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Palestine – not such a fringe idea*Jonathan Rosenhead and Naomi Wimborne-Idrissi*

Last year at the Edinburgh Festival Israel was prominent for all the right reasons. In the midst of

Israel's assault on Gaza, the hip-hop opera *The City*, performed by the Jerusalem-based Incubator Theatre Company, was besieged by demonstrators, causing such disruption to Underbelly, the venue where it and other events were being staged, that they decided to close the show. The demonstrators, led by Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, objected to *The City* because it was funded by the Israeli government.

A year on, at this year's Festival Fringe, there was a production, *5 Kilo Sugar*, by the London-based Israeli theatre company *Tik-Sho-Ret* – and in this case there were no protests. The company, once openly funded by Israeli state money, now depends on a mixed package of funding mostly from domestic Jewish donations. The company's director when interviewed suggested that this was at least in part a test to see if the 2014 justification for boycott was principled, or just a smoke-screen for national prejudice. If this test was in fact intended as a trap, their bluff was called. Activists found plenty of other productive avenues for effective campaigning.

One notable cultural consequence of the fuss at the 2014 Fringe was a theatre event inspired by three cause celebres, including the Incubator/Underbelly fracas. (The other two trigger events were the failed attempt by London's Tricycle Theatre to avoid Israeli government funding for the Jewish Film Festival which it was housing, and the cancellation of *Exhibit B* at the Barbican after protests against its alleged racism.) Under the heading *Walking the Tightrope – the tension between politics and art*, eight short plays by established playwrights were staged this year from August 7 to 29 – appropriately at Underbelly itself. The playlets, running for barely an hour in

total, captured some of the dilemmas and disputes about sponsorship, censorship and boycott in the cultural field.

The performances were followed by short panel discussions, and on most occasions panellists from Artists for Palestine UK (APUK) and Scottish Palestine Solidarity Campaign were able to ensure that the case for cultural boycott was heard and clearly distinguished from any form of censorship.

It was an unprecedented opportunity to explain to new audiences the cultural boycott call from the Palestinian group PACBI, which specifies that the boycott it requests from supporters of justice for Palestine is institutional and not individual. This is why two Israeli productions went ahead at last year's Fringe unimpeded by protest – a fact ignored by commentators determined to demonise boycott as antisemitic bullying.

At *Walking the Tightrope*, two successive appearances by Dan Golan, Minister-Counsellor for Cultural Affairs at the Israeli Embassy, pitted him against the secretary of Scottish PSC and an Edinburgh-based activist-film maker, Jon Pullman, who afterwards noted the significance of these encounters in [a Facebook post](#).

Pullman records Golan's response when confronted with the text of contracts artists are required to sign in exchange for state funding. This requires them to commit to promoting "the policy interests of the State of Israel" and to help create a positive image of the country. Golan took it for granted that any creatively-expressed point of view that was deemed to raise questions about Israel's "right to exist" (a concept kept usefully vague) was quite beyond the pale and thus entirely unfit for sponsored support. To illustrate his point, and with undoubted expectation of audience agreement, Golan referred to an artist who had somewhere described arch-hawk and previous Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon as 'murderer'.

"The parallels with our very own Tony Blair, and the ready supply of artistic endeavour bent towards his misdemeanours come obviously to mind," Pullman noted, adding that the audience greeted Golan's assertions with a degree of incredulity.

While Israel, with the exception of Golan, was next to invisible at the Fringe 2015, Palestine was bursting out all over. This was not happenstance or coincidence. One of the responses to last year's

Festival events was a drive spearheaded by Scottish dramatist David Greig (one of those who had signed up to the protest about the staging of *The City*) to showcase Palestinian creativity. Aided by British Council funding he pulled together *Welcome to the Fringe: Palestine Day*, eight hours of live performance, featuring innovative Palestinian artists – storyteller Fida Ataa, dancer Yazan Ewiedat, performance artist Farah Saleh, poet Alice Youssef, the Al Shaghaf music ensemble, stand-up comedian and ventriloquist Ayman Nahas and Al Harah theatre's almost exclusively female performance, Shakespeare's Sisters. The photographic work of Hamde Abu Rahma was on display, though he himself was absent, having been refused a UK visa. Even so the day, hosted by the Forest Fringe, must surely rate as the most significant Palestinian arts programme ever presented at the Fringe, and perhaps more widely.

