any other credible mechanism for upholding Palestinian democratic rights).

Generally speaking, judging Israel using the same standards applied to other countries is not antisemitism. Paying disproportionate attention to Israel and/or treating it differently than other countries is not *prima facie* evidence of antisemitism. There are numerous reasons for treating Israel differently or devoting special attention to Israel, among them that Israel receives more military aid than any other country or that someone has a special religious connection with Israel. Singling out Israel because it is a Jewish state, using standards different than those applied to other countries, is antisemitism.

Opposition to Zionism and/or Israel:

There are multiple reasons that people may have for opposing Zionism and/or Israel. Such opposition does not necessarily reflect specific anti-Jewish animus nor purposefully lead to antisemitic behaviors and conditions. For example, someone might oppose the principle of nationalism or ethnonationalist ideology, of which Zionism is an example.⁷ Someone's personal or national experience may have been adversely affected by the creation of the State of Israel (e.g., Palestinians for whom Zionism/Israel has created inequality and/or led to exile). Indeed, there are Jewish anti-Zionists who hold ethical and religious convictions that oppose a Jewish state. None of these motivations or attitudes toward Israel and/or Zionism necessarily constitute antisemitic behavior.

When is criticism or opposition to Zionism and/or Israel antisemitic?

All claims of antisemitism, like all claims of discrimination and oppression in general, should be given serious attention. Arguments that claims of antisemitism are *always* or *primarily* tools to suppress criticism of Israel or opposition to its policies often justify the dismissal of Jewish concerns, allowing even serious cases of antisemitism to go unchallenged. In particular, antisemitic speech or conduct is not insulated simply because it styles itself as "criticism of Israel."

Whether or not speech or conduct about Zionism and Israel is antisemitic should be based on the standards for speech or conduct that apply to antisemitic behavior in general. Thus, it is antisemitic to promote myths, stereotypes or attitudes about Zionism and/or Israel that derive from and/or reinforce antisemitic accusations and tropes. These include:

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- Characterizing Israel as being part of a sinister world conspiracy of Jewish control of the media, economy, government or other financial, cultural or societal institutions; ⁴
 - Indiscriminately blaming suffering and injustices around the world on a Jewish conspiracy or as the maligning hand of Israel or Zionism. ⁵
 - Holding individuals or institutions, because they are Jewish, *a priori* culpable of real or imagined wrongdoing committed by Israel. ⁶
 - Considering Jews to be *a priori* incapable of setting aside their affinity/loyalty to the Jewish people and/or Israel. ⁷
 - Denigrating or denying the Jewish identity of certain Jews because they are perceived as holding the “wrong” position (whether too critical or too favorable) on Israel. ⁸
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Other cases in which criticism of Zionism and Israel or opposition to Israel’s policies might be deemed antisemitic include:

- Including symbols and images that present Jews worldwide as collectively guilty for the actions of the State of Israel.
 - Attacking a Jew because of her/his relationship to Israel. Conveying intense hostility toward Jews who are connected to Israel in a way that intentionally or irresponsibly (acting with disregard to potential violent consequences) provokes antisemitic violence.
 - Treating Israel in a negative manner based on a claim that Jews in particular should be denied the right to define themselves as a people and to exercise self-determination.
 - Advocating a political solution that denies Jews the right to define themselves as a people, thereby denying them because they are Jews the right to self-determination, and/or denying Jews the right to physical safety and full human, civil, and religious rights.
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Overall, the criterion for judging whether instances are antisemitic is the same criterion for judging antisemitic behavior in any of its forms. It is antisemitic if it includes harmful hostile, degrading, or discriminatory behaviors directed toward Jews — in word and/or in action, that harm Jews — and significantly impede their ability to participate as equals in political, religious, cultural, economic, or social life.

¹ This paper was drafted by the Nexus Task Force, which was a project of the Knight Program on Media and Religion at the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at USC, examining the issues at the nexus of antisemitism and Israel in American politics.

² For the purposes of this paper we are using the term “antisemitic” and “antisemitism” to refer to all forms of anti-Jewish behavior. We also use “antisemitism” (without a hyphen) to emphasize that there is no ideology of “Semitism” that antisemites oppose — antisemitism is not, for example, hostility towards speakers of Semitic language groups. For the purposes of this paper we are using the term “antisemitic” and “antisemitism” to refer to all forms of anti-Jewish behavior. We also use “antisemitism” (without a hyphen) to emphasize that there is no

ideology of “Semitism” that antisemites oppose—antisemitism is not, for example, hostility towards speakers of Semitic language groups.

³ See [“Skin in the Game”](#) by Eric Ward for an articulation of the ways in which antisemitism animates white nationalism.

⁴ From the Iranian run Press TV broadcasting in North America and Europe: “Netanyahu still has his hands on the strings that control puppets around the world, the press, entertainment industry, key world leaders.”

⁵ An Algerian news site blamed the “Zionist Entity” (Israel) for the Coronavirus and a collaboration between a “Zionist Institute” and a French Jewish billionaire. <https://almasdar-dz.com/?p=103657>

⁶ A study by the UK based Institute for Jewish Policy Research showed “almost eighty percent of respondents, indicated that “they have felt blamed by non-Jews, at least occasionally, for the actions of the Israeli government, purely on the basis of their Jewishness.”

⁷ In August 2019, President Trump, while praising the loyalty of Israeli Jews to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused American Jewish Democrats of disloyalty. The New York Times wrote of the incident: “It was the second day in a row that Mr. Trump addressed Jews and loyalty, a theme evoking an anti-Semitic trope that Jews have a “dual loyalty” and are often more loyal to Israel than to their own countries.” “If you want to vote Democrat, you are being very disloyal to Jewish people and very disloyal to Israel,” Mr. Trump said Wednesday at the White House.”

⁸ David Friedman, prior to becoming U.S. Ambassador to Israel called, J St supporters “worse than Kapos.” <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/Articles/Article.aspx/18828>

2. Architect of apartheid: *Canada’s support for Israel has taken many forms, but perhaps its greatest gift has been its example* (Article)

SOURCE: [Briarpatch](#)

Architect of apartheid

Canada’s support for Israel has taken many forms, but perhaps its greatest gift has been its example

By Mike Krebs. Mike Krebs is a Vancouver-based Indigenous activist of Blackfoot and European descent. He is an assistant professor at the University of British Columbia in Geography and the Institute of Critical Indigenous Studies.



There is no better friend to Israel than Canada. We shall always be there for you, and in front of you.”
– Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, Jerusalem, January 2012

Canada’s support for Israel has a long history, dating back even before Israel was founded. In fact, it was Canada’s own Lester B. Pearson who chaired the United Nations committee that recommended the partition of Palestine and the creation of Israel in 1947. Still, there is little question that the diplomatic, military, and economic ties between the two countries have deepened in recent years, coupled with a concerted campaign to stifle criticism of Israel.

The Canadian government’s unbending support for Israel is well known, especially within Palestine solidarity circles across Canada. What is less understood is the basis for this support. While economic and geopolitical ties are certainly important factors, the shared history of Canada and Israel as settler societies is crucial to understanding Canada’s ongoing support for Israel. Simply put, both countries were founded on the forced displacement of Indigenous peoples and the theft of their lands and resources. And in both cases, these colonial processes continue to the present day.

The similar nature of Canada and Israel as settler societies not only serves as a solid foundation for ideological affinity, but is also the basis for shared interests in the realm of international politics as both countries contend with ongoing attempts by their Indigenous populations to seek justice and redress on the world stage.

Providing a playbook

Canada's support for Israel has taken many forms, but perhaps its greatest gift has been a real-life how-to guide for establishing and maintaining a settler society that includes an array of strategies, tactics, and programs for taking land, subjugating Indigenous populations, and weakening their resistance. It's also worth noting that many of these tactics and strategies were used by the South African apartheid regime, including the Bantustan system and the use of the Dom Pass to restrict the movement of black South Africans.

The Indian Act of 1876 must be seen not only as the centrepiece of Canadian colonial policy towards Indigenous peoples, but also as a blueprint for apartheid. The Indian Act enshrined completely unequal rights, relations, and – over time – vastly disparate living conditions between Indigenous peoples and Canadian settlers. It also represented a policy of extermination as it facilitated the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples, and deprived Indigenous nations of their right to decide who was and was not "Indian." This was a very gendered process as different standards for retaining "status" were applied to Indigenous women as compared to men, resulting in vast numbers of Indigenous women and their descendants losing not only their recognized status as Indigenous peoples, but also their ability to remain in their communities.



Israel has long engaged in attempts to regulate Palestinian identity, such as granting Palestinians within its borders Israeli citizenship while designating them "Arab Israelis," issuing a complex array of different

ID cards to Palestinians in the occupied territories restricting where they can reside and travel, or gradually stripping residency rights from hundreds of thousands of Palestinians with ties to the West Bank and Gaza.

Canada's reservation system was also central to the displacement and containment of Indigenous peoples. In most of what is now Canada, the federal government can point to treaties as affirmation that the land was occupied with the ostensible consent of its Indigenous peoples, though there are also areas, including the majority of British Columbia, where colonization and the establishment of reserves took place with very few treaties. This process is one that continues to this day in a number of ways, most notably in B.C. with what's referred to as the modern day treaty process, in which the only accepted framework for negotiating treaties is through permanent extinguishment of inherent land rights in exchange for fee-simple reserve lands.

Israel's process of colonizing Palestine followed a similar strategy of forced displacement coupled with containment. Gradual settlement began in earnest during the first decades of the 20th century, culminating with the 1948 Nakba (the Arabic word for "catastrophe") which saw the displacement of over 750,000 Palestinians from what then became the state of Israel. This process of land theft deepened after 1967 with the expansion of Jewish-only settlements in the occupied territories, a process that continues to the present.

Controlling the movement of Indigenous peoples has also been central to both Canadian and Israel colonialism. Canada's pass system, enacted in 1885, dictated that Indigenous peoples required written permission, including their reasons for leaving, from the local Indian agent to leave their reserves. The pass system was put into place during the North-West Resistance and was justified by the Canadian government as a means of monitoring Indigenous peoples who were potentially participating in or supporting the resistance. Though initially described as a temporary measure, the pass system was used against Indigenous peoples at least until the 1940s.

This model of restricting the basic human right of Indigenous peoples to mobility within their own lands lives on today in Palestine. This includes an elaborate system of permits, checkpoints, and the apartheid wall, which together restrict and regulate the movement of Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. This is accompanied by the hermetic siege of Gaza, the most extreme expression of controlling movement between and within Palestinian reserves.

