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SINCE 1977

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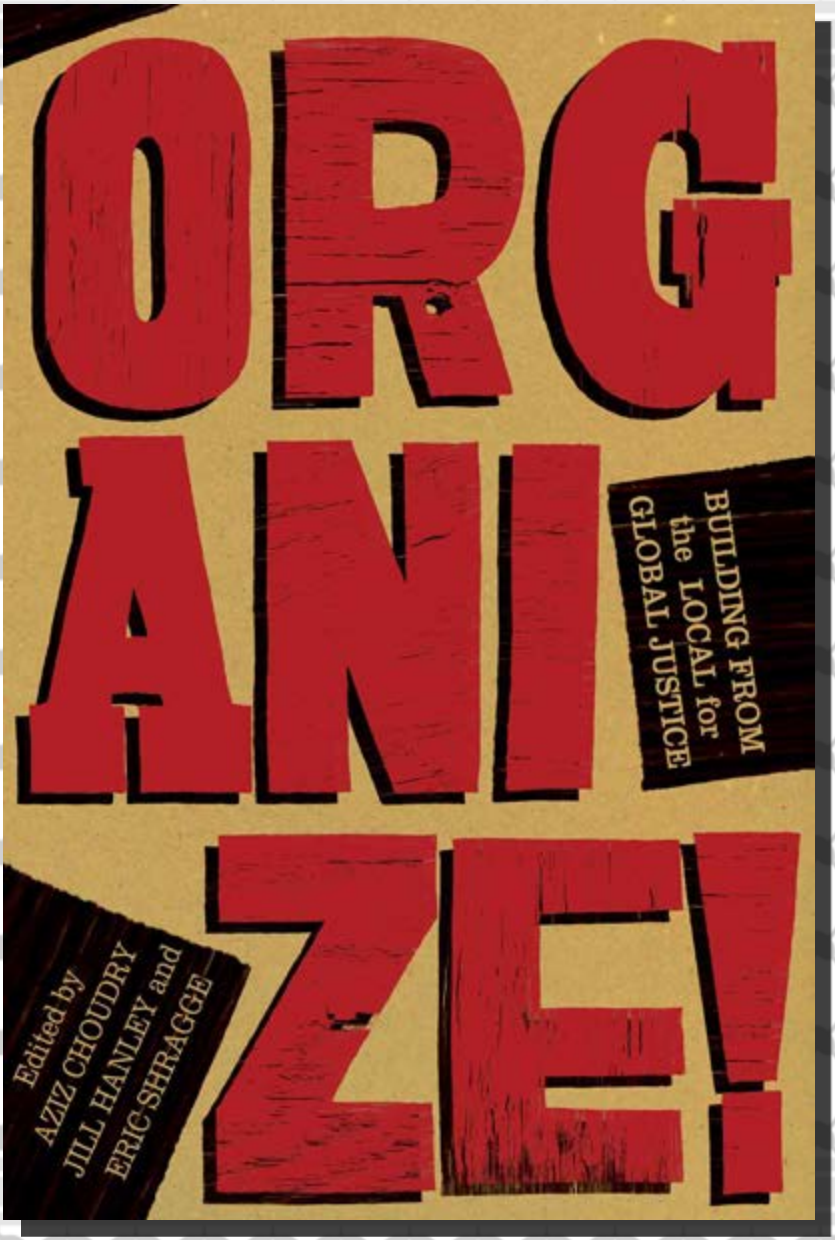
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Edited by
AZIZ CHOUDRY
JILL HANLEY and
ERIC SHRAGGE

Organize!
Building from the Local for Global Justice

Aziz Choudry, Jill Hanley, and Eric Shragge

BTL

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Aziz Choudry, Jill Hanley, and Eric Shragge

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Art for Palestine: "Renarrating" History and the Present

Rafeef Ziadah

The Palestinian author Ghassan Kanafani ends his popular novel *Men in the Sun* with a character questioning why the three Palestinian refugees being smuggled to Kuwait inside a water tank didn't bang on the walls before suffocating to death.[1] Kanafani ends the novel urging Palestinians to "knock on the wall of the water tank," essentially not to die in silence, not to accept the status quo. This novel was written at a specific turning point in Palestinian history, where Palestinian cultural production was central to creating a new national narrative of resistance and in urging the younger generations who found themselves born in exile or under occupation not to quietly accept their new conditions.

Oppositional cultural production from and about Palestine should be seen in the context Kanafani laid out: as loud knocks on the walls (both real and metaphorical) that separate Palestinians from their land and from each other. In an anticolonial context, the relationship of art and politics is clarified as one dominant force is trying to clearly erase the culture of the other. The claim that "art is above politics" is superficial in a situation where artists have no freedom of movement and live under a military occupation or in exile, unable to return to their homes. Art from and about Palestine is embedded within a specific reality and a set of relations between occupier and occupied, oppressor and oppressed. It is thus not

1 Ghassan Kanafani, *Men in the Sun and Other Palestinian Stories* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1978).

above politics, but despite, within, and in relation to politics that cultural production takes place.

There are a few significant ways one can find the intersections between art and politics within the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. First, Palestinian artists and cultural workers insist on continuing to produce art despite the brutality of Israeli occupation in an act of defiance, as well as an act of reasserting identity. Second, artists around the world are producing works for the specific use of the social movements in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. Thirdly, artists are withholding their work from the Israeli state in support of the cultural boycott called for by Palestinian civil society. This chapter will focus mainly on the first two ways, showing how organizers across social movements can benefit from some of the experiences the Palestine solidarity movement has been through in relation to cultural production (of course the three elements listed above are interlinked and arguably would not exist without one another).

I will begin by discussing some concrete examples of organizing I have been involved with, showing how cultural production in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle helps to break the parameters of the debate around Palestine and disrupts the status quo. One of the main objectives of art in relation to Palestine is to make visible the unseen and unspoken in mainstream discourse. When the Palestinian narrative is so purposefully erased from the mainstream, art allows for a creative rewriting of the visual landscape. Secondly, I will describe my own personal experience as a spoken word poet within the Palestinian diaspora and what it has meant to renarrate Palestine in exile.

Israeli apartheid has not only attempted to cast Palestinians out of the land, but also out of history itself by claiming they never existed in the first place, physically changing the geography and violently silencing any attempts to hold onto a national identity. This process, which Ahmad Sa'di describes as an "important strategy of un-narration" is designed to simply erase the victims from history—along with their culture of course. This chapter argues that cultural production is an important element of resistance against this "un-narration"—indeed, it is a persistent *renarration* of Palestine.[2]

2 Ahmad Sa'di, "Reflections on Representations, History and Moral Accountability," in *Nakba: Palestine, 1948 and the Claims of Memory*, ed. Ahmad Sa'di and Lila Abu-Lughod (New York: Columbia, 2007), 288.

Art in Palestine Solidarity Activism: Having the Conversation on Our Terms

Edward Said often stressed the importance of "writing back" to imperialism, and most specifically to Zionism by "telling the story of Palestine." Today, the story of Palestine is being retold around the globe, in many languages, through different art forms—visual art, poems, posters, hip hop, film, etc. Where Israeli apartheid has tried to separate and fragment the Palestinian people, art has acted as a connector between different groups of Palestinians and the outside world as well. For example, there are Palestinian hip hop groups living under occupation in Gaza and the West Bank, others living as second-class citizens in Israel, and some in refugee camps in Lebanon as well as in exile in the Diaspora—their art form connects them despite their different situations. Importantly, these new forms of cultural production that are reaching new audiences and raising questions about Palestine are spreading *despite* the so-called democratic media of the West and not *because* of it. As a matter of fact, the parameters of the mainstream debate on Israel/Palestine are very narrow. Palestinians and their supporters find themselves having to respond to accusations of anti-Semitism or being "terrorist supporters" before being allowed to put their case forward in any way. A cursory look at any television program concerning the Arab world is enough to give a sense of the orientalist notions Palestinians are always framed by and the selective historiography presented. An excellent study conducted by the Glasgow Media Group and later published as a book entitled *Bad News from Israel* explained how mainstream television viewers ended up more confused about the situation in Palestine after watching the news.[3]

The strength of using art in activism transcends these parameters that are set for us and allows for a different framing that is in our control, instead of being trapped inside their "water tanks" and responding to their formulations; poetry, posters, and music allow us to engage with different communities starting the conversations on our own terms.

The space for engagement between art and Palestinian activism has become particularly clear after a call was made by Palestinian popular organizations in 2005 to adopt a strategy of boycott, divestment, and sanctions (BDS) against Israel in the manner of the campaign launched against South African apartheid. Since its launch the BDS movement has seen

3 Greg Philo and Mike Berry, *Bad News from Israel* (London: Pluto Press, 2004).

many successes, including union divestment resolutions, student academic boycott initiatives, and consumer boycott campaigns. As with the South African antiapartheid movement, the cultural boycott has also been at the heart of the BDS movement with artists refusing to perform in Israel and others around the world from Montreal, Ireland, and significantly South Africa signing declarations that they will heed the boycott call.

In the Canadian context, cultural production has been a key component of this growing BDS movement, most significantly through poster art. Creating appealing posters and stickers (and raising the funds to produce them) only happens when cultural production is seen as a central component of a movement and not an additive. The use of compelling visuals, as well as creatively finding locations to post them allows the process of renarrating Palestine to take place more effectively. Not having the resources to take out expensive advertising in mainstream papers, the entire city then becomes a canvas for the messages of a social movement and every wall a space to assert that the solidarity movement will not be silenced by censorship.

This has been the case with the Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) posters. IAW began at the University of Toronto in 2005 as an educational week of lectures around the nature of Israel as an apartheid state. Over the past several years, IAW has grown to be a well-coordinated international effort with more than fifty cities hosting the week in 2010 with a program that spanned lectures, demonstrations, cultural performances, and film screenings. The main aim of IAW is to help build support for the BDS campaign.

The poster for the week is anticipated every year, just as much as the lecture series itself because the poster was conceived of as a stand-alone work of art. The effectiveness of the poster to communicate the Palestinian narrative was unfortunately highlighted by the fact that it was banned on several university campuses for IAW 2009.

This was a particularly important year because IAW came only several months after Israel's war on the people of Gaza. The poster was created by cartoonist Carlos Latuff and it depicted the Israeli bombardment of Gaza with a helicopter aiming at a child holding a teddy bear.

Carleton University, in Ottawa, was the first to ban the IAW poster. The Carleton Equity Service took down the posters arguing they "could be seen to incite others to infringe rights protected in the Ontario Human Rights code" and are "insensitive to the norms of civil discourse in a free and democratic society." Those who drafted this statement remained oblivious

to the Orwellian nature of their actions—banning a poster in the name of "free and democratic society." Following Carleton, the University of Ottawa became the second to ban the poster using similar arguments. Other universities (Wilfrid Laurier, Trent) also stopped the poster from being circulated using the same type of justification. Unfortunately for these university administrations, this banning only made the poster more popular. It was reproduced as a sticker and posted on most university campuses across Canada. Ironically the banning also forced the debate around Palestine into the open in Canadian mainstream media, which in turn had to reproduce the poster being discussed. But this time the debate was happening on different terms, around the use of the term "apartheid." The tables had been turned and it was the censorship being questioned.

Organizers of IAW would not have imagined that the poster would be reprinted (in full color) in the *National Post* (a conservative Canadian newspaper) for example. The lectures for IAW of 2009 came and went, but the poster from that year became a symbol of fighting back against censorship. In a recent trip to speak at the first Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions conference in Australia, I saw the same poster reproduced there as well. The poster has traveled the globe to tell the story of Gaza, while Palestinians there remain trapped in an open-air prison under Israeli siege.

Mainstreaming Palestine through Film

Along with poster art, another important area of cultural work in support of Palestinian human rights is film. One can see this in the diversity of films being produced from and about Palestine, and the myriad Palestinian film festivals taking place across Europe and North America. In creating the Toronto Palestine Film Festival (TPFF) specifically, one of the explicit aims was to bring the Palestinian narrative into mainstream discourse. TPFF was launched in 2008, on the sixtieth anniversary of the expulsion

of Palestinians from their land (referred to by Palestinians as *Al-Nakba*—Arabic for catastrophe).

The main focus of TPFF was reaching an entirely new audience who might have never heard the Palestinian narrative before. Much of the initial work of establishing the festival was coming to a consensus on this vision and then ways of implementing it. In its first year TPFF ran for a week with evening and weekend screenings of thirty-six films (shorts, features, and documentaries). All screenings took place in accessible venues; festival organizers also put tremendous efforts into keeping the ticket prices as low as possible, so as not to make that a hindrance to attendance. In its second year the festival grew to include an art exhibit and a Palestinian breakfast. For each of its initial three years TPFF has attracted more than four thousand people, with a different outreach slogan and creative promotional campaign. Organizers secured grants from the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council and a host of community businesses that wanted to support the effort.

Through this process we were told many times that funding from banks and corporations would be forthcoming if the festival was changed to an Arab film festival instead of a Palestine one, and that the word "Palestine" in and of itself implies controversy and could keep funders away. But that was precisely the point of the festival, to bring these contradictions to the forefront and to highlight the word "Palestine" instead of shying from it. The purpose of the festival was inserting Palestine into the mainstream discourse and normalizing discussions about its history, and in that TPFF has been successful. The idea is not to dilute the politics through art, but to creatively challenge silence around Palestine through art. It was important for festival organizers to let the films speak for themselves and allow the audience the space to reflect on what they were watching in an unassuming environment. The idea was to crack the walls of silence around the Palestinian narrative ever so slightly and this meant believing that once an audience saw a different view of Palestine (not colored by media bias), they would at least begin to question the story of Palestine as it has been told to them. The films selected were from every genre (and not only documentaries) so that every filmgoer would find something they could enjoy. Also, great care was taken to coordinate with various community organizations on specific film subjects (for example, environmental organizations were contacted about films to do with the environment in Palestine so they could promote the films to their networks—this process really allowed the

festival to reach new crowds beyond the usual core for Palestine solidarity organizers).

However, the real challenge was creating appealing visuals and messaging that would attract a new audience despite the negative stereotypes of Arabs and Palestinians. This required us to leave our comfort zones, the rhetoric we are used to, the usual visuals and actually research a new mode of presentation. The real art was to create a noncorporate festival that was as organized and appealing as the corporate ones. The festival's image was not produced as an afterthought, but as an essential part of the creative process to make the festival happen.

It is interesting to note that, aside from the major films being shown in festivals, activist filmmaking is beginning to play a key role in the Palestinian-led BDS movement as well. Filmmakers are producing short films (being spread on YouTube) urging artists not to perform in Israel. Excellent examples, are those produced by filmmaker John Greyson, one film urging Elton John not to go to Israel, the second entitled *Vuvuzela* is a play on the theme of the soccer World Cup, recapping artists who refused to perform in Israel and urging others not to go. These shorts are an inspiring example of artists thinking outside the box, using parody and humor to get the message across.

There is also the growing number of creative BDS actions being filmed around the world, from flashmobs to silent walkouts. These short films act to connect the movement across geographical areas and inspire actions worldwide. For example, students at the University of Michigan staged a silent walkout when an Israeli soldier came to speak on their campus; it was filmed and resulted in similar walkouts at other universities where Israeli soldiers were scheduled to speak.

Artists Against Apartheid

The ongoing concert series in Montreal entitled Artists Against Apartheid (AAA) has been yet another angle to link art with the growing BDS movement. Constantly highlighting strong musical talents, the series is held in solidarity with the call from Palestinian civil society for boycott, divestment, and sanctions from Israeli apartheid and is organized by Tadamon!, a Montreal collective working in solidarity with Palestine. The strength of the AAA concerts is the way in which they interlink the performances with the lived reality of Palestinians. The concert becomes an opportunity to highlight certain facets of the Palestinian struggle, while simultaneously

bringing artists together as vocal antiapartheid activists. This is a crucial mix of music and BDS activism all in one space, where music is not reduced to a cliché, but valued on its own terms in a political context.

Spoken word poetry allows for a similar opening that the AAA concerts do—it gives the space to renarrate Palestine to different audiences, while making connections with other artists who write about social justice. It is true that spoken word, like other art forms is losing some of its radical roots as it mainstreams, but there is still a core of poets who see their work as part of a larger project for social transformation. Perhaps naively however, I never thought my poetry would be an issue in my immigration interview at the Canadian immigration center in Buffalo, New York. It was blatant in that small room, however, with just me and an immigration officer carrying out his interrogation, that Western slogans of freedom of expression, selectively applied, seem to collapse at the footsteps of the Palestinian narrative. Sometime between the routine questions about my travels, the officer pulled out an article written in the Zionist press about my poetry, the claims being the poetry incites violence. The article referred to a specific incident where I performed at a Toronto high school. The majority of the poems I presented that day were actually about violence against women in Canada, but one was about Palestine.

The specific offending line was, "I want to write a poem like my grandfather's smile when they stole his land." One student didn't appreciate this line; he reported feeling "uncomfortable" to his teacher. His family went on to report this to the board of education. And there I was in a small room in Buffalo, my lawyer not allowed to come in with me, being told "these people are writing that you support terrorism, they are Canadian citizens, so I have to question you about this, we need to make sure if you come into the country you are not a danger to our citizens."

To begin with, forgetting about the artistic merits of the poem—it is factual. My grandfather's land was stolen when Israel was created. He was not allowed to return, and he was internally displaced living only two hours away inside the newly created state of Israel. I agree this fact would make some feel uncomfortable if they support this dispossession and theft.

At the time, the festival hosting the event I performed in conjunction with were contacted, and luckily they supported me. The Toronto district school board on the other hand decreed that such performances in schools would have to be vetted by the board from that point forward. Needless to say, I have not performed in a high school since. The immigration interview

did emphasize to me, however, the effect that art can have in wider political organizing. Those who hold power don't see art as "neutral," "apolitical," or just a form of entertainment. I have found that poetry can go places that no leaflet or political slogan can go. It reaches and connects with people at a different level—speaking directly to their emotional being. It stirs anger, pain, hope, and love—the necessary feelings that inspire revolutionary action and help to maintain us as political beings for the long term. Poetry allows for a renarration of Palestine in ways that are not just different to a political speech, but act to fill in the blank spaces that political speech necessarily leaves behind. This runs against the notions of art that are often conveyed to us in this world of never-ending commodification—*the best art is not just political, it is political in different ways*.

Implications for Social Movements

The examples above highlight a few important lessons that translate across social movements. Firstly, that art produced within social movements must be conceived of as an integral part of the organizing process from the beginning of a campaign through to its end. If the purpose is to attract people and inform them, then images we choose must be appealing to a wide audience, but for this to happen the messages and visuals must be at the core of a campaign, not an afterthought to it.

Secondly, art allows for debate and contestation around the use of public space. In most urban centers there is an increase in laws that criminalize the use of public space for art; as in graffiti laws in Toronto for example or expensive insurance policies introduced to limit the ability of activist organizations to rent out public space. Along with this we witness the intense commodification of space for corporate purposes to the extent that one can no longer use a bathroom stall without an advertisement trying to sell us something. Art in social movements, is not therefore simply about the final form, but also the struggle to regain public space and to regain a slight bit of our humanity where we are not simply consumers, but beings that enjoy artistic expression.

Third, social movements must work against the distinction between types of cultural workers that fetishizes art produced in the academy as a higher form of art than that produced in/for/about social movements. This does not mean that social movement art should be hastily done with no focus on content or skill, but rather that we have to create within movements the space for people to develop skill in their particular crafts (and

that those spaces should not be relegated only to universities and those who can afford art schools).

Lastly, art has to be critical and self-reflexive as well. Many times activist groups are afraid to push the boundaries of their cultural production and remain within the confines of a specific aesthetic and rhetoric. Its critical to have different elements of art and not rely on the shock value of images all alone—for example Palestinian comedians have been able to raise the question of Palestine in very interesting ways bringing it to new audiences. But along with experimenting with different art forms, the art itself needs to reflect the contradictions in social movements as well and not shy away from being a tool for self-criticism.

Conclusion

When Palestinians are stripped of their history and fixed in a colonial gaze that subjugates them, deeming them inferior and cultureless, cultural production is an act of resistance and it is inherently political. What I've called the process of renarrating Palestine is not just geared toward the outside world, but also for the Palestinian people, to empower our self-expression and reclaim humanity against Israeli war machinery. But this renarration is not static; it is not simply repeating old art forms to keep them alive (though that is important) it is also creatively pushing ourselves to create newer art that speaks to the current stage of the struggle.

The reality is that the Palestinian story has gone beyond Israel's walls and checkpoints, beyond Western media bias, and is being told in ever more creative ways in ever more creative locations. And interestingly art allows us to have the discussions about Palestine on our own terms, to reject and shift the parameters imposed on us. This does not apply only to those living under direct colonialism, but those trying to fight for social justice on any front, asserting our existence; reclaiming space through culture is an essential component of our organizing. Most successful social movements have left behind them a legacy of music, plays, and poster art; this is not an accident of history. Back in Buffalo, I could have explained to the officer that I wrote my first poem after being told by a Zionist that I "deserve to be raped before I have my terrorist children." But this was not the space to speak about the Nakba, the fragmentation of the Palestinian people, Israel's violence against Palestinians (supported by the Canadian state, among others). There was also no interest in poetry as such, as an art form—this was an interrogation room and I had to prove that I am not a

terrorist, terrorist supporter, or that I would write anything to incite violence. I mustered the one line I could: it's poetry, sir.

Chronologies

Chronologies—with no purpose
just dates upon dates and dates
to remind us we once existed over There.
Years are only names for massacres
48
67
20 something and waiting
the dead are numbered
listed, graphed, mapped
and clustered in phosphorus
wrapped neatly in statistic.

20 something and waiting
long enough in visa lines
to carve out a home of fake smiles and documents
to know I am from There and unwanted anywhere else.

The There they accuse us of
The There of stories told in shelters in Beirut
by grandparents, voices trembling
not knowing if they will see There ever again.
"the Oranges There taste different, ya benti"

20 something and waiting
to negotiate or not negotiate
to apologize for our own Nakba
accept exile and pray forgetfulness
and "be practical" child
be "pragmatic" child
"the refugees are the last stumbling block"
so they negotiate us away
"they will never let you return" child
as if… as if we need permission to be from There
or had a choice to be from somewhere else.

20 something and waiting
for another boat to break another siege
for mothers to make miracles raising children
only on water and lentils and no shoes for school
for some to let us be human and work
others to just let us be.
Palestinian and return.

There will be more boats
I will sit in one—curled up in a memory
that still smells of lead and concrete
my children will learn to play
by a beach in Yaffa, they will tell stories
of how long we waited
to come back There.
20 something and waiting.

Organizing and the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Strategy: The Turn to BDS in Palestine Solidarity Politics in Montreal

Brian Aboud

This paper is about organizational practice in Montreal as it pertains to the advancement and attainment of the objectives of an international political undertaking. The undertaking seeks, by means of a strategy, and an accompanying analysis, to achieve a change in prevailing conditions for Palestinians in Palestine-Israel and elsewhere. In general terms, the change is expected to bring about measurably improved circumstances in economic, political, and social life. The strategy comprises three main components, each meant to direct actions against some feature of the institutional and systemic supports of the Israeli state's exercise of oppressive power over Palestinians. The components are: (a) the implementation of boycott actions directed against specific products, organizations, institutions and events; (b) divestment, or the withdrawal of investment funds from and the conscious refusal to invest funds in specified private or public corporate entities; and (c) sanctions, or the imposition of specific punitive measures by national states against the state of Israel.[1]

Known popularly by the three terms "boycott, divestment, and sanctions" or more succinctly as "BDS," the strategy is put into effect and advanced consciously and explicitly within the domain of popular-level, political activism in Montreal. Its deployment and the pursuit of its goals have taken the form of a range of practices that we may suitably qualify as

1 For a more complete account of these components see the website Global BDS Movement: Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions for Palestine, http://www.bdsmovement.net.

organizational: they are planned, publicized, and carried out on a collective or group basis (although, also individually) and they tend, in a fairly coherent, systematic, and sustained way, toward the attainment of some identifiable end. These practices include, but are not limited to the following: planning and decision-making on a sustained basis; aggregating and managing resources; producing, communicating and diffusing information; creating distinctive formal structures of deliberative, cooperative and collaborative work (associations, collectives, committees, coalitions); and conceiving, managing, executing actions and projects.

