Public Humanities (2025), 1, e179, 1–12
doi:10.1017/pub.2025.10094

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS PUBLIC HUMANITIES

ARTICLE

Palestine is a Paradigm

Sherene Seikaly

Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA, USA
Email: sseikaly@ucsb.edu

(Received 03 September 2025; revised 03 September 2025; accepted 25 October 2025)

Abstract

This essay approaches Palestine not as a laboratory or a problem to be solved, but as a paradigm that elucidates the persistent and cumulative violence of settler colonialism, genocide, and dispossession. The author explores the collapse and distortion of time under siege, the fragmentation and resilience of bodies amid relentless violence, and the radical power of storytelling in the face of attempted erasure. Weaving together images from Gaza's hospitals, refugee camps, schools, prisons, and graveyards, this essay documents both the horror and tenacity of everyday Palestinian life. It situates the ongoing Nakba within global trends of authoritarianism and repression, including the assault on academic freedom and criminalization of solidarity. Ultimately, this essay argues that Palestinian defiance, memory, and narrative offer vital lessons in apocalyptic times.

Keywords: Gaza; genocide; humanitarian crisis; Israeli occupation; Palestinian prisoners

It has been twenty-two months of witnessing the relentless, escalating fragmentation of Palestinian bodies, lives, and futures. It has been twenty-two months of mourning—today, over 60,000 Palestinian lives and counting.[1] It has been twenty-two months of holding tightly to the thousands under the rubble, of imagining a tomorrow for the largest amputee cohort in modern history.[2]

We stand bereft, in loss. We stand in abundance, the abundance of our gathering, of the many communities we shape, of the histories we come from, of the things we know, and all that we will learn. How can we make sense of our worlds as they shrink and constrict under regimes of genocide and authoritarianism? How can we hold ground on an earth giving way to mudslides, fire, floods, and drought?

How can we move through the suspension of what we have long critiqued and relied on: liberal norms of due process, academic freedom, and free speech?

This article was a keynote for the conference titled "The Long Arc of Fascism," organized by University of British Columbia's Centre for Climate Justice and Simon Fraser University's Centre for Comparative Muslim Studies, on April 18–19, 2025.

[1] "Israel-Gaza War Death Toll: Live Tracker" 2025.

[2] Moor 2025.

© The Author(s), 2025. Published by Cambridge University Press. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

I think through these questions by sharing some lessons that Palestine, and the Palestinians, offer us as we navigate cartographies of loss and abundance.

I do this as a child of a Palestinian woman and man who became, like 750,000 other Palestinians, refugees in 1948. I am a product and a scholar of what we call our ongoing Nakba, which spans the one hundred years of denial of Palestinian political rights and peoplehood.[3]

To embark, I call on my ancestors to guide us. In the words of Indigenous scholar Kyle Whyte, "indigenous peoples already inhabit what our ancestors would have likely characterized as a dystopian future."[4] In this dystopia, we remain grounded in the knowledge that the lands and histories that we belong to reside in us. Dispossession is cumulative, repetitive, and ongoing. We know but must always repeat: the Nakba did not end in 1948. The Nakba is not in the past. Catastrophe is not in the future.

1. Time, body, and stories

Palestine is not a laboratory. It is not a problem to be solved. It is not an object of salvation. Palestine is a paradigm.

Palestine teaches us about the long arc of dispossession. It teaches us about the cumulative power of settler colonial complicity: how massacres culminate into genocide, and the attempted excision of large groups of people from the category of the human. I turn now to such lessons from and of Palestine—about time, the body, and storytelling.

1.1. Time

Palestinians "went to sleep in 2023 and woke up in 1948."[5] Today, we are in the 555th day of the U.S.-backed Israeli genocide of the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip. Following Leanne Simpson, we live in a present that collapses the past into the future. This genocide has kept time *for* us; it has kept time *from* us.[6]

Shock, loss, and exhaustion melt, fuse, and deform time. Days are transformed into years. Years intermingle with moments. Like the couple whose hands remained gripped together as they burned to death, the past and the future meld to shape the present.

Think of Dr. Hussam Abu Safiya, who, until the last moments of 2024, worked tirelessly at the dilapidated and besieged Kamal Adwan Hospital in Beit Lahia. He healed, he soothed, he pleaded, he advocated, amid unbearable loss and horror. On December 26, Dr. Abu Safiya witnessed Israeli forces kill five of his staff and set fire to his hospital, the last functioning medical facility in northern Gaza.[7] The final photograph of Dr. Abu Safiya has become iconic.[8] He walks in his tattered medical coat up a hill of rubble toward an Israeli tank. In this confrontation between man and tank, Dr. Abu Safiya walks in grief and courage, residing in the present among the ruins of the past, and facing the horror of the future. Today, suffering

[3] The list of references for the ongoing Nakba is capacious. See the work of Rana Barakat, Amahl Bishara, Noura Erakat, Rashid Khalidi, Mezna Qato, Rosemary Sayigh, and many more.