A further strategy that Israel has borrowed from Canada is the use of seemingly endless negotiations as a deliberate stalling tactic and a means of further entrenching the control of Indigenous lands and resources. Negotiations also take place in a context of vast disparities in power and, to varying degrees, overt threats of violence. For example, when Treaty 7 was negotiated between the Canadian government and representatives from the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Tsuu T'ina nation, and a number of Nakoda and Assiniboine communities, the representatives of the Crown brought a sizable contingent of North West Mounted Police, who pointed their cannons directly at the Indigenous encampments and occasionally fired at them as a show of force. In an oral account of the signing of Treaty 7, Stoney Nakoda elder Morley Twoyoungmen recalls: "The chiefs said, 'You talk of peace while there are guns pointing at me. This is not peace, please lay down your guns.'"

Israel has also employed the tactic of negotiations with similar success, at the expense of the Palestinian national movement. Throughout the Oslo Accords, the Road Map to peace, the Annapolis conference, and countless other “peace processes,” Israel has continued its expansion of illegal settlements and brutal wars against the Palestinian people. At the same time, the most basic demands articulated by the Palestinian movement (ending the occupation, allowing refugees to return to their homelands, and recognizing equal rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel) are invariably outside the parameters of negotiations.

Fates bound together

This shared colonial history is crucial to understanding Canada’s support for Israel. The similar nature of the two states creates a solid foundation for ideological affinity wherein, from the Canadian standpoint, there is nothing particularly problematic or controversial about a predominantly European population establishing a state on the lands of racialized people, displacing the original inhabitants, and settling the land as their own. In fact, Israel is often celebrated as an “outpost of civilization” in much the same way that the colonization of Turtle Island (North America) was justified as a “civilizing mission.”

Canada and Israel also have shared interests that are somewhat unique to settler societies. The legitimacy of both nation states is regularly challenged by the continued survival and resistance of the Indigenous inhabitants of the lands to which these states lay claim. With the perseverance of the Palestinian struggle and international growth of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, challenges to Israel’s “right to exist” as a colonial apartheid state have gained mainstream prominence, but it’s important to note that Canada also faces significant challenges from assertions of Indigenous sovereignty. The ongoing struggles in B.C., where the provincial government has had to acknowledge that the vast majority of the land is unceded, provide but one of the more clear examples of challenges to the very legitimacy of Canada’s territorial jurisdiction.

In the realm of international politics, Canada plays the role of a proud and uncritical defender of Israel against attempts to address any of its numerous human rights violations or war crimes. Canada has its own interest in ensuring that Israel maintains impunity as it has also come under scrutiny at the UN, which is increasingly used by Indigenous peoples as a forum through which to advance their struggles and seek redress for human rights abuses. Canada has also garnered international attention over its ongoing expansion of the tarsands in Alberta, its continued export of asbestos to the Global South, and the atrocious record of Canadian mining companies in regards to human rights abuses and displacement of (predominantly Indigenous) people in Latin America. If Israel is held accountable for its crimes against Indigenous people on the world stage, Canada has a greater risk of meeting the same fate. It can’t allow these precedents to be set, and thus it benefits from ensuring that the UN and its various bodies are kept weak and unable to uphold international law.

A recent example of this is Canada’s continued fear of being held accountable for the residential school system as a crime of genocide. According to a recent article in the *Globe and Mail*, the Conservative-appointed chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is conscious of this concern: “Justice Murray Sinclair says the United Nations defines genocide to include the removal of children based on race, then

placing them with another race to indoctrinate them. He says Canada has been careful to ensure its residential school policy was not 'caught up' in the UN's definition." As Judge Sinclair explained to a group of students at the University of Manitoba in February, "That's why the minister of Indian Affairs can say this was not an act of genocide ... but the reality is that to take children away and to place them with another group in society for the purpose of racial indoctrination was – and is – an act of genocide and it occurs all around the world."

The Canadian government also benefits from its relationship with Israel by gaining access to Israel's experience with tools of repression either for domestic use or, in the case of Israeli drones, in Afghanistan. Though Canada has developed its own vast experience in this regard through repeated police and military deployments to subdue Indigenous resistance, Israel has much to share in the way of high-tech means of policing and intelligence gathering developed over decades of repression and warfare against Palestinians. In addition to more overt forms of violent repression, this also includes the repeated use of the "terrorism" label to try to discredit the Palestinian movement, a label that is now increasingly used by the Canadian government in its propaganda wars against Indigenous peoples and, recently, to smear both Indigenous and non-Indigenous opposition to the tarsands and its associated pipeline projects.

Canada's desire for Israel's expertise in matters of repression underlies the 2008 Canada-Israel Declaration of Intent to enhance co-operation on public security issues, a document signed by representatives of both governments that outlines Canada and Israel's "common threats" and details a "shared commitment to facilitate and enhance cooperation" in areas ranging from border security to correctional services and "terrorist financing."

Unity and solidarity

For Indigenous peoples living in Canada, the principle of unity and solidarity between peoples has often been crucial in continuing their struggles as people of many nations all living on Turtle Island. This unity has been extended to include the Palestinian struggle since at least the 1970s when the American Indian Movement and the Palestine Liberation Organization issued a joint declaration affirming "united resistance to a common form of oppression." These connections must continue and be deepened as our different experiences of resisting Israel and Canada help inform each other.

For Canadians working in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle, it must never be forgotten that Indigenous people here are struggling every day to survive the numerous ways in which Canadian apartheid continues to damage the original peoples upon whose land this country was built. It is not simply a matter of moral consistency, though that is of course important. Struggles for Indigenous sovereignty are unique in that they directly challenge the hegemony of Canadian capitalism. For that reason, it is important to bear in mind how supporting Indigenous self-determination will benefit all struggles for social justice within Canada in the long term. Furthermore, coming to terms with what it means to be a part of a settler society in Canada, and the resulting ramifications for both Indigenous peoples and settlers, can only make our ability to support the Palestinian struggle stronger.

3. Opinion: Sheikh Jarrah highlights the violent brazenness of Israel's colonialist project (Article)

SOURCE: [The Washington Post](#)

Opinion: Sheikh Jarrah highlights the violent brazenness of Israel's colonialist project

Opinion by Noura Erakat and Mariam Barghouti

May 10, 2021

Noura Erakat is a human rights attorney and associate professor at Rutgers University. She is the author of "[Justice for Some: Law and the Question of Palestine](#)." Mariam Barghouti is a Palestinian writer and researcher based in Ramallah.

The young Palestinian writer [Mohammed El-Kurd](#) sits quietly in front of his laptop with a grin on his face, preparing for the launch of his most recent manuscript, "[Rifqa](#)." He seems excited, anxious and afraid all at once, as he revises his poems and the paragraphs about his grandmother. [She died at 103 defending her home from Israeli settlers](#) who had already squatted in one part of it. El-Kurd seems to clutch onto his words in an attempt to ensure that the memory of his grandmother, of himself and his lineage, remains with him.

Some believe that what is documented cannot be lost, but El-Kurd's calm is broken when we speak of his Jerusalem neighborhood, Sheikh Jarrah, where he and his sister Muna are now trying to highlight the grave violations happening there as they face [forced eviction](#).

Sheikh Jarrah is now practically [a war zone](#) as armed Israeli settlers, under the protection of Israeli police, [terrorize the Palestinian residents](#). These are the very settlers who are looking to kick out families, including El-Kurd's.

Sheikh Jarrah is the [latest flashpoint](#) of Israel's expansionist project. The threats of eviction are part of what Palestinians describe as their "ongoing Nakba," because the removal and forced exile of 80 percent of historic Palestine's native population between 1947 and 1949 was not a singular event. It is the same reality we saw in [Khan al-Ahmar](#), and in Araqib before that, and it is how every settlement was solidified, from Tel Aviv in 1948 to the newer settlements of [Maali Adumim and Givat Hamatos in the West Bank](#).

Zionist settlement remains an ongoing process that seeks to remove Palestinian natives and replace them with Jewish-Zionists. In Jerusalem, the forced removals echo throughout the West Bank, throughout Gaza and among Palestinians forcibly exiled in the global diaspora.

Israeli settlers, supported as they are by the United States and a nearly silent global community, are incredibly brazen in their ethnic-cleansing campaign. One settler matter-of-factly told Muna El-Kurd while she protested the theft of her home: ["If I don't steal it, someone else](#)

[will.](#) Jerusalem Deputy Mayor *Arieh King* was caught on camera [lamenting that a Palestinian men shot in the leg during protests wasn't shot in the head.](#) On Monday, Israeli [police raided the al-Aqsa Mosque](#), one of Islam's holiest sites, wounding hundreds of Palestinians who had sought shelter inside with rubber-tipped bullets and stun grenades.

Now a new generation has taken to social media, using the hashtag #SaveSheikhJarrah, to once again show Zionist settler violence to the rest of the world. But when the hashtag began to trend in recent days on social media platforms, many activists reported that their posts were being removed; accounts have also been suspended en masse. The apparent censorship of Palestinian protest on social media is another chapter in the months-long campaign urging Facebook not to flag anti-Zionism critique as anti-Semitic hate speech. Many pro-Israel groups are trying to use the empty charges of anti-Semitism to shut down debate about Palestine.

As May 15 marks the 73rd commemoration of the mass expulsion of Palestinians from cities such as Haifa, Tarshiha and Safad in 1948, let the world bear witness to Jerusalem today. This is how refugees are made, this is our ongoing Nakba. Our freedom struggle is not for a state but for belonging to the land, to remain on it, to keep our homes, to resist erasure. But somehow calling it by its name on social media, revealing to the world what has been happening for decades, seems more offensive than our ongoing displacement at gun point.

There's no denying the reality: This is Zionist settler colonialism, where if one settler does not take our homes, another settler will. When will the world open its eyes to this injustice and respond appropriately? We do not need more empty both sides-isms, we need solidarity to overcome apartheid.

Read more:

[H.A. Hellyer: Israel uses apartheid to exclude Palestinians. When will Washington face that?](#)

[Daoud Kuttab: The Israel-UAE agreement is an insult to the peace Palestinians and Arabs want and need](#)

[Noura Erakat: Israel's annexation of Palestinian land will be the result of U.S. policy, not a betrayal of it](#)

[Gershon Gorenberg: What a vaccination joke on 'Saturday Night Live' got wrong about the real disease afflicting Israel](#)

4. NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh calls for Canada to block arms sales to Israel amid escalating violence (Article)

SOURCE: [The Star](#)

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh calls for Canada to block arms sales to Israel amid escalating violence

By [Alex Ballingall](#)

Wed., May 12, 2021

OTTAWA—NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh is calling on the federal government to block arms sales to Israel amid escalating violence in the long-running Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Singh accused the Liberal government of “arming one side of the conflict” by allowing military exports to Israel as Palestinians face forced evictions in occupied East Jerusalem.

