



The *Journal of Palestine Studies* in the Twenty-First Century: An Editor's Reflections

Rashid I. Khalidi

ABSTRACT

The *Journal of Palestine Studies* is celebrating fifty years of uninterrupted publication as the journal of record on Palestinian affairs since its founding in 1971. Historian, book author, and Columbia University's Edward Said Chair of Middle East Studies, Rashid Khalidi, has been at the helm as editor for almost two decades. In this article, he reflects on the *Journal's* role in knowledge production on Palestine from a number of vantage points: the situation that obtained at the *Journal's* founding when Palestinians simply did not have "permission to narrate" their own story in the Western public sphere; the evolution of the academic universe in the United States and its eventual embrace of disciplines, such as race, gender, Indigenous, and Palestine studies, once considered marginal or fringe; and the concomitant and virulent Zionist campaign to tar speech critical of Israel and the Zionist project with the brush of anti-Semitism, whether in the media, politics, or academia.

KEYWORDS

Palestine studies; knowledge production; digital publishing; BDS; criticism of Israel; joint struggles; American progressives; permission to narrate

I TOOK UP EDITORSHIP of the *Journal of Palestine Studies* (*JPS*) in 2002 and have now spent almost a quarter of my life in that position, which in retrospect seems too long.* Reflecting on that time, it is apparent that much has changed, both in Palestine and in the contents, form, and focus of the *Journal* itself. The year 2002 marked the height of the Second Intifada, in which about fifty-five hundred Palestinians and eleven hundred Israelis died, typically lopsided casualty ratios that were rarely reflected in media coverage of these events.¹ That uprising grew out of popular frustration with the Oslo Accords, which effectively thwarted Palestinian aspirations for sovereign statehood while helping to entrench and fortify Israel's military occupation and colonization of Palestine. It was also a time when Palestine advocacy work in the West reached another low point, as Israel's formidable public relations machine succeeded in tarring the Palestinians with the brush of terrorism in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

In the nineteen years since 2002, conditions in Palestine have deteriorated even further. Israel has aggressively expanded its control of the entire country in the face of Palestinian disunity and strategic incoherence, while the Palestinian cause continues to face daunting political challenges in the United States and elsewhere. Paradoxically, however, in spite of these reversals and hardships, the Palestinian narrative is today more firmly anchored and more globally accepted than at any time in the past century. Discussions that once would have been taboo in the United States and Europe—about what is actually happening in Palestine, about Zionism, about settler colonialism, about Israel as an apartheid state or worse—are taking place with increasing vitality across university campuses, in intellectual and academic circles, and on social media, as well as in the nonmainstream, noncorporate media.

Much has also changed over this period as regards the *Journal*, whether in terms of content, orientation, platforms and audience, or personnel. One of the most important of these changes occurred in 2020 when I began sharing editorial duties with Sherene Seikaly, a leading historian of Palestine and an experienced institution-builder who is the author of the much-lauded *Men of Capital: Scarcity and Economy in Mandate Palestine*.² Another important change has been the establishment of a larger, more active, and more diverse Editorial Board. There have been other transformations too, in terms of the *Journal's* content and focus, to which I shall return later.

When I became editor, peer-reviewed articles, essays, interviews, and book reviews formed the core of *JPS* knowledge production on Palestine, featuring an approach weighted heavily toward politics, history, international relations, and foreign policy questions. About half of every issue was dedicated to documentary material comprising a quarterly update on developments in and around Palestine; a chronology; separate sections devoted to key documents, to the Hebrew and Arabic press, and to Israeli settlements; and the Congressional Monitor (which, as its name implies, monitors all congressional actions pertaining to Palestine). Producing these sections involved an enormous amount of detailed work and the resulting data proved invaluable to researchers. While the internet was no longer new in 2002, access to our material was gained via print copies of the *Journal*, which counted over two thousand institutional and individual subscribers.

Today, *JPS* content is primarily accessed digitally and no longer includes any of the documentary sections. Most of the documentary material, together with new features like the interactive Palestinian Timeline, is now produced by the *Journal's* parent organization, the Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS), in digital formats that makes it far more accessible and easily searchable than it used to be.³ This shift to a new format recognizes the fact that digital platforms are more agile and better suited to the purposes of documenting and covering rapidly changing events than a quarterly academic journal appearing three to six months after these events. With over 330,000 downloads of *JPS* material in 2020, up from 200,000 in 2019, it is clear that the vast majority of our readers access the *Journal's* content online rather than in printed form. They do this via the *JPS* page either on the IPS website or on the portal of our publisher (Taylor & Francis), and via the digital academic journals library, JSTOR.⁴ The growth in these different forms of digital access has paradoxically expanded *JPS's* reach while diminishing its subscriber base.

