

Unholy Trinity of Catastrophe

**Columbia University, Adalah, and The Netherlands Partner to Advance
Anti-Israel Nakba Narrative**

"The Nakba & The Law" project – a joint initiative of [Adalah: The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel](#) and the [Columbia University Center for Palestine Studies](#) – explores and thinks through the Nakba as an event, a structure, and a process through a critical lens on the law. This blog, The Nakba Files, is the project's online work and discussion space.

The consequences of the Nakba – the term commonly given to the exile of over 700,000 Palestinians during and after the 1948 founding of the state of Israel – continue to reverberate, especially in the legal systems of Israel/Palestine. The Nakba remains so potent a presence that in 2011, 63 years after its foundation, the State of Israel [legislated](#) against its commemoration.



Jaramana refugee camp, Syria, 1949 (credit: Wikimedia)



Introduction

The “Nakba,” the Arabic word for “catastrophe” that is used to describe the Palestinian Arab exodus from the Land of Israel in 1948, is the oldest tool in the well-oiled Palestinian Arab propaganda machine used to delegitimize Israel and to undermine its right to exist.

Despite claims to the contrary, the Nakba doesn’t aim to express a personal tragedy of displacement. Rather, it seeks to establish a false political myth that is an unprecedented and unabashed misrepresentation of history. The Nakba narrative is an attempt both to shirk the responsibility of the Arabs for the results of their own aggression and to whitewash the crimes of the Palestinian national movement.

There was, and remains, only one party to blame for the so-called Nakba: the Arabs. It was the Arabs who rejected the UN Partition Plan and launched a war on the Jewish Yishuv, and it was the Arabs who invaded Israel with intent of wiping it off the map.

In 2016, Columbia University’s Center for Palestine Studies (CPS) together with the Israeli NGO Adalah launched “The Nakba & The Law” project.¹ The project, which “explores and thinks through the Nakba as an event, a structure, and a process through a critical lens on the law,” is partially funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research,² an organization that is heavily funded by the Government of The Netherlands³ and is subordinate to the government’s Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.⁴

As we will see in the following report, the goal of this project is neither educational nor academic, but to further promote the anti-Israel Nakba narrative and to provide a platform for propagators of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement to spread their anti-Israel vitriol. This is evidenced not only from the content of the project, which is replete with wild, radical and false accusations against Israel, but from its contributing authors, the vast majority of whom are virulently anti-Israel and supporters of the BDS movement.



The Nakba & The Law

“The Nakba & The Law” project features blog-style posts from a variety of contributing authors on the topic of the Nakba. As stated above, the project utilizes the false Nakba narrative to delegitimize and undermine the State of Israel’s right to exist and provides a platform to propagators of the BDS movement.

A quick glance at the below list of the project’s contributing authors sheds light on the project’s true agenda. **Of the 32 authors listed on the website,⁵ 17 openly support the BDS movement, 3 are affiliated with BDS organizations and 6 work for the radical anti-Israel NGO Adalah.**

Of the 6 authors who have no public affiliation with the BDS movement or Adalah, there is no shortage of extreme anti-Israel rhetoric, including accusations of apartheid,⁶ massacres,⁷ and even the equation of the Nakba to the Holocaust.⁸

In addition, the 4 editors of the project consist of 2 Adalah staff members and 2 Columbia professors,⁹ both of whom openly support the BDS movement.¹⁰¹¹

Among the pro-BDS authors is Professor Amahl Bishara, who has openly defended several terrorists, including Rasmea Odeh who masterminded the murder of two Israeli students;¹² Columbia Professor Katherine Franke, also one of the project’s editors, who has legitimized terrorism against Israel and co-authored a report defending the Black Lives Matter platform that accuses Israel of committing a genocide against the Palestinians;¹³ and Randa Wahbe, who has publicly advocated on behalf of two senior officials of the terrorist group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.¹⁴

Below is a complete list of the project’s 32 authors:

