

Palestine-Israel: Recommendations for learning about and taking action

Selected by Skip Schiel & Chris Jorgenson

TO READ OR WATCH FIRST

Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions? A Quaker Zionist Rethinks Palestinian Rights, by Steve Chase, 2017, 34 pp. (Pendle Hill Pamphlet #445)

Former NEYM friend, Chase, “does us all a service as he traces his journey through this tangled web, with compassion for everyone who is trying to find their way, himself included. He started out with a warm and sympathetic understanding of the oppression of the Jews and the hope of Israel. It was with difficulty, and much reading of history, that he found his way to a similar understanding of the oppression of Palestinians by the state of Israel.” (Friends Journal)

The Lemon Tree: An Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East, by Sandy Tolan, 2007, 304 pp.

Based on extensive research, and springing from his enormously resonant documentary that aired on NPR’s Fresh Air in 1998, Sandy Tolan brings the Israeli-Palestinian conflict down to its most human level, suggesting that even amid the bleakest political realities there exist stories of hope and reconciliation. In 1967, Bashir Al-Khayri, a Palestinian twenty-five-year-old, journeyed to Israel, with the goal of seeing the beloved old stone house, with the lemon tree behind it, that he and his family had fled nineteen years earlier. To his surprise, when he found the house he was greeted by Dalia Ashkenazi Landau, a nineteen-year-old Israeli college student, whose family fled Europe for Israel following the Holocaust. On the stoop of their shared home, Dalia and Bashir began a rare friendship, forged in the aftermath of war and tested over the next thirty-five years in ways that neither could imagine on that summer day in 1967. (Goodreads)

Occupied with Nonviolence: A Quaker Woman Speaks, by Jean Zaru, 2008, 168 pp.

Jean Zaru is the anchor of Quakerism in the Occupied Territories. Long clerk of Ramallah Friends Meeting, world traveler speaking for Quakers in the Holy Land, and friend and mentor to many attempting to understand the dynamics of occupation and siege, the author presents a perspective blending resistance, nonviolence, Christianity, and Quakerism that has influenced many who have read her book, heard her speak, met her, and seek her guidance.

The Present, a video by the Palestinian director, Farah Nabulsi and Hind Shoufani, 2020, 24 minutes

This short drama gives a taste of the experience of a Palestinian father and daughter as they try to cross a checkpoint to do a birthday errand. (streaming)

FOR MORE DEPTH

READ (BOOKS)

Apeirogon, by Colum McCann, 2020, 480 pp.

“Colum McCann's most ambitious novel to date, *Apeirogon*--named for a shape with a countably infinite number of sides--is a tour de force concerning friendship, love, loss, and belonging.” (Goodreads)

Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights, by Omar Barghouti, 2011, 320 pp.

“International boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) efforts helped topple South Africa's brutal apartheid regime. In this urgent book, Omar Barghouti makes the case for a rights-based BDS campaign to stop Israel's rapacious occupation, colonization, and apartheid against the Palestinian people. This considered, convincing collection contributes to the growing debate on Israel's violations of international law and points the way forward to a united global civil society movement for freedom, justice, self-determination, and equality for all.” (Haymarket Books)

The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine, by Ilan Pappé, 2006, 336 pp.

“Renowned Israeli historian, Ilan Pappé's groundbreaking book revisits the formation of the State of Israel. Between 1947 and 1949, over 400 Palestinian villages were deliberately destroyed, civilians were massacred and around a million men, women, and children were expelled from their homes at gunpoint.” (Amazon)

On Antisemitism—Solidarity and the Struggle for Justice, by various writers compiled by Jewish Voice for Peace, 2017, 288 pp.

An array of views about antisemitism, especially when used as a charge against criticism of Israel.

Palestine and Israel: a Personal Encounter, by Max Carter, 2020, 150 pp.

The evolution of a Quaker thru on the ground experience over decades in the region.