The migration of the documentary sections to online platforms has also made it possible for the *Journal* to pursue a new vision for itself. As part of the transition outlined above, *JPS* is focused on expanding the number of articles, essays, interviews, and roundtables it publishes (alongside book reviews and a quarterly bibliography of recent works), and more importantly, on developing new conceptual frameworks, approaches, and analyses. A growing priority is to broaden the scholarly study of Palestine in conversation with other fields beyond those of Middle East studies. The widening of this focus reflects a progressive redefinition of the *Journal's* mission by both its editorial team and its parent institution.

How *JPS* Has Changed

In order to better understand the changes outlined above, it is necessary to explain the *Journal's* genesis and early development. When *JPS* was launched in Beirut in the fall of 1971—at the inspiration of Walid Khalidi, Constantine Zurayk, and their IPS colleagues,⁵ and under the

editorship of Hisham Sharabi⁶—the scholarly study of Palestine was in its early stages of definition and articulation. That year, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had been driven from Jordan, and its survival was in question. Meanwhile, the very term “Palestine” was taboo in most intellectual, academic, political, and media circles in the United States and other Western countries. In contrast with the Arab world and most developing countries, where the cause of Palestine was exceedingly popular, to write about Palestine in the West could be a contentious, even hazardous, endeavor for students, academics, activists, and journalists, not to speak of politicians.

In the 1970s, and for many years thereafter, the Palestinian voice went largely unheard in the United States and many other parts of the Western world, a situation that had persisted since the inception of what I have called the “hundred years’ war on Palestine.”⁷ Simply put, the Palestinians did not have what Edward Said called “permission to narrate.”⁸ Instead, a meticulously crafted and superficially convincing Zionist narrative was ubiquitous. Systematically erasing the country’s Indigenous people, the Palestinians, it took up all the oxygen in almost any public space. As with other settler-colonial endeavors, the native people’s expropriated villages were demolished, original place names were replaced with new (Hebrew) ones, and even their cuisine was appropriated, with “khummus” and falafel becoming Israeli delicacies. Half a century ago, simply putting Palestine back on the map, and asserting that the study of Palestine and the Palestinians was a legitimate endeavor, represented an arduous and frustrating task in Western academia, media, and political circles, let alone popular culture. Hence the painstaking effort by the *Journal’s* founders to document, substantiate, and firmly establish a counternarrative to the widespread, insistent denial of the very existence of a Palestinian people and of their claims and rights. That explains as well the largely political, historical, and documentary emphasis of much of the *Journal’s* output in its first few decades.

When I became editor nearly twenty years ago, these and other efforts by the pioneering generation of scholars of Palestine in the Arab countries, in the United States, and around the world—including a few in Israel—had begun to achieve measurable academic success. Critical and objective monographs, histories, translations, journal articles, and other scholarship on Palestine were starting to turn the tide against the mass of literature that repeated uncritically the core myths of the Zionist and Israeli canon.⁹ Over the decades since the early 1970s, there had been a manifold increase in the quantity and quality of scholarly work in English on Palestine, Israel, and Zionism, much of which recognized or reflected a Palestinian perspective. (Excellent work was also being produced on these topics in Arabic, largely published by IPS, but generally ignored in the Western academy.) This impressive output in multiple languages was the work of a growing number of increasingly well-established Palestinian, Arab, Arab American, and non-Arab scholars who worked on Palestine and the Palestinians and on regional and international politics around Palestine.

The depth of this growing academic cohort made it possible to reshape and strengthen the *Journal’s* Editorial Board, and to bring in a group of younger and more diverse scholars who had recently established themselves in their fields of specialization. This effort, which began when I took over as editor, was aimed at broadening the *Journal’s* reach and adding new perspectives to its approach. In the last two decades, Editorial Board members, in close collaboration with a small cadre of dedicated and highly competent editorial staff,¹⁰ have succeeded in transforming the *Journal*. From its original orientation as a publication of primarily

politico-historical scholarship and documentary research, *JPS* has become a much more interdisciplinary and diverse intellectual and political forum.

This process of widening the *Journal's* focus was both natural and necessary as interest in, and academic attention to, Palestine spread from the narrow precinct of studying “the conflict” to examining multiple aspects of Palestinian social, economic, intellectual, cultural, and artistic affairs. This meant a partial shift in terms of the subject of study, from the struggle over Palestine to the Palestinians themselves, ushering in the production of important research by anthropologists, sociologists, and musicologists; scholars of literature, film, and other cultural fields; as well as women’s, gender, race, Indigenous, and environmental studies. As this disciplinarily diverse, and often interdisciplinary, work has increasingly been featured in our pages, it has measurably enriched the *Journal*. Throughout, *JPS* has remained the standard source for rigorous scholarly work on Palestine and the Palestinians.

