



Golden Silence? – Inaction, Non-engagement, and Avoidance in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

Part of IRC Project “Religious Conflicts and Coping Strategies”
Project 12 - The Use and Abuse of the Israel-Palestine Conflict • **Basel Alte Kaserne**
(KBasel), May 19/20, 2022

Register by May 12: <https://forms.gle/BEKUdizEp8ryscdC8>

Introduction

The sessions will discuss the role of inaction in the Israel/Palestine conflict. It invites studies of different practices and policies reacting to or engaging with the conflict through non-engagement, inaction, avoidance, or silence. The Israel/Palestine conflict is commonly defined by action and agents – both violent and consolidatory. Acts of violence are condemned and responsible actors retaliated against. This workshop, however, looks to investigate other forms of agency and interaction. It starts from the assumption that inaction is not to be equated with passivity and silence, or with surrender. Rather, these forms of non-engagement make up a particular form of response to the conflict and open up for different forms of solutions to it. They present different forms of violence and injuries, as well as different forms of resistance and power.

Thursday, 19 May 2022

10:00–10:30 **Opening remarks**

10:30-12:30 **History**

Arie Dubnov, George Washington University: Between Testimony & Agnotology: The Teddy Katz Affair and the limits of reckoning with the Past in Palestine/Israel
Daniel Levine, University of Alabama: “It’s Been a Minute:” Toward a Hebrew Language Political Catechism
Discussant: Efrat Gilad, University of Bern

12:30–14:00 **Lunch Break**

14:00–16:00 **Theory**

Maria Birnbaum, University of Bern: Religion, Race, and Borders: Agnotology and the Palestine Peel Commission
Elad Lapidot, University of Lille: Politics of Not Speaking
Discussant: Dana Landau, Swisspeace

16:30 Short Inner City Tour 'Basel in Peace and Conflict' (Georg Kreis, University of Basel)

19:00 **Dinner**

Friday, 20 May 2022

10:00–11:30 Politics and Activism

Oded Leshem, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Oliver Fink, University of Basel/Bern

Discussant: Laurent Goetschel

12:00–13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:00 Education

Orly Idan, Reichman University

Sami Adwan, University of Bethlehem

Discussant: Maurus Reinkowski

15:00-15:30 Coffe Break

15:30–16:30 Final Symposium & Discussion

Moderator: René Bloch

Saturday, 21 May 2022

Bordering differently: Tri-state Basel: Switzerland, France, and Germany

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Biographical Notes on Contributors

Sami Adwan is Co-Director of PRIME (Peace Research Institute in the Middle East) and a professor at Bethlehem University. His work focuses on educational models that enable both Palestinian and Israeli educators to create school history curricula that include both historical narratives in a single textbook. He has published widely on the role of education in peacebuilding.

Maria Birnbaum is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Bern and currently a visiting fellow at Cambridge University. She received her Ph.D in International Relations from the European University Institute (EUI). Her work focuses on the relationship between diversity and order with a particular focus on religion and global politics. Her most recent publication *Entangled Empire: Religion and the transnational history of Pakistan and Israel* traces the interconnected histories of British India and the Palestine Mandate and shows how the terminology of religion came to form a distinctive part of a transnational vocabulary defining minorities, borders, and conflicts. In her new project, *Histories and Hierarchies of Ignorance*, Maria Birnbaum studies cases where political and legal unintelligibility are conceived as forms of power rather than forms of suppression.

Arie Dubnov is the Max Ticktin Chair of Israel Studies at the George Washington University and is a historian of twentieth century Jewish and Israeli history, with emphasis on the history of political thought, the study of nationalism, decolonization, and partition politics. His publications include the intellectual biography *Isaiah Berlin: The Journey of a Jewish Liberal* (2012), and two edited volumes, *Zionism – A View from the Outside* (2010 [in Hebrew]), and *Partitions: A Transnational History of Twentieth-century Territorial Separatism* (2019, co-edited with Laura Robson). His current book research project, tentatively entitled *Dreamers of the Third Empire/Temple*, examines ties between Zionist and British imperial thinkers in interwar years and to uncover alternative, neglected federalist political schemes for the future of the region that were circulating at the time.

Oliver Fink is a PhD candidate at the University of Basel and formerly engaged with the University of Bern (IRC 'Religious Conflicts and Coping Strategies'), affiliated with swisspeace and the Kelman Institute for Conflict Transformation. His research focuses on the psychological dimension of intergroup conflict, and specifically, how emotions contribute to violent collective action.

Elad Lapidot is Professor for Hebraic Studies at the University of Lille, France. Holding a PhD in philosophy from the Paris Sorbonne university, he has taught philosophy, Jewish thought, and Talmud at many universities, such as the University of Bern, Switzerland, and the Humboldt Universität and Freie Universität in Berlin. His work is guided by questions concerning the relation between knowledge and politics. Among his publications: *Jews Out of the Question. A Critique of Anti-Anti-Semitism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2020), Hebrew translation with introduction and commentary (with R. Bar) of Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Vol. 1 (Tel Aviv: Resling Publishing, 2020), *Heidegger and Jewish Thought. Difficult Others*, edited with M. Brumlik (London/New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), and *Etre sans mot dire : La logique de 'Sein und Zeit'* (Bucarest: Zeta Books, 2010).