[4] Whyte 2017, 207.

[5] Insaniyyat: Society of Palestinian Anthropologists 2024.

[6] Simpson 2017.

[7] Salman et al. 2024.

[8] Valdez 2024.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

torture at the notorious Sde Teiman prison, Dr. Abu Safiya invites us into a sliver of time between the aggrieved past and the frightening future—the now.

Sometimes the sliver of time opens wider. For a brief two months, the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip wrested relief from the jaws of grief. On January 19, 2025, at 11:15 a.m., Israeli jets, drones, and artillery shells that had dominated the Palestinian soundscape in the Gaza Strip fell silent.[9] Fifteen months of unbridled brutality halted, if only temporarily.

Relief was everywhere as aid trucks entered the besieged Gaza Strip. Israel's denial and restriction of food and basic goods had created "one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in the world."[10] That respite would be short-lived. Israel dismantled UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency), the lifeline of survival for Palestinians in Gaza.[11] Israel has engineered starvation through the destruction of agricultural land, attacks on aid convoys and infrastructures, and the targeting of aid personnel, bakeries, shelters, and markets. Today is the 48th day of the complete closure of Gaza to any humanitarian assistance.

During those ephemeral days of ceasefire in January, joy overtook many at the sight of loved ones set free from Israeli prisons. Two of those prisoners were Khalida Jarrar, who was held for six months of her detention in solitary confinement, and Mohammed al-Tous, whom Israel had imprisoned since 1985.[12] The touch, smell, sight, and sound of freedom were indeed a respite. But Israel's carceral logic was never far from sight.

Israel's arrest campaigns had already "doubled the number of Palestinians in Israeli custody" since October 7, 2023.[13] From then to this day, it has detained more than 18,500 people.[14] Less than a week into the ceasefire, Israel arrested 95 Palestinians across the West Bank.[15] Joy and relief, the Palestinians know too well, are temporary under Israeli rule.

Israel has promised to make Gaza uninhabitable. It has delivered that promise at slow and warp speeds. And at each turn, Palestinians have defied this intent. As soon as the ceasefire was announced, Palestinians began returning to their lands along the Mediterranean coast. In the face of the ongoing Nakba, they practiced what Barakat has called ongoing return.[16]

In the West Bank, the Israeli military launched Operation "Iron Wall," which concentrated on the West Bank city of Jenin and its refugee camp. Settlers and soldiers join forces to assault people, partition the land, and prevent movement throughout cities, towns, and villages. Demolition, detention, and forcible expulsions define the everyday. Across the geography of a targeted and brutalized people from Rafah to Jenin, Palestinians know that what is to come has never left the present. They reside in a now, embodying all that remains and all that might be.

[9] "Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Takes Effect in Gaza" 2025.

[10] Murphy 2025.

[11] "Israel's New Laws Banning UNRWA Already Taking Effect" 2025.

[12] "Tears, Hugs Greet 90 Palestinian Women, Children Freed from Israeli Prisons" 2025; "Who Is Mohammed al-Tous, Longest-Serving Palestinian Prisoner Released by Israel?" 2025.

[13] "Focus On: A Year of Genocide in Gaza" 2024.

[14] "Palestinian Prisoners' Institutions Monthly Report: Arrests of Palestinians in Occupied West Bank & Jerusalem in July 2025" 2025.

[15] Nashed 2025.

[16] Barakat 2026.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

1.2. The body

Over the last twenty months, I have attempted to record what it means to live in genocide. What does it mean to be a child, to parent, to age, in genocide?

On the fortieth day of the genocide, a ten-year-old asked: "Are you taking me to the cemetery?"[17] Covered in rubble, her skin burnt, the young girl looked at the death surrounding her and noted the end of her world. Both singular and representative in her confrontation of loss, she is (and hopefully remains) a survivor amid the now drastically underestimated 60,000 people Israel has killed in Gaza. She is just one of nearly 155,000 people who have been injured.[18] She is but one of the 40,000 children who have lost one or both parents.[19]

Is she lucky or cursed? Did she face the fate of those emaciated children who have died of starvation? Did she suffer surgery without anesthesia? Did she suffer the fate of one girl whose burns exposed her facial bones, who faced the agony and suffering of her death in the tattered hallways of a besieged hospital, without the numbing power of morphine? Did she make it to any of the now destroyed hospitals—hospitals that were a microcosm of Palestinians holding tightly to the remains of a social order?