“It is undermining the peace process and it is supporting illegal occupation,” Singh said Wednesday in the House of Commons.

“Will the prime minister commit to stopping the sale of arms to Israel while they are violating international human rights?”

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau did not answer the question. Instead, he said the government is “following the situation with grave concern.” He also condemned rocket attacks on Israel by the Islamist militant group Hamas, called violence against Palestinian demonstrators in East Jerusalem “unacceptable” and said Canada is “gravely concerned” with the expansion of Israeli settlements in occupied territories.

“Canada supports a two-state solution and we urge all parties to renew their commitment to peace and security,” Trudeau said.

Tensions erupted this week amid protests over the displacement of Palestinians in East Jerusalem and clashes with Israeli police. Hamas militants in the Gaza Strip have fired hundreds of rockets into Israel, which launched its own airstrikes in Gaza and reportedly assassinated Hamas military leaders on Wednesday.

By Wednesday night, 65 people — including 16 children — had been killed in Gaza, while seven people had been killed by Hamas rocket fire in Israel, the Associated Press reported.

Singh said earlier in the day that Canada can play a bigger role in soothing tensions in the region. And he argued Canada should do so by banning arms sales to apply “pressure” on Israel to ensure a “peaceful resolution” to the current crisis.

“One of those elements of pressure we can place is making sure we’re not selling arms to Israel that are being used in a conflict which is breaching international law or violating human rights,” he said.

The fundamental problem with UNRWA, according to this line of argument, is that it treats the children and grandchildren of Palestinians expelled at Israel's founding as refugees themselves. Establishment Jewish critics don't blame UNRWA merely for helping Palestinians pass down their legal status as refugees, but their identity as refugees as well. In *The War of Return*, a central text of the anti-UNRWA campaign, the Israeli writers Adi Schwartz and Einat Wilf allege that without UNRWA, refugee children "would likely have lost their identity and assimilated into surrounding society." Instead, with UNRWA's help, Palestinians are "constantly looking back to their mythologized previous lives" while younger generations act as if they have "undergone these experiences themselves." To Schwartz and Wilf's horror, many Palestinians seem to believe that in every generation, a person is obligated to see themselves as if they personally left Palestine.

As it happens, I read *The War of Return* just before Tisha B'Av, the day on which Jews mourn the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem and the exiles that followed. On Tisha B'Av itself, I listened to medieval kinnot, or dirges, that describe those events—which occurred, respectively, two thousand and two thousand five hundred years ago—in [the first person and the present tense](#).

In Jewish discourse, this refusal to forget the past—or accept its verdict—evokes deep pride. The late philosopher Isaiah Berlin once [boasted](#) that Jews "have longer memories" than other peoples. And in the late 19th century, Zionists harnessed this long collective memory to create a movement for return to a territory most Jews had never seen. "After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion," proclaims Israel's [Declaration of Independence](#). The State of Israel constitutes "the realization" of this "age-old dream."

Why is dreaming of return laudable for Jews but pathological for Palestinians?

Why is dreaming of return laudable for Jews but pathological for Palestinians? Asking the question does not imply that the two dreams are symmetrical. The Palestinian families that mourn Jaffa or Safed lived there recently and remember intimate details about their lost homes. They experienced dispossession from Israel-Palestine. The Jews who for centuries afflicted themselves on Tisha B'Av, or created the Zionist movement, only imagined it. "You never stopped dreaming," the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish once [told](#) an Israeli interviewer. "But your dream was farther away in time and place . . . I have been an exile for only 50 years. My dream is vivid, fresh." Darwish noted another crucial difference between the Jewish and Palestinian dispersions: "You created our exile, we didn't create your exile."

Still, despite these differences, many prominent Palestinians—from [Darwish](#) to Edward Said to law professor [George Bisharat](#) to former Knesset member [Talab al-Sana](#)—have alluded to the bitter irony of Jews telling another people to give up on their homeland and assimilate in foreign lands. We, of all people, should understand how insulting that demand is. Jewish leaders keep insisting that, to achieve peace, Palestinians must forget the Nakba, the catastrophe they endured in 1948. But it is more accurate to say that peace will come when Jews remember. The better we remember why Palestinians left, the better we will understand why they deserve the chance to return.



Samira Dajani holds a photo of her father, Fouad Moussa Dajani and his sons, taken in the same place in the courtyard of their home in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem, May 9th, 2021. The Dajanis are one of several Palestinian families facing imminent eviction in Sheikh Jarrah. Photo: Maya Alleruzzo/AP Photo

Even for many Jews passionately opposed to Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, supporting Palestinian refugee return remains taboo. But, morally, this distinction makes little sense. If it is wrong to hold Palestinians as non-citizens under military law, and wrong to impose a blockade that denies them the necessities of life, it is surely also wrong to expel them and prevent them from returning home. For decades, liberal Jews have parried this moral argument with a pragmatic one: Palestinian refugees should return only to the West Bank and Gaza, regardless of whether that is where they are from, as part of a two-state solution that gives both Palestinians and Jews a country of their own. But with every passing year, as Israel further entrenches its control over all the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, this supposedly realistic alternative grows more detached from reality. There will be no viable, sovereign, Palestinian state to which refugees can go. What remains of the case against Palestinian refugee return is a series of historical and legal arguments, peddled by Israeli and American Jewish leaders, about why Palestinians deserved their expulsion and have no right to remedy it now. These arguments are not only unconvincing but deeply ironic, since they ask Palestinians to repudiate the very principles of intergenerational memory and historical restitution that Jews hold sacred. If Palestinians have no right to return to their homeland, neither do we.

The consequences of these efforts to rationalize and bury the Nakba are not theoretical. They are playing themselves out right now on the streets of Sheikh Jarrah. The Israeli leaders

who [justify](#) expelling Palestinians today in order to make Jerusalem a Jewish city are merely paraphrasing the Jewish organizations that have spent the last several decades justifying the expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 in order to create a Jewish state. What [Ta-Nehisi Coates](#) has observed about the United States, and [Desmond Tutu](#) has observed about South Africa—that historical crimes that go unaddressed generally reappear, in different guise—is true for Israel-Palestine as well. Refugee return therefore constitutes more than mere repentance for the past. It is a prerequisite for building a future in which both Jews and Palestinians enjoy safety and freedom in the land each people calls home.

THE ARGUMENT AGAINST REFUGEE RETURN begins with a series of myths about what happened in 1948, which allow Israeli and American Jewish leaders to claim that Palestinians effectively expelled themselves.

The most enduring myth is that Palestinians fled because Arab and Palestinian officials told them to. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) [asserts](#) that many Palestinians left “at the urging of Arab leaders, and expected to return after a quick and certain Arab victory over the new Jewish state.” The Palestinian historian Walid Khalidi debunked this claim as early as 1959. In a [study](#) of Arab radio broadcasts and newspapers, and the communiques of the Arab League and various Arab and Palestinian fighting forces, he revealed that, far from urging Palestinians to leave, Palestinian and Arab officials often pleaded with them to stay. Decades later, employing primarily Israeli and British archives for his book, *The Birth of the Refugee Problem Revisited*, the Israeli historian Benny Morris did uncover evidence of Arab leaders urging women, children, and the elderly to evacuate villages so Arab fighters could better defend them. Still, he concluded that what Arab leaders did “to promote or stifle the exodus was only of secondary importance.” It was Zionist military operations that proved “the major precipitants to flight.” Zionist leaders at the time offered a similar assessment. Israel’s intelligence service noted in a June 1948 [report](#) that the “impact of ‘Jewish military action’ . . . on the migration was decisive.” It added that “orders and directives issued by Arab institutions and gangs” accounted for the evacuation of only 5% of villages.

The Jewish establishment’s narrative of Palestinian self-dispossession also blames Arab governments for rejecting the United Nations proposal to partition Mandatory Palestine. “Zionist leaders accepted the partition plan despite its less-than-ideal solution,” the ADL has [argued](#). “It was the Arab nations who refused . . . Had the Arabs accepted the plan in 1947 there would today be an Arab state alongside the Jewish State of Israel and the heartache and bloodshed that have characterized the Arab-Israeli conflict would have been avoided.”

This is misleading. Zionist leaders accepted the UN partition plan on paper while undoing it on the ground. The UN proposal envisioned a Jewish state encompassing 55% of Mandatory Palestine’s land even though Jews composed only a third of its population. Within the new state’s suggested borders, Palestinians thus constituted as much as 47% of the population. Most Zionist leaders considered this unacceptable. Morris notes that David Ben-Gurion, soon to be Israel’s first prime minister, “clearly wanted as few Arabs as possible in the Jewish State.” As early as 1938, he had declared, “I support compulsory transfer.” Ben-Gurion’s logic, concludes

Morris, was clear: “without some sort of massive displacement of Arabs from the area of the Jewish state-to-be, there could be no viable ‘Jewish’ state.”

Establishment Jewish organizations [often link](#) Arab rejection of the UN partition plan to the war that Arab armies waged against Israel. And it is true that, even before the Arab governments officially declared war in May 1948, Arab and Palestinian militias fought the embryonic Jewish state. In February and March of 1948, these forces even came close to cutting off Jewish supply routes to West Jerusalem and other areas of Jewish settlement. Arab forces also committed atrocities. After members of the right-wing Zionist militia, Etzel, threw grenades into a Palestinian crowd near an oil refinery in Haifa in December 1947, the crowd turned on nearby Jewish workers, killing 39 of them. In April of 1948, after Zionist forces killed more than 100 unarmed Palestinians in the village of Deir Yassin, Palestinian militiamen burned dozens of Jewish civilians to death in buses on the road to Jerusalem. In May of that year, Arab fighters vowing revenge for Deir Yassin killed 129 members of the kibbutz of Kfar Etzion, even though they were flying white flags.

What the establishment Jewish narrative omits is that the vast majority of Palestinians forced from their homes committed no violence at all. Their presence was intolerable not because they had personally threatened Jews but because they threatened the demography of a Jewish state.

But what the establishment Jewish narrative omits is that the vast majority of Palestinians forced from their homes committed no violence at all. In *Army of Shadows*, Hebrew University historian Hillel Cohen notes that, “Most of the Palestinian Arabs who took up arms were organized in units that defended their villages and homes, or sometimes a group of villages.” They ventured beyond them “only in extremely rare cases.” He adds that, frequently, “local Arab representatives had approached their Jewish neighbors with requests to conclude nonaggression pacts.” When such efforts failed, Palestinian villages and towns often surrendered in the face of Zionist might. In most cases, their residents were expelled anyway. Their presence was intolerable not because they had personally threatened Jews but because they threatened the demography of a Jewish state.

