



The Black Panthers and Palestine

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Abstract:

The question of the Black Panthers' relationship with Palestine is quickly dismissed. A discussion of the Black Panthers and the praxis of Palestine's national liberation, however, permits us to address epistemology. In the United States, a formal hearing in Congress is principal method by which members of legislative committees collect and analyze information. The fact that oral evidence is taken under oath, and that textual evidence can be written into the *Congressional Record* grants information introduced within these hearings a legal status of "justified and true." In the following discussion, a hypothesis that such information regarding the Black Panther Party rose to the standard of "coincidentally correct" is tested. So as to limit the scope of this inquiry, assertions regarding the Black Panther Party, the Panthers' "International Office" in Algiers, and other "Third World Liberation Movements" are considered. These include South Africa's *Umkhonto weSizwe*, Palestine's *Fatah*, and, by extension, Algeria's national liberation struggle as a means to test Gettier's "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"

Keywords : *Black Panther Party ; Eldridge Cleaver ; epistemology ; Fatah; military assistance ; Third World Liberation*

Introduction:

Personal experience is one, widely-accepted form of knowledge. In her memoir, Elaine Mokhtefi describes hers of Spring 1961. "Mohamed [Sajhnoun] and I drove from New York to New Orleans in an outdated Oldsmobile my father had passed on to me." The two stopped to visit Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference. "The staff that day was jubilant: Rich's department store [in Atlanta]... had been integrated" (2016, p. 33). Her personal experience can be corroborated with an external source. A decision to end

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segregation at downtown lunch counters in Atlanta (including the department store's Magnolia Tea Room) was announced 7 March 1961 (Hatfield 2019).

Documentation is a widely-accepted form of knowledge. In a draft statement to Judge James E. Webb (now, part of Stanford University's manuscript collections), the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King justified that day's actions. "Your Honor," he began his letter, "I would simply like to say that I don't think we have done anything wrong in seeking to be served at the Magnolia Tea Room of Rich's." The letter continued, emphasizing the pacifistic nature of the event that had led to King's imprisonment: "we assembled quietly, peacefully and non-violently to secure seek service just as any other citizen."¹ Such a primary source is available to textural analysis.

Replacing the verb "secure" with the solicitous "seek" underscores the conservative nature of Dr. King's political stance. Edmund Gettier "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" (1963) called into question a theory of knowledge dominant at the time. According to Gettier, in some situations one's belief may be justified and true, yet fail to count as knowledge. That is, Gettier contended that while justified belief in a true proposition is necessary for that proposition to be known, it is not sufficient. As we shall see, Gettier's "Justified True Belief" clarified a distinction between "justified and true," and "coincidentally correct" that the decade's epistemological practices tested later in the decade.

1. Third World Liberation Movements:

As Elaine Mokhtefi writes, "Algeria [had been] an overwhelmingly rural society of poor people, over 90% illiterate, who had accomplished the awesome feat of bringing the fourth-greatest military power in the world [France] to its knees" (2018, p. 60). During early 1970, Black Panther Minister of Information Eldridge Cleaver underscored commonalities between Algerians and African Americans; "for us, our cooperation with all oppressed peoples, including the American Black people, is one and indivisible." Moritz Feichtinger notes: "When Amilcar Cabral termed Algiers the 'Mecca of revolutionaries,' he referred to the fact that not had only famous leaders of various liberation movements like Che Guevara, Yasser Arafat and Nelson Mandela visited Algeria in the early 1960s, but also that hundreds of Trotskyists, anarchists, and all sorts of revolutionaries from the Third World met in Algiers in the following years to hold discussions, build up networks, and to study the Algerian experiment of revolutionary decolonization."

¹ <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/draft-statement-judge-james-e-webb-after-arrest-richs-department-store>

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As we shall see, these discussions, networks, and study of “the Algerian experiment” activated institutions formed to struggle against “Trotskyists, anarchists, and all sorts of revolutionaries,” with their own distinct means of truth-production. This section addresses three national liberation movements which eventually found administrative homes in independent Algiers, or received technical assistance (civilian, and military) from Algeria—the Palestinian *Fatah*, the South African *Umkhonto weSizwe*, and the U.S. Black Panther Party—are addressed. The following three sections address three “Third World Liberation Movements,” placing the Black Panthers and one aspect of Palestine’s national liberation struggle in comparison with another national liberation movement.