Simultaneously, and equally significant, there was growing attention to Palestine among scholars who were not Middle East specialists. Their disciplines included fields founded in a critique of the United States’s global hegemony and its colonial and slave-holding past, ranging from postcolonial and cultural studies to American studies, race, gender, and queer studies, and others, including Native American and Indigenous studies. Sarcastic critics decried the fact that Palestine had become “fashionable” in liberal and Left circles. Their ire was partly the result of a recognition that the tables of public discourse on Palestine, so long favorable to Israel, were finally turning; it was also stoked by the failure of attempts to police and suppress critical discussion of Israeli policies in academic fora.

In fact, this growing concern with Palestine was a result of an awareness of its central position in relation to a number of questions such as race, gender, colonialism, and postcolonialism that have become well established within the academy. It was also a reaction to the systematic exclusion of Palestine from consideration in so much of progressive and radical discourse, to the point that the acronym PEP—progressive except for Palestine—became commonplace. A recent book, *Except for Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Politics*,¹¹ explores perceptively what the trailblazing legal pioneer, the late Michael Ratner, called the “Palestine exception” to the commitments of liberals to progressive politics.¹²

This new attention to Palestine by nonspecialists produced occasional problems. There was a tendency on the part of scholars unfamiliar with the breadth and depth of the burgeoning literature on Palestine to cite only a few standard texts by established authors, or to make only token references to the topic. In so doing, they not only slighted the sophisticated work of many less-well-known, especially younger, academics, they also missed the granular nature of the processes involved, along with much else about Palestine and the Palestinians. Thus, for example, while making superficial comparisons between Zionism and other settler colonialisms, such scholars sometimes failed to appreciate the unique specificities of the case of Palestine and of the Zionist project.

These were problems that could easily be corrected, however, and they were more than made up for by the value of most contributions from these fields. This in turn resulted in enriching the output of *JPS* (and of other academic journals) as well as Palestinian studies generally. Those contributions also served as the basis for much political activism by students and scholars in those fields (and by others outside academia). Their attention to Palestine sometimes engendered fierce resistance to any consideration of this “controversial” topic in their disciplines by older and more conservative senior scholars. American studies,

anthropology, and several other disciplines that were undertaking new work on Palestine became particular arenas of struggle—both over the work itself, and over many scholars' implicit support for Palestinian rights and the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement, on the one hand, and their opposition to growing reflexive censorship of Palestine advocacy, on the other. There were victories as well as defeats in these struggles. Academic organizations that endorsed the BDS call for a boycott of Israeli academic institutions linked to the Israeli government included the African Literature Association, the American Studies Association, the Association for Asian American Studies, the Association for Humanist Sociology, the Critical Ethnic Studies Association, the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies, the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association, the Peace and Justice Studies Association, and several others. Some of them, in particular the American Studies Association—the first to endorse BDS—paid a heavy price in the form of harassing lawsuits and constant vilification from partisans of Israel.

The Evolving Environment

Attempts to stifle interest in or advocacy for Palestine and criticism of Israel, in academia and elsewhere, increasingly made the spurious claim that such outlooks were tainted with anti-Semitism. This libelous accusation—which has become a constant in the relentless campaign to suppress sympathetic or even objective discourse on Palestine in the academy, on campus, and in the media, as well as in politics and other public spaces—has been ramped up in recent years to unprecedented levels. In particular, there has been massive pressure on academic and other institutions to adopt the deeply flawed International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism, seven of whose eleven operative examples are tailored to restrict criticism of the Israeli state and its policies and have nothing whatsoever to do with the lethal right-wing anti-Semitism that is increasingly prevalent in the United States and Europe. At the same time, laws have been proposed in dozens of U.S. state legislatures prohibiting support for the BDS campaign, which itself has been described by its opponents as “anti-Semitic.” The attempt to conflate critiques of Zionism or Israel with anti-Semitism and to smear Palestinian solidarity work with this entirely bogus charge has been examined at different times by the *Journal* and other IPS publications, and has been harshly criticized by many groups.¹³

The multipronged and heavily funded campaign, which is essentially directed at suppressing objective scholarship and Palestine solidarity work as well as any criticism of Israel and its policies, has taken on a new urgency. This is a direct result of the changing atmosphere on many college campuses resulting from BDS campaign successes and other student activism around Palestine. Thus, large majorities in representative student bodies at institutions such as Brown University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Columbia University have voted to adopt pro-BDS resolutions in the face of dogged opposition.¹⁴ More broadly, this hostile campaign is a desperate response to growing recognition in the U.S. public sphere that Israel really does not conform to its carefully curated, conventionally idealized image, and that the Palestinians too are not what they have falsely been made out to be.