IN FOCUSING ON THE BEHAVIOR of Arab leaders, the Jewish establishment tends to distract from what the Nakba meant for ordinary people. Perhaps that is intentional, because the more one confronts the Nakba’s human toll, the harder it becomes to rationalize what happened then, and to oppose justice for Palestinian refugees now. In roughly 18 months, Zionist forces evicted upwards of 700,000 individuals, more than half of Mandatory Palestine’s Arab population. They emptied more than 400 Palestinian villages and depopulated the Palestinian sections of many of Israel-Palestine’s mixed cities and towns. In each of these places, Palestinians endured horrors that haunted them for the rest of their lives.

In April 1948, the largest Zionist fighting force, the Haganah, launched Operation Bi’ur Hametz (Passover Cleaning), which aimed to seize the Palestinian neighborhoods of Haifa, whose population had already been demoralized by the flight of local Palestinian elites. A British intelligence officer accused Haganah troops of strafing the harbor with “completely

indiscriminate . . . machinegun fire, mortar fire and sniping.” The assault on Arab neighborhoods sparked what one Palestinian observer termed a “mad rush to the port” in which “man trampled on fellow man” in a desperate effort to board boats leaving the city, some of which capsized. Many evacuees sought sanctuary up the coast in Acre. Later that month, the Haganah launched mortar attacks on that city, too. It also cut off Acre’s supply of water and electricity, which likely contributed to a typhoid outbreak, thus hastening the population’s flight.



Members of the Haganah escorting Palestinians expelled from their homes out of Haifa, May 12th, 1948. Photo: AFP

In October of that year, Israeli troops entered the largely Catholic and Greek Orthodox village of Eilaboun in the Galilee. According to the Palestinian filmmaker Hisham Zreiq, who used oral histories, Israeli documents, and a UN observer report to reconstruct events, the troops were met by priests holding a white flag. Soldiers from the Golani Brigade responded by assembling villagers in the town square. They forced the bulk of Eliaboun’s residents to evacuate the village and head north, thus serving as human shields for Israeli forces who trailed behind them, in case the road was mined. After forcing the villagers to walk all day with little food or water, the soldiers robbed them of their valuables and loaded them on trucks that deposited them across the Lebanese border. According to an eyewitness, the roughly dozen men held back in the town square were executed in groups of three.

In al-Dawayima, in the Hebron hills, where Israeli forces reportedly killed between 80 and 100 men, women, and children—and, in one instance, forced an elderly woman into a house and

then blew it up—an Israeli soldier [told](#) an Israeli journalist that “cultured, polite commanders” behaved like “base murderers.” After Israeli troops evicted as many as 70,000 Palestinians from Lydda and Ramle in July, an Israeli intelligence officer analogized the event to a “pogrom” or the Roman “exile of Israel.” Less openly discussed were the rapes by Zionist soldiers. In *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, Morris recorded “several dozen cases”—but later [acknowledged](#) that since such incidents generally went unreported, that figure was probably “just the tip of the iceberg.”

Even survivors who avoided permanent physical injury were never the same. At the age of seven, Fawaz Turki fled Haifa with his family on foot. Decades later he wrote about “the apocalyptic images that my mind would dredge up, out of nowhere, of our refugee exodus . . . where pregnant women gave birth on the wayside, screaming to heaven with labour pain, and where children walked alone, with no hands to hold.” Nazmiyya al-Kilani [walked](#) with a broken leg, one child in her arms and another tied to her apron, to the Haifa port, where she boarded a boat to Acre. In the chaos she lost contact with her husband, father, brother, and sisters, all of whom were deported from the country. For the next half-century, until her adult daughter tracked down her siblings in Syria, she did not know if they were alive or dead. According to Elias Srouji, forced to march from his Galilean village to the Lebanese border, “The most heartrending sight was the cats and dogs, barking and carrying on, trying to follow their masters. I heard a man shout to his dog: ‘Go back! At least you can stay!’” (Jews familiar with the way our sacred texts imagine expulsion may hear a faint echo. The Talmud [records](#) that when the First Temple was destroyed, “even the animals and birds were exiled.”)

In June 1948, Ben-Gurion himself lamented the “mass plunder to which all sectors of the country’s Jewish community were party.”

Eviction was generally followed by theft. In June 1948, Ben-Gurion himself [lamented](#) the “mass plunder to which all sectors of the country’s Jewish community were party.” In Tiberias, according to an official from the Jewish National Fund (JNF), Haganah troops “came in cars and boats and loaded all sorts of goods [such as] refrigerators [and] beds” while groups of Jewish civilians “walked about pillaging from the Arab houses and shops.” In Deir Yassin, an officer from the elite Haganah unit, the Palmach, observed that fighters from the right-wing Zionist militia Lechi were “going about the village robbing and stealing everything: Chickens, radio sets, sugar, money, gold and more.” When the Haganah cleared the village of Sheikh Badr in West Jerusalem, according to Morris, Jews from the nearby neighborhood of Nachlaot “descended on Sheikh Badr and pillaged it.” Haganah troops fired in the air to disperse the mob, and British police later tried to protect vacated Palestinian houses. But once both forces left, Nachlaot residents returned, “torching and pillaging what remained.”

Jewish authorities soon systematized the plunder. In July 1948, Israel created a “Custodian for Deserted Property,” which it empowered to distribute houses, lands, and other valuables that refugees had left behind. Kibbutz officials, notes the historian Alon Confino, “clamored for Arab land,” and the Israeli government leased much of it to them in September, using the Jewish National Fund as a middleman. Atop other former Palestinian villages, the JNF [created national parks](#). In urban areas, it distributed Palestinian houses to new Jewish immigrants. Israel’s

national library took possession of [roughly 30,000 books](#) stolen from Palestinian homes. Many remain there today.

In November 1948, Israel conducted a census. A month later, the Knesset passed the Law for the Property of Absentees, which determined that anyone not residing on their property during the census forfeited their right to it. This meant not only that Palestinians outside Israel's borders were barred from reclaiming their houses and lands, but that even Palestinians displaced inside Israel, who became Israeli citizens, generally lost their property to the state. In a phrase worthy of Orwell, the Israeli government dubbed them "present absentees."

The scale of the land theft was astonishing. When the United Nations passed its partition plan in November 1947, Jews owned roughly 7% of the territory of Mandatory Palestine. By the early 1950s, [almost 95%](#) of Israel's land was owned by the Jewish state.



Arab refugees flee fighting between Israel and Arab troops in the Galilee, November 4th, 1948. Photo: Jim Pringle/AP Photo

SINCE IT TOOK the expulsion of Palestinians to create a viable Jewish state, many Jews fear—with good reason—that acknowledging and rectifying that expulsion would challenge Jewish statehood itself. This fear is often stated in numerical terms: If too many Palestinian refugees return, Jews might no longer constitute a majority. But the anxiety goes deeper. Why do so few Jewish institutions teach about the Nakba? Because it is hard to look the Nakba in the eye and not wonder, at least furtively, about the ethics of creating a Jewish state when doing so required forcing vast numbers of Palestinians from their homes. Why do so few Jewish institutions try to envision return? Because doing so butts up against pillars of Jewish statehood: for instance, the fact that the [Israel Land Council](#), which controls 93% of the land inside Israel's original boundaries, reserves almost half of its seats for representatives of the Jewish National Fund, which defines itself as "[a trustee on behalf of the Jewish People](#)." Envisioning return requires uprooting deeply entrenched structures of Jewish supremacy and Palestinian subordination. It requires envisioning a different kind of country.

I have [argued](#) previously that Jews could not only survive, but thrive, in a country that replaces Jewish privilege with equality under the law. A wealth of comparative data [suggests](#) that political systems that give everyone a voice in government generally prove more stable and more peaceful for everyone. But, even in the best of circumstances, such a transformation would be profoundly jarring to many Jews. It would require redistributing land, economic resources, and political power, and perhaps just as painfully, reconsidering cherished myths about the Israeli and Zionist past. At this juncture in history, it is impossible to know how so fundamental a transition might occur, or if it ever will.

To ensure that this reckoning never comes, the Israeli government and its American Jewish allies have offered a range of legal, historical, and logistical arguments against refugee return. These all share one thing in common: Were they applied to any group other than Palestinians, American Jewish leaders would likely dismiss them as immoral and absurd.

Consider the claim that Palestinian refugees have no right to return under international law. On its face, this makes little sense. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [declares](#) that “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.” [United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194](#), passed in 1948 and [reaffirmed more than a hundred times since](#), addresses Palestinian refugees specifically. It asserts that those “wishing to return to their homes and to live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date.”

In the decades since World War II, the international bodies that oversee refugees have developed a clear ethical principle: People who want to return home should be allowed to do so.

Opponents of Palestinian return have rejoinders to these documents. They [argue](#) that General Assembly Resolutions aren’t legally binding. They [claim](#) that since Israel was only created in May 1948, and Palestinian refugees were never its citizens, they would not be returning to “their country.” But these are legalisms devoid of moral content. In the decades since World War II, the international bodies that oversee refugees have developed a clear ethical principle: People who want to return home should be allowed to do so. Although the pace of repatriation has slowed in recent years, since 1990 almost [nine times](#) as many refugees have returned to their home countries as have been resettled in new ones. And as a 2019 [report](#) by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) explains, resettlement is preferred only when a refugee’s home country is so dangerous that it “cannot provide them with appropriate protection and support.”

When the refugees aren’t Palestinian, Jewish leaders don’t merely accept this principle, they champion it. The 1995 Dayton Agreement, which ended years of warfare between Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia, [states](#): “All refugees and displaced persons have the right freely to return to their homes of origin” and “to have restored to them property of which they were deprived in the course of hostilities.” The American Jewish Committee—whose CEO, David Harris, [has demanded](#) that Palestinian refugees begin “anew” in “adopted lands”—not only endorsed the Dayton agreement but [urged](#) that it be enforced with US troops. In 2019, AIPAC [applauded](#) Congress for [imposing sanctions](#) aimed at forcing the Syrian government to,

among other things, permit “the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of Syrians displaced by the conflict.” That same year, the Union for Reform Judaism, in justifying its support for reparations for Black Americans, approvingly [cited](#) a [UN resolution](#) that defines reparations as including the right to “return to one’s place of residence.”

Jewish leaders also endorse the rights of return and compensation for Jews expelled from Arab lands. In 2013, World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder [claimed](#), “The world has long recognized the Palestinian refugee problem, but without recognizing the other side of the story—the 850,000 Jewish refugees of Arab countries.” Arab Jews, he argued, deserve “equal rights and treatment under international law.”