VIEW (MEDIA)

Film—Antisemitism in Our Midst: Past and Present, by the Antisemitism Education Initiative, at the University of California, Berkeley, 2021, 11 minutes

This video is part of the Antisemitism Education Initiative on the Berkeley campus. This video charts the history of antisemitism from its origins until today. It tackles the hard questions about different and changing forms of antisemitism, persistent anti-Jewish stereotypes, the complex racial position of Jews in contemporary America, and the precise line between criticism of Israel and antisemitism. With Questions for deeper discussion.

On YouTube: youtu.be/e9SQrldlaVE

The Occupation of the American Mind: Israel's Public Relations War in the United States, by the Media Education Foundation, 2016, 84 minutes,

“Israel’s ongoing military occupation of Palestinian territory and repeated invasions of Gaza have triggered a fierce backlash against Israeli policies virtually everywhere in the world—except in the United States. This film takes an eye-opening look at this critical exception, zeroing in on pro-Israel public relations efforts within the U.S. Narrated by Roger Waters and featuring leading observers of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and U.S. media culture, the film explores how the Israeli and U.S. governments, and the pro-Israel lobby (including AIPAC) have joined forces— often with very different motives— shape American media coverage of the conflict in Israel’s favor.” (Media Education Foundation).
Available free: occupationmovie.org

The Promised Land Exhibit by the Jewish Museum of the Palestinian Experience and curated by Dr. Steve Feldman, an interactive exhibit of historical photographs and documents with links to audio and video materials that is easily transported and set up. A Jewish perspective on the Israel/Palestine conflict, rooted in Jewish values of truth, justice, and peace, to treat our neighbor, as we would want to be treated.

Info: promisedlandmuseum.org

Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People, a movie by Sut Jhally and produced by Media Education Foundation, 15 minutes, 2006

How Hollywood corrupts or manipulates the image of Arabs.

Available: bit.ly/2mJ1L4X

ORGANIZATIONS

The American Friends Service Committee work in Palestine-Israel: neym-ip.org/afsc-in-palestine-israel

Compassionate Listening Project: compassionatelistening.org

Developed by a Quaker, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering individuals and communities to transform conflict and strengthen cultures of peace

Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT): cpt.org/programs/palestine

Organizes volunteers for accompaniment in Hebron. “CPT Palestine is a faith-based organization that supports Palestinian-led, nonviolent, grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation and the unjust structures that uphold it. By collaborating with local Palestinian and Israeli peacemakers and educating people in our home communities, we help create a space for justice and peace.” (CPT)

Combatants for Peace: cfpeace.org

Ex-combatant Israelis and Palestinians, men and women, who have laid down their weapons and rejected all means of violence, their “mission is to build the social infrastructure necessary for ending the conflict and the occupation: communities of Palestinians and Israelis working together through non-violent means to promote peace. We believe that such communities can serve as a role model for both people,

demonstrating through action that there is a real alternative to the cycle of violence. We believe that disseminating such activities widely can and will affect attitudinal change at the societal level and policy change at the political level.” (CFP)

Jewish Voice for Peace (resource page): jewishvoiceforpeace.org/?s=resources

“Jewish Voice for Peace opposes anti-Jewish, anti-Muslim, and anti-Arab bigotry and oppression. JVP seeks an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem; security and self-determination for Israelis and Palestinians; a just solution for Palestinian refugees based on principles established in international law; an end to violence against civilians; and peace and justice for all peoples of the Middle East.” (Jewish Voice for Peace)

New Israel Fund: nif.org

“Helps Israel live up to its founders’ vision of a society that ensures complete equality to all its inhabitants. Our aim is to advance liberal democracy, including freedom of speech and minority rights, and to fight the inequality, injustice and extremism that diminish Israel.” (NIF)

Quakers Advocating Justice for Palestine (QAJP): neym-ip.org

Meeting since 2015, QAJP has primarily planned programs at NEYM Sessions about Palestine-Israel. During those gatherings, it has organized and facilitated over 40 programs including slideshows and movies about the region, workshops, speakers, a Gaza pinwheel display from the American Friends Service Committee, photographic displays, and informal lunch sessions. Most recently it concentrates on helping write and distribute minutes (statements) from monthly and quarterly meetings.”

