# THE MORAL TRIANGLE

## GERMANS, ISRAELIS, PALESTINIANS


SA'ED ATSHAN
AND KATHARINA GALOR

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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We, the authors of this book—Katharina Galor and Sa'ed Atshan—grew up on different sides of a divide and conflict that is seventy years old. We are grateful for having met in 2014, just days after the end of the Israel-Gaza War, whose traumas we experienced in similar ways, though from opposite sides of the wall. The opportunity to work together on this project has proved that by overcoming the boundaries imposed on us, we can bridge these gaps. Through flexibility and trust we were able to navigate the occasional hurdles, painful stories, and difficult encounters imbued with prejudice and occasional hatred that we experienced from others together. We also rejoiced together about the hopeful and heartwarming sides of the research, fieldwork, and writing process. We hope that the results of this collaborative project will show others that conflicts are constructions that can be overcome if the common goal is to listen and understand each other's perspectives.

This work would not have come to fruition without the assistance, guidance, and generosity of numerous people. Most notably, we are indebted to the fifty interlocutors who agreed to meet with us to answer the questions that served as the foundation of this inquiry. We also thank the other fifty people who spoke to us, mostly at great length, about issues that relate directly to the focus of our study without following a specific protocol or questionnaire. Given the sensitive nature of this study, only six of these individuals agreed to have their identity revealed. We extend our thanks to Iris Hefets, Ármin Langer, Tamara Masri, Dorothee Reinhold, Yael Ronen, and Martin Wiebel for taking the time to talk to us, and we express our admiration for their courage. Although the descriptions, impressions, profiles, and quotes in this book are based on actual encounters, we have altered all identifying characteristics of other people with whom we met.

We also talked to a number of professionals who shared useful knowledge about various issues at the core of the study. The information we gathered during these conversations contributed to a better understanding of contemporary Berlin and its Israeli and Palestinian communities. Most of them have lived in or traveled to Israel/Palestine or are closely related to either or both migrant communities in Berlin: Najat Abdulhaq, Maryam Abu Khaled, Ayham Majid Agha, Tarek Al Turk, Mazen Aljubbeh, Hila Amit, Sina Arnold,

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This list does not include the numerous German, Israeli, and Palestinian friends and acquaintances with whom we spoke while we were in Berlin but not conducting fieldwork. Many of them are similarly intrigued by the questions at the core of this study and thus enhanced our understanding and experience of the issues at hand.

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We were sitting at a table at Café Atlantic on Bergmannstraße in one of Berlin's trendiest neighborhoods, Kreuzberg, known not so long ago for its large Turkish community but in recent years also as one of the areas in town that have attracted concentrations of Palestinians and Israelis. It was 9:00 PM, and we were both famished. We had just completed another day of interviews, running from one place to the next and barely finding the time to talk to each other and digest the reflections of the Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians we were interviewing.

We were also full of anticipation. We were going to meet Yael Ronen, the Jewish Israeli theater director who had moved to Berlin some five years earlier from Israel. We were familiar with her plays featuring German, Israeli, and Palestinian actors on the stage of the Maxim Gorki Theater, speaking alternately in German, English, Hebrew, and Arabic. The actors were at once following their inner voices and bringing their real lives into dialogue with the stories Ronen framed. We had been stunned to learn that the issues we had been exploring for nearly two years were dealt with in such a vibrant, creative, colorful, and daring fashion onstage, in all visibility, in the middle of Berlin.

Once we came up with the idea to investigate Berlin's large Israeli and Palestinian communities and their relationship to German society and politics, we began to follow Israeli, Arab, English, and German media coverage closely in relation to the issues we planned to explore. We scanned and read all of the scholarship we could lay our hands on. This was meant to prepare us for our field study, including interviews and meetings with Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians living in Berlin.

We had long admired Ronen's work, particularly her play *The Situation* (figure P.1). We also knew about her ex-husband, Yousef Sweid, a Palestinian dancer and actor with whom she was still involved as a friend, colleague, and co-parent to their ten-year-old son. Ronen and Sweid work closely at the Maxim Gorki Theater.