This was the most high profile presence of Palestinian culture at the Fringe but by no means the only one. *B-Orders* performed at the Circus Hub by members of the Palestinian Circus School was described in the Fringe programme as, "A stunning contemporary circus and dance performance by Ashtar Muallem and Fadi Zmorrod, featuring the absence of freedom and the desire to escape the multitude of codes, orders and borders dominating the Palestinian society. A poetic search for inner peace and liberation from prejudice." Sadly an injury to one of the performers caused the cancellation of some scheduled performances.

Thanks to Israel, Palestinian culture often has a political dimension over and above the artists' choice of subject matter. This was dramatically highlighted in a satellite transmission from Gaza City where a performance of *The Cage* by the Gaza branch of Ramallah-based Ashtar theatre was played out in front of an audience there and beamed direct to one of the Stand Comedy Club Fringe venues. This was a collaboration between Ashtar, the British Council and the Palestine regional office of the Rosa Luxembourg Stiftung. Stand founder Tommy Sheppard MP opened the evening and playwright David Greig explained that it was a Fringe first, necessitated by the siege of Gaza which made it impossible for performers to travel abroad to show their work.

Palestine featured at the Fringe in other ways too. A bevy of comics (Mark Steel, Daniel Kitson and Mark Thomas, corralled by Ivor Dembina) held a packed-out benefit gig at the Assembly Rooms which raised thousands of pounds for a medical

charity active in Gaza. And Artists for Palestine UK set up a temporary HQ in Edinburgh in donated rooms shared with the Network of Photographers for Palestine and members of Scottish PSC.

APUK was founded to promote the cultural boycott of those Israeli institutions linked to the state or engaging in pro-Israel propagandist activities. Launched in February, its boycott pledge committing not to accept professional invitations except by oppositional groups has already attracted almost [1100 signatures](#) from across the artistic fields, including many prominent names. Simultaneously it published a booklet *The Case for Cultural Boycott* which has been very well received.

The shared space housed a whole array of cultural/political activities. Two photographic exhibitions provided accounts of life in Palestine, and of the life of Palestinian exiles in Scotland. But the centrepiece was the resurrection of an exhibition of photographs by James Morris vividly portraying the destruction of Palestinian villages in 1948, 1967 and since. When displayed at an arts centre in North Wales last year the exhibition [was censored](#). Morris's captions, describing in bare factual terms the dislocation, dispossession, brutality and slaughter which produced the current landscape, were removed. In Edinburgh the photographs were projected onto a large screen as part of a film loop with the captions voiced by distinguished actor David Calder.

The centre was not part of the official Fringe programme, so it had to be promoted by energetic leafleting. A growing stream of visitors came to view, and to be refreshed by sage tea and flat bread dipped in oil and za'atar. In the evenings, talks and readings by a roster of cultural figures – including James Morris himself, author Ghada Karmi, comedian Alexei Sayle, actor Kika Markham, writer and legal campaigner Raja Shehadeh and several of the Palestinian artists who had performed during the Palestine Day – led to engaged discussions about Palestine and the need for cultural boycott.

Discussions are under way to see how to convert this successfully improvised operation into a more permanent feature of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

The firing of Steven Salaita at the University of Illinois: An update.