This chapter examines organizational practice in reference to the deployment, implementation and advancement of the BDS strategy and, more generally, in reference to BDS politics in Montreal.[2] It does so by addressing two main questions: first, it queries the architecture of this politics asking whether there is an evident and identifiable pattern or structure of relations and interaction within and across formal associative groupings that may be indicative of an emergent or existent associational network; second, it queries the conceptual content of this politics asking what the objectives, guiding principles and lines of analysis and argument are in organizational work that aims consciously at advancing the BDS strategy. In focusing the discussion on these two sets of questions, the hope is to come to a better understanding of developments in organizational practice generally but also to grasp what challenges have been and continue to be encountered, what strategies have been adopted in the face of challenges and what achievements have been attained. The discussion draws on documentary sources, interviews, and personal observations of organizational activity.[3]

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2 In this chapter, I qualify BDS as a "strategy," for the most part. The various actions undertaken in the pursuit and advancement of the strategy as well as the aggregate of interactions that results, I qualify, together, as "BDS politics." It is worth noting that in addition to "strategy" other terms are used in talk and in the literature on BDS to qualify the type of human artifact or undertaking it is: "movement" (i.e., Abigail Bakan and Yasmeen Abu Laban, "Palestinian Resistance and International Solidarity: The BDS Campaign," *Race and Class* 5, 1 [2009]; Noura Erakat, "BDS in the USA, 2001–2010," *Middle East Report* 255 [2010]); "campaign" (i.e., Bakan and Abu Laban, "Palestinian Resistance"; Omar Barghouti, *Boycott, Désinvestissement Sanctions: BDS contre l'apartheid et l'occupation de la Palestine* [Montreal: Lux Editeur, 2010]); "idea," "concept," "outlook" (i.e., Barghouti, *BDS*, 37). Often, it is qualified as, at once, several, if not all, of the preceding.

3 Interviews were conducted with three individuals active and directly engaged in BDS organizing in Montreal. A set of common, open-ended questions were asked of each interviewee. Observational data includes specific notes prepared over several months at the end of 2010 while attending or participating in public and semipublic events held under the BDS banner.

The Emergence and Continuity of BDS Politics and Organizational Praxis in Montreal

In Montreal, political work that consciously and explicitly deploys and promotes a BDS strategy has its beginnings in 2005–2006. It was during this period that activists in Montreal, individually and under the auspices of existing Palestine solidarity organizations, planned and put into effect actions and campaigns that were intended to advance BDS aims. The catalyst for this turn in local Palestine solidarity politics was the call, issued by Palestinian civil society actors on July 9, 2005, for "international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era."[4] In Montreal, the early responses to the call took the form of two main initiatives pursued under separate organizational auspices and drawing, more or less, on common support bases.

One initiative, and by all accounts the first chronologically, was a consumer boycott campaign focused on wines and spirits produced in Israel and, more particularly, in the part of the Golan Heights occupied by Israel and that were being sold in branches of the Société des alcools du Québec.[5] A second called on consumers to boycott Canadian retail bookstores Indigo and Chapters, both of which are run by the Canadian company Indigo Books and Music Inc. The stores became the object of a boycott call because the majority shareholders of Indigo Books and Music Inc., Heather Reisman and Gerry Schwartz, are founders and key financial supporters of the Heseg Foundation, an organization that provides financial assistance to young people who are not born in Israel but elect voluntarily to migrate to Israel to serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and remain in Israel after they have completed their military service.[6]

It should be pointed out that the author has been engaged in Palestine solidarity work over the entire period of explicit BDS organizing in Montreal covered in this paper although not directly or instrumentally engaged in BDS organizing specifically.

4 Global BDS Movement, "Palestinian Civil Society."

5 The campaign was launched by a number of member-organizations of the Coalition pour la Justice et la Paix en Palestine. While Israeli-made wines were named as the first target of the campaign, the products of the company Caterpillar—manufacturer of bulldozers used by the Israeli military in the demolition of Palestinian homes—were also identified as subject to boycott. See: Coalition pour la Justice et la Paix en Palestine, "Pour que cesse l'occupation."

6 The campaign was launched in December 2006 by the Toronto-based Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (CAIA), (CAIA "Boycott Chapters/Indigo"). For a fuller account of the reasons for the boycott of the Indigo and Chapters stores, see CAIA, "Heseg Boycott Factsheet."

The campaign on Golan wines saw a gradual decline in momentum and, after a period of time, ceased to be pursued consistently and actively. The campaign focused on the bookstores continues to be pursued into the present, but has seen changes over time in its organizational configuration and modus operandi.[7] Since these beginnings in 2005–06, there has been ongoing and consistent integration of a BDS strategy in Palestine-solidarity work and organizing in Montreal.

In October 2010, this first five-year stretch of BDS work reached something of a point of culmination with the holding, in Montreal, of a three-day weekend conference devoted to an examination of the conceptual bases, arguments and terms of practice of BDS politics, to an exchange of ideas for advancing a BDS strategy and to the planning of future tactics and initiatives. The conference may be signaled as a potential defining juncture for organizing for several reasons: it was unprecedented (it was the first time that a stand-alone public conference devoted to the subject of BDS was held in the city); it was wide-ranging in scope, addressing questions of practice and strategy across a comprehensive selection of sectors (i.e., economic, cultural, educational); it assembled actors from a diversity of domains and contexts (i.e., labor, education, the arts, Palestinian civil society, Canadian activist networks); and it created a space for the establishment and strengthening of associational ties.

BDS Organizing: Structure and Process

The October 2010 conference is a suitable starting point for considering the structural configuration of BDS politics in Montreal. The conference was not organized, officially, by a single organizational actor, but, rather—as documentation on the conference indicates—by a number of coorganizers.[8] Yet, for the purposes of this discussion, it is important to note that the conference project emerged out of a single and particular organizational initiative and accompanying deliberative space.[9] The initiative has its beginnings in the latter half of 2009 and consisted in the formation of a committee or collective of activists whose purpose was to better coordinate the deployment and promotion of a BDS strategy in Montreal and, more

7 In 2010, the campaign is sustained largely by the Montreal-based Palestine solidarity group Palestiniens et Juifs Unis/Palestinians and Jews United (PAJU).

8 For a full list of conference organizers, see: BDS 2010 Conference Organizing Committee, "Conférence Montréal"; BDS 2010 Conference Organizing Committee, "Conference Program."

9 In large part, this discussion draws on interviews conducted for the preparation of this chapter.

broadly, in Quebec. The initiative, which came to be pursued under the appellation "BDS-Quebec" or "Comité BDS-Québec," was expressive of a view that, as the frequency of public actions undertaken for the explicit purpose of advancing BDS was increasing, and as BDS was becoming a more consistent element of the discourse on Palestinian liberatory politics worldwide, there was a need to enhance exchange, cooperation, and resource sharing among associational groupings pursuing the BDS strategy in Montreal.

The BDS-Quebec initiative was not conceived with a view to setting up a permanent, formal organizational structure, but rather to achieve a greater degree of interorganizational cooperation and both to enhance coherence and to bridge some divisions that seemed to be emerging in BDS work. Perhaps most notably, the division of concern was the one that took the form of a certain lack of convergence in BDS work between actors working in French and addressing and appealing to French-speaking audiences and supporters, and those working in English and organizing activities and events in settings that attracted largely English-speaking audiences. This divergence in organizing and activism reflects an entrenched and longstanding pattern in Palestine-solidarity work in Montreal wherein associations, not necessarily by conscious design, function more in one of the two languages than the other and find their support and membership base similarly weighted in favor of one linguistic group or the other. Attempts by associations to redress such imbalances on their own meet with mixed results. Consequently, organizational arrangements like coalitions are seen as possible ways of bridging such division or divergence. At its inception and initiation, BDS-Quebec was seeking a greater measure of balance on the linguistic front insofar as the advancement of the strategy was concerned. While not seeking to become formally constituted in organizational terms, the initiative did seek to introduce a new element of structure in collective organizational practice by creating a space of and for enhanced collaboration and integration within the emerging network of associations engaged in the advancement of the BDS strategy.

At the time of this writing, the sphere of political work on BDS is characterized structurally by a configuration of associative relations that is more horizontal than vertical in shape, relatively decentralized, but wherein the pattern of interactions is sufficiently stable and regular to constitute an identifiable and fairly distinctive network of relations. Within this network, there is a core comprising a number of associations (between

four and five).[10] These latter share the features of being explicitly and publicly engaged in the pursuit of a BDS strategy and, also, having the Middle East, in part or in whole, as a contextual focus of concern and interest. Their constitution as the network core is determined, more particularly, by a sustained pattern of interrelations that take the form of the cosponsorship of events, the issue of statements or declarations of support for each other's events and undertakings and the carrying out of mutually supportive mobilization efforts. Further, the actors that compose the core are distinguished by their regular participation in planning and strategizing for the advancement of BDS at the level of the municipality and the Province and by their general agreement on tactics, and, perhaps more significantly, on the reasons for particular tactical choices and on the premises and content of the general argument that is being made about Palestine-Israel in and through events and actions that explicitly seek to advance the BDS strategy.[11]

Immediately beyond this core is a set of associations and groupings linked to it by means of interactions and relations that are fairly consistent and relatively intense. These include international solidarity organizations—progressive in outlook and with a BDS orientation in their analysis and action on the Palestine-Israel question[12]—as well as trade unions and union-related organizations that have expressly endorsed a BDS strategy.[13] At a further degree of distance from the core, there is an additional set of associations whose ties to the core are looser, and less regular and

10 I use the term "associations" and "organizations" more or less interchangeably. In both cases, I refer to any instance of a voluntary grouping of persons, consciously constituted in collective terms and bearing the features of some measure of procedural formality and public existence: for instance, a designation by which it is publicly identified, a recurring public presence, a record of public communication, a decision-making process, some form of membership and a protocol that sets terms of adherence, participation or membership. However, I use the term "organization" when the organizational entities of reference are large in scale, complex in configuration and, characterized by evident formality in roles, task distribution and operations (for example, trade unions).

11 BDS-Quebec is at once a member of this core and also a space where the core associations, along with others, meet, deliberate and plan. I have chosen not to refer to individual associative actors by name in this sketch of the network for several reasons: accuracy (there is a fluidity of position in the network and the location of actors in the network can and does change); relevance (it is the overall configuration of the network and the flow, pattern and quality of relations that is relevant rather than which specific associations are positioned at different locations of the network).

12 It is worth noting that this category of actors would include organizations that express a progressive Jewish outlook critical of Zionism or explicitly anti-Zionist.

13 Among these latter would be included student-centered collectives.

intense, but which maintain relations of a formal to semiformal type with the associations in the core and other actors in the network. These latter may also be contributors to and participants in the BDS-Quebec space. They include organizations that are internationalist in outlook or have an orientation and analysis that gives primacy to human rights, equality, and social justice.

Additionally, it is worth mentioning that the sphere of BDS politics includes some associations that, at present, have only tenuous and irregular links to the emergent network. These include: organizations explicitly advancing a BDS strategy but, for various reasons, function at a distance to the network; associations that share an interest in the Palestine question, seek to promote Palestinian interests and, also, give occasional support to BDS actions and initiatives but are not explicit, consistent or public advocates of BDS (i.e., community-level associations defined as Arab or Muslim); organizations positioned on the Left intellectually and analytically and that include among their political engagements support for the Palestinian cause and recognize, in some measure, the merits of BDS as a strategy while also lending support to BDS activities (publicizing and attending events, agreeing to endorsements).

Finally, a characterization of this field of political action and work must acknowledge a set of key strategic ties that bear on organizational work—ties to the international hub or center of BDS organizing and strategizing, namely the BNC (the Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee) and to one of its members, PACBI (Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel).[14]

In sum, we may characterize the sphere of BDS politics as, in general terms, still emergent and still in a process of definition structurally. There is an evident clustering of activity and resources (largely informational and mobilizational) around a small core of local associations. There is an extension of interorganizational relations and ties beyond the core in the range of two gradations according to the consistency, intensity, depth, and regularity of relations and interactions. The network also includes at its periphery, associations that have tenuous ties to the constituents of the core and of the inner gradients. There is also fluidity and variability within and across the gradations. The members of the network, especially at the

14 It is worth noting that the October 2010 BDS conference in Montreal was organized in coordination with the BNC (Conference Program). For a full list of BNC members see "Links" at www.bdsmovement.net.

deeper levels of the structure, share a decidedly progressive, critical, leftist analytic and normative stance.

Associations whose analytic and normative positions are informed by a liberal (center-Left) political-philosophical outlook tend to be either pursuing BDS independent of the main cluster or to be pursuing Palestinian solidarity outside the BDS framework entirely. Associative groupings that are concerned with international affairs and are positioned to the political center or right on matters of state-society relations, economic life, and global politics are not evidently contributing to BDS in any respect. In fact, in some cases, associations of this latter category may be decidedly hostile to the BDS strategy and may be working actively to counter its advance in Palestine-solidarity organizing and activism.

BDS Organizing: Purpose, Principles, and Analysis

The emergence, existence and persistence of BDS politics and organizational work in Montreal is tied to a conscious commitment among a number of individuals to advance by organized, collective means a program for significant change in Palestine-Israel. This change may be summed up as liberating Palestinians from the conditions of extreme oppression under which they live. This condition is seen to be the result, first and foremost, of a power relationship between the Zionist Israeli state, on one hand, and, on the other, the Palestinian population over which it exercises rule.[15] The power relationship, in its general expression, is defined as and by colonialism or settler colonial domination. The specific form of this colonial relation is designated in BDS discourse most often as apartheid but also as occupation. The term apartheid (as well as occupation) describes the structural and systemic features of economic and political life for Palestinians within Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza, historically and in the present, as well as the particularities of rule in Palestine-Israel as they are manifest in policies, laws, regulations, and routine practices of the Israeli state and its agents and agencies with respect to Palestinians (for example: laws and regulations that are exclusionary or discriminatory in fact or in effect; a range of everyday restrictions, impediments and prohibitions to which Palestinians are subject specifically and exclusively under Israeli military rule in the West Bank; various exceptional, large-

15 The concern in BDS organizing with challenging oppression extends to other settings (national, regional, global) but has the context of Palestine-Israel as a primary focus.

scale projects and technologies of control and management of territory and population such as the system of walls, fences, and roads installed in the West Bank by Israeli authorities to effect a more physical separation between people and territories in Palestine-Israel).[16]

Conditions seen as antithetical to or limiting of human liberty, self-development and actualization, choice, equality of treatment and opportunity and dignity are thus the overriding object of attention and concern in BDS organizing. This overriding object contributes an element of coherence and cohesion to the pursuit of the BDS strategy locally and internationally. This is further achieved through the role of several key organizational instances—international, regional, and national—that serve as centers or focal nodes of the global network and provide a measure of conceptual coherence and practical guidance (i.e., the BNC). Most important among the sources of conceptual coherence is the "Palestinian United Call" of July 9, 2005, which names three obligations that Israel must meet, but that function, also, as three objectives or outcomes that BDS, as a strategy for change, seeks to achieve.[17] Interestingly, the "United Call" is said to have been the catalyst for the successful 2009 divestment campaign launched and pursued at Hampshire College in Massachusetts.[18]

Thus, a measure of conceptual coherence is achieved via the various instances of informational and analytical relay—international, regional, national, local. This contributes to the possibility and potential of achieving desired outcomes on specific international campaigns (e.g., pressing international artists to cancel planned performances in Israel), but also on campaigns and initiatives that have more local targets (e.g., boycott

16 There is a substantial and growing literature that examines the practices and techniques of rule in Palestine-Israel, qualifying the Israeli state's relationship of power vis-à-vis Palestinians as an instance of apartheid. See, for instance, Barghouti, *BDS*, 41–61; Ben White, *Israeli Apartheid: A Beginner's Guide* (London: Pluto Press, 2009); Middle East Report, *Apartheid and Beyond,* 253 (Winter 2009); Karine MacAllister, "Applicability of the Crime of Apartheid to Israel," *Al-Majdel* 38 (Summer 2008).

17 The text of the "United Call" states that the "non-violent punitive measures" that make up the BDS strategy should be maintained until Israel "fully complies with the precepts of international law by: 1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall; 2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and 3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194." (Global BDS Movement, "United Call").

18 The campaign sought and achieved the College's divestment of any of its holdings in companies that, through the sale of materials or services, are implicated in Israeli military rule in the Occupied Territories. Erakat, "BDS in the USA," 38–39.

campaigns focused on products in local shops) or that advance local objectives within the framework of broad international campaigns (e.g., the campaign, launched in 2008, targeting the French corporations Veolia and Alstom).[19] There are, however, divergences apparent in the terms of justification for various tactics but also in the formulation of the ultimate end of BDS organizing. These are reflected in the field of BDS politics in Montreal.

The divergences tend to correlate with broader philosophically and theoretically informed interpretations of conditions in Palestine-Israel and on global political-economic conditions (mapped, generally, as Left-critical, antiauthoritarian and anticapitalist to Left- and center-Left liberal and liberal-democratic). For instance, while some activists pursing the BDS strategy consider that gains should and can be made through and within the state, especially through methods of persuasion and direct representation (lobbying) of elected officials in and outside the governing party, others discountenance, if not eschew, lobbying tactics and engagements of a similar type with the state and state officials, and favor popular-level mobilizing and outreach as a means of building pressure and having persuasive input at the governmental level and its apparatuses of support (i.e., corporate media, business and corporations, universities). In some instances, divergence occurs in reference to the ethical suitability of some tactics of the BDS strategy. For example, there is some difference of view over the justifiability of advancing a boycott of cultural events, artists, or artistic performances.

For some, directing a boycott call at artists and performers is seen to be inimical to the very nature and purpose of the arts, while, for others, it is ethically justifiable to hold artists to account for their presentation and performance choices if they serve to sustain conditions of oppression or domination (performing in Israel, for instance). BDS politics in Montreal have manifested openness to debate on matters such as these as exemplified by programming for the October 2010 BDS conference but also the formation of a coordinating space in the form of BDS-Quebec and the explicit commitment in much BDS organizing to education and building awareness and knowledge.

19 Veolia and Alstom were key corporate members of a consortium contracted by the state of Israel to construct and manage the East Jerusalem tramway. According to Barghouti (*BDS*, 132), the tramway plays a strategic role in Israel's plan to colonize Jerusalem. For a full account of the campaign see Barghouti, *BDS*.

BDS Organizing: Complex, Context, Challenges

In this final section, consideration will be given to organizational challenges faced by and in BDS politics. In doing so, I will be drawing on the content of interviews, to a great extent, but also observations and the existing literature. The discussion is informed by a basic assumption—that in assessing BDS politics, its organizational practices must be situated and understood in relation to the constellation of power relations of which it is a part and within which it is manifest in the form of actions and interventions. This power relationship is not one that lends itself to simple characterization and can only be sketched out here.[20] It includes the exercise of power by several national states. Most especially, there is the Israeli state whose exercise of power as it affects Palestinians takes various forms: domination, being one, and governmental power, understood, in general terms, as practices that aim at the management of people's behavior for the purpose of achieving particular ends, being another.[21] But, there are also other states exercising rule over sizable populations of Palestinians in, for example, Lebanon and Jordan, that are part of this power complex and the features of domination and authoritarian government that are manifest in it. Additionally, instances of rule in the form of the Palestinian National Authority's governmental institutions and its practices in parts of the West Bank and in Gaza are part of the global power arrangement.

Moreover, in Montreal, BDS organizing is carried out, also, within the parameters of a more localized configuration of power which includes state actors governing the Canadian federal/national space and the Quebec regional/subnational space and their respective governmental practices, programs and techniques. BDS-oriented action and organizing is embedded and implicated in this power arrangement by virtue of its objective of challenging and seeking to change the structure of relations and the practices of rule in so far as they bear on Palestinians (and other peoples, by extension) in a manner that is consistent with domination and, also,

20 This sketch of the power complex within which BDS organizing takes place is informed by a conception of power found in the works of Michel Foucault and in works that address, elaborate or make analytical use of this conception (for example: Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London: Sage Publications, 1999); Barry Hindess, *Discourses of Power: From Hobbes to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose, *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2008).

21 "Domination" entails an asymmetrical relation of power in which those subject to it have little room to maneuver "because their 'margin of liberty is extremely limited'… by the effects of power" (Hindess, *Discourses of Power*, 102).

limiting and antithetical to liberty, equality, dignity, and respect. Inasmuch as the BDS strategy seeks explicitly to change conditions of domination as they take expression in state practices and to the extent that states govern in ways that are inconsistent with human self-determination and with opportunities for leading lives of full dignity, free of arbitrary and oppressive power practices, BDS organizational actors will continue to engage with national states from a standpoint of critical assessment and contestation.

The power arrangement within which BDS organizing is carried out also includes a set of relations with a range of nonstate, associative actors. Some of these act in ways that are complementary to and supportive of BDS aims, others in ways that intentionally (or less intentionally) impede and seek to undermine the advancement of BDS (most notably, organizations that are supportive of the Israeli state and the reasons it gives for its policies and practices of rule with respect to Palestinians).

Within this complex of power relations, BDS organizing in Montreal is confronted with the challenge of advancing locally an international program of change "from below" while facing opposition from well-entrenched, well-resourced forces (state and nonstate) whose claims have wide resonance and acceptance. This situation is not unique to BDS organizing in Montreal. Indeed, throughout the West, with particular local inflections, the claims that reflect, support and sustain a narrative that legitimates the conduct of the Israeli state with respect to Palestinians have been and are dominant and hegemonic in ideological terms.[22] What presents Montreal-based organizing with a particular challenge is the antagonism toward Palestinian solidarity work and, more notably, hostility to BDS arguments and objectives that has been reflected and expressed in governmental discourse and practice at the level of the Canadian federal state in recent years.[23] The means of dealing with this situation appears to take two forms: one is direct engagement with elected officials through lobbying efforts; the other is to build force and support at the popular level

22 This feature of the political field in which BDS organizing occurs, is reflected in Bakan and Abu Laban's ("Palestinian Resistance," 32–33) account of the ideological terrain of the BDS movement in the West.

23 For example, in a December 2009 speech, the Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration linked a decision to withdraw state funding to a Canadian ecumenical, justice and human rights organization to the organization's "leadership role in the boycott" (Alternatives, "Jason Kenney speech"). Explicit support for the Israeli state and its conduct has been manifest, also, in the line of discourse on the Palestine-Israel conflict emerging from the Canadian state executive under Conservative Party rule.

through education and information and through mobilization. The tendency among associations that make up the core and immediate outer-core of the network of BDS organizational actors is to view the expansion of the base of popular support as the optimal means by which the BDS strategy can be advanced in the face of efforts by hegemonic forces to undermine and discredit it.

Further, organizers engaging in BDS activism recognize this as a particularity of their context and take the view that it is not unusual for counterhegemonic, liberatory, or resistance political projects to encounter the state in scenarios of disagreement and opposition. Responding to the challenge of this power complex has also taken the form of fairly consistent critical reflection on organizational planning, practice and structure. This was especially evident during the October 2010 BDS conference. However, there needs to be continuity in this reflection beyond the conference at the level of individual associative groupings and within a space of interassociative dialogue and strategizing like BDS-Quebec.

In addition to this internal discussion, the challenges of the context must be met by strengthening alliances and shoring up the existing base of support within the general field of progressive, Left politics. Further, the task of widening and enhancing public support for BDS is crucial given the reliance and dependence on the political agency of individuals in such forms as observing and actively promoting boycott calls or avoiding and challenging investment that is supportive of occupation and apartheid. In respect of this latter, my respondents all acknowledged the importance of educational and informational work. At the same time, however, there is a concern that this process of building and expanding should not see compromises, beyond a certain limit, of foundational principles of organizational practice and purpose.

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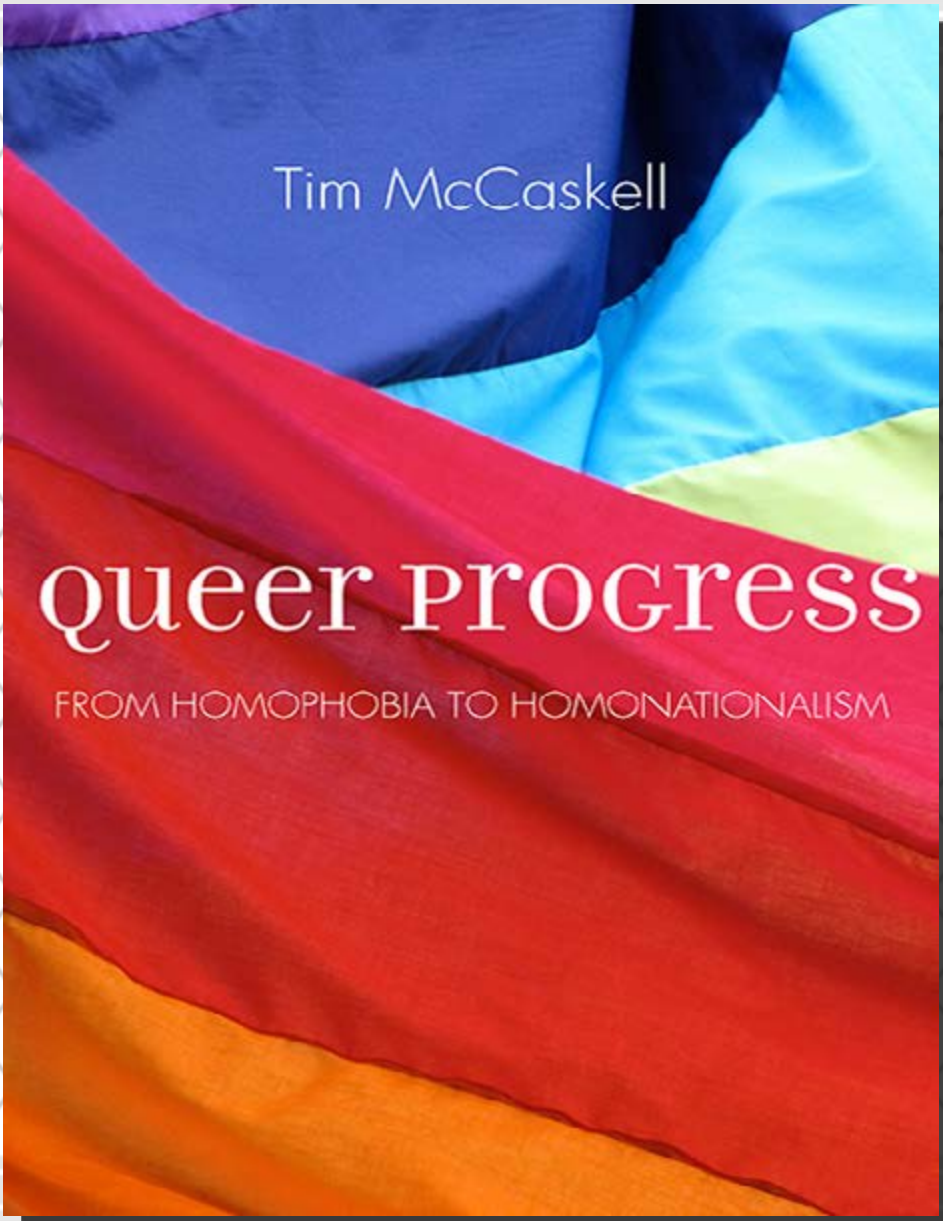
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QUEERS AGAINST ISRAELI APARTHEID

At first glance, the Middle East would seem a long way from Toronto, even though, in a fast globalizing world, distances were collapsing. Still, few would have predicted that Israel/Palestine would be the next flashpoint in Toronto gay politics.