A week earlier, when we had met with the renowned German journalist Carolin Emcke to chat about common interests and experiences, particularly as they relate to Emcke's work covering stories across the Middle East, she said that we had to get to know Ronen and immediately put us in contact. This en-

counter turned out to be pivotal for our understanding of why the topic that had caught our attention was so sensitive. The German and Israeli and, to some extent, international press has been swamped with stories about the post-2011 migration of young Israelis to Berlin. Numerous scholarly articles and several books have been written about the phenomenon, and several more are on the way. Yet Berlin's Palestinian community, which is twice as large, is barely mentioned; nor has this population attracted much attention.

When Ronen arrived on her bicycle, we were struck by her beauty and style, a combination of Israeli straightforwardness and Berlin cosmopolitanism. In the German theater world she is known as "eine Art Generalsekretärin für Weltkonflikte" (a sort of a general-secretary for world conflicts), tackling the most complicated sociopolitical issues and turning them into sensible humor.[1] She was telling us about the play that started her international career and reputation: *Third Generation*, which takes on the issues of inherited guilt and present conflicts and the complex relationships (or Gordian Knot) among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians that define these three national groups.[2]

When the play was first to be performed at Tel Aviv's Habima National Theater, the Israeli government tried to shut it down. Ronen said that she had been threatened with public accusations of anti-Semitism if she proceeded with performances of *Third Generation* there and across Europe. When we asked her why the authorities considered the play such a threat, she told us that the idea of a "triangle" that connects Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians challenges those who do not want Palestinians to be rendered legible as victims of the historical circumstances that have led Germany to support Israel since the Holocaust. Ronen persisted with the play, and it catapulted her career. She gave us permission to share these parts of her story in our work. This affirmed to us the importance of properly theorizing and analyzing the notion of the triangle in this context through an anthropological lens.

Our research focuses on issues that resonate with broader controversies in Europe, the Middle East, the United States, and around the world. Our study centers questions of memory, trauma, narrations of the Holocaust, experiences of the Nakba, trajectories in pursuit of reconciliation, pathways of migration, policies toward refugees, integration of religious and ethnic minorities, Jewish-Christian-Muslim relations, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism, European politics, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Countless scholars, civil society practitioners, and social movement leaders continue to grapple with considerations of how Israel/Palestine maps onto global contexts; how



Figure P.1 Yael Ronen's play *The Situation*, performed at Berlin's Maxim Gorki Theater (stage set by Tal Shacham; costume design, Amit Epstein; music, Yaniv Fridel and Ofer Shabi; and dramaturge, Irina Szodruch). It features, among others, Israeli, Palestinian, and German actors. From left to right: Orit Nahmias, Maryam Abu Khaled, Yousef Sweid, Ayhan Majid Agha, Karim Daoud, and Dimitrij Schaad. Photograph by Ute Langkafel.

European countries handle their Muslim communities; how we define the relationship between Zionism and anti-Semitism; and how liberal democracies must contend with freedom of speech in the context of growing populist and supremacist groups within their borders. We investigate each of these themes and offer insights that intersect with and diverge from so many other global conversations in productive ways.

Theoretically, we ground this work in the conceptual framework delineated by Michael Rothberg in *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*. Rothberg writes against what he terms "competitive memory," in which we fear that our recognition of another's trauma will dilute attention to our own. Instead, he calls for multidirectional memory, in which recognition of one another's traumas can inform and enrich the robustness of public discourse on our own memory and struggle. Rothberg reminds us that "the other's history and memory can serve as a source of renewal and reconfiguration for the self—granted one is willing to give up exclusive claims to ultimate victimization and ownership over suffering."[3] While the focus of *Multidirectional Memory* is to bring together Holocaust studies and

studies of colonialism, slavery, and racism, Rothberg identifies the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as "the other dominant political site of multidirectional memory."[4] Our book, in examining Israel/Palestine in relation to Germany, can be read as a response to Rothberg's compelling and persuasive call for "an ethical vision based on commitment to uncovering historical relatedness and working through the partial overlaps and conflicting claims that constitute the memory and terrain of politics."[5]

# THE TRIANGLE

*Germans, Israelis, Palestinians*

Our study examines the triangular relationship among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians in contemporary Berlin.[1] It poses the question of the moral responsibility of Germans with regard to Israelis and Palestinians residing in their capital city. While our temporal focus is the present, we recognize that past events such as the Holocaust and the Nakba continue to reverberate. Despite the fact that our geographic focus is Berlin, it is clear that our exploration has implications for Germany as a whole and its connections to Israel/Palestine.

Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians seem to be divided among five patterns of thought on the question of Germany's and Germans' current moral responsibility—or lack thereof—toward Israelis and Palestinians in Berlin. There are those who identify the need to support Israelis alone; those who identify the need to support Palestinians alone; those who identify the need to support both Israelis and Palestinians; those who identify the need to support neither Israelis nor Palestinians; and, finally, those who are indifferent or unsure in response to this central question of our study.

Israeli and Palestinian communities are internally heterogeneous. When the two populations are compared, we find that Palestinians form the larger demographic group (recent estimates are forty-five thousand to eighty thousand for Palestinians and eleven thousand to forty thousand for Israelis). Most Palestinians in Berlin have refugee backgrounds. Israeli migration to Berlin is a relatively more recent phenomenon and largely motivated by socioeconomic opportunities. While these communities are separated from each other overall, there are various possibilities for interaction, communication, and cooperation.

An asymmetry in the Israeli and Palestinian experience in Berlin reveals itself when one considers differing German official positions and discourses with regard to the two groups. Germany's work in coming to terms with the past, a process known in German as *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, has accomplished a great deal. This work has translated into both profound Holocaust

guilt and taking responsibility to disavow continued anti-Semitism. Both of these positions have led to a special relationship with the Israeli state, which has been accompanied by preferential treatment for Israelis in Germany. Simultaneously, many Palestinians report experiencing various forms of censorship in Berlin. This results from sensitivity toward discourses and policies that define any critique of Israel as evidence of the "new anti-Semitism." Moreover, the increasing climate of racism and Islamophobia in Germany has placed Palestinians in a precarious position. Thus, Israeli and Palestinian standing in Germany, whether legal or social, can be dramatically different, with repercussions in the private and public spheres.



Based on our research, including the interviews and conversations we conducted, as well as the testimonies, media coverage, and literature we examined, our optimism for the future overrides the challenges to German-Israeli-Palestinian relations that we have come across. Despite the tensions and fears that have emerged during the course of our inquiry we believe that, looking forward, it is possible to imagine a realistic future scenario in which German understanding, compassion, and responsibility can be extended to both Israelis and Palestinians. This is particularly encouraging if examined in the larger context of Germany's traumatic past and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Our examination of Germany's moral responsibility toward Israelis and Palestinians, on a political and philosophical level, cannot be separated from the empirical realities on the ground in Berlin. Our ethnography reveals the possibilities for the city to bring together Israelis and Palestinians. Thus, if Germans and Israelis can work toward reconciliation, and Israelis and Palestinians can also engage in rapprochement, then it should be possible for Germans and Palestinians to address the traumas that connect them. While official German state discourse has demonstrated solidarity with Israelis in a robust manner, and largely excluded Palestinians, German actors at the individual and grassroots levels are increasingly acknowledging the importance of Palestinian experiences and narratives. We envision the movements toward mutual recognition among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinian individuals as ultimately shaping a more nuanced German public discourse in the future in which Palestinians, and their place in the moral triangle, are recognized.

### *Positionality*

Our interest in this study is not only intellectual but also deeply personal. Katharina Galor is a German Israeli archaeologist and art historian with a focus on Israel/Palestine. She was born to refugee parents in Germany and

raised there, then lived through several wars in Israel as a citizen and scholar and completed her higher education in France and the United States. As the daughter of Holocaust survivors, with a father and grandmother who survived Auschwitz while most of the family perished in the camps, Galor has an unwavering commitment to Jewish studies. Her work within both Israeli and Palestinian communities has helped her cultivate a keen awareness of social injustice defined by religious and racial discrimination and the need for reconciliation.

Sa'ed Atshan is a Palestinian American sociocultural anthropologist with a focus on humanitarianism and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. He grew up in the West Bank and completed his higher education in the United States. Living under Israeli military occupation, coupled with his activism in Palestinian, LGBTQ, and Quaker social movements, he approaches his intellectual and political pursuits from the perspectives of intersectionality and universal human rights.

