

# **Reading List: Palestine, Israel and Decolonization**

This reading list brings together a broad variety of nonfiction, fiction and poetry, from classic texts on the topics of Palestine, Israel, and global decolonization to contemporary voices.

## **Nonfiction: Palestine**

### **Susan Abulhawa. *Every Moment is A Life*. (2026)**

An anthology of short stories compiled by Abulhawa featuring 18 writers from Gaza.

### **Jehad Abusalim, Jennifer Bing & Mike Merryman-Lotze. *Light in Gaza*. (2022)**

A powerful anthology of Palestinian writers and artists that imagines Gaza's future beyond occupation and apartheid, while reaffirming its critical role in Palestinian identity and struggle for liberation.

### **Aida Essaid. *Zionism and Land Tenure in Mandate Palestine*. (2013)**

A political-historical analysis of how the land tenure system under the British Mandate facilitated Zionist land acquisition, examined within a colonial-settler framework.

### **Norman Finkelstein. *Gaza*. (2018)**

A meticulously researched inquest into Israel's assaults on Gaza, arguing they constituted flagrant violations of international law, while also documenting the failure of human rights organizations to hold Israel accountable.

### **Ghassan Kanafani. *The 1936-39 Revolt in Palestine*. (1972)**

A concrete analysis of the mass uprisings against Zionism and British colonialism from 1936 to 1939, examining the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions that shaped the anti-colonial struggle.

### **Irit Katz. *The Common Camp*. (2022)**

An exploration of the camp as a spatial instrument used for controlling populations and territories in Israel/Palestine, serving as both a tool of colonial power and a makeshift space of resistance.

### **Rashid Khalidi. *The Hundred Year's War on Palestine*. (2020)**

A sweeping history of the conflict told from an explicitly Palestinian perspective, reevaluating the forces arrayed against the Palestinians without whitewashing their own leadership's mistakes.

### **Ilan Pappé. *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*. (2006)**

Drawing on archival evidence, this book demonstrates that the forcible removal of the indigenous Palestinian population was a central plank in Israel's founding ideology between 1947 and 1949.

### **Joe Sacco. *Palestine*. (2001)**

A landmark work of graphic journalism based on extensive research and an extended visit to the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the early 1990s.

### **Edward Said. *After the Last Sky*. (1986)**

A powerful look at Palestinian lives and identity told through Said's own experiences and Jean Mohr's stunning photographs.

### **Edward Said. *The Question of Palestine*. (1992)**

Said traces the collision between two peoples in the Middle East and its repercussions for both occupier and occupied.

## Nonfiction: Israel and Zionism

### **Jeff Halper. *Decolonizing Israel, Liberating Palestine.* (2021)**

Arguing that settler colonialism provides a clearer framework for understanding the Zionist project, Halper advocates for decolonization through a single democratic state with a shared political community.

### **Ilan Pappé. *Ten Myths About Israel.* (2017)**

The Israeli historian examines and debunks ten contested ideas about Israel's origins and identity that reinforce the regional status quo.

### **Areej Sabbagh-Khoury. *Colonizing Palestine.* (2023)**

A microhistory of left-wing Zionist settlements that, despite professing support for a binational state, actively participated in the protracted displacement of Palestinians over decades.

### **Eyal Weizman. *Hollow Land.* (2007)**

An essential examination of how Israel extends control over Palestinian lands through architecture and infrastructure, transforming Gaza and the West Bank into a war zone.

## Fiction: Palestinian authors

**Content warning:** Many of these books explicitly deal with the themes of war, genocide, ethnic cleansing, military occupation, sexual violence, systemic violence, and the forced displacement of the Palestinian people. As such, they might be distressing to some readers, especially those with personal or inter-generational connections to these or similar events.

### **Susan Abulhawa. *Mornings in Jenin.* (2008) // suom. *Jeninin aamut.* (2010)**

A devastating multi-generational novel following one Palestinian family from 1948 onward, spanning five countries and exploring love, loss, war, and hope.

### **Susan Abulhawa. *Against the Loveless World.* (2020) // suom. *Rakkaudetonta maailmaa vastaan.* (2022)**

Confined in solitary detention, a Palestinian woman called both terrorist and revolutionary recounts her story of survival, love, and resistance.

