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*Political Environment and Transnational Agency: a Comparative Analysis
of the Solidarity Movement For Palestine*

Sam Cassanos
Senior Honors Paper
Politics
Fall 2009-Spring 2010
Advisor: Stephen Crowley
Second Reader: Ben Schiff

I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.
S.C.

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Introduction

In this paper I consider whether the transnational framing processes of solidarity movements have the ability to influence government policy. In what conditions do transnational solidarity movements create, expand and/or seize political opportunities? I argue that for most of their history, challengers to power, including solidarity movements, often appear ineffectual and constrained by their political environment. However, during this period there exists a complex relationship between opportunity and agency in which political environments unfavorable to mobilization makes challengers attempt to reshape dominant ideologies and political agendas before they can have a significant influence on policy makers. In other words, those trying to challenge power are engaged in a protracted war of position in which information is their primary instrument with which to shape a political environment. During this period groups develop the capacity that allows them to successfully adapt, or attempt to do so, to expanding political opportunities. This capacity includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a persuasive alternative media, alliances with extra-movement institutions such as religious institutions and a sense of collective identity that facilitates sustained political contention.

I demonstrate these theoretical propositions through a comparison of the US based solidarity movement for Palestine with earlier US solidarity movements for East Timor and Central America. In these latter two cases movement successes occurred during periods of expanding political opportunities combined with an increased social awareness of the movements' main concerns and strong facilitating organizations. In the East Timorese context, activists used the period from 1975 until the early 1990s to develop strong internal communications networks, alternative media and relationships with the leaders of the East Timorese national movement that allowed them to persuade policy makers to withdraw US support for Indonesia's occupation. The US Central America Peace movement, by contrast, exerted influence over policy makers largely because of the legacy of the Vietnam war had tarnished the ideological appeal of US foreign policy and helped to generate a substantial number of anti-war groups

and progressive Church movements that facilitated the movements growth. Thus, the rapid mobilization of the Central America solidarity movement can be credited in part to the preceding decades of a leftwing war of position in American politics.

In the context of the transnational movement for Palestine, the analysis in this paper reveals three general conclusions about the relationship between transnational framing processes and political environment. First, the movement is a diffuse, loosely connected and decentralized network made up of localized activist groups. The movement's structure is to a considerable degree due to the dynamics of repression in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) and the difficulty of making Palestinian grievances resonate internationally. Second, using a political opportunity framework I argue that unlike the solidarity movements for East Timor and Central America, the US section of the Palestinian solidarity movement faces challenges that will likely reduce its ability to be effective. However, through comparisons with the East Timor and Central America solidarity movements we can begin to identify particular tactics and strategic approaches that can help the Palestine solidarity activists act upon political opportunities, if they arise in the future. Third, I examine the use of transnational framing processes and "new media," such as viral Internet videos and low budget documentaries, to build ties between activists and to help the movement overcome some of the obstacles it faces. By investigating the specifically transnational and international elements of the movement (framing processes, information politics) we can identify potential advantages, such as "new media" that the movement may have recourse to in future framing contests. In other words, while the constraints revealed by the opportunity framework cannot be ignored, they cannot be treated as *fait accompli* either. It is almost invariably the case that the success of any solidarity movement appears obvious only in hindsight. At the time these movements arose they were all by definition outside of the mainstream view they sought to influence, and undertaking to change entrenched views is always a risky and uncertain objective. But it can be accomplished.

The Object of this Study

The transnational solidarity movement for Palestine is important because of its political impact and also because it raises questions about how social movements opposing US imperialism develop, succeed and fail. Although solidarity with the Palestinians has received a considerable amount of media attention, scholars have not attempted to apply social movement concepts to this particular movement. This is the case for both the transnational and the domestic components of the solidarity network. This paper is an attempt to use social movement concepts to illuminate the dynamics and potential of an under-studied movement. I also hope that by using the social movement theory tool-kit I can help to better explain the transnational movement for Palestine to its members and highlight some of the constraints and challenges that it faces.

As a starting point for this study I use Sidney Tarrow's definition of a social movements as, "collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities" (1998: 4) and Tarrow and Donatella Della Porta's insight that transnational movements are largely defined by,

three important processes of transnationalization: diffusion, domestication, and externalization. By *diffusion* we mean, the spread of movement ideas, practices and frames from one country to another; by *domestication*, we mean the playing out on domestic territory of conflicts that have their origin externally; and by *externalization*, we mean the challenge to supranational institutions to intervene in domestic problems or conflicts. (2005: 2)

Pro-Palestinian activism is to a considerable degree the effect of the first two types of mobilization described by Tarrow and Della Porta. Through the *diffusion* of common interpretations of the of the Palestine-Israel conflict that emphasize Israel's colonial history, its exclusion and marginalization of Palestinians from political life, its violations of international law and the similarities between Israel and apartheid South Africa, Palestinians and non-Palestinians have constructed a shared history of the conflict in Palestine. They have also established a common belief that transnational activism can help bring a just end to it. Activists outside of Palestine *domesticate* the conflict by voicing Palestinian

grievances within their communities, schools, and religious institutions, elected representatives and corporations that do business with Israel. Appropriating the Palestine-Israel conflict to local circumstances is not limited to simply publicizing Palestinian narratives, but involves a complex process of identifying and targeting the often-subtle connections between the subjugation of the Palestinians and a local context. The Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee (BNC), helps to guide activists in this process by compiling information on multinational corporations that sell weapons to Israel, Israeli companies that are based in the OPT and cultural icons, for example Jean Luc Godard and Leonard Cohen, who are planning well-publicized visits to Israel. Palestinian activists and their allies are limited in their ability to *externalize* the conflict to international organizations. A central contention of this paper is that US imperialism has denied the transnational movement for Palestine the advantage of using international institutions such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) for support.

The transnational solidarity movement is a large and rapidly expanding phenomenon that has won recent and important victories in Africa, Europe and the United States. For example, in January 2009 South African dockworkers under the guidance of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) refused to unload an Israeli cargo ship in Durban, enacting a COSATU decision from 2004 to join in a comprehensive boycott of Israel. During the summer of 2009 the French rail company Veolia announced that it would withdraw from a plan to build a light rail line between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in part because of grassroots pressure against the project (Barghouti 2009). Because important trade unions and governments made these decisions, respectively, they represent two of the most important victories to date of the solidarity movement. However, due to time constraints and the difficulty in finding information on the mobilizations behind these events, this paper does not report in detail on them. Although this paper examines particular groups or episodes in the history of transnational activism for Palestine its subjects are typically US based, its primary aim is not to provide detailed treatments of particular group histories or movement victories. Rather, it should be viewed as

is a historicized analysis of a transnational social movement that examines its mobilization dynamics, prospects for success and political and communicative strategies in the contexts of international, national and local political fields.

There is also a positive reason for focusing largely on US based groups: the US is the principle military, economic and diplomatic sponsor of the Occupation outside of Israel itself. Were the US to suspend the roughly \$3 billion in aid that it gives Israel annually and allow UNSC resolutions condemning Israeli policy to pass, it is highly plausible that Israel would have to end its Occupation of Palestine and its aggression towards Lebanon. For these reasons, the US based solidarity movement should be of particular concern to scholars and activists.

The Second Dimension of Power

In his study of coal miners in the Appalachians, John Gaventa argues that political power is expressed through three interdependent dimensions: the ability of actors to participate in decision making processes; the ability of actors, organizations and institutions to create political agendas for others—in this context, “by preventing issues from arising, so too many actors are prevented from acting”(1982: 9); and the capacity of social forces, not just individuals and institutions, to produce consent for the political status quo by shaping the public’s demands and expectations from politics.

The study of transnational social movements in general, and the transnational movement for the Palestinians in particular, relate primarily to Gaventa’s second dimension of power. The Palestinian right of self-determination is not part of the political agenda in the United States. Palestinian solidarity activists are viewed in the media and in government as solidly outside of the mainstream. Before political opportunities can be seized, if they become available, the dominant discourse on Palestine-Israel would have to shift dramatically to recognize both the historic and ongoing suffering of the Palestinians, their right of self-determination and the fundamentally discriminatory characteristics of

Zionism. Only then will the Palestinians and their allies be able to persuade governments to shift their support away from Israel and towards the Palestinians.

What are the main axioms of this discourse and what institutions and actors reproduce it? Palestinian-Jordanian scholar Joseph Massad writes that, in the United States, discussion of the Palestine-Israel conflict is a “discursive space that places the Palestinians on its border, faced with checkpoints that mainly keep us out but do allow some entry” (1993: 94). Massad is echoing the arguments Edward Said put forward in his essay *Permission to Narrate* which was written in the aftermath of Israel’s 1982 invasion of Lebanon and the infamous collusion of Israeli and Phalangist fighters in the Sabra and Shatilla massacre that took place in the same year. Said noticed that despite the proliferation of books and news coverage of the invasion and the massacre, many authors seemed to go out of their way to avoid speaking with Palestinians or discussing the fundamental prejudices inherent in a self-described “Jewish-state.” Said attributed these elisions to, “a disciplinary communications apparatus [that] exists in the West both for overlooking most of the things that might present Israel in a bad light, and for punishing those who try to tell the truth.” (2000: 247) In a recent essay, titled “The Israelization of American Middle East Policy Discourse” Joel Beinin argues that the September 11, 2001 attacks have “consolidated an understanding of the world drawing sharp oppositions between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and positing Islam as the ‘new enemy for a new world order’” (2003a: 125). In this context, Palestinians are erased from public discourse except when presented as a threatening enemy. Additionally, pro-Israel and pro-US imperialism institutions such as the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (a spin-off of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the most powerful pro-Israel lobby in the US) enjoy increased authority within the media and government (Beinin 2003b; 2003c).

The dominance of this ideology is the primary problem facing Palestinian solidarity activists, particularly those in the United States. By comparison, the East Timorese and Central American solidarity movements were able to successfully persuade policy-makers to restrict US support for its

clients once the dominant ideological position in support of Indonesia, the Contras and the military-oligarchy power-blocs in El Salvador and Guatemala had been punctured. Changes in political discourse, are the effect of extra-discursive events (such as the Santa Cruz massacres in East Timor or the killing of Arch Bishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador) that forced a reconsidering of US foreign policy and the work that activists do to sustain and spread counter-hegemonic consciousness through contention with elites and non-elites. Through comparisons with other solidarity movements and analysis of the information politics of the transnational movement for Palestine this paper aims to uncover and discuss the mechanisms of power facing the Palestinians and their allies. Examining specifically, the potential for activists to push these mechanisms to their limits as well as the broader constitution of political opportunities in which Palestinian solidarity activists can make US policy overlap with the objectives of the Palestinian struggle.

Organization

The arguments presented in this paper attempt to fill particular gaps in the scholarly knowledge of the transnational solidarity movement for Palestine. Chapter One is a descriptive history of transnational solidarity for the Palestinians since the beginning of the second *intifada* (fall 2000). During the 21st century mobilized international solidarity with the Palestinians has proven to be a popular, resistant and innovative force in world politics. This chapter introduces some of the principle organizations and individuals in the transnational solidarity movement; briefly tells the stories of how these organizations formed and the strategies they deployed; considers reasons for the rise and decline of certain groups and tactics and explains how the movement relates to the Palestinian national movement proper.

The next chapter puts the US based component of the Palestine solidarity movement in a comparison with recent US solidarity movements for East Timor and Central America. In all three cases movements have used similar repertoires, including but not limited to boycotts, divestment, public demonstrations and familiar discourses such as human rights and self-determination in order to

challenge the US government's relationship with a third world client guilty of systematic human rights abuses. The movements for East Timor and Central America are all credited with helping to change US policy.

I argue that particular configurations of political opportunity explain the variations in movement strategy and outcomes between these cases. The comparisons reinforce the salience of political opportunities in limiting how far a movement can influence or impact a political environment and supports the general hypothesis of the political opportunity framework that elite allies, support from public opinion and the lack of a credible opposition are crucial determinants in the success of social movements in democratic politics. These comparisons highlight the remarkably unfavorable circumstances facing the US based solidarity movement for Palestine, which has few significant elite allies, faces enormous opposition and has a difficult relationship with public opinion and the news media. I argue that the absence of political openings will continue to prohibit the solidarity movement from having the type of influence over US policy that it covets, despite its recent innovations in tactics and strategy.