David Pegg

We reported the extraordinary events surrounding Steven Salaita in the October 2014 edition of this newsletter (# 80). Steven Salaita is a well-regarded academic in the field of American Indian Studies: he is also a determined supporter of Palestinian rights and of academic boycott in support of achieving these rights. Steven applied for a tenured post at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) and, in October 2013, he was given a formal offer following an open search process whose recommendation was subsequently approved at all of the appropriate levels. Such appointments at UIUC are subject to final approval by the school's Board of Trustees: Steven was, like all other new appointees, informed that this was a mere formality and accordingly he resigned from his tenured post at Virginia Tech and moved his family to Illinois. However to the surprise and consternation of the faculty, University Chancellor Phyllis Wise declined to submit his name to the trustees for ratification and the job offer was cancelled, almost a year after the offer had been made. It appears that this dramatic *volte face* was prompted by Steven's horrified tweets in reaction to Israel's assault on Gaza.

On Thursday, 6 August 2015, a federal judge [cleared the way](#) for Salaita's [lawsuit](#) to proceed against university administrators and trustees for breach of contract and violation of his First Amendment right of free speech. Salaita alleges that the officials fired him to appease, among others, pro-Israel donors. The judge did not accept the university's key arguments that it did not have a valid and binding contract with Salaita. But on the very same day that the court ruling came, Chancellor [Phyllis Wise](#), the top official at the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#) (UIUC) campus resigned. [Explaining](#) her departure, Wise alluded only to "external issues [that] have arisen over the past year that have distracted us from the important tasks at hand." She is reported to have left her post with a \$400K golden handshake and a faculty position with a \$300K salary.

In a further complication a [university statement revealed](#) that "the University of Illinois became

aware in late April that certain members of the Urbana-Champaign campus administration and other campus employees might have used personal email accounts for university-related communications, and that those emails may not have been made available to those at the university responsible for responding to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.” University policy is that all records related to university business are subject to FOIA regardless of whether they were sent or received on an official or personal account.

More than 1,000 pages of the newly released emails expose unethical and possibly illegal behavior by campus officials. The emails show that top officials colluded to conceal information and one administrator even destroyed what might be key evidence. Emails from certain personal email accounts that were responsive to 10 FOIAs from eight requestors previously submitted to the university were not produced to the university’s FOIA team for review and potential production. The university said it had launched an internal inquiry into the email practices it disclosed.

[The Electronic Intifada](#) and others, including [Urbana attorney Andrew Scheinman](#), have previously alleged that there was a deliberate cover-up over the Salaita matter, including possible destruction, or “spoilation,” of evidence. But rarely does one find such clear support for such suspicions as in this case.

The 294 emails that related to Salaita, as well as others, make it clear that evading public disclosure laws and concealing information that may be relevant to Salaita’s litigation was a key motive. In an email dated 18 September 2014 Wise wrote from her private account that a university spokesperson “has warned me and others not to use email since we are now in litigation phase. We are doing virtually nothing over our Illinois email addresses. I am even being careful with this email address - and deleting after sending.” There are several instances of Wise herself coaching others on how to act in ways that she – falsely – believed would stop communications becoming public.

There appears to be no reference in the emails to the infamous two-page memo on Salaita handed to Wise by a major donor days before she sent Salaita a letter informing him that his job no longer existed. The Electronic Intifada made [extensive efforts to try to retrieve the](#)

[memo](#) under the Freedom of Information Act. Wise and the university could not explain what had happened to it. Salaita alleges in his lawsuit that Wise destroyed the two-pager. That part of his complaint was rejected by the judge, so it may never be known what really happened.

Wise has now admitted in writing that she deleted emails – in effect destroying evidence – not just because of FOIA but because she expected litigation by Salaita. The emails confirm that up until the morning of 24 July 2014, Wise and her campus colleagues were preparing for Salaita to take up his tenured position in the American Indian Studies program a few weeks later and there was no talk of firing him. Their plan amounted to giving him a stern lecture about his tweets when he arrived on campus. But after a closed meeting of the board of trustees on 24 July, Wise said that the board would be “considering carefully whether to approve” Salaita’s appointment at its subsequent meeting in September, she added “Definitely not a given.”