The three “Liberation Movements” are Palestine’s *al-Fatah*, South Africa’s *Umkhonto weSizwe*, and the United States’ Black Panther Party. Each of these struggles against settler-colonialist regimes and racist ideologies, is attentive to shifting relationships between the civil and military, and between non-violence and violence within each movement; all sought the support of a global superpower. These three sections are also attentive to the dynamic bilateral relationships between individual movements and the People’s Republic of China, as well as the multilateral relationships that characterized trans-national solidarity networks.

1.1. *al-Fatah* (1959):

al-Fatah espoused a Palestinian nationalist ideology for Palestinian Arabs would be liberated by their own actions. From *ḥarakat al-tahrīr al-waṭanī al-Filasṭīnī*, meaning the “Palestinian National Liberation Movement” was crafted a reverse acronym *FATAH*, meaning “conquest,” “opening,” or “victory;” *al-Fatah* was the secret military wing, complementing the public activities of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). Members of the Palestinian diaspora (including Arafat, then head of the General Union of Palestinian Students at Cairo University; Salah Khalaf; Khalil al-Wazir; and Khaled Yashruti, at GUPS in Beirut) founded the organization during 1959. By 1965, *al-Fatah* had its own monthly journal, *Filastinuna* (“*Our Palestine*”) published in Beirut, and illegal in Arab states.

Helena Cobban reports that “a heavyweight delegation of *al-Fateh* leaders including Arafat, al-Wazir, and Farouq Qaddumi had travelled at the invitation of President Ahmed Ben Balla, hero of the newly victorious FLN” (Cobban 1984, p. 31). Cobban adds, “the Algerian President did not want to act openly against the wishes of his more important ally, Egypt’s President Nasser, who still feared that any concerted guerrilla action against Israel would provoke retaliations extremely

damaging for Egypt and the other Arab states” (1984, p. 32). For this reason, Ben Balla limited military assistance to *al-Fatah*. Wazir “who had stayed behind in Algiers from the 1962 *Fatah* delegation to manage the group’s new office there, was able to include himself in an official Algerian delegation to Beijing in early 1964” (p. 32).

Benoit Faucon observes, “it is with Mao’s China, that the cooperation got the closest; in Algiers [during] 1962, Abu Jihad got in touch with the Chinese embassy and travelled to Beijing with Arafat; there, he met Prime Minister Chou en-Lai who told him: ‘I hope I can live to see this revolution;’” soon, Chinese military academies accepted *Fatah* guerrillas, and a plane loaded with Chinese weapons landed at Damascus airport (2010, p. 42). While members of *al-Fatah* received army cadet training from Eastern Bloc member nation-states including North Korea, Vietnam, and Yugoslavia, for Tareq Ismael China was “alone” in the significance it placed on the Palestinian national liberation movement (1986, p. 210).

1.2. *Umkhonto weSizwe* (1962):

Mandela had gone on record as saying, “non-violence was a useless strategy and could never overthrow a white minority regime bent on retaining its power at any cost... violence was the only weapon that would destroy apartheid, and we must be prepared in the near future to use that weapon” (Bonner 2014, p. 164). Philip Bonner points to African National Congress members who enjoyed close ties to South Africa’s communist party, and their efforts to attract the support of the People’s Republic of China; Walter Sisulu attended the Fourth World Festival of Youth and Students in Bucharest during 1953, traveling from there to the U.S.S.R. and the P.R.C.; his proposal to the Chinese communist party was “firmly rebuffed” (2014, pp. 164-164). Having founded *Umkhonto weSizwe*, the “Spearhead of the Nation” (June 1961), Nelson Mandela travelled to Morocco to train with the Algerian National Liberation Front (March 1962).