Chapter Three connects the subjective transnational framing tactics of the movement to the objective, structural conditions of the international system. The objectives of this chapter are to clarify the principle mechanisms and processes by which transnational solidarity with the Palestinians is constructed and to demonstrate the ways in which activists at all levels are developing new political resources through these processes. I argue that US primacy in the inter-state system has prevented the Palestinians and their allies from *externalizing* their cause to influential international organizations. As a result the transnational movement for Palestine is an example of *globalization from below*: it is reliant upon the discourses and norms of globalization such as international law and universal human rights and it targets multinational businesses that have direct links to the Occupation. However, because it lacks strong state sponsors or support from international organizations it is made up of grassroots and civil society groups. Thus, the movement has developed through the multiplication of localized

iterations connected by a shared injustice frame. At the center of this frame is the analogy between the situation in Palestine and the history of apartheid South Africa. This analogy allows actors to easily explain a problem and produce an understanding of how it can be redressed; the Occupation of Palestine is morally indefensible because it recalls the abhorrent racial discrimination of South African apartheid and just as in the apartheid context it can be ameliorated through a global campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel. The processes described in this chapter (as well as Chapters One and Four) explains the ways in which the US based solidarity movement is connected to and inter-dependent with its counterparts throughout the world as well as Palestinian national leaders.

Chapter Four extends this analysis by examining the role of new media such as viral videos and low-budget documentaries in the construction of the solidarity movement. These videos are a key resource for the solidarity movement because they can easily cross national borders, create common repositories of knowledge and signal the movement's increasing ability to represent the Palestine-Israel conflict in its own terms. These projects are analyzed as both strategic deployments intended to influence potential supporters and as reflexive practices that reveal the ways in which Palestinian, Israeli and international activists conceptualize their own agency.

1: The Making of the Transnational Solidarity Movement for Palestine

Witnessing, shielding and voicing: solidarity groups and their tactics, 2000-2004

The outbreak of the second *intifada* provided the impetus for a new era of transnational solidarity with the Palestinians. The *intifada* began simultaneously with the breakdown of peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). During July and August of 2000 Israelis and Palestinians negotiated under American auspices at Camp David ostensibly to broker a final resolution of their century old conflict. The negotiations faltered over Israel and America's unwillingness to grant the Palestinians sovereignty over significant economic, religious, cultural and geographic parts of the central West Bank and East Jerusalem (Ben Ami 2006: 246-265; Enderlin 2003: 177-261; Finkelstein 2007). As a negotiated settlement appeared increasingly unlikely, Israeli and Palestinian officials began to make preparations to manage the aftermath. According to Charles Enderlin, while at Camp David Israeli negotiators crafted a simple message to deliver to the international public: the negotiations failed because of Yasser Arafat's unwillingness to accept an unprecedented and generous offer of statehood. On the Palestinian side, Marwan Barghouti and his associates began planning protests modeled after the famous demonstrations of the first *intifada* (1987-1993) in order to draw international attention to and create criticism of Israel's occupation thereby hopefully giving the Palestinians some added leverage in future negotiations.¹

The first protests and counter-protests occurred in late September 2000. In the first weeks of the uprising scenes of Israeli soldiers using lethal force against Palestinian civilian demonstrators "framed" the conflict as an Occupation army trampling on the rights of a civilian population to audiences go global audience. Images of indiscriminate IDF violence against Palestinians quickly became

¹ In the decade since Camp David concluded unsuccessfully the range of debate on the reasons for the talks' failure has narrowed dramatically. The Israeli produced narrative that Arafat had rejected a generous offer because of his incorrigible desire to destroy Israel either through the repatriation of Palestinian refugees or armed struggle has been discredited by a wealth of testimonial literature and journalism on the topic (Finkelstein 2007).

commonplace throughout the world. In the early weeks of the *intifada* the ratio of Palestinians to Israelis killed was 20:1 and in most documented cases of Palestinian fatalities Israeli soldiers fired without themselves being in danger (Finkelstein 2005: 97).

Yasser Arafat and Fatah expected to benefit from the *intifada* but were unable to conceive of strategic direction for it. Yezid Sayigh writes that Arafat's "management [of the revolt] has been marked by a high degree of improvisation and short-termism" (2001: 47). As a consequence the ordinary Palestinian population was especially vulnerable to Israeli repression. This is in marked contrast to the dynamics of the first *intifada* when Palestinian labor, communal and educational institutions worked in concert with the Palestinian national leadership within the OPT to maximize the revolt's effect by sending a twofold message: that the uprising was a non-violent gesture; and that Palestinians were willing to accept a two-state solution. Interestingly, the spontaneous expressions of labor and other communal groups were also consistent with this message. The shift in protest tactics from popular mobilization in first *intifada* to militarized insurgency in the second, reflect Arafat and Fatah's distrust of grassroots Palestinian democracy.

Charmaine Seitz explains that in the context of substantial loss of life and a confused national leadership, "Palestinian civil society activists in the West Bank in particular began to examine new ways to participate in the uprising that would not get demonstrators killed" (2003: 54). The conclusion that these activists drew was that an international presence in the OPT could potentially restrain Israel's counter-*intifada*. The first wave of transnational solidarity with the Palestinians to emerge during the second *intifada* was primarily concerned with drawing attention to the violence of Israel's counter-*intifada* and providing security for Palestinian civilians under the threat of Israeli aggression.

The Christian Peace Makers Team (CPT) in Hebron, Women in Black and Olive Tree Summer serve as prominent examples of non-Palestinian groups present in Occupied Palestine and Israel before the second *intifada*. Members of these groups acted as witnesses and human shields for Palestinians as well as intermediaries between the Palestinians and transnational activist networks. The tactics that

these early risers applied became central to the work of Grassroots International Protection for the Palestinian People (GIPP), which was founded by Palestinian civil society groups and international delegations in May 2001. By May of 2002 over 2000 foreign supporters of the Palestinians, mostly from Europe, had visited the occupied territories as part of GIPP missions in order to distribute aid and protect Palestinians from the IDF (Struck 2002: 62-65). In summer of 2001 a similar group, the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) was founded by Ghassan Adoni (Palestinian), George N. Rishmawi (Palestinian), Neta Golan (Israeli) and Huwaida Arraf (Palestinian-American).

The rise and decline of the International Solidarity Movement

The Palestinian Solidarity Movement was formed out of the struggle between Palestinians, Israelis and internationals to provide physical protection for Palestinian civilians suffering under Israel's counter-intifada. Adoni and Rishmawi were leaders of the Center for Rapprochement Between People, based in the West Bank town of Bayt Sahur. In 1989, the organization mobilized a 45 daylong tax-strike in the town under the famous slogan of the American Revolution, "no taxation without representation" (Seitz 2003: 54; Rishmawi and Golan 2004; Adoni, Qubbaj, Rishmawi and Saffold 2003: 65). Arraf had worked at the Israeli-Palestinian program of the international dialogue project Seeds of Peace (as did Adam Shapiro, a prominent member who joined ISM shortly after its founding) before leaving the group to dedicate himself to activism.

The ISM concluded that the best way to achieve its goals would be to replicate the actions of CPT and GIPP on a much larger scale and to put an increased emphasis on broadcasting their message to the international community. Founder George Rishmawi explains, "Our goal is to help Palestinians do non-violent resistance because when they do it without international accompaniment they are met with terrible violence." (Rishmawi and Golan 2004: 7). The ISM restricted its actions to non-violent modes of resistance but made explicit that out of principle it would not dictate to Palestinians that they should totally reject violent actions nor would it intervene in internal Palestinian politics by offering preferential support to specific parties or movements. The group's founders also came to a consensus

that Palestinians should be in charge of the group.

The organization's first major operation, "Freedom Summer 2001" aimed to bring thousands of internationals to the West Bank in order to act as a buffer between Palestinians and the IDF. The "Freedom Summer" fell far short of the ISM's aspirations. While preparing for the campaign ISM members found that many Palestinians in the al- Khadir village of the West Bank where the group planned on establishing a tent of human shields were suspicious that the organization had an ulterior motive to displace Palestinian resistance. Furthermore, some Palestinians also objected to the involvement of the Israeli citizens in direct action within Palestine (Seitz 2005: 56). Ultimately, only between 50-80 internationals joined the movement. However, the campaign did succeed in executing direct actions such as marching on checkpoints and guarding Palestinians as they removed IDF roadblocks.

In December 2001, the ISM launched its second campaign in the Occupied Palestinian territories, which mirrored the actions of the "Freedom Summer." In March 2002, Israel launched Operation Defensive Shield and sent armed troops to re-occupy parts of the West Bank that it had granted to the Palestinian Authority such as Ramallah and Jenin. Operation Defensive Shield prevented the ISM from carrying out its planned third mission to the West Bank but by increasing the violence in the OPT it drew attention to the ISM's work. One assessment of the group explains that it was during this period when,

the ISM really hit its stride. With every West Bank town save Jericho invaded and placed under draconian curfew, and with thousands of Palestinians being arrested and processed through detention camps, ISM suddenly found itself in a position to do lifesaving work (Seitz 2005: 57).

During this period two events in particular raised the profile of the ISM. The first occurred in early April 2002 when ISM participants along with internationals from other (mostly Europeans associated with GIPP) solidarity groups and medical personal marched past the ring of Israeli tanks and into Yasser Arafat's Presidential Compound (the Muqata'a) in Ramallah. The presence of these

activists reduced Israeli gunfire on the compound, possibly prevented the assassination of Arafat and added pressure on the IDF to let food, water and medical supplies cross the siege. The second major event was the murder of ISM member Rachel Corrie, an American citizen and a student at Evergreen College, by the IDF on 16 March 2003. Corrie was killed while protecting Palestinian homes and land in southern Gaza from IDF bulldozers that were demolishing properties of civilians and militants alike in order to create a buffer zone between the Gaza Strip and the Egyptian Sinai. ISM members have provided eyewitness accounts explaining how Corrie was deliberately attacked by an IDF bulldozer (Finkelstein 2005: 120). However, the Israeli government maintains that her death was an accident.

The death of Rachel Corrie brought attention to the ISM's activism and temporarily increased its influence but it was also a major event in the group's undoing. The ISM had hoped that by sending internationals to a conflict zone it could deter the IDF from indiscriminately using force. It also hoped that foreign government's would intervene on behalf of their imperiled citizens in the ISM and pressure Israel to restrain its violent counter-intifada. In many cases the ISM successfully disrupted IDF violence, delivered humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, and amassed international pressure on the IDF to free Palestinian prisoners.

By winter 2002, the ISM had become increasingly aware that the IDF could not be counted on to spare the lives of Palestinians because of the presence of international activists. By this time the activists themselves were increasingly under attack by the Israeli army and the American Consulate in Israel would not take responsibility to secure the physical safety of its citizens in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (Shaik 2003). Beginning in Summer 2003 Israel started placing increased restrictions on international solidarity activists. The official Israeli policy became to prohibit international activists from entering the OPT and many participants who were in the territories were deported. Both the ISM and the CPT have had their offices raided and their files and computers

confiscated by the IDF.²

The combination of an increasingly repressive IDF, lack of support from foreign governments for its work and the difficulties of organizing in occupied Palestine presented the ISM with a strategic crisis. The ISM currently maintains a presence in the OPT but its greatest effect is felt outside of Palestine. Current and former ISM members have used the relationships they built with Palestinian activists during their stays in the territories to foster connections between solidarity groups and Palestinian communities, which have been an important factor of the BDS campaign. ISM participants regularly speak in the US and Europe about their experiences in Palestine. The ISM continues to send delegations to the Occupied Territories and takes part in actions against the West Bank Wall, the siege of Gaza and on behalf of Palestinians threatened by military or settler violence. However, the group no longer commands the public attention that it once did.