Parents Circle - Family Forum (PCFF): theparentscircle.org

“Is a joint Israeli-Palestinian organization of over 600 families, all of whom have lost an immediate family member to the ongoing conflict. Moreover, the PCFF has concluded that the process of reconciliation between nations is a prerequisite to achieving a sustainable peace. The organization thus utilizes all resources available in education, public meetings and the media, to spread these ideas.” (PCFF)

Ramallah Friends Meeting (Quakers): rfmq.org

Since 1910 one of the centers for Quakerism in Palestine

Ramallah Friends School: rfs.edu.ps

A high-quality school based on Quaker values, preschool thru high school

Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center: sabeel.org

Uses prayer, advocacy, witness visits, and gatherings. The vision is that “local Christians inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ stand for the oppressed, work for justice, engage in peace-building”. (Sabeel)

Shoulder to Shoulder: www.shouldertoshouldercampaign.org

“Standing with American Muslims-Advancing American Ideals, the organization envisions an America where people of all faiths and cultural backgrounds are treated respectfully, fairly, and with dignity. We advance our vision by directly engaging faith leaders in the United States to be strategic partners in countering discrimination and violence against Muslims.” (Shoulder to Shoulder)

Friends Committee on National Legislation: fcn1.org

“Lobbies for nonviolent engagement in the Middle East to prevent, de-escalate, and resolve longstanding conflicts. Lasting peace in the region will require engagement with all stakeholders and an end to U.S. complicity in the violence.” (FCNL)

Quaker United Nations Office: guno.org

“A Quaker presence at the United Nations, representing Friends’ concerns for global peace and justice to the international community.” (QUNO)

CAMPAIGNS BY ORGANIZATIONS

Ben & Jerry’s Ice Cream— <https://icecream.vtjp.org/>

“July 19th 2021 – Ben & Jerry’s announces that they will end sales of their ice cream in illegal settlements, and terminate the contract with their license holder when it expires in 2022!” (Vermonters for Justice in Palestine)

Boycott, Divest, Sanction Movement (BDS): bdsmovement.net

The movement works to end international support for Israel's oppression of Palestinians and pressure Israel to comply with international law.

Gaza Unlocked (AFSC): gazaunlocked.org

“For over a decade, two million Palestinians in Gaza have lived under a brutal military blockade imposed by Israel. Media stories about Gaza primarily focus on violence and politics, while stories of how the blockade impacts everyday life remain largely untold. Gaza Unlocked gives you access to firsthand accounts from Palestinians living in Gaza, information about the blockade, and opportunities to make a difference. (American Friends Service Committee)

No Way to Treat a Child (AFSC and Defense for Children International Palestine):

afsc.org/story/how-quakers-can-join-no-way-to-treat-child-campaign

“In 2015, AFSC and Defense for Children International-Palestine launched the No Way to Treat a Child campaign to challenge the Israeli occupation of Palestinians by exposing the systematic ill treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention. Since then, the campaign has mobilized Quakers, other faith communities, and many others across the U.S. to urge Congress to work to stop the detention of Palestinian children and end the occupation. We hope you and your meeting/church will join our efforts!” (American Friends Service Committee)

NEWS/INFORMATION SOURCES

Haaretz: [haaretz.com](https://www.haaretz.com)

A leading Israeli newspaper covering different perspectives from the region (subscription may be required).

Middle East Eye: [middleeasteye.net](https://www.middleeasteye.net)

One of the best news sources about current events in Palestine-Israel

Quakers in Palestine-Israel Timeline:

teeksaphoto.org/Writing/QuakersInIsraelPalestineTimeLine.html

Compiled by Skip Schiel to provide an overview

An extensive resource list here: neym-ip.org/resources

(7.3.2023)