1. Randa Wahbe – Supporter of the BDS movement and founding member of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at UCLA.¹⁵
2. Prof. Katherine Franke – Supporter of the BDS movement.¹⁶
3. Mezna Qato – Supporter of boycotts on Israel.¹⁷
4. Nick Estes – Supporter of the BDS movement.¹⁸
5. Melanie K. Yazzie – “Diné for Sanctions Against Israel” spokesperson.¹⁹
6. Prof. Shira Robinson – Supporter of the BDS movement.²⁰
7. Dr. Lauren Banka – Supporter of boycotts on Israel.²¹
8. Professor Mazen Masri – Supporter of the BDS movement.²²
9. Majd Kayyal – Participated in a BDS France event.²³
10. Prof. Noura Erakat – Supporter of the BDS movement.²⁴
11. Amjad Alqasis – Supporter of the BDS movement.²⁵
12. Amahl Bishara – Supporter of the BDS movement and has publicly defended terrorists.²⁶
13. Prof. Greg Thomas – Supporter of boycotts on Israel.²⁷
14. Prof. Nimer Sultany – Supporter of the BDS movement.²⁸
15. Prof. Susan Slyomovics – Supporter of boycotts on Israel.²⁹



16. Nadia Ben-Youssef – Supporter of the BDS movement.³⁰
17. Mireille Fanon Mendès-France – Supporter of the BDS movement.³¹
18. John Reynolds – Former legal researcher for Al-Haq, a Palestinian NGO involved in libel, BDS and “lawfare” campaigns against Israel.³²
19. Jihad Abusalim – Participated in Israeli Apartheid Week³³ and has written for the pro-BDS +972 Magazine.³⁴
20. Amjad Iraqi – Writes for the pro-BDS Electric Intifada³⁵ and +972 Magazine.³⁶
21. Hassan Jabareen – CEO of Adalah.³⁷
22. Suhad Bishara – Director of the Land and Planning Rights Unit of Adalah.³⁸
23. Muna Haddad – Adalah attorney.³⁹
24. Haneen Naamneh – Adalah attorney.⁴⁰
25. Sawsan Zaher – Adalah attorney.⁴¹
26. Nasser Rego – Oversees the individual giving program of Adalah.⁴²
27. Prof. Bashir Bashir – Promotes putting the Nakba to the Holocaust “together in a common frame.”⁴³
28. Prof. Mutaz Qafisheh – Accuses Israel of being an apartheid state.⁴⁴
29. Hala Abu Medeghem – Accuses Israel of “Judaiz[ing]’ the southern portion of Israel/Palestine.”⁴⁵
30. Emilio Dabed – Fellow at Columbia University’s Center for Palestine Studies.⁴⁶
31. Prof. K-Sue Park – Lecturer at UC Berkley.⁴⁷
32. Prof. Michael Karayanni – Bruce W. Wayne Professor of Law at Hebrew University’s Faculty of Law.⁴⁸

Below are several excerpts from the project:

“It is not enough for Israel to kill or eliminate the living Palestinian, it is necessary to dehumanize and degrade the body in order to control it.”⁴⁹

“This defeat transformed the ethnic cleansing of Palestine from something temporary into a constant in the political equation.”⁵⁰

“Such Jewish monopolization of agricultural production in Palestine has a long history.”⁵¹

“The war of 1948 led to the disappearance of most of the Palestinian printed works and institutional memory in Palestine. Israel destroyed and confiscated all public libraries, printing presses and publishing houses, as well as land registries, municipal council archives, schools and cultural centers.”⁵²

“Israel’s militarized power is performed through a matrix of technologies of violence—spatial, social, political, economic, legal—which, taken together, strip away Palestinian women’s power and limit their access to justice.”⁵³



“It may be helpful as well then to think of the ongoing Nakba as part of a regime of captivity, and not only as dispossession and expulsion, as it is commonly discussed by other academic perspectives in particular.”⁵⁴

In addition, one of the project’s posts featured a talk from known Israel-hater Richard Falk,⁵⁵ and another post advertised a conference of Mada al-Carmel, a radical Palestinian NGO that published a journal titled, “Boycotting Israel: Between Theory and Practice.”⁵⁶

Adalah: The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel

For over the past decade, the Israeli NGO Adalah has been engaging in an array of anti-Israel activity that includes accusing Israel of war crimes,⁵⁷ defending terrorists in court,⁵⁸ and working in international institutions to isolate Israel.⁵⁹