The Origins of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement

From the start of the second *intifada* international activists experimented with boycotts, divestment campaigns and other forms of commercial and cultural sanctions against Israel. In many cases, the inspiration for this tactic came from the example of transnational resistance to apartheid rule, which pressured schools, banks, governments and athletic institutions to stop doing business with the racist state in South Africa. In August-September of 2001, an NGO declaration at the Durban Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance labeled Israel an

² The ISM also made mistakes of its own that hindered its reputation with Palestinians and international activists. In May 2002, the ISM recreated its entry into the Muqata'a by joining Palestinians within the besieged Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The delegation provided aid and increased international attention on Israel's siege of the historic city. However, after Palestinians and Israelis had reached a deal to evacuate the Church and relieve the pressure on Bethlehem the ISM inadvertently prolonged the siege by refusing to leave unless they were guaranteed by Israel that their members in the Church would not be deported from the West Bank. Understandably, the move caused friction among Palestinians who saw their suffering prolonged by the ISM's choice (Seitz 2005: 58-59). Many also feel that by inserting itself in Palestinian villages, the ISM placed unfair burdens on Palestinian communities who are asked to feed and house the activists.

“apartheid state” and called for the international community to marginalize it.

Frances A. Boyle, a professor of law at the University of Illinois, launched the first movement for campus divestment from Israel in November 2000. Around the same time, a parallel campaign was launched by the group Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) at the University of California Berkeley that circulated a petition asking the school to reconsider the estimated \$6.4 billion that it has invested with companies in sizeable business relationship with Israel. By March 2003, the document had over 6,000 student signatures. A joint divestment campaign by students at Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology divestment campaign received the support of prominent faculty members such as Noam Chomsky and well publicized criticism from Harvard’s Dean Lawrence Summers. By 2004, solidarity groups on over 40 US campuses had launched divestment campaigns. In addition to attracting a significant amount of media attention and furthering the comparison between Israel and apartheid South Africa, this first generation of the campus divestment movement succeeded in organizing a divestment conference at UC Berkeley and producing a widely circulated handbook on divestment that continues to be used by activists (Aladin 2003; Sbaihat 2005).

In July 2004, the general assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA (PCUSA) overwhelmingly voted in favor of a policy of “corporate engagement” potentially including selective divestment from corporations profiting from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The resolution was informed by a recent trip to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian territories by PCUSA congregants who returned to the United States horrified by the privations and the hardships brought about by Israel’s West Bank Wall. In August 2005 PCUSA identified Caterpillar, ITT Industries, Motorola, Citigroup and United Technologies as five corporations whose business practices in Palestine-Israel put innocent lives in danger. The Anglican Peace and Justice Network, the World Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical and Lutheran Church in America and the United Church of Christ all of which passed decisions to explore selective divestment followed the Presbyterians.

In Europe, interest in an academic boycott of Israel has been steadily growing since April of

2002. The campaign for an academic boycott of Israel in Europe began mainstreamed by Hillary Rose and Steven Rose in an April 2002 in the *London Guardian* calling on European academic institutions, at both the national and regional level to stop providing support to Israeli institutions, until Israel meets its obligations under international law and opens peace negotiations with the Palestinians (Rose and Rose 2002; Rose and Rose 2008). The letter was signed by 120 European academics.

The most significant result of these early BDS campaigns was to demonstrate to Palestinian leaders that making a global BDS movement, similar to the one launched against South African Apartheid was a possibility, even if its chances for success were uncertain. In July 2004, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI) issued a statement of principles urging their peers in other countries to boycott Israeli academic and cultural institutions until the state of Israel ends its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, assented to UN resolutions pertaining to refugee rights, and ends its discriminatory practices against the Palestinians. PACBI argued that Israeli schools and universities play numerous roles in “maintaining, defending or justifying” the oppression of the Palestinians “or have been complicit through their silence” (PACBI 2004) Over 60 academic, cultural, labor and political Palestinian civil society groups have endorsed the resolution. PACBI frequently selects protest targets against which local solidarity groups design specific campaigns. For example, in the summer of 2009, groups throughout the United States and Europe protested the musician Leonard Cohen’s concerts on the basis that his world tour included a show in Tel Aviv.

In the period immediately after PACBI’s call was issued, organizations throughout the world continued to press for a BDS movement against Israel. In October 2004 the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and other South African organizations issued a joint declaration calling for a boycott of Israel. In May 2006 COATSU voted to endorse the PACBI resolution. The US based National Lawyers Guild, a historically progressive legal group voted to endorse divestment campaigns until Israel fulfilled its obligations to the Palestinians under international law (Murray 2008: 142143).

On 9 July 2005, building off of the momentum of the PACBI initiative and the worldwide

support for BDS, 170 Palestinian civil society organizations within Palestine issued a call for a global BDS campaign against Israel. The statement reads:

In view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in the struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott, divestment and sanctions; and

Inspired by the struggle of South Africans against apartheid and in the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression;

We, representatives of Palestinian civil society, call upon 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. We appeal to you to pressure your respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. We also invite conscientious Israelis to support this Call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace.
(Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee 2005)

The parallel between the 2005 call from Palestinian Civil Society for a global BDS campaign against Israel and the comparison with anti-Apartheid BDS movement was sharpened by the one year anniversary of the International Court of Justice's landmark ruling that Israel's wall though the West Bank violated international law and thus had to be dismantled. The movement against Apartheid was similarly emboldened by a 1971 International Court of Justice ruling against South Africa's violations of international law in Namibia, which reinforced its demand for South Africa to be treated like a rogue state (Murray 2008: 141).

The 2005 call from Palestinian Civil Society for a BDS campaign against Israel represents a major escalation from earlier attempts to foster a BDS movement. The call itself put greater stress on the West Bank Wall, international law and the analogy between Israel's policies and the state-racism of apartheid South Africa than previous attempts to mobilize shame against Israel. The mass support that the declaration brought from Palestinian organizations gave it credibility with foreign activists worried about imposing an agenda on the Palestinians or being insufficiently attentive to Palestinian voices.

The BDS movement has also created a number of prominent Palestinian personalities. The best-known figure is Omar Barghouti, a founding member of PACBI and an international spokesperson for the academic and cultural boycott of Israel. Jamal Juma, a coordinator for the Grassroots Anti

Apartheid Wall Campaign speaks regularly in Europe about the injustices that the Wall brings upon Palestinians who lose access their homes, jobs, farmlands, hospitals and family members because of its presence. The Grass Roots Anti Apartheid Wall Campaign formed in 2002 and is comprised of representatives from communities that are directly affected by the Wall and Palestinian NGO's. The group coordinates protest strategies between communities and conducts outreach to the international community by speaking at conferences, sending representatives on speaking tours, publishing information on the Wall and bringing non-Palestinians to villages affected by the Wall to witness its impact and participate in protests against it.

In late 2009 and early 2010 Juma received international attention after being arrested by the IDF during an arrest campaign against West Bank anti-Wall and BDS activists. Mohammad Othman, a native of Jayyous in the West Bank, also received international media attention when he was detained without charge by Israel in September 2009. Othman was returning from Norway, which had recently terminated its public pension's investments in the Israeli military contractor Elbit, where he was speaking with government officials about the situation in the OPT and other ways in which the country could make ethical investment decisions regarding Palestine-Israel. The arrests of Juma and Othman made two already visible activists even more prominent within the BDS movement.

The call for BDS energized existing attempts to replicate the anti-apartheid repertoire and inspired new local movements. Since its declaration, the call has become the strategic and political linchpin of a global movement that is highly decentralized, non-hierarchical and increasingly successful in the past year. In the next section I provide a general outline of the history of one of the most prominent and influential US based groups in the BDS movement, Adalah. Adalah is responsible for bringing attention to Israel diamond magnate Lev Leviev's construction of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank and for pressuring respected international organizations such as OXFAM and UNICEF to distance themselves from Leviev.

Adalah³

In 2005, Omar Barghouti visited New York City to meet with local solidarity activists from the ISM, Jews Against the Occupation, Al-Awda the Right of Return Coalition, the International Socialist Organization, New York University and Columbia University to discuss organizing a BDS campaign in the city. Participants in this meeting formed the New York BDS Campaign. Through 2005 and 2006, the New York BDS Campaign made limited strides in building a BDS movement. The group's first action occurred during Israel's summer 2006 invasion of Lebanon when the groups organized demonstrations outside of Israeli coffee shop chain Aroma Café's Houston Street location. These protests were carried out with minimal preparation and lasted for roughly a month. Participants admit that the decision to protest Aroma Café was chosen quickly and without a strategic assessment of its consequences.

Over the next year, the New York City BDS Campaign worked within the Ad Hoc Committee for Middle East Justice, an umbrella organization of New York City antiwar, peace, and leftwing groups that had united to keep awareness of the Palestinian issue alive within New York City and to organize relevant groups around a solidarity strategy. The Committee did not undertake any major BDS efforts. It did however organize demonstrations against the IDF's policies in the Gaza Strip and act as reminder within the New York anti-war movement of the links between the Palestinian question and the US war in Iraq.

In the summer of 2007, the Committee underwent a major internal assessment of its identity, objectives and role. Members of the committee concluded that they were in fact no longer an "ad hoc" organization but a stable group and that they would like to spend more of their resources on developing a BDS campaign in New York City. The group changed its name to Adalah, which means "justice" in

³ This section is largely based off the presentation given by Adalah members Daniel Strum and Andrew El Kadi on November 21st at 2009 Campus BDS Conference at Hampshire College (Strum and El Kadi 2009) as well as Adalah's online resources on Land Developers BDS (Adalah undated).

Arabic, and underwent a nearly three month long process researching potential targets for BDS campaigns.

The organization decided to target the businesses of Lev Leviev and Shaya Boymelgreen, two Israeli businessmen with significant financial and ideological investments in the expansion of Israeli settlements. Leviev is an Israeli diamond magnate whose is famous for breaking the DeBeers company's monopoly on diamond exports from Southern Africa. He is the owner of Africa- Israel Investments a real-estate company working to expand Israeli settlements in the OPT. His company has substantial investments in the settlements of Modi'in Illit, which is built on land taken from the Palestinian village of Bil'in. When Adalah's campaign began, Shaya Boymelgreen worked closely with Leviev in both the West Bank and New York City. In 2002, they formed the real estate company Leviev Boymelgreen that built and developed properties in Manhattan and Brooklyn. In the West Bank, Boymelgreen's company, The Green Park Project, subcontracted one of Leviev's companies to build in Modi'in Illit. Leviev figured more prominently than Boymelgreen in Adalah's activism because he was opening a diamond store bearing his name in midtown Manhattan and because human rights and labor groups have criticized his relationship with the Angolan government.

When Adalah was preparing to launch its campaign, Leviev and Boymelgreen were already facing criticisms from the New York City Laborers Union for substandard labor practices. Adalah reached out to the laborers union and planned on working closely with them in a joint campaign against Leviev and Boymelgreen, the settlements in the West Bank and labor issues in New York City. However, the Laborers Union reached an agreement with Leviev and Boymelgreen and Adalah was left without their support. Thus, Adalah's first campaign against Leviev concentrated heavily on his financing of Israeli settlements in the OPT, while making some mentions of his relationship with the Angolan government and his record of conflicts with organized labor. In fall and winter 2007 Adalah began to protest in front of Leviev's Manhattan store. The group also reached out to celebrity endorsers of Leviev's diamonds such as Susan Sarandon but was unable to elicit public responses from them.

It is important to note that the idea to launch BDS actions against Leviev came from Palestinian and Israeli activists involved in direct action against the Wall in the West Bank. Residents of the towns of Jayyous and Bil'in, both of which lose substantial amount of their lands to the Wall, have been holding regular protests against the barrier for the past five years. In addition to organizing demonstrations members of the popular committees of these towns and members of the Grassroots Anti-Wall Campaign and Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW) conduct detailed research on Israel's settlement plans for the areas East of the Wall and the construction and real estate firms that build the settlements. Activists in Bil'in and Jayyous discovered that Leviev and Boymelgreen's companies were major player in settlement construction in these areas. The connection between Bil'in and Jayyous and Adalah in New York City was made through members of the ISM and AATW who before joining the Ad Hoc Committee spent time in these villages (especially Jayyous) and built strong relationships with activists there. Members of Adalah emphasize that if it were not for the research of the Popular Committees for Bil'in and Jayyous their organization would probably not have realized the extent of Leviev and Boymelgreen's involvement in settlement construction.

The campaign against Leviev's diamond business quickly became one of the most ubiquitous BDS actions. Leviev's spokespeople responded to Adalah by touting their figurehead's history of philanthropy and pointed to his contributions to UNICEF and OXFAM International as examples. Adalah reacted by asking these organizations how they could accept donations from a settlement builder with a history of objectionable relations with the Angolan government without violating their own conditions for donors. UNICEF responded to Adalah's inquiry by stating that it would no longer accept contributions from Leviev and explained that it had only received donations "indirectly" from Leviev who had contributed to events for the group that were organized by the French magazine Gala. (Adalah 2008b).