[Anand Swaminathan](#), one of Salaita’s lawyers, has concluded from his reading of the emails that “something changed” around the time of the 24 July board meeting. “It’s very clear that the university administration understood all the way through, at least through 24 July, that they had obligations and commitments to Professor Salaita. Something changed in their attitude since then.” It is known that Salaita’s tweets – almost certainly as selected and spun by hostile, pro-Israel websites – were discussed at that board meeting.

On 31 July, the day before she sent her letter to Salaita informing him that his job had been rescinded, Wise wrote, in an apparent reference to a redacted draft university lawyers had sent her: “It will be the beginning of a lawsuit, I am sure I will be deposed no matter who sends the letter.”

What is completely absent from the Salaita emails – during the entire period they cover from July 2014 to May 2015 – is any reflection by university officials on whether this kind of characterization of Salaita by his strident critics was fair, accurate or complete. Not once did they ask seriously why so many people, including thousands of academics inside and outside the university, and major bodies like the [American Association of University Professors](#) (AAUP), saw the matter so [differently](#). Instead, a siege

mentality, where all critics were, at best, misinformed and, at worst, enemies, took over.

The timing of Wise's less than voluntary departure and the disclosures regarding the hidden emails give rise to the question of how far the new president wants to go to keep defending someone else's costly mess. We now learn that [Provost Ilesanmi Adesida is also resigning his position](#) next week. It appears that Adesida was one of Wise's most trusted subordinates and his personal emails were also revealed earlier this month. Although Adesida strongly supported Wise, the released emails show him as more of a bewildered figure rather than someone pushing for the firing of Steven Salaita.

It remains to be seen whether these extraordinary turns mean that the university will be more willing to restore Salaita's rights and reverse its attack on free speech without a protracted court battle.

Note: This article is an abbreviated version of the article by [Ali Abunimah](#) in the Electronic Intifada [<https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/univ-illinois-official-who-fired-steven-salaita-admits-destroying-evidence>] 10 August 2015

The Ten Mythologies of Israel.

Ilan Pappé

Any attempt to solve a conflict has to touch upon the very core of this conflict and the core more often than not lies in its history. A distorted or manipulated history can explain quite well a failure to end a conflict whereas a truthful and comprehensive look at the past can facilitate a lasting peace and solution. It can in fact do more harm, as the particular case study of Israel and Palestine shows: it can protect oppression, colonization and occupation.

The wide acceptance in the world of the Zionist narrative is based on a cluster of mythologies that in the end of the days cast doubt on the Palestinian moral right, ethical behavior and chances for any just peace in the future. The reason for this is that these mythologies are accepted by mainstream media in the West, and by the political elites there as truth and therefore a justification, not so much for the Israeli actions, but for the West's inclination to interfere.

And here are these ten common myths that provided an immunity shield for an impunity and inhumanity in the land of Palestine:

The first is that Palestine was a land without people waiting for the people without land. The first part was successfully proved to be false by a number of excellent historians who showed that before the arrival of the early Zionists, Palestine had a thriving society, mostly rural, but with a very vibrant urban center. It was a society that, like all the other Arab societies around it, was under Ottoman rule and part of the empire but nonetheless one which witnessed the emergence of a nascent national movement that probably would have turned Palestine into a nation-state, like Iraq or Syria, had Zionism not arrived on the shores of Palestine.

The second part of this mythology is also doubtful, but less significant. Several scholars, among them Israelis, doubted the genetic connection between the Zionist settlers and the Jews who lived the Roman time in Palestine or were exiled at the time. This is really less important as many national movements create artificially their story of birth and plant it in the distant past. The important issue is what do you do in the name of this narrative: do you justify colonization, expulsion and killing in the name of that story or do you seek peace and reconciliation on its basis? It does not matter whether it is true or not, what matters is that it is vile if in its name you colonize, dispossess and in some cases even genocide indigenous and native people.