There is growing awareness, for example, that for over half a century what is fancifully described as “the only democracy in the Middle East” has in fact deprived nearly half the population under its control of their political and human rights while inexorably extending

its settler-colonial regime over ever more Palestinian land. As the spotlight shines brighter on the bitter four-hundred-year history of the suppression of the rights of Black people in the United States, the parallels become all too apparent between the segregationist Jim Crow system of “legal” discrimination erected after the U.S. Civil War—with lasting sequels in the form of systematic voter suppression, police brutality, and mass incarceration—and the institutionalized discrimination embodied in the constitutional structures, laws, and practices of the State of Israel. Equally clear to growing numbers of people are the similarities between the white European settler-colonial project that produced Israel and those that operate(d) in Ireland, North America, Australasia, East Africa, South Africa, and Algeria. These realizations have undermined the fable of deserts being made to bloom by a people miraculously “restored” to an empty land without a people. Of equal importance, they have engendered a sense in the United States and elsewhere that Black or Native American communities and Palestinians share joint struggles that are interconnected and require heightened solidarity.

Pernicious myths similar to those outlined above, which underpin blanket U.S. financial, military, and diplomatic support for Israeli occupation and colonial settlement expansion in Palestine, have been increasingly challenged, in particular by students and academics who have been influenced not only by activism but also by the kind of critical and probing writings on Israel and Palestine that the *Journal* publishes. Together with other platforms—such as the IPS digital projects, *Jadaliyya*, *Al-Shabaka*, and others, as well as the dozens of monographs on Palestine that are now published regularly, many of them by prestigious university presses¹⁵—the *Journal* has played a key role in this evolution. The hundreds of thousands of downloads of its materials annually provide the scholarly undergirding for innumerable term papers, master’s theses, doctoral dissertations, and other scholarly research.

These materials are also used by journalists, government officials, politicians, and activists engaged in combating the disinformation and distortions about Palestine that are so prevalent in the U.S. public sphere. The educational arena is particularly crucial, however. Once people, especially those in academic settings, have followed their own paths to learning elementary facts, thereby gaining a basic understanding about an issue as contentious as Palestine, they cannot unlearn them. Similarly, the growing number of students and others who visit Palestine and perceive the colonial nature of the realities there cannot “unsee” what they have witnessed. Their views can and will vary over time, but their new understanding poses a fundamental challenge to the mythic underpinnings of the entire Zionist project. In turn, this understanding begins to turn the tide in a crucial public opinion battle that heretofore has almost always been won by Israel and its advocates—a battle in which, to use Said’s words, “ideas, representation, rhetoric, and images [are] at issue.”¹⁶

The impact of this growing shift in views can be seen in polls of U.S. public opinion over the past several years.¹⁷ These uniformly show an increase in sympathy for the Palestinians and in the willingness to criticize Israel, especially among grassroots Democrats and the more progressive figures associated with the party, foremost among them Vermont senator Bernie Sanders. This shift has had little or no impact on the establishment Democratic Party leadership, from President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer on down—all of whom remain publicly committed to unequivocal support for Israel. At this writing, after more than four months in office, the Biden administration has yet to reverse most of the policies that the administration of former U.S. president Donald Trump ushered in, including recognition of the Israeli

annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, and keeping the U.S. embassy in the Holy City, all of which endorse Israeli violations of international law.

The shift at the Democratic grass roots is nevertheless significant. It was evident in the 2016 and 2020 Democratic presidential primaries, when ideas about Palestine that had never previously entered mainstream party discourse, such as making military aid to Israel conditional on its human rights record, were put forward by Senator Sanders and other presidential candidates like Massachusetts senator Elizabeth Warren. It is also visible in the U.S. Congress where, for the first time, there are more than just one or two isolated critics of conventional pro-Israel pieties on the topic of Palestine. In the 1970s and 1980s, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (better known as AIPAC) and its minions targeted politicians like Congressmen Pete McCloskey and Paul Findley and Senator Charles Percy for taking such positions, and these men ultimately lost their reelection bids or chose not to run again. Today, there exists a diverse bloc of legislators who are critical of Israeli policies, exemplified by the two dozen members of the House of Representatives who were not afraid to cosponsor the resolution drafted and introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum (D-MN) in April 2019 requiring U.S. funds not to support Israeli military detention of Palestinian children.¹⁸ Far from being intimidated by the unceasing smears of pro-Israel supporters, every member of this group, which includes Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), the first Palestinian American congresswoman, was reelected in the November 2020 elections. Meanwhile, several members newly elected to the House in the same ballot—among them, Reps. Jamaal Bowman (D-NY), Mondaire Jones (D-NY), Marie Newman (D-IL), and Cori Bush (D-MO)—took similar explicit positions during their campaigns. The first three won House seats previously held by outspoken partisans of Israel: Eliot Engel and Nita Lowey in New York, and Dan Lipinski in Illinois.

Clearly, these long-term shifts in the United States are due to greater awareness regarding the question of Palestine and much closer scrutiny of Israel. Changes in the mainstream media, the rise of alternative and social media, and increasing sophistication in its understanding of the world on the part of young people, progressives, and people of conscience all play a part. At best, the *Journal* can claim only a small role in these broader changes. But together with parallel developments encompassing a burgeoning of literature, essays, autobiographies, theater pieces, documentaries, feature films, and television series that offer more accurate portrayals of Palestinians (and of Arabs and Muslims too), academic publishing such as that undertaken by the *Journal* helps to sustain the environment in which these transformations can take place.