By 2008, Palestinians made up the largest and most long-standing refugee population in the world. Displaced by Israeli ethnic cleansing in 1948, many had been refugees for sixty years. Millions were stateless and living in surrounding Arab countries or scattered throughout the world. In the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, four million had lived under Israeli occupation since 1967. Palestinians had tried many strategies to regain their homeland: armed struggle, spontaneous uprisings, and UN-brokered talks. All had failed. Israel refused to comply with international refugee law and continued expanding its illegal settlements in the occupied territories.

In 2005 Palestinian civil society organizations agreed on a new strategy, an international call for boycott, divestment, and sanctions until Israel complied with international law. That would mean allowing refugees to return to their homes, giving full rights to Palestinians living in Israel, and ending its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.[20]

The strategy was modelled on the international campaign to isolate apartheid South Africa thirty years before. "Israeli apartheid" was not a rhetorical slogan. It had been used to describe the situation by well-known figures such as former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and South African archbishop Desmond Tutu. It was based on the uncanny similarities between the two systems, as evidenced in a major 2009 study by the South African Human Sciences Research Council.[21] There were separate laws and education systems, housing segregation, a pass system to regulate movement, daily humiliations, huge disparities in wealth, and brutal military repression to keep the system in place. Visiting South Africans often remarked that what they saw in Palestine was worse than what they had experienced in South Africa.

The BDS strategy rejuvenated an international solidarity movement, including Israeli Apartheid Week events on university campuses. Queers Against Israeli Apartheid formed in 2008 after one such event at the University of Toronto. The small group's original membership was mostly young, many already friends. Most had studied equity issues and were acquainted with Queer Theory. About a third were Jewish, and there were a few Palestinians.

That year at Pride, a gaggle of QuAIA activists marched, sandwiched between the CUPE and Canadian Union of Postal Workers. CUPE Ontario had endorsed the Palestinian call for BDS in 2006, and CUPW had become the first country-wide union to do so in April 2008. It was not the first time that Israeli politics had surfaced at Pride. The largely lesbian and bi Jewish Women's Committee to End the Occupation had marched regularly during the late 1980s and early '90s carrying Palestinian solidarity messages.

BRAND ISRAEL

By 2008, the stakes were higher. Israeli brutality and its occupation of Palestinian lands had seriously tarnished the county's international reputation. In October 2005 after a review of "specialized research conducted by American marketing executives," the directors of Israel's three most powerful ministries, the Foreign Ministry, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Finance Ministry, launched a new public relations campaign, "Brand Israel."[22]

Brand Israel, aimed at U.S. and European audiences, was based on marketing theory: establishing brand loyalty is more important than the merits of a product. It called for downplaying religion and avoiding mention of the Palestinian conflict. Instead, it focused on Israel's contribution to medicine, technology, and culture. The country would be associated with warm, fuzzy, core liberal values: modernity, democracy, innovation, and progress. The resulting brand loyalty, it was hoped, would render the North American and European public impervious to Palestinian arguments about human rights and international law.

In August 2008, the Israeli consulate announced Toronto would be a test market for Brand Israel. The lessons learned would inform the subsequent worldwide rollout. Consul General Amir Gissin revealed plans for an exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls and a major presence in the 2009 Toronto International Film Festival.[23]

According to the U.K. *Guardian,* "One of the most remarkable features of the Brand Israel campaign is the marketing of a modern Israel as a gay-friendly Israel." This was not simply aimed at winning friends and encouraging tourism among queer communities.

> Within global gay and lesbian organizing circuits, to be gay friendly is to be modern, cosmopolitan, developed, first-world, global north, and, most significantly, democratic. Events such as World Pride 2006 hosted in Jerusalem, and "Out in Israel" recently held in San Francisco highlight Israel as a country committed to democratic ideals of freedom for all, including gays and lesbians.[24]

Our community was being played to support an apartheid regime.

13

Homonationalism

PRIDE AND POLITICS

Martin Gladstone, an estate lawyer with connections at city hall, lived in the fashionable Upper Beaches neighbourhood with his partner and their two dogs. He was also an ardent Zionist. He had spent the 2009 Pride parade shadowing QuAIA's contingent with his camera. Over the winter he made a video.

The thesis of *Reclaiming Our Pride* was that QuAIA's participation was an anti-Semitic attack on Canadian multiculturalism. The propaganda techniques were unsophisticated. Happy parade images accompanied by refrains of "Pride Party," which Gladstone composed and performed himself, are replaced by ominous chords once the QuAIA contingent appears. QuAIA chants are distorted in post-production to sound menacing but barely intelligible. An anti-Nazi T-shirt with a crossed out swastika that a marcher wore is shown repeatedly; it was subsequently characterized in the press as "Nazi memorabilia." Right-wing media turned the image into an army of Nazis marching in Pride.

Central to the video are interviews recounting how QuAIA spoiled Pride and frightened people. But one segment gives the game away. Justine Apple, director of Kulanu, a Jewish LGBT social group, recounts receiving a call from the police Hate Crimes Unit before the parade. "The tension in my heart just increased as soon as I received phone calls from the Toronto police," she says. "These people . . . had been built up in everyone's heads, that it was a serious thing that they might pose a security risk, that there might end up being violence, and that's why it led to a lot of tension and fear."

The video didn't mention that Pride asked the police to approach Kulanu because of demands from lobbyists, including Gladstone. It was a page out of B'Nai Brith's playbook, inciting fear in the Jewish community for their own political purposes.

Over the winter, Gladstone distributed his video to city councillors and staff to convince them that QuAIA was a hate group whose participation contravened city policy. In November, Gladstone, Avi Benlolo of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre, Carol Pasternak from Kulanu, and Daniel Engel

met privately with city staff. A briefing note to downtown councillor Kyle Ray reported:

> Gladstone stated that Pride has no mandate to engage in anti-Israel advocacy and that . . . allowing marchers, some of whom wore swastikas and carried signs that read "End Israeli Apartheid" and "We stand with Queers in Palestine" is contrary to the City of Toronto Anti-Racism, Access and Equity Policy.[1]

On February 9, 2010, Rae wrote to Pride Toronto. His message was very different from the year before when he had supported QuAIA's right to march. "Over the weekend, I saw the film produced by Martin Gladstone and found the intervention of Queers Against Israeli Apartheid in last year's parade completely out of keeping with the spirit and values of Pride Toronto."[2] He urged Pride to review parade entrance requirements.

It was a dramatic about-face. No one believed Rae was actually swayed by Gladstone's crude video. Several years later, he is candid. Staff who had been positive about Pride were "getting heat from people." The "lefties" on council didn't know what to do and were "freaking out." There were angry calls from constituents, and an election was coming. He himself "got a lot of calls from Jewish developers who were very angry with what QuAIA was doing. . . . All along I knew that what QuAIA was doing was not in violation of the city's human rights policies. . . . The debate for me was keeping the funding and getting it through another year, or watching Pride lose its funding."[3]

A series of meetings including Rae, Tracey Sandilands, and Israel lobbyists to discuss how to exclude QuAIA from Pride then followed. It would be months before anyone found out about them.

Pride wasn't the only place where Palestine solidarity was targeted for censorship. On February 25, at the end of the day when few members were in the House, Progressive Conservative member Peter Shurman managed to manoeuvre an all-party resolution through the Ontario legislature condemning the use of the term "Israeli Apartheid." The non-binding resolution, part of an attempt to suppress Israeli Apartheid Week activities at Ontario universities, would be repeatedly cited in the polemics around Pride.

The first step in Pride's strategy to exclude QuAIA was to organize focus groups to help shape a strategy for community involvement. QuAIA was not cited as an issue, but the Wiesenthal Centre's Benlolo seemed to know what was going on. He wrote to Pride to "express his shock and concern that Pride Toronto has chosen to follow the route of focus groups to determine if Israel- and Jew-bashing is an acceptable practice." He threatened to further pressure sponsors and funders if QuAIA wasn't banned.[4]

On March 11, Pride announced that as a result of the focus groups, all parade messaging would need advance approval by an ethics committee. That provoked an immediate response. Rick Telfer, a doctoral student at the Uni-

versity of Western Ontario, organized a Facebook group called Don't Sanitize Pride: Free Expression Must Prevail, signing up 1,500 members in two weeks. Telfer was not simply concerned about QuAIA; he saw this as the beginning of a cleanup of anything controversial. Within Pride itself, members of the Human Rights Committee, Jane Walsh and Doug Kerr, met with Sandilands and then the co-chairs to demand the ethics committee idea be scrapped. Pride withdrew the idea two weeks later.

BLACKNESS YES!

Pride had another problem on its hands. Blackness Yes!, organizers of Blockorama, the Pride space for black queer and trans people and allies, had called a public meeting.

Blocko had been an important feature in Pride since 1999. It recreated the spirit of a Trinidadian blocko party after the parade. Blocko built on the stream of black community organizing starting with Zami in 1983, and Blackness Yes! included many original Zami and Aya activists.

For years, the Blocko dance party was held in a prominent site at the Wellesley Street parking lot in the centre of the Pride action. But in 2007, without consultation, Pride decided that spot would be given to a TD Bank–sponsored stage and beer garden. Blocko had always resisted becoming a beer garden. It wanted to be open to all ages and welcoming to those with substance issues. So although the Blocko stage was popular, it didn't make money for Pride. The new space was in a much smaller parking lot. As a result, overcrowding led to a number of medical emergencies.

The following year, Pride moved Blocko again, this time to the George Hislop Parkette, an out-of-the-way area four blocks north of the main festival hub. Grassy parks are not well suited to dancing, and the space was soon a muddy mess. Accommodations were made at the same site in 2009, but in 2010 Pride announced, again without consultation, that Blocko would move to an even smaller site, this one hilly and completely unsuitable.

Enough was enough. The Blackness Yes! community meeting at the 519 on April 13 was angry and raucous, and Sandilands was raked over the coals. Under pressure, Pride agreed to allow Blocko to stay at George Hislop Parkette for the time being. But the damage was done. Pride was perceived to have been at least disrespectful, if not racist, in its treatment of the group.

BACK AT CITY HALL

Gladstone and company continued to press the city and Pride sponsors. On April 19, the *Toronto Star* ran a half-page story entitled "Dispute Threatens Funding for Pride: Queers Against Israeli Apartheid Violated Policy, City Says." The *Star* quoted Toronto's general manager of economic development and culture Mike Williams, saying that the city "believes its anti-discrimination policy was likely violated by QuAIA's conduct and even its very presence at last

summer's parade." On May 12, city councillor Giorgio Mammoliti introduced a motion to withdraw all funding from Pride unless it banned QuAIA. Mammoliti was well known for his homophobic opposition to spousal benefits as a provincial representative. Council bounced the motion to executive committee for further study. The referral was the weak-kneed response of progressive councillors fearful of taking on a controversial issue or defending free speech in an election year. They hoped Pride would do the dirty work and get the city off the hook.

On May 13, three QuAIA members met with Williams and diversity and community engagement manager Ceta Ramkhalawansingh. Williams denied that the city had been pressuring Pride to exclude QuAIA, and admitted that there had been no investigation and no finding that QuAIA violated any city policy. We asked him to write to the *Star* to "clarify" its misleading article. He agreed but never did so.

That same afternoon, *Xtra* released documents from a Freedom of Information request revealing the secret meetings between Rae, city officials, Pride staff, and Israel lobbyists to establish a rationale to keep QuAIA out of Pride. It was a very different account from the one that Pride had been spinning or that city officials had suggested that morning.[5]

Both the city and Pride were embarrassed, but word leaked out that the Pride board was buckling, nonetheless. On QuAIA's initiative, a last-minute meeting was organized for May 19. It was clear that board members were in over their heads. Although they seemed to understand our arguments, they saw their role as primarily financial. The festival's success was measured by growth in dollar terms. Anything that might interfere with that was expendable. Talk about community accountability was met with blank stares.

I missed that meeting because I was chairing another initiative. Savannah Garmon, one of QuAIA's trans members, had pointed out that Pride seemed to have contracts with everyone except the community. That was the germ of a coalition, The Pride Community Contract. At that meeting, Rinaldo Walcott put his finger on an important dynamic: Pride was addicted to growth. Success was about being bigger – more sponsors, bigger budgets, larger audiences, and higher salaries. Its contracts were aimed at facilitating such growth. That served Tourism Toronto, Pride staff, and its board, but no one asked about its impact on queer communities. The Contract group developed an eleven-point series of principles for a Pride Toronto contract with the community. They included financial, social, and environmental sustainability and accessibility to all; freedom of expression; priority for grassroots community events, local queer and trans artists, and local small businesses; and meaningful commitment of sponsors to the well-being of local queer and trans communities.

Up until the last minute, the idea that Pride might ban us seemed so outrageous that I didn't believe it could happen. Hunkered down in AIDS, I hadn't been paying attention to how much the world, including Pride, was changing.

THE BAN

On Friday, May 21, in a four-to-three vote, the Pride Toronto board decided to ban the use of the term "Israeli apartheid" from all Pride activities.

The decision was to be secret until a press conference on May 25, but word soon leaked out. The group that had convinced Pride to drop sign vetting swung into action, joined by former Pride co-ordinators purged by Sandilands, organizers of Blocko, and trans activists. The Pride Coalition for Free Speech (PCFS) was born.

The Israel lobby made a strategic error in pushing for censorship. They had generally managed to control the discourse on Israel/Palestine through the memory of the Holocaust, Islamophobia, and the War on Terror. Instead, here it became a question of "free speech." When it was revealed that Pride had written in a blanket prohibition against "political statements" in performers' contracts, people were truly enraged.

Anti-censorship was embedded in this community. My first gay protest had been against the *Toronto Star* for its refusal to accept classified ads using the word "gay." Then there were *The Body Politic* trials, the Glad Day and Little Sisters customs censorship battles, the fight against the board of education policy banning gay speakers, and struggles for the right for explicit safe sex education. This tradition gave momentum to the Pride Coalition for Free Speech and extensive coverage in *Xtra*. Although *Xtra* did not take a position on Israel/Palestine, it was firm in its support of the PCFS free speech demand.

The bright spring morning of May 25, Pride held a press conference on the steps of its office, a renovated Victorian building in the village. A crowd of a hundred PCFS and QuAIA members gathered to heckle the announcement of the ban. Some wore tape across their mouths. Others loudly demanded the resignation of the Pride board and director. When beleaguered spokespeople tried to explain their rationale – not that QuAIA had violated any city policy or law, but that Pride feared it might lose funding – they were met with chants of "Fight the city, not the queers."

QuAIA took advantage of media interest to focus on the substantive issue – that queer Palestine solidarity had a place in Pride. We spoke of the history of politics at Pride and Israel's pinkwashing campaign, and pointed out that, because of the country's apartheid regulations, Palestinian queers did not benefit from Israel's gay rights.[6]

Off to a bad start, Pride's crisis management continued to unravel. Dr. Alan Li, chosen as the 2010 grand marshal, rejected the honour. "Pride's recent decision to ban the term 'Israeli apartheid' and thus prohibit the group Queers Against Israeli Apartheid from participating in the Pride celebrations this year is a slap in the face to our history of diverse voices," he wrote in a letter to the board. Li's example was soon followed by the honoured dyke and the Community Service Award winner. On May 29, organizers of the first Pride march in 1981 released an open letter declaring, "We stand totally

opposed to the decision of the current Toronto Pride Committee to ban the use of 'Israeli Apartheid' at Toronto Pride events."

On June 7, the 2010 international grand marshals, ILGA co-chairs Gloria Careaga and Renato Sabbadini, announced that they, too, were rejecting their honours and would not come to Toronto. That same morning, more than twenty additional former Pride honourees returned their awards and marched to the Pride offices to present the organization with an "award of shame." Pride's own Human Rights Committee announced it was cancelling its planned events to protest the ban.

That same evening, PCFS and Queer Ontario organized a protest meeting at the 519 Church Street Community Centre, the likes of which had not been seen since the bath raids. Hundreds packed the hall and the meeting was live-streamed by TV news channel CP24. The rowdy meeting brought together all sectors of the community and heard all kinds of complaints about Pride. Groups like Blackness Yes! clearly understood issues of intersectionality and were therefore unmoved by arguments that Palestine was not a queer issue. Others, even those who were unconvinced about Palestine, understood the classical liberal arguments against censorship. *Xtra* editorialized: "In effect, Pride Toronto secures its 2010 city funding by agreeing to limit the free expression of gay and lesbian people. It's an assault on the very foundational root of the sexual liberation movement."[7]

For weeks, the issue raged in the media. The attempt to silence discussion of Israel's apartheid policies spectacularly backfired. There were few in queer communities or the city who didn't hear some reference to Israeli apartheid.

IT'S NOT JUST US

Pride had already alienated many in the black community and it just got worse. Again, without consultation, Pride had decided that the 2010 Dyke March would no longer end back in the gay village. "Expanded" post–Dyke March activities would instead take place in Queen's Park, blocks away from other festival events. It soon became evident that the dykes had been moved out of the village because Pride was partnering with party promoter Prism Toronto to hold Aqua Pride – an admission-only event for the male circuit party crowd – in the village that afternoon.

At first, the change produced only resigned grumbling, as much about the irony of the situation as about the new site itself. A boys' party displaced the dykes on Dyke Day. *Well, that's Pride for you.* Others were happy to leave the heat and the testosterone-soaked village behind to move to the grass and the shade of the park.

But when Pride announced the ban on QuAIA, everything changed. Sex advice columnist Sasha Von Bon Bon and fellow activist Jess Dobkin called for an event to compete with the official Dyke March, Take Back the Dyke.

Then trans issues blew up. It turned out that including a *T* in the acronym

hadn't done the trick. Toronto's first Trans March at Pride was spontaneously pulled together in 2009 by an ad hoc committee of trans folk concerned about the lack of trans visibility in the festival. But in 2010, without consultation with the previous organizers, the Trans March was listed as an official Pride event. When the University of Toronto's Trans Inclusion Group wrote Sandilands to find out what was going on, she offered to meet with them on August 12, two weeks *after* Pride.

Nor was it clear who was running other trans events. Nik Redman, who programmed TransAction in 2008 and 2009, offered on several occasions to help out, but was put off. As things fell apart, Pride finally tried to do outreach. One of those contacted, Ayden Scheim, responded, "It's frustrating and upsetting and offensive to be contacted at this stage in the game. If I have to tell you in June that you should probably talk to The 519 or the Sherbourne Health Centre, somebody's not doing their job."[8]

Further, local queer performers had been relegated to less important stages to make way for "international" talent that would draw a more mainstream audience. With rates set to reflect the budgets of corporate sponsors, local businesses were priced out of entering floats. Volunteers who had co-ordinated aspects of the festival for years had been squeezed out by the increasingly hierarchical model promoted by the new executive director. QuAIA's banning was a lightning rod that brought all these issues to the fore.

INTERNAL TENSIONS

Being at the centre of this whirlwind was not easy. Many QuAIA members had little experience in such community politics. And there was what I felt to be a left opportunist current within the group, hostile towards PCFS because of its "liberal" basis of unity around anti-censorship. They complained that the Voltaire quote adorning the PCFS Facebook group – "I may disagree with what you have to say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it" – was an implicit criticism of QuAIA's politics. They were also concerned that the focus on free speech might eclipse the issues around Israeli apartheid. I argued that the last thing we needed was for PCFS to take a position on Palestine. That was our job. And if the issue was eclipsed, it was our fault, not theirs.

At a meeting on June 14 we agreed that we would march despite the ban. Another member and I had met with the police at 52 Division on behalf of the group. We had been assured that police would not intervene if our intention was to march peacefully. Still, we decided to keep open the option of civil disobedience if there was an attempt to prevent us from participating.

Two members, however, were increasingly unhappy with the strategy. They found it difficult to speak about Pride without contempt. They considered free speech to be a "liberal" issue and opposed marching with the PCFS. They were furious that there had been a successful meeting with the police, whom they regarded as the enemy. They proposed "jumping into" the parade rather

than taking our rightful place there, a strategy that would inevitably lead to confrontation with parade marshals. When it was announced that the Canadian Auto Workers had also invited us to march with their float, they were opposed to that as well, since the CAW hadn't taken a stand on BDS. They seemed more interested in distancing themselves from Pride than in participating, or in winning lesbian and gay hearts and minds to the struggle for justice in Israel/Palestine. At the end of the meeting, after losing all the arguments, they stormed out.

We were also working on two events, a discussion between Palestinian queer activist Haneen Maikey and Trinidadian activist Colin Robinson on the question of solidarity, and a concert organized in conjunction with PCFS. After the meeting when we broke into sub-committees to focus on these events, the two disgruntled members returned to harangue everyone before storming off again. I found it annoying, but after forty years I was used to political histrionics. Many of the younger members, though, seemed traumatized.

THE G8/G20

Tensions in the city were also building as the police turned the downtown into an armed camp for the G8/G20 meeting the weekend before Pride. The leaders of the world's most important capitalist economies were coming to town to try to sort out the economic crisis. Unions and civil society groups were planning huge demonstrations against neo-liberalism and its consequences. Confrontation seemed likely.

It was worse than anyone had expected. At first, police stood by and allowed a group of masked demonstrators to inflict considerable property damage in the downtown. (It was suspected that this Black Bloc group was infiltrated by police provocateurs.)[9] Then, the damage was used as a pretext for a police riot the next day, with unprovoked attacks on peaceful demonstrators and the largest mass arrest in Canadian history. More than a thousand people, many of them bystanders, were swept up, held in deplorable conditions, beaten, subjected to racist, sexist, and homophobic insults, and denied their most basic rights.[10] This was the unsmiley face of neo-liberal power.

The fallout spilled into Pride Week. In 2005, Police Chief Bill Blair had been cajoled by Kyle Rae to be the city's first police chief to march in Pride. Now the chief hosted an annual reception at 519 Church every Pride Week. But that year it was like attending a wedding the day after the groom was caught cheating. Protesters gathered outside and tried to push their way past the police guard, demanding Blair resign for his role in the police riot. Both Blair and Rae were heckled and booed. The *Toronto Sun* reported that queer activists said they refused to be pinkwashed by Blair's attempt to rub shoulders with the community.

> "He's got some nerve coming in here and acting like everything is back to normal and we're all buddy buddy," said protester Michelle Hill, 54. "You attacked our community this weekend, you attacked gay, lesbians and straight people out there who were exercising our basic democratic rights."[11]

RESOLUTION

In the midst of the turmoil there was a breakthrough. Behind the scenes, three prominent community members had been working to broker a resolution. MCC's Brent Hawkes pulled a troika together: himself, Doug Elliott, the lead lawyer in the Supreme Court gay marriage decision and *Hislop*, and Maura Lawless, executive director of 519 Church. Their goal was to head off a confrontation at Pride and win time to deal with the underlying issues.

On June 24 they announced a deal had been struck. Pride would rescind its ban on QuAIA's participation, all groups in the parade would sign an undertaking to abide by the city's non-discrimination policy, and a community advisory panel would be set up to recommend strategic principles and a framework to help shape future festivals.

The deal worked for QuAIA. We had never violated any laws or bylaws and were happy to sign the undertaking – the group's mandate was opposed to ethnic nationalism and racism, after all. But while it solved our immediate problem, it merely postponed the day of reckoning. The fundamental questions about Pride as celebration or politics, free expression or censorship, remained.