An OXFAM representative publicly responded that in fact Leviev had never donated to the organization and that it does not "knowingly accept funds from any business involved in any illegal

activity, or operating in any illegally occupied territory, including settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.” (Adalah 2008a) These actions received a significant amount of media attention. Videos of Adalah protesting in front of Leviev’s Manhattan store became a small viral sensation on solidarity and leftwing listservs and websites. The campaign and the statements from UNICEF and OXFAM were covered by a wide range of media organizations including Haaretz, the Jerusalem Post, the Jewish Daily Forward, the Jewish Week, the New York Post and numerous diamond industry trade journals.

At the Hampshire College BDS Conference in November 2009, an Adalah member Daniel Strum explained the group’s approach to Leviev as follows: “You look for a target. And you look for a target that has hooks... You research it and it starts to look like a web with a target at the center” (Strum and El-Kadi 2009). Adalah and other solidarity groups have targeted other institutions associated with Africa-Israel. In Norway the investment firm Blackrock divested from Africa-Israel in result from a campaign critical of the company’s human rights record in the OPT and Angola. The British Embassy in Tel Aviv backed out of a plan to rent a building owned by the company in response to arguments that it would be improper to do business with a settlement builder. In these and other cases Adalah has provided a model to other activists and supplied resources on Africa-Israel’s involvement in settlement construction, its impact on Palestinian communities and its status under international law.

One of Adalah’s most lasting effects has been to convince other groups that BDS is a viable political strategy. In 2009, the feminist antiwar group CODEPINK launched a boycott against the Israeli cosmetics company Ahava on the grounds that it uses resources and owns land in the West Bank. A lot of the information in CODEPINK’s campaign has come from research Adalah had collected on Ahava. CODEPINK also followed Adalah’s example and targeted celebrity endorsers of Ahava just as Leviev’s famous spokespeople were targeted.

2: Comparative Analysis

What does the political opportunity framework have to offer the study of solidarity movements and their outcomes? What does it tell us about how foreign policy is made in the United States?

Scholarship on the American solidarity movements for East Timor and Central America reports that at certain points solidarity did influence the procedures and policies of US foreign policy. However, comparative questions about the relationship between political opportunity and the impact of solidarity movements on US foreign policy remain largely unaddressed. This chapter argues that the variations in strategies and outcomes of these past solidarity movements are to a great extent determined by the variations in political opportunities. However, these opportunities are not currently in effect nor will they be available in the foreseeable future for the Palestine solidarity movement.

This argument is explicated along three closely related lines in the course of my discussion of these movements. First, this chapter analyzes the core thesis of the political opportunity framework that the presence of elite allies is a crucial factor affecting movement strategy and the ability of movements to effect political outcomes. The evidence demonstrates that in the cases studied access to and support of elite actors such as elected politicians, party leaders and members of government is crucial to movement success. Second, political opportunities should be analyzed as particular ‘configurations’ (Schock 1999; Tarrow 1996). The effect of one dimension of political opportunity is highly dependent on other dimensions and it these combinations of openings and closings that determine the trajectory and impact of movements. Third, solidarity activists have their greatest impact when the strategic efficacy of the US relationship with a third world client is in doubt. For example, solidarity with East Timor registered its greatest successes after the Cold War ended and Indonesia lost its utility as an anti-Communist ally while the inability of Suharto’s regime to maintain order in Indonesia proper and East Timor forced US policy makers to consider the possibility that their objectives may be better served by allowing democratic transitions in these countries.

How Movements Matter

Social movements aspire to change public policy; but the relationship between movements and observable policy changes has been a relatively neglected field in social movement research compared to the study of the emergence and trajectory of particular movements (Giungi 1998). Recently, however, the study of social movement outcomes has received increased scholarly attention (Gingui 1998; Giungi 1999; Meyer 1999) and clarified some of the methodological and theoretical problems that have stood in the way of a systematic understanding. This section reviews and synthesizes some of this work in order to clarify the relevant methodological and theoretical issues involved in this chapter.

To examine the influence of solidarity movements it is useful to first identify the types of effects that activism can have on US foreign policy. Kitschelt's (1986) insight that movement impacts should be broken down into procedural, substantive and structural change is useful to our study. For a social movement, being able to influence the procedure of policy-making by introducing its ideas into an agenda, making the government justify its policies to the public and by changing who makes policy represent significant achievements. This reinforces Meyer's warning against the trap of seeing policy-making as a "black box, described without nuance and contingency" (2003: 5). Substantive impacts refer to the actual policies of state and imply a procedural change. Legislation suspending military and/or economic assistance, restricting diplomatic ties or conditioning a bilateral relationship on improvements in its human rights record are all examples of substantive impacts solidarity movements have made. Structural impacts involve long-term changes in the constellation of institutional channels that make policy. The Vietnam anti-war movement joined with political elites and members of Congress to have a democratizing effect on the structure of foreign policy-making that required that the military parts of the state apparatuses responsible for foreign policy (CIA, National Security Council, Pentagon) and the executive become increasingly accountable to the supervision of the Congress. Legislation such as the War Powers Act, The Freedom of Information Act and the creation of

intelligence oversight committees in the House and the Senate are effects of structural change brought about in part by anti-Vietnam War mobilization (Blackman and Sharpe 1986). Unlike the anti-Vietnam war movement, the movements studied in this paper have not resulted in structural changes in the US political system; and their effects for policy are limited to the procedural and substantive.

Since our interest is in the causal relationship between solidarity movements and foreign policy, it is useful to address the routes by which movement influence manifests. David Meyer argues that social movements can influence foreign policy through three paths: “Direct and indirect influence on state policy from within the state, direct influence on foreign governments, and indirect influence on foreign governments by alliance with movements in other countries” (1999: 188).

American solidarity movements typically view the military-diplomatic relationship that the US has with a client as their most effective lever to change a situation because of the dominance of the US in international politics and the relative openness of its political system. Solidarity movements have attempted to directly influence US foreign policy by bringing issues to the attention of elites, proposing policy alternatives, mobilizing constituent pressure against policy choices, launching disruptive actions to increase the cost of policy options and to indirectly effect policy by appealing to public opinion by re-framing issues to highlight resonate political or moral themes, pressuring corporations, schools and cultural institutions to terminate their relationships with foreign actors.

Solidarity movements can also indirectly affect US foreign policy through their relationships with groups in other countries. Ideas, frames and tactics are diffused between the first and third worlds in what Clifford Bob refers to as the “marketing of rebellion” (2001). Solidarity activists can help their allies frame their message in resonant ways for the consumption of the United Nations, transnational nongovernmental organizations, foreign publics, activist constituencies and US elites. They can also give an advantage to certain tactics and strategies in insurgent repertoires by bringing them increased international attention as well as funding and logistical support. This is part of the larger project of framing processes and perception management that movements participate in.

Political Opportunities, Movement Strategies and Outcomes

Recent scholarship on social movements has proposed looking at movements through a “political process model” that filters and mediates internal aspects of particular movements such as strategy and mobilizing structure through the field of political opportunities. This approach emerged as a response to an earlier emphasis in social movement research on movement tactics argued that that the particular set of tactics employed by movements was the determinant of political outcomes. This project produced contradictory findings on the effects of internal characteristics (Giungi 1998: 374-379) and scholars have increasingly recognized the role of political environment in the emergence, trajectory and outcomes of social movements. An emphasis on the dimensions of political opportunity, rather than internal variables, is more useful here since solidarity movements employ very similar strategies, but gain very different results from their efforts.

The political opportunity framework has been criticized from various angles, but two arguments in particular cut to the core of the potential shortcomings of the concept. First, an emphasis on political opportunity structure can lead to invariant causal models that negate cultural and historical specificity of movements and their contexts (Goodwin and Jasper 1999). Second, political opportunity can become a fuzzy category of analysis that does not specify *what* political contexts are relevant to the mobilization and outcomes of solidarity movements and *how* this influence works (Meyer and Minkoff 2004; McAdam 1996).

Addressing these problems is useful for our discussion of the solidarity movements. First, because these movements all operate primarily within the US’ ‘open’ political system, because the high points of their mobilization all occurred in the aftermath of the US invasion of Vietnam when Congress and public opinion enjoyed an unprecedentedly important role in foreign policy-making and because they share the same objective of eroding US support for a rogue state, it makes sense to consider the same factors across cases. By placing these movements in a comparative arrangement this work is

concerned with explaining and understanding the generalizable logic at work across cases. Second, the dimensions of opportunity that I apply in this chapter are in general regarded as core factors of a political environment for social movements in Democratic states: elite allies/divided governments, oppositions, media coverage; implementation capacity; and international contexts of political opportunities. In the following paragraphs, I justify the application of these factors to the study of solidarity movements.

For anti-imperialist movements, the presence of significant elite allies is typically coterminous with divisions within government. Disagreements among elites signal to activists that they may be able to find support from within policy-making institutions for their goals. Divisions within government may also encourage elites to make alliances with challengers as a source of leverage against opponents. Ultimately, solidarity movements are dependent on alliances with elites and members of government in order to sustain their cause in institutional forums and to translate their mobilization into policy outcomes (Tarrow 1996).

Organized opposition includes lobbying groups, advocacy organizations, counter movements, coercive or repressive measures and policy-making blocs. These parties work to hinder the ability of social movements to voice their grievance and bargain with elites. This can happen through explicit efforts such as assembling reactionary constituencies, discursively delegitimizing challengers, policing activist groups and/or buying influence with Congress. Opposition can also be effective when it takes on ambiguous forms. Counter movements and agents of opposition attempt to destabilize the dramatic and simple injustice frames that challengers need as mobilizing devices (Mcadam 1982: 215).

Media coverage is not typically included as a dimension of political opportunity in case studies of movements occurring in democratic countries, although scholars regularly point to the effects of free flows of information on the emergence, mobilization and outcomes of insurgencies in authoritarian states (Schock 1999; Fish 1996). However, although activists have the freedom to communicate amongst themselves, it should not simply be assumed that the press in democratic societies will provide

the critical accounts of foreign policy that activists require. In many cases coverage of important issues is constrained by and imitates official sources making the task of framing issues much more difficult for social movements (McCarthy, Smith and Zald 1998). Alternatively, high levels of media coverage can help activists mobilize large numbers of people—as was the case for the Central American peace movement. This can also provoke counter-movements or introduce them into a debate under the ethic of balanced coverage (Meyer and Staggenbord 1996: 1642). Finally, social movements are likely to influence the legislative process when their goals are compatible with the general trends in public opinion (Gamson and Wolsfeld 1993), which implies regular and favorable media attention.

Developments in international politics can impact domestic social movements in multiple ways. As we have seen in our discussion of the BDS movement, activists attempt to align themselves with international institutions and norms in order to establish their legitimacy. When policymakers face difficult foreign policy decisions they may turn to activists and academics for advice. In this context, the intellectual resources of a movement are of critical importance. For example, the anti-Vietnam war movement benefited from the expertise of scholar-activists such as George Kahin who, once policymakers began to question the viability of the war, were able to provide intellectually credible and extensive reports on the history of Indochina that disputed the strategic and moral wisdom of US policies. Studies of the American Civil Rights movement point to the US-Soviet rivalry as a political opportunity that created international pressure on the US to improve its treatment of African-Americans (Klotz 2002: 55).

Imperialism and Solidarity Movements: East Timor

In December 1975, Indonesia invaded and annexed the former Portuguese colony and newly independent nation of East Timor. The invasion took place shortly after Indonesia's President Suharto received a visit from Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger promising US support in the event that Jakarta decided to invade East Timor and licensing the use of US weapons in the invasion. For most of

Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, Washington provided arms, training and diplomatic cover at the United Nations Security Council. During this time, Indonesia was a key Cold War ally, violently anti-communist and a favorite example in the US political discourse of the virtues of economic liberalization.