Given that international law strongly favors refugee return, the logical implication of Lauder’s words is that Arab Jews should be allowed to go back to their ancestral countries. But, of course, Lauder and other Jewish leaders don’t want that; a Jewish exodus from Israel would undermine the rationale for a Jewish state. What they want is for the world to recognize Arab Jewish refugees’ rights to repatriation and compensation so Israel can trade away those rights in return for Palestinian refugees relinquishing theirs. As McGill University political scientist Rex Brynen has noted, during the Oslo peace process Israeli negotiators privately acknowledged that they were using the flight of Arab Jews as “a bargaining chip, intended to counterweigh Palestinian claims.” In so doing, Israeli leaders backhandedly conceded the legitimacy of the very rights they don’t want Palestinians to have.



A Palestinian woman living in Lebanon holds a placard that reads, “We will meet soon Palestine, we will return,” during a rally to mark the 70th anniversary of the Nakba, May 15th, 2018. Photo: Bilal Hussein/AP Photo

The double standard that suffuses establishment Jewish arguments against the Palestinian right of return expresses itself most glaringly in the debate over who counts as a refugee. Jewish leaders often claim that only Palestinians who were themselves expelled deserve the designation, not their descendants. It's a cynical argument: Later generations of Palestinians would not need refugee status had Israel allowed their expelled parents or grandparents to return. It's hypocritical too. Distinguishing between expelled Palestinians and their descendants allows Jewish leaders to cloak their opposition in the language of universal principle—"refugee status should not be handed down"—while in reality, they don't adhere to this principle universally. Across the globe, refugee designations are frequently handed down from one generation to the next, yet Jewish organizations do not object. As UNRWA has [noted](#), "Palestine refugees are not distinct from other protracted refugee situations such as those from Afghanistan or Somalia, where there are multiple generations of refugees."

Moreover, the same American Jewish leaders who decry multigenerational refugee status when it applies to Palestinians celebrate it when it applies to Jews. In 2018, AJC CEO David Harris [expressed](#) outrage that UNRWA's mandate "covers all descendants, without limit, of those deemed refugees in 1948." The following year, Harris—who was born in the United States to a [refugee father](#) who grew up in Vienna—[announced](#) that he had taken Austrian citizenship "in honor and memory of my father." In 2016, after Spain and Portugal [offered](#) citizenship to roughly 10,000 descendants of Jews expelled from the Iberian Peninsula more than 500 years ago, the AJC's Associate Executive Director [declared](#), "We stand in awe at the commitment and efforts undertaken both by Portugal and Spain to come to terms with their past."

NOT ONLY do Jewish leaders insist that Israel has no legal or historical obligation to repatriate or compensate Palestinians; they also claim that doing so is impossible. Israel, the ADL [notes](#), believes that "'return' is not viable for such a small state." Veteran Republican foreign policy official Elliott Abrams has called compensating all Palestinian refugees a "[fantasy](#)." Too much time has passed, too many Palestinian homes have been destroyed, there are too many refugees. It is not possible to remedy the past. The irony is that when it comes to compensation for historical crimes, Jewish organizations have shown just how possible it is to overcome these logistical hurdles. And when it comes to effectively resettling large numbers of people in a short time in a small space, Israel leads the world.

More than 50 years after the Holocaust, Jewish organizations [negotiated an agreement](#) in which Swiss banks paid more than \$1 billion to reimburse Jews whose accounts they had expropriated during World War II. In 2018, the World Jewish Restitution Organization [welcomed](#) new US legislation to help Holocaust survivors and their descendants reclaim property in Poland. While the Holocaust, unlike the Nakba, saw millions murdered, the Jewish groups in these cases were not seeking compensation for murder. They were seeking compensation for theft. If Jews robbed en masse in the 1940s deserve reparations, surely Palestinians do too.

If Jews robbed en masse in the 1940s deserve reparations, surely Palestinians do too.

When Jewish organizations deem it morally necessary, they find ways to [determine](#) the value of lost property. So does the Israeli government, which [estimated](#) the value of property lost by Jewish settlers withdrawn from the Gaza Strip in order to compensate them. Such calculations can be made for property lost in the Nakba as well. [UN Resolution 194](#), which declared that Palestinian refugees were entitled to compensation “for loss of, or damage to, property,” created the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) to tally the losses. Using land registers, tax records, and other documents from the British mandate, the UNCCP between 1953 and 1964 assembled what Randolph-Macon College historian Michael Fischbach has called “one of the most complete sets of records documenting the landholdings of any group of refugees in the twentieth century.” In recent decades, those records have been turned into a searchable database and cross-referenced with information from the Israeli Land Registry. The primary barrier to compensating Palestinian refugees is not technical complexity. It’s political will.

The same goes for allowing Palestinian refugees to return home. Lubnah Shomali of the Badil Resource Center, which promotes Palestinian refugee rights, has [noted](#) that, “If any state is an expert in receiving masses and masses of people and settling them in a very small territory, it’s Israel.” In its first four years of existence, Israel—which in 1948 contained [just over 800,000](#) citizens—absorbed [close to 700,000](#) immigrants. At the height of the Soviet exodus in the early 1990s, when the Jewish state totaled roughly [5 million](#) citizens, alongside several million Palestinian non-citizens in the West Bank and Gaza, it took in another [500,000 immigrants](#) over four years. The number of returning Palestinian refugees could be substantially higher than that, or not. It’s impossible to predict. But this much is clear: If millions of diaspora Jews suddenly launched a vast new aliyah to Israel, Jewish leaders would not say that Israel lacked the capacity to absorb them. To the contrary, Israel would exercise the capability it displayed in the late 1940s and early 1990s, when, as Technion urban planning professor Rachelle Alterman has [detailed](#), it quickly built large amounts of housing to accommodate new immigrants.

Palestinian scholars have begun imagining what might be required to absorb Palestinian refugees who want to return. One option would be to build where former Palestinian villages once stood since, [according](#) to Shomali, roughly 70% of those depopulated and destroyed in 1948 remain vacant. In many cases, the rural land on which they sat now [constitutes](#) nature preserves or military zones. The Palestinian geographer Salman Abu Sitta imagines a Palestinian Lands Authority, which could dole out plots in former villages to the families of those who lived there. He [envisions](#) many returnees “resuming their traditional occupation in agriculture, with more investment and advanced technology.” He’s even convened [contests](#) in which Palestinian architecture students build models of restored villages.



Ruins of Palestinian homes in Lifta, on the western edge of Jerusalem, abandoned in 1948. Photo: Ariel Schalit/AP Photo

The Palestinian historian Rashid Khalidi, by contrast, told me he thought it unlikely that many refugees—most of whom now live in or near cities—would return to farming. Most would probably prefer to live in urban areas. For Palestinians uninterested in reconstituting destroyed rural villages, Badil has partnered with Zochrot, an Israeli organization that raises awareness about the Nakba, to [suggest](#) two other options, both of which bear some resemblance to Israel's [strategy](#) for settling Soviet immigrants in the 1990s. In that case, the government gave newcomers money for rent while also offering developers subsidies to rapidly build affordable homes. Now, Badil and Zochrot are suggesting a “fast track” in which refugees would be granted citizenship and a sum of money and then left to find housing on their own, or a slower track that would require refugees to wait as the government oversaw the construction of housing designated for them near urban areas with available jobs.

When Jews imagine Palestinian refugee return, most probably don't imagine a modified version of Israel's absorption of Soviet Jews. More likely, they imagine Palestinians expelling Jews from their homes. Given Jewish history, and the trauma that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has inflicted on both sides, these fears are understandable. But there is little evidence that they reflect reality. For starters, not many Israeli Jews live in former Palestinian homes since, tragically, only a [few thousand](#) remain. More importantly, the Palestinian intellectuals and activists who envision return generally insist that significant forced expulsion of Jews is neither necessary nor desirable. Abu Sitta [argues](#), “it is possible to implement the return of the refugees without major displacement to the occupants of their houses.” [Yusuf Jabarin](#), a Palestinian professor of geography who has [developed plans](#) for rebuilding destroyed villages,

emphasizes, “I have no interest in building my life on the basis of attacks on Jews and making them fear they have no place here.” Asked about Jews living in formerly Palestinian homes, Edward Said in 2000 declared that “some humane and moderate solution should be found where the claims of the present and the claims of the past are addressed . . . I’m totally against eviction.”

“I have no interest in building my life on the basis of attacks on Jews and making them fear they have no place here.”

Badil and Zochrot have [outlined](#) what a “humane and moderate solution” might look like. If a Jewish family owns a home once owned by a Palestinian, first the original Palestinian owner (or their heirs) and then the current Jewish owner would be offered the cash value of the home in return for relinquishing their claim. If neither accepted the payment, Zochrot activists Noa Levy and Eitan Bronstein Aparicio have suggested a further compromise: Ownership of the property would revert to the original Palestinian owners, but the Jewish occupants would continue living there. The Palestinian owners would receive compensation until the Jewish occupants moved or died, at which point they would regain possession. In cases where Jewish institutions sit where Palestinian homes once stood—for instance, Tel Aviv University, which was built on the site of the destroyed village of al-Shaykh Muwannis—Zochrot has proposed that the Jewish inhabitants pay the former owners for the use of the land.

EFFORTS TO FACE AND REDRESS HISTORIC WRONGS are rarely simple, rapid, uncontested, or complete. Seventeen years after the end of apartheid, the South African government in March [unveiled](#) a special court to fast-track the redistribution of land stolen from Black South Africans; some white farmers [worry](#) it could threaten their livelihood. In Canada, where the acknowledgement of native lands has become standard practice at public events, including [hockey games](#), some conservative politicians are [pushing back](#). So are some Indigenous leaders, who claim the practice has become meaningless. [Thousands of US schools](#) now use *The New York Times’s* 1619 curriculum, which aims to make slavery and white supremacy central to the way American history is taught. Meanwhile, some Republican legislators are [trying to ban it](#).

But as fraught and imperfect as efforts at historical justice can be, it is worth considering what happens when they do not occur. There is a reason that the writer Ta-Nehisi Coates ends his famous [essay](#) on reparations for slavery with the subprime mortgage crisis that bankrupted many Black Americans in the first decade of the 21st century, and that the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama—best known for memorializing lynchings—ends its main exhibit with the current crisis of [mass incarceration](#). The crimes of the past, when left unaddressed, do not remain in the past.

That’s true for the Nakba as well. Israel did not stop expelling Palestinians when its war for independence ended. It displaced [close to 400,000](#) more Palestinians when it conquered the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967—roughly a quarter of whom only lived in the West Bank or Gaza because their families had fled there, as refugees, in 1948. Between 1967 and 1994, Israel rid itself of another 250,000 Palestinians through a [policy](#) that revoked the residencies of

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who left the territories for an extended period of time. Since 2006, [according to Badil](#), almost 10,000 Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem have watched the Israeli government demolish their homes. In the 1950s, 28 Palestinian families forced from Jaffa and Haifa in 1948 relocated to the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah. After a decades-long campaign by Jewish settlers, the Jerusalem District Court ruled earlier this month that six of them should be [evicted](#). By refusing to acknowledge the Nakba, the Israeli government prepared the ground for its perpetuation. And by refusing to forget the Nakba, Palestinians—and some dissident Israeli Jews—prepared the ground for the resistance that is now convulsing Jerusalem, and Israel-Palestine as a whole.