Galor experienced significant anti-Semitism and xenophobia (*Ausländerfeindlichkeit*) as a child and young adult in Germany; her relationship to the country thus has been fraught with apprehension. Returning to Germany for this research project in Berlin in 2016, after spending more than thirty years abroad, has provided her with opportunities to learn about how far the society has come in grappling with the past. While her concerns remain focused on racist and populist currents, she is also heartened by efforts in Berlin to build a more inclusive future in Germany.

The Holocaust education curriculum that Atshan received at his school in Palestine has helped him learn about the tragedies of the Holocaust and their impact on Jewish, LGBTQ, and other victims. This awareness in turn has shaped his dedication to resisting anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination. It was also bewildering to him as a child to learn about German military occupations in the past while simultaneously living under Israeli military occupation in the present. He subsequently understood the marked differences between these two contexts. In that way, he, like many Palestinians, indirectly inherited various traumas of the Holocaust, which led to feelings of alienation from Germany and the German language. This research project in contemporary Berlin has provided important social and psychological domains in which to reexamine his own relationship to Germany.

Both authors were raised in a social context that did not provide and encourage access to the "Other." Though Galor's family was largely secular, most of her upbringing was shaped by a deep commitment to Jewish traditions and a love for Israel. Her knowledge about Israel/Palestine and her first trips to the

region as a teenager were shaped by the Zionist Youth of Germany (Zionistische Jugend Deutschlands; ZJD). This aligned with the narrative promoted by her Jewish community while living in France as a college and graduate student. Israel was perceived as the only safe haven for Jews, and though a newly established country, it was also understood as being directly linked to its roots in antiquity. The "Arab" was featured as the enemy; the Palestinian, by contrast, was hardly present in this narrative. It was not until Galor became a citizen of Israel at twenty-two, and while she was living in Jerusalem, that she had her first encounters with Palestinians. Although she was married to an Israeli and was living mostly in an Israeli context, her circle of Palestinian friends and colleagues expanded quickly. At the same time, her knowledge regarding the region's history deepened, and her position regarding the conflict changed gradually.



While living in Palestine as a child, Atshan did not have exposure to Israelis beyond soldiers and settlers in the West Bank. It was challenging to travel across the West Bank, let alone into Israel, and this limited his interaction with everyday Israelis, as is the case for the vast majority of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. He appreciated that his family encouraged him to affirm the humanity of Israelis as people while also being committed to the liberation of his people from the yoke of military occupation. It was at places such as the Seeds of Peace camp in Maine, U.S. institutions of higher education, and activist circles that he was able to cultivate friendships with progressive Israelis.

This joint project has provided an opportunity to overcome societal boundaries and prejudices by placing the human qualities of trust, collegiality, and friendship above national animosity. It aims to provide a model for other partnerships among individuals from contexts of polarized conflicts. Most important, this book should be understood as a form of co-resistance. While there was no intellectual tension or disagreement between the coauthors of this study at any point during their prolonged period of close collaboration—this concerns the research, field study, and writing process—their personal experiences were rather distinct and are featured separately in the postscript, where their individual voices regarding the inquiry come to the fore.

### *Methodology*

The focus on Berlin was deliberate. It is the capital of Germany, the country shaping European economic and political power most profoundly. The country has a long history of engagement with Israel/Palestine. Berlin is home to the largest Palestinian population in Europe and to one of Europe's largest

Israeli diaspora communities. The presence of so many Israelis in Berlin has attracted significant attention largely as a result of the irony of Germany's history of anti-Jewish persecution. Berlin is now known for its cosmopolitanism (in some ways reminiscent of pre–World War II Weimar culture); its critical engagement with the Holocaust; its grappling with issues of justice, immigration, social difference, and integration; its robust public discourse on moral responsibility; its vast cultural sphere; the massive refugee migration of 2015; and the rise of the far-right, populist, and intolerant Alternative for Germany (Alternative für Deutschland; AfD) party.