On trial later for a passport violation during that trip, Mandela testified: “In Africa I was promised support by such men ... Ben Bella, now President of Algeria ...It was Ben Bella who invited me to visit Oujda, the Headquarters of the Algerian Army of National Liberation, the visit which is described in my diary, one of the Exhibits” (Rivonia Trial, 9 October 1963-12 June 1964). In his autobiography, Mandela clarified: “... we spent several days with Dr Mustafa, head of the Algerian mission in Morocco ... At the end of the three days, he sent us to Oujda, a dusty little town just across the border from Algeria ...” (Mandela 1994). At Oujda, Algerian colleagues impressed Mandela with the need to

combine diplomatic, military, and political efforts (Mandela, 2010). Thula Simpson recounts that at the ANC's office in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), seven men—Lucky Sitole, Michael Diro, Mnyamane Hlaya, Patrick Baphela, Peter Metshane, Samuel Balekeng, and T.T. Cholo—are assigned to China for military training.

Welcomed by representatives of the Chinese Peace Committee and the Chinese Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, the seven eventually completed training at the Nanking Military Academy. At the A.N.C.'s office in Livingstone (Zambia) during March 1964, a budget includes 40,000 rand from the U.S.S.R., 36,000R from the People's Republic of China; and 24,000R from the Anti-Apartheid Committee of the U.K. (2016, chapter four). Stephen Ellis and Tshepo Sechaba mention an eighth guerrilla, Joe Gqabi, member of South Africa's communist party. According to Ellis and Sechaba, Gqabi "was trained for 18 months in the Chinese city of Nanking before he was arrested by Rhodesian police in 1963 while helping to spirit volunteers out of South Africa and into exile;" in addition to him, Ellis and Sechaba add the name of a ninth political leader who trained in China, Wilton Mkawayi (1992, p. 45).

1.3. Black Panther Party (1966):

The Black Panther party was founded in Lowndes County, Alabama after the November 1966 general election. Hasan Kwame Jeffries points out that it was due to the high rate of adult literacy, that the organization previously known as the Lowndes County Freedom Organization "selected a snarling black panther as their ballot symbol to meet the state requirement that every political party have a logo." Jeffries adds, "there are several conflicting stories about the origins of the symbol, including one that has [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)] activists choosing it because it reminded them of a fiercely determined local activist; in truth, the logo was the brainchild of SNCC field secretary Ruth Howard, who patterned it after the panther mascot of Clark College in Atlanta GA" (2010, p. 152).

Following Malcolm X's success in establishing the paramilitary group "Fruit of Islam" (as Kathleen Cleaver writes of them, "to their credit, they had perfected a method of recruiting, organizing, and training (although little training was provided) that was unparalleled," 2014, p. 129), as Malcolm X was preparing to address a meeting of the Organization of Afro-American Unity at the Audubon Ballroom in Washington Heights on 21 February 1965, three members of the Nation of Islam (Thomas Hagan, Thomas Johnson, and Norman Butler) assassinated him. One of Malcolm X's bodyguards shot Hagan in the leg, as he

attempted to flee. The following year, Huey Newton, a student at Merritt College in Oakland, member of Afro-American Association (AAA), co-founded a Black Panther Party for Self Defense with Bobby Seale. Newton and Seale adopted Malcolm X's slogan "freedom by any means necessary" as their own.

Released from prison during December 1966, Eldridge Cleaver joined the Oakland-based Black Panther Party (BPP), as its spokesperson (later, Minister of Information). According to Curtis Austin, the "Black Panther Society for Self Defence" provided an alternative to "the perceived unwavering nonviolence of the civil rights movement" (Austin 2006, p. 46). Newton's contributions included a 1968 position paper, "The Correct Handling of a Revolution" (Austin 2006, p. 40), and in the "Functional Definition of Politics" the equation, "politics is war without bloodshed/war is politics with bloodshed" (Bloom and Martin, p. 68). Austin adds, "acquiring guns turned out to be easy; the familiar story of Newton and Seale buying their first weapons with proceeds from peddling Mao Tse-Tung's *Little Red Book* to University of California Berkeley students, told by Seale in his autobiography and by dozens of other Panthers is interesting, even colourful, but not necessarily where their *first* guns came from."

