

# The More Plausible and Reasonable History of Palestine and Israel

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*The history behind Palestine and Israel is a history of Jewish European [settler-colonialism](#)—i.e., Zionism. And since racism is a symptom and a tool of settler-colonialism, Zionism is also viewed as [anti-Semitism](#), and as ethno-supremacy or [Jewish supremacy](#), [Arabophobia](#) and [Islamophobia](#).*

The triangulation of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Arabophobia in the history of Palestine and Israel is part of the settler-colonial movement of Zionism and is not a “new history” in the sense of the term as introduced by Israeli historian Benny Morris in 1980 to humanize, in Israeli academic discourse, the victims of Zionism. It simply reflects modern terminology and encompasses [historic events](#) to which the Zionist mind is still largely closed.

These historic events are simple in their broad outline. Zionist Jews (self-proclaimed atheists) decided to build a Jewish state in Palestine and ended up taking much of the land by force and expelling most of the Palestinian non-Jewish Arab population, preventing them from returning.

Now Israel is occupying the rest of the territory the World Zionist Organization didn't manage to take and continues to “settle” it.

In *The Ends of Zionism: Racism and the Palestinian Struggle*, Joseph Massad [writes](#):

Zionism as a colonial movement is constituted in ideology and practice by a religio-racial epistemology through which it apprehends itself and the world around it... It is no longer contested, even among many Israelis, that the impact of Zionism on the Palestinian people in the last one hundred years includes: the expulsion of a majority of Palestinians from their lands and homes, the prevention of their return, and the subsequent confiscation of their property for the exclusive use of Jews; imposing a military apartheid system on those Palestinians who remained in Israel from 1948 until 1966, which since then has been relaxed to a civilian Jewish supremacist system of discrimination; and the military occupation and apartheid system imposed on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and their population for the last thirty-five [now fifty-one] years as well as continued colonization of these occupied territories.

In that sense, the history of Jewish European settler-colonialism—i.e., Zionism—behind Palestine and Israel (as opposed to history as Zionist “narrative” or [myth](#)) has the voice of reason behind it, because it reveals an atrocity that must be redressed.

Acknowledging and taking accountability for Israel's historic and ongoing crimes against Palestinian Arabs is the first step in resolving the Nakba. The historic details regarding why and how these tragic events happened have filled many books, but they are beside the point.

The broad outline by itself has the voice of reason if you also consider justice as reasonable and injustice as unreasonable.

What is reasonable or plausible, for example, about Ivanka Kushner now being able to buy a house in Jerusalem and "[return](#)" to Israel by dint of her conversion to Judaism and her American husband's Jewishness, but [Ghada Karmi](#), a Muslim Palestinian Arab being denied return to her homeland and not even allowed to buy back her own father's [stolen](#) house?

In *Humanizing the Text: Israeli "New History" and the Trajectory of the 1948 Historiography*, Ilan Pappé, who is famously known for his *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, [writes](#):

One thing is clear when analyzing the fortunes of Israeli new history from the time of its inception in the late 1980s until its brief/temporary disappearance in 2000: historical reconstruction is closely linked to general political developments and upheavals. In societies torn by internal and external rifts and conflicts, the work of historians is constantly pervaded by the political drama around them. In such geopolitical locations the pretense of objectivity is particularly misplaced, if not totally unfounded.

Radical Jewish dissident historians like Ilan Pappé in Israel are vital to a history that has the voice of reason on its side. They are a bridge to a wider public in Israel.

Palestinians often wonder what it takes to break through to the consciousness of Western publics with regard to the 70-year-long tragic history of Palestine.

I believe that the best way of shifting Western publics' opinion from supporting Israel to supporting the Palestinian cause is to continue emphasizing what has already taken place through the demise of the so-called "peace process" and "two-state solution"—the realization, so long obscured, that the problem of Israel lies in its nature as a Zionist [settler-colonial project in Palestine](#), rather than as a military "occupier".

In *Why the term 'Israeli occupation' must be rejected*, Ramzy Baroud [writes](#),

...It is often argued that Israel is an occupier that has violated the rules of occupation as stated in international law. This would have been the case a year, two years or five years after the original occupation had taken place, but not 51 years later. Since then, the occupation has turned into long-term colonization.

Many people believe that the [Great March of Return](#) has had so much positive journalistic reactions in Western media because the protest is essentially non-violent—i.e., it cannot be said to threaten Israel's security and so the deadly force Israel uses is "disproportionate" and criminal.

That's as far as Palestinian non-violent action goes. It doesn't do anything to change

Western publics' perceptions of Israel as a legitimate Western-like state protecting its "borders" (albeit with disproportionate force) against a sea of Arabs or their perceptions of Palestinians as "rioters" and "barbarians" whose sole evil wish is to kill Jews.

Non-violent resistance has its uses, certainly, but it must never be pushed on an oppressed and brutalized people, in my view, as a higher moral ground of resistance.

Additionally, the emphasis on the tactic of non-violent resistance implicitly delegitimizes other forms of resistance, making saints out of some Palestinian martyrs and hunger-striking prisoners held under administrative detention (i.e., those imprisoned without charge) and accepting Israel's justification for the execution and imprisonment of thousands of other Palestinians.

What's different about the Great March of Return is that its demand of [return](#) connects the "occupation" and siege with the [Nakba](#), dramatizing for a Western audience, through protest and resistance, the colonization of all of Palestine.

That demand, heard for the first time in the recent history of Palestinian resistance, is shifting the perceptions of Western publics.

Activists for justice in Palestine on social media have long used different tactics (primarily documenting and publicizing Israel's violations of international law and human decency) to reach Western publics (to break through mainstream media in the West). The most effective are The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS - [PACBI](#)) campaigns that persuade academic big names and cultural and sports celebrities to take up the Palestinian cause.

Western publics are also becoming more aware of the Zionist [backlash](#) against BDS campaigns, especially as they impinge on [freedom of speech](#).

Generally, addressing Western audiences, especially those on the Left, works by reference to progressive values applicable to injustices against all marginalized groups in Western society, as it brings home the incongruity of singling the Palestinian cause as an exception.

Western audiences are assumed to be part of the Judeo-Christian tradition, a term [coined](#) by George Orwell in the late 1930s in order to fight anti-Semitism. Unfortunately, this humanist tradition is tainted, because anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are now linked inexorably within it, and so combating one means combating the other.

Western civilization has long been defined by colonial conquest (with Islamophobia and Arabophobia in the Middle East) and imperial power; it is what gave birth to Zionism. [Furthermore](#),

... once established in its position of military superiority, the colonial culture produces, through a whole range of media, an unending 'series of propositions that slowly and subtly—with the help of books, newspapers, schools and their texts, advertisements, films, radio—work their way into one's mind and shape one's view of the world of the group to which one belongs'... Successful colonisation leads the oppressed to identify with the world view of the oppressor.

The Palestinian Authority now identifies with its oppressor so thoroughly that it did not shy away, as dictated by Israel, from [cracking down viciously](#) on Palestinians in the West Bank

rallying against Mahmoud Abbas’s punitive economic measures in Gaza.

What will ultimately change Western Public’s perceptions are Palestinians themselves, however they choose to resist. They must insist on liberation—on decolonization and not simply on “ending the occupation”.

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