Academia and *JPS*

While real-world politics inform the general atmosphere within which journals like ours function, academic and campus politics are the immediate orbit within which many of our readers, and most of our Editorial Board, operate. There, the picture is mixed. The ferocious campaign by supporters of Israel to squelch scholarship on Palestine and activism in support of Palestinian rights, and to intimidate and silence their proponents, affects both students and faculty. Lavishly funded organizations like Canary Mission, Students Supporting Israel, the Israel on Campus Coalition,¹⁹ and numerous others—many of them guided by powerful off-campus institutional actors, including the Israeli government itself—cast a heavy McCarthyite shadow over U.S. campus life where Palestine is concerned. Their efforts are

mainly directed at defaming, slandering, and harassing students and faculty who support Palestinian rights or criticize Israeli policies, all the while claiming the role of the victim for those they describe as their own constituents. Palestine Legal, an organization that provides legal support for academics, students, and Palestine activists so targeted, responded to over seventeen hundred incidents of suppression of Palestine advocacy in the seven years from 2014 to 2020, most of them involving academics and students.²⁰ As part of the effort to silence Palestine advocacy and criticism of Israel, the Trump administration's Department of Education adopted the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as a basis for claims of discrimination in educational institutions under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. A few weeks before leaving office, Trump signed an executive order that utilized the same flawed IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as a cudgel against university Middle East studies programs (which pro-Israel groups claimed were biased) and against Palestinian solidarity activism.²¹ Neither measure has been reversed by the Biden administration at the time of writing.

Meanwhile, faculty appointments at several universities—including Harvard, the University of Illinois, De Paul University in Chicago, and American University in Washington—have been derailed over a number of years because of a slew of baseless accusations against academics who were pro-Palestinian. Faculty at San Francisco State University and other universities have been subjected to relentless harassment for their writings and their activism on the question of Palestine. Other academics have managed to gain tenure in spite of such campaigns. For all of those targeted, there is nonetheless a price to pay, one that is sometimes invisible to outsiders, with many cases we never hear of, research projects that are quietly aborted, and adjuncts that are unobtrusively eased out of positions.²² Such ordeals serve, and are meant to serve, to discourage graduate students and junior faculty from risking their careers by working on Palestine. Several current and former members of our Editorial Board are among those who have been subjected to such abuse and intimidation.

All the above notwithstanding, there has been substantial progress on the study of Palestine in many areas of academia. Besides the normalization of research and publishing on Palestine in individual departments, and the inclusion in many professors' syllabi of some of the rigorous new academic publications on this topic, whether books or journal articles, there have been several high-profile achievements. At Columbia University, the Center for Palestine Studies, the first and only one of its kind in the Western Hemisphere, is celebrating its tenth anniversary in 2021. Similar centers have been established in the United Kingdom: at SOAS University of London and at Exeter University. Meanwhile, at Brown University, a chair has been named for the renowned Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, with the distinguished Palestinian historian Beshara Doumani, a member of the *JPS* Editorial Board, as its inaugural incumbent. Such advances were unimaginable two or three decades ago, and they are an indication of the fact that the study of Palestine has begun, despite strong opposition, to establish a place for itself in the U.S. and European academies.

The pandemic and resulting global economic crisis have, however, also affected higher education, and this has resulted in a wave of retrenchment, faculty hiring freezes, the closing of departments and programs, and the firing of faculty, including, in some cases, those with tenure. Such measures pose a threat to all academic domains seen as "marginal." There is a justifiable fear that, given how unpopular the very mention of Palestine is among some members of state legislatures, boards of regents, and boards of trustees, these cuts may produce serious casualties among faculty and programs dealing with the study of Palestine, thus

shrinking this still-fragile field. Indeed, a major threat hangs over this and other newly established scholarly domains, like race and gender studies, unless and until the ruinous U.S. model for the financing of higher education is transformed in a progressive manner, halting both spiraling tuition increases²³ and exploding student debt. Threats to fields like Palestine studies will continue as long as administrators with an MBA mindset, advised by expensive and clueless corporate consultants, and influenced by the wishes of donors, raise money for athletic programs, glittering buildings, expensive bijou projects, and flashy overseas programs instead of reinforcing the core competency of higher education—the classroom education of students and its concomitant: the hiring of good faculty engaged in critical research. Where Palestine is concerned, there are similar threats to academic freedom outside the United States, whether the Conservative Party's neoliberal model for education in the United Kingdom, or because of baseless anti-Semitism charges being marshaled there and in other European countries.