The second foundational mythology was that the Palestinians from early on resorted to anti-Semitic campaign of terror when the first settlers arrived and until the creation of the state of Israel. As the diaries of the early Zionists show they were well received by the Palestinians who offered them abode and taught them in many cases how to cultivate the land. It was only when it was clear that these settlers did not come to live next to or with the native population, but instead of it, that the Palestinian resistance began. And when that resistance started it was not different from any other anti-colonialist struggle.

The third myth is a set of Israeli fables about the 1948 war. There were four foundational mythologies connected to this year. The first was that the Palestinians are to be blamed for what

occurred to them since they rejected the UN partition plan of November 1947. This allegation ignores the colonialist nature of the Zionist movement. It would have been unlikely that the Algerians, for instance, would have accepted the partition of Algeria with the French settlers – and such a refusal would not be deemed unreasonable or irrational. What is absolutely clear is that such an objection, in the case of any other Arab country, would not have justified the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians as a ‘punishment’ for accepting or rejecting a UN peace plan that was devised without any consultation with them.

Similarly absurd is the myth that the Palestinians left their homes voluntarily and as a result of a call by their leaders and those of the neighboring Arab states to leave so as to make way for the invading Arab armies that would come to liberate Palestine. There was no such call – this myth was invented by the Israeli foreign minister in the early 1950s. Later on Israeli historians changed the mythology and claimed that the Palestinians left, or fled, because of the war. But the truth of the matter is that half of those who became refugees in 1948 were expelled before the war commenced, on May 15, 1948.

Two other mythologies associated with 1948 are that Israel was a David fighting an Arab Goliath and that Israel after the war extended its hand for peace, to no avail, as the Palestinians and the Arab rejected this gesture. The research on the first proved that the Palestinians had no military power what so ever and the Arab states sent only a relatively small contingent of troops that was smaller in size compared to the Jewish forces and far less equipped or trained than the latter. Moreover, and highly significant, is the fact that these troops were sent into Palestine after May 15, 1948 when Israel was declared as a state, as a response for an ethnic cleansing operation that the Zionist forces had already begun in February 1948.

As for the myth of the extended hand of peace, the documents show clearly an intransigent Israeli leadership that refuses to open up negotiations over the future of post-Mandatory Palestine or consider the return of the people who were expelled or fled. While Arab governments and Palestinian leaders were willing to participate in a new and more reasonable UN peace initiative in 1948, the Israelis assassinated the UN peace mediator, Count Bernadotte, and rejected the suggested by the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC), a UN body, to reopen negotiations. This intransigent view would

continue and as Avi Shlaim has shown in his *The Iron Wall*, contrary to the myth that the Palestinians never missed an opportunity to miss peace – it was Israel that constantly rejected the peace offers that were on the table.

The fourth mythology is that Israel was a benign democratic state, seeking peace with its neighbors, and offering equality to all its citizens before the June 1967 war. This is a myth propagated alas by some notable Palestinian and pro-Palestinian scholars – but it has no historical foundation in facts. One fifth of the Israeli citizenship was subjected to a ruthless military rule based on draconian British mandatory emergency regulations that denied them any basic human and civil rights. Within this period more than fifty Palestinian citizens were killed by the Israeli security forces. At the same time, Israel pursued an aggressive policies towards its Arab neighbors, attacking them for allowing refugees to try and return, or at least retrieve their lost property and husbandry, and in collusion with Britain and France tried to topple Gamal Abdul Nasser, legitimate regime, in Egypt.

The fifth myth is that the Palestinian struggle is that of terrorism and nothing more. The struggle led by the PLO was a liberation struggle against a colonialist project. Somehow the world finds it difficult to grant legitimacy to anti colonialist struggle when most of the oppressed are Muslims and the oppressor is Jewish.