In East Timor, the Fretilin Party, a social democratic movement that fought the Indonesian backed Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) in a civil war prior to the invasion, retreated to East Timor's mountainous interior and fought Indonesia in a guerrilla war. Fretilin was poorly armed and not well enough trained to fight the NATO-backed Indonesian army. Only Indonesia's faulty preparation allowed the fighting to ebb and flow until the end of the decade. During this period tens of thousands of East Timorese were displaced as a consequence of intensive aerial bombardment and a third of the population died from either disease, famine or fighting (Anderson 1998: 133-134; Kammen 2001).

In the US the invasion provoked resistance from a small but determined collection of antiwar activists, journalists, academics, Portuguese-Americans, antiwar protesters and Catholic activists (Simpson 2004: 456). Despite having a relatively small number of participants the solidarity movement for East Timor found important intellectual resources in Benedict Anderson, an Indonesia expert at Cornell University and a group of students, notably Arnold Kohen, conducted extensive research into the situation in Timor, published regular newsletters, lobbied politicians, reached out to the media and built bridges between activists. These efforts, however, only made a minimal impact on a public that was generally ignorant of the situation in East Timor. As one participant-history of the solidarity movement explains, "through the 1980s, in most of the world, East Timor was the quintessential, obscure lost cause" (Scheiner 2001: 109)

By the beginning of the 1980's, Indonesia came to believe that the East Timorese guerrillas had been sufficiently suppressed and marginalized that they could begin incorporating East Timor into the

Indonesian polity. Jakarta's attempts to 'modernize' East Timor by building urban infrastructure, increasing literacy and encouraging East Timorese participation in the Indonesian state and economy coexisted with a paternalistic attitude towards the East Timorese who were never considered members of the Indonesian nation despite their empirical integration into the Indonesian state. Many of the paternalistic measures that Indonesia applied to East Timor ostensibly to 'advance' it gave the country a deeper and wider sense of national identity than had previously existed. (Anderson 1993). Fretilin readily adapted its strategy to these changing circumstances. From the mid 1980's onward the party concluded that it had been defeated militarily and decided to strengthen its contacts with young activists in the capital city of Dili and encouraged them to prepare for non-violent actions.

In November 12 1991, a funeral march towards the Santa Cruz cemetery was held for nationalist East Timorese activists who had died in clashes with pro-integration forces two weeks earlier. As the marchers approached the cemetery the military fired on them killing a total of 271 people in what came to be known as the "Santa Cruz Massacre" (Kammen 2001: 164). The events were caught on film by American journalists and were widely circulated throughout the world. In response to international concern over the massacre, Suharto dismissed the generals responsible for it. For the first time evidence of Indonesian atrocities in East Timor was incontrovertible and widely known. The solidarity network used graphic footage and testimonials of the counter-protest to grow its ranks and exercise moral pressure on Indonesia's backers in Washington and neither Indonesia nor the US could provide a compelling justification for the occupation of East Timor. After the massacre, solidarity activists seized the opportunity and formed larger bodies such as the East Timor Action Network (ETAN) that gave the movement a more singular voice. By 1995, ETAN had over 10,000 supporters (Simpson 2004: 464).

By working through Congress the movement was able to reduce US military support to Jakarta. In 1992, ETAN initiated and won a campaign to cut a US training program for Indonesian military officers. In 1993, ETAN convinced Congress to suspend the transfer of F-5 fighter planes to Indonesia

and in 1994, under mounting Congressional and social movement pressure the State Department issued a ban on small arms transfers (Simpson: 460-561). By the end of the decade the US came to favor East Timor's independence. This change is attributable to a considerable extent to activists that had persuaded Congress to oppose the occupation through a campaign of information politics.

Political Opportunities

Media coverage

Lack of public consciousness about the occupation proved to be the central obstacle to a more robust solidarity campaign. East Timor was all but completely ignored by the mainstream media until the early 1990s (Chomsky and Herman 1979). Without a greater public awareness of the atrocities being committed in East Timor solidarity activists in the US could not draw on the reserves of moral outrage that filled the mass mobilizations on behalf of Central America and South African blacks. Knowledge about Timor was thwarted by a double censorship. First, the Indonesian annexation made it extremely difficult to get a consistent flow of reliable information out of East Timor. Accounts of atrocities came from infrequent electronic communications from nationalist guerrillas, refugees who had resettled in Australia or Portugal, exiles and the Catholic Church in Timor. Until 1989, international journalists that visited the country were managed by the Indonesian military and their accounts reflected the interests of their minders. Second, the American media gave almost no coverage to the invasion and occupation of East Timor. When news outlets did report on the situation, they typically gave deference to the accounts of Indonesian generals, which portrayed Jakarta's invasion as an intervention to halt intra-Timorese violence and to displace Freitlin's "Marxists" proto-state.

The absence of mainstream media coverage of the events in Timor forced activists to gather and disseminate information through their own channels. In 1991, when Indonesia temporarily opened up East Timor to foreign observers, American journalists Amy Goodman, Allan Nairn, Max Stahl and Steve Cox seized the opportunity and went to East Timor. During their mission they attended the protest at the Santa Cruz cemetery, which was violently repressed by the Indonesian military and

resulted in the deaths of 271 people. The video, photographs and testimonials provided by these journalists “distilled the brutality of East Timor into a single graphic event for the international mass media. Cut into sound bites, screened repeatedly around the world” including on the CBS evening news (Hill 2002: 32).

The historical significance of the Santa Cruz massacre is inextricably intertwined with the politics of its representation. The footage reinvigorated the solidarity movement for East Timor, which shortly thereafter formed the East Timor Action Network (ETAN/US). The US media’s lack of East Timor coverage made ETAN and its affiliates one of the few sources of information available on East Timor. The group expanded on its precursors’ commitment to independent media by producing a popular newsletter and using listservs and websites as parallel news sources.

Divided government and elite allies

East Timor was met with general indifference from Congress. This was the result of general ignorance about the situation and calculated strategies from within the US government to suppress information about the human rights abuses occurring in East Timor. For example, a 1958 US-Indonesian agreement prohibited Jakarta from using American supplied arms outside of its borders. State Department reports on human rights abuses in East Timor regularly elided Jakarta’s violations or offered apologia for Indonesia’s ‘improving’ commitment to human rights. During this period the US provided close to one billion dollars in aid to Jakarta. In 1977, when Indonesia requested OV-10 bronco counter-insurgency airplanes the Carter administration covertly provided them while assuring Congress that an embargo on military transfers was being honored (Anderson 1998: 133).

Opposition

Suharto’s Indonesia never developed a strong lobby in Washington. The absence of a large Indonesian community prevented the state from developing a social base in America. Furthermore, until the 1990s when the authority of the military government began to visibly erode there was no need for any additional force to guide US policy towards Indonesia, which enjoyed stable support from corporate interests, the diplomatic corps and both political parties.

When the Santa Cruz Massacres brought increased attention to Indonesia, solidarity activists found they were the main organized voice petitioning Congress on the issue and, in the words of one historian, “persuaded many Congressional offices with just a few visits, phone calls or constituents letters” (Simpson 2004: 464). Consequently, a core part of ETAN’s strategy involved communication with the State Department, the White House and Congress. In 1994, as criticism of Suharto’s regime and the occupation of East Timor intensified, business and diplomatic elites interested in “downplaying human-rights abuses, and bolstering U.S. commercial, diplomatic, and military support for Suharto” (Press 1997) formed the United States-Indonesia society to lobby Congress and the Clinton Administration.

International factors

The post-Cold War situation offered an array of expanding international opportunities to the East Timorese nationalist movement and its transnational allies. The collapse of the Soviet Union denied the US its main rationale for supporting Suharto’s regime which after decades-long attempts at state and nation-building faced major domestic legitimization problems from civil society activists and a rebellion in the Ache province. While the Clinton administration initially maintained US foreign policy’s embrace of Suharto, as his government’s problems multiplied Washington lost reasons to maintain him in power. Furthermore, the crisis besetting Jakarta was an opportunity for the East Timorese to escalate their nationalist mobilization.

Imperialism and Solidarity Movements: Central America

For most of the 1970s Central America, like Indonesia, was an example of stability in the US’ global strategy of constructing client regimes in the Third World. US weapons, monetary aid and military training subsidized oligarchic systems in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador that rested on an alliance between the armed forces and the landowning elite. These states did not seek out popular legitimacy, which would have required social welfare and land distribution policies. During the 1970s

coalitions of progressive Catholics, Marxist rebels and union organizers slowly gathered the capacity and popular support to challenge these regimes. By 1979, Nicaragua's Somoza dynasty had been overturned by a Marxist guerrilla force known as the Sandinistas. El Salvador was engulfed in a brutal civil war between the military and a Catholic-Marxist joint opposition; Guatemala had disintegrated into civil war. The Reagan administration declared Central America one of the most important geo-strategic areas in the world and threatened a direct US invasion of the region (Lafeber 1993: 278-280)

The most important groups in the US Central America peace movement were Sanctuary, Witness for Peace and the Pledge of Resistance. Sanctuary was started in response to the Department of Immigration Naturalization Services' (INS) refusal to grant asylum to Central American refugees. It helped displaced Central Americans circumvent INS roadblocks, navigate the desert terrain and found them shelter in places of worship. By 1983 more than forty-five Churches and Synagogues had become Sanctuaries and six hundred organizations had endorsed the group's efforts (Smith 1996: 60-70). Witness for Peace organized delegations of North Americans who visited Nicaragua to express solidarity with the victims of Contra violence, hold prayer meetings and gather information about the war in Nicaragua that they could publicize in the US (Smith 1996: 70-78). Pledge of Resistance began by soliciting students and activists to commit to participating in demonstrations and other non-violent acts of resistance in protest of US policy in Central America. It petitioned Congress, trained activists in non-violent actions, organized marches and demonstrations, established an expansive communications network and bought advertising in newspapers. Pledge was both the most daring and most popular of these organizations. It interrupted congressional hearings, interrupted campaign appearance by pro-contra politicians and attempted to block shipments of weapons to the Contras. In 1984, it collected over forty thousands signatures from people pledging to commit acts of civil disobedience if America invaded Central America and, in April 1987, it organized one hundred thousands people to march in Washington D.C. for peace in Central America (Smith 1996: 78-86).

The US Central American peace movement was a popular phenomenon that was given added depth through its bases in religious institutions, the American left and university campuses. Many participants put themselves at risk by traveling to war-torn countries, breaking US immigration law, committing acts of civil disobedience. As during the Vietnam War, peace activists faced intimidation, infiltration and repression from the US government (Gelbspan 1991). Despite its impressive capacity to mobilize, the Central America peace movement did not achieve its overriding objective: pressing the US government to end its support for the Contras and right wing forces in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The Reagan administration continued to support these parties in the face of public pressure and the offers of Costa Rican president Oscar Arias to broker a peace process for the entire region. The administration only supported peace negotiations once the leftwing rebels and the people of Central America were so damaged by years of civil war and economic turmoil that they were willing to relent. Nevertheless, the peace movement did make many important impacts on the procedure and outcome of US foreign policy. By working with Congress it was able to defeat numerous bills licensing aid for right wing paramilitaries and passed the Boland Amendment (1982), which temporarily prohibited US intelligence agencies from providing aid to the Contras. Christian Smith argues that the movement made Reagan's objectives extremely difficult to implement by forcing hearings on human rights violations.

Political Opportunities

Media coverage

During the 1980s, US proxy wars in Central America were a consistent feature of news coverage. The Reagan administration deserves considerable credit for the high level of media coverage. By advertising Central America as the site of the global Soviet-Cuban conspiracy and a prime threat to US interests Reagan intended to escalate media coverage and build support for his policies. The President succeeded in getting the press to cover Central America, which became one of the most reported issues

of the 1980s. The New York Times ran an average of 3.4 articles or editorials a day on the subject during the Reagan presidency (Smith 1996: 89-90) but this did not translate into popular support for the administration's policies. Between 1983 and 1985, public opinion polls consistently showed that between fifty and sixty percent of American opposed sending aid to the Contras (Sobel 1989: 117). In 1986, US public opinion opposed sending aid to the Contras by a ratio of two to one despite the administration's efforts to raise support for its policies (Lafeber 1993: 333).

