

Impact Report

July 2023

**Prepared for donors to the University of Waterloo's Foundation for Palestinian Studies Fund
by the Faculty of Arts, University of Waterloo**

Study of Palestine at the University of Waterloo



Thanks to the generosity of the University of Waterloo's founding donor to the Foundation for Palestinian Studies Fund, Shawky Fahel, and the alumni and friends who have joined Mr. Fahel, a vision to promote mutual respect and insights on Palestinian issues by shedding new light for our students and the broader community on a culture and communities little understood in the West, has been realized. The work has just begun, and the activity to date is detailed in the following pages.

Activities

Public Lectures

supported by the Foundation for Palestinian Studies Fund

May 24, 2022: The Kindness of Strangers, Being Palestinian, Living the Law.

Inaugural Lecture in the Study of Palestine at University of Waterloo, featuring keynote speaker Dr. Reem Bahdi, Dean of Windsor Law, the first Palestinian law professor in Canada, and the first Palestinian law dean in North America.

Special thanks to a group founded by Shawky Fahel, the 'Friends of the Foundation for Palestinian Studies', for sponsoring the entertainment and reception.



Reem Bahdi was appointed the Dean of Windsor Law on July 1, 2021. She joined the faculty in 2002 where her teaching and research has focused on access to justice in both Canada and Palestine. Dean Bahdi co-created and co-Directed [KARAMAH, The Project on Judicial Independence and Human Dignity](#), a multi-million dollar initiative which aimed to support human dignity in Palestine through research, continuing judicial education and directed civil society engagement. She has served as the Editor-in-Chief of the [Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice](#) and the Associate Dean of Windsor Law between 2012 and 2015. She is recipient of the [2017 Guthrie Medal](#) for her research, teaching and advocacy in furtherance of access to justice in Ontario and was appointed a member of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists in 2015 for national research excellence. The Student Law Society at Windsor Law has bestowed the award for exemplary teaching and dedication to Windsor Law on her three times and the University of Windsor has recognized her research with five distinguished teaching awards. Professor Bahdi is the first Palestinian law professor in Canadian history and the first Palestinian law dean in North America.

156 attended the lecture while a further 128 people registered to view it online. Feedback from attendees was very positive:

"Dr. Reem Bahdi's speech was very heartwarming, as well the debka performance was amazing!"

"I enjoyed the speaker and the opportunity to meet with young people from several Middle Eastern countries!"

"My favourite part was hearing about Dr. Bahdi's childhood and how she was able to persevere through difficult circumstances."

[Watch here](#)

October 13, 2022: The Hundred Years' War on Palestine: a lecture by Rashid Khalidi, honouring Feridun Hamdullahpur, President Emeritus of the University of Waterloo.

Dr. Rashid Khalidi, Edward Said Professor of Modern Arab Studies in the History Department at Columbia University. Based on his 2020 Book, *The Hundred Years' War in Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance 1917-2017*, Professor Khalidi laid a framework for understanding the conflict in Palestine.



Dr. Khalidi received his BA from Yale in 1970, and his D.Phil. from Oxford in 1974. He is co-editor of the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, and was President of the Middle East Studies Association, and an advisor to the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid and Washington Arab-Israeli peace negotiations from October 1991 until June 1993.

178 attended the event and 146 people registered to view the lecture online. Once again, we received very positive feedback from the attendees:

"The fact that this issue is being discussed without biases is a huge step. The topic was relatable, and the speaker connected with us, even virtually."

"Dr. Khalidi was engaging and perspective on the conflict was refreshing."

"I felt like I gained knowledge about the lecturer and his work, and was able to be in a respectful setting for it."

[Watch here](#)

Research

supported by the Study of Palestine Research Support Fund

In February, 2023, the first research grant from the study of Palestine Research Support Fund was awarded. The award recipient is a PhD student in the Global Governance program at the Balsillie School of International Affairs. Their project, *Place Making through International Development: SDGs in Palestine*, will analyze the place making of Palestine through the international development work undertaken in the OPT under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) paradigm.

Partnership Support

Supported, in part by financial contributions from the Foundation for Palestinian Studies Fund, and with in-kind support from the Faculty of Arts.

The University of Waterloo has supported two lectures hosted by the [Global Institutions, Diplomacy and Justice Research Cluster](#) at the Balsillie School.

March 29, 2023: From Occupation to Apartheid: In discussion with Former UN Special Rapporteur, Michael Lynk

Michael Lynk reflected on his time working as the UN Special Rapporteur for the Palestinian Territories since 1967 from 2016-2022. Prof. Lynk spoke about his time with the UN, his mandate as the Special Rapporteur, and his findings on the case of Palestine.



Michael Lynk was an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law at Western University, where he taught labour law, constitutional law, and human rights law. Before teaching, Prof. Lynk worked in refugee and labour law, as well as for the United Nations in Jerusalem. He has written widely on labour law and human rights issues in Canada and published articles on the application of international law to the Middle East conflict. In 2016, Professor Lynk was appointed to the UN as the Special

Rapporteur to the Palestinian Territories since 1967 where he regularly addressed the UN and its subsidiaries on the situation in the Palestinian Territories.

May 15, 2023: Canadian Foreign Policy and the Question of Palestine

After a brief description of international law as it applies to the conflict, and of the Israeli policy of control of Palestinian land, the talk will examine this apparent contradiction in Canadian policy and will provide keys for understanding it.



Rachad Antonius has recently retired from a position of Full Professor at the Department of Sociology, Université du Québec à Montréal. He holds a Ph.D. in Sociology and an M.Sc. in Mathematics. His publications cover a variety of domains, including political conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli Palestinian conflict. He has also done extensive work in the Middle East with NGOs, and consultancy work for international agencies. He has often appeared on major Canadian national channels to comment on the situation in the Arab region.