2. Forms of Evidence

Personal experience is an important means of gaining knowledge. Richard Aoki, interned as a prisoner during World War II, and a member of Berkeley's Third World Liberation Front during the 1960s, gave "a M-1 and a 9mm" to Newton and Seale (Austin 2008, p. 56). Of Huey Newton, Kathleen Cleaver writes he: "was uncomfortable with the military development of the [Black Panther Party]" (Cleaver 2014, p. 8). Cleaver adds, after Martin Luther King's assassination (and U.S. Federal authorities' failure to take King's assassin into custody), Bobby Seale called a press conference at the Oakland CA police station to discourage the Black community from rioting. Some knowledge is specific to the time that gave rise to this.

Even as the Oakland organization supported its members' Second Amendment rights, Oakland Panthers condemned the Symbionese Liberation Army's terrorist actions, with both constituting a "failure to adopt an offensive military strategy" (Jones and Jeffries, p. 40). "Few observers will disagree with" Matthew Holden, Jr.'s *The Politics of the Black "Nation"* (as Jones points out, 2001 p. 35) that "black people lack the technical capabilities to wage successfully a military campaign against the United States," rendering the issue of foreign technical assistance secondary. Rather, military struggle was problematic among U.S.-based Panthers for ideological reasons. Jones adds that "Holden is also

correct twenty-five years later that the Black people should be hesitant to depend on Third World countries for political support.”

This information yields the observation that Black Panthers in Algiers were isolated from the main direction of Panther organization. Kathleen Cleaver writes: “given the repression of the BPP and the Black liberation movement [in the United States], the exiled Panthers centered in Algeria believed it was ‘necessary... to advance the armed struggle... we need a people’s army and the Black Panther vanguard will bring that about” (Cleaver 2014, p. 11). Cleaver herself acknowledges that, while in Algeria “the FLN was ... willing to enable the Black Panthers to display their presence publicly, which had symbolic importance in a nation where the United States government was denied formal representation... the military training facility Cleaver had envisioned never materialized” (1998, p. 231). As Jones adds, Cleaver “notes that the international section of the Black Panther Party in Algiers, Algeria was eventually shut down because of the Algerian government’s need to sell liquefied gas to the United States oil companies” (2001, p. 35).

2.1. House Committee on Internal Security: *The Theory and Practice of Communism* (1969):

In addition to personal experience, state proceedings serve as a source of knowledge for a given jurisdiction. In the United States’ Congress, the House of Representative’s Committee on Internal Security was successor to the Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). Established during 1938, HUAC initially investigated allegations disloyalty on the part of organizations, private citizens, public employees suspected of having Communist ties (the local colleagues of those “Trotskyists, anarchists, and all sorts of revolutionaries” who began to gather in Algiers after 1962) in public hearings. During August 1966, openly-defiant witnesses responded to questions from a committee investigating anti-Vietnam War activities, leading the committee to adopt a new name, the “House Committee on Internal Security” in an attempt to reinvent itself during 1969.

Professor of economics at Georgetown University and anti-communist advocate Lev E. Dobriansky, known for his work with the National Captive Nations Committee and chairman of the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, Professor Dobriansky had testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee on the role of Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev in crimes against the Ukrainian people perpetrated by his predecessor, Joseph Stalin during September 1960. Dobriansky returned during 1969, to testify about historical

events. His account of nationalism's role in the Russian Revolution ("similar to what is going on today in Africa and Asia, the Russian Bolsheviks sought, even before the outbreak of World War I, to exploit the good and morally principled cause of national self-determination and independence for their own nefarious ends") assumed that the House Committee followed news of national liberation movements (p. 51).