Although often deferential to the official portrayal of events (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting 1987), the mainstream press' coverage of US involvement in Central America was a fundamental resource for the mobilization of the solidarity movement. As early as 1982, three-fourths of the American public were familiar with the conflicts in Nicaragua and El Salvador and half could identify which parties the US supported. These statistics remained stable throughout the decade (Sobel 1989: 114-115). Mike Clark, an organizer for Witness for Peace explains,

The single most important factor was that the President made it impossible for people to ignore Central America. If he would have made it possible for us to ignore it, I think we would have. But it was his obsession for eight years. So we were helped enormously by the fact that Regan focused on Central America as the most dangerous and sinister threat.” (Smith 1996: 90-91)

Divided government and elites allies

The plan to invade Nicaragua with US forces provoked the initial wave of opposition to Central America within the elite. From the start of the Reagan administration, the US Congress, the military as well as the State Department and intelligence services manifested divisions over Central America policy. From an activist perspective, the most directly important divisions existed within the Congress where there existed was intense opposition to Reagan's Central America policy agenda. Criticisms from activists and legislators were reinforced in their criticisms by the dissidents within the military, intelligence and diplomatic spheres, who challenged Reagan over the viability of his policies, the claim that the region's peasant insurgencies were the effect of a Soviet-Cuba conspiracy and the harm inflicted on innocent civilians by aiding the Contras and the government's of El Salvador, Honduras

and Guatemala. According to Smith, Congressional willingness to challenge Reagan over Central America provided activists with “a partially effective institutional channel” to press their demands (Smith 1996: 99).

By the end of its first term, the Reagan administration had become good at resolving the divisions between its agenda and the Congress. From 1984 to 1988, opposition to Reagan’s objectives in Central America evaporated to a considerable extent. According to Morris J. Blachman and Kenneth E. Sharpe, the Reagan administration was successful in marketing its Central America policies in order to attract support from liberal members of Congress by re-framing its agenda with “symbols of value to moderates.” For example, it began to describe the El Salvadorian government as “reformist” and claimed that both San Salvador and Washington supported “land reform, a negotiated settlement of the war, democratization, and end to human rights abuses.” (1987: 1; 4) The administration went so far as to help El Salvador organize what Edward S. Herman and Frank Broadhead refer to as a “demonstration election” (1984) in which leftwing parties and candidates were systematically intimidated from participating.

However, this public relations campaign helped convince the Congress to increase military and non-military aid to the Duarte government in 1984. According to Sharpe and Blackman, “The Deception was complete, evidenced by the fact that, in the end, the Democrats were priding themselves for having forced the Reagan administration adopt *their* strategy.” (1987: 6)

Opposition

The Central America peace movement faced significant pushback from the Reagan administration. It also had to contend with infiltration and harassment from the FBI and the proliferation of private groups, such as Accuracy in Academia, that attempted to align the movement with the Sandinistas (a claim which was true in some instances but also a gross over-simplification) and a vast international Communist movement emanating from the Soviet Union (which was false). The solidarity movement was also challenged directly by Reagan and Pat Buchanan for being a fifth-column (Smith 1996: 289-

290). It is difficult to assess the overall impact of this counter-movement on the solidarity network. However, the effects of government repression and private opposition groups are most likely overshadowed by the Reagan administration ability to persuade Congress that it would be unwise to continue to withdraw support for its vision in Central America.

International factors

The solidarity movement for Central America received very little support at the international level. The decline of the USSR in international relations and relatively undiminished power of the US in world affairs prevented the United Nations from challenging the US over its policies in the region.

Furthermore, the US was able to convince European countries to limit their aid to the Sandinista government. This forced the Sandinistas to become more reliant on Cuba and the USSR which gave the Reagan administration an additional justification for supporting the Contras. The ICJ ruling that the US had illegally mined Nicaragua's harbors provided Congressional opponents of Reagan with another opportunity to challenge the administration. However, by refusing to challenge Nicaragua in court the administration kept interest in the ruling to a minimum.

Discussion and comparison with Palestine

The above sections suggest that in the East Timorese and Central American contexts political opportunities are a useful tool for explaining movement strategies and outcomes. It also illustrates some of the difficulties involved in assessing the impact of social movements on US foreign policy. The interplay of domestic and international forces is extremely complex. The analysis is further complicated because media coverage, elite allies and the strength of opposition groups are all opportunities for and effects of mobilization.

The two cases discussed herein suggest different routes to movement influence; but they also illustrate some general themes in how political opportunity can facilitate or constrain movement influence. Political environment filters mobilization through cultural and political coordinates and

determines its ability to activate the third-party support that is necessary for long-run achievement.

Ultimately the success of these groups is due to a combination of strong alliances, public support and the disunity of opponents.

The East Timorese and Central American solidarity movements demonstrate the importance of examining political opportunities in configurations, i.e. in the presence or absence of other measures of political opportunity. For example, for decades the East Timorese solidarity movement languished in obscurity primarily because Indonesia's invasion of East Timor was barely covered by the US media. Because the US-Indonesian relationship over East Timor was hardly discussed publicly, a lobby for Indonesia's occupation of East Timor never developed in the United States. When domestic and international attention turned to East Timor in the early 1990s, the solidarity movement was the principle force providing a cogent and convincing explanation of what was happening. The movement's narrative of a brutal Indonesian occupation became credible once frightening scenes of Indonesian troops firing on non-violent demonstrators were widely seen. The fact that American journalists were victims of this repression gave the movement an additional measure of credibility.

The Central America peace movement initially benefited from the enormous level of media coverage and public opposition to the Reagan Administration's regional policies. The influence of the movement can be divided between Reagan's two terms in office. In the beginning of Reagan's first term the joint action of social movement pressure, public opinion and media coverage was able to prevent a US invasion of Central America and encourage Congressional legislation to set limits on Washington's ability to give its proxies military support. Ultimately, the peace movement lost a framing contest with the Reagan administration. The administration exploited a key weakness in the peace movement's presentation: it could not get explicit elite support for the insurgencies it was trying to defend from US imperialism. Legislators willing to oppose the Contras typically stopped short of endorsing the Sandinistas and, according to Smith, were frequently more interested in using an unpopular issue to "embarrass" the Reagan administration rather than taking a principled stand against

US imperialism (Smith 1996: 99). The administration exploited this situation by selectively appropriating progressive causes. It convinced its allies in Guatemala and El Salvador to allow some (mostly insignificant) land reforms and touted the (sham) elections that took place in El Salvador in 1984. Most importantly, it convinced Congress that its allies in the region were actually embattled centrists trying to stop their countries from falling to extreme right-wing movements or Communists.

In the Palestinian case, the US solidarity movement exists in one of the most unfavorable political environments imaginable. In each of the categories of political opportunity discussed in this paper the movement faces severe obstacles.

Opposition

Unlike the East Timorese and Central American solidarity movements, the Palestinian solidarity network is confronting a powerful counter-lobby, the influence of which is felt throughout America's political culture and connects many of the categories of the political opportunity discussed in this section. Michael Massing writes that the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) "is widely regarded as the most powerful foreign-policy lobby in Washington" (2002) and its level of influence has been compared that of the American Association for Retired People, the National Rifle Association and the Tobacco lobby at the height of its influence.⁴ AIPAC's leverage stems primarily from its ability to guide money from wealthy pro-Israel individuals and Political Action Committees (PACs) to political candidates who share its agenda and to punish those who do not by mobilizing contributions to their opponents (Massing 2006). The Center for Responsive Politics reports that in the run-up to the 2006 midterm elections pro-Israel PAC's gave more than \$3 million to candidates from both parties (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: 156). Either out of political calculation or genuine belief in

⁴ AIPAC is not the only significant pro-Israel lobby in US politics. However, it is widely regarded as the most influential. Some other influential groups actively lobbying Congress include The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the Zionist Organization of America, Christians United for Israel and the American Jewish Committee. For the sake of brevity I have chosen not to discuss the individual efforts of these groups. For a detailed discussion of these and other groups consult Chapter 4 of John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt's *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (2007).

AIPAC's agenda, the vast majority of Congress has granted the organization enormous influence over how America's relationship with Israel is discussed on Capitol Hill. Rather than deviating from the AIPAC line, members of Congress regularly call on the group to conduct research, write legislation, participate in hearings on the conflict and give them political advice (Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: 152-162). The force of AIPAC and other lobbying groups makes it almost impossible for solidarity groups to make alliances in Congress. Few causes have the financial clout to challenge the pro-Israel Lobby, and the Palestinian solidarity movement is no exception.

Divided government and elite allies

The result of the pro-Israel lobby's efforts has been a uniquely high level of Congressional support for Israel's settlement of the West Bank, military strategy in the OPT and an aggressive backing for its positions in negotiations with the Palestinians. Because of the financial and organizational resources at AIPAC's disposal, members of Congress eagerly co-sponsor the legislation that it supports (and sometimes helps to write) and few members of Congress are willing to oppose its agenda.

Media coverage

A running theme in this paper is that public discourse on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is grossly unfriendly to Palestinians and deeply embedded in American political culture. The Israel lobby deserves a considerable amount of credit for this fact. As Israel became an important ally of American imperialism in the 1960s, public intellectuals, lobbyists and the Israeli state all worked to ensure that Israel would be perceived as the "victim" of its conflict with its neighboring Arab states. This project has been carried out along two major lines. After 1967, American elites aiming to solidify their country's new alliance with Israel in public opinion began to pay unprecedented attention to the Nazi Holocaust. Finkelstein argues that the result of these efforts was an "ideology" of the Holocaust, which "bears a connection, if tenuous, to reality" and serves to prop up the "significant political and class interests" of the Israel Lobby and the American political establishment (2003: 3). This construction of the Holocaust serves multiple closely related functions: It has largely supplanted Israel's colonial-

settler roots as the central historical lens of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In this framework, the existence of the state of Israel is understood primarily in relation to the suffering of European Jewry and its colonial-settler reality is omitted (Massad 2006: 18-26). An extension of this frame is that criticism of Israel is explicitly or implicitly considered anti-Semitic. Individuals who openly criticize Israel are either often termed anti-Semitic either directly or by insinuation by influential organizations influential journals or prominent public intellectuals.⁵

When Israel comes under heightened criticism for its conduct on the OPT the aforementioned organizations, individuals and their allies can be counted on to proclaim that there exists a rising tide of anti-Semitism or a “new anti-Semitism.” This claim purposefully confuses criticism of Israel with bigotry towards Jews in order to assert the overall thesis that there is an aggregate increase in “anti-Semitism.” Evidence of actual anti-Semitism in either Europe or America since the start of the second *intifada* is minimal (Judt 2004). However, the Lobby is successful in using inflated arguments and dramatic language to make a *nearly identical* set of arguments whenever Israel confronts a potential

⁵ For example, in 2002, after Norman G. Finkelstein spoke at an event sponsored by Georgetown University student groups and the school’s Arab Studies Department, the ADL wrote a letter to the school’s President accusing Norman G. Finkelstein of perpetuating “classic anti-Semitic stereotypes” and of being a Holocaust denier (Friedman 2002). Similarly, *The New Republic’s* literary editor Leon Wieseltier (unsuccessfully) attempted to stop the publication of one of Finkelstein’s books by telling the book’s publisher (Sara Bershtel of Metropolitan Books) that Finkelstein is, “poison, he’s a disgusting self-hating Jew, he’s something you find under a rock.” Recently, Wieseltier has begun strongly insinuating that conservative/libertarian writer Andrew Sullivan (a former editor at *The New Republic*) is anti-Semitic. Wieseltier has accused Sullivan of seeing in American Jewry, a “clandestine and cunningly organized power of a single and small ethnic group” and “dividing the American Jewish community into good Jews and bad Jews” (Wieseltier 2010). John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt’s writings on the Israel Lobby have come under particularly ubiquitous criticism. In *The New Republic* Jeffrey Goldberg wrote that the two scholars were part of a long line of figures including Osama bin Laden, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, David Duke, Louis Farrakhan and Father Coughlin who have maliciously exaggerated the influence of Jews in the world. Mearsheimer and Walt, explained Goldberg had made this mode of analysis their “special province” (Goldberg 2007). Eliot A. Cohen responded to their writings under an editorial titled “Yes, It’s Anti-Semitic” and the ADL published an analysis under the title “Mearsheimer and Walt’s anti-Jewish Screech: A Relentless Assault in Scholarly Guise.” There is a significant literature on how the charge of anti-Semitism has been used increasingly frequently since the beginning of the second *intifada* to invalidate criticisms of Israel and intimidate the country’s critics. See, (Finkelstein 2005: Ch 1-3; Mearsheimer and Walt 2007: Ch 6; Roy 2004; Butler 2003; Klug 2004)

public relations crisis. The charge that there is a “new anti-Semitism” was first unveiled by the ADL after the October 1973 War when Israel was under intense pressure to reach a peace-agreement with Egypt. During the beginning of the second *intifada* when Israel once again came under pressure to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians and to restrain its counter-insurgency, the ADL once again announced the existence of a “new anti-Semitism” (Finkelstein 2006: Ch 1). At the end of 2009, the ADL released a report under the title, “Anti-Semitism has Moved from the Fringes to the Mainstream.” Most of the evidence in the report was of marginal phenomena such as shooting at the Holocaust museum in Washington D.C. by a neo-Nazi and Internet discussions blaming the financial collapse on “greedy Jew thieves.” The one glaringly unambiguous piece of evidence of mainstream anti-Semitism that the ADL provides is Richard Goldstone’s UN mandated investigation into Israeli and Palestinian violations of the rules of international law.

