



MAYOR

DELVE DEEPER READING LIST



This list of resources, compiled by Matt Pettit and the staff of the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Mayor*.

Musa Hadid is the Christian mayor of Ramallah, the de facto capital of the Palestinian Authority. As he tries to keep his city running while paving sidewalks, planning holidays and building a new fountain, his job is made increasingly difficult by the Israeli occupation of his home. Mayor asks with humor and quiet outrage: how do you run a city if you don't have a country?

Contributors

Matt Pettit

ADULT NON-FICTION

Chomsky, Noam & Pappé, Ilan. *Gaza in Crisis: Reflections on the US-Israeli War Against the Palestinians*. Chicago IL: Haymarket Books, 2003.

Israel's Operation Cast Lead thrust the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip into the center of the debate about the Israel/Palestine conflict. In this updated and expanded edition, Noam Chomsky and Ilan Pappé survey the fallout from Israel's conduct in Gaza, including their latest incursions, and place it in historical context.

Barghouti, Murid. *I Saw Ramallah*. New York: Anchor Books, 2003.

Barred from his homeland after 1967's Six-Day War, poet Mourid Barghouti spent thirty years in exile—shuttling among the world's cities, yet secure in none of them; separated from his family for years at a time; never certain whether he was a visitor, a refugee, a citizen, or a guest. As he returns home for the first time since the Israeli occupation [he] is unable to recognize the city of his youth. Sifting through memories... he discovers what it means to be deprived not only of a homeland but of “the habitual place and status of a person.” Winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature.

Bregman, Ahron. *Cursed Victory: Israel and the Occupied Territories: A History*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2015.

In a move that would forever alter the map of the Middle East, Israel captured the West Bank, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula in 1967's brief but pivotal Six Day War. *Cursed Victory* is the first complete history of the war's troubled aftermath—a military occupation of the Palestinian territories that is now well into its fifth decade. Drawing on unprecedented access to high-level sources, top-secret memos and never-before-published letters, the book provides a gripping chronicle of how what Israel promised would be an 'enlightened occupation' quickly turned sour, and the anguished diplomatic attempts to bring it to an end.

Davis, Angela. *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2015.

In these newly collected essays, interviews, and speeches, world-renowned activist and scholar Angela Y. Davis illuminates the connections between struggles against state violence and oppression throughout history and around the world. Reflecting on the importance of black feminism, intersectionality, and prison abolitionism for today's struggles, Davis discusses the legacies of previous liberation struggles, from the Black Freedom Movement to the South African anti-Apartheid movement. She highlights connections and analyzes today's struggles against state terror, from Ferguson to Palestine.

Feldman, Keith P. *A Shadow over Palestine: The Imperial Life of Race in America*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

This book brings a transnational perspective to the cultural forces that have shaped sharply differing ideas of Israel's standing with the United States—right up to the violent divisions of today. Focusing on the period from 1960 to 1985, author Keith P. Feldman reveals the centrality of Israel and Palestine in postwar U.S. imperial culture.

Halper, Jeff. *Decolonizing Israel, Liberating Palestine: Zionism, Settler Colonialism, and the Case for One Democratic State*. Pluto Press, 2021.

This book explores how the concept of settler colonialism provides a clearer understanding of the Zionist movement's project to establish a Jewish state in Palestine, displacing the Palestinian Arab population and marginalizing its cultural presence. Jeff Halper argues that the only way out of a colonial situation is decolonization: the dismantling of Zionist structures of domination and control and their replacement by a single democratic state, in which Palestinians and Israeli Jews forge a new civil society and a shared political community.

Hill, Marc Lamont & Plitnick, Mitchell. *Except for Palestine: The Limits of Progressive Politics*. New York, NY: 2021.

In this major work of daring criticism and analysis, scholar and political commentator Marc Lamont Hill and Israel-Palestine expert Mitchell Plitnick spotlight how holding fast to one-sided and unwaveringly pro-Israel policies reflects the truth-bending grip of authoritarianism on both Israel and the United States. *Except for Palestine* deftly argues that progressives and liberals who oppose regressive policies on immigration, racial justice, gender equality, LGBTQ rights, and other issues must extend these core principles to the oppression of Palestinians. In doing so, the authors take seriously the political concerns and well-being of both Israelis and Palestinians, demonstrating the extent to which U.S. policy has made peace harder to attain. They also unravel the conflation of advocacy for Palestinian rights with anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel.

