

Tabea Tbaasa

# The wisdom of the olive trees

A preview booklet – a first breath



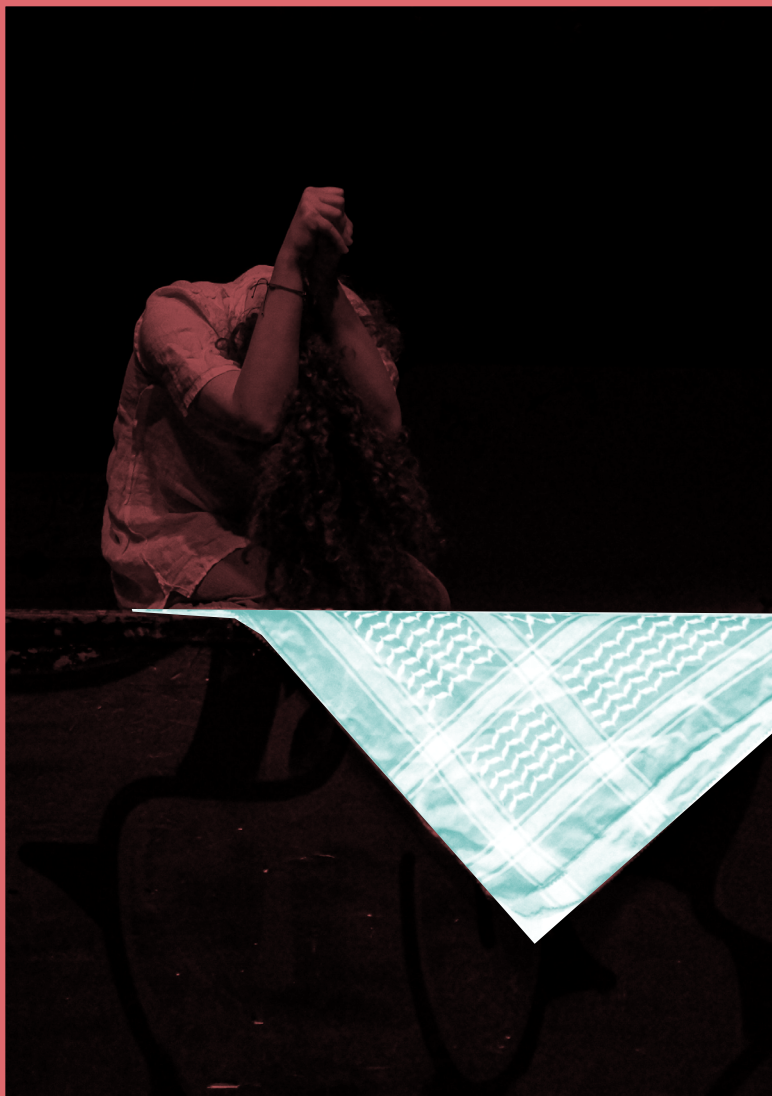
**No peace without justice.  
Which paths might lead us there?**



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**Contact: [www.empathyforpeace.de](http://www.empathyforpeace.de)**



## **I. Opening**

This is not purely a book about politics.  
It is a book about love in the face of loss.  
About dignity when everything slips away.  
About remaining, planting, remembering  
For Palestinians, it seeks to be recognition.  
For Germans, an invitation to take responsibility rather than  
being stuck in guilt.  
For Jewish people, a space where diversity can breathe again.  
This booklet is not an ending, but an opening –  
a first breath toward liberation, toward just peace.  
What happens when we dare to truly feel?  
And what if this feeling does not separate, but connects?

## **II. On Reading**

I hesitated to release this short booklet because the topic's complexity needs more time to unfold.  
I want to acknowledge that many voices are missing here and will only appear in the book, and that even the characters included here flicker more than they appear in their full stories.  
Maybe you'd like to listen to music by Fairouz while reading.  
Or breathe after each section.

If you feel resistance – stay.

If you feel shame – let it breathe.

If you feel helplessness – know: it is systemic.

Somatic Impuls: Feel the ground under your feet. It holds you.



Tantura Expulsion 1948 (Nakba) © Benno Rothenberg / Meitar Collection / Wikimedia Commons, bearbeitet, CC BY-SA 4.0

### **III. Where history still burns**

The Nakba is not over.

It has merely taken on new forms – in checkpoints, in nights of bombing, in the fear that passes on from generation to generation. For decades, human rights organizations have documented targeted attacks on homes, fields, and schools. Hundreds of thousands murdered, millions uprooted. Some call it war.