The sixth myth is that the 1967 war forced Israel to occupy the West Bank and the Gaza strip and keep it in custody until the Arab world, or the Palestinians, would be willing to make peace with the Jewish State. The Israeli political and military elite regarded the 1948 war as a missed opportunity: a historical moment in which Israeli could have occupied the whole of historical Palestine (from the river Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea). The only reason they did not do it was a tacit agreement with the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan that for return of the latter’s limited participation in the general Arab war effort, Jordan could annex the West Bank. Ever since 1948, this elite was looking for an opportunity and planned carefully from the mid-1960s how to implement a plan to have it all.

There were several historical junctures in which the Israelis nearly did it – but did not in the last moment. The most famous are 1958 and 1960, when the leader of the state and its first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, in the last moment aborted the plans due to fears of international

reaction in the first instance and a demographic fear (thinking that Israel cannot incorporate such a large number of Palestinians) in the second. The best opportunity came in 1967: whatever is the Israeli mythology of not wishing to go to war against Jordan, but having to react to Jordanian aggression, there was no Israeli need to remain in the West Bank, if this was just another round of tension between the two states. Incorporating the West Bank and the Gaza Strip within Israel was an Israeli plan since 1948 that was implemented in 1967.

The seventh myth was that Israel came with good intentions to conduct a benevolent occupation but was forced by Israel to take a tougher attitude because of Palestinian violence. Israel regarded from the very beginning any wish to end the occupation, whether expressed peacefully or through a struggle, as terrorism and reacted brutally by punishing collectively the population for any such demonstration of resistance.

The Palestinians were offered two options: to accept life in an Israeli open prison and enjoy limited autonomy and the right to work as underpaid, and bereft of any workers' right, labor in Israel, or resist, even mildly, and risk living in a maximum security prison subjected to collective punishment such as house demolition, arrest without trial, expulsion and in severe cases assassinations and murder.

The major reality change they had to accept - or endure punishment - was that Israeli will unilaterally decide which part of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will be taken from them forever and annexed to Israel. As it turned out, by now more than half of the West Bank was annexed in one way or another, while the Gaza strip was left alone eventually as an area over which Israel wishes to exercise a direct rule.

Part of that myth was a claim that liberal Zionists in the USA, as well as in Israel, shared with the rest of the political forces in Israel about the PLO's struggle. The allegation was that the PLO - inside and outside of Palestine - was conducting a war of terror for the sake of terror. This demonization alas is still very prevalent in the West and has been accentuated after 2001 by the attempt to equate Islam, terrorism and Palestine. The PLO was in fact recognized as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by more states than have recognized Israel. It is noteworthy that the demonization continued even after the Oslo accord of 1993 in which allegedly Israeli recognized it as a legitimate partner. Even

the Palestine Authority is still depicted by Israel as an outfit that supports terror. The worst kind of demonization, which convinced the Western world to resort to boycott, was directed at the Hamas. Among the civil societies worldwide, this demonization is successfully challenged but main stream media and politicians still fall foul to this slander.

The eight myth is that the Oslo accord was a peace process that was born out the wish of both sides to reach a solution. The idea of partitioning Palestine already back in the 1930s was a Zionist concept that the Palestinians successfully rejected until the late 1980s. In the meantime the share the Israelis were willing to offer them went down from half of the land to 15 percent of it. The willingness to call this part a state could not hide the fact that the Oslo process, devised solely by Israelis, offered a fragmented Bantustan for the Palestinians, of what was left without any right of the refugees expelled to return.

It was a matrix of events that have disempowered the PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat, to such an extent, that against the advice of his best friends, he went into this process hoping to gain independence at least in part of Palestine. The end result was an almost total destruction of Palestine and the Palestinians.

The ninth myth is that the second Intifada was a mega terrorist attack sponsored and in a way planned by Arafat. The truth is it was a mass demonstration of dissatisfaction with the betrayal of Oslo, compounded by the provocative action of Ariel Sharon and his likes around the holy places for Islam in Palestine. This non-violent protest was crushed by brutal force by Israel which led to a more desperate response - continuing a tactic of suicide bombs as the last resort in the face of the strongest military power in the region. There is telling evidence by Israeli newspaper correspondents how their report on the early stages of the Intifada - as a nonviolent movement that was crushed violently - were shelved by the editors so as to fit the narrative of the government.