Future Perspectives

Among the issues that the *Journal* must tackle in coming years is not only that of the proper balance between a policy-oriented politico-historical emphasis and content that speaks more directly to academics and scholars, but also the question of what kind of academic work to feature, whether a more traditional or a more radical, activist approach to academic knowledge production. In fact, the distinction between academia and activism, or academia and politics, is a false one, because no academic piece of work can be devoid of politics, even if it does not seek to endorse a political position or solve a political problem. Moreover, in principle, there is no contradiction between all of these differing approaches, although overemphasis of one can lead to de-emphasis of the other. The *Journal's* readership is by no means restricted to academics, who themselves are of different generations and have disparate interests and approaches. It also includes policy-makers, researchers, journalists, activists, and ordinary citizens. While it is true that some styles of academic writing may not appeal to such a broad audience, the editorial team does its best to ensure that the writing we publish is not drawn from a narrow disciplinary perspective and is not arcane. However, academic writing has requirements that cannot be transgressed without being robbed of its analytical value, and doing so might make the *Journal* a less attractive publishing venue, especially for younger, more unconventional researchers, journalists, and writers. Much of the Editorial Board's effort is therefore aimed at attracting academics and others who had never before considered writing for *JPS*.

The question of how to achieve a balance between these imperatives is one that the editorial team has long debated, as this balance is essential if the *Journal* is to serve the multiple audiences it is meant to serve. In addition, speaking to multiple audiences matters because the use of multiple theoretical lenses and methodologies allows us to understand Palestine in more nuanced ways. Moreover, it opens up new possibilities for intersectional and transnational analyses of relationships of power that are conjoined—like U.S. support for Israel's military control of Palestinians under occupation and Israeli training of U.S. police engaged in suppressing Black communities in the United States, not to mention joint U.S.-Israeli support for police repression in Central America, among others.

Another vexing issue is that of the timing and extent of the shift from print to a fully digital format. Science and mathematical journals, and many other academic publications, have

already transitioned to digital publishing and no longer produce print copies. This change has begun to affect the social sciences and is making inroads in the humanities. Sooner or later, a change in this direction is coming. The print subscriber base of the *Journal*, and of most other academic journals, has shrunk steadily over the past couple of decades. Following our recent shift to Routledge, we hope to halt and eventually reverse this decline. But the vast bulk of our content is already viewed online, primarily through institutional subscriptions, mainly with universities, which provide students and faculty with unlimited digital access to current and past issues. Managing this transition, as and when it becomes inevitable, will be a delicate task, dependent partly on larger trends in journal publishing and on our readers' preferences.

A related issue is that of open access, by which I mean free, unfettered online availability of all or most content. Many scholarly journals, especially in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) realms, are moving in this direction, responding to the laudable ideal of free access to human knowledge for everyone. While in STEM fields this may be possible because individual scientists, medical researchers, and others are recipients of large grants that fund many of their costs and expenses, this is less often the case in the humanities and social sciences where most of our academic contributors (and readers) are located. Moreover, STEM publication does not require the same intensive linguistic editing that is imperative to producing high-quality content for the *Journal*. Maintaining such editorial standards requires painstaking, lengthy labor and extensive back-and-forth between authors and editors, as well as the input of considerable time by expert *JPS* editorial staff, the two editors, members of the Editorial Board, and peer reviewers. While the editors, Editorial Board, and peer reviewers offer their services gratis, that is not the case for our dedicated editorial staff, without whom we could not bring out a quality journal. It is not clear to me how these and other necessary costs can be covered under an open access system, which presumably would not involve subscriptions as we understand them today.

When I began editing this publication in 2002, as I noted, it was already a going concern. It had established itself, had an esteemed academic publisher, and was ideally placed to benefit from the expanding respectability of the study of Palestine in the academy. Well-known figures in Middle Eastern studies, in the policy world, and in other fields published in its pages. As the situation of the Palestinian people, whether inside or outside their homeland, has grown more dire, the *Journal* has evolved. Ongoing events are now addressed with more immediacy by the IPS blog, *Palestine Square*, in the IPS Current Issues in Depth series, and on other IPS digital platforms, including the Palestinian Timeline project, for example, as well as in online panels and webinars. Many of these offerings, none of which existed nineteen years ago, feature the work of Editorial Board members or materials drawn from the *Journal*, leaving *JPS* freer to focus on in-depth, analytical approaches to issues of relevance to the Palestinians and the Palestine question via contributions from emerging and established scholars in a broad range of fields and specialties.

From this perspective, it appears that the future of *JPS* is assured, and that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. But in fact, if the experience of the recent past is any guide—whether in the politics of Palestine or of the United States, or in regard to global health, climate, or the economy—nothing about the future is assured but its total unpredictability. Beyond the daunting challenges mentioned earlier, economic and financial threats to institutions like the IPS, which supports the *Journal*, strong headwinds in the publishing industry, and what may be a long-term crisis in higher education together have the potential to threaten the stability and perhaps even the survival of our publication.