Would our young survivor have preferred death to the suffering and grief she now inhabits? How would she fare in the face of repeated displacement, the terror of a nuclear state annihilating a small piece of blockaded and parched land, the witnessing of family members dismembered? Did her loss lead her, like other children "as young as five to tell us that they would prefer to die"?[20]

To parent in genocide is to exist in fragments of time between life and death. For fifteen months, and the days since March 17, when we have returned to conditions of industrial slaughter, Israel has killed two women every hour in the Gaza Strip.[21] Every day, 37 children lost their mother.[22] Every pregnant woman lives anticipation and terror, giving birth amidst death.[23] Every pregnant woman resides a landscape of miscarriage, stillbirth, premature births, and congenital abnormalities. Women giving birth survive blood clots and multiple displacements while witnessing their children ravaged by shrapnel, disease, and hunger. Women give birth after Israeli shelling has killed their spouses. Women's babies stop moving in their wombs, as they wait for people to save their spouses from the rubble of their homes. The specter of the death of their unborn child occupies their minds. Will the child survive? For how long?

To parent in genocide is to witness bodies in fragments. It has become a "strange scene" to mourn over a shroud containing "a whole body with two hands, ten fingers, two feet, and a head."[24] To be a good parent is to "bury your children whole."[25] To be a good parent is to find

[17] Quds News Network 2023.

[18] "Israel-Gaza War Death Toll: Live Tracker" 2025. For a more recent estimate, see https://www.counterpunch.org/2025/08/19/the-real-gaza-death-toll-is-impossible-to-know-today-but-the-minimum-isnt/.

[19] Kingsley and Shabir 2025.

[20] "Doctors Without Borders" 2024.

[21] "Two Mothers Killed Each Hour in Gaza Conflict: UN Women" 2024.

[22] UN Women 2024.

[23] "'Catastrophic Birth Outcomes' in Gaza Threaten a Whole Generation, Warns UN Agency" 2025; Collier 2023.

[24] Al Khateeb 2024.

[25] Al Khateeb 2024.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the head matching your child's body after an air strike. It is to hope that your child's body parts will not be "mixed with the garbage" or "cut up in pieces," marked with tank treads and bulldozer tracks.[26] It is to dig for your child's remains and, in so doing, pull your "heart out of the earth."[27] It is to pray that you can secure a graveyard that the Israelis will not destroy.

To parent in genocide is to exist in fragments between speech and silence. It is to find words to prepare children for forced absences, sudden deaths, unexpected arrests, and critical injuries. It is to shelter from a "place of grief."[28] It is the "struggle to speak" with rage filling the throat. It is to "swallow ... [the] tongue" in times of speechless horror.[29] It is to witness famine robbing speech. It is Khalil watching his son, Sa'id, his eyes hollowed, his skin ashen, his stomach empty, unable to cry from hunger.[30] It is Nabila, witnessing how horror forced her nonverbal son, Muhammed, to speak for the first time as Israeli soldiers released the dogs that would maul and kill him.[31] It is Mona, looking at her son, Muazzaz, as he emerged from nine months of administrative detention, less than half his previous body weight, unable to walk unaided, his right arm jerking, his speech erratic, unable to recognize his father.[32]

In the face of all this death, Palestinians offer lessons on life—on how to cherish life amid relentless horror. Fathers like Ahmad Imteiz navigated bullets and survived hunger on and through love alone. On the day of the Flour Massacre in, when throngs of hungry people at the Nabulsi roundabout in Gaza City were subjected to live Israeli ammunition, Imteiz crawled for a kilometer as bullets rained down around him. He clung tightly to four cans of fava beans and a chicken. Once he was far from the Israeli attack that would take 115 lives that hour, he stood up to run. A journalist would later ask him if it was worth it. "Yes," he answered, "to save my hungry children, yes."[33]

And how is it to age in genocide? Since October 2023, Palestinian elders have confronted a "cartography of genocide" in which 90% of the people are displaced, confined to "humanitarian zones" that are systematically attacked.[34] Israel has killed at least 3,447 people over the age of sixty.[35] Most "were crushed to death under the debris of their homes" or in shelters where they sought refuge.[36] Some died from shelling as they weathered forced evacuations. Some were on their way to market. Some were killed in field executions, on the march of the displaced in the early months of the genocide, making their way down Salah al-Din Road, the main route to the southern Gaza Valley. Their bodies bloodstained and left on the street, died tired, cold, thirsty, and hungry.[37]

Sixty-nine percent of Palestinian elders in the Gaza Strip have chronic illness.[38] Like everyone else, they are subject to blockade, famine, and the destruction of the healthcare

[26] Hajjaj 2024b.
[27] Hajjaj 2024b.
[28] Atallah 2024.
[29] Atallah 2024.
[30] al-Sharif 2024.
[31] Hussaini 2024.
[32] Masarwa and Oborne 2024.
[33] Hajjaj 2024a.
[34] Forensic Architecture 2024.
[35] Institute for Middle East Understanding 2024.
[36] Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor 2024.
[37] "Israel-Palestine War" 2023.
[38] Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor 2024.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

system.[39] Palestinian elders have witnessed quadcopters killing pedestrians making their way through the rubble of what is left of the streets.[40] They have seen airstrikes destroying entire residential blocks.[41] Elders are always among the thousands of Palestinians lined up by Israeli soldiers to be detained, tortured, and investigated. They are among those forcibly grouped together on bombed-out streets, "carrying their few belongings in plastic bags … fac [ing] the same direction … holding their ID cards up in the air to an Israeli soldier just out of view."[42]