Over the course of eighteen months, from 2017 to 2018, with intensive fieldwork in June and July 2018, we conducted the primary research for our study. We completed fifty formal semistructured interviews and fifty informal interviews, evenly divided among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians in Berlin. For the semistructured interviews we relied on a standardized questionnaire while leaving ample space and time for our subjects to explore themes that they found relevant. The questionnaire enabled us to be consistent in attending to the key themes of our study. The snowball sampling method enabled us to reach a wide range of interviewees beyond our initial contacts. Between the two of us we had all four languages necessary for engaging with these subjects: Arabic, English, German, and Hebrew. We conducted most of the interviews together in English; with some additions and clarifications in Hebrew, Arabic, or German. Some interviews and meetings were conducted in Hebrew, Arabic, or German exclusively by only one of us. While they were a minority among our research subjects, there were Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians who were more comfortable speaking with one of us alone and in their mother tongue. Regarding many of the sensitive matters that we explored, it was important for us to promote a sense of trust and to protect confidentiality. Several potential interviewees declined to participate for a number of reasons, including refusals to support a joint Israeli-Palestinian project; feelings of intimidation because of our levels of education; and fear of reprisal for speaking about these issues. We use the real first and last name of participants only with their permission or if they were public figures who were already on the record stating the reference. In all other instances we use pseudonyms to protect confidentiality.

The participant observation that we conducted among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians in Berlin enabled us to complete the informal interviews. Both formal and informal interviewees represented a broad sample of these populations. They ranged in age from sixteen to eighty-one and included women, men, and LGBTQ individuals. They differed in religious and secular

background; political orientations (right, center, and left); levels of education (and lack thereof); and legal statuses in Germany, including some who were undocumented. They also represented all of the neighborhoods with high densities of Israelis and Palestinians and those at the highest levels of power and policy-making influence, as well as those experiencing the most vulnerability. The vocational diversity of our participants was vast, including one or more individuals from the following occupations: activist, actor, architect, artist, athlete, ballet teacher, bank employee, barber, barista, businessman, cab driver, carpenter, cashier, chief executive, computer consultant, computer engineer, conservatory student, construction manager, construction worker, cultural worker, dancer, diplomat, disc jockey, doctoral student, economist, engineer, film director and producer, financial and administrative service professional, flight attendant, gallery manager, gas station attendant, government representative, graduate student, graphic designer, hairdresser, information scientist, information technology expert, institute fellow, janitor, journalist, large business owner, laundry worker, lawyer, librarian, marketing specialist, museum and cultural curator, musician, network engineer, nongovernmental organization employee, nurse, performance artist and actor, office manager, personal trainer, photographer, physician, police officer, politician, postdoctoral researcher, professor, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, real estate agent, religious leader, restaurant owner, salesperson, secretary, small business owner, social worker, startup entrepreneur, student, teacher, television host, tour guide, translator, travel agent, waiter, and yoga instructor. We also interviewed several unemployed Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians. In being mindful about including such a broad range of interviewees across differences of nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity, we aspired to ensure that our methodology was as intersectional as possible.

Our interlocutors can be divided into two groups: the individuals we engaged with informally and those we spoke to in semistructured interviews. The information gathered during the informal encounters is based on spontaneous conversations, as well as on scheduled meetings. The data collected during the semistructured interviews are framed by a questionnaire.

Our informal encounters ranged from a half-hour-long chat with an undocumented Palestinian refugee from Syria at a bar in Neukölln to a one-and-a-half hour scheduled meeting of Katharina Galor with Ambassador Jeremy Issacharoff in his office at the Israeli Embassy in Berlin. Numerous discussions with Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians took place in the homes of friends and colleagues; in offices; at cultural events; before and after panels and lectures at various venues, including institutes, centers, academies, and univer-

sities; at museums; during guided tours; in cafés and restaurants; during our countless and lengthy rides using Berlin's excellent public transportation system (buses, trams, S-Bahn, and U-Bahn) and in cabs; and, finally in many parks and forests. Most of these conversations touched on several, or even all, of the points we raised in our questionnaire. We also benefited from myriad stimulating conversations—some of them spontaneous and others planned with a clear goal in mind—in which we relied on professional expertise and experience relevant to our inquiries.

The structured interviews were conducted by using the snowball method. We began with a short list of ten individuals from each of our three target groups. They were selected from an initial pool of about 120 individuals we met or were introduced to in personal encounters or by using social network tools (mostly Facebook) while also relying on our own circles of friends and colleagues. Most encounters and meetings (structured and informal) soon led to growing numbers of volunteers willing to be interviewed. After the first three weeks of our field study we had to decline meetings with many interesting and inspiring individuals.