Herbert "Herb" Romerstein joined the U.S. House of Representatives as a staff member during 1965, employed as investigator for the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), then as minority chief investigator for the House Committee on Internal Security. Romerstein testified with regard to Palestine, tying a complicated knot. On the one hand, "American communists, even those Jewish communists, were repudiated by Jews because of their anti-Semitic activities;" on the other hand, he quoted a 1938 text, "when condemning the terrorist attacks on the Jews in Palestine we must not overlook the peculiar situation in that country where attacks upon the Jews are a by-product of the liberation movement... Arab patriots are fighting against the British mandate" (p. 1860). Unknown to members of the House of Representatives and the committee's staff, newly-inaugurated President Nixon was interested in changing relations with China, in order to take advantage of the adversarial Sino-Soviet relationship since early 1969. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger attempted to establish communications through the governments of Romania and Pakistan. Initially, none of these attempts were successful.

2.2. William Klein, "*Eldridge Cleaver*" (1969)

The Algerian National Film Board (ONCIC) retained William Klein to film the pan-African Cultural Festival. While in Algiers, Klein took the opportunity to film "*Eldridge Cleaver, Black Panther*" for himself. Within Klein's "*Black Panther*" film (which Steven Seid describes as, "a strategically tactful portrait of a militant who relished his own outlaw gestures"²), an unidentified man (presumably Algerian, wearing a distinctive red shirt) asks Cleaver questions—initially, through a female interpreter, then increasingly without interpretation. These begin with the fragmentary, « *aussi quelles sont les moyens quelles les peuples.. pour parvenir la lutte?* » which she translated as, "what are the means you are going to reach your [goals]?" Cleaver replies, "guns, guns" (25:57).

Without requiring interpretation, the man in the red shirt understood the response in French, « *la force* », with the translator off camera clarifying, « *les*

² <http://archive.bampfa.berkeley.edu/film/FN18019>

fusils ». The man in the red shirt countered, « *les fusils, uniquement les fusils?* » then the female translator [Elaine Mokhtefi?] asked the Black Panther Party's Minister of Information: "he asks if it's only guns." Cleaver interrupted the translator to answer, "And bombs. Guns. Just like you had to do it here. The way you did it here, with understanding of the problem, with the ideology for liberation, and with fighting men who put the ideology into practice." The man in the red shirt who asked the initial question responded by raising his eyebrows, « *c'est beau, que puis-je dire,* » then laughed.

Amal Jamal emphasizes the fluidity of *al-Fatah's* political positions. For Jamal, "the concept of *kiyan* ('entity'...) reveals [*al-Fatah's*] pragmatic character; *Fatah* supported this policy from the end of the 1950s until 1964, but abandoned the idea when the [League of Arab States] established the P.L.O. as the Palestinian entity" during 1964 (2005, p. 18). *Al-Fatah* marked the ascendance of a tendency "to overstep the barrier of national unity in order to promote a certain political program, while retaining rhetoric about the importance of this unity for the achievement of the national goals" (2005, p. 61). Klein's film records Cleaver's aspiration to such fluidity for the Panthers.

2.3. *The Black Panther* (1969-1971):

Official newspaper of the Black Panther Party, the *Black Panther* began as a four-page newsletter in Oakland during 1967. Following Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, the 4 May 1968 issue of the *Black Panther* printed official condolences from: the African National Congress, the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), the Arab Students' Organization (ASO), "concerned Black people in Canada," the Federation of University Students for Independence (Puerto Rico), the Japan Council Against Atomic Hydrogen Bombs, the Vietnam Youth Federation Central Committee, and the Zimbabwe African National Union.

According to the 23 August 1969 issue of the *Black Panther*, *al-Fatah* held a press conference on the second day of the Pan-African Cultural Festival in Algiers (for which the Black Panther Party's Minister of Information Eldredge Cleaver had left Cuba). The *Black Panther Party's* newspaper reported: "The room was filled to maximum capacity. Attending the press conference were: Algerian workers, students, and government officials, representatives from the African liberation movements (SWAPO, FRELIMO, MPLA, ZAFU), members of the domestic and foreign press, two embassy representatives from the Peoples Republic of China, and four members of the Black Panther Party Central Committee—Eldridge Cleaver, David Hilliard, Emory Douglas, and Kathleen

Cleaver.” According to the same issue of *The Black Panther*, the hosting delegation was queried: “what is your attitude toward the Black Panther Party?” *Al-Fatah* was reported to have answered, “we support them. Absolutely! And revolutionaries all over the world. We see our battle as one and the same—a fight against imperialism and capitalism—and that fight can’t be divided.”

