

A Tale of Two Narratives

The Holocaust and the Nakba are foundational traumas in Israeli–Jewish and Palestinian societies and form key parts of each respective collective identity. This book offers a parallel analysis of the transmission of these foundational pasts in Israeli–Jewish and Palestinian societies by exploring how the Holocaust and the Nakba have been narrated since the signing of the 1993 Oslo Accords. The work exposes the existence and perpetuation of ethnocentric victimhood narratives that serve as the theoretical foundations for an ensuing minimization – or even denial – of the other’s past. Three established realms of societal memory transmission provide the analytical framework for this study: official state education, commemorative acts, and mass mediation. Through this analysis, the work demonstrates the interrelated nature of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and the contextualization of the primary historical events, while also highlighting the universal malleability of mnemonic practices.

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A Tale of Two Narratives

*The Holocaust, the Nakba, and the
Israeli–Palestinian Battle of Memories*

Grace Wermenbol



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In loving memory of my father.

A world that can be explained even with bad reason is a familiar world. But, on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land.

—Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

And, of course, people are interested only in themselves. If a story is not about the hearer he will not listen. And I here make a rule – a great and lasting story is about everyone or it will not last. The strange and the foreign is not interesting – only the deeply personal and familiar.

—John Steinbeck, *East of Eden*

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A Note on Transliteration

For transliteration of Modern Standard Arabic and Hebrew, this work follows the American Library Association-Library of Congress System¹ with two exceptions: First, where established English names of people, places, and institutions exist, English-language spelling is applied and, second, this work uses “tz” rather than “ts” for the Hebrew letter tzadi. For the list of characters of Modern Standard Arabic and Hebrew, see below.

Arabic

<i>Consonants</i>	<i>Romanization</i>	<i>Consonants</i>	<i>Romanization</i>
ا	omit	ض	d
ب	b	ط	t
ت	t	ظ	z
ث	th	ع	' (ayn)
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	h	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	ه، هـ	h
ش	sh	و	w
ص	ṣ	ي	y

¹ Randall K. Barry, *ALA-LX Romanization Tables: Transliteration Schemes for Non-Roman Scripts* (Washington, DC: U.S. Library of Congress, 1991), 4, 52.

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Vowels	Diphthongs
א	a
ו	u
י	i
א	ā
אֵי	á
וֹ	ū
אֵי	ī
אוֹ	aw
אֵי	ay

Hebrew

Consonants	Romanization	Consonants	Romanization
א	' (alif) or disregarded	ל	l
ב	b	מ (final ם)	m
ב	v	נ (final ן)	n
ג	g	ס	s
ד	d	ע	' (ayn)
ה	h	פ (final ף)	p
ו	v̄ (only if a consonant)	פ (final ף)	f
וו	v̄ (only if a consonant)	צ (final ץ)	tz
ז	z	ק	q̄
ח	ḥ	ך	
ט	ṭ	ש	sh
י		שׁ	ś
כ (final ך)	k	ת	t
כ (final ך)		ת	t

A Note on Transliteration

Vowels	Romanization
·	a
·	a or o
·	e
·	e
·	i
·	o
·	u
·	e
·	ai
·	e
·	i
·	o
·	u
·	e or disregarded
·	a
·	e
·	o

Abbreviations

ADRID	Association for the Defense of the Rights of the Internally Displaced
AMAN	Coalition for Accountability and Integrity
CMIP	Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace
CPJ	Committee to Protect Journalists
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DOP	Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDF	Israeli Defense Forces
IDP	internally displaced Palestinian
JNF	Jewish National Fund
MDHH	Memorial Day to the Holocaust and Heroism
MEMRI	Middle East Media Research Institute
MK	Member of Knesset
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	nongovernmental organization
NSC	Nakba and Steadfastness Committee
OT	occupied territories
PA	Palestinian Authority
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau for Statics
PCDC	Palestinian Curriculum Development Center
PDFLP	Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PLC	Palestinian Legislative Council
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PMW	Palestinian Media Watch
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PNC	Palestinian National Council

List of Abbreviations

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POW	prisoner of war
PPP	Palestinian People's Party
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USHMM	United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

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