### **Hala Alyan. *Salt Houses.* (2017)**

A multi-generational novel following a Palestinian family displaced by the Six-Day War, scattered across Kuwait, Beirut, Paris, and Boston as they navigate the burdens of diaspora and assimilation.

### **Isabella Hammad. *Enter Ghost.* (2024)**

After spending years away from her homeland, actress Sonia Nasir returns to Haifa and joins a West Bank production of Hamlet, discovering a new self in herself.

### **Ghassan Kanafani. *Men in the Sun.* (1962)**

#### **see also film adaptation *The Dupes* (1972), by Tewfik Saleh**

Three Palestinian men embark on a brutal odyssey across the Iraqi desert to Kuwait, confronting border bureaucracy, the blank aggression of the sun, and their own compromises.

### **Sahar Khalifeh. *Wild Thorns.* (1976/1985)**

A young Palestinian returns from the Gulf to support the resistance, only to find his fellow citizens adjusting to life under occupation.

**Sahar Mustafah. *The Beauty of Your Face*. (2020)**

When a shooter attacks a Muslim school in Chicago, the Palestinian principal's memories unfold, revealing a life shaped by bigotry, family loss, and the community she found in Islam.

**Anton Shammas. *Arabesques*. (1986/1988)**

Written by a Palestinian Christian, this luminous novel weaves generations of family history with the writer's own voyage into exile and vocation.

**Adania Shibli. *Minor Detail*. (2017/2020) // suom. *Sivuseikka*. (2024)**

Beginning with the rape and murder of a young Palestinian woman by Israeli soldiers in 1949, a woman in present-day Ramallah becomes obsessed with this forgotten "minor detail" of history.

## Biographies and memoirs of Palestinians

**Mourid Barghouti. *I Saw Ramallah*. (1997)**

After thirty years in exile following the Six-Day War, the poet returns to Ramallah, discovering what it means to be deprived not only of a homeland but of one's habitual place in the world.

**Ghada Karmi. *In Search of Fatima*. (2002)**

A moving account of displacement and exile, charting the author's forced departure from Jerusalem in 1948 and her lifelong search for identity between Palestine and London.

## Nonfiction: Political theory/philosophy, decolonization

**Angela Y. Davis. *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. (2016)**

A series of recent interviews outlining Davis' thoughts on the interconnected nature of struggle and liberation from the 1960s to the 2010s.

**Frantz Fanon. *The Wretched of the Earth*. (1961)**

A masterful interrogation of race, colonialism, psychological trauma, and revolutionary struggle, this landmark text continues to influence decolonization and Black consciousness movements worldwide.

**Paulo Freire. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (1970/2005)**

[Open access \(pdf\)](#)

Freire's groundbreaking approach to education rejects passive learning in favor of dialogue and critical consciousness as an active practice against oppression.

**Emma Goldman. *Anarchism and Other Essays*. (1910)**

Goldman combines early modern anarchism with early feminist thinking. The collection tackles various topics, including nationalism, prisons, and political violence.

**David Livingstone. *Less Than Human*. (2011)**

An exploration of how and why humans dehumanize others, drawing on history, psychology, biology, and philosophy to illuminate the roots of violence and bigotry.

**Asim Qureshi. *I Refuse to Condemn*. (2020)**

A collection exploring how the expectation to condemn what society at large fears emerges in times of heightened security, and how writers subvert this pressure as part of an anti-racist commitment.

**Edward Said. *Orientalism*. (1978)**

Said traces how Europe's centuries-long domination of the Middle East constructed "the Orient" as fundamentally "other," an entrenched view that continues to prevent true understanding.

**Sophie Watson & Katherine Gibson. *Postmodern Cities and Spaces*. (1995)**

A landmark work examining the influences of postmodern discourse on thinking about contemporary cities and questions of power in urban life.

## **Other texts**

**Omar Barghouti. *BDS*. (2011)**

Barghouti lays out the case for an international boycott, divestment, and sanctions campaign to pressure Israel to comply with international law, drawing lessons from the South African anti-apartheid movement.