Khatib, Sulaiman and Eilberg-Schwartz, Penina. *In This Place Together: A Palestinian's Journey to Collective Liberation*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2021.

In language that is poetic and unflinchingly honest, Eilberg-Schwartz and Khatib chronicle what led him to dedicate his life to joint nonviolence. In his journey, he encountered the deep injustice of torture, witnessed the power of hunger strikes, and studied Jewish history. Ultimately, he came to realize mutual recognition, alongside a transformation of the systems that governed their lives, was necessary for both Palestinians and Israelis to move forward.

Klein Halevi, Yossi. *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor*. New York: HarperCollins, 2018.

Attempting to break the agonizing impasse between Israelis and Palestinians, the Israeli commentator and award-winning author of *Like Dreamers* directly addresses his Palestinian neighbors in this taut and provocative book, empathizing with Palestinian suffering and longing for reconciliation as he explores how the conflict looks through Israeli eyes. And now, in a brand-new Epilogue, Palestinian readers have been given a chance to respond through their own powerful letters. *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor* is one Israeli's powerful attempt to reach beyond the wall that separates Israelis and Palestinians and into the hearts of "the enemy."

Oren Michael B. *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2003.

Historian Michael B. Oren reconstructs both the lightning-fast action on the battlefields and the political shocks that electrified the world. Extraordinary personalities—Moshe Dayan and Gamal Abdul Nasser, Lyndon Johnson and Alexei Kosygin—rose and toppled from power as a result of this war; borders were redrawn; daring strategies brilliantly succeeded or disastrously failed in a matter of hours. And the balance of power changed—in the Middle East and in the world. A towering work of history and an enthralling human narrative, *Six Days of War* is the most important book on the Middle East conflict to appear in a generation.

Regan, Bernard. *The Balfour Declaration: Empire, the Mandate and Resistance in Palestine*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso Books, 2018.

The true history of the imperial deal that transformed the Middle East and sealed the fate of Palestine. On 2 November 1917, the British government, represented by Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour, declared it was in favour of "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." This short note would become one of the most controversial documents of modern history. Offering new insights into the imperial rivalries between Britain, Germany and the Ottomans, Regan exposes British policy in the region as part of a larger geopolitical game. He charts the debates within the British government, the Zionist movement, and the Palestinian groups struggling for self-determination. The after-effects of these events are still felt today.

Robinson, Daniel, et al. *Israel & the Palestinian Territories*. Dublin: Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd, 2018.

Israel & the Palestinian Territories is a Lonely Planet guidebook to the area, useful for the non-traveler as it immerses readers in the history, people, music, landscapes, wildlife, cuisine and politics of the region from a non-political tourist perspective. The volume is replete with color maps and vivid photography for readers to get a sense of the region beyond media depictions of unceasing conflict and strife.

Shehadeh Rajeh. *Going Home: A Walk Through Fifty Years of Occupation*. London: Profile Books, 2020.

Orwell Prize-winning author of *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape*, Raja Shehadeh travels to Ramallah and records the changing face of the city. Walking along the streets he grew up in, he tells the stories of the people, the relationships, the houses, and the businesses that were and now are cornerstones of the city and his community. Green spaces - gardens and hills crowned with olive trees - have been replaced by tower blocks and concrete lots; the occupation and the settlements have further entrenched themselves in every aspect of movement - from the roads that can and cannot be used to the bureaucratic barriers that prevent people leaving the West Bank. The culture of the city has also shifted with Islam taking a more prominent role in people's everyday and political lives and the geography of the city.

ADULT FICTION & POETRY

Abu al-Hayat, Maya, editor. *The Book of Ramallah: A City in Short Fiction*. Manchester: Comma Press, 2021.

Ramallah is a relatively new town, a de facto capital of the West Bank allowed to thrive after the Oslo Peace Accords, but just as quickly hemmed in and suffocated by the Occupation as the Accords have failed. Perched along the top of a mountainous ridge, it plays host to many contradictions: traditional Palestinian architecture jostling against aspirational developments and cultural initiatives, a thriving nightlife in one district, with much more conservative, religious attitudes in the next. Most striking... is the quiet dignity, resilience and humor of its people; citizens who take their lives into their hands every time they travel from one place to the next, who continue to live through countless sieges, and yet still find the time and resourcefulness to create.

