

IRGF Final Report

Ayyash - #103621

“From 'Indigeneity' to 'Arrivants': Palestinian-Canadian Solidarities Towards Indigenous Political Activism in Canada.”

1.1 Project Summary

I conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty Palestinian and eight Indigenous activist leaders in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Ottawa. My research studied the following questions: Under what conditions do Palestinian and Indigenous activists come to see their desire for liberation from settler colonialism as potentially a shared decolonial project with each other? What knowledges and practices emerge from that solidarity to promote shared decolonial freedom and justice? And what can we learn about how settler colonial power restraints and constrains the interactions and solidarities between Palestinians and Indigenous peoples?

1.2 Student involvement

None

1.3 Dissemination and Knowledge Mobilization

I am still in the early stages of dissemination. So far, I have accomplished the following: (1) I have a rich set of data to analyze and publish in the coming years. I am currently writing my first academic article based on this data. The abstract for that paper has been accepted at the Annual Palestine Forum conference in Doha (January 2026). I am expected to submit the full article to the conference by the end of September 2025, and I am on track to do so. (2) I also developed my theoretical framework for analyzing the data during my sabbatical in 2024. I was a visiting scholar at the University of Western Cape in Cape Town, South Africa for 2.5 months (early February to mid-April of 2024). During my visit, I gave multiple lectures, and held several meetings and discussions with faculty, students, and community activists. I shared my work on decolonial sovereignties and decolonization, as well as activist solidarities across different struggles during my visit. My time in Cape Town has been incredibly helpful and important in developing my theoretical framework for understanding decolonial solidarities. In my articles, I will be combining my theoretical framework with the data, making sense of my data through theory while also being attentive to how the data may challenge and change the theory. Here are a list of writings directly on or related to the topic: (1) Ayyash, Muhannad (2025). *Lordship and Liberation in Palestine-Israel: The Promise of Decolonial Sovereignties*. New York: Columbia University Press. (384 pages). (2) Ayyash, Muhannad (2025). “The Struggle for the Decolonial Liberation of Palestine.” In *The Sage Handbook of Decolonial Theory* (Eds.

Jairo I. Fúnez-Flores, Ana Carolina Díaz Beltrán, Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, Sandeep Bakshi, Augustin Lao-Montes & Flavia Rios), pp: 80-93. London: Sage. (3) Ayyash, Muhannad (2025). "The Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions Campaign: Challenging the Unintelligibility of Palestinian Decolonial Resistance in Canada." *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 54 (1): 9-27. (4) Ayyash, Muhannad (2025). "Defining decolonial liberation in Palestine." Reading Decoloniality: Scholarship for Liberation, United Kingdom, February 8: <https://readingdecoloniality.warwick.ac.uk/defining-decolonial-liberation-in-palestine/> Here are a list of academic and community presentations I made that are directly on or related to the topic: 2025 "Palestine as Pathway to Decolonial Futures: A Book Launch." Hosted by The Studio for Media Activism and Critical Thought and Faculty for Palestine, Toronto Metropolitan University. Moderated by Dr. Christopher Powell and Dr. Layal Shuman. June 10. 2025 "Panel discussion on the book: Canada as a Settler Colony on the Question of Palestine." Centre for Indigenous & Critical Canadian Studies, Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, March 21. 2025 "Book Launch: Canada as a Settler Colony on the Question of Palestine." Community, Culture and Global Studies, University of British Columbia Okanagan, Kelowna, February 28. 2025 "An Alternative Vision for Palestine-Israel and the Long Struggle for Decolonial Liberation." Hearing Palestine Lecture Series, University of Toronto, February 14. 2024 "Decoloniality in the Midst of Genocide." Reading Decoloniality: Scholarship for Liberation Series, University of Warwick, United Kingdom, December 4, 2024 (online event). 2024 "Palestine as a Global Struggle against Colonial Modernity." Politics Cornwall Department, University of Exeter, UK, October 23, 2024 (virtual event). 2024 "Palestine, Canada, and Settler Colonialism: A Conversation with Dr. Muhannad Ayyash." University of Saskatchewan, September 27, 2024. 2024 "Against the Colonial Partition of 'Self' and 'Other': Mahmoud Darwish, Elias Khoury, and the Path Towards a Decolonial Alternative." Humanities in Session Series, Centre for Humanities Research in partnership with the Consortium for Humanities Centers and Institutes' Humanities Administration Network, University of Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa. Hybrid event, April 4. 2024 "Solidarity in Times of Crisis and Uncrisis." Refugee Solidarities: Critical Refugee and Migration Studies Canada, Workshop, Carleton University. Speakers: Muhannad Ayyash, Chandni Desai, Maysoun Darweesh. May 23. 2024 "Empire and Israeli Settler Colonialism." Forging Solidarities under Racial Capitalism: Transcending the 'Race'-Migration Divide, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden, November 13-15. 2025 "Lordship and Liberation in Palestine-Israel: An Evening with Muhannad Ayyash." Sponsored by Coalition for Palestine, Independent Jewish Voices, Seed and Spark Book Coop. Local Council of Women, Halifax, August 20. 2025 "An Afternoon with Dr. Muhannad Ayyash." I gave a 2-hour public lecture on Palestine. Central Library, Calgary, May 4. 2025 "The Gaza genocide as an expression of white supremacy and contemporary settler-colonialism and what it means for the more civilised world." An international public online panel organized by the Palestinian Arts and Culture Solidarity Collective, South Africa, April 30. Speakers: Muhannad Ayyash, Diana Buttu, and Gavin Evans. 2025 "Understanding Canada's Complicity in the Genocide of Palestinians." This event was organized by Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), Okanagan and Kelowna Unitarians, Amnesty International Okanagan, and Central Okanagan United Church. Kelowna Unitarian church, March 1. 2024 "Palestine 101." Students for Justice in Palestine, Carleton University, October 28. I gave a 45 minute lecture to students, followed by an hour of Q&A. 2024 "Iqaluit community discussion: Indigenous solidarity with Palestine." Organized by Iqaluit community members at a local community centre in Iqaluit, hybrid event, October 3. I spoke alongside Indigenous activists Beth Kotierk and Aka Hansen. 2024 "York University's History of Palestinian Solidarity Repression." Organized by York University student groups, YUGSA Conference Room, York University, Toronto, June 28. I spoke alongside York University students in a 2