In addition to these potentially troubling systemic trends, there are other issues to confront, some of which we may be able to exercise more control over. One is the paradoxical phenomenon that Palestine becomes more popular in some quarters as the actual status of its land and people becomes more precarious in the face of the unceasing settler-colonial displacement of its population. We cannot simply celebrate the greater level of attention that Palestine is receiving while Palestinians are increasingly being repressed and Palestine is dwindling any more than we can allow the *Journal* to become a repository for the arcane and the fashionable. This is a strong case for the importance of a publication such as *JPS*, with its focus on the at-times harsh realities of Palestinian politics, society, history, and culture. The generation of editors that takes over the *Journal's* custodianship in the years ahead will have to ensure that it continues its mission of liberatory knowledge production for and about Palestine and the Palestinians. In other words, what constitutes the core of the *Journal's* work is indissolubly linked to the Palestinian people and to conversations in Palestine and in the diaspora among Palestinian thinkers, youth, scholars, feminists, and others.

About the Author

Rashid I. Khalidi is Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies at Columbia University. He is the author of eight books, most recently *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020), and coeditor of three others, including, with Salim Tamari, *The Other Jerusalem: Rethinking the History of the Sacred City* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2020).

Endnotes

1. These figures, derived from statistics compiled by the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem, cover the period 2000–2008.
2. Sherene Seikaly, *Men of Capital: Scarcity and Economy in Mandate Palestine* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016).
3. These are accessible on the IPS website, Digital Projects section, <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/digital-projects>.
4. In 2002, JSTOR was only a few years old. It now provides over eight thousand universities and other institutions with online access to articles published in nearly two thousand journals. *JPS* content is available on JSTOR after a lapse of five years from the date of publication.
5. The Institute had been founded only eight years earlier, in 1963.
6. Hisham Sharabi remained the *JPS* editor until 2002 although, over time, Associate Editor Philip Mattar and Managing (later Associate) Editor Linda Butler played increasingly large roles in the *Journal's* direction.
7. See Rashid Khalidi, "Historical Landmarks in the Hundred Years' War on Palestine," *JPS* 47, no. 1 (Autumn 2017): pp. 6–17, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2017.47.1.6>; and *The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917–2017* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2020).
8. Edward Said, "Permission to Narrate," *JPS* 13, no. 3 (Spring 1984): pp. 27–48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2536688>.
9. As regards English-language works, in addition to many published by the IPS, several books published by Columbia University Press or copublished by Columbia University Press and the IPS (most of them with IPS research support) played a key role in centering Palestine as a legitimate topic of scholarly interest. These included Rashid Khalidi, *Under Siege: PLO Decision-Making during the 1982 War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Philip Mattar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem: Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York:

- Columbia University Press, 1988); Muhammad Y. Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press and IPS, 1988); Laurie A. Brand, *Palestinians in the Arab World: Institution Building and the Search for State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Justin McCarthy, *The Population of Palestine: Population Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate* (New York: Columbia University Press and IPS, 1990); Camille Mansour, *Beyond Alliance: Israel and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press and IPS, 1994); Michael Dumper, *The Politics of Jerusalem since 1967* (New York: Columbia University Press and IPS, 1997); Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Michael R. Fischbach, *Records of Dispossession: Palestinian Refugee Property and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press and IPS, 2003); and Ahmad Sadi and Lila Abu Lughod, eds., *Nakba: Palestine, 1948, and the Claims of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
10. Since its launch in 1971, *JPS* has always been fortunate in enjoying the services of a cohort of talented editors and staffers. Among those responsible for maintaining the high editorial standards of the *Journal* over many years were Michael Simpson, Anita Vitullo, Vera Naufal, Laurie Brand, Margaret Chiari, Philip Mattar, Linda Butler, Michelle K. Esposito, Geoff Schad, Laurie King, and Nehad Khader.
 11. Marc Lamont Hill and Mitchell Plitnick, *Except for Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Politics* (New York: The New Press, 2021).
 12. Michael Ratner, *Moving the Bar: My Life as a Radical Lawyer* (New York: OR Books, 2021).
 13. In addition to several articles in *JPS* on this topic, a monograph in the IPS series Current Issues in Depth examines the false conflation of anti-Semitism with anti-Zionism. See Moshe Machover, Barry Trachtenberg, and Kyle Stanton, *Zionism, Israel, and Anti-Semitism: Dangerous Conflation* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2019), <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1650164>. In the United States, there has been pushback against the IHRA definition by Arab and Palestinian scholars, a group of mainly Jewish scholars, and also by activist groups like Jewish Voice for Peace. See Letters, “Palestinian Rights and the IHRA Definition of Antisemitism,” *The Guardian*, 29 November 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/nov/29/palestinian-rights-and-the-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism>; JDA, “The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism,” 2020, <https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>; and Jewish Voice for Peace, “Principles for Dismantling Antisemitism: A Progressive Jewish Response to the Jerusalem Declaration,” 5 April 2021, https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/jerusalem-declaration/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=jerusalem-declaration.
 14. Another Current Issues in Depth monograph is devoted to BDS. See Omar Barghouti, *Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions: Globalized Palestinian Resistance to Israel’s Colonialism and Apartheid* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2020), <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1650875>.
 15. The last four issues of the *Journal* have featured reviews of books on topics related to Palestine published by Stanford University Press (four books), Cambridge University Press (three), Oxford University Press (two), and by the University of Pennsylvania Press, the University of Texas Press, the University of California Press, Yale University Press, Princeton University Press, and four other university presses, as well as a half dozen trade publishers.
 16. Edward Said, “Introduction,” in *Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question*, ed. Edward Said and Christopher Hitchens (New York: Verso, 1988), p. 1.
 17. A 2019 Pew Research Center poll, for example, shows a major partisan divide between Republicans and Democrats, with the latter much more likely to be favorable to the Palestinians than the former. See Carol Doherty, “A New Perspective on Americans’ Views of Israelis and Palestinians,” Pew Research Center, Fact Tank—News in the Numbers, 24 April 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/24/a-new-perspective-on-americans-views-of-israelis-and-palestinians/>. According to a 2020 Gallup poll, Americans favored an independent Palestinian state by a 55–34 margin, with support among Democrats at 70 percent. See Lydia Saad, “Majority in U.S. again Support Palestinian Statehood,” Gallup News, 22 April 2020, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/293114/majority-again-support-palestinian-statehood.aspx>. A 2019 University of Maryland poll showed that while 85 percent of Republicans considered the