In our bones, Jews know that when you tell a people to forget its past you are not proposing peace. You are proposing extinction.

“We are what we remember,” wrote the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. “As with an individual suffering from dementia, so with a culture as a whole: the loss of memory is experienced as a loss of identity.” For a stateless people, collective memory is key to national survival. That’s why for centuries diaspora Jews asked to be buried with soil from the land of Israel. And it’s why Palestinians [gather soil](#) from the villages from which their parents or grandparents were expelled. For Jews to tell Palestinians that peace requires them to forget the Nakba is grotesque. In our bones, Jews know that when you tell a people to forget its past you are not proposing peace. You are proposing extinction.

Conversely, honestly facing the past—a process Desmond Tutu has [likened](#) to “opening wounds” and “cleansing them so that they do not fester”—can provide the basis for genuine reconciliation. In 1977, Palestinian American graduate student George Bisharat traveled to the West Jerusalem neighborhood of Talbiyeh and knocked on the door of the house his grandfather had built and been robbed of. The elderly woman who answered the door told him his family had never lived there. “The humiliation of having to plead to enter my family’s home . . . burned inside me,” Bisharat later [wrote](#). In 2000, by then a law professor, he returned with his family. As his wife and children looked on, a man originally from New York answered the door and told him the same thing: It was not his family’s home.

But after Bisharat chronicled his experiences, he received an invitation from a former soldier who had briefly lived in the house after the Haganah seized it in 1948. When they met, the man said, “I am sorry, I was blind. What we did was wrong,” and then added, “I owe your family three month’s rent.” In that moment, Bisharat [wrote](#), he experienced “an untapped reservoir of Palestinian magnanimity and good will that could transform the relations between the two peoples, and make things possible that are not possible today.”

There is a Hebrew word for the behavior of that former Haganah soldier: Teshuvah, which is generally translated as “repentance.” Ironically enough, however, its literal definition is “return.” In Jewish tradition, return need not be physical; it can also be ethical and spiritual. Which means that the return of Palestinian refugees—far from necessitating Jewish exile—could be a kind of return for us as well, a return to traditions of memory and justice that the Nakba has evicted from organized Jewish life. “The occupier and myself—both of us suffer from exile,” Mahmoud Darwish once declared. “He is an exile in me and I am the victim of his exile.”

The longer the Nakba continues, the deeper this Jewish moral exile becomes. By facing it squarely and beginning a process of repair, both Jews and Palestinians, in different ways, can start to come home.

Eliot Cohen, Sam Sussman, and Jonah Karsh assisted with the research for this essay.

Peter Beinart is editor-at-large of *Jewish Currents*.

6. Angela Davis on Black Lives Matter, Palestine, and the Future of Radicalism (Interview)

SOURCE: [lithub](#)

Angela Davis on Black Lives Matter, Palestine, and the Future of Radicalism

"Theories of Freedom are Always Tentative"

By [Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin](#)



The following interview originally appears in [Futures of Black Radicalism](#), edited by Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin. Angela Y. Davis is Emeritus Professor in the History of Consciousness program and University of California, Santa Cruz. Her most recent book is *Freedom and Consciousness: Essays on the History of the Black Radical Tradition*.

Gaye Theresa Johnson and Alex Lubin: In your scholarship you have focused on prison abolitionism, Black feminism, popular culture and the blues, and Black internationalism with a focus on Palestine. Taken together, how does this work draw inspiration from, and perhaps move forward, the Black Radical Tradition?

Angela Davis: Cedric Robinson challenged us to think about the role of Black radical theorists and activists in shaping social and cultural histories that inspire us to link our ideas and our political practices to deep critiques of racial capitalism. I am glad that he lived long enough to get a sense of how younger generations of scholars and activists have begun to take up his notion of a Black Radical Tradition.

In *Black Marxism*, he developed an important genealogy that pivoted around the work of C. L. R. James, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Richard Wright. If one looks at his work as a whole, including *Black Movements in America* and *The Anthropology of Marxism*, as H. L. T. Quan has pointed out, we cannot fail to apprehend how central women have been to the forging of a Black Radical Tradition. Quan writes that when asked about why there is such an enormous focus on the role of women and resistance in his body of work, Robinson replies, “Why not? All resistance, in effect, manifests in gender, manifests as gender. Gender is indeed both a language of oppression [and] a language of resistance.”

I have learned a great deal from Cedric Robinson regarding the uses of history: ways of theorizing history—or allowing it to theorize itself—that are crucial to our understanding of the present and to our ability to collectively envisage a more habitable future. Cedric has argued that his remarkable excavations of history emanate from the positing of political objectives in the present. I have felt a kinship with his approach since I first read *Black Marxism*. My first published article—written while I was in jail—which focused on Black women and slavery was, in fact, an effort to refute the damaging, yet increasingly popular, discourse of the Black matriarchy, as represented through official government reports as well as through generalized masculinist ideas (such as the necessity of gender-based leadership hierarchies designed to guarantee Black male dominance) circulating within the Black movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although this is not how I was thinking about my work at that time, I certainly would not hesitate today to link that research to the effort to make a Black radical, thus feminist, tradition more visible.

The new field formation—critical prison studies and its explicitly abolitionist framework—situates itself within the Black Radical Tradition, both through its acknowledged genealogical relation to the period in US history we refer to as Radical Reconstruction and, of course, through its relation both to the work of W. E. B. Du Bois and to historical Black feminism. The work of Sarah Haley, Kelly Lytle Hernandez, and an exciting new generation of scholars, by linking their valuable research with their principled activism, is helping to revitalize the Black Radical Tradition.

With every generation of antiracist activism, it seems, narrow Black nationalism returns phoenix-like to claim our movements’ allegiance. Cedric’s work was inspired, in part, by his desire to respond to the narrow Black nationalism of the era of his (and my) youth. It is, of

course, extremely frustrating to witness the resurgence of modes of nationalism that are not only counterproductive, but contravene what should be our goal: Black, and thus human, flourishing. At the same time it is thoroughly exciting to witness the ways new youth formations—Black Lives Matter, BYP100, the Dream Defenders—are helping to shape a new Black feminist-inflected internationalism that highlights the value of queer theories and practices.

GTJ & AL: What is your assessment of the Black Lives Matter movement, particularly in light of your participation in the Black Panther Party during the 1970s? Does Black Lives Matter, in your view, have a sufficient analysis and theory of freedom? Do you see any similarities between the BPP and BLM movement?

AD: As we consider the relation between the Black Panther Party and the contemporary Black Lives Matter movement, it feels like the decades and generations that separate one from the other create a certain incommensurability that is a consequence of all the economic, political, cultural, and technological changes that make this contemporary moment so different in many important respects from the late 1960s. But perhaps we should seek connections between the two movements that are revealed not so much in the similarities, but rather in their radical differences.

The BPP emerged as a response to the police occupation of Oakland, California, and Black urban communities across the country. It was an absolutely brilliant move on the part of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale to patrol the neighborhood with guns and law books, in other words, to “police the police.” At the same time this strategy—admittedly also inspired by the emergence of guerrilla struggles in Cuba, liberation armies in southern Africa and the Middle East, and the successful resistance offered by the National Liberation Front in Vietnam—in retrospect, reflected a failure to recognize, as Audre Lorde put it, that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” In other words, the use of guns—even though primarily as symbols of resistance—conveyed the message that the police could be challenged effectively by relying on explicit policing strategies.

A hashtag developed by Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza, and Opal Tometi in the aftermath of the vigilante killing of Trayvon Martin, #BlackLivesMatter began to transform into a network as a direct response to the rising protests in Ferguson, Missouri, which manifested a collective desire to demand justice for Mike Brown and for all of the Black lives sacrificed on the altar of racist police terror. In asking us to radically resist the racist violence at the very heart of policing structures and strategies, Black Lives Matter early on recognized that we would have to place the demand to demilitarize the police at the center of our efforts to move toward a more critical and more collective mode of justice. Ultimately linked to an approach that calls for the abolition of policing as we know and experience it, demilitarization also contested the way in which police strategies have been transnationalized within circuits that link small US police departments to Israel, which dominates the arena of militarized policing associated with the

I appreciate the more complicated analysis that is embraced by many BLM activists, because it precisely reflects a historical-mindedness that is able to build upon, embrace, and radically critique activistisms and antiracist theories of the past. As the BPP attempted—sometimes unsuccessfully—to embrace emergent feminisms and what was then referred to as the gay liberation movement, BLM leader and activists have developed approaches that more productively take up feminist and queer theories and practices. But theories of freedom are always tentative. I have learned from Cedric Robinson that any theory or political strategy that pretends to possess a total theory of freedom, or one that can be categorically understood, has failed to account for the multiplicity of possibilities, which can, perhaps, only be evocatively represented in the realm of culture.

GTJ & AL: Your most recent scholarship is focused on the question of Palestine, and its connection to the Black freedom movement. When did this connection become obvious to you and what circumstances, or conjunctures, made this insight possible?

AD: Actually my most recent collection of lectures and interviews reflects an increasingly popular understanding of the need for an internationalist framework within which the ongoing work to dismantle structures of racism, heteropatriarchy, and economic injustice inside the United States can become more enduring and more meaningful. In my own political history, Palestine has always occupied a pivotal place, precisely because of the similarities between Israel and the United States—their foundational settler colonialism and their ethnic cleansing processes with respect to indigenous people, their systems of segregation, their use of legal systems to enact systematic repression, and so forth. I often point out that my consciousness of the predicament of Palestine dates back to my undergraduate years at Brandeis University, which was founded in the same year as the State of Israel. Moreover, during my own incarceration, I received support from Palestinian political prisoners as well as from Israeli attorneys defending Palestinians.

In 1973, when I attended the World Festival of Youth and Students in Berlin (in the German Democratic Republic), I had the opportunity to meet Yasir Arafat, who always acknowledged the kinship of the Palestinian struggle and the Black freedom struggle in the United States, and who, like Che, Fidel, Patrice Lumumba, and Amilcar Cabral, was a revered figure within the movement for Black liberation. This was a time when communist internationalism—in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia, Australia, South America, and the Caribbean—was a powerful force. If I might speak about my own story, it would have almost certainly led to a different conclusion had not this internationalism played such a pivotal role.

The encounters between Black liberation struggles in the United States and movements against the Israeli occupation of Palestine have a very long history. Alex Lubin's *Geographies of Liberation: The Making of an Afro-Arab Political Imaginary* attempts to chart important aspects of this history.