We kept all structured interviews to an average of sixty minutes. In most meetings we managed to systematically cover all of the questions in the questionnaire. In a few cases, the emerging in-depth discussions, and occasional emotional responses, took more time and did not allow us to cover all of the points listed within the allocated time frame. The majority of the meetings took place in cafés or restaurants in Kreuzberg, Neukölln, Mitte, and Prenzlauer Berg. Some were conducted in offices; yet others were conducted at Galor's home in Charlottenburg or in the homes of our interviewees in various neighborhoods of Berlin.

After providing subjects with the option not to be named in our manuscript, the overwhelming majority asked to have their identities obscured due to the sensitive nature of our discussions. Out of one hundred individuals, only six were comfortable with having their names or identifying information published; as a result, we are handling these concerns with great care. The Israeli and Palestinian communities in Berlin can be intimate, and the stakes could be high for those, especially Palestinians, who spoke openly and critically on issues discussed in this study. Several Palestinians and Germans, mostly in national and even international positions of power and high visibility, spoke about risking their careers and lives more broadly if their views regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict were made public. As a result, our book does not feature a series of detailed profiles or portraits of individual personalities. Our focus instead is on broader trends that transcend any one person

whom we interviewed. We bring into dialogue voices from the private sphere with public debates and political discourse. This allows us to protect the privacy of everyone involved in this research study.

Over the course of our time in Berlin, we navigated public and private spaces relevant to Israelis and Palestinians in the city, including, for example, in homes, on the streets, in cafés and restaurants, at workplaces, in theaters, at religious institutions, on educational and political platforms, at demonstrations and other forms of activism, and, finally, at various artistic, cultural, and social events. Our "deep hanging out" provided us with invaluable perspectives from our interlocutors.[2] By giving more than ten talks at German institutions, together and separately, we also gained important insights into academic and nonacademic debates relevant to German moral responsibility toward these communities.



Our discourse analysis was a result of close attention to media coverage that touched on our central research themes, whether in the Israeli, German, Arab, or international press, as well as websites, blogs, and social media (not encompassing coverage beyond September 2018). Our use of the term "discourse analysis" is not meant to signal a particularly established methodology; rather, it is meant to indicate our reliance not only on ethnographic methods but also on analysis of discursive trends in the written and published form related to this research material.

We have relied on the scholarly literature connected to all of these communities and related topics of intersection, such as recent Israeli immigration to Germany and research on Palestinians in Berlin. While academic, media, literary, and artistic coverage of Israelis in Berlin is extensive, attention to Palestinians in the city (beyond their involvement in crime) has been negligible. And while we do not necessarily reference each of the following explicitly, we read from academic sources on Israel/Palestine studies; German history, politics, and culture; and studies on race, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia, as well as reports conducted by government agencies and nongovernmental organizations related to migration, discrimination, integration, and restorative justice.

The methodology we are offering is unique. We are not aware of any comparative ethnographic study of Israelis and Palestinians in Berlin or Germany. Our academic delineation of the German-Israeli-Palestinian triangle is groundbreaking. The concept of this configuration is recognized and emerges in popular discourses in Berlin. It is, however, also considered taboo, particularly in many German and Israeli contexts, where there is widespread denial of the place of Palestinians in this relationship. Our research reveals the inextricably linked nature of Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians.

We are committed to engaging Germans on these issues while highlighting the diversity of their views, as well as the heterogeneity of Israeli and Palestinian voices in Berlin. Furthermore, through our partnership as progressive Israeli and Palestinian scholars we hope to model the type of collaborative interdisciplinary project that is deeply rooted in the experiences of communities on the ground. We do not purport to offer a positivist or quantitative analysis for the field. Rather, we reflect the potential for anthropology to bring together expertise in archaeology, cultural heritage, and social anthropology. Atshan brought with him existing experience in ethnographically based research. Galor was invested in aiming not to leave a single relevant living stone and human layer unexplored. We aimed to be systematic with great attention to details while never losing sight of the larger context. We were also deliberate in not reaching conclusions until we had completed our interviews.