- BDS movement to be “anti-Israel,” 77 percent of Democrats considered it “legitimate.” See University of Maryland Critical Issues Poll, “American Attitudes toward the Middle East,” October 2019, <https://criticalissues.umd.edu/sites/criticalissues.umd.edu/files/UMCIP%20Middle%20East%20Questionnaire.pdf>.
18. The bill, HR 2407, was introduced during the 116th (2019–20) Congress with twenty-four cosponsors. On 15 April 2021, McCollum introduced HR 2590, the “Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living under Israeli Military Occupation Act,” with thirteen cosponsors, including newly elected House members Newman and Bowman. The act is more wide-ranging than her previous bill, prohibiting Israel from using U.S. taxpayer funding not only to detain or abuse children, but also to seize or destroy Palestinian property, or to annex Palestinian territory.
 19. The latter group, for example, is sponsored by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation; Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life reportedly has a budget of \$8 million, according to *The Forward*. See Josh Nathan-Kazis, “A New Wave of Hardline Anti-BDS Tactics Are Targeting Students, and No One Knows Who’s Behind It,” *Forward*, 2 August 2018, <https://forward.com/news/407127/a-new-wave-of-hardline-anti-bds-tactics-are-targeting-students-and-no-one/>.
 20. Palestine Legal, *2020 Year-in-Review: The Movement Will Not Be Cancelled*, accessed 11 June 2021, <https://palestinelegal.org/2020-report>. Palestine Legal was founded in 2012 to confront the suppression of Palestine advocacy in collaboration with the Center for Constitutional Rights. For more details, see Ratner, *Moving the Bar*, pp. 331–40.
 21. Peter Baker and Maggie Haberman, “Trump Targets Anti-Semitism and Israeli Boycotts on College Campuses,” 10 December 2019 (updated 22 January 2021), *New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/10/us/politics/trump-antisemitism-executive-order.html>. The executive order provoked sharp criticism from many Jewish groups who argued that in considering Jews a race or nationality rather a religion, the order itself was anti-Semitic. See Rosie Perper, “Many American Jews Are Worried Trump’s Executive Order on Anti-Semitism Would Do More Harm than Good,” *Business Insider*, 11 December 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/american-jews-response-trump-executive-order-judaism-as-nationality-2019-12>.
 22. Lara Deeb and Jessica Winegar provide a searching analysis of how these constraints operate in the discipline of anthropology. See *Anthropology’s Politics: Disciplining the Middle East* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015). See also, Beshara Doumani, ed., *Academic Freedom after September 11* (New York: Zone, 2006), especially Joel Beinin’s essay in the volume, “The New McCarthyism: Policing Thought about the Middle East,” pp. 237–66.
 23. University students (and their parents) have expressed anger at the maintenance of high fees at a time of economic distress when most teaching is taking place online. As these words were being written, Columbia University was experiencing a tuition strike involving large numbers of students. See Caitlin O’Kane, “Columbia University Students Are Holding a Tuition Strike, Refusing to Pay for Remote Learning during the Pandemic,” *CBS News*, 29 January 2021, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/columbia-tuition-strike-students/>.