Oftentimes, however, it is not in the explicitly political realm that one discovers moments of contact. As Cedric Robinson emphasized, it is in the cultural realm. Of course Robin Kelley's *Freedom Dreams: The Making of the Black Radical Imagination* accentuates the arena

In the latter 20th century, it was Black feminist poet June Jordan who pushed the issue of the occupation of Palestine to the fore. Despite the Zionist attacks she suffered, and despite the temporary loss of a very important friendship with Adrienne Rich (who later also became a critic of the occupation), June became a powerful witness for Palestine. In her poetry she felt impelled to embody the juncture of Black and Palestine liberation. “I was born a Black woman / and now / I am become a Palestinian / against the relentless laughter of evil / there is less and less living room / and where are my loved ones / It is time to make our way home.” At a time when feminists of color were attempting to fashion strategies of what we now refer to as intersectionality, June, who represents the best of the Black Radical Tradition, taught us about the capacity of political affinities across national, cultural, and supposedly racial boundaries to help us imagine more habitable futures. I miss her deeply and am so sorry that she did not live long enough to experience Black Lives Matter activists across this continent raising banners of resistance to the occupation of Palestine.

As I have remarked on many occasions, when I joined a delegation in 2011 of indigenous and women of color feminist scholar activists to the West Bank and East Jerusalem, I was under the impression that I thoroughly understood the occupation. Although all of us were already linked, to one extent or another, to the solidarity movement, we were all thoroughly shocked by how little we really knew about the quotidian violence of the occupation. At the conclusion of our visit, we collectively decided to devote our energies to participating in BDS and to help elevate the consciousness of our various constituencies with respect to the US role—over \$8 million—in sustaining the military occupation. So I remain deeply connected in this project to Chandra Mohanty, Beverly Guy-Sheftall, Barbara Ransby, Gina Dent, and the other members of the delegation.

In the five years following our trip, many other delegations of academics and activists have visited Palestine and have helped to accelerate, broaden, and intensify the Palestine solidarity movement. As the architects of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement have modeled their work on the anti-apartheid campaign against South Africa, US activists have attempted to point out that there are profound lessons to be gleaned from earlier boycott politics. Many organizations and movements within the United States have considered how the incorporation of anti-apartheid strategies into their agendas would radically transform their own work. Not only did the anti-apartheid campaign help to strengthen international efforts to take down the apartheid state, it also revived and enriched many domestic movements against racism, misogyny, and economic justice.

In the same way, solidarity with Palestine has the potential to further transform and render more capacious the political consciousness of our contemporary movements. BLM activists and others associated with this very important historical moment of a surging collective consciousness calling for recognition of the persisting structures of racism can play an important role in compelling other areas of social justice activism to take up the cause of Palestine solidarity—specifically the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement. Alliances on university campuses that bring together Black student organizations, Students for Justice in

Palestine, and campus chapters of Jewish Voice for Peace are reminding us of the profound need to unite antiracist efforts with strong challenges to Islamophobia and anti-Semitism, and with the global resistance to the apartheid policies and practices of the State of Israel.

Theoretically and ideologically, Palestine has also helped us to broaden our vision of abolition, which we have characterized in this era as the abolition of imprisonment and policing. The experience of Palestine pushes us to revisit concepts such as “the prison nation” or “the carceral state” in order to seriously understand the quotidian carceralities of the occupation and the ubiquitous policing by not only Israeli forces but also the Palestinian Authority. This, in turn, has stimulated other research directions on the uses of incarceration and its role, for example, in perpetrating notions of a permanent binarism with respect to gender and in naturalizing segregation based on physical, mental, and intellectual ability.

GTJ & AL: What sort of social movements can, or should, exist at the present conjuncture, given the ascendance of American global hegemony, neoliberal economic relations, militarized counterinsurgency at home, and racial “color blindness”?

AD: At a time when popular discourse is rapidly shifting as a direct response to pressures emanating from sustained protests against state violence, and from representational practices linked to new technologies of communication, I suggest that we need movements that pay as much attention to popular political education as they pay to the mobilizations that have succeeded in placing police violence and mass incarceration on the national political agenda. What this means, I think, is that we try to forge an analysis of the current conjuncture that draws important lessons from the relatively recent campaigns that have pushed our collective consciousness beyond previous limits. In other words, we need movements that are prepared to resist the inevitable seductions of assimilation. The Occupy campaign enabled us to develop an anti-capitalist vocabulary: the 99 percent versus the 1 percent is a concept that has entered into popular parlance. The question is not only how to preserve this vocabulary—as, for example, in the analysis offered by the Bernie Sanders platform leading up to the selection of the 2016 Democratic candidate for president—but rather how to build upon this, or complicate it with the idea of racial capitalism, which cannot be so neatly expressed in quantitative terms that assume the homogeneity that always undergirds racism.

Cedric Robinson never stopped excavating ideas, cultural products, and political movements from the past. He attempted to understand why trajectories of assimilation and of resistance in Black freedom movements in the United States co-existed, and his insights—in *Black Movements in America*, for example—continue to be valuable. Assimilationist strategies that leave intact the circumstances and structures that perpetuate exclusion and marginalization have always been offered as the more reasonable alternative to abolition, which, of course, not only requires resistance and dismantling, but also radical reimaginings and radical reconstructions.

Perhaps this is the time to create the groundwork for a new political party, one that will speak to a far greater number of people than traditional progressive political parties have proved

capable of doing. This party would have to be organically linked to the range of radical movements that have emerged in the aftermath of the rise of global capitalism. As I reflect on the value of Cedric Robinson's work in relation to contemporary radical activism, it seems to me that this party would have to be anchored in the idea of racial capitalism—it would be antiracist, anti-capitalist, feminist, and abolitionist. But most important of all, it would have to acknowledge the priority of movements on the ground, movements that acknowledge the intersectionality of current issues—movements that are sufficiently open to allowing for the future emergence of issues, ideas, and movements that we cannot even begin to imagine today.

GTJ & AL: Do you make a distinction, in your scholarship and activism, between Marxism and “Black Marxism”?

AD: I have spent most of my life studying Marxist ideas and have identified with groups that have not only embraced Marxist-inspired critiques of the dominant socioeconomic order, but have also struggled to understand the co-constitutive relationship of racism and capitalism. Having especially followed the theories and practices of Black communists and anti-imperialists in the United States, Africa, the Caribbean, and other parts of the world, and having worked inside the Communist Party for a number of years with a Black formation that took the names of Che Guevara and Patrice Lumumba, Marxism, from my perspective, has always been both a method and an object of criticism. Consequently, I don't necessarily see the terms “Marxism” and “Black Marxism” as oppositional.

I take Cedric Robinson's arguments in *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* very seriously. If we assume the unquestioned centrality of the West and its economic, philosophical, and cultural development, then the economic modes, intellectual histories, religions, and cultures associated with Africa, Asia, and indigenous peoples will not be acknowledged as significant dimensions of humanity. The very concept of humanity will always conceal an internal, clandestine racialization, forever foreclosing possibilities of racial equality. Needless to say, Marxism is firmly anchored in this tradition of the Enlightenment. Cedric's brilliant analyses revealed new ways of thinking and acting generated precisely through the encounters between Marxism and Black intellectuals/activists who helped to constitute the Black Radical Tradition.

The concept associated with *Black Marxism* that I find most productive and most potentially transformative is the concept of racial capitalism. Even though Eric Williams's *Capitalism and Slavery* was published in 1944, scholarly efforts exploring this relationship have remained relatively marginal. Hopefully the new research on capitalism and slavery will help to further legitimate the notion of racial capitalism. While it is important to acknowledge the pivotal part slavery played in the historical consolidation of capitalism, more recent developments linked to global capitalism cannot be adequately comprehended if the racial dimension of capitalism is ignored.

7. Palestinian families and children are being killed. Why is it so quiet? (Article)

SOURCE: [The Star](#)

Palestinian families and children are being killed. Why is it so quiet?

By **Shenaz Kermalli**

Sun., May 16, 2021

Israeli bombs and artillery shells are raining down on Gaza. Yet again, the world watches silently.

A 14-storey highrise building [collapses](#), one tower complex at a time into piles of rubble and dirt, 9/11-style.

A Doctors Without Borders physician [reports](#) from the front-lines of Jerusalem: her patient, a 14-year-old Palestinian boy is shot in the face with a rubber bullet, the wound less than a centimetre away from his left eye.

A young Palestinian woman is being treated in a tent for the injured after being shot in the buttock. The impact of the shot causes her to fall, injuring her elbow. She's then sprayed with "skunk water," a chemical agent that Israeli police routinely fire from water cannons that smells like excrement and rotting flesh. The scent causes her to vomit.

They are the luckier ones. Too many others have lost their lives.

Early Saturday, the Shati refugee camp was hit, killing 10 Palestinians and eight children. An entire [family](#) was wiped out, except for an infant named Omar.

A few days earlier, [Ali Aymen Saleh](#), 15, was shot dead in the stomach on his birthday while watching a protest against Israeli occupation in his village.

[Sajid Mizher](#), 17, was also shot in the stomach while volunteering with medics at a refugee camp, despite wearing a clearly marked vest.

There are so many more. But not enough, it seems, amid the deafening silence.

Because even as airstrikes continue to strike the already crippled Gaza Strip, Israel still, [according](#) to U.S President Joe Biden, "has a right to defend itself" against rockets fired from the coastal Palestinian territory.

Even as [mobs](#) of far-right Israelis smash Arab-owned businesses and drag a man who they believe is Arab from his car and beat him unconscious, Israel "has a right to defend itself."

Even as the UN warns of an all-out war breaking out — a war, that is, between a state backed by the world's largest arms supplier and a dispossessed population — Israel still "has the right to defend itself."

It's a line we've heard over and over from Israeli leaders and their allies. But the death toll tells a different story, as it did after Israel's last brutal offensive in Gaza in 2014. On the Palestinian side [according to a 2015 UN report](#), 2,251 people, of whom 1,462 were civilians, were killed. On the Israeli side, 67 soldiers were killed along with six civilians.

As of [Sunday](#) morning, at least 188 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, including 55 children and 33 women, with 1,230 people wounded. Eight people in Israel have been killed, including a five-year-old boy and a soldier.

"The right to defend itself" argument makes little sense in the context of current realities on the ground. Palestinians living in the occupied territories are not at war with Israel, they live at the mercy of their occupiers. In his book, "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine" Israeli historian Ilan Pappé describes how the foundations of Israel are rooted in a colonial project that continues to subject its Indigenous Palestinian population to military occupation, land dispossession and unequal rights.