The Israel lobby was outraged. Hawkes and his committee soon experienced some of the abuse previously reserved for QuAIA. The Canadian Jewish Congress and the Canada-Israel Committee held a press conference condemning the capitulation to QuAIA's "hateful message." Right-wing city councillors were apoplectic, feeling they had been duped by Pride, which, by this point, had received its city cheque. Councillor Mammoliti and councillor and mayoral candidate Rob Ford drafted a motion demanding Pride return the money and that the festival be stripped of any future city funding.

For others, QuAIA's unbanning was welcome but not enough. Queer Ontario had concerns about the backroom nature of the process that led to the deal. Who would make up this community advisory panel? Whom would they be accountable to? Take Back the Dyke still organized its alternative to the official Dyke March. According to their Facebook post:

> We applaud the hard work of our community's activists who pressured Pride Toronto to rescind the ban. But let's be clear: Pride's reversal should not make us come running back into the arms of this abusive relationship, forgiving and forgetting. We stand by our position that this has never been a single-issue fight. Pride Toronto's 11th hour gesture does not address the many grievous issues that have been of concern for years. Pride Toronto's

> policies and agenda has impacted the Dyke March spirit before and beyond the words "Israeli Apartheid" and the current censorship disgrace. Barricades, marching fees, corporate sponsorship and vetting of groups all contribute to diminishing the true sense of community spirit and visibility the Dyke March was originally intended to embody. Pride Toronto still does not represent our community or our interests.[12]

THE MARCH

The day of the main Pride parade broke hot, humid, and sunny. Since Pride director Sandilands had purged most of the experienced volunteer organizers, parade assembly was chaotic. There were only a handful of official Pride Toronto marshals, and assigned sites were too small to accommodate marchers. The contingents ended up on top of each other. Some groups lucked into some cover, but QuAIA and PCFS waited for hours under a broiling sun.

I had participated in almost every Pride since 1981 and co-ordinated security for many groups, but I cannot remember a more stressful occasion. Not far away, the former Jewish social group Kulanu had converted itself into a pro-Israel contingent bedecked with Israeli flags. They had sent out a call through area synagogues for support, and their ranks were filled with aggressive, mostly straight, Israel supporters including the Jewish Defense League (JDL), a thuggish right-wing group on the U.S. terrorist watch list.[13] A steady stream of provocateurs kept infiltrating the QuAIA staging area, jostling and attempting to start fights. Luckily, our marchers followed instructions not to engage, and police were generally co-operative in escorting troublemakers out of the crowd.

When we finally began to move, the PCFS contingent with its sea of yellow "My Pride Includes Free Speech" signs provided by *Xtra*, and QuAIA, with its large "Israeli Apartheid Is . . ." and "Solidarity with Palestinian Queers Is . . ." placards created by John Greyson, numbered more than five hundred. The QuAIA contingent was led by a group of Palestinian and Arab women. Despite small groups of hecklers, we were upbeat and disciplined, and received resounding cheers from hundreds of onlookers.

WTF WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

When the dust settled, we tried to make sense of what had just happened. Why would our largest community festival alienate the black, women's, and trans communities, and violate a fundamental community value with censorship?

A first clue was the composition of the Pride board. By 2010, most were from management or consulting backgrounds. Well intentioned, they were upwardly mobile types and, with notable exceptions, didn't have much history with the political struggles that had shaped the community. Certainly they believed in community, but a stint on the board of a million-dollar festival was also not a bad thing to have on your resumé.

These were people who felt that with gay marriage, we had arrived. Their role was putting on a festival. Above all, they wanted to associate good feelings with the Pride brand. Conflict was to be avoided. It was a board that didn't attract the already engaged. It was politically weak and out of touch with many community currents.

Because of their backgrounds, members also generally bought into a growth model of the festival: bigger is better. That model requires ever-increasing corporate and government sponsorship to sustain itself. As it spent more and more time attracting dollars, Pride Toronto's role had shifted from putting on a festival for our communities, to delivering LGBT bodies to corporate branding and advertising and helping the city market itself as a queer-friendly tourist destination.

Success was measured in increased cash flows, staff salaries, and sponsorships. Such growth required the attendance of more straight people. In 2009, an *A* for allies was officially added to the jumble of initials that Pride now used to define community – LGBTTIQQ2SA. Pride was to be fun for all. Naughty and titillating was okay. To be sexually risqué within limits was tolerated; that could be marketed. Of course they believed in freedom of speech, but politics? Wasn't that one of those things that polite people didn't talk about at dinner parties? To expose Canada's strategic ally as an apartheid state was upsetting to the power structure in which Pride wanted to be included and on which it depended for financial survival.

A glimpse of who Pride Toronto imagined as its community was revealed in the promo materials for its 6th Annual Gala and Awards Ceremony, described as "an evening of exquisite dining and entertainment."

> The queer community provides a demographic comprised of upper-income, well educated consumers. Highly educated (40% have a university degree), nearly 45% are professionals in their field. In today's economy, the acquisition and retention of skilled talent is vital to success in any industry. Demonstrating public support of the queer community by sponsoring the Pride Toronto Gala & Awards ceremony sends a strong message to the queer community that your business is welcoming of this well educated talent pool.[14]

Sponsored tables were a deal at $10,000 for ten. They came with admittance to a VIP reception, priority table placement in the Platinum zone, and complimentary advertising in Pride publications and on the website. Less prominently placed tables with fewer perks went for $5,000 and $3,500. Individual tickets were $350 each.

The bungling of relations with the black communities, dykes, and trans folk could be understood as a matter of incompetence by the largely white, male, and cis Pride board and staff, or less generously, as examples of racism, sexism, and transphobia. But the logic that bound these groups together was class.

This was rational, liberal logic at work. Demographics that were not targets for corporate advertising were irrelevant. Those that might detract from marketing messages by causing offence – whether political, such as QuAIA, or cultural, such as TNT Men – needed to be excised.

One group that cleverly pointed out class issues was the Lesbian Billionaires. They attended Pride functions and PCFS protests in cocktail dresses, carrying martini glasses (often full) featuring slogans such as "Censorship is Tasteful," and "Whose Pride? TD Pride." They handed out Monopoly money asking, "Can we buy your pride?"

AFTERMATH

When Pride was over for another year, QuAIA was still embroiled in city politics. Mammoliti's motion demanding the return of city money went nowhere, but another motion, seconded by Councillor Ford, directed that next year's Pride funding be withheld until after the parade and be conditional on all participants complying with the city's anti-discrimination policy. It also asked the city manager to determine "whether the participation of QAIA [*sic*] and the signs or banners they carry contravenes the City's Anti-Discrimination Policy." The struggle QuAIA had touched off was far from over.

THE CITY ELECTIONS

That fall left little time to muse over the politics of Pride. The municipal election was unfolding. David Miller, the generally popular and liberal mayor, declined to run for a third term. The progressive favourite, Adam Giambrone, flamed out in a sex scandal and withdrew, leaving only three major candidates: George Smitherman, the openly gay former Liberal cabinet minister; Joe Pantalone, Miller's progressive but uncharismatic deputy mayor; and Councillor Rob Ford, the ultra-right-wing buffoon from Etobicoke who had co-sponsored the resolution to defund Pride.

To almost everyone's astonishment, Ford was soon the front-runner. His platform called for cuts to city hall's "gravy train." It was a simple message that resonated with a hard-pressed electorate in the midst of a recession. His base was the ever-poorer outer suburbs, those who lived far from the glittering arts and cultural events emblematic of Florida's creative city. Why should their taxes support entertainment for the downtown elites? Many worked two precarious jobs to make ends meet, or were small businesspeople who could never share in the stable jobs, benefits, and pensions available to unionized city workers. Why should city workers live better than they did? Without public transit, they had to drive to work. What stake did they have in bicycle lanes? Although he had inherited his daddy's millions, Ford knew how to tap into the cauldron of resentment that was building up in an ever more unequal city. He presented himself as an unvarnished, straight-talking man of the people who would set things right.

All this was soon amplified by a retirement party that Kyle Rae threw for himself at a cost of $12,000 out of his city budget.[15] The *Toronto Sun* jumped on the story and milked it for all it was worth. Gay equalled downtown excess.

Councillor Rae's retirement opened up his downtown ward, an unlikely amalgam of old-money Rosedale north of Bloor Street and the gay village to the south. First off the mark to replace him was Kristyn Wong-Tam, a young lesbian businesswoman with a long history of progressive activism in the community. Rae supported Ken Chan, also gay, a former police officer and one-time adviser to Smitherman.

QuAIA soon became an issue. Although Wong-Tam had not been an active member, she had volunteered to be the "owner" of the QuAIA website when it was first set up. Right-wing lesbian columnist Sue-Ann Levy broke the story in the *Sun* in September.[16] The JDL and other sectors of the Israel lobby were already discussing picketing Wong-Tam's home. Anonymous leaflets denouncing her as an anti-Semite were distributed and cost her support among businesses in the Yorkville area.

The smear campaign was not effective. In the October 25 election, Wong-Tam carried the ward. But Rob Ford swept the city to replace Miller as mayor.

OVER TO THE CITY MANAGER

Since the city manager was charged to determine whether QuAIA's participation contravened city policy, QuAIA requested a meeting with him in September. Given our experience in the spring, when officials had maligned us in the press without going through any process, we had decided on a pre-emptive strike. At first we were refused, since we already had a complaint to the city ombudsman about our treatment by city staff. But we insisted, and a meeting was granted for November 25.

City manager Joe Pennachetti was an affable civil servant. Despite the initial concern about interfering in the ombudsman's deliberations, he invited the key figures in our complaint to attend. He said he intended to listen to all points of view, including the results of the upcoming Community Advisory Panel (CAP).

After a year of skirmishes, our arguments were finely honed. We reminded Pennachetti that we had peacefully participated in Pride for three years, and groups calling for an end to Israeli apartheid had marched in Pride parades in other Canadian cities. The Quebec Jewish Congress had clearly stated that it did not call for a banning of the term. Our right to criticize government policy was protected speech under the Charter.

Elle Flanders, a QuAIA member who grew up in Israel, explained that "Israeli apartheid" was widely used in Israel. She supplied examples of recent articles in the mainstream Israeli press using the term.

Richard had served on the board of the Toronto Arts Council and had helped draft equity guidelines for the Canada Council for the Arts back in the

1990s. He pointedly explained to the city's director of culture that cultural funding policy did not exclude political expression, and that the intention of cultural equity is to allow marginalized voices to be heard. The use of such equity policies to silence criticism of a country's human rights violations was a perversion. It would have deleterious effects not only on the arts but also on the credibility of equity.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

A few days later, the first Community Advisory Panel began its consultations to develop recommendations for Pride. In December, CAP held six public meetings, three open forums, and one each focused on trans, racialized, and women's communities. Meetings were live-streamed by *Xtra*. There were over forty targeted sessions with different groups, including one with QuAIA. An online survey received 1,600 responses. CAP also consulted Pride groups in Montreal, Quebec, Vancouver, New York, San Francisco, Sydney (Australia), and Tel Aviv.[17]

But events did not wait for the report. On January 25, Pride released the long-delayed audited financial statement revealing "financial irregularities" and a $430,000 deficit. Although former treasurer Mark Singh gamely continued to blame the loss on "political messaging," the auditors' report showed that sponsorship had actually increased by more than $200,000 from 2009. This was a hefty sum, but not enough to meet dramatically increased costs of salaries, office administration, advertising, and rent. Most damning was the revelation that Sandilands had hired her partner, Janine Marais, to the tune of $40,000, without the knowledge of the board. Marais had continued to be paid while other Pride Toronto employees were laid off.[18] The following day, Sandilands's resignation was announced.[19]

That did little to calm waters at Pride's general meeting January 27. *Xtra* described "a storm of anger" that met the board as the financial mismanagement, lack of oversight, and conflict of interest were revealed. Community member Jane Farrow described the event as a "gong show." The best Pride could do was to plead for time until the CAP report.[20]

THE CAP REPORT

The report was released February 17. At 232 pages with 133 recommendations, it covered everything from finances to entertainment to the rift between Pride and the black and trans communities. It called for a scaling down of Pride events and a focus on local talent. While there was discussion of QuAIA's role, the report made no recommendations about our right to participate. Instead, it called for the creation of a dispute resolution process that would be triggered in the event of complaints.[21]

This was not good enough for the Israel lobby. *Sun* columnist Sue-Ann Levy called the report "milquetoast,"[22] and in consultation with Rob Ford's

office, she wrote Jewish leaders calling on them to send mass emails to councillors to defund Pride.[23] The letter backfired, however; because of the perceived conflict of interest, Levy was removed from the Pride beat until after the funding decision.[24]

Gladstone, in an op-ed in the *National Post*, called the CAP report a "complete moral abdication" and argued that bringing a complaint about QuAIA to the dispute resolution process "would literally mean putting the state of Israel on trial."[25]

The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Centre issued a community alert with a blistering personal attack on Brent Hawkes, accusing him of leading efforts to ensure that QuAIA could march. Hawkes replied, "I am neither a member of Quaia [*sic*] nor have I ever been a supporter." He explained, "In my role as Chair [of the CAP], I have to set aside my personal opinions and try to remain neutral." His letter was termed "a very positive development" by the centre, and released below a picture of a smiling Hawkes shaking hands with Wiesenthal Centre president and CEO Avi Benlolo.

At city hall, Mayor Ford reacted to the news by intoning "taxpayers' dollars should not be used to fund hate speech," and reiterated that unless QuAIA was banned, there would be no city funding for Pride.[26] This was no idle threat. The new mayor was on a roll and seemed positioned to marshal votes in council to get his way.

ANXIOUS OPTIONS

In the spring of 2011, QuAIA needed to re-evaluate its strategy. Although the controversy had brought our issue widespread attention in 2010 and we had provoked a cascade of events that resulted in significant changes at Pride, there was a strong feeling that we couldn't just repeat the same scenario.

Pride was in a fragile state. Fresh in everyone's memory was the history of Caribana, the West Indian festival that was Toronto's other signature summer cultural event. After infighting and financial irregularities put that festival's continuation in jeopardy, the city decided that, given its tourist revenue, Caribana was too important to fail, and the city assumed management in 2005. Caribana was now the Scotiabank Toronto Caribbean Carnival, a complete government/corporate takeover.

If Pride lost its funding or was taken over by the city, QuAIA could potentially take the blame. With so much community energy going into trying to hold Pride together, it was far from clear whether we would be able to marshal the same level of support as in 2010. Not marching, on the other hand, could register as a defeat for Palestine solidarity and for those supporting space for progressive politics in Pride.

After a long and emotional meeting on March 18, there was a consensus that QuAIA would not apply to march in the 2011 parade. Instead, we would use Pride Week as a kickoff for an international queer tourism boycott

campaign. We ultimately decided to wait until the release of the city manager's report, which we now understood would be favourable.

The report became public the following day, April 13.[27] It began:

> City staff have determined that the phrase "Israeli Apartheid" in and of itself does not violate the city's Anti-discrimination policy. . . . To date, the phrase "Israeli Apartheid" has not been found to violate either the Criminal Code or the Human Rights Code (Ontario). . . . The City also cannot therefore conclude that the use of term on signs or banners to identify QuAIA constitutes the promotion of hatred or seeks to incite discrimination contrary to the Code.[28]

It was a stunning vindication of our position. In a legal system shaped by the Charter, we could not be silenced. Two days later the press release went out, arguing that the city manager's report settled the issue of censorship. Nonetheless, QuAIA would not march in the parade.

> Rob Ford wants to use us as an excuse to cut Pride funding, even though he has always opposed funding the parade, long before we showed up. . . . By holding our Pride events outside of the parade, we are forcing him to make a choice: fund Pride or have your real homophobic, right-wing agenda exposed.

The release not only produced a minor media sensation and lit up the Twittersphere, but it also changed the focus of the dispute.[29] It was no longer about QuAIA or Israel. It was about the mayor and homophobia. All eyes were now on Ford's response. The mayor and his friends seemed unsure what to do. While Ford stated that Pride funding would still be held back, and Mammoliti demanded a letter from Pride guaranteeing QuAIA would not march, Bernie Farber of the Canadian Jewish Congress declared the matter closed. Councillors such as Josh Matlow followed Farber's lead and deserted the Ford camp.[30]

QuAIA's major Pride event took place on June 22. After a preview of experimental filmmaker Mike Hoolboom's new work, *Lacan Palestine*, New York dyke author and activist Sarah Schulman spoke about her pro-Palestinian activism to a full house. She introduced Jasbir Puar's concept of homonationalism as an analysis of what was happening to our communities. And although QuAIA did not march, Dykes and Trans People for Palestine, including many QuAIA members, participated in the Dyke March, July 2.

Their message was given extra visibility by the presence of Councillor Mammoliti, who stalked the parade with a video camera, taking home footage of lesbians. This attempt to gather evidence of anti-Israel activity was widely ridiculed as "creepy" in the press, and even garnered an editorial cartoon in the *Toronto Star*.[31] During the Pride Parade on July 3, QuAIA dropped an enormous banner – Support Palestinian Queers / Boycott Israeli Tourism –

over the Wellesley subway station in the heart of Pride activity across from the Blockorama stage.[32] The banner drop, reminiscent of the tactics of early AIDS activism, went viral. It was much more effective than a parade contingent.

QuAIA's strategy paid off handsomely. The mayor's refusal to attend Pride events cemented his reputation as a homophobe. This was not the kind of ally that did much to burnish the image of Brand Israel in the queer community. Then on July 12, Mammoliti, deserted by his allies, lost the vote to defund Pride.[33] By that point even Farber said of Mammoliti, "He just doesn't get it."[34]

It was the beginning of the end of Ford's fiscal conservative / social conservative / Israel apologist coalition. The mayor's boorish and often bizarre behaviour, along with growing evidence of his drug and alcohol problems, soon marginalized him at city hall.

HOMONATIONALISM

"While we enjoy an awesome Pride Week celebration in this wonderful country in which we can be free to be ourselves, let's bear in mind there are many who don't have the same freedom we do." That was Tracey Sandilands's message to the community in the 2010 Pride Guide.

Jasbir Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*, like much Queer Theory, revels in obscure language and wordplay. But her concept of homonationalism helped us understand what QuAIA was facing at Pride. Puar built on Lisa Duggan's notion of homonormativity: "a new neoliberal sexual politics" that "hinges upon the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption."[35] Puar called homonormativity plus U.S. nationalism "homonationalism." She argued that while the homonormative part of the equation reiterates heterosexuality as the national norm by mimicking such institutions as heterosexual marriage, "certain domesticated homosexual bodies provide ammunition to reinforce nationalist projects,"[36] such as the War on Terror.

The QuAIA experience also seemed to indicate that the notion of homonationalism needed complicating. Where different national imaginaries competed, there were several competing homonationalisms. The Pride Coalition for Free Speech had a vision of a tolerant nation where the right to free expression was sacrosanct. It opposed a conservative national project that envisioned a more jingoistic nationalism with no place for dissent. The conservative project sought to reinforce the apolitical nature of the quasi-ethnic LGBT community. The PCFS project sought to repoliticize it to defend liberal values. Both, however, were happy to celebrate Canada as model for gay inclusion.

The community was not divided into a reactionary homonationalist versus a progressive anti-homonationalist bloc. On the ground everything was, as always, far more messy.

LAYTON

On August 22, 2011, long-time LGBT community ally Jack Layton died of cancer. He had led the federal NDP to a significant success, with the party for the first time becoming the official opposition in Ottawa. After lying in state in Ottawa and Toronto city hall, Layton's body was accompanied by a police escort to Roy Thomson Hall in downtown Toronto for a state funeral on August 27.

In ceremonies broadcast live nationally, politicians and officials of all stripes jockeyed to eulogize the NDP leader. Layton, who had been instrumental in the struggle for LGBT rights as a city councillor in Toronto, made a statement even in death. MCC minister Brent Hawkes gave the sermon, and the MCC choir sung as the coffin was carried in. Lorraine Segato of the Parachute Club sang "Rise Up." In a day of national mourning, lesbians and gay men were visibly part of the nation.

OCCUPY

That fall the Canadian anti-corporate magazine *Adbusters* initiated a call to protest corporate influence and inequality. Its slogan, "We are the 99 per cent," sparked a huge public discussion about growing income inequality under neo-liberalism, and identified the 1 per cent of the population who were its main beneficiaries. In New York, Occupy Wall Street took over Zuccotti Park near the heart of the American finance capital. A month later protesters took over St. James Park in downtown Toronto.

The Toronto occupation was supported by thousands of individuals and seven major unions led by OPSEU. But taking over a park and attempting to house people there was ultimately unsustainable. Toronto police cleared the tents and the few remaining protesters at the end of November. Although Occupy Toronto lasted only a month, the movement was spectacularly successful in drawing attention to growing inequality.

The argument of the protesters was strengthened by statistics on income inequality released by Statistics Canada that year. Based on 2009 income tax figures, the top 1 per cent of families in Canada earned substantially more from wages and salaries than the entire bottom 30 per cent, and their share of such income had more than doubled since 1990. They also captured 57 per cent of total investment income. The top 10 per cent received more than the bottom 60. The bottom 10 per cent both increased in numbers and saw their income fall.[37]

Occupy in Toronto had an LGBTQ committee, and Stefonknee Wolscht, a trans woman, was a key organizer in the protest. But while there were several small queer interventions, no major lesbian and gay organization made a statement of support or engaged with the protesters.[38]

At the end of 2011 it appeared that Pride had turned a page. But there would be more to the saga. In 2012, QuAIA called together key allies from the remains of the PCFS and, based on feedback, decided to apply to march in the parade. At a subsequent meeting, a new group, Queers for Social Justice, was formed to raise other political issues during Pride Week.

City hall delivered an unexpected twist. On June 7, city council unanimously approved Pride funding. But the trade-off was an amendment to the funding motion:

> City Council reaffirm(s) its recognition of Pride Toronto as a significant cultural event that strongly promotes the ideals of tolerance and diversity, but condemn(s) the use of the term "Israeli Apartheid" which undermines these values and also diminishes the suffering experienced by individuals during the apartheid regime in South Africa.[39]

While annoying, the amendment, largely cribbed from the 2010 motion in the Ontario legislature, was little more than a symbolic sop to the Israel lobby. Still, seven councillors voted against it, more than had been willing to stand up for free expression in 2010.

Meanwhile, the impression that *Xtra* was QuAIA's mouthpiece was reinforced with its publication of a feature article on pinkwashing by Israeli journalist Mya Guarnieri. Probably the best of its kind in the queer press to that point, it explained the concept of Israeli apartheid, extensively quoted Palestinian queer activist Haneen Maikey and Israeli anti-occupation activists, and challenged the myth of Israel as a gay paradise. It generated a furious reaction from Israel supporters in the comments section.[40]

QuAIA's application to participate in the 2012 Pride parade sparked a series of complaints to the new Dispute Resolution Committee. In the end, the only one to go forward came from B'Nai Brith. After a full-day hearing under the Arbitration Act, the three-person panel found "that the activities of QUAIA are not contrary to the core missions, or policies, of Pride Toronto" and dismissed the complaint. We had won again.

That was essentially the end of the QuAIA wars at Pride, although there were a few echoes. Gladstone filed an official complaint accusing Uzma Shakir, the city's equity director, of bias because of her role in producing the city manager's report in 2011. When that failed, he made an equally unsuccessful complaint to the city ombudsman. There were also unsuccessful attempts to change the city's human rights policy to ban criticism of Israel. The proposal was rebuked by other equity-seeking groups for trivializing the difficulties they faced, but it required more organizing and more rounds of deputations at city hall. In 2013, another dispute resolution complaint was dismissed.

QuAIA's participation in Pride had become normalized. Public mobilization

had played an important role, but success had ultimately been achieved through recourse to the law. With much of civil society cowed by the Harper government, and corporations interested only in money, we had once again found ourselves appealing to the Charter.

WORLD PRIDE

The announcement that Toronto would host the 2014 World Pride was initially met with scepticism. London's World Pride in 2012 had been a financial disaster, with major events cancelled at the last minute. Given that Pride had just gotten back on its feet after Sandilands's disastrous tenure, there were fears that it was again overreaching itself.

QuAIA began planning early, despite our depleted energies. Several key members had moved away, others had moved on to other issues, and new members were not taking up the slack. The website was out of date and our Twitter account was dormant. There was debate about whether we should participate at all. Younger members weren't much interested in investing

energy in Pride. If it hadn't been for QuAIA, many wouldn't even have attended the festival. World Pride, like the Olympics, it was argued, would inevitably be soaked in homonationalism and displace the poor and marginalized. In fact, it was later leaked that police were already planning to clean up the downtown to ensure the "security" of revellers.

Certainly, for all of its pretensions of inclusivity, Word Pride's immediate goal was to attract the gay tourist dollar. And that had geographic, gender, racial, and class implications. The lion's share of that market comes from Europe and the white settler states, countries whose passports allow us to travel freely. It is also mostly male because of higher levels of disposable income among men, and middle class and above. World Pride is an inclusive project resting on exclusive material foundations.

The debate came down to whether or not QuAIA was primarily an anti-homonationalist organization or a Palestine solidarity organization. If our prime concern was educating people about Israel's apartheid system and building support for BDS, then World Pride was an opportunity to get our message out. Whether it was homonationalist or liberal was irrelevant. I argued that the call for BDS was a classic liberal demand calling on Israel to comply with existing international law, and there was nothing in that basis of unity that precluded participating.