Israeli mass incarceration has not spared Palestinian elders. They, too, have been subject to the transformation of "more than a dozen Israeli prison facilities, military and civilian, into a network of camps dedicated to the abuse of inmates as a matter of policy."[43] In those prisons and camps, sexual and gender-based violence have increased so dramatically as to become systematic.[44] Soldiers have arrested men and women over the age of seventy and subjected them to abuse, torture, and denial of basic rights. Palestinians released from custody in recent months have emerged "emaciated, bruised, and deeply scarred," providing "glimpses into the abyss."[45] Elders like Omar Assaf, who was seventy-four when Israeli soldiers arrested and detained him, lost 60 pounds in Israel's prisons, and his hair turned white.[46]

Some elders have been unable or unwilling to leave their homes. They could not face losing everything and walking for extended periods, only to face new evacuation orders. Such elders decided instead to "stay at home rather than endure the weariness of the displacement journey."[47] They knew there was no such thing as a "safe place."[48] One couple hid in a room, its floor marked with their blood and littered with the fragments of the bullets that had executed them.[49]

Even to know one's last place of rest has become a luxury. The respite of knowing one's resting place was beyond imagination for the man facing seven dispossessions on a cane, or for the grandfather soaked in his grandson's blood, grieving over his three-year-old body.[50] We saw them suffering the reality of dispossession once again, still holding tight to the hope of return, the hope of living and of resting in the afterlife.

States often use the body to "stage" their power. We might think here of Kilmar Ábrego García and of how his attire and his tattoos became the grounds of his criminalization and the seizure of his sovereignty, and of his experience of confinement in the so-called Terrorism Confinement Center (CECOT) in El Salvador.[51] The body is no predetermined vessel; it is a historical subject. It is a site of buried evidence.

[39] In Gaza, Mounting Evidence of Famine and Widespread Starvation" 2025; "Lift the Blockade on Gaza and Stop the Genocide" 2025; "Schmidl and Diamond 2025.
[40] Abdel Kouddous and Abed 2024.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security 2024.
[44] Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security 2024.
[45] Hajjar and Farrah 2024.
[46] Shalash 2024.
[47] Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor 2024.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Palestine Pixel 2024.
[51] Finley 2025.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In the Gaza Strip, whenever there is word of a humanitarian convoy arriving, Israeli soldiers bulldoze corpses and bury them under the rubble to suppress "images of people in advanced stages of decay."[52] In April of this year, a doctor at the Nasser medical complex in Khan Younis named Ahmed al-Farra uncovered a mass grave of 15 paramedics, their hands and feet tied, with multiple shots to the chest.[53] One paramedic had been shot in the head. Israeli soldiers executed these 15, crushed their ambulances and vehicles, and buried them all under the sand.[54]

Israeli soldiers are not the only ones who attempt to hide the bodies of assassinated paramedics and so many others; so too do the regimes of Israel and the United States. They bury the lede in their media, in their courts, and in their universities.

1.3. Storytelling

Underneath the rubble and the smoking guns of genocide lies the deepest threat to these regimes: our capacity to tell our stories.

Over the last twenty-two months, Israel has killed poets, writers, novelists, journalists, and scholars. The names are too many to recount, and we mourn them all, from Refaat Alareer to the photographic journalist Fatima Hassouna. They are targets because our stories—and indeed our very existence—are a source of fear. As scholar and organizer Elias Shoufani pointed out in the late 1960s, "A settler society in the midst of large indigenous populations … cannot withstand the feeling of vulnerable existence."[55]

Since October 7, 2023, the Israeli army has killed or injured over 50,000 students and more than 800 school staff across the education sector in Gaza.[56] Thousands of students, teachers, and administrators have been injured. Israeli airstrikes have destroyed or damaged 403 school buildings.[57] Nearly 93% of school buildings in Gaza have sustained varying degrees of damage.[58]

Universities have been a target from the first week of this war of annihilation. Israeli forces have destroyed every single university in the Gaza Strip.[59] These include the Islamic University of Gaza, the University College of Applied Sciences, Al-Azhar University, Al-Aqsa University, Palestine Technical College, Al-Quds Open University, Gaza University, and Al-Israa University.