The issue for 7 June 1969 included an advertisement for the film “Z.” Wit hits Greek director, Spanish screenwriter, and plot based on an assassination in Athens, this is considered an Algerian film on account being filmed on location in Algiers, and on account of the Algerian Ministry of Culture’s support. The 7 June issue of *Black Panther* advertised premiere showings in Los Angeles at the Europa Theater and U.C.L.A.’s Royce Hall, and in the Bay area at the MLK School auditorium, and the Surf Theater. With a \$3.00 requested donation, these screenings were Algerian-subsidized fund-raiser for the Panthers’ U.S.-based programs. Under the headline “know your enemies, know your friends” the cover for the *Black Panther* newspaper’s 16 October 1971 issue was a photograph with the caption, “Huey P. Newton, Servant of the People, with Premier Chou En Lai in the People’s Republic of China;” the Panthers’ relationship with China was largely aspirational at that point in time.

3. The Question of Military Assistance from Palestine:

Let us bear in mind that the Algerian national liberation movement was connected with both South Africa’s *Umkhonto weSizwe* and Palestine’s *al-Fatah* before Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver arrived in Algiers. Let’s also recall that (once the decision had been made to embark on armed struggle) the Algerian national liberation movement, *Umkhonto weSizwe*, and *al-Fatah* benefitted from the support of the People’s Republic of China. This section assesses the role U.S. Government organizations assumed in knowledge-production regarding the Black Panthers, before assessing “strategically tactful” aspects of Cleaver’s presentation of the Panther Party’s military goals.

3.1 *Black Panther Party, Investigation of Kansas City Chapter, National Organization Data (1970):*

Of the U.S. House of Representatives’ Internal Security Committee (“cochaired by Richard Ichord of Missouri and Richardson Preyer of North Carolina”), Bruce Fehn and Robert Jefferson emphasize its disproportionate representation of southern and midwestern Congressional districts, “Claude Pepper from Florida, Edwin Edwards from Louisiana, Louis Stokes and John Ashbrook from Ohio, Richard Roudebush from Indiana, Albert Watson from

South Carolina, and William Scherle from Iowa” (2010, p. 215). While Jeffries described testimony before the House Committee on as: “rumor, innuendo, and speculation intended to reinforce the members’ preconceived notions of the [Black Panther] party as a violent organization” (p. 216), the committee chair foregrounded questions of epistemology.

Just as Dr. King replaced “secure” with “seek,” Committee co-chair Richard H. Ichord (Dem) shared his conservative epistemology with witnesses, “I believe nothing that I hear, about half of what I see, and a smaller percentage of what I read in the newspapers or hear over the television tube” (1970, p. 2614). Yet even with the committee’s preference for testimony delivered under oath, the committee turned to documentation such as the *Black Panther* newspaper (23 August 1969) for *Al-Fatah*’s spokesman’s remark about the Black Panthers (“we support them. Absolutely! And revolutionaries all over the world. We see our battle as one and the same—a fight against imperialism and capitalism—and that fight can’t be divided” as well as CBS News reports, and the AP wire service (pp. 2815-2816). The Committee ascertained the Black Panthers’ connection with the communist government in Beijing through Chairman Mao Tse-Tung’s statement in support of the Afro-American struggle, printed in the *Black Panther*.

The Committee, however, learned that Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver were living in Algeria from published sources (that proceeds from screening the Algerian-produced film “Z” were filling Panther coffers fell from their notice), not from witnesses sworn to tell “the whole truth, the full truth, and nothing but the truth.” Frank Benson Jones was one of few who testified to the Committee under oath. An Air Force veteran and bookstore owner, a conversation with Huey Newton convinced Jones to join the Panthers in Oakland (which he styled the “national headquarters”). Initially a staff writer for the *Black Panther* under Raymond Lewis’ editorship, Jones taught political education classes using *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung* as course text until he became editor of the *Black Panther* (1970, pp. 4749-4756).