hour York community event. 2024 "Nothing to Celebrate: Canada's role as a settler colonial state from Turtle Island to Palestine." Organized by the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) for Palestine, June 26. Speakers: Muhannad Ayyash, Katsi'tsakwas Ellen Gabriel.

1.4 Project Outcomes and Impacts

I am very much on track to achieve what I set out to achieve, but some of my goals will take time. The project I concluded should produce two peer reviewed journal articles. I am already writing the first and have a general idea for the second (which I plan to start writing late in 2026). I view this project as part of a larger research program that will properly situate the Palestinian struggle alongside all decolonial struggles in Canada and indeed globally. I am hopeful that my articles will lead to more data collection in the future, and eventually I plan to write a new authoritative book on the topic of Palestinian-Indigenous decolonial activism and solidarities in Canada, which would be the first of its kind. I am well placed to write this book as a scholar who has an international reputation of being deeply involved in both Palestinian and Indigenous struggles for freedom in settler colonial settings. This book will secure my position as a leading expert at the intersection of the fields of decolonial studies and migration studies in terms of how decolonial solidarities emerge in the settler colonial context. Second, this project has already garnered significant interest from international scholars and activists as is evident in my presentations listed above. I hope to also organize a series of scholarly seminars in the future that will present the findings of the Canadian case and engage in comparative discussions with scholars from other settler colonies. My outreach activities will both be an outcome and a generator of comparative work on migration in settler colonial contexts, contributing to both decolonial and migration studies. In bringing together an international group of participants, this outreach work builds towards future research collaborations. Finally, as a community engaged research project, I have already shared panels with Palestinian and Indigenous activists on the topic, and plan to do more community engagement in the future. These talks are important because they engage members of the public in accessible language to share the findings and insights of the research. Furthermore, I have already written for the public on Palestinian-Indigenous solidarities and decolonial activism, and plan to continue to do so based on the data I will publish in the academic journals. In addition, I will go back to the social movement organizations involved in this particular study and share with them my anonymized findings, and general themes. I am hopeful that this knowledge will help these organizations better understand and practice solidarity with Indigenous political activism in Canada.