Archives are another target. This is nothing new. Since 1948, every Israeli attack on Palestine and the Palestinians has targeted an archive. The last twenty-two months are no exception. Since October 2023, we have watched Israel obliterate the Central Archives of Gaza, incinerating one hundred and fifty years' worth of archival materials.[60] We have witnessed the destruction, bombardment, firebombing, and looting of the Gaza Municipal Library, the

[52] Ziv 2024.
[53] Tondo et al. 2025.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Shoufani 1974, 52.
[56] Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and Israel 2025, 3; United Nations Children's Fund 2025.
[57] Ibid., 2.
[58] Ibid., 3.
[59] Golshiri 2024.
[60] Majed 2023.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Islamic Manuscript Library of the Great Omari Mosque, the archives of the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the archives of the Ministry of Education, and the archives of the Ministry of Interior. Centuries of charitable endowments, decades of school collections and student data, and countless collections of family registration documents are reduced to rubble.[61]

Genocide targets extended families in their entirety, attempting to erase the next generation by killing children in the thousands. Scholasticide, a term coined by Karma Nabulsi in 2009 to name the intentional destruction of education, is crucial to this attempt to destroy this future.[62]

The targeting of education is now global. The global right wing relies on a "charisma of impunity" and on miseducation.[63] Universities, academics, and students are the target of escalated repression and silencing. In the United States, decades of austerity politics had already attenuated the space for critical inquiry. Today, things are moving at warp speed as the Trump administration seeks to "undermine tenure and academic freedom protections, eviscerate shared governance, diminish the faculty's control over the curriculum, and redefine higher education to benefit private interests over the public good."[64] A broad array of scholars, universities, associations, and educational institutions have fallen prey to "anticipatory obedience."[65] They rush to comply in advance of pressure to do so. For their compliance, they are rewarded with more punishment.

In January 2025, the U.S. administration issued two executive orders that criminalized the support of Palestinian liberation.[66] Arrests, detention, kidnapping, and deportations have begun—particularly of students and scholars. In March alone, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency abducted, arrested, and detained Mahmoud Khalil, Badar Khan Suri, Mohsen Mahdawi, and Rümeysa Öztürk.[67] They have deported Rasha Alawieh.[68] Yunseo Chung is in hiding as she fights detention and the revocation of her green card.[69] Momodou Taal self-deported when a court affirmed the government's decision to revoke his student visa.[70] Over 1,800 international students have had their visas revoked.[71] As Columbia University has learned all too well, complying with unconstitutional demands does not protect you. It erodes academic freedom, free speech, and due process.

Palestine is shrinking. Palestine is everywhere. The Palestinian scholars of Gaza, who continue their educational mission in the face of scholasticide, teach us that we cannot avoid what is to come through obedience. The dangers of the future have already arrived.

2. Conclusion

Palestine is not a laboratory. It is not a problem to be solved. It is not an object of salvation. Palestine is a paradigm.

[61] El Chamaa 2023; Librarians and Archivists with Palestine 2024; Majed and Shamala 2025.
[62] Amer 2024.
[63] Seikaly 2024, 3.
[64] "*Against Anticipatory Obedience*" 2025.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Executive Order No. 14161 and Executive Order No. 14188.
[67] Fadel et al. 2025; Gerstein and Cheney 2025; Offenhartz 2025; Öztürk 2025.
[68] Goldstein 2025.
[69] Singh 2025.
[70] Pazmino and Musa 2025.
[71] Mowreader 2025.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

As we witness this ongoing, escalating, reiterative Nakba in Palestine and far beyond, let us listen to the abundant lessons Palestine teaches us. We cannot await a secular salvation or a messianic apocalypse—in Palestine or on earth. We are already in the apocalypse.

As we face the rapid shifts of the present, Palestinians teach us to remain vigilant about what got us here. They teach us to balance our understandings of continuity and rupture. As we struggle with the permanent, the temporary, and a present suspended in time, we must learn from the Palestinians—who make life amidst the certainty of death, who plan not for but despite the future. They remind us to keep telling our stories and to remain vigilant in the face of the realities that lie under the rubble.

We must listen to ordinary people narrating extraordinary things. These people craft the Palestinian tradition of storytelling. They do so not to reflect history, but to shape it. As Sayigh reminds us, telling our stories is a way of living despite catastrophe, of perceiving the world and intervening in it.[72] Through these acts toward the world, Palestinians teach us to exceed exclusion from the human. They teach us to hold tightly to our visions of the possible, to shape and reshape life—even amidst the certainty of death. In these ruins of generalized catastrophe, let us return to loss and abundance. Let us cultivate courage in spaces of fear. Let us find arenas of shared possibility across difference. Let us practice defiance, in the hope that the future might, must still, be ours.

Sherene Seikaly is Associate Professor of History at UCSB and the Editor of the Journal of Palestine Studies.

Acknowledgment. The author would like to thank Adel Iskandar, Julia Elyachar, Naomi Klein, Rasmieyh Abdelanbi, Nadim Bawalsa, Maria Khoury, and Eman Abdelhadi for making this piece possible.

Author contribution. Conceptualization: S.S.

Conflicts of interests. The author declares none.

References

Abdel Kouddous, Sharif, and Abubaker Abed. 2024. "The Murderous Logistics of Israel's Ethnic Cleansing Campaign in Northern Gaza," *Drop Site*, October 23. https://www.dropsitenews.com/p/israel-north-gaza-hospital-eyewitness-palestine-united-nations.

"*Against Anticipatory Obedience*." 2025. American Association of University Professors. https://www.aaup.org/report/against-anticipatory-obedience.