In the end, we agreed to make a splash. Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East had raised money to place ads in the subway system with a series of maps showing the erosion of Palestinian territory over sixty years, but under political pressure, the Toronto transit system refused to display them. Instead, we raised money to place a full-page ad in *Xtra* featuring the same maps during Pride Week.

A second project was to distribute two thousand condom packages labelled "Fuck apartheid," with an insert explaining the loss of land, Israeli human rights violations, and pinkwashing. Now that we were no longer entangled in the freedom of speech issue, we organized a public event to explore Middle East solidarity in a more nuanced fashion. Finally, we came up with the semi-insane idea of floating a massive twenty-five-foot-long banner displaying the same censored disappearing Palestine maps, held aloft by helium balloons above our parade contingent.

The city's mood was appreciably lightened on June 12, when Wynne's Liberals unexpectedly swept to a majority in the provincial election. There had been real fears that the hard-right Progressive Conservatives under Tim Hudak might take power and return us to the Harris era. But Ontario's first lesbian premier defied the odds and humiliated both the Tories and the NDP, whose vote against her previous minority government had sparked the election.

As the date drew closer, it appeared World Pride would come together. A major LGBT Human Rights Conference organized by Sexual Diversity Studies at the University of Toronto would draw activists from around the world. A

steep registration fee put it out of reach of many in Toronto, but there were generous scholarships to activists from developing countries.

Dozens of World Pride–affiliated public art shows, performances, innovative history exhibits, talks, and events were planned. A panel of queer people of colour packed the Gladstone Hotel to address "WTF is queer about Settler Colonialism, Racism and Homonationalism?" A mural project promoted by Councillor Wong-Tam redecorated key buildings on Church Street, and the park housing the AIDS Memorial was refurbished. Wong-Tam also planned a mass gay wedding at city hall.

There would be six major stages in the Church Street area with performances by local and international talent. Mariela Castro, director of Cuba's National Centre for Sexual Education, was coming to town. She would receive the OFL's International Workplace Rights Award for her part in reforming the Cuban labour code. Parachute Club announced the release of a remix of its iconic 1983 anthem "Rise Up"; Rise Up was the 2014 festival slogan. Brent Hawkes was chosen as grand marshal, and the international grand marshal would be the young Georgian human rights activist Anna Rekhviashvili.

The buildup was not without missteps connected with the now ubiquitous corporate sponsorship. In April, as part of a million-dollar sponsorship package, CTV began airing a public service announcement asking the meaning of Pride. For the next thirty seconds, a dozen smiling white normative faces said things like "acceptance, harmony, being an equal," and so on. A cop says "tolerance." Two gay dads with their infant say "happiness." At the end, the only racialized person, a young black woman, says "peace." The Pride board had no say in the content, which by the terms of the contract was CTV intellectual property. The ad produced an angry reaction from a number of the ethnospecific AIDS service organizations.

Then *Xtra* revealed that Pride's agreement with Trojan meant that only Trojan condoms could be distributed at events. The commodification of safe sex also produced blowback.

Nevertheless, the opening ceremonies in front of city hall were packed. They featured performances by lesbian icon Melissa Etheridge, Canadian R&B singer Deborah Cox, gay country music heartthrob Steve Grand, and Tom Robinson, whose 1976 "Glad to Be Gay" was one of our first activist anthems. There was something for everyone.

Many of us had feared the human rights conference would be a homonationalist showcase. While the celebratory currents of Canada as a gay-friendly liberal nation were certainly present, the conference was both thought provoking and nuanced, with strong participation from a range of critical activists from around the world. Despite the cost, it was oversubscribed, but every evening there was a free keynote open to the public.

Critical perspectives broke through even in public sessions with a homonationalist cast. The Pathbreakers plenary featured the former prime minister

of Iceland, Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir; her wife, Jónína Leósdóttir; and eighty-five-year-old Edith Windsor, whose legal case in 2013 had won the recognition of same-sex marriages in the United States. Conversation revolved around the importance of gay marriage for the panellists, but in the middle of her talk, Windsor went off script. She pointed out that while marriage might be an important issue for older middle-class lesbians and gay men with property to bequeath, it was largely irrelevant to youth and other groups facing violence, discrimination, poverty, homelessness, and substance abuse problems.

Over the week I was in demand as a living gay dinosaur, with seven different speaking gigs on topics as diverse as World Pride and homonationalism, HIV criminalization, the successes and problems of single-issue queer equity work in the schools, and QuAIA.

Richard was also busy. He was producing a follow-up to his first video *Orientations: Lesbian and Gay Asians*, following the activities of the surviving interviewees thirty years later. Pride was the obvious backdrop, and he had to shepherd a film crew through the massive crowds. We briefly met up at the Trans March on Friday evening and the Dyke March on Saturday afternoon, and I waved as the QuAIA contingent with its giant floating banner passed underneath him as he filmed from the roof of Glad Day Bookshop on Sunday.

The 2014 Pride march could not have been more different from the one forty years before when fifty or so of us walked from Allan Gardens to Queen's Park, largely unnoticed, carrying homemade signs. With more than 12,000 marchers and 280 floats and contingents, the World Pride parade went on for six hours. Led by a white balloon-festooned float of the Two Spirited People of the First Nations, it included leading banks and corporations, NGOs, community groups, more than a dozen unions, and at least six local and regional police forces. Hundreds of marchers carried national flags. Political leaders were out in force and the Canadian Olympic Team participated for the first time. Yonge Street was packed with spectators for almost twenty city blocks well before the parade kicked off. The 1974 march had gone unreported. In 2014, media partners included CP24, CTV, Proud FM, Z103.5, and the *Toronto Star*.

In 1974 Pride was organized by an ad hoc group of volunteers on a budget of a few hundred dollars. World Pride had an office, paid staff, and net revenues of more than $5.3 million, of which $2.7 million were from sponsorships and almost $1.4 million from federal, provincial, and municipal grants.[66]

World Pride embodied all the contradictions of neo-liberal Canada and the state of the LGBT movement. Promotion of the inclusive Canadian state and a critique of that notion. Corporate development of the pink dollar niche market and anti-corporate protest. Israeli pinkwashing and anti-pinkwashing activism. Discussion of both the necessity and pitfalls of international human rights work. Community unity and community infighting, inclusivity and the displacement of the homeless, and a celebration of historical struggles that were at the same time conceptualized as a relic of an ever more distant past.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAN!	AIDS ACTION NOW!
ACAS	Asian Community AIDS Services
ACCHO	African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario
ACT	AIDS Committee of Toronto
ACT UP	AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
AL-721	a lipid mixture used as an anti-HIV drug
AMENO	Anti-racism Multicultural Educators Network of Ontario
ANC	African National Congress
APA	American Psychiatric Association
ARCH	Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped
AZT	an antiviral drug (azidothymidine)
BDS	boycott, divestment, and sanctions
Black CAP	Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention
BM	black male
BOOST	Blind Organization of Ontario with Self-Help Tactics
CAAT	Committee for Accessible AIDS Treatment
CAISO	Coalition Advocating for Inclusion of Sexual Orientation (Trinidad and Tobago)
CALGM	Canadian Association of Lesbians and Gay Men
CAMH	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
CAP	Community Advisory Panel
CAS	Canadian AIDS Society
CATIE	Community AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (later, Canadian AIDS Treatment Information Exchange)
CAW	Canadian Auto Workers
CD4	a type of white blood cell; a measure of the immune system
CEF	Campaign for Equal Families
CEM	Canadians for Equal Marriage
CGRO	Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (later, CLGRO)
CHAR	Comité homosexuel anti-répression / Gay Coalition Against Repression

CHAT	Community Homophile Association of Toronto
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (U.S.)
CIRPA	Citizen's Independent Review of Police Activities
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress
CLGA	Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives
CLGRC	Canadian Lesbian and Gay Rights Coalition
CLGRO	Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario
CLHE	Working Group on Criminal Law and HIV Exposure
CMV	cytomegalovirus
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
CPAVIH	Comité des Personnes Atteintes du VIH du Québec
CRIT	Community Research Initiative Toronto
CSAM	Comité SIDA Aide Montréal
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
CUPW	Canadian Union of Postal Workers
CURE	Citizens United for Responsible Education
CUT	Coalition for Usable Transportation
DDC	an antiviral drug (dideoxycytidine)
ddI	an antiviral drug (dideoxyinosine)
EDRP	Emergency Drug Release Program
EGALE	Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere (later, EGALE Canada; Egale Canada)
EHGAM	Euskal Herriko Gay Askapen Mugimendua (Basque Gay Liberation Movement)
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment (U.S.)
FAGC	Front d'Alliberament Gai de Catalunya (Catalan Gay Liberation Front)
FGG	Federation of Gay Games
GAAP	Gay Asian AIDS Project
GASA	Gay Association of South Africa
GAT	Gay Asians Toronto
GATE	Gay Alliance Toward Equality
GCDC	Gay Community Dance Committee
GLAAD	Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
GLAL	Grup de Lluita per l'Alliberament de la Lesbiana (Group in Struggle for Lesbian Liberation) (Spain)
GLARE	Gays and Lesbians Against the Right Everywhere (later, Gay Liberation Against the Right Everywhere)
GLAUT	Gays and Lesbians at U of T
GLOBE	Gay and Lesbian Organization of Bell Employees
GLOW	Gay and Lesbian Organization of the Witwatersrand (South Africa)
GNP+	Global Network of People Living with HIV

GO	Gays of Ottawa
GRID	gay related immune deficiency
GSA	Gay Straight Alliance
GWM	gay white male
HALCO	HIV and AIDS Legal Clinic of Ontario
HEAL	Health AIDS Education Liaison
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus (previously, HTLV-III)
IAS	International AIDS Society
ICASO	International Council of AIDS Service Organizations
ICW	International Community of Women Living with HIV
IGA	International Gay Association (later, ILGA)
ILGA	International Lesbian and Gay Association
IRQO	Iranian Queer Organization
IRQR	Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees
IV	intravenous
IWD	International Women's Day
JDL	Jewish Defense League
J-FLAG	Jamaica Forum for Lesbians, All-Sexuals and Gays
KS	Kaposi's sarcoma
LAR	Lesbians Against the Right
LEGIT	Lesbian and Gay Immigration Taskforce
LGB	lesbian, gay, bisexual
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans
LGBTQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer
LGBTTIQ	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, queer
LGBTTIQQ2SA	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, two-spirited, and allies
LGBYT	Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth Toronto
LGSM	Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (U.K.)
LOON	Lesbians of Ottawa Now
LOOT	Lesbian Organization of Toronto
LSA	League for Socialist Action
MCC	Metropolitan Community Church
MVAAA	Metropolitan Vancouver Arts and Athletics Association
NAMBLA	North American Man/Boy Love Association
NARCC	National Anti-Racism Council of Canada
NDP	New Democratic Party
NGO	non-governmental organization
NGRC	National Gay Rights Coalition (later, CLGRC)
NMI	New Marxist Institute
NOW	National Organization of Women (U.S.) (also, italicized, a free downtown weekly in Toronto)

OAN	Ontario AIDS Network
OAS	Organization of American States
OBOS	*Our Bodies, Ourselves*
OCASI	Ontario Coalition of Agencies Serving Immigrants
OFL	Ontario Federation of Labour
OHIP	Ontario Health Insurance Plan
OHRC	Ontario Human Rights Commission
OLGA	Organization of Lesbian and Gay Activists (South Africa)
OPSEU	Ontario Public Service Employees Union
PASAN	Prisoners AIDS Support and Advocacy Network
PCFS	Pride Coalition for Free Speech
PCP	a kind of pneumonia (pneumocystis)
PFLAG	Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (later, Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays)
PHA	people living with HIV/AIDS
PI	protease inhibitors
PIE	Paedophile Information Exchange (U.K.)
PLURA	inter-church coalition with Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Church, Roman Catholic, and Anglican sponsors
PLWA	people with AIDS (people living with HIV/AIDS)
PMA	Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association
PTP	Pink Triangle Press
PWA	people living with AIDS
QN	Queer Nation
QuAIA	Queers Against Israeli Apartheid
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RGO	Rand Gay Organization (South Africa)
RHN	Rainbow Health Network
RICC	Riverdale Intercultural Council
RMG	Revolutionary Marxist Group
RTPC	Right to Privacy Committee
SARS	severe acute respiratory syndrome
SDS	Sexual Diversity Studies
SIDA	*syndrome d'immunodéficience acquise* (AIDS)
S/M	sado-masochism
SMM(C)	Stop Murder Music (Canada)
SNAAC	Simon Nkodi Anti-apartheid Committee: Lesbians and Gays Against Apartheid
SRS	sex reassignment surgery
STI	sexually transmitted infection
TAAR	Treatment, Access and Research Committee (AAN!)
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign (South Africa)
TAG	Treatment Action Group (New York)

TBP	*The Body Politic*
TCLSAC	Toronto Committee for the Liberation of South African Colonies
TDSB	Toronto District School Board
TGA	Toronto Gay Action
TGCC	Toronto Gay Community Council
TIE	Treatment Information Exchange
TNT Men	Totally Naked Toronto Men
TRIPS	trade-related aspects of property rights
TSPFN	Two Spirited People of the First Nations
UBC	University of British Columbia
UN	United Nations
U of T	University of Toronto
WASP	*White Assed Super Pricks* (magazine)
WAVAW	Women Against Violence Against Women
WAYV	Welcoming All Youth to the Village
WBC	Women's Bathhouse Committee
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

12 We're Not in Kansas Anymore

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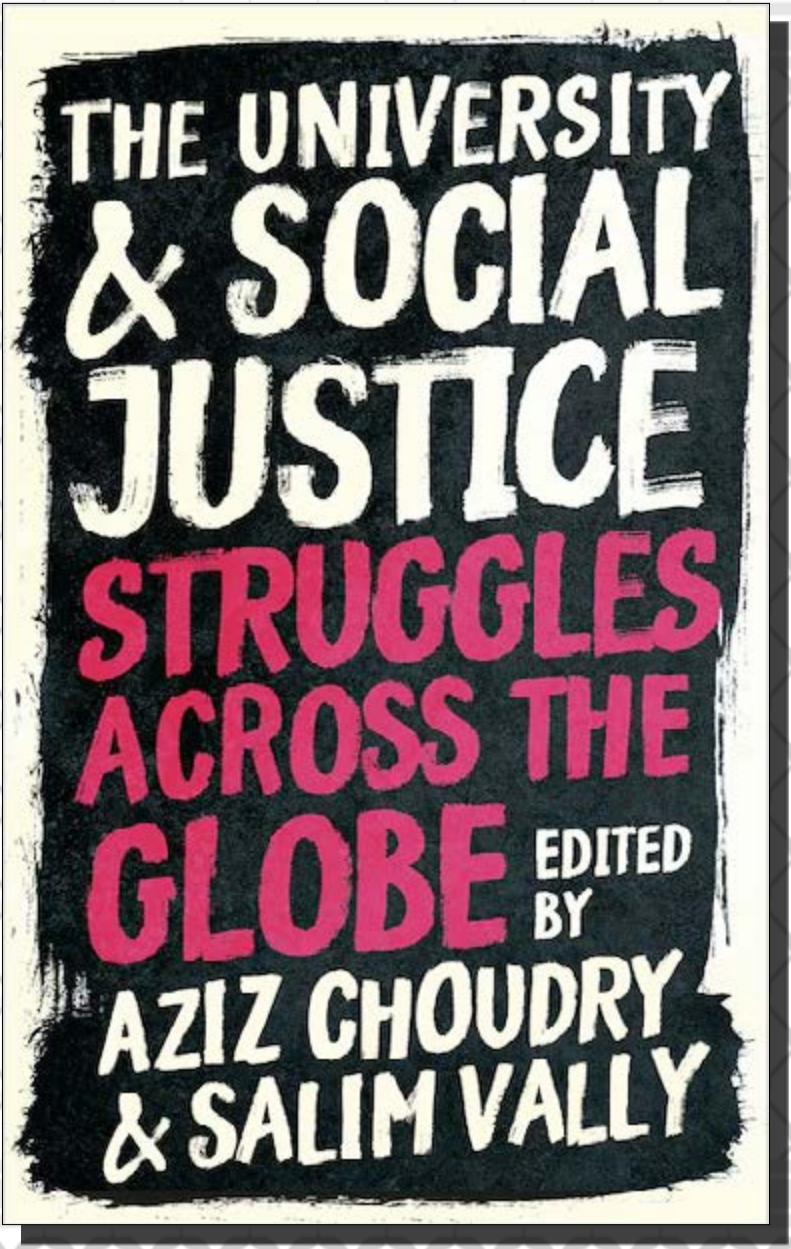
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7

Resisting the US corporate university

Palestine, Zionism and campus politics

Rabab Ibrahim Abdulhadi and Saliem Shehadeh

In recent years, the Israel lobby industry has intensified its campaign to censure, silence and discredit campus dissent, especially advocacy for justice in/for Palestine. Zionist groups attempt to punish Palestine advocacy through a wide array of tactics including passing legislation to criminalise the movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), pushing for judicial reinterpretation that would criminalise other channels of support such as charitable donations to Palestinian NGOs and smearing Palestine advocates as anti-Semitic. It is a new McCarthyism. San Francisco State University (SFSU) has been a major site for this campaign, with the objective to bully and smear faculty, discipline student activism and dismantle the Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas (AMED) Studies programme whose pedagogy, scholarship and public engagement unambiguously insists on framing justice for/in Palestine as part of the indivisibility of justice. This chapter historicises and contextualises current campus conditions, enabling us to understand the waves of campus repression and assault on free speech and efforts to fight back. We discuss the political economy of the Israel lobby and the interconnected dynamics of the corporatisation of this public university. Concluding with lessons for social movement organising against the criminalisation of campus activism, we present three cases of campus mobilisation to resist the nexus of the corporatisation and Zionisation of SFSU.

On 23 February 2018, SFSU President Leslie Wong sent an email to 30,000 students, faculty, staff and donors legitimising Zionism from the highest office of the university, declaring, 'Let me be clear: Zionists are welcome on our campus' (Wong 2018). Wong's statement was neither spontaneous nor did it come out of nowhere. Rather, it was the latest sign of the neoliberal transformation of SFSU from a campus with 50 years of an avowedly social justice mission to one with an intimate relationship with Zionism. While the university administration allowed other right-wing expressions, such as Nazism, under the pretext of protecting speech, it has denied similar protections to campus advocates of justice for/in Palestine, in effect weaponising free speech in order to silence the dissenting voices of those supporting Palestinian rights. The more SFSU accepted funding from Zionists and other right-wing donors, the more it engaged in a systematic campaign of silencing, harassment and retaliation.

ENLISTING RACISM, ORIENTALISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

Today a number of well-funded organisations whose mission is to salvage Israel's badly damaged public image have launched a vicious campaign in the US academy to silence scholarship, pedagogy and advocacy for justice in/for Palestine. Israel lobby groups have twisted faculty and student calls for justice by labelling them anti-Semitic, enlisted Islamophobic 'war on terror' rhetoric and increasingly demanded that university administrations adopt policies that police dissent, including narrower student conduct charges and accusations against faculty during hiring and promotion processes.

The Israel lobby organisations that have more overtly engaged in such harassment and bullying include: The AMCHA Initiative (founded in 2011), The David Horowitz Freedom Center (founded in 1988), Campus Watch (founded in 2002), Middle East Forum (founded in 1990), Canary Mission (founded in 2014), Hillel International (founded in 1923), the David Project (founded in 2002) and the Lawfare Project (founded in 2010). These organisations became more active after September 11, 2001, and increasingly following the warning signs by the Reut Institute of the expanding base of their 'delegitimization network'

following Israel's brutal war against Gaza in 2008–2009 (The Reut Institute, 2010). Their work seeks to advance hegemonic discourses that support Israel's colonialism, racism and occupation (or apartheid). This is especially true as US public support for Israel declined with its escalating anti-Palestinian assaults. This lobby network receives support from organisations whose wide-ranging scope has brought them into campus politics such as: the Simon Wiesenthal Center (founded in 1977), Stand With US (founded in 2001), the Zionist Organization of America (founded in 1897), the Brandeis Center (founded in 2012), the Anti-Defamation League (founded in 1913), the Jewish Federations of North America (founded in 1935) and its public relations wing, the Jewish Community Relations Councils (founded in 1944). While each organisation employs different tactics, some deploying more aggressive language and imagery than others, they seem to share a basic commitment to silencing Palestine advocacy.

White supremacist nationalist organisations and individuals, well-connected with the current US political establishment and who formally endorse and/or support Zionism, including Christian Zionists, work closely with the Israel lobby industry. Their xenophobia stretches far and targets non-white people, LGBTQI people, environmental and feminist groups and the working class. These right-wing groups are leaders of the Islamophobia industry. Their work includes overt hate speech such as Pamela Geller's *Stop the Islamization of America*. The Southern Poverty Law Center, for example, has characterised many of these organisations as hate groups and classified their leaders as the driving force behind anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant and anti-Black racist movements (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019, see webpage 'Anti-Muslim'). The webpage of the Christian Zionist organisation, Christians United for Israel, boasts of being 'the largest pro-Israel grassroots organization in the United States' (Christians United for Israel, 2019, see homepage). The work of such organisations is deeply embedded in US Evangelicalism that embraces Zionism as an integral part of its teaching.

Funding for these organisations ranges from localised small-scale Zionist donors to multimillion-dollar donations from mega-millionaires and billionaires, such as Sheldon Adelson, Haim Saban and Paul Singer. Organisations such as the Jewish Federations of North America have adopted a standard approach by channelling donations to a wide array of Zionist Jewish organisations, including those operating on university

campuses. In explaining their impact on campuses, we have identified several structural factors that contribute to their efficacy including labour, campus connections, professionalisation, coercive donations and the legal harassment of Palestine advocates.

ZIONIST CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

The extensive funding that Zionist organisations receive enables them to hire full-time staff. This is reflected in a complex organisational model with a staff that includes a board of directors, advisors, regional directors, project directors, analysts, editors, public relations specialists, assistants, interns, general members, as well as volunteers. These human resources allow these organisations to hire campus liaison officers, bring students, faculty and administrators onto their payroll to collect intelligence about everyday campus developments, hire lawyers to file lawsuits, and develop website coders to build online platforms. By contrast, most Palestine-centred campus organising is done by volunteer students, faculty and staff out of their own commitment for justice in/for Palestine rather than as a paid job. But that also affects their capacity for consistent messaging, media impact and tracking ever-changing campus rules that shrink the public space for counter-hegemonic organising.

A key organising strategy of well-funded Israel lobby organisations is to establish strong connections to campus administrators and student groups to normalise support for Israel as part of the campus status quo politics. Zionist organisations have a skilled lobbying cadre that inundates administrators with letter writing campaigns and regular meetings with donors and political pressure groups. For example, Hillel, the Jewish fraternity AEPi and The Israel on Campus Coalition operate as a conduit for other Zionist organisations that target youth. The David Project, an Israel lobby group well-known for instructing students on how to bring charges against professors that teach Palestine, was once a strategic partner with Hillel and has now fully been absorbed within Hillel. Birthright Israel is another programme that uses Zionist campus organisations as a foothold to recruit students by offering free trips to Israel that act as a propaganda tool for Israeli colonial and racist policies. The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) has turned itself into 'the go-to' liaison with political and civic leaders, including campus

administrators and officials (JCRC, 2019, see 'Public Affairs' webpage). The Lawfare Project, specialising in legal bullying, pursued the same strategy when it filed a Federal lawsuit against SFSU and several staff and administrators. A co-author of this chapter (Abdulhadi) was the only Palestinian, Arab and Muslim faculty member who was targeted for frivolous litigation while being smeared for similar false allegations. Lawfare Executive Director Brooke Goldstein defined the goals of this legal harassment to 'Make the enemy pay' and exacting 'massive punishments' for critics of Israel (Abunimah, 2016). After 14 months of continuous attacks, Lawfare was dealt a monumental defeat when Federal Judge Orrick dismissed the lawsuit with prejudice, meaning that they cannot file it again. In his written opinion, Orrick stated that being anti-Zionist and supporting Palestinian resistance does not make Abdulhadi anti-Semitic (*Mandel v. Board of Trustees*, 2018, p. 29). Lawfare then resorted to another tactic in their war of attrition against their grassroots opponents. They filed another lawsuit against SFSU, in the California State Court, and did not name Abdulhadi nor any of the student and faculty organisers who could have had the legal standing to defend more rigorously than the university's corporate lawyers. Both lawsuits attempt to silence Palestine campus advocacy by falsely accusing critics of Israel of anti-Semitism.