The Criteria speak clearly for genocide.

An unending pain and ongoing oppression.

There, where olive trees burn, more than land dies. The Earth is being ravaged, too. Not just genocide, but also ecocide – which Israel has been perpetrating for 80 years.

And again and again, capital – the invisible hand that profits from bombs fed by the silence of the world. Global interests being negotiated on this very patch of earth.

#### **IV. Three stories, one knot**

Judaism. Antisemitism. Zionism.

Three threads, tangled, twisted, mistaken for one another.

This book also wants to tell their stories, and to untangle them.

It searches for a language in which no one has to be erased for someone else to be heard – and where voices can still be weighed.

#### **V. One-sided – and intentionally so**

Because “balance” often means obscuring violence.

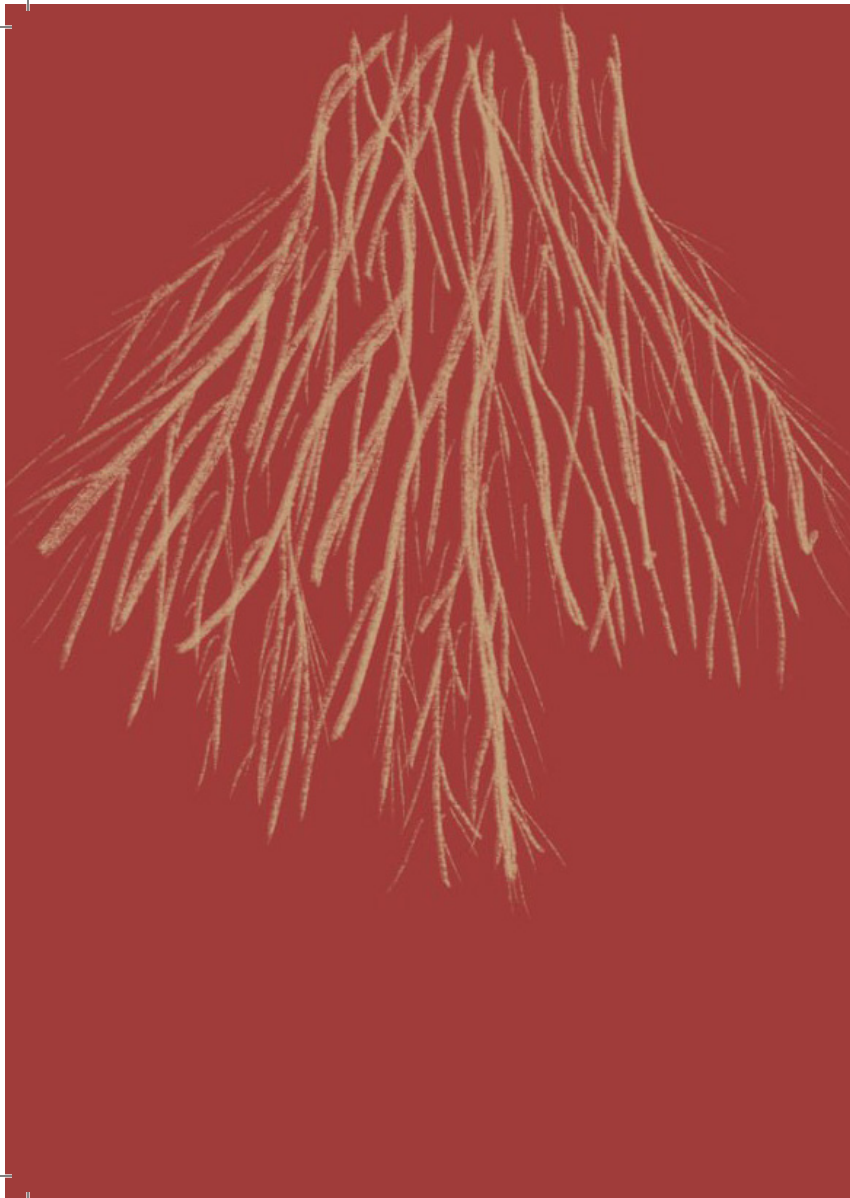
Because Palestinian stories are often distorted through the Western gaze. This one-sidedness is not wilfull ignorance but an act of solidarity toward humanity.

The Holocaust was a human catastrophe.

But memory must not become a tool of misuse.

German responsibility today means: not weapons, but bridges.