Al Khateeb, Mariam M. 2024. "The Luxury of Death." *Palestine Square* (blog), Institute for Palestine Studies, June 10. https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1655709.

al-Sharif, Maher. 2024. "'North Gaza Is Dying of Hunger'" [in Arabic]. *Filastin al-Maydana* (blog), Institute for Palestine Studies, June 24. https://www.palestine-studies.org/ar/node/1655760.

Amer, Mohammedwesam. 2024. "Personal Reflections on Israel's War on Education in Gaza." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 53 (4): 44–9. https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2024.2447220.

Atallah, Devin G. 2024. "Lessons in Grief, and Love, from Gaza's Fathers." *MSNBC*, June 16. https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/msnbc-opinion/fathers-day-gaza-brings-heart-wrenching-lessons-grief-love-rcna157158.

Barakat, Rana. 2026. *Ongoing Return: Mapping Memory and Storytelling in Palestine*. University of North Caroline Press.

"'Catastrophic Birth Outcomes' in Gaza Threaten a Whole Generation, Warns UN Agency." 2025. UN News, July 23. https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165471.

[72] Sayigh 2007.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Collier, Neil. 2023. "'A Horror Film': Mothers in Gaza on Giving Birth in a War Zone." *New York Times*, November 20. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/20/world/middleeast/palestinian-pregnant-women-childbirth-gaza.html.

"Doctors Without Borders." 2024. Children in Gaza as Young as Five Say They Want to Die. *New Arab*, February 24. https://www.newarab.com/news/msf-children-gaza-young-five-say-they-want-die.

El Chamaa, Mohamad. 2023. "Gazans Mourn Loss of their Libraries: Cultural Beacons and Communal Spaces." *Washington Post*, last modified December 1. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/11/30/gaza-library-palestinian-culture/.

Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor. 2024. "Gaza: About 4 Percent of Victims of Israel's Genocide Are Elderly; Numerous Cases of Execution Are Well-Documented." September 1. https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6455/Gaza:-About-4-percent-of-victims-of-Israel%E2%80%99s-genocide-are-elderly;-numerous-cases-of-execution-are-well-documented.

Fadel, Leila, Jan Johnson, and Kaity Kline. 2025. "Mohsen Mahdawi—The Columbia Student Arrested at his Citizenship Appointment—Speaks." *NPR*, April 29. https://www.npr.org/2025/04/29/nx-s1-5377484/columbia-student-mohsen-mahdawi-citizenship-arrest.

Finley, Ben. 2025. "*What to Know after Judge Keeps Kilmar Abrego Garcia in Jail over Deportation Fears*." Associated Press, July 1. https://apnews.com/article/kilmar-abrego-garcia-smuggling-deportation-release-523fdb48ead56dde2a3c2c4b28fef6d9.

"*Focus on: A Year of Genocide in Gaza*." 2024. The Palestinian Policy Network, October 8. https://al-shabaka.org/policy-focus/focus-on-a-year-of-genocide-in-gaza/.

Forensic Architecture. 2024. "A Cartography of Genocide: Israel's Conduct in Gaza since October 2023." October 25. https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/a-cartography-of-genocide.

Gerstein, Josh, and Kyle Cheney. 2025. "Georgetown Researcher Targeted for Deportation Settles with Trump Admin." *Politico*, August 5. https://www.politico.com/news/2025/08/05/badar-khan-suri-georgetown-deportation-case-00494742.

Goldstein, Dana. 2025. "Brown University Professor Is Deported Despite a Judge's Order." *New York Times*, March 16. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/16/us/brown-university-rasha-alawieh-professor-deported.html.

Golshiri, Ghazal. 2024. "All 12 Universities in Gaza Have Been the Target of Israeli Attacks: 'It's a War Against Education.'" *Le Monde*, March 7. https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/03/07/all-12-universities-in-gaza-have-been-the-target-of-israeli-attacks-it-s-a-war-against-education_6592965_4.html#.

Hajjaj, Tareq S. 2024a. "Flour Soaked in Blood: 'Flour Massacre' Survivors Tell Their Story." *Mondoweiss*, March 4. https://mondoweiss.net/2024/03/flour-soaked-in-blood/.

Hajjaj, Tareq S. 2024b. "'It Felt like Pulling my Heart out of the Earth': Testimonies from the Mass Grave at Nasser Hospital." *Mondoweiss*, April 25. https://mondoweiss.net/2024/04/i-felt-like-pulling-my-heart-out-of-the-earth-testimonies-from-the-mass-grave-at-nasser-hospital/.

Hajjar, Lisa, and Basil Farrah. 2024. "Israel Is Waging War on Palestinian Prisoners," *Middle East Report* (312). https://merip.org/2024/10/israel-is-waging-war-on-palestinian-prisoners-2/.

Hussaini, Maha. 2024. "Gaza: Palestinian with Down Syndrome 'Left to Die' by Israeli Soldiers after Combat Dog Attack." *Middle East Eye*, July 12. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/gaza-palestinian-down-syndrome-left-die-israeli-soldiers-after-combat-dog-attack.