The news media covers Palestine-Israel regularly. However, coverage is often structured around the official Israeli claim that IDF violence is a response to Palestinian terrorism. This framework ignores Israel’s own stated interests in controlling the OPT and denies that Israel’s treatment of the Palestinians contributes to the conflict. Mainstream media rarely discuss the relevance of international law in the conflict (Falk and Friel 2007). Finally, Palestinian deaths are under-reported relative to Israeli ones. A Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting Press Release from August 2003 reports a pattern of media outlets declaring the periods in which Palestinians but not Israelis were killed as “peaceful” or “relatively peaceful” and declaring a “return to violence” only after Israeli deaths. The Press Release reads,

The media's tendency to downplay-- or completely ignore-- Palestinian suffering and death is nothing new. In late 2001 and the beginning of 2002, for example, a loose cease-fire declared by Yasir Arafat led to a period of very few Israeli deaths, but sustained Palestinian deaths-- and the American media repeatedly referred to it as a time of "relative calm." (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting 2003)

Additionally, in recent years, US media outlets have become increasingly reluctant to designate the West Bank and Gaza Strip as Occupied Territories. According to research conducted by media analyst

Seth Ackerman, during the first eleven months of the year 2000 the phrase was used in less than one percent of Associated Press articles on Palestine-Israel (2001: 62).

International factors

Many of the same international factors that are unfavorable to the Palestinian liberation movement also hinder its allies abroad. Central to the persistence of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a highly evolved system of control and repression that Israel has constructed within the OPT and Israel proper. This web of military, juridical and discursive technologies of power has been largely successful in limiting and controlling Palestinian resistance and producing consent for the Occupation amongst Israel's Jewish citizens. As a result, Israel's reliability as an effective client has not come into doubt and the country has not developed a substantial movement for Palestinian rights which could de-legitimize the Occupation and Israel's relationship with the US.

So far this paper has touched on some of the repressive tactics that Israel has used to demobilize protestors including the use of live ammunition, arrests, prohibiting activists from entering Israel and the OPT and raiding the offices of transnational organizations. However, Israeli control in the Territories is far deeper than these tactical responses to protests. John Collins describes the Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza as “a model of perpetual counterinsurgency” in which “war is waged directly on civilians and on the natural and built environment that ensures their survival” (2007: 12). Collins is referring to the dense network of settlements, Israeli-only roads, checkpoints, roadblocks and walls that have segmented the OPT into individual islands with highly restricted access to one another. There are over 500 checkpoints and roadblocks at any given time in the West Bank, which divide the West Bank into six geographically distinct areas, each of which are even further, subdivided by additional restrictions on movement. Jeff Halper refers to these restraints as a “matrix of control...that allow Israel to control every aspect of Palestinian life” and which have “virtually paralyzed the Palestinian population” (2006: 63) and limits communication and contact between Palestinians. The extent of Israeli control in the OPT has helped to make a coordinated, widespread

protest of the type that took place during the first *intifada* nearly impossible. As a result regular protest has been confined to specific townships such as Bil'in and Nil'in and spread relatively slowly to other areas. The "matrix of control" has helped to thwart the type of Palestinian uprising that could make Israel's occupation appear untenable and unappealing to its US sponsor.

In tandem with Israel's creation of new forms of territorial and demographic control in the OPT, the Israeli state has developed an effective system of legitimation that helps to preserve its authority in the West Bank and Gaza. Whereas other colonial states, for example French Algeria, were considered "permanent" parts of the mother country, Israel has explicitly and consistently stated that its possession of the Palestinian territories is a temporary measure to limit Palestinian violence. Despite forty years of military occupation and construction of a massive settler presence in the OPT (numbering over 500,000 people on 40% of the West Bank) the claim of temporality is still used to rationalize many of Israel's violations of international law and human rights in the OPT.

The ability of the Israeli state to create domestic legitimacy for the Occupation is advancing faster than the Palestinians and their allies can strategize against it. It is important to keep in mind that a crisis in the legitimation of colonialism was a major reason why European states abandoned their Asian and African possessions after World War Two (Judt 2006: Ch 9). A vivid example is the use of torture as a counter-insurgency tactic in Algeria, which helped to scandalize colonialism in French public life and internationally. Were Israel to face a similar legitimacy crisis it would be difficult for US policy to continue to support the Occupation and the possibility of a genuine anti-Occupation coalition of Israeli, Palestinian and international activists would be a possibility.

The Hague Regulations allow the occupying power the temporary right to confiscate exclusively land for military needs. According to Neve Gordon, the official claims that Israel's policies in the OPT are temporary measures and responses to exceptional circumstances have been integral to of Israel's military-judicial control through most of history of the Occupation—and is a major way in which the domestic legitimacy of the Occupation is preserved. However, Israel has frequently taken

Palestinian land while citing this provision only to transform it into the ground for settlements (2008: 122). Similar justifications have been used effectively to justify the use of torture against Palestinian detainees. Although Israel claimed that torture was only used to stop “ticking time bombs,” its use has been widespread and according to Gordon, “to silence and control the population rather than to extract information” (Gordon 2008: 159). In fact, the Israeli High Court has licensed the use of torture by Israeli security forces under the rationalization of exceptional circumstances (Finkelstein 2005: 165).

Although Israel has constructed a highly effective a system of control in the OPT, the Palestinians and their allies do have some important resources at their disposal. For example, the Palestinian right of self-determination is recognized amongst UNGA member states and a 2004 International Court of Justice advisory ruling declared Israel’s West Bank Wall a violation of international legal principles. The OPT is one of the most highly researched areas in the world by human rights organizations and international organizations—which produce a significant number of detailed reports on Israel’s violations of international norms. Consequently, the transnational movement for Palestine has made international law and the research of NGOs and international organizations central elements of its information politics.

In the next section we will examine the capacity of the East Timorese and Central American solidarity movements to affect their political environment. In both cases, movements were not the passive recipients of circumstances but worked assiduously to create and expand political opportunities. Although the situation facing the US Palestine solidarity movement is to a considerable extent less favorable than the circumstances that either of these movements dealt with, their histories do provide examples of the ways in which activists can prepare to take advantage of the rare moments when they are presented with the opportunity to exert influence on policymakers. I argue that although the solidarity movement for Palestine operates under uniquely difficult circumstances, the movements for East Timor and Central America offer some valuable examples of tactics and strategy that Palestinian activists can emulate.

Political environment and framing: how do movements navigate unfavorable circumstances?

“No matter how momentous a change appears in retrospect,” write Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, “it only becomes an ‘opportunity’ when defined as such by a *group* of actors sufficiently well organized to act on this shared definition of the situation” (1996: 8). Social movements often exist in unfavorable political environments for long periods of time during which they innovate, adapt and transform themselves. These periods offer a crucial opportunity for movements to develop the resources that allow them to effectively mobilize once favorable political opportunities arise. The cases of solidarity for East Timor and Central America provide important lessons for how the solidarity movement for Palestine can develop the characteristics that will allow it to mobilize effectively for political change if and when more favorable circumstances arise. Although external factors determine to a considerable extent the outcomes of social movements, opportunities are not immutable structures but are susceptible to the strategic choices and tactical innovations of activists.

In some ways, the experience of American activists fighting against the Indonesian occupation of East Timor parallels the problems facing the Pro-Palestinian movement in the US. For decades supporters of East Timor found that it was all but impossible to bring public and elite attention to the oppression of the East Timorese. During this period of obscurity activists worked to develop many of the characteristics that made the movement influential later on. The strategy of developing alternative media was extremely important to the movement during this period as the newsletters; articles and books produced were a central method in connecting activists and building common reservoirs of knowledge. Connections with the East Timorese Diaspora and East Timorese activists played an important role. The transnational Timorese community provided testimonials of the horrors of Indonesian occupation. The close connections between Freitlin’s leadership in exile and the solidarity movement facilitated the construction of a consistent message that was delivered at the UN and to US

policy makers. As the occupation of East Timor became increasingly ethically and strategically questionable for US policymakers, the decades old formation of the East Timorese solidarity movement allowed them to emerge as a cogent, well-informed and persuasive source of information on East Timor.

For the Palestinian solidarity movement, the history of solidarity with East Timor offers positive examples of successful tactics. Both movements had to struggle and wait before their cause became part of the political agenda. However, once the situation in East Timor became widely known the solidarity movement emerged as a major source of information and analysis. The lesson for the pro-Palestinian movements that a cause's intellectual resources and the alternative media that it makes are important for both sustaining the group during quiet periods and influencing political authorities once political agendas change for the better. Of course, the major differences between these two cases is that there exists a significant intellectual infrastructure in the US that is reliably supportive of the Israeli government and experienced in shaping public opinion. The major difference between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel propaganda is that Palestinian advocates have innumerable credible resources in the reports produced by international human rights organizations, international humanitarian organizations and international organizations which decry Israel's human rights record in the OPT. The challenge facing the movement is to market this information in a way that allows it to infiltrate discussions in both the media and Washington. This will most likely require condensing a voluminous literature into a few major points and deploying it when significant events put the Palestine-Israel conflict in the headlines.

A major reason for the successes of the US Central America peace movement was the assistance it received from allied religious organizations. Churches in particular were integral to the formation and political influence of the movement. Many important solidarity organizations such as Sanctuary and Pledge of Resistance were born by Church activists. Throughout the 1980's Churches provided members, financial resources and communications networks that were essential to the

movement's mobilization (Smith 1996: 109-117). The supportive role that religious groups played in the Central America peace movement demonstrated to politicians that it could mobilize voters in support of its preferred Central America policies.

The Palestine solidarity movement could potentially benefit by putting more resources into forming alliances with progressive Churches. There is already considerable interest in the Palestinian cause within certain corners of American Christian life. As we discussed in Chapter One, the Presbyterian Church was an early riser on the divestment movement and has a sustained interest in using its investment portfolio to bring an end to the conflict in Palestine-Israel. The Anglican Peace and Justice Network, the World Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical and Lutheran Church have all passed resolutions in favor of divestment. These efforts have been reinforced by the connections that many churches have to Palestinian Christians in the West Bank, and particularly in the city of Bethlehem.

An important factor contributing to the influence of the Central America peace movement was that the experience and memory of US aggression in Vietnam had badly damaged the credibility of US foreign policy. This is true for its ideological legitimacy and efficacy and applies to non-elite and elite circles. Walter Lafeber writes that the Administration ran into conflicts with "Top U.S. Army officers, having suffered nightmares after Vietnam had turned the military into a public enemy...feared that the Sandinistas were too well entrenched." (1993: 280). The legacy of the Vietnam war left a substantial portion of public opinion deeply averse to US interventionism as well as a large number of already mobilized anti-war groups that joined the Central America peace movement (Smith 1996: 93-97).

It is plausible that the solidarity movement with the Palestinians could benefit from the Iraq war in a way that mirrors the relationship between Vietnam and the Central America peace movement. A pronounced drop in the popularity of the Iraq-war could benefit the Palestinian solidarity movement by provoking a larger re-assessment of US foreign policy in the Middle East, and the influence of Israel in the United States. The difficulties facing the US Iraq have already called into question the wisdom of

making military occupation a cornerstone of national security strategy. The influence that the Israel lobby and the Israeli government exercised in the US decisions to go to war in Iraq has made public intellectuals question the utility of the US-Israel special relationship and the strategic wisdom of the Israeli government. The most significant evidence that this shift has begun is John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt's book *The Israel Lobby and the Making of US Foreign Policy*. Mearsheimer and Walt's argument is made in "realist" terms and human rights and international law enter into their thinking only to counter the common argument that the US' support for Israel stems from a shared set of values.