Destroy, displace and kill. It's been the (arguably unofficial) policy of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government since he was elected 25 years ago.

Meanwhile, Hamas, the Palestinian group that governs the Gaza Strip, has fired over 1,000 rockets from Gaza towards Israel over the last week, of which 200 have actually [landed](#) (most have been intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system). While death and suffering inflicted on Israeli civilians is as troubling as it is on the Palestinian side, any violent retaliation has to be viewed in context: Israel's Defence Forces (IDF) is supported with billions of dollars of American aid, a powerful air force and intelligence-gathering system.

It's also hard to believe that the IDF is on a mission to rid the Gaza Strip solely of "violent attackers and terrorists" when they try to use international media to provoke insurgency. Leading Israeli news outlets began reporting on Saturday that an earlier IDF proclamation about Israeli ground troops entering Gaza on Friday — news that made headlines worldwide — was an elaborate ploy to dupe Hamas into thinking that an invasion had begun so they could respond with even more lethal attacks on Palestinians. In fact, [no invasion](#) had taken place.

In response, Israel's military's spokesman, Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus, insisted it was an honest mistake during the fog of war. Was it an honest mistake too, then, when media offices belonging to the Associated Press and Al Jazeera were destroyed Saturday afternoon?

How are we, in a year of racial awakening, still not able to recognize Israel's half-century military occupation and deepening grip over Palestinian life? Why does a culture of impunity exist when it comes to Israeli aggressions?

The silencing of Israeli crimes and exclusion of Palestinian voices has been felt acutely in Canada for years, most [recently](#) when University of Toronto's law faculty controversially decided to rescind a hiring offer to a human rights lawyer because of concerns that her scholarship criticized Israeli human rights violations of Palestinians.

Canadian journalists are getting fed up too. An open letter to newsrooms signed by over a thousand people, including news editors, reporters, academics, lawyers and citizens are calling

for more equitable coverage of Israel balanced with historical and social context, which hasn't happened. As former CBC Middle East correspondent Neil Macdonald [said](#) around the hesitation felt by reporters to cover Israel and Palestine three years ago: "Many journalists and editors have come to understand that critical coverage of Israel can result at minimum in a professional headache, and at worst in career damage."

Critics of the Israel government are not Israel-haters or anti-Semites. We all know that political conflict results in devastating suffering on both sides. But we are also pushing against the narrative that the victims of this violence — children and teenagers — are somehow deserving of it.

Shenaz Kermalli is a freelance journalist based in Toronto and has previously worked for CBC, BBC and AJE.

8. Thousands of pro-Palestine protesters gather at Nathan Phillips Square to condemn Gaza Strip violence (Article)

SOURCE: [The Star](#)

Thousands of pro-Palestine protesters gather at Nathan Phillips Square to condemn Gaza Strip violence

10. Jewish Voice for Peace: RESOURCES

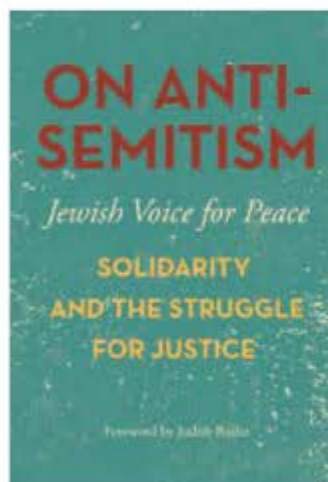
In conversations about Israel/Palestine, the same questions come up over and over again. You don't need to be an expert to talk about the issues of human rights at stake to have an opinion.

Use this guide to start conversations, field common questions, and address the myths and facts of ["The Israel/Palestine Conflict"](#) with your friends, family, and community.

[VIEW AND PRINT THE FULL PDF](#)

[DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ISRAEL AND PALESTINE – \(Guide\)](#)

BOOK: **On Antisemitism** - Solidarity and the Struggle for Justice



SOURCE: <http://onantisemitism.com/>
About the Book

A collection of essays on antisemitism, edited by Jewish Voice for Peace.

With Trump and Bannon in the White House, empowering antisemites while claiming their love for Israel, how do we talk about antisemitism in the present moment?

How have false charges of antisemitism been used to stifle criticism of Israeli policy and support for Palestinian human rights?

What is the relationship between antisemitism and other forms of bigotry and oppression?

How can we further the global progressive fight for justice for all peoples?

11. Why are Palestinians protesting? Because we want to live (Article)

[SOURCE: The Guardian](#)

Why are Palestinians protesting? Because we want to live

[Mariam Barghouti](#)

Just as the Black Lives Matter protests were not only about one killing, we are facing a whole regime of oppression

I started going to demonstrations when I was 17. At first, I went to protests against Israel's military occupation. Then we also began to protest against the authoritarianism of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, and the [sickening rivalry](#) between Palestinian political factions. For Palestinians, protest has become a way of life – a way to [be steadfast](#), to persevere.

Over the past decade, much of this burden of protest has been borne by individual Palestinian families facing expulsion or violence at the hands of soldiers and settlers. The threat of evictions or demolitions will spark a local protest, in the hope of preventing this or that particular outrage. But right now the attention of the world is on us not as individuals, but as a collective, [as Palestinians](#). It is not only about one village or one family or “only those in the West Bank” or “only those in Jerusalem”.

What we are in the streets protesting about now is not one killing or one violent raid, but a whole regime of oppression that destroys our bodies, our homes, our communities, our hopes – just as the protests for Black lives that spread across the US last year were not only about [George Floyd](#) or [Breonna Taylor](#) or any one killing.

This is what colonialism does: it suffocates every part of your life, and then it finishes by burying you. It is a strategic, deliberate process, and it is only obstructed or delayed because oppressors are almost always confronted and challenged by those under their rule. In the end, who wants to be chained down for being born who they are?

Last week, I was near the illegal settlement of [Beit El](#) by Ramallah in the West Bank as the Israeli army sent jeeps rushing towards demonstrators, journalists and medical staff, firing high-velocity teargas canisters directly at the crowd.

The sound of those canisters spiralling towards us in the dozens still makes me tremble. It reminds me of the day in December 2011, in the village of Nabi Saleh, when an Israeli soldier fired a teargas canister, from close range, directly at the face of 28-year-old Palestinian stone-thrower [Mustafa Tamimi](#), who died as a result of the injury.

I remember the face of then six-year-old Janna Tamimi, his cousin, as she screamed in her fragile voice: “Why did you kill my best friend?” Behind her was the illegal settlement of Halamish. Mustafa’s protest was against the settlement expansion and the impunity of settler violence as he and his community were imprisoned in the village, with no access to water springs or public services.

[Once this violence in Israel and Gaza ends, there can be no return to 'normal' | Jonathan Freedland](#)

The fact that these protests are leaderless is a sign of what has been festering for decades among all Palestinians. This is the coming-of-age of a generation born since the [pitiful Oslo accords](#) of 1993-1995, who grew up during decades that only solidified Israel’s settlement expansion and grip on Palestinian lives.

More than this, it is a continued growth of stamina, endurance and loss of faith. But at the same time, it is a complete reclamation of faith, not in international policymakers, not in negotiation committees, not in humanitarian observers and NGOs, but in ourselves.

“Why do you always have to put yourself on the frontlines?” my mother reprimanded me years ago, as she threw away my clothes that were soaked in noxious “*kharara*”, [skunk water](#), sprayed by the Israeli military.

Often used in protests in the West Bank, Israeli forces have also now been spraying it on the streets of Sheikh Jarrah and the homes of Palestinians. It’s an attempt to make our [lives so unbearable](#) that we are driven out.

I wanted to tell my mother, if it isn’t me, it’s someone else. I wanted to tell her how in Gaza the [unarmed protests of 2018](#) were met with the sniping down of hundreds, as Israeli soldiers turned it into an unrelenting sniper free-for-all, deliberately causing [debilitating injuries](#). But we both knew that what made her so angry was the horrible recognition that we had no choice but to protest – that as long as injustice persists, and our dreams for better realities continue to push us towards confrontation, getting soaked in skunk water meant that I was at least alive.

This is exactly why we are protesting, because we are ready to be alive.

Mariam Barghouti is a Palestinian writer and researcher

12. Continuously Updated Masterlist of Sources on Palestine (Resources by multiple researchers, scholars, academics, authors)

PALESTINE: A Master List

(I've read many of these links, but not all. Many are from well known scholars, historians and journalists. The articles I've read use a critical race praxis and are transparent and intentional about calling out anti-semitism. Read these with a critical anti-racist lens, and ensure credibility and intersectional anti-oppressive frameworks that use a clear analysis of power. -JD)

Continuously Updated Masterlist of Sources on Palestine:

Books/ archives/ research/articles/ etc:

#SaveSheikhJarrah:

<https://linktr.ee/m7mdkurd/> & <https://linktr.ee/letstalkpalestine>

Collections:

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- <https://decolonizepalestine.com/introduction-to-palestine/> (provides Palestine 101 info, counters common myths, answers frequently asked questions, and offers reliable reads)
 - https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vKvDiT_TLRnr-QftISLIM3EJ8eq3Wis (Palestinian Studies folder compiled by @ayaghanameh)
 - <http://sincerelyjia.com/must-read-nonfiction-books-about-palestine> <https://free-palestine.carrd.co/> (list of non-fiction books about Palestine & carrd)
 - <https://drive.google.com/drive/mobile/folders/1sck4qTPMSwc5D7C1DmtlAFMDc1BNx2LU> (folder of readings compiled by @hotgirlhala/ currently taken down by Google)
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rw55meTIE2p2eh1nTHvvREGHUITJoW7GuulkgRuJyck/mobilebasic> (Palestinian History, Israel's Crimes, and Debunking Zionist Arguments by @knafehnabulsiye)
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ES6Nthlq4zq8xfekdlu3-e537UCJ7nqKY6Nk7O3LtTU/edit> Radius of Arab American Writers
 - Link tree: <https://linktr.ee/palestineresources>
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Important Reads:

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- Zionist Colonialism in Palestine by Faye A. Sayegh: http://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/DOC12_scans/12.zionist.colonialism.palestine.1965.pdf
 - Freedom Archives Collection on Palestine: https://search.freedomarchives.org/search.php?view_collection=24
 - The 1936-39 Revolt in Palestine by Ghassan Kanafani: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kanafani/1972/revolt.htm> / <http://media.virbcdn.com/files/5f/d06c929d62d90a04-3639RevoltinPalestine.pdf>
 - A Short History on the Colonization of Palestine (Flyer): <http://www.onepalestine.org/resources/flyers/MythHistory.pdf>
 - The Other Shift: Settler Colonialism, Israel and the Occupation: <https://online.ucpress.edu/jps/article/42/2/26/54509/The-Other-Shift-Settler-Colonialism-Israel-and-the>