"In Gaza, Mounting Evidence of Famine and Widespread Starvation." 2025. UN News, July 29. https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/07/1165517.

Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. 2025. Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, A/HRC/59/26. https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/59/26.

Insaniyyat: Society of Palestinian Anthropologists. 2024. "Voices from Gaza: S., Community Worker with Children and Youth." https://www.insaniyyat.org/s-community-worker. Accessed August 13, 2025.

Institute for Middle East Understanding. 2024. "One Year of Israel's Genocide in Gaza: By the Numbers." October 7. https://imeu.org/article/fact-sheet-one-year-of-israels-genocide-in-gaza-by-the-numbers.

"Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Takes Effect in Gaza." 2025. *Al Jazeera*, January 19. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/1/19/israel-hamas-ceasefire-takes-effect-in-gaza.

"Israel-Gaza War Death Toll: Live Tracker." 2025. *Al Jazeera*, last modified August 14. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/18/gaza-tracker.

"Israel's New Laws Banning UNRWA Already Taking Effect." 2025. UN News, January 29. https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1159586.

"Israel-Palestine War" 2023. Israeli Army Kills Elderly Palestinian After Taking PR Photo on 'Safe Corridor. *Middle East Eye*, November 15. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-palestine-war-army-kills-elderly-taking-pr-photo-safe-corridor.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Kingsley, Patrick, and Bilal Shbair. 2025. "The Trauma of Childhood in Gaza." *New York Times*, August 15. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/15/world/middleeast/gaza-children-school-play.html.

Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention and Human Security. 2024. *The Genocidal Dimensions of Israel's Use of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Against Palestinians.* https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/the-genocidal-dimensions-of-israel%E2%80%99s-use-of-sexual-and-gender-based-violence-(sgbv)-against-palestinians.

Librarians and Archivists with Palestine. 2024. *Israeli Damage to Archives, Libraries, and Museums in Gaza, October 2023–January 2024.* https://librarianswithpalestine.org/gaza-report-2024/.

"Lift the Blockade on Gaza and Stop the Genocide." 2025. Amnesty International. https://www.amnesty.org/en/petition/lift-the-blockade-on-gaza-and-stop-the-genocide/. Accessed August 16.

Majed, Mohamed. 2023. "'Israel Destroyed Central Archives of Gaza City': Head of Gaza Municipality." Anadolu Agency, November 29. https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/-israel-destroyed-central-archives-of-gaza-city-head-of-gaza-municipality/3068555.

Majed, Mohamed, and Rania Abu Shamala. 2025. "Devastated by Israel, Palestinian Team Saves Centuries-Old Manuscripts from Ruined Gaza's Omari Mosque Library." Anadolu Agency, March 10. https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/devastated-by-israel-palestinian-team-saves-centuries-old-manuscripts-from-ruined-gaza-s-omari-mosque-library/3505592.

Masarwa, Lubna, and Peter Oborne. 2024. "'I Have the Prison Inside Me': The Emaciated Palestinian Bodybuilder Broken by Israel," *Middle East Eye*, July 12. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/palestine-west-bank-muazzaz-abayat-prison-interview.

Moor, Ahmed. 2025. "There Are More Child Amputees in Gaza than Anywhere Else in the World. What Can the Future Hold for Them?." *Guardian*, March 25. https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2025/mar/27/gaza-palestine-children-injuries.

Mowreader, Ashley. 2025. "International Student Visas Revoked." *Inside Higher Ed*, last modified April 25. https://www.insidehighered.com/news/global/international-students-us/2025/04/07/where-students-have-had-their-visas-revoked.

Murphy, Brett. 2025. "Israel Deliberately Blocked Humanitarian Aid to Gaza, Two Government Bodies Concluded. Antony Blinken Rejected Them," *ProPublica*, September 24. https://www.propublica.org/article/gaza-palestine-israel-blocked-humanitarian-aid-blinken.

Nashed, Mat. 2025. "'Less than Slaves': The Palestinians Detained by Israel Despite Ceasefire." *Al Jazeera*, January 24. https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/1/24/less-than-slaves-the-palestinians-detained-by-israel-despite-ceasefire.

Offenhartz, Jake. 2025. "Freed from ICE detention, Mahmoud Khalil Fles $20 million Claim Against Trump Administration." Associated Press, July 10. https://apnews.com/article/mahmoud-khalil-ice-release-trump-columbia-protests-570f7af32010c16b1a00dd7e78f4c687.

Öztürk, Rümeysa. 2025. "'Even God Cannot Hear Us Here': What I Witnessed Inside an ICE Women's Prison." *Vanity Fair*, July 17. https://www.vanityfair.com/news/story/rumeysa-ozturk-what-i-witnessed-inside-an-ice-womens-prison.