CORPORATISING AND THE PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONALISATION

The professionalisation of Zionist organisations has come to define the bloated managerial class of the neoliberal economy spanning across the public sector, semi-private civil service organisations and NGOs. The interconnected network provides a platform to train new mobile administrative professionals. SF Hillel, at the forefront of attacking this chapter's co-authors, the AMED Studies programme and campus activism, is a prime example. Oliver Benn, SF Hillel's Executive Director, began his career as a lawyer and then became an entrepreneur who participated in the metropolitan council for the JCRC and the Jewish Community Federation Board (SF Hillel, n.d., see Webpage 'Our Professional Team'). The employment trajectory of the current Associate Executive Director, Rachel Ralston, highlights the resources of

the Israel lobby networks of training new administrative professionals. Ralston worked her way up from being a student member of SF Hillel to becoming a high-level administrator after graduating from SFSU in 2011 (ibid.). University administrations are not exempt from this modus operandi. The highest-placed Zionist at SFSU, Jason Porth, was promoted to SFSU as Vice President in charge of several portfolios such as University Enterprises and the University Corporation. The latter oversees SFSU 'development' and construction plans and the internal expenditure of grants and contracts (Porth, 2019). Porth worked his way up from a disabilities labour attorney to the chief of staff for two SFSU presidents. He simultaneously doubled up for three years as the President of the Raoul Wallenberg Jewish Democratic Club (the Jewish club in the San Francisco Democratic Party) that 'has been a force on issues pertaining to Israel, in particular, fighting anti-Israel resolutions in the cities of San Francisco and Berkeley' (Raoul Wallenberg, 2019). Porth lobbied against a resolution submitted to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors (BOS) (city council) in 2010 condemning the attack on the Turkish ship *Mavi Marmara* attempting to end the blockade of Gaza. One of the co-authors of this chapter was among the speakers who urged the BOS to adopt the resolution on the basis of the indivisibility of justice. The resolution, submitted by a broad-based community coalition, was not tabled (Palevsky, 2010).

MOVING MONEY: THE POLITICS OF ZIONIST COERCIVE DONATIONS

Neoliberalism has had a direct negative impact on transparency and accountability. An emerging new public discourse justifies increasing reliance on student tuition, grants and donations, but how the funds are used is not disclosed. As a result, academic institutions increasingly hire more administrators and less faculty and staff who might belong to an employee union where they could negotiate a collective bargaining agreement, as is the case with SFSU. While tuition fees rise and neoliberalism becomes the lexicon of interaction, students are slowly transformed into consumers and the faculty as customer service. As the measure of a university's success is the size of its endowment, the relationship between the university and its private donors is transformed

in favour of what the donors want, i.e. 'donor-driven' programmes. Indeed, the job description of the 2019 search for a new SFSU president emphasises the relationship with donors. The job advert's subheading of 'finances' exclusively focuses on the university's success in garnering donations and grants, even noting the largest donation of the previous year; a $25 million donation made by SFSU alumni George and Judy Marcus. George Marcus is an emeritus member of the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees serving on the CSU Foundation's Board of Governors (San Francisco State University, n.d., see Webpage 'George and Judy Marcus Donate over $28 million to SF State'). The CSU/SFSU public relations strategy of aligning administrators with donors is so entrenched that they receive an honourable mention in the job description for the highest office at the university. Absent in this job description is any discussion of demanding public funds from California's legislature, reducing student tuition, providing affordable housing for out of town students, and hiring more faculty to respond to the needs of students on public loans to graduate more quickly.

Zionist organisations are not SFSU's largest donors. Their influence on campus, however, is quite substantial and stems from their ability to plug into the clientele model paved by the administration's increasing commitment to neoliberalism. Shared characteristics among these philanthropists are how they made their fortunes in 'land development', as real estate brokers or as CEOs of San Francisco's industries. The irony is not lost on SFSU students, faculty and staff who can barely afford rental or real estate costs in the San Francisco Bay Area that have caused student homelessness and hunger, massive indebtedness, and have pushed them out of their neighbourhoods in deliberate gentrification. The widening class divisions between donors and potential donors on the one hand, and students, staff and faculty, on the other, reflect the same logic that marginalises campus activists, students and faculty.

The Helen Diller Family Foundation is a prime example. Founded in 1999 by real estate tycoon and billionaire Sanford Diller and his wife Helen, the foundation made millions of dollars in tax-deductible donations to 'support education, science, and the arts largely in the Bay Area and also in Israel' (Inside Philanthropy, 2018, see Webpage 'The Helen Diller Family Donation'). In its 2016 tax filings, the Diller Foundation reported a $100,000 donation to The Central Fund of Israel listing the purpose as 'Canary Mission for Megamot Shalom'

(Nathan-Kazis, 2018). Canary Mission is a well-known shadowy website whose mission is to smear, harass and intimidate campus critics of Israel by publicising their personal information and other misinformation 'to damage the lives of activists' (Against Canary Mission, n.d., see Webpage What Is Canary Mission?). In an attempt to obfuscate the connections and funding source, The Central Fund of Israel transferred the funds to the Jewish Community Federation (JCF) of San Francisco who, in turn, distributed it to Canary Mission. Nathan-Kazis, a reporter for the Jewish newspaper *The Forward* exposed this collaboration between the organisations and noted that two staff members of the JCF sit on the Diller Foundation's board (Nathan-Kazis, 2018).

Furthermore, Jaclyn Safier, current president of the Diller Foundation and current CEO of the real estate group sits on the UC Berkeley Board of Visitors and the external advisory board for the chancellor of the university (University of California Berkeley, 2019, see Webpage 'Board of Visitors'). Safier also sits on the University of California, San Francisco's Board of Overseers as a distinguished director whose function is to raise money for the university ('About the UCSF', 2019). In May 2019, the Diller Foundation gave $5 million to UC Berkeley (UCB) to fund the Helen Diller Family Chair in Israel Studies (Pine, 2019). The first Chair of Israel Studies is on active duty in the Israeli army and advocates against BDS. We therefore should not expect any better at UCB.

For university administrators, the lessons from both the Diller Foundation as well as George Marcus are clear. Installing foundation directors on the university's board of directors not only increases the likelihood of the foundation's donation but also equally troubling is the influence Israel's supporters can and do exercise over university policies and treatment of faculty and students who advocate for justice in/for Palestine. In effect, this ensured a direct pipeline from the corporate boardroom to university boards that are populated with corporate representatives instead of educators. The tiered structure of California's higher education is made up of three different systems. In the California Community Colleges system, five out of the 14 members of the Board of Governors are experienced educators (California Community Colleges, 2019, see Webpage 'Board of Governors Members'). In the California State University system, the number on the Board of Trustees falls to 3 out of 17 (California State University, 2019, see Webpage 'Meet the Board

of Trustees'). In the University of California, its Ph.D. granting system, only 2 out of 17 members of the Board of Regents have experience in higher education (University of California, 2019, see Webpage 'Board of Regents'). Most trustees and regents are comprised of corporate leaders, including CEOs, partners at mega law firms, foundation directors and policy analysts in non-adjacent fields. These boards reflect the economic structure of higher education that allows the private sector to exert more influence over the public sector and thus blur the lines between the two and allow corporations to exert undue influence over public education that is supposed to provide a public good for all. Thus, indirectly, it feeds into normalising the status quo of support for Israel irrespective of how flagrant its violations of Palestinian rights and international consensus.

A glaring example of the ever-expanding role of corporations and private donors at SFSU is evident in the Koret Foundation's 2016 $1.7 million donation to SFSU. The foundation sought to leverage its donation to the university to punish Palestinian student participants in a broad-based student protest on 6 April 2016, against Nir Barkat, the right-wing mayor of occupied Jerusalem (now a Knesset member), who was hosted on campus by SF Hillel with help from the JCRC. Barkat was visiting San Francisco on a private fundraising trip for AIPAC (the American Israel Public Affairs Committee) (Pine, 2017). The foundation's donation was part of a $50 million campaign Koret promised to twelve colleges in California (Asimov, 2016). As the Lawfare lawsuit against SFSU and Abdulhadi noted, the Koret Foundation had 'pledged to give a $1.7 million gift to SFSU, but had held back because of concerns about anti-Jewish animus on campus, especially after the shut-down of Mayor Barkat's speech and *the lack of sufficient response from SFSU following the event*' [emphasis added] (*Mandel v. Board of Trustees*, 2017, p. 43). The 'lack of sufficient response from SFSU' refers to SFSU's disciplinary process. Nearly four pages of the lawsuit describe what Lawfare alleges to be student protestors' violations. The lawsuit claims that 'no actions were taken by SFSU against the disruptive students, no disciplinary charges were ever filed, and no sanctions ever imposed against GUPS … or any other individuals responsible for committing these acknowledged violations' (*Mandel*, 2017, p. 30). The lawsuit further reveals that at a meeting with Jewish faculty members regarding the Koret Foundation, President Wong said that 'in his entire

career he had never had a donor invoke "political reasons" to withhold a gift' (*Mandel*, 2017, p. 40).

Not unlike the rest of the Lawfare lawsuit, this was a misrepresentation of the disciplinary process. Sanctions were imposed on GUPS, the only organisation singled out for charges. GUPS leaders were placed on oral notice that any future demonstrations taken by GUPS or its members would be met with strict disciplinary punishment. The effect was that of a gag order imposed by the Koret Foundation on Palestinian students through donations to SFSU. The business-as-usual response of SFSU betrayed the corporatisation of SFSU and its submission to Zionist pressure. While the university hired an independent law firm to investigate what had transpired during the Barkat affair, nonetheless SFSU found and fired Osvaldo Del Valle, the Director of Student Conduct, who had carried out the prosecution of the Palestinian students. Del Valle was asked by his supervisor, Luoluo Hong, Vice President of Student Affairs, to submit his resignation. The independent investigator's report vindicated GUPS and other student protesters and made it clear that neither Palestinian students nor any other student protesters engaged in violence nor had exhibited any anti-Semitic actions or discourses. Nonetheless, in their first statement following the filing of the Lawfare lawsuit, SFSU referred to the protest as 'ugly reminders [of] anti-Semitism' (SF State News, 2017). Despite SFSU's misrepresentation of the truth, the Koret Foundation rescinded its donation.

ALLEGATIONS AND INVESTIGATIONS

To silence advocates for justice in/for Palestine, Zionist organisations rely on legal harassment tactics by filing discrimination charges. Allegations range from violations of campus policy to accusations of treason and collaboration with terrorists. There is a wide spectrum of views among Zionist groups. Some, like Hillel, have condemned the use of violent images by the David Horowitz Freedom Center (DHFC) and dismissed Horowitz's actions as those of an extremist. However, the logic of a narrative that associates Palestine advocacy with criminality and hatred of Jews constitutes a racialised discourse that is rooted in Islamophobia that permeates Zionist groups. Hillel students falsely alleged that Palestinian students physically threatened them despite lack

of any evidence. Hillel students claimed that Palestinian students came to the protest of Barkat's campus visit with shielded knives and that they had 'readjusted their head coverings in a threatening manner' according to the Lawfare lawsuit against SFSU and Abdulhadi (*Mandel v. Board of Trustees*, 2017, pp. 3, 33). In 2014, Hillel students accused the GUPS President of planning to kill Israelis. This resulted in his suspension for one year and investigations by the SF Police Department, the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force and the Israeli Consulate. Soon after, AMCHA and its associates alleged that the GUPS advisor (Abdulhadi) inspired the student following her 2014 trip to Palestine. AMCHA then falsely accused Abdulhadi of misusing public funds to support terrorist activities by meeting with Leila Khaled and Sheikh Raed Salah. SFSU then re-audited Abdulhadi's trip to Palestine and Jordan twice and proceeded to investigate her international travel for the previous five years in response to AMCHA's rejection of the outcome of the two new audits.

Though these various audits vindicated Dr Abdulhadi, the university's redundant investigation lent credibility to the smearing of her reputation. This represents a key tenet of Islamophobia, anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian racism. Such racialisation has legitimised the surveillance and interrogation of Muslims, and those perceived to be Muslim, on a mass scale. At the centre of it is the constant Zionist use of terms such as 'exposure', misuse, anti-Semitism or terrorism. This messaging implies that the targeted individuals are intrinsically predisposed to such illicit behaviour and hide behind an academic facade in US cities and universities. The language shared equally by Zionist organisations and neoliberal university administrations portrays Palestine advocates as deviant. Palestine Legal, a legal group that defends students, reported that between 2014 and 2018 it responded to 1247 incidents of suppression of Palestinian advocacy work and 318 that required legal intervention across 68 campuses (Palestine Legal, 2019). Spending their time defending their standing at and reputation outside the university, students and faculty experience anxiety and lose irreplaceable time to study for exams, join clubs, read books, take up internships, find jobs, write and publish, construct lesson plans, attend conferences, enjoy stimulating conversations with friends and colleagues and engage in other activities related to the academy.

RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND McCARTHYISM: ORGANISING FOR AN INDIVISIBLE SENSE OF JUSTICE

Organising at SFSU for the survival and growth of GUPS and AMED has been a lesson in collaboration and building a broad-based community of justice. A camaraderie has developed at SFSU between anti-racist and anti-colonial faculty and student organisations who lead what have become known as the Historical Orgs. The naming goes back to 1968/69 – the longest student strike in the history of the US student movement, led by the Third World Liberation Front, initiated by the Black Student Union mostly made up of the Black Panther Party. Student groups that had not been established at that time but were now organising in the spirit and according to the principles of the coalition are given honorary status by the Historical Orgs. A measure of acknowledgement can be seen in the murals of various struggles that adorn the Cesar Chavez Student Center. These Historical Orgs also mark historical events such as the Sabra and Shatila massacre of Palestinian refugees and displaced Lebanese following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. These historic events receive funding from the student government and are able to access a designated funding pool for such purposes. Ebbs and flows characterise coalition work among Historical Orgs and their allies depending on how experienced student leaders are and how hostile the campus environment is in any given semester. The extent of hostility is characterised by the degree to which the administration enforces disciplinary mechanisms against students and faculty and the strength or weakness of faculty resistance to such coercive methods and shrinking academic public space. This usually correlates with the intensity of Zionist and other right-wing attacks and private donors' intervention in university affairs. The larger coalition of historical and honorary organisations include *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlán* (MEChA), League of Filipino Students, Student Kouncil of Intertribal Nations, Black Student Union, Pacific Islander Club, Muslim Student Association, Muslim Women Student Association, African Student Association, JUSTICE, Students for Quality Education, Black n' Brown Liberation Coalition, Ethnic Studies Student Organization, and students minoring in Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Studies academic programmes.

TASERS: THE BATTLE OVER CAMPUS 'GUN CONTROL'

A major battle that tested the faculty-student-staff coalition of justice was a year-long confrontation with the administration over what the students defined as wrong governance. The first confrontation emerged against the use of electroshock weapons (tasers) as 'standard issued' weapons for the University Police Department (UPD). The issue arose in 2013 over a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between the California State University (CSU) system, to which SFSU belongs, and the State University Police Association, a union representing all of the CSU campus police departments (Miller, 2013). A major point of the CBA stipulated that University police would be permitted to carry tasers at all CSU campuses but that CSU would defer the decision on whether these would be distributed at individual campuses to each campus president (Barba, 2015). While 17 campuses had already issued tasers to their UPD by that time, SFSU did not participate (Middlemiss, 2014; Rodriguez, 2013). To guarantee that the SFSU President would not change his mind, SFSU Historical and honorary Student Orgs formed a new coalition called *Students Against Police Brutality*. Students organised rallies, demonstrations and town halls and called attention to the dangers that tasers and an armed police force would entail. Students were reminded of the killing of Oscar Grant. On New Year's Day 2009, Grant, a 22-year-old Black man, was murdered in Oakland, California by a police officer, Johannes Mehserle. At his subsequent trial, the police officer's legal defence team argued that Mehserle mistook his gun for a taser. Massive protests and rallies were organised against police brutality and anti-Blackness and demanded justice for Oscar Grant and other victims of police brutality. Black-Palestinian solidarity was evident in these protests where posters carried the slogan 'Justice for Oscar Grant! Justice for Gaza! End Government Sponsored Murder in the Ghettos of Oakland and Palestine' (The Palestine Poster Project Archives, 2009). In February 2014, the SFSU student coalition was successful in pressuring President Wong to deny university police access to tasers on campus (Abu-Zaghibra, 2015). But the success was temporary. A new CBA between the police union and CSU in 2015 guaranteed all campus police access to tasers as 'standard issued' weapons as part of their equipment package (California State University, 2015, see 'Bargaining Agreement: Unit 8'). In fall 2015, students held more rallies outside the

Administration Building but by then the campaign had suffered a major defeat and could not be sustained.

'POURING RIGHTS'? EXCLUSIVE CONTRACTS TO COCA-COLA AND PEPSI MULTINATIONALS

But the student organising learning curve was not wasted. The energies and experiences gained by *Students Against Police Brutality* shifted to a new campaign to block a proposal to award an exclusive contract of soft drinks to either Coca-Cola Company or PepsiCo. Jointly launched by the University Administration and the University Corporation, the proposal was sanitised as 'pouring rights' to camouflage its true nature from the university community. Students and faculty saw this move as another manifestation of the intensification of the privatisation of their public university. Both the cafeteria and restaurants as well as the university bookstore were already privatised. Students and faculty also opposed this neoliberal policy that began to transform university governance that, along with rising tuition costs, alienated them from their university. Students and faculty were opposed, as a matter of principle, to the two beverage multinational corporations with their history of union busting, exploiting indigenous labour and resources, privatising access to public water sources, and their contribution to the global plastic waste crisis. They also criticised the companies for selling high sugar content beverages due to the adverse health effects of obesity and diabetes. Poor families and individuals (such as indebted and cash-starved college students) were especially vulnerable since soda is usually even cheaper than bottled water, a major issue when municipal water sources were unsafe to drink (Firger, 2017). Students, faculty and the faculty union, the SFSU chapter of the California Faculty Association (CFA), organised a sustained campaign in fall 2015 against 'pouring rights'. They rallied, held demonstrations, voiced opposition in town hall meetings and issued public statements. Finally, in late November 2015, President Wong announced the cancellation of the proposed contract, but lamented the loss of the $2 million signing fee and the $125,000 annual payment for the duration of the contract (Huehnergarth, 2015).

DEFEND AND ADVANCE ETHNIC STUDIES

Following the victory against Coca-Cola and Pepsi, students embarked on a new campaign to demand increased funding for the College of Ethnic Studies (CoES). At the time, the college had been denied funding for new tenure-track faculty hires for nearly a decade. As a result, the Administration restricted faculty hires to replacement upon retirement or resignation and relied on low paid adjunct lecturers for teaching. In late fall 2015, the College Dean got wind of the Administration plan to deny two faculty searches to fill vacancies in Africana Studies. The College news was shared by the Dean at an emergency CoES meeting attended by the students. Leaders of the Historical and honorary Student Orgs had come to consider CoES their academic home based on their commitment to anti-racist and anti-colonial curriculum. Going beyond the College's immediate needs for hiring new faculty in Africana Studies, students formed a coalition inspired by the 1968 student strike with elected leadership from the Historical Orgs, along with honorary groups and students with majors and minors and in graduate programmes in the College's various departments. They formulated a list of ten demands similar to those of the 1968 students. Their demands included the reinstatement of the two faculty lines for the AMED Studies programme along with administrative assistance and an operating budget; a new department for Pacific Islander Studies (PIS), changing Race and Resistance Studies from a programme to a department and more substantial funding for the rest of the College departments with increased staff, operating budgets and scholarship funds. After successive town halls, demonstrations, rallies and a hunger strike, the administration agreed to most demands but fell short on all the demands concerning AMED Studies. SFSU's President refused to fund any of the AMED needs. The Zionist pressure, including the Koret Foundation's decision to rescind its $1.7 million to SFSU, following the student protest of Barkat's visit, did the trick. CoES faculty who participated in the negotiations agreed to abandon AMED needs in favour of the other demands such as the departmentalisation of Race and Resistance Studies and the hiring of a fundraiser for the College – an add-on by the administration to the student demands.

RESISTING CORPORATISATION AND ZIONISATION OF SFSU

As SFSU continues to deeply sink into neoliberal structures and corporatisation, students and faculty from marginalised backgrounds increasingly become the most susceptible and vulnerable facing a hostile campus environment. Not only is this public university reneging on its commitments to provide affordable education, but also its policies have almost rolled back the spirit of '68 and the student movement that has transformed US higher public and private education (Abdulhadi, 2017). Attempts to co-opt otherwise radical faculty have intensified, while the punishment of those who speak up has escalated (Abdulhadi, 2018). As we have seen in the campaign to shut down the AMED Studies programme to target and criminalise campus activism, including this chapter's co-authors, SFSU's social justice mission has slowly been eroded and replaced by the weaponising of free speech in favour of right-wing Zionists, Nazis and white supremacists.

In the face of such corporatisation, a tilt to the right and collusion with the Israel lobby, SFSU student, staff and faculty activists have continued to wage their struggle to reclaim SFSU's social justice mission.

In this context, framing Palestine as a question of justice rather than as an issue that only belongs to Palestinians, making Palestine visible becomes an organic part of the indivisibility of justice. Palestine as a topic of study and as a cause of justice can no longer be ignored, evaded or treated as a 'controversial issue' towards which scholars and students can choose to remain neutral to escape the cost Zionists have been exacting. While feigning 'neutrality' in the context of struggles for justice is definitely a career-building move for many academics, the complicity with white supremacy, Islamophobia and Zionism is rooted in ideological and intellectual commitments grounded in how authority and domination are centred, which can be seen in the ways in which the fear of challenging the oppressive status quo plays out.

Today, the combination of repeated Zionist attacks (for several years and in different forms) have succeeded in Zionising SFSU. Recruited to implement a right-wing and Zionist agenda while making it sound legitimate, bureaucrats are rewarded in different ways – a pay raise, a promotion etc. It sounds disturbingly familiar to those of us who have lived experiences of what domination does and how it works. In practice,

this also meant strangling AMED Studies in order to shut it down. After cancelling tenure-track searches to accommodate Zionist pressure, defunding faculty lines, refusing to provide staff or an operating budget, the next logical step for a complicit administration has been to recruit lower-level administrators to force out the only remaining faculty member. Not unlike other structures of domination, those in power do not dirty their own hands, but rather, the foreman and the forewoman are assigned that task to camouflage the act.

As a result of this hostile campus environment, student activists and their faculty allies came up with a multi-pronged approach that combines a protracted view to counter their escalating marginalisation on campus. This consists of a social movement building strategy along with public criticism to shame university administrators, refusing to allow the university's Zionisation and privatisation to proceed in a business-as-usual fashion. Constantly monitoring and analysing the political economy of the university's corporatisation, campus activists have come to learn that they can, in fact, defeat such designs under the right conditions and with a well-organised campaign. For example, during the three years before this chapter was written, campus activists, directly and indirectly, prevented SFSU from bringing in $3.7 million in irresponsible and problematic funds: $2 million from beverage corporations and $1.7 million from a Zionist foundation.

Along these lines, the CFA's stance has also shifted towards a more organising-based approach, replacing the old 'business' model. The further radicalisation of the CFA also impacted the long-established pro-Israel status quo. The CFA has voted in favour of two resolutions against the silencing and bullying of Palestine advocacy, submitting these to the San Francisco Labor Council, that passed both unanimously with a few abstentions, including the past cautious CFA president who practised a policy of peaceful co-existence with the SFSU administration.

Despite the deepening retaliation against a co-author of this chapter by the University Provost, several groups reacted quite forcefully to President Wong's welcoming Zionists to campus. Not only did GUPS come out with a strong statement that was followed by equally forceful articulations by the Black Student Union, African Studies Association, Black Residents United in Housing and Black Business Association at SFSU; Jews Against Zionism. Community groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace-Bay Area, Palestinian Youth Movement, International Socialist

Organization-Northern California issued strong condemnations. On campus, the Department of Women and Gender Studies posted a scathing critique of President Wong. A new student group, Jews Against Zionism (JAZ) was formed in direct response and to make it clear that Zionists do not own Jewishness nor speak for Jewish Students at SFSU. Most recently, SFSU students led by JAZ blocked the rail lines of the MUNI public transportation system next to the University to protest SFSU's settlement with Lawfare in the California State Court. Although Lawfare sought to come in the window to accomplish what they failed to do through the door, students made it clear that corporatisation and Zionisation will not pass uncontested. Young students of all backgrounds were saying: Zionism does not speak for all Jews and our campus is not for sale.

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8

The Palestinian student movement and the dialectic of Palestinian liberation and class struggles

Lena Meari and Rula Abu Duhou

In September 2016, the student movement at Birzeit University announced a strike against tuition fee increases, asserting the principle of 'education for all'. Student activists shut down the university for 28 days during which the different tendencies of the student movement organised various events and activities. Some of these resembled popular education activities in which students discussed the role of the student movement, its struggles, and the components of 'education for liberation' which they sought. The long strike evoked heated debates within the university and wider Palestinian society on socio-political issues and the type of society envisioned. Taking the student strike as a point of departure, this chapter outlines the formation, priorities, strategies and vision of Palestinian student activism from the 1950s until today.

We argue that the strike offers potential for student activism to transcend the post-Oslo impasse through forging a space for a unified struggle that links Palestinian national liberation with class struggle.