Alyan, Hala. *Salt Houses*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

On the eve of her daughter Alia's wedding, Salma reads the girl's future in a cup of coffee dregs. She sees an unsettled life for Alia and her children; she also sees travel and luck. While she chooses to keep her predictions to herself that day, they will all soon come to pass when the family is uprooted in the wake of the Six-Day War of 1967. Lyrical and heartbreaking, *Salt Houses* follows three generations of a Palestinian family and asks us to confront that most devastating of all truths: you can't go home again. Winner of the Dayton Literary Peace Prize and the Arab American Book Award.

Alsous, Zaina. *Lemon Effigies*. Poetry. Tallahassee, FL: Anhinga Press, 2018.

Zaina Alsous is an abolitionist, a daughter of the Palestinian diaspora, and a movement worker in South Florida. Her poetry, reviews, and essays have been published in the *Boston Review*, the *New Inquiry*, the *Kenyon Review* and elsewhere. She edits for *Scalawag Magazine*, a publication dedicated to unsettling dominant narratives of the U.S. South. Her chapbook *Lemon Effigies* won the Rick Campbell Chapbook Prize and was published by Anhinga Press. Her first full-length collection *A Theory of Birds* won the Etel Adnan Poetry Prize, and will be published by the University of Arkansas Press in fall of 2019.

Ashour, Radwa. *The Woman from Tantoura: A Novel of Palestine*. New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2014.

Palestine. For most of us, the word brings to mind a series of confused images and disjointed associations—massacres, refugee camps, UN resolutions, settlements, terrorist attacks, war, occupation, checkered kuffiyehs and suicide bombers, a seemingly endless cycle of death and destruction. This novel does not shy away from such painful images, but it is first and foremost a powerful human story, following the life of a young girl from her days in the village of al-Tantoura in Palestine up to the dawn of the new century. We participate in events as they unfold, seeing them through the uneducated but sharply intelligent mind of Ruqayya, as she tries to make sense of all that has happened to her and her family.

Darwish, Mahmoud. *In the Presence of Absence*. Poetry. Hanover, NH: Streetforth Press, 2011.

One of the most transcendent poets of his generation, Darwish composed this remarkable elegy at the apex of his creativity, but with the full knowledge that his death was imminent. Thinking it might be his final work, he summoned all his poetic genius to create a luminous work that defies categorization. In stunning language, Darwish's self-elegy inhabits a rare space where opposites bleed and blend into each other. Prose and poetry, life and death, home and exile are all sung by the poet and his other. On the threshold of im/mortality, the poet looks back at his own existence, intertwined with that of his people. Through these lyrical meditations on love, longing, Palestine, history, friendship, family, and the ongoing conversation between life and death, the poet bids himself and his readers a poignant farewell.

Darwish, Mahmoud. *Unfortunately, It Was Paradise: Selected Poems*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003.

Mahmoud Darwish is a literary rarity: at once critically acclaimed as one of the most important poets in the Arabic language, and beloved as the voice of his people. He is a living legend whose lyrics are sung by fieldworkers and schoolchildren. He has assimilated some of the world's oldest literary traditions at the same time that he has struggled to open new possibilities for poetry. This collection spans Darwish's entire career, nearly four decades, revealing an impressive range of expression and form. A splendid team of translators has collaborated with the poet on these new translations, which capture Darwish's distinctive voice and spirit.

Kanazi, Remi. *Before the Next Bomb Drop: Rising Up from Brooklyn to Palestine*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2015.

Remi Kanazi's poetry presents an unflinching look at the lives of Palestinians under occupation and as refugees scattered across the globe. He captures the Palestinian people's stubborn refusal to be erased, gives voice to the ongoing struggle for liberation, and explores the meaning of international solidarity.

In this latest collection, Kanazi expands his focus outside the sphere of Palestine and presents pieces examining racism in America, police brutality, US militarism at home and wars abroad, conflict voyeurism, Islamophobia, and a range of other issues.

Sacks, Rebecca. *City of a Thousand Gates: A Novel*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2021.

Brave and bold, this gorgeously written novel introduces a large cast of characters from various backgrounds in a setting where violence is routine and where survival is defined by boundaries, walls, and checkpoints that force people to live and love within and across them: Hamid, a college student, in Israeli territory illegally for work; Vera, a German journalist headed to Jerusalem; Salem, a Palestinian boy beaten into a coma revenge-seeking Israeli teenagers; Ido, a new father traveling with his American wife and their baby; and Ori, a nineteen-year-old soldier from a Jewish settlement guarding a checkpoint between Bethlehem and Jerusalem through which Samar—Hamid's professor—must pass.