3.2. Columbia Broadcasting System (1970):

While Congressman Ichord confessed he believed half of what he heard “over the television tube,” journalist Richard Hottelet of CBS Television reported that *al-Fatah* spokesman “Abu Bassam” in Algiers acknowledged, “giving combat training to a number of American Black Panthers.” From Algiers, CBS television reported that Black Panthers were receiving training in North Vietnam, North Korea, and Cuba “in combat, sabotage, the use of time bombs, and other tactics” (“Al Fatah Eyes Aid to Blacks,” *Austin Statesman*, 3 February 1970).

While Committee co-chair Ichord believed nothing that he heard, about half of what he saw, and a smaller percentage of what he read in the newspapers or heard over the television tube, others were more expansive in their epistemologies. Abu Bassam's statement of *al-Fatah's* support of the Panthers' armed struggle, found its way from CBS Television into local newspapers and in campus newspapers. Similarly, news circulated that the Panthers' enjoyed Chinese support, as when the *Stanford Daily* reported that Huey P. Newton, Elaine Brown and Robert Bay paid a "recent visit to China" which "enabled them to experience many specifics of socialist transformation and establish strong, direct ties between the Chinese people and the Black Panther Party" (Cherry, 25 October 1971).

As if to discount the value of televised news, another spokesperson for *al-Fatah* (in the organization's Amman, Jordan headquarters) told CBS Radio's Michael O. Sullivan, "I firmly deny that we are training Black Panthers in terrorism or sabotage." Furthermore, the Palestinian organization was cutting its ties to other Arab entities, and to other national liberation movements, since *al-Fatah* considered that its battle could be fought only by Palestinians ("Train Black Panthers," 1 February 1970). Finally, any invitation extended to Eldridge Cleaver would be personal (as opposed to an invitation to the Black Panther organization) ("Panther Eldridge" 1 February 1970).

3.3. Gun-Barrel Politics: The Black Panther Party, 1966-1971 (1971):

The Committee on Internal Security held additional hearings on the Black Panthers' strategy and tactics. Chapter V of the report addresses a pilot education program for section leaders that Black Panther Party Minister of Education George Murray had developed in Los Angeles during 1968. The Committee was concerned that a covering letter accompanying mimeographed study kits was "in great part copied, without attribution, from advice given by Mao to his Chinese Red Army troops during 1929, the national office substituting 'the Panther Party' where the name of the Red Army had appeared, instructing its chapters. that defeat of an enemy relied not only on military action but also on political work" (1971, p. 90).

Michael R. Fischbach's new book, *Black Power and Palestine* (2019) asks why Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Muhammad Ali acknowledged the justice underlying Palestinian national cause. Greg Thomas' article, "Blame It on the Sun" (2016) explores "the political significance of a literary 'mistake' made in 1971," when prison guards in the United States confused the literary voices of George Jackson and Samih al-Qasim. Alex Lubin's *Geographies of Liberation* (2014) introduced this new field of research, when it addressed the

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“intercommunalism” of an “anti-imperialist, trans-community politics that united the U.S. Black Panther Party, the PLO, and a group of Arab Jews in Israel who called themselves the Israeli Black Panthers.”

The Committee on Internal Security’s report equated *al-Fatah*’s revolutionary precedent with “fighters in Africa and Latin America [and] Ho Chi Minh in Asia” (p. 91), drawing on the previous hearings’ part four, exhibit 4, to assert that “continuous Panther publicity in 1969 favourable to Arab commando forces dedicated to the destruction of the State of Israel and Cleaver’s contacts with groups such as *Al-Fatah* after reaching Algeria added to alienation of alienation of white sympathizers” (p. 104).

Conclusion: Result of the research and suggestions

What unites these three recent studies is a general emphasis on the non-violent nature of the transnational community of blackness. This article draws on on recently-digitized documents in the Hathi Trust collection, and released via the Freedom of Information Act, to query military aspects of “intercommunalism.” Acknowledging the precedent of Nelson Mandela’s military training with the army of Algeria’s National Liberation movement, this article examines a series of claims that, while in Algeria, the Black Panther Party sought military training with the Palestinian *al-Fatah* organization.

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