The current student movement in Palestinian universities emerged during the 1970s, and had been organically linked to the broader Palestinian national liberation struggle. It played a vital role, with other collective mass organisations, in mobilising young Palestinians for the struggle for liberation and resisting the occupation. The post-Oslo

neoliberal transformations and their ramifications influenced all sectors and aspects of Palestinian society and had important consequences for the student movement. The chapter traces the pre- and post-Oslo student movement's formations and its dialectical relations with the wider Palestinian liberation struggle. It also considers the connection between the student movement and union struggles against neoliberal governance and its demands for radical institutional change. This chapter will identify the tensions in the student movement in all its phases and the different meanings and dynamics it produced contingent on the conditions in broader Palestinian society.

First, we trace the origins of the Palestinian student movement in the diaspora in the late 1950s and its development inside colonised Palestine with the establishment of the Palestinian universities during the 1970s. The student movement, similar to other Palestinian social movements, such as the women's movement, emerged in response to the Zionist settler-colonial project, and had been linked with the national liberation struggle, prioritising the national liberation of Palestine. However, this does not mean that the different parts of the student movement overlooked matters concerning the social and economic conditions of Palestinian students and raised demands related to them.

The second section discusses the post-Oslo transformations and their effects on the student movement, showing that the student movement had been enormously affected by the deterioration of the Palestinian liberation project and the prevalence of the economic, social and political neoliberal rationalities and material conditions. The division within the Palestinian political sphere between Fateh and Hamas, particularly since the student wings of both parties had competed throughout the last decade in student council elections, also impacted on the student movement.

The third section examines the space of activism within Birzeit, one of the leading Palestinian universities, as reflected in the student movement struggle against tuition fee increases, which constituted a major event at the level of the university and broader Palestinian society. Here we reflect on the proceedings of the strike and the debates it instigated, based on a detailed reading of statements and posts on the Facebook page of the student council at the time of the strike as well as conversations with student activists who were involved.

We contend that the social class features of the strike offered the possibility to overcome the ideological-political divisions among the

students from different factions, leading them to form an alliance to confront the new post-Oslo material conditions that affected the liberation project and created class discrepancies within Palestinian society in the 1967 occupied territory. This possibility applies to other recent Palestinian union struggles, such as the Palestinian teachers' struggle, constituting an opportunity to revive the class struggle and link it to the liberation struggle.

THE PALESTINIAN STUDENT MOVEMENT: ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

The student movement in the diaspora

The emergence of an organised widespread Palestinian student movement[1] preceded the establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO).[2] Following the Nakba (catastrophe) of the Palestinian people in 1948 – when Zionist military groups occupied 78 per cent of Palestine, destroyed over 500 Palestinian villages, and expelled two thirds of the Palestinian people – Palestinians realised the need to form collective organisations and movements to resist the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine. The Palestinian student movement was one of the first and most active movements. Throughout the 1950s, Palestinian (and other Arab) students at universities, specifically in Cairo, Damascus and Beirut, established student associations to raise awareness of the Palestinian cause and operate within and outside their campuses to mobilise the youth for the liberation struggle. Student activists represented diverse political positions, convictions and ideologies and were active in political movements and parties as well as in student unions. Through their activism, Palestinian students acquired political skills and leadership competences.[3] Thus, early student activism constituted an incubator for individual and collective revolutionary capacities and laid the foundations for Palestinian collective organisations. Palestinian activism had been inspired by the national sentiments prevalent in the Arab countries during the second half of the 1950s.

This activism was the nucleus for the establishment of one of the earliest Palestinian general unions, the General Union of Palestinian

Students (GUPS), which was formed in a students' conference in Cairo on 29 November 1959 (The Palestinian Revolution, n.d.).

Following the PLO's founding in 1964, GUPS became part of the many other representative popular organisations comprising the PLO such as the professional unions of teachers, engineers, journalists, as well as the Palestinian political parties, and gained representation in the Palestinian National Council – the PLO's legislative body. GUPS, like the other PLO institutions, was based outside Palestine and played an active role in fortifying Palestinian national identity and mobilising Palestinian youth. Many GUPS activists, particularly from the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fateh) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) engaged in vibrant university activism in Arab, Eastern European and Western countries. They organised Palestinian students and supported their studies, particularly the incoming students from occupied Palestine who benefitted from scholarships offered by the Soviet Union and Eastern European countries throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Palestinian student activism had emerged as a response to the Zionist settler colonial project and was organically connected to the Palestinian national liberation struggle. In this, the student movement does not constitute an exception. All other Palestinian unions share this feature that is affected by the magnitude of the Zionist settler-colonial project. This project was, and still is supported by imperial Western powers which aim at eliminating the Palestinians, uprooting them and dividing the Middle East according to imperial interests. The 1950s and 1960s witnessed the emergence of Third World national liberation movements with their socialist vision, as well as the victory of the Cuban and Algerian revolutions, which inspired the Palestinian liberation movement. While the socialist commitment of the liberation movements gave rise to class-consciousness, particularly within the leftist parties comprising the PLO, national liberation constituted its priority. In this sense, GUPS' main goal had been preparing Arab youth for national liberation, and mobilising Palestinian students to engage in it. GUPS became the incubator and producer of political and military leaders and cadres for the Palestinian revolution (Twam, 2010). This was reflected in the vital role GUPS members played in confronting the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, when GUPS called on its student members to take part in the battle, and thousands of its members moved to Lebanon and resisted the invasion (Muhammad, 2000; Twam, 2010).

The student movement inside Palestine

Following the expansion of the Zionist settler-colonial project and the occupation of the remaining parts of Palestine in 1967 – the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem – GUPS began its activism by enrolling its members in the clandestine military groups inside the 1967 occupied territory. The student movement inside the 1967 occupied parts of Palestine[4] had been formally created with the establishment of the first Palestinian universities[5] in the 1970s. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the student movement in Palestinian universities was one of the various emerging popular mass organisations which constituted a front of semi-legal organisations to the clandestine political fractions of the PLO in the 1967 occupied parts of Palestine (Taraki, 1989). The mass organisations in general, and the student movement in particular, focused on the mobilisation of the masses for confronting the occupation and brought tens of thousands of young people from diverse social groups into the Palestinian national liberation movement. This included the traditionally marginalised social class from urban and rural areas, as well as refugee camps into the political and institutional domains. Another factor for this inclusion was the increase in the number of Palestinian universities and the increase in the enrolment of Palestinian students in these universities, benefitting from the financial support that the PLO provided to universities which covered student fees. This financial support enabled poorer youth to join higher education institutions, hence influencing the diversification of the student movement and adding a popular character to the movement.

According to Salim Tamari (1991), the mass organisations generally adopted 'radical populism' challenging the structure and perspective of the traditional nationalist movement in the 1967 occupied territory, rejecting its elitist and nepotistic character through involving all sectors of the population in its organised political activities rather than making them the passive recipients of these activities. However, the marks of populism were evident in the amorphous overarching thrust of the movement and in its lack of a specific class perspective, as well as its hesitation to tackle issues about the position of women in Palestinian society and the status of women in the domestic sphere (Tamari, 1991; Taraki, 1989). The marginalisation of the 'woman question' within the student movement is reflected in the constant low representation

of female students in student councils (Kuttab, 2000; MIFTAH, 2014). Nevertheless, the leftist parties in general and the leftist student blocs in particular, enabled relatively more female representation as reflected in the case of Maha Nassar, the first female student who headed the voluntary work committee of Birzeit's student council from 1973 to 1974 (Abu Duhou, 2009).

The student movement, like other mass organisations, was from its inception riven by factionalist divisions. Student organisations were one of the organisational popular arms of the PLO political parties. For instance, the student blocs 'al-Shabiba', 'jabhat al amal altulabi altakadumi' and 'kutlat al wihda', were linked to the main Palestinian political organisations Fateh, PFLP and DFLP respectively. According to Tamari (1991), the student movement's dual feature of factionalism and populism had transferred the rivalry of the parent political parties to the general student populations of the universities. Yet, paradoxically, during the 1980s, factionalism also constituted an effective mechanism for mass mobilisation by creating an institutional and organisational framework, and providing incentives to the individual to belong and to act within a familiar, and exclusive, concrete identity (Tamari, 1991). Ibrahim Makkawi (2004) concurs: 'Party identity could be viewed as a mediating level of identification linking between the personal identity (self) and collective identity (society) … The political organisation provides them with the opportunity to examine and express their ideas about the national cause and their feelings of belonging' (p. 43).

Although the student movement in Palestinian universities emerged in opposition to the occupation, as part of the national liberation movement, not in opposition to Palestinian university administrations' policies and practices,[6] student activists engaged in union struggles and promoted students' interests and demands (Twam, 2010). In this regard, Gibril Muhammad (2012) provides multiple examples of union struggles waged by the student movement at Birzeit University, such as the success of Birzeit students in their struggle to transfer the management of the university's cafeteria to student control following a long strike in the late 1970s, in what was termed 'the nationalisation of the cafeteria'.[7] Successes also include the achievement of student representation in university councils. Besides the students' struggle to schedule university fees according to individuals' level of income, they achieved a subsidy from the university towards the costs of educational books. The student

movement also cooperated with the union of employees at Palestinian universities and supported their struggles to improve their working conditions.

Moreover, the leftist student blocs at Palestinian universities perceived the dialectical relation between the nationalist and social class struggles and promoted the merging of these struggles. According to Wisam Rafidi (2016), this was reflected in the articles that appeared in the *Altaqadom Bulletin*, a monthly review published by the Progressive Student Work Front, the student organisation linked with the PFLP in Palestinian universities and colleges between 1984 and 1987. The bulletin gave space to the social class perspectives of the student movement by featuring writing on student union struggles about the curricula, overcrowding in university classes, freedom of speech in universities, solidarity with the struggles of the academic staff union, and against the oppressive practices of the university administration toward academics and students.

Despite the attempts mentioned above at merging class-unionist and national liberation struggles, particularly by the leftist student blocs, the student movement's main contribution had been its success in developing organisational structures and mobilisation tools, as well as in nurturing political national cadres. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the leadership of the different political parties originated from the cadres of the student movement involved in student union activism and struggle in all universities, especially at Birzeit where the student movement had matured. This had played a vital role in sustaining the Intifada (Palestinian popular uprising) which erupted in 1987. University students' active engagement in resisting the oppressive occupation forces increased during the Intifada, and as a result, the Israeli military governor[8] closed the universities, hoping that this would decrease the student movement's role in the struggle (Salameh, 2013). However, the return of the student activists to their localities charged the local rural areas with cadres experienced in organisational and political skills, who played a mobilising role among all political parties for the popular Intifada in rural areas. For instance, with the closure of the universities, the PFLP decided to dissolve the party's student organisation and join the rural popular organisations or build such organisations. This catalysed the struggle in the rural areas which are the bases for the Palestinian working class and which lacked the organisational and

political structures to organise and defend itself against the occupation. Student activists played a critical role on this front (interview by the authors on 20 May 2019 with W. R. a PFLP activist during the Intifada).

POST-OSLO TRANSFORMATIONS

After the interruption of university student life during the Intifada because of the long period of university closures by the colonial authorities,[9] Palestinian students returned to their campuses amidst a new reality following the Oslo agreements. The signing of the Oslo agreements by the PLO's right-wing leadership and the subsequent transformation of the Palestinian liberation project into a state building project amid the continuation of Zionist settler-colonial expansion meant fundamental shifts that reached every aspect and sector of society. The establishment of the Palestinian Authority (PA), which was structurally bonded by the economic and security agreements with the Israeli colonial entity, and its dependence on the donor community and its conditionalities, distorted the Palestinian political sphere, and weakened the political parties, popular organisations and the unions that were previously organically linked to the liberation project. Gradually the PA replaced the PLO which since the mid-1960s had been the representative of the whole Palestinian people. Consequently, the PLO was turned into an empty institution and its components including the GUPS were paralysed. The accumulation of the post-Oslo transformations and the adoption of an all-encompassing neoliberal rationality steadily shifted Palestinian material conditions, political culture and sociality. It also transformed the values of collectivism, voluntarism and sacrifice into the values of individualism, self-interest and consumerism. These transformations led to the regression of the democratic popular mass organisations, including the student movement.

The economic policies of higher education institutions became mainly based on generating high student fees to cover costs, particularly after PLO support to universities ended.[10] Following the Oslo accords, the European Union played a major role in funding Palestinian higher education. This funding was conditioned on structural changes within the universities to increase ostensible 'effectiveness' and develop self-sustainability through different procedures. Given these conditions, in

addition to the small portion of the PA budget allocated to education and the disinclination of the PA from transferring already allocated funds for higher education to universities, university administrations began to raise student fees to the degree that they cover 65 per cent of the costs today (Muhammad & Batta, 2019). The growing tendency of Palestinian higher education institutions toward privatisation was further encouraged by the World Bank and other funding agency policies (Salem, 2000). The ability of the poor to enrol in higher education had been affected, increasing the burden on students' families. Thus, a growing portion of students had to combine education with work in order to be able to pay their fees, affecting their involvement in student activism. This trend had also impacted on the living conditions of academics and employees of Palestinian higher education institutions and provoked union struggles aimed at improving members' living conditions.

Already weakened and deeply divided, these conditions produced a new negative reality for the student movement to confront. The divisions had been deepened by the weakening of the PLO and the political parties that composed it, particularly the leftist ones. Islamist parties (mainly Hamas) were strengthened as they obtained financial resources and continued to offer the choice to resist the occupation and settler-colonialism in relation to Fateh that constituted the ruling party. The context affected the student movement's formation and practices and limited its ability to organise and act at the national level (Ramadan, 2016; Youssef, 2011).

Although factionalism had typified the student movement since its inception, within the new post-Oslo reality, factionalism acquired a new signification and dynamic. The student blocs became mere recipients of directives, not active agents in strengthening and influencing their mother political parties. The latter, despite perceiving their student wings as a source of legitimacy, popularity and a thermometer for their presence in the street, did not provide the requisite support to nurture its cadres. In addition, the student movement faced new challenges such as the interference of the PA's security forces in universities and its continuous attempts to control the oppositional student blocs.

Within these new conditions, the student movement adopted the role of service provider to students, mainly in the election season, instead of defending students' interests against the structural changes

of higher education institutions. That is, despite the shift of the focus of the student movement from mobilisation for the liberation struggle to focusing on students' everyday needs, a unionist-class perspective connected with the liberation struggle was missing.

THE STUDENT STRIKE AT BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY

The new conditions under the PA, its subjection to Oslo's security arrangements and economic protocols, as well as its dependence on funders' political agendas were apparent in its securitisation practices and social-economic policies. This had constrained Palestinian resistance prospects and increased economic gaps among Palestinians, bringing class issues to the fore. These issues formed the context of Birzeit's 2016 student strike.

Reflections on the chronology of the strike

In mid-August 2016, the Birzeit student council called for a protest against the administration's decision to raise tuition fees for current and new students. The protest, labelled 'the last chance', was announced on the student council's Facebook page under the hashtag 'will not pass'. This was the main slogan throughout the strike. All components of the student council and the student movement united in the struggle against the tuition raise and suspended lectures on that day from 12:00 to 13:30 to enable students to participate in the protest. One Birzeit student wrote on the student council's Facebook page, the main communication tool among the student body: 'my father worked very hard all his life to educate me, he does not sleep at nights worrying for not being able to get the money to pay my fees – and higher education should be free'. Another student wrote, 'education is not a business'.

These two posts reflect the sentiments that drove the strike. They expressed the students' position regarding two conflicting perspectives, specifically on higher education, and on societal matters in general: a social perspective held by the student movement that perceives higher education as a public resource that should be available to all, and a contrasting narrow economic perspective that perceives education as a commodity in accordance with a market logic.

Hundreds of students attended the protest that the student council called for on that day. The head of the student council directed his speech at the protest to the university administration saying: 'the solution for the financial crisis of the university should be through pressing the Palestinian government and demanding its support for the university instead of raising the tuition fees'.

The head of the student council's speech stated that the struggle of the student movement against the tuition fees increase did not just target the university's administration, but also the PA's economic policies of privatisation and its abstention from supporting higher education institutions. The student movement opposed the university administration's attempt to resolve its financial problems through the tuition increase, demanding instead that the PA allocate a greater portion of its budget to education. It is worth noting that 'the security sector consumes more of the PA's budget than the education, health, and agriculture sectors combined' (Tartir, 2017).

At the end of the protest, the head of the student council announced that the student movement would give the administration ten days until 25 August to cancel the decision regarding tuition fees. Meanwhile, the students formed a unified committee composed of representatives of the student council and all the student movement blocs to manage the crises.

Between mid-August to the end of September 2016, the student movement dedicated its activities to the struggle against the fees increase. It simultaneously focused on Palestinian political prisoners on hunger strike. The student movement organised multiple protests supporting the hunger strikers Malek Al Qadi, Muhammad and Mahmud Al Balbul, Ayad Al Harimi and Bilal Kayed who had been on hunger strike for 64 days. Additionally, the student council's Facebook page followed up and condemned several cases of student arrests by the Palestinian security forces such as the arrest and detention of the student council's head of the specialisation committee.

Hence, while waging the battle against the tuition increase – one with a class dimension – the student movement also engaged with one of the Palestinian national liberation struggle's main issues – that of political prisoners in the Israeli colonial prisons. At the same time, students raised their voices against the securitisation of everyday post-Oslo Palestinian life by the security forces. While engaging with class and political issues, they also insisted on continuing their battle to defend education for all.

At the end of the ten day deadline, the student council and the student movement held a press conference at the university and announced an open-ended strike until the cancellation of the tuition increase. The crisis management committee issued a statement declaring that the university gates would be closed to all except for the students and the administrators involved in the negotiation committee. The student movement representatives commandeered all the university's gates and began their open sit-in on the campus on 25 August 2016. They began negotiations with the administration's negotiation committee and announced all the developments to the students through their Facebook page, which was followed not only by the students but also by the university community, broader society and the media.

Soon after the beginning of the open strike, the Palestinian media began to cover the details of the crisis which turned into one of the most debated issues in the media and among Palestinian society. Students from different Palestinian universities arrived on campus to support the student strike. Representatives of the different students' clubs – an important component of the student movement (Twam, 2010) – expressed their support. Students' family members supported the students' right to strike, and some called for joining the students on campus. Heated debates occurred among faculty and administrators about the right of students to strike through shutting down the university. A few faculty members and employees organised to support the students and arrived at the campus individually and collectively to listen to the students and defend their right to strike.

The debates among the Birzeit University community led to serious engagements with the university's economic policies, administrative and financial practices, and educational approach. Two years later, these issues became the main matters raised and fought for by members of the union of academics and employees mainly by those who were involved in supporting the students' strike. That is, the eminence of the student strike motivated faculty members and employees to organise and promote solid union activism.

The students employed different means in managing their struggle. They produced several infographics showing the extent of the fees increase in recent years. They successfully managed a media campaign clarifying the students' position and responding to each statement of the university administration. For instance, on 29 August 2016, the student

council and the student movement issued a statement titled 'why the strike' stating that the Birzeit student movement which represents an extension and producer of national activism aimed to first put an end to the university policy in recent years which targets the pocket of poor students as the easiest way to solve its financial problem. Second, it aimed to pressure the university to find other ways to solve its financial problem such as demanding that the PA, the main reason for the problem, allocate more money to higher education. Third, they demanded the revision of academic, financial, administrative and social policies adopted by the university which negatively affected students.

The student movement statement diagnosed the structural political and economic reasons behind the fee increase. Thus, it challenged the economic policy of the university directed by the privatisation logic and simultaneously challenged the Palestinian political system, which allocates a much greater portion of its budget to the security sector than to education. Additionally, the student movement called for structural changes at the university level concerning administrative, financial and academic dimensions. The leftist student bloc, Al-Qotb al-Tollabi, took the demand for institutional changes further by defining its vision for a popular university, democratic education and liberation. During the strike, leftist activists organised multiple activities to discuss radical student struggles, forms of popular education and ways to revive the voluntary collective culture that characterised the first Intifada.

On 4 September 2016, the 11th day of the strike, the student movement called for a protest titled 'Sunday of Anger' in front of the Council of Ministers to demand support for the university and the transfer of allocations earmarked for higher education. That is, students carried their demands outside the walls of the university directing them to the formal political system, a task that should be done by university administrations. During that protest, Palestinian security forces arrested a student council member.

Throughout the strike, student activists proved their readiness to sacrifice for their cause, taking student activism many steps forward. They spent Eid al-Adha (one of the most important feasts) within the walls of the university apart from their families, and on the 26th day of the strike, four students began an open hunger strike until the cancellation of the fees decision. Throughout the strike, the student movement received supporting delegations and letters of solidarity from

public figures, including a statement of support from Muhammad Alqiq, a former Palestinian political prisoner acknowledged by Palestinians for his long period of hunger strike. Alqiq, formerly a head of Birzeit's student council, stated that the students at Birzeit had always been at the forefront of defending the Palestinian cause, Palestinian prisoners and the families of martyrs, calling for support of their struggle for the right of education for all, and encouraging joining their rejection of the inhuman economic policies.

On 23 September, the student movement reached an agreement with the administration. The university administration agreed that it would not raise fees for four years and that any future increase would be conditional on consultation between all university constituents. On 25 September, the student movement announced its victory and the end of the strike, stating that the victory was a result of the unity and persistence of the students.

The strike and its success constitutes a turning point in the student movement's struggle. Student activists from all factions were unified despite the deep division that characterises current Palestinian society. This unity had been carved around a class issue which de-emphasised ideological divisions and highlighted the material conditions and their deterioration because of the economic policies adopted by the PA and higher education institutions. Throughout the long period of the strike, the other issue was that of Palestinian political prisoners. This points to the fact that national liberation and class issues are two dimensions with the ability to unify students.

Students also adopted new tactics for achieving their goals. Shutting down the university gates and occupying the university continuously until their goals were achieved constituted a new tactic that proved to be successful and strengthened the students' confidence in their collective power. Moreover, the strike's time span provided students with the space and time to perceive and discuss important issues related to the structure and content of higher education. That is, they gained theoretical consciousness through praxis and gained confidence in their agency. Also, during the strike, female student activists, especially members of leftist blocs challenged the objection of conservative male students to their involvement in some types of actions and activities, especially staying on campus at night.

Finally, the student struggle went beyond the university's walls and

opened a societal debate around the form of education and the form of society that the masses need and envision, restoring the student movement's vanguard role.

UNION STRUGGLES: OPENING A NEW POLITICAL HORIZON

The struggle waged by the student movement at Birzeit University was not the only union struggle that year. The summer of 2016 also witnessed the union struggle of the Palestinian schoolteachers who collected 15,000 signatures to form a new union after their abandonment by their weak formal union. On 22 October 2016, the teachers announced a strike protesting the oppressive practices of the ministry of education toward the teacher activists and also against security forces' policies in harassing and arresting teachers engaged in activism. Recently, various unions such as that of 'Ambulance and emergency services in the Red Crescent' and the newly formed union at Dar Al Shifa (Pharmacare), a private company, are fighting to improve their members' work conditions.

These union struggles represent the response of the masses to the material conditions caused by the PA's neoliberal economic policies and supported by its security apparatus. These in turn are both consequences of the post-Oslo conditions and the submissiveness of the PA to the Zionist colonial dictates supported by the US empire. Union struggles have recently been spreading in all Palestinian sectors, endowing their participants with organisational skills. Strong union organisation and activism open a new horizon of possibility that link union-class struggles with liberation struggles – a path that entails the potential to transcend the post-Oslo impasse.

NOTES

1 The earlier history of Palestinian student activism goes back to the period of British colonialism (mandate) in Palestine in which students in different educational institutions began to form associations calling for forming a student union to confront the colonial plans. In 1929, following the events of the Al-Buraq revolution, a student conference was held in Akka, calling for confronting British colonialism and its support for Zionist immigration to Palestine. In 1936, the student committees' conference in Jaffa was

attended by representatives from various Palestinian schools and the elected student union called for supporting the six-month long strike to confront British colonialism and its collusion with the Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine (Ghaiathah, 2000; Encyclopedia Palestina, 2013; Salem, 2000).

2 The Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) was established in 1964 as the embodiment of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement. It has been a broad front comprised of various Palestinian political parties, independent figures, and the popular organisations which were part of the resistance movement during the time of its establishment.

3 Historical leaders of the Palestinian revolutionary movement such as Yasser Arafat and George Habash began their political engagements during the 1950s as student activists in Cairo University and the American University of Beirut.

4 It is worth noting that student activism inside the borders of colonised Palestine had begun earlier when the Palestinian students at Hebrew University established the Arab Students Committee in 1959. The emergence and development of the Palestinian student movement within the parts of Palestine occupied in 1948 is outside the scope of the current chapter. On the student movement in the 1948 occupied parts of Palestine see Ibrahim Makkawi (2004).

5 In 1972, Birzeit College transformed into a university, to become the first Palestinian institution to award a bachelor's degree. In 1973, Bethlehem University was established, followed by An Najah National College which transformed into a university in 1977, and the Islamic University of Gaza in 1978.

6 For instance, the student movement and the union of employees at Birzeit engaged in activities to confront the occupation practices in cooperation with the administration, such as the battle against the military decision of the occupation military chief which provided the occupation the right to interfere in higher education institutions.