This book turns its gaze to the now – to justice, to voices losing the most today.





## **VI. Roots, memories, fires and questions**

Where stories begin that do not end.  
Between dust and memory speak those who stayed,  
those who left, and those who could not return.

These voices come from lived biography,  
encounters, books, films.

### **Umm Sliman – The Mother of All Memories**

"I was born in 1927. In 1948 they came at night.  
I fled with bread, stories, hope.  
My children grew up in dust and camps,  
and I nourished them with tales of orange blossoms.  
I am Palestine.  
Wounded, but proud of our Şumūd – steadfastness."

Umm Sliman – my grandmother,  
expelled from Palestine in 1948 by Zionist groups.



**Sabine – The silence is old**

“We knew enough to stay silent.

Silence protected us. But silence became a stone in the stomach.

I hope my grandchildren will be braver –  
that they will speak when others fall silent.”

My German grandmother speaking about the Holocaust and the Second World War.

**Norma – From Russia to Palestine**

“We came from Europe, marked by the Shoah.

We wanted to arrive, to find safety. But the land was at war.

Doors stood open, pots on tables – I did not ask who lived here before.

The longing for peace turned into new unrest.”

The Jewish grandmother of a friend describing her arrival in Palestine.



Bild: Umm Eimann Ismail Shammout. Titel: The explosion YEAR: 1984 DIMENSION 60 x 80, STYLE Oil

**Umm Eiman – Living in the fire**

يا رب الصمود – Oh Lord of the steadfastness.

I breathe dust and fear.

I pulled my daughter from the rubble – her hand was still warm.

They do not only destroy houses, they destroy hearts.

But we stay. We plant again.

I only want a simple life – why is that impossible?”

Umm Eiman, who is currently living in Gaza in the midst of genocide.

Somatic Impuls: Place a hand on your chest. Breathe. You are alive.

### **Rahel – Between walls and questions**

“I am Israeli.

I love the land, but not the walls.

I help with olive harvests in the West Bank.

I know: our fear is real and also instilled  
in us.

Every day a hostage story.

Of Palestinian suffering, almost nothing.

But should fear make us blind?

Occupation destroys not only Palestini-  
ans – it destroys our own soul.”

Rahel, an anti-Zionist Jewish acquaintance.





## VII. What wants to rise now ?

This book wants to be part of a movement.  
Not only to be read, but shared, moved, carried on.  
It seeks contributors, allies, translators, people who remember,  
contribute, donate, spread.  
It is intended to appear in Arabic and English, later in more languages.  
Because liberation speaks many tongues.

## VIII. Questions that remain open

Palestine has become more than a place;  
it also asks the questions of our time.  
How do we live with history when it speaks through our bodies?  
How does justice sound when we have internalized critiques of  
domination and make white supremacy more visible?  
Can memory heal without forgetting?  
And what if Earth itself has long been trying to tell us something?

**These questions lead onward — into the coming book, into conversations, into action.**



## IX. About me

I am **Tabea Tbaasa** — writer, performer,  
daughter of the diaspora.  
Born between languages, rooted in the longing  
for a free Palestine, raised in Germany.  
I write to build bridges that can bear justice.  
To find words that do not destroy, but liberate.

## X. Glossary of Terms

**God:** A source of power, a question, or a breath.

**Nakba:** A catastrophe; a term used to describe the ethnic cleansing, displacement of approximately 750,000 Palestinians, and destruction of Palestinian villages in 1948 by paramilitary Zionist organizations.

**Holocaust:** A catastrophe; a term used to describe the systematic murder of millions of Jewish and other people, including communists, disabled individuals, Sinti and Roma, by the Nazi regime during World War II.

**White:** A social position of power, often associated with and grown out of colonialism.

### Here are some suggestions for action:

- Donate: Support organizations or initiatives that support Palestinians.
- Learn: Educate yourself about the Palestinian situation and its history.
- Support Palestinians: Empower and amplify their voices.
- Take care in your style: Show solidarity and care for those affected by injustice.
- Boycott large corporations: Refrain from supporting companies that contribute to or profit from injustices, such as Amazon.

### Crowdfunding



Support the birth of the book:

Contact: [www.empathyforpeace.de](http://www.empathyforpeace.de)

3-300€ [Paypal.me/Tabea Tabazah](https://www.paypal.com/TabeaTabazah)

Instagram: [Tabea Tbaasa](https://www.instagram.com/TabeaTbaasa)

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**Coming soon**