That narrative of the Palestinians aborting by force the peace process, and thus reaffirming what Israel has always said about them that they do not miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity for peace and that 'there is no one to talk to on the Palestinian side' is particularly cynical. The Israeli government and army had tried by force to impose its own version of Oslo - one which was meant to perpetuate the occupation forever but

with Palestinian consent – and even a feeble Arafat could not accept it. He and so many other leaders who could have led their people to reconciliation were targeted by the Israelis; and most of them, probably Arafat as well, were assassinated.

The last and *tenth* myth is that there is a solution in Israel and Palestine around the corner: the two states solution and it will be nearly over. This corner is definitely not upon this earth, maybe somewhere in the universe. The reality on the ground, of a massive colonization and direct annexation of vast part of the West Bank to Israel renders any state, if it is ever agreed upon, as a Bantustan without any proper sovereignty; nor is it thinkable that Palestine would be just 20 percent of what it actually is or that the Palestinians would be defined as only those who live in the West Bank (as the Gaza strip seems to be now excluded from any future discussion and many parts of Jerusalem are also not included in the envisaged state).

The two states solution as commented earlier on is an Israeli invention that was meant to allow it to square a circle – how to include the West Bank within Israel's control without incorporating the population that lives there. Thus, it was suggested that part of the West Bank would be autonomous and maybe even a state in return for the Palestinians giving up all their hopes for return, equal rights for the Palestinians in Israel, the fate of Jerusalem and leading normal life as human beings on their homeland.

Any criticism of this mythology is branded as anti-Semitism. In fact, this policy and mythology is the main reason why anti-Semitism is still alive. Israel insists that what it does, it does in the name of Judaism – hence the association in the minds of more twisted people between the Zionist colonization and Jewish religion.

This association should be rejected and in the name of Judaism and indeed universal values the right of everyone who lives there and was expelled from there to live as equals should be the main peace and reconciliation agenda.

Conference: Rethinking trauma and resilience in the context of political violence: new directions in research and practice.

Marin Kemp

This conference will take place on Saturday & Sunday, November 14 & 15, 2015, 9.00am - 5.00pm at **Kingston University**. The Conference is being co-sponsored by the Palestine-UK Social Work Network, the Palestine Trauma Centre and the UK-Palestine Mental Health Network.

We hope to bring together mental health workers, social workers and academics to evaluate mental health practices in a war zone and question the traditional concept of trauma. It is intended to examine the effectiveness of Western-derived interventions for ongoing trauma and discuss the viability of a PTSD diagnosis (including DSM & ICD) for civil conflict situations.

The victims of war are not 'ill'. They react normally to abnormal conditions. Understanding those conditions and the ways in which they can be resisted offers new insights into therapeutic processes. This conference will explore community-based interventions, physical approaches to mental health, and trauma relief that focuses on children and adults.

This conference should create a stimulating and enjoyable scientific forum for the international community of senior and young researchers and practitioners in the field of trauma and related topics.

Weekend tickets: £50 (£15 student rate).

Booking is essential to attend this event. Go to: <http://www.kingston.ac.uk/events/item/1702/14-nov-2015-rethinking-trauma-and-resilience-in-the-context-of-political-violence-new-directions-in-research-and/>

For further information contact: Dr Muthanna Samara at rethinkingtrauma@gmail.com

Notices

BRICUP is the British Committee for the Universities of Palestine.

We are always willing to help provide speakers for meetings. All such requests and any comments or suggestions concerning this Newsletter are welcome.

Email them to: newsletter@bricup.org.uk

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Arranging meetings and lobbying activities are expensive. We need funds to support visiting speakers, book rooms for public meetings, print leaflets and pay the whole range of expenses that a busy campaign demands.

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