7 In recent years, Birzeit student activism regarding the universities' cafeterias had been focused on boycotting Israeli products.

8 For detailed documentation of the history of Birzeit closures by the occupation forces see: www.birzeit.edu/en/about/history/education-under-occupation/closures-history.

9 Birzeit University had been closed for 1571 days from 1 October 1988 to 29 April 1992.

10 Before the PA was established, the PLO funded the greater portion of higher education institutions, as the contributing portion from student fees did not exceed 10 per cent of the real student cost (Muhammad & Batta, 2019).

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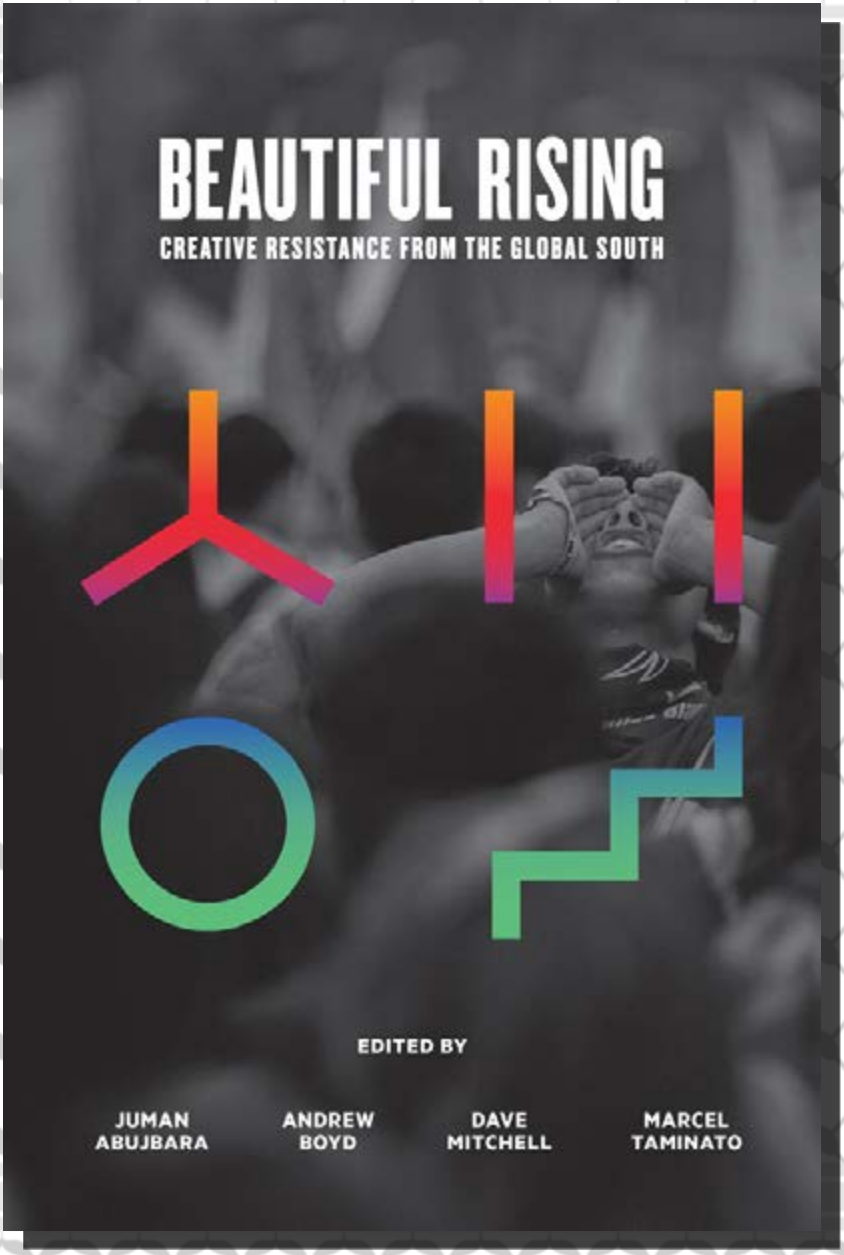
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HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Beautiful Rising is not a traditional book. It's a network of interrelated concepts or *tools* that you can read in any order.

There are five types of tools in the *Beautiful Rising* toolbox: *stories, tactics, principles, theories,* and *methodologies.*

Each type of tool has a designated symbol:

Stories 

Tactics 

Principles 

Theories 

Methodologies 

Each tool begins with a snapshot summary. Each tool ends by listing one or more *key* and *related* tools. You can think of a *key* tool as helping to explain the current tool through the eyes of other tools from the toolbox. For example, let's say you are reading the tactic *civil disobedience* (p. 108). In the write-up, you will find the key principle *maintain nonviolent discipline* and a paragraph explaining how nonviolent discipline informs a successful civil disobedience effort. You will also find a list of related tools that you can refer to if you want to gain a broader understanding on the uses of civil disobedience.

Potential risks
If you see this sign, know that there are some risks or potential pitfalls involved that you need to be aware of.

Online toolbox
Because this book represents just a subset of a much larger and still expanding set of tools in the online toolbox, you will sometimes see a reference to a tool that is not published in the book, but can be found online at beautifulrising.org.

(see: NAME OF TOOL)
You may see (*see: NAME OF TOOL*) in the text you are reading. It will either be followed by a page number or it won't. If it does include a page number, you can simply turn to that page. If it does not, you can find the tool in the online toolbox.

Learn more
Each tool also lists a few resources under the heading "Learn More." Rather than providing a long URL for readers to type into their browser to find the resource, we have opted to provide just enough information to allow you to find the resource using an online search. (Alternatively, you can go to our online toolbox and simply click the hotlinked resource you're looking for.)

Contribute
Finally, if you have an idea for a tool that you would like to see included in the toolbox, we'd love to hear from you. Please submit your story, tactic, principle, theory, or methodology at beautifulrising.org/contribute.

STOP PRAWER PLAN

Palestine | *2013*

In response to a draft Israeli bill that aimed to expel 70,000 Palestinian Bedouins from their ancestral land, Palestinians organized a massive campaign that led to the withdrawal of the proposed bill.

Nisreen Haj Ahmad

Official Israeli policy does not recognize the rights of the Palestinian Bedouins in the Negev to their ancestral land, and therefore prohibits them from accessing infrastructural services. Israel continually attempts to confiscate the land and destroy the homes and villages of the Bedouins as a means of slow yet systematic ethnic cleansing. The Prawer-Begin draft bill aimed to destroy 35 villages, making up 300 square miles of Bedouin land, and ethnically cleanse 70,000 Palestinians in one go. It was claimed that they had received the approval of the Bedouins on the plan.

With a four-vote majority, the bill passed in the Knesset (Israel's national legislature) on its first reading in June 2013. With such a large-scale plan of ethnic cleansing, this was seen as yet another Nakba (the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948). The goal of the Stop Prawer Plan campaign was to stop the Prawer draft

from passing in its second and third readings. The bigger objective, of course, was to stop home demolitions and land expropriation of the Palestinians in the Negev, and to see their villages provided with infrastructure and services.

Initially, various actions were taken by local groups and political parties, yet the number of people mobilized was low. Disappointed by the number of participants, a group of young Palestinian Bedouins organized a campaign to ensure that the Prawer plan would not pass.

The campaign collected Bedouin signatures on the petition denouncing the law, organized a general strike on the day the Knesset committee visited the Negev, and, in alliance with other groups, lobbied the Knesset members to vote against the bill. The campaign organized a global Day of Rage *(see: TACTIC: Distributed action)* with actions in 34 cities around the world and across historic Palestine,

"Unlike what happens in many other campaigns, the campaign leaders spent most of their time organizing rather than mobilizing."

Demonstrators in Haifa under attack by the Israeli police on the Day of Rage against the Prawer plan. The Israeli police used horses, water canons, and shock grenades to disperse the demonstrators. Dozens of protesters were arrested and several injured. Photo: Activestills

including in the Negev, Haifa, Yaffa, Jerusalem, Nablus, and Gaza. All these actions were accompanied by strong media outreach and coverage.

In parallel, all these peaceful actions were met by a violent crackdown by the Israeli police and army to repress Palestinians from nonviolently resisting their continued ethnic cleansing and forced expulsion from their ancestral lands. During the campaign, Israeli intelligence investigated dozens of campaigners and arrested many more who participated in peaceful demonstrations.

Despite the challenges, on the eve of the Day of Rage, the head of the Labor Party withdrew his support for the draft law. A week later the government decided to shelve it. The Palestinians won. Prawer did not pass.

WHY IT WORKED

Unlike what happens in many other campaigns, the campaign leaders spent most of their time organizing rather than mobilizing. To begin, they invested time in establishing, coordinating, and maintaining four teams, in addition to their core team: media, Israeli voices, international action, and Bedouin towns. This approach not only gave space for new leadership to develop, but also gave organizers the ability to sustain and escalate their efforts without depending solely on the core team.

continued on next page ›

KEY TACTIC

DISTRIBUTED ACTION

In coordination with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement, the organizers of the Stop Prawer Plan campaign were able to send a call to action to groups and organizations all over the world. Accessing this already-existing network of organized groups made action possible in 34 cities worldwide on the Day of Rage. As interest spread, groups they'd never even heard of contacted them and joined the day of action. This access and networking made all the difference.

KEY PRINCIPLE

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

Initially, the collection of signatures on the petition refusing the Prawer Law was slow and tedious, given the distances involved. Municipal council elections were set for October 22, 2013, so the organizers smartly used these high-traffic points to collect signatures outside the polling stations and saw numbers on the petition multiply.

RELATED

Stolen Gas Campaign » *p. 72*

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Would you like some structure with your momentum? » *p. 166*

Al faza'a (a surge of solidarity) » *p. 172*

Pillars of power » *p. 210*
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KEY THEORY

ACTION LOGIC

As action on the campaign was building, the Knesset committee tasked with studying the draft law decided to visit the Negev and meet with the heads of the Bedouin tribes to prove that the Bedouins approved the draft bill. The campaign leaders, along with other organizations, called for a general strike and took to the streets as the Knesset committee arrived. This way, even if the committee had found a few tribesmen to say they supported the bill, bigger numbers taking to the streets against the proposed law would speak far louder.

KEY METHODOLOGY

THEORY OF CHANGE

Because of limited time and resources, it was necessary for activists to choose their actions strategically and invest their limited resources smartly. Despite the many creative ideas that came up, the leaders decided to focus on a few assumptions, which became the guiding principles of their action and alliances. Their four theories of change were that the draft would not pass if: (1) Bedouins demonstrated in an organized way that they were against the draft law contrary to what Prawer said, (2) large numbers of people could be convinced to boycott Israel for being a racist and apartheid state, (3) Knesset members were pressured by their own constituencies, and (4) Israel's ability to secure order in the streets was jeopardized. Organizers recognized that only if one or more of these four conditions were realized would their opposition be taken seriously.

LEARN MORE

Demolition and Eviction of Bedouin Citizens of Israel in the Naqab (Negev) - The Prawer Plan | Adalah

Palestinian Civil Society Calls for Escalating BDS to Stop Israel's Racist Prawer Plan, Urges Inter-Parliamentary Union to Suspend Knesset's Membership | BDS movement, 2013

Forty-Thousand Bedouin Are Being Kicked Off Their Land by Israel | Vice, 2013

WELCOME TO PALESTINE

Ben-Gurion Airport/Lod Airport, Tel Aviv, Historic Palestine | *2011 - 2013*

Hundreds of international solidarity activists staged a "fly-in" at Ben Gurion airport demanding to visit Palestine in protest of Israel's racist border policies and de facto siege of historic Palestine.

Ribal Al-Kurdi

The Palestinian people have been enduring systematic repression, colonization, and ethnic cleansing since the occupation of Palestine in 1948. Today, Palestinians live in Bantustan-like areas segregated by an apartheid wall built on stolen Palestinian land to allow Israeli settlers to enjoy Jewish-only privileges. Historic Palestine has been torn into scattered pieces of land disconnected from each other.

In 2011, Palestinians in the West Bank invited people of conscience from across the world to visit Palestine with the aim of drawing attention to the cruelty of life under the occupation, in general, and racist Israeli border policies, in particular. The initiative also aimed to strengthen the ongoing boycott effort to isolate Israel, demonstrate the hypocrisy and illegitimacy of the Israeli occupation and colonization of Palestine, and exert pressure on European and other governments accused of collaboration with that occupation.

Since Israeli authorities regularly deny visitors the right to visit Palestine if they state their intention to do so at the border, the idea was to have international solidarity activists fly into Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport, and try to publically exercise their right to visit Palestine. Inevitably, they would be denied that right,

International solidarity activists unfurling "Welcome to Palestine" banners upon arriving at Ben Gurion Airport/ Lod Airport. Photo: Activestills

"The actions disrupted the status quo at the heart of injustice, making a clear statement that could not be silenced except by repression."

which, if well-publicized, would help expose the truth about Israel's regime of occupation, colonization, and apartheid.

In the first year, more than 300 people from different countries and nationalities took part. After arriving at the airport, activists peacefully unfurled their "Welcome to Palestine" banners, creating a dramatic scene at the airport. Israeli police attacked the protesters, and ripped down their signs. Activists and non-activists alike were arrested and interrogated. Those identified as part of the campaign were deported or sent to detention facilities.

In response, the Israeli government launched a "diplomatic" campaign requesting governments of other countries to help bring an end to this form of solidarity. Some airlines cancelled the scheduled flights, others, at the behest of Israeli security, prevented activists from boarding planes for which they had already purchased tickets that they had every right to use.

In 2012, most of the 400 people worldwide who were set to fly to Palestine were denied boarding. Activists responded by holding sit-ins inside airports across Europe to protest their governments' complicity in supporting the Israeli

occupation and violations of Palestinian human rights. During the sit-ins, activists also distributed flyers to raise awareness about the campaigns. In some of these airports, pro-Palestine protesters were violently dispersed and expelled from the airports.

All told, the actions disrupted the status quo at the heart of injustice, making a clear statement that could not be silenced except by repression. The extensive local and international media coverage exposed the repression and racism of Israeli policies, leading the Israeli regime to launch a massive PR campaign in an attempt to save face.

WHY IT WORKED

The Welcome to Palestine campaign came up with an innovative new tactic to expose the truth of Israel's racist border policies, and ushered in a unique type of solidarity. The organizers understood that it is much more effective to *show* an injustice, rather than just *tell* people about it. They also understood that quite often the key to success isn't what you do, but how your target *reacts* to what you do *(see: PRINCIPLE: The real action is your target's reaction)*. By simply and nonviolently stating their intention (and perfectly legitimate right) to visit Palestine, and knowing that the Israeli authorities would not only refuse it, but respond with repression and violence (and that the media would keenly cover such a scene), the campaign set up a perfect scenario to expose the truth about the Israeli regime *(see: PRINCIPLE: Make the invisible visible)*.

continued on next page ›

KEY TACTIC

SUBVERSIVE TRAVEL

Freedom of movement is a basic right denied to Palestinians. By deliberately trying to exercise that right, which required defying Israeli travel restrictions, the Welcome to Palestine campaign put a global spotlight on the racist border policies imposed by the Israeli occupation.

KEY PRINCIPLES

THE REAL ACTION IS YOUR TARGET'S REACTION

Welcome to Palestine activists knew they would be denied entry to Palestine once they'd explicitly stated their intentions. They knew how the Israeli regime would react, and so they planned their action accordingly. And that reaction did a better job of demonstrating the racist, oppressive, and colonial policies of the apartheid state than any critique could.

PLAY TO THE AUDIENCE THAT ISN'T THERE

When designing your action, keep in mind the people who aren't physically in the immediate vicinity of where the action is taking place. The fly-in action was planned to have global media reach; organizers were keenly aware that their primary audience was not witnessing it directly in the airport, but receiving it indirectly all across the world through TV and other media.

KEY THEORY

DECOLONIZATION

The fly-in staged by international solidarity activists was a media big bang that challenged and exposed Israeli apartheid as one of many facets of the Zionist colonization of the indigenous Palestinian population. It was yet another example of grassroots disobedience to the ongoing colonization of Palestine. By exposing the racist border policies, the violence against solidarity activists, and collusion of Western governments, the action disrupted, even if only momentarily, the balance of power between colonizer and the colonized.

LEARN MORE

Welcome to Palestine | Wikipedia

Welcome to Palestine — If You Can Get In | The Guardian, 2011

Israel Bans "Flytilla" Activists but Hundreds Left in Europe | Ahram Online, 2012

RELATED

Stolen Gas Campaign » p. 72

Civil disobedience » p. 108
Subversive travel » p. 130

Al faza'a (a surge of solidarity) » p. 172
Postcolonialism » p. 196

Spectrum of allies » p. 232

DIVESTMENT

A divestment campaign is an effective way to apply economic pressure on an industry or state that is profiting from injustice and destruction.

"The logic of divestment couldn't be simpler: If it's wrong to wreck the climate, it's wrong to profit from that wreckage."
—Bill McKibben

"Those who invest in South Africa should not think they are doing us a favor; they are here for what they get out of our cheap and abundant labor, and they should know that they are buttressing one of the most vicious systems."
—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Hoda Baraka and Mahmoud Nawajaa

A divestment campaign is an effective way to apply economic pressure on an industry or state that is profiting from injustice and destruction. The idea is that stock sell-offs, cancelled contracts, and the like will scare off potential investors and create enough economic pressure to compel the target to comply with your demands. A divestment campaign helps to politically isolate the target and limit its ability to act with impunity.

The tactic became prominent in the 1980s, when it was used to bring concentrated economic pressure on the government of South Africa, helping to force it to abolish its racist policy and crime of apartheid. The tactic has most recently been taken up by Palestine solidarity activists and by the global climate justice movement. Both campaigns have shed light on the power and versatility of a divestment strategy.

The global climate justice movement has chosen to target the fossil fuel industry, identifying it as the main obstacle blocking serious action on climate change. The 2015 climate talks in Paris saw 500 institutions commit to divest their capital from fossil fuel companies, while many students have launched campaigns pressuring the universities they attend to divest. So far, the movement has won pledges to divest $3.4 trillion — a sign that the tide of public opinion is turning against the fossil fuel industry.

Often, a divestment campaign will focus on *secondary targets* because the *primary target* is too powerful or too removed from your supporters' daily lives to be directly pressured *(see: STORY: Taco Bell Boycott).* This is how the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has operated. In 2008, for instance, the BDS movement called for divestment from Veolia, a French multinational company that was involved in building a light rail system in Palestine that would connect Jerusalem with illegal settlements, thereby contravening international law and Palestinian human rights. After mounting pressure from

This 1987 image of students calling on Pennsylvania State University to divest from companies doing business in South Africa dramatized one of the first successful uses of the tactic. Photo: Craig Houtz, Associated Press

people of conscience across the world and having lost billions of dollars worth of global contracts, in 2015 Veolia officially declared that it would end all its business in Israel's occupation of Palestine *(see: STORY: Dump Veolia Campaign).* Through many similar victories against businesses that profit from Israel's regime of colonialism, occupation, and apartheid, the BDS movement is mounting significant pressure on Israel to comply with international law — far more than it could have brought to bear by focusing only on its primary target.

Potentially, any company or institution can become a target of a divestment campaign, but it is absolutely critical that the target is chosen strategically *(see: PRINCIPLE: Choose your target wisely).* Once a target is chosen, power map the web of relationships around that target *(see: METHODOLOGY: Power mapping p. 216).* In weighing the range of primary and secondary targets, organizers should consider the degree of involvement of each potential target in the violations at hand, and how vulnerable the target might be to pressure or persuasion.

While the core focus of a divestment campaigns is to bring direct or indirect economic pressure on a target, the campaign's most important function is often more broadly political and moral. The South African divestment campaign helped to politically isolate the apartheid regime. The BDS movement is successfully forcing wider and wider sectors of global public opinion to confront the criminality of Israel's occupation and colonization of historic Palestine. From museums, to college campuses, to investment firms, the global fossil fuel divestment movement is successfully turning the fossil fuel sector into a rogue industry and revoking its social license. Furthermore, because these divestment campaigns simultaneously draw a clear ethical line in the sand and offer many local targets, and therefore create many points of entry *(see: PRINCIPLE: Create many points of entry),* they have been particularly effective at deepening and broadening the movements they're part of.

Almost all entities being lobbied to divest will initially resist or ignore your call. It is thus important to remain persistent and have an escalation plan you can stick to until your target concedes to your demands *(see: PRINCIPLE: Escalate strategically).* Remember: A divestment campaign is only one piece of a long-term, multi-pronged strategy, and the breakthrough will come only after a trickle of small successes that continue to accumulate until the last straw breaks the camel's back — and you win.

POTENTIAL RISKS

Targets will often try to deflate your enthusiasm, momentum, or anger by making misleading statements and false promises. Divestment is a long-term campaign that requires patience and persistence. The pressure must continue until the actual goal is achieved.

KEY PRINCIPLE

PERSONALIZE AND POLARIZE

Divestment focuses on one secondary target at a time (e.g. the Tate Museum's sponsorship of British Petroleum) in order to increase pressure and build public anger against the primary target (e.g. the fossil fuel industry as a whole), so that it becomes isolated and eventually has no choice but to comply. People start to personally identify the primary target with the injustice you are fighting, eventually seeing it as the main obstacle to a just solution. The idea is to dismantle the network of support that your target enjoys, including clients, sponsors, shareholders, or the general public, until the target accedes to your campaign's demands.

RELATED

The Global South » *p. 188*

Pillars of power » *p. 210*
Power mapping » *p. 216*
Spectrum of allies » *p. 232*

LEARN MORE

Interview: The Man Behind the BDS Movement | Rami Younis, +972 Magazine, 2015

The Case for Fossil Fuel Divestment | Bill McKibben, Rolling Stone, 2013

What is Fossil Fuel Divestment? | Go Fossil Free

Private Prison Divestment Campaign Resources | ENLACE: Organizing for racial and economic justice

BDS Divestment Page | BDS movement

AL FAZA'A (A SURGE OF SOLIDARITY)

A key segment of your supporters will only join at peak moments of your campaign — usually in response to an external event — and then disappear again. To win, you must be ready to make the most of this surge.

Origins: *Faza'a* is a Bedouin term that means solidarity, and refers to when other tribes are called upon for help in wartime or on a specific occasion. It conveys the idea of taking rapid and imminent action to help people in danger.

"Beware the level-headed person if they're angry."
—Arabic proverb

Safa' Al Jayoussi

Most people do not feel the need to act in circumstances they see as normal. However, a specific event — a brave act of resistance; or a disputed election, corruption scandal, or police beating — can serve as an emotional trigger, moving people to respond en masse and join actions to address the problem. They come in large numbers, with new ideas and energy, and boost your campaign for a brief while. These moments are often amplified by media, particularly social media, as trending topics generate even more attention and interest in the campaign. People's

enthusiasm is often momentary, however, which can make it difficult to retain their support once the external element of emergency that drew them to act recedes.

An example of this phenomenon is Greenpeace's "Jordan Is Not Nuclear" campaign, which sought to stop the construction of a nuclear facility in Jordan in 2011. The number of people who were active in the campaign prior to the Fukushima disaster of 2011, which saw the partial meltdown of a nuclear reactor in Japan following a major earthquake and tidal wave, was very small compared to the number of people who were inspired to act immediately following the disaster. Thirty thousand Jordanians, including many Jordanian tribes, joined the movement in the aftermath of the disaster. They joined *al faza'a (a surge of solidarity)* to save their country out of fear that a similar nuclear disaster might befall them if the facility were built.

There are many other examples in recent history, including the public outcry at the 2012 gang rape in Delhi, the mass outrage after the self-immolation of the Tunisian street vendor that sparked that country's revolution and set off the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street movement in the US, and so many others.

Al faza'a, in its traditional sense, is perceived as a positive trait among Arabs because it implies solidarity and friendship. Nonetheless, it presents challenges to modern campaigns because the vast majority of supporters are drawn by external events, and therefore may not share the strategic vision or values of your campaign.

In a moment of anger sparked by the self-immolation of street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi, hundreds of thousands of Tunisians united against the regime and took to the streets in mass protests, eventually ousting decades-long dictator Ben Ali.

The key is to know what to expect and to make the most of the skills and talents that are suddenly available to you.

Lifted by a huge surge of support, you can transform your campaign from a specialist discussion going on behind closed doors among a small number of activists into a matter of public opinion *(see: STORY: Stolen Gas Campaign p. 72)*. Use your strength of numbers to shift the balance of power and pressure decision makers to heed your demands. Also, seize the opportunity to identify potential leaders and activists and recruit them to your campaign.

Eventually, the surge dissipates, so it's wise to set your expectations early on. Instead of being disappointed when the momentum wanes, take advantage of the opportunity to build connections with those who have specific skills or networks that may support you later on *(see: PRINCIPLE: Would you like some structure with your momentum? p. 166)*.

Taiwanese students take part in a mass protest as part of the Sunflower Student Movement in 2014. Photo: Artemas Liu | CC BY 2.0

RELATED

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Burmese Students' Long March » *p. 26*
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LEARN MORE

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Solidarity with the Palestinian Popular Resistance | Mondoweiss, 2015

Occupy Wall Street