

Denijal Jegić, *Trans/Intifada: The Politics and Poetics of Intersectional Resistance*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2019. 329 pages. ISBN 978-3-8253-6958-3

In early 2020, Jared Kushner, senior advisor to Donald Trump, unveiled his new Middle East Peace Plan. This 80-page report calls for no Israeli settlement evacuations, limits Palestinians' presence in Jerusalem, and does not include a clear path to Palestinian statehood. In an interview on CNN, Kushner addressed critics of his plan, arguing that in order to see its merits, they must "divorce (themselves) from all of the history." Ostensibly the "history" Kushner wishes to erase in support of his plan is the history of West Asia (also known as the Middle East), and one of the struggles at the heart of its modern and contemporary periods, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The amnesia for which Kushner calls, however, does not run counter to this conflict. It is not, in other words, a stance one must adopt in order to solicit peace. Amnesia, and its implementation in myriad forms of erasure, is in fact *central* to the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is what shapes its contours, encourages stagnation, and ultimately allows for the entrenchment of state and ideological power that perpetuates settler-colonialism in Occupied Palestine.

Such erasure bears out in the narrative woven by Denijal Jegić in his book *Trans/Intifada: The Politics and Poetics of Intersectional Resistance*. In this well-researched monograph, Jegić makes a stunning case for the correspondences between Palestinian and Black liberation struggles, thus casting a transnational perspective on seemingly disparate narratives of identity, autonomy, and belonging. Jegić builds a careful interdisciplinary and intersectional case to elucidate what he calls "transnational linkages of suffering" and to argue for an ongoing "transnational Intifada" (11). In not only outlining a new concept to be applied to historically-focused research, but also methodologically *operationalizing* this concept, Jegić makes an important contribution to the field of American Studies.

Denijal Jegić holds a PhD from the Institute for Transnational American Studies at Johannes Gutenberg University (Mainz) and is currently a post-doctoral scholar based in Beirut, Lebanon. Connected to, but apart from his scholarly work, Jegić frequently contributes essays and commentaries to a range of publications, including Al Jazeera English, Mondoweiss, and teleSur. His geographic and linguistic range (he speaks over five languages

and has lived and studied in Europe, West Asia, and North America) situates him as particularly adept at transnational analyses, as clearly represented by his prize-winning dissertation, on which this book is based.

This rich monograph is divided into seven chapters including the introduction and conclusion. Jegić begins in Chapter 2 by illuminating what he calls “Palestinicides” to indicate the multiply-construed and ongoing nature of the Nakba, the “catastrophe” that marked the institution of the Israeli state in 1948. Not only does Jegić compellingly argue for the ways that both Nazism and Zionism capitalize on Anti-Semitism, but he adeptly examines how Palestinian voice and history have been pointedly obscured by the mechanisms of colonial violence. Chapter 3 takes us to the United States, where Jegić expounds upon how Arabs have been culturally and politically imagined, and the role of US-Israeli cooperation in producing Arabs as marginalized “Others” in West Asia and the United States. Chapter 4 offers a thorough history of Black-Palestinian solidarity, situating its origins in the correspondences between Palestinian liberation and the U.S.-based Black Power Movement, as well as Black nationalism more broadly. In the latter half of this chapter, Jegić pays special attention to contemporary struggles, including the racialization of the wars on drugs and terror, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the solidarity that took root over social media between Gaza and Ferguson in the midst of mutual upheaval in 2014. He also, importantly, gives space to Jewish solidarity with Palestinian liberation. A brisk section of the book, Chapter 5 does a quick but solid excavation of transnational literature and the arts as resistance to set Jegić up for the interesting and evocative work of Chapter 6. This final chapter weaves together the work of the writers Jegić introduced in Chapter 5. Centering on transnational/-cultural writers June Jordan, Suheir Hammad, and rap group DAM, Jegić here explores artistic demands for a transnational intifada, but also operationalizes the term in his literary analysis, which connects seemingly disparate (geographically, linguistically) artistic oeuvres to manifest contemporary overlaps and synergies. His selection is strategic: the artists engaged here are “accessible and do not require literary nor political expertise” (277). The analysis, then, serves as both an academic text, *and also* an invitation into a conversation that might draw the audiences around these artists, and academics who might not at first feel prepared to take on work by artists of different backgrounds, closer together.

While at first the late appearance of the literary analysis may seem to relegate it to secondary status behind historical exposition, the book would

suffer without the careful research Jegić has carried out. In fact, his is one of the clearest expositions of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict this reviewer has read. It is also one of the most thorough in its athletic analysis of different rhetorical texts from both Zionist and Palestinian points of view. Jegić fearlessly makes big, lucid claims that get at the oppressive complexities of identities and nationalisms, and the key role religion plays (both in Israel and in the evangelical movements of the United States) in cementing these ideologies.

In a world in which Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Black and -brown cultural political formations are on the rise, aided by (neo)colonial policy and the local manifestations of a global far right, works like Jegić's will be crucial for understanding and challenging the proliferation of isolationist ethnic nationalism. Graduate students and faculty alike will benefit from this extraordinarily well-executed piece of research, which embodies the best parts of the American Studies field – its strong interdisciplinarity, openness to methodological innovation, and historical situatedness. It is also a call to remember that solidarity has been and continues to be possible, even when the fractured political landscape suggests otherwise. In a sense, this analysis itself is *trans*, where the term implies crossing, mutuality, and reciprocity. *Engage* Jegić encourages his readers. *Remember. Dream forward.* Our historical moment demands it.

Erin Cory

Malmö University

Janne Lahti, *The American West and the World: Transnational and Comparative Perspectives*. New York: Routledge, 2019. 189 pages. ISBN-13. 978-1138187344.

Janne Lahti's *The American West and the World* is an accessible introduction to the history and cultural representation of the American West. In five clearly written chapters, Lahti synthesizes a voluminous historiography and makes some important analytical interventions that will aid university instructors as they seek to inspire conversation and debate among their students. Thus, as synthetic histories go, *The American West and the World* does a fine job of introducing readers to complex and long-debated issues in the history of the American West.