NON-FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Marx, Trish and Karp, Cindy. *Sharing Our Homeland: Palestinian and Jewish Children at Summer Peace Camp*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2010.

Photo-essay focusing on two Israeli children, one Jewish and one Palestinian, who, in spite of their differences and the longstanding conflicts in the region, learn to play, work, and share ideas together at Summer Peace Camp, a day camp located in Israel. Includes glossary, map, and resources for readers.

Murray, Julie. *Mayor*. Edina, Minnesota, ABDO Publishing Company, 2017.

Learn about where a mayor works and what he or she does. Part of the My Government series.

Nakamura, May. *The Cat Who Ruled the Town*. New York: Simon Spotlight, 2019.

In this story, learn all about a sweet kitty who was voted the mayor of a town in Alaska! Stubbs was the mayor of a small town in Alaska. He was friendly and well respected by the townspeople. But there was one thing that set Stubbs apart from any other mayor: he was a cat!

Robinson Anthony and Young, Annemarie. *Young Palestinians Speak: Living Under Occupation*. Interlink Pub Group, 2017.

A number of Palestinian kids and teens discuss their hopes and dreams and what it is like living in an occupied country. An introductory chapter explains the Occupied Territories, provides an overview of the history of the Palestinian land, and explores the impact of occupation on subjects such as human rights, citizenship, education, housing, land ownership, and the economy.

Sha'ban, Mervet Akram. *If You Could Be My Friend: Letters of Mervet Akram Sha'ban and Galit Fink*. New York: Orchard Books, 1998.

Contains the correspondence between two girls, one an Israeli and the other a Palestinian, from August 1988 until their meeting in October 1991. Includes a brief history of their two peoples.

FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

Bashi, Golbarg. *P is for Palestine: A Palestine Alphabet Book*. New York: Dr. Bashi. 2018.

The world's first-ever English-language ABC story book about Palestine, told in simple rhythmic rhyme with illustrations to act as an educational, colorful, empowering reference for children, showcasing the geography, the beauty and strength of Palestinian culture.

Laird, Elizabeth and Nimr, Sonia. *A Little Piece of Ground*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books, 2006.

A novel about war and peace by one of Great Britain's best-known young adult authors explores the human cost of the occupation of Palestinian lands on the West Bank through the eyes of a young boy who longs to play football with his friends while living under a strict Israeli curfew instituted after a suicide bombing.

Muhammad, Ibtihaj and Ali, S. K. *The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family*. New York: Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2019.

With her new backpack and light-up shoes, Faizah knows the first day of school is going to be special. It's the start of a brand-new year and, best of all, it's her older sister Asiya's first day of hijab—a hijab of beautiful blue fabric, like the ocean waving to the sky. But not everyone sees hijab as beautiful, and in the face of hurtful, confusing words, Faizah will find new ways to be strong. Olympic medalist Ibtihaj Muhammad and Morris Award finalist S.K. Ali bring readers an uplifting, universal story of new experiences, the unbreakable bond between siblings, and of being proud of who you are.

Shami, Wafa. *Easter in Ramallah: A Story of Childhood Memories*. New Providence, NJ, Bowker, 2019.

Easter in Ramallah is a story about friendship and holiday traditions that have been shared among Palestinian Christian and Muslim families for centuries. A story that reflects the tradition of celebrating Easter holiday that was carried on for years and takes the reader to a fun festive place that is filled with a colorful atmosphere, drums playing, love and laughter from the eye of a child.

Shami, Wafa. *Olive Harvest in Palestine: A Story of Childhood Memories*. New Providence, NJ, Bowker, 2019.

A story about the harvest traditions that have been shared among Palestinian farmers for centuries. The story takes the reader's imagination on a journey, starting from how the olives are picked, through how they are pressed into oil, bottled, and finally arrive in the consumer's hands. Along the way the reader shares in this festive working atmosphere filled with singing, eating, love, and laughter portrayed from the eyes of a child.

Warga, Jasmine. *Other Words for Home*. New York: Balzer+Bray, 2019.

A gorgeously written, hopeful middle-grade Newbery Honor novel in verse about a young girl who must leave Syria to move to the United States. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the U.S.—and her new label of “Middle Eastern.” But this life also brings unexpected surprises—there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is. This lyrical, life-affirming story is about losing and finding home and, most importantly, finding yourself.