Palestine Pixel (@palestine.pixel). 2024. "Sami Mohammed Ayyad was killed after air aid fell on him in Khan Younis city in the southern Gaza Strip." Instagram, October 19. https://www.instagram.com/p/DBTZtJOoA0N/.

"Palestinian Prisoners' Institutions Monthly Report: Arrests of Palestinians in Occupied West Bank & Jerusalem in July 2025." 2025. Addameer: Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, August 15. https://www.addameer.ps/news/5607.

Pazmino, Gloria, and Amanda Musa. 2025. "Cornell Student Activist Chooses to Leave US After Judge Denies Bid to Immediately Block Deportation." *CNN*, April 2. https://www.cnn.com/2025/03/31/us/cornell-student-activist-deportation/index.html.

Quds News Network (@QudsNen). 2023. "'Are you taking me to the cemetery?!' A little girl asking, as she is rescued from beneath the debris of her demolished home in Al-Bureij camp." X, November 2. https://x.com/QudsNen/status/1720093428606992888.

Salman, Abeer, Irene Nasser, Ibrahim Dahman, et al. 2024. "Israeli Forces Surround Northern Gaza Hospital and Order Evacuation, Says Director." *CNN*, last modified December 27. https://www.cnn.com/2024/12/27/middleeast/israeli-forces-order-staff-and-patients-evacuate-gaza-intl-hnk.

Sayigh, Rosemary. 2007. *The Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries*. Bloomsbury.

Schmidl, Anna-Christina, and Eitan Diamond. 2025. "The Systematic Destruction of Healthcare in Gaza." *Opinio Juris* (blog), International Commission of Jurists, July 11. https://opiniojuris.org/2025/07/11/the-systematic-destruction-of-healthcare-in-gaza/.

Seikaly, Sherene. 2024. "From the Editor." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 53 (4): 1–7. https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2025.2463824.

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Shalash, Fayha. 2024. "Palestinian Prisoners Released from Israeli Jails Tell of Terrible Impact of Abuse." *Middle East Eye*, April 24. https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/shocking-pictures-after-release-what-happening-palestinian-prisoners-israeli-jails.

Shoufani, Elias. 1974. "Israeli Reactions to the War." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3 (2): 46–64. https://doi.org/10.2307/2535799.

Simpson, Leanne B. 2017. *As we Have Always Done Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*. University of Minnesota Press.

Singh, Maanvi. 2025. "Student Who Sued Trump Takes Powerful Stand Against 'Constant Dread' of Deportation Threats." *Guardian*, March 25. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/mar/25/columbia-gaza-protester-yunseo-chung-lawsuit.

"Tears, Hugs Greet 90 Palestinian Women, Children Freed from Israeli Prisons." 2025. *Al Jazeera*, January 20. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/1/20/celebrations-as-90-detained-palestinians-freed-from-israeli-prisons.

Tondo, Lorenzo, Malak A. Tantesh, and Julian Borger. 2025. "Palestinian Paramedics Shot by Israeli Forces Had Hands Tied, Witnesses Say." *Guardian*, April 1. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/apr/01/palestinian-paramedics-shot-by-israeli-forces-had-hands-tied-eyewitnesses-say.

"Two Mothers Killed Each Hour in Gaza Conflict: UN Women." 2024. UN News, January 19. https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/01/1145707.

United Nations Children's Fund. 2025. "'Unimaginable horrors': More Than 50,000 Children Reportedly Killed or Injured in the Gaza Strip." News release, May 27. https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/unimaginable-horrors-more-50000-children-reportedly-killed-or-injured-gaza-strip.

UN Women. 2024. "9,000 Women Have Been Killed in Gaza Since Early October." News release, March 1. https://www.unwomen.org/en/news-stories/press-release/2024/03/press-release-9000-women-have-been-killed-in-gaza-since-early-october.

Valdez, Jonah. 2024. "The Scramble to Find the Gaza Doctor in the White Coat." *Intercept*, December 31. https://theintercept.com/2024/12/31/israel-gaza-hospital-doctors-hussam-abu-safiya/.

"Who Is Mohammed al-Tous, Longest-Serving Palestinian Prisoner Released by Israel?." 2025. Press TV, January 25. https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/01/25/741585/Longest-serving-Palestinian-prisoner-among-200-inmates-released-by-Israel.

Whyte, Kyle P. 2017. "Our Ancestors' Dystopia Now: Indigenous Conservation and the Anthropocene." In *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities*, edited by Ursula Heise, Jon Christensen, and Michelle Niemann. Routledge.

Ziv, Oren. 2024. "'I'm Bored, so I Shoot': The Israeli Army's Approval of Free-for-all Violence in Gaza." *+972 Magazine and Local Call*, July 8. https://www.972mag.com/israeli-soldiers-gaza-firing-regulations/.

Cite this article: Seikaly, Sherene. 2025. "Palestine is a Paradigm." *Public Humanities*, 1, e179, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094

https://doi.org/10.1017/pub.2025.10094 Published online by Cambridge University Press