Adalah is a highly politicized anti-Israel NGO that receives millions of shekels in funding from foreign governments, the New Israel Fund, and a Palestinian foundation based in Ramallah.⁶⁰

A large focus of Adalah’s recent activity has centered around Israel policy vis-à-vis the Bedouin in the Negev, of which it has lobbied the European Union to oppose.⁶¹

The following list represents a small portion of Adalah’s activity:

- Adalah was involved in crafting the platform for the Movement for Black Lives that supports the BDS movement and accuses Israel of being an “an apartheid state committing genocide.”⁶²
- Adalah defended the terrorists Subhi Abu Khalifa and Shuruk Dawiyat, who stabbed Israeli civilians during the recent wave of terror in Jerusalem.⁶³
- Adalah and the Palestinian organization Al Dameer (the head of which has participated in terrorist activity) demanded to investigate the death of the terrorist Muataz Awisat.⁶⁴
- Adalah works against revoking the citizenship of terrorists from East Jerusalem.⁶⁵
- Adalah holds Observer status at the United Nations, and from there works to isolate the State of Israel in the world.^{66,67}
- Adalah filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Al Midan Theater in Haifa, which presented a play inspired by the terrorist Walid Daka, one of the murderers of the kidnapped soldier Moshe Tamam.⁶⁸
- Adalah objected to the outlawing of the “Islamic Movement in Israel”.⁶⁹



- Adalah together with the Palestinian organization Al Dameer (the head of which has participated in terrorist activity) demanded to investigate the death of the terrorist Fadi Alloun,⁷⁰ who stabbed a 15-year-old boy.
- During the most recent wave of terror, Adalah worked against the actions of security forces to mitigate acts of terror.⁷¹⁷²⁷³⁷⁴⁷⁵
- Adalah accuses Israel of committing war crimes.⁷⁶
- Adalah presented a report to the United Nations' Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Gaza Conflict, in which it accused Israel of committing war crimes and sought to prosecute Israeli officials.⁷⁷
- Adalah filed a judicial appeal behalf of the former Member of Knesset, Said Nafa, who was convicted of contact with a foreign agent and of illegally entering an enemy state.⁷⁸
- Atty. Hasan Jabarin, CEO of the "Adalah Center", represented fugitive MK Mohammad Barakeh.⁷⁹
- Adalah represents terrorists in court.⁸⁰

The Netherlands

The Government of The Netherlands is one of the largest financiers of radical anti-Israel NGOs in the world. The Dutch government transfers millions of euros to both Israel and Palestinian NGOs whose goal is to slander and delegitimize the State of Israel.

The Netherlands funds anti-Israel NGOs including Adalah, Breaking the Silence, B'Tselem and HaMoked via direct government entities and indirectly via organizations funded by the government.⁸¹ In addition, The Netherlands is one of the 5 countries that fund the Ramallah-based Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Secretariat, which funds both Palestinian and Israeli NGOs, many of which support the BDS movement.⁸²

The Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), which is boasted as one of the supporters of "The Nakba & The Law" project, is extensively funded by the Government of The Netherlands. According to the NWO's website, "NWO receives public money for science from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and from almost all the other government ministries..."⁸³

In addition, "NWO falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science."⁸⁴



Conclusion

As is evidenced by the authors and the content of the project, the goal of “The Nakba & The Law” project is to promote radical anti-Israel rhetoric and to provide a platform for propagators of the BDS movement to spread their anti-Israel propaganda.

The project’s partnership with the radical anti-Israel NGO Adalah further adds to the clear anti-Israel agenda that is driving this ostensibly academic project. In addition, the involvement of the Government of The Netherlands adds further proof to the involvement of foreign governments in the international attempt to undermine the State of Israel.

The fact that such a venerable institution would divert its resources to such a biased and politicized project in the guise of academia is not only an affront to the Jewish State, but to all Columbia students whose tuition is used to fund this project.

Columbia University should immediately withdraw its support and sponsorship from this anti-Israel politicized program and investigate all academic programs and curricula whose sole goal is to slander the State of Israel.

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