The growth of "realist" critiques of the US-Israel relationship could be a parallel development that reinforces the work of solidarity activists. Alternatively, it could be the beginning of a unique coalition of policy-minded mainstream scholars and activist/scholars united around a shared goal and common enemy in the Israel lobby.⁶ Currently, anti-Iraq war and pro-Palestinian activists feel that they share a common enemy in US imperialism and could potentially benefit politically by doing more to publicly highlight the common sources of the two conflicts. One of the important lessons in the relationship between Vietnam and Central America is that examples and analogies can have a significant effect on the ability of a social movement to be persuasive.

To conclude, although solidarity movements historically have only rarely found truly favorable political opportunities, the work that they do before these opportunities arise either in developing their own organizational capacities or by re-shaping the ideological terrain on which discussions over US foreign policy are waged, are of significant consequence. In the following two chapters we will examine how the Palestinians and their allies are actively crafting a discursive framework for understanding the conflict that uses human rights and international law as concepts to highlight

⁶ There is some anecdotal evidence in support of the latter. John Mearsheimer has been an advocate of Norm Finkelstein and has championed both the scholarly quality of his work and spoken out against his termination at DePaul University. *The Israel Lobby* touches on numerous themes such as the power of the lobby to stifle debate and intimidate critics of Israel as well as a historical record of the Palestine-Israel conflict is both in the academic mainstream and familiar to solidarity activists.

injustices while searching for agency in places outside of Palestine such as schools, Churches, international aid organizations and consumer markets where they believe they can win battles of public discourse.

3: Transnational Activism and the Solidarity Movement for Palestine in Historical and Theoretical Contexts

How does the political environment of international relations effect the direction of transnational social movements? To answer that question I first explore how US power limits the opportunities for the Palestinians at the international level. I argue that the transnational solidarity movement has incorporated the laws, principles and norms of the international system into its framing processes while facing strict limitations on its ability to rely upon the international organizations tasked with enforcing these principles. With the constellation of BDS, rights discourse and the apartheid analogy in mind, I reflect on how these frames function as both a strategic resource and crucial source of collective identity that allows the movement to transcend national borders.

The solidarity movement in the context of international, regional and local Political fields

Transnational movements do not just aim to build horizontal coalitions of activists but also strive to make common cause with powerful international organizations such as the UNGA, the UNSC, the ICJ and the ICC. In social movement theory when a local or national movement either receives recognition or support from organizations such as these, it is said to have accomplished a “scale shift” (Tarrow and McAdam 2005). Audie Klotz writes that, “relatively weak actors, such as movements that lack a formal role in the inter-state political process, often use international organizations as avenues for leverage.” (2002: 66) However, the ability of a movement to move up scales, as well as the way in which it moves between scales often reflects the power hierarchies of the inter-state system. The civil society and grassroots Palestinian organizations that are the backbone of the transnational solidarity movement are in active conflict with Israel, and by extension they are also in conflict with the US, which restricts their ability to use international organizations to their advantage. These movements are further constrained by their conflict with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, which is internationally

recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and holds observer status at the UN. The PLO is hostile towards groups and movements that challenge its authority in intra-Palestinian politics and uses its alliance with the US to suppress challengers. This political context has limited the ability of the transnational movement for Palestine (and also the PLO) to use international organizations to affect change. However, the UN and other international organizations contribute to the information politics of the solidarity movement by conducting research on Israel's policies in the OPT and making Palestine a topic of discussion internationally.

In an article on the political and historical contexts facing the transnational anti-apartheid movement Hakan Thorn writes that the “apartheid issue points to the Janus face of the UN as a political community” (2006: 292) shaped in part by the balance of power amongst states and by its relationship with global civil society and its own relatively independent and democratic institutions. This point also applies to the Palestinian case. American veto power at the UNSC prevents the Palestinians and their allies from using the institution to pressure or sanction Israel in order to get it to change its policies. The International Criminal Court, which expressed interest in investigating claims that Israel committed war crimes during its Winter 2008/2009 invasion in Gaza, would not be able to do so without UNSC authorization.

However, in many of its other institutions the UN provides important resources for and a forum to discuss the Palestinian cause. For example, Judge Richard Goldstone's report on Israeli and Palestinian violations of the laws of war during Israel's Operation Cast Lead returned attention to Israel's extensive violations of international law a year after the fighting ended. The Goldstone Report's researchers and authors worked with human rights organizations operating in the OPT in order to gather information of Operation Cast Lead. Once the report was released it received widespread coverage on activist websites and was incorporated into the essays and speeches of solidarity activists. The regular reports on Human Rights in the OPT commissioned by the UN's Human Rights Council add legitimacy to the concerns of the solidarity movement. John Dugard, the

Council's special rapporteur for the OPT, has explained the similarities between Israel's discriminatory policies in the OPT and apartheid South Africa in his reports. The special rapporteur is arguably the most prominent authority on the human rights situation in the OPT. The fact that his investigations give credibility to Palestinian grievances infuriates both Israel and its advocates, who have tried to discredit both Dugard and his successor Richard Falk.

The Palestinian solidarity movement has been able to make some moderate gains at the European Union. However, although the movement has successfully pressured the EU to enforce some of its trade policies with Israel it typically been ineffective in its attempts to get the organization to sanction Israel for its violations of international legal norms. For example, in February 2010 the European BDS movement won a campaign to persuade the EU High Court that the West Bank was not part of Israel and that the EU could level import duties on products sold by Israeli companies doing business in the OPT (Wielgaard 2010). However, the BNC and the solidarity movement have not succeeded in their attempts to persuade the EU to suspend the EU-Israel Association agreement on the grounds that Israel has violated the agreement through an abysmal human rights record (Palestinian Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions National Committee 2009).

In 2002 and 2003, the EU Parliament passed resolutions calling for a EU trade boycott of Israel. Virginia Tilley writes that the resolutions were no more than "rhetorical flourishes" that glossed over the major national and business oppositions to the boycott as well as the fact that the EU "has every reason to abjure a showdown with the United States over Israel" (Tilly 2005: 126). Even if activists were able to exercise greater influence over EU policy, it would still have to confront the reality that a core component of the US' "special relationship" with Israel is that the US maintains a near-monopoly over diplomacy in the Middle East. As a result, states and international organizations that could potentially provide leverage for the Palestinians, such as the EU, are largely kept out of regional peace-processes (Tilley 2005: 91-106).

Inter-state hierarchies and conflicts have forced the transnational solidarity movement into

becoming an example of what is referred to as *globalization from below*. The limited relationship with powerful state sponsors and international institutions has structured the movement into a loose, largely non-hierarchical network of grassroots organizations. It has also made solidarity work a highly localized affair in which activists typically appropriate the Palestinian cause into their own local settings rather than bringing this issue to the attention of their states or to international organizations. In this context, the most salient transnational aspect of the solidarity movement is the exchange of ideas across national boundaries. The diffusion of the BDS frame in particular has created new opportunities for local activists to join the struggle for Palestine by allowing them to tailor the cause to local circumstances. It has also helped to form the structure of the movement of the by creating linkages between Palestinian political organizations and a global civil society of activists.

Thus, a major challenge facing the solidarity movement is finding “hooks” between their local circumstances and the Palestine-Israel conflict. This tactic includes publicizing and challenging obvious examples of complicity in Israel’s war crimes such as college investment portfolios that own stock in corporations that sell military equipment to the IDF. It also addresses much more subtle forms of support, such as performing concerts or participating in film festivals in Israel. In the past two years Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen and Jean Luc-Godard have been accused by the BDS movement of normalizing Israel’s crimes against the Palestinians by scheduling public appearances in the country. The argument that cultural and academic relationships between Israeli institutions and famous non-Israelis legitimize and reinforce Israel’s Occupation of Palestine is often difficult to make resonate. However, the logic of this claim is not lost on Israeli elites and public relations strategists. For example, Judith Butler reports that after her visit to Tel Aviv University, the school’s rector declared: “Look how lucky we are. Judith Butler has come to Tel Aviv University, a sign that she does not accept the boycott.” The conclusion Butler drew from this experience is instructive:

The fact is that there is no possibility of going to Israel without being used either as an example of boycott or as an example of anti-boycott...I was instrumentalized against my will. I realized I cannot function in that public space without already being defined in the boycott

debate. (Butler 2010).

Currently, both the solidarity movement and Israel are investing in the battle over Israel's image. Since its 2006 invasion of Lebanon, Israel has begun employing public relations firms to remake its image as a site of recreation and popular culture.

Because activists are for the most part prohibited from jumping international scales local political fields are often the site of the movement's campaigns. These fields have a considerable impact on the outcomes of specific groups. Frances Hasso defines 'Political field' as the "legal-cultural-historical-political environment within which a protest movement exists and to which it must respond" (2005: xvii). Political fields filter movement issues through established cultural concepts of protest, modes of organization and targets of political action.

The case of Hampshire College's Students for Justice in Palestine provides an illustration of how a field can allow for an issues effectiveness and explain a group's strategy. Hampshire's institutional rules allowed H-SJP members to join decision-making institutions such as the Board of Trustees, the Socially Responsible Investing Committee and Student Senate. The process of working through campus institutions required activists to acquire a detailed understanding of the school's structure and of the complexities of its investment portfolio. This learning process shaped the group's strategy in two related ways: (1) The amount of learning involved required a near total commitment of group resources into the divestment effort; and (2) because the group had promised the administration that it would not publicly advertise any 'divestment' related to Israel's human rights violations it had difficulty conveying its message to and building bonds with the student body in the run up to the decision to divest and in its aftermath (Stachiw 2009). In contrast, student groups without these institutional avenues press their claims through petitions, protests and other noise-making practices that raise the student body's consciousness of the Palestinian question.

To conclude, the transnational movement for Palestine illustrates Thomas Olesen's argument that although social movements are "becoming increasingly transnational in both objectives and

activities, *it does not also mean that they are becoming less local and national*" (2005: 86, my emphasis). The globalizing processes that facilitate the growth of new transnational movements do not so much erode the distinct categories of local, national and international fields as they create opportunities for activists to bridge them and redefine their meanings through political action.

Framing, diffusion and transnational movements

Della Porta and Tarrow define transnational protest as the "externalization of domestic contention and the formation of durable transnational coalitions" (Della Porta and Tarrow 2005: 34). Transnational framing processes and the diffusion of collective action repertoires are two of the main ways in which causes travel across borders. Snow and Benford define frames as the ways in which activists are "engaged in the production of and maintenance of meaning for constituents, bystanders or observers" and "inspire and legitimate the campaigns of social movement organizations" (Snow and Benford 2000: 613; 614). Although modes of framing differ between groups, in general, social movements organize their frames around two poles: one, the recognition and diagnosis of an injustice; and two, the recommendation of collective actions which could be effective in ameliorating the injustice.

Transnational framing differs from other types of framing processes because it carries the added burdens of connecting groups that are separated by geography and often also by ethnicity, citizenship and culture. One of the principle ways in which activists overcome the obstacles of space and culture in order to build coalitions across national borders is by re-writing their grievances in universal terms. The Palestinian solidarity movement has organized its message around a constellation of international legal principles and BDS tactics that comprise a transnational frame. The deployment and reception of this frame is one of the main ways in which the solidarity movement for Palestine is transnationally constructed. Palestinians and their allies have used political frames to link the Palestinian national struggle to global politics, local issues and other social movements, facilitating the construction of a collective identity and historical imaginary amongst activists.

In the Palestinian transnational movement injustice is typically constructed in terms of a number of international discourses including human rights and international law. According to Barghouti, the BDS movement “adopts a rights-based, not solutions-based, approach” in how it talks about the conflict. Communications from the BNC, PACBI and the Stop The Wall Campaign all call on Israel to comply with its obligations under international law and enunciate long lists of rights including the Right of Return for Palestinian refugees, freedom of movement within the OPT and the national rights of Palestinians within Israel.

For Barghouti the concept of rights function as an organizing concept that determines the worthiness and viability of any proposed political solution. Like many other prominent figures in the solidarity movement