### *Trajectory of Inquiry*

This interdisciplinary study explores the lives of contemporary Berliners and their engagement with past and current traumas and conflicts. The opening chapters examine how the past shapes present realities, with subsequent chapters addressing the politics of migration and demography, followed by a delineation of our theoretical foundation and proceeding to highlight current debates, urban experiences, and contestations in the public sphere related to Israel/Palestine in Berlin. We conclude with an eye toward future possibilities regarding the nature of German-Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Chapters 1–3 provide the social context that is foundational to what we call the German-Israeli-Palestinian moral triangle. Chapter 1 defines what we term the "Holocaust-Nakba Nexus" and how the various actors understand these overlapping historical events. Chapter 2 offers a nuanced explication of the concepts of victim and perpetrator and the politicization of these categories with reference to our research subjects. Chapter 3 traces Germany's policies toward Israel/Palestine and how debates about past crimes and present responsibilities have shaped German public and private spheres.

Chapters 4–6 are devoted to discussing the politics of migration and demography in Berlin. Chapter 4 investigates Germany's policies on migration and the divergent experiences of Israelis and Palestinians within its borders. Chapter 5 synthesizes existing statistics related to Israelis and Palestinians in Berlin and demonstrates the implications of the elusive nature of the data. Chapter 6 explicates how these actors navigate the struggle for integration in German society and the forging of new homes in the capital city.

Chapter 7 constitutes the theoretical heart of our book; in it, we draw on philosophical work on moral responsibility. We connect these conceptualizations to the main question underlying this study: What moral responsibility, if any, do the German state and society have toward Israelis and Palestinians living within Germany's borders in the present?

Chapters 8–11 feature contemporary issues animating Germany's public sphere, including in the media, among policy makers, within civil society, and at the grassroots level. Chapter 8 examines the relationship between anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in Berlin. Chapter 9 integrates the voices of Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians and reflects how their lives and experiences interface with the urban landscape. Chapter 10 outlines points of intersection between Israelis and Palestinians, particularly through dialogue and collaboration. Chapter 11 analyzes how Germans' guilt regarding past crimes contributes to censorship of critical views related to Israel/Palestine in Berlin. We provide case studies that elucidate the processes underlying this censorship.

Our conclusion looks to a future of restorative justice and coexistence among Germans, Israelis, and Palestinians. We reiterate a central argument of this book that—despite the challenges these populations face in Germany—Berlin provides a space where Israelis and Palestinians can imagine shaping a society together that is not under the weight of discrimination and oppression.

# NOTES

*Prologue*

1 See Mounia Meiborg, "Überleben im Dauerprovisorium. Humor ist, wenn man trotzdem lacht," *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, March 15, 2016.
2 The Gordian Knot is an ancient legend of Phrygian Gordium, used as a metaphor for an intractable problem solved by thinking creatively. On the reception of *Third Generation* in Berlin, see Silke Bartlick, "Theater Director Yael Ronen Breaks Taboos," *Deutsche Welle*, May 12, 2015; Frank Weigand, "Verharmlost die Schaubühne den Holocaust?," *Die Welt*, March 19, 2009.
3 Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), 132.
4 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 28.
5 Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 29.

*Introduction: The Triangle*

1 This triangular relationship has been largely ignored by scholars and remains to a large extent taboo, in particular within Germany and Israel. Julia Chaitin, for instance, refers to the difficulty of bridging gaps between Israelis and Germans and Israelis and Palestinians, but does not even consider the triangular relationship among the three parties: see Julia Chaitin, "Bridging the Impossible? Confronting Barriers to Dialogue between Israelis and Germans and Israelis and Palestinians," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 13, no. 2 (2008): 33–58.
2 The term "deep hanging out" was coined by the anthropologist Clifford Geertz in 1998, referring to the research method of engaging with communities in an informal manner: see Clifford Geertz, "Deep Hanging Out," *New York Review of Books*, October 22, 1998.

*Chapter 1. Trauma, Holocaust, Nakba*

1 The American television series *Holocaust*, created by Gerald Green and directed by Marvin J. Chomsky, was screened in Germany for the first time in January 1979. Claude Lanzmann's movie *Shoah* was released in 1985.
2 The historian Saleh Abdel Jawad documents more than sixty massacres: see Saleh Abdel Jawad, "Zionist Massacres: The Creation of the Palestinian Refugee Problem in the 1948 War," in *Israel and the Palestinian Refugees*, edited by Eyal Benvenisti, Chaim Gans, and Sari Hanafi (Berlin: Springer, 2007), 59–127.
3 Among the literature that brings Holocaust and Nakba studies into dialogue, a few recent studies have made valuable contributions to this approach: see Yair