

## MYTH 7

Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 7

- Israel is a **democracy for Jews only**, while **Palestinians** live under **occupation, land confiscation, apartheid laws, military rule, and systematic discrimination**.
- Palestinians have **no voting rights and no freedom of movement or speech**.
- They face **home demolitions, detentions without charge, and surveillance**.
- **Israel** is not a true democracy; it has **over 65 discriminatory laws** denying Palestinian rights.



Israel has 850 military checkpoints for Palestinians



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat (Oslo, 9.13.93)

## MYTH 8

The Oslo Accords were a step toward two states

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 8

- The 1993 Oslo Accords **promised peace, withdrawal from Gaza, and a Palestinian homeland** but instead **cemented occupation and allowed Israel** (with US backing) to
  - **triple Israeli settlements** (1993-2000), **fragment the West Bank**, and **restrict Palestinian movement** – permits, checkpoints, roadblocks, separation wall, Israeli-only roads, military control.
  - **block Palestinian access to natural resources**, including water, land, airspace, and energy.
  - **continue to displace refugees**, blocking their right to return.
- Despite promises of security, **settler and military violence continue** to this day.
- **Gaza is still under a harsh blockade** 20 years after Israel's so-called withdrawal.



## MYTH 9

Israel “withdrew” from Gaza and no longer occupies it.

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 9

- Israel's 2005 “**withdrawal**” was not freedom – it was a **remote-control occupation**.
- Israel continued to **control Gaza's land, air, sea, borders, electricity, fuel, and humanitarian aid**.
- Israel **broke the Gaza ceasefire** in January 2025, leading to continued death, injury, disease, worsening starvation, and continued destruction of homes, hospitals and infrastructure.
- Israel has **completely blocked humanitarian aid** leaving millions without food, water, electricity, fuel, medical care, and shelter.
- Over time, **Israel's repeated bombings, collective punishment, and military sieges** have made Gaza an open-air prison, **violating international law**

OCHA says 69-70% of all buildings in Gaza have been destroyed or damaged as of January 2025. Additionally, 92% of housing units have been destroyed



## MYTH 10

The two-state solution is the path to peace

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 10

- **Settlement expansion** makes a **two-state solution unworkable**.
- **Peace** requires **ending apartheid** and building **one democratic state with equal rights for all**.
- The **two-state solution** is used as a distraction. It doesn't address the **right of return** for **millions of Palestinian refugees displaced since 1948**.
- **Peace** requires **following international and US laws and prosecuting war criminals**.



## Beyond the Headlines: Unraveling Israeli Myths

based on Ilan Pappé's  
*Ten Myths About Israel*

In 2017, the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé argued that many myths about Israel attempt to justify its settler colonialism, forced expulsion, and apartheid policies. The falsehoods persist to this day.

Scan the QR code to read *Ten Myths About Israel* online



Verso Books. 2017, 2024

Some information in this brochure was prepared with assistance from Perplexity AI,  
<https://www.perplexity.ai>

For more information, contact Linda at  
[Lkateeb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Lkateeb@sbcglobal.net)

## MYTH 1

Palestine was an empty land

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 1

- Palestine was a thriving society long before Zionist settlers arrived in 1882.
- It was home to **470,000 residents**—**85% Muslim**, **11% Christian**, and **4% Jewish** – and not at all an empty land.
- It had established **towns, infrastructure, legal systems, religious life, and farming**.
- Zionists used the “**empty land**” myth to justify **colonization and displacement**.



Ancient Palestine had major centers of commerce in Jaffa, Acre, Gaza, Nablus, Hebron, Sidon, and Haifa.

This 1936 poster by Franz Kraus was used by a Zionist tourist organization urging Jews worldwide to immigrate to Palestine and build a Jewish homeland



## MYTH 2

The Jews were a people without a land

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 2

- For most of history, **being Jewish** was a **religion**, not a **nationality**.
- For **centuries**, **Jewish communities** lived **across the world** and were **treated as equals** with some exceptions.
- **British Christian evangelicals** in the early 1800s were among the first to describe Jews as “a people without a land” to **justify** the idea that **Jews should be “restored” to Palestine** for religious reasons.
- **Zionists** wanted an exclusively **Jewish homeland** – preferably in **Palestine** – although it would **displace the Palestinian inhabitants**.

## MYTH 3

Zionism is Judaism

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 3

- **Zionism** is a **secular political movement** seeking a **homeland** for **Jews in Palestine** via **colonial settlement and displacement**.
- **Judaism** is a **global faith and culture**.
- Many **Jews** and **rabbis** around the world **reject Zionism**, believing it **contradicts Jewish ethical values**.
- To **criticize Zionism** is to **oppose injustice** and US Middle East policy.

Neturei Karta is an ultra-Orthodox, anti-Zionist, pro-Palestine Jewish group.



## MYTH 4

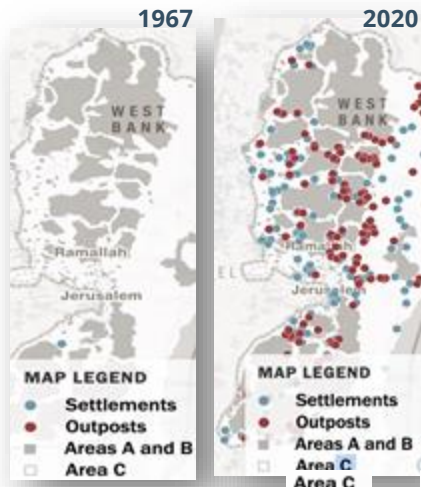
Zionism is not colonialism

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 4

- **Zionism** is **settler colonialism**, using **military force, land theft, and the erasure of native culture and history** to build a Jewish state.
- It **replaces the native Palestinian population with Jews** to achieve a **Jewish state**.

Israeli **outposts** (unauthorized) & **settlements** (authorized) on Palestinian land are illegal under international law.

**Civil and Security Control**  
**Area A** Full Palestinian control  
**Area B** Palestinian civil; Israeli security  
**Area C** Full Israeli control



No settlements before 1967.

crisisgroup.org

## MYTH 5

Palestinians voluntarily left their homeland in 1948

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 5

- During the **1948 Nakba** (“the Catastrophe”), **Zionist forces** expelled **750,000 Palestinians**, destroyed **500+ villages**, carried out dozens of **massacres**, and **poisoned wells** to **block Palestinian return**.
- **Plan Dalet** (1948) was a Zionist strategy to **force Palestinian removal, seize their land, towns and villages**, and drive them into **refugee status**.
- The **Deir Yassin massacre** (April 9, 1948) instilled **fear** and compelled **Palestinians to flee**.

Palestinians flee during the **Nakba**. Before the Nakba, Palestine was a **multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society**.



## MYTH 6

The June 1967 War was a war of Israeli self-defense because Israel was attacked first

### FACTS TO DEBUNK MYTH 6

- **Declassified documents** verify that **Israel** had preemptively **attacked Egypt to gain territory**.
- After the war, Israel **occupied** all of **historic Palestine** (**West Bank, East Jerusalem, Gaza**), plus the **Sinai Peninsula** and **Golan Heights**.
- This land loss started decades of international law violations, including **military rule** and **no voting rights** for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza..



Yellow on 1947 map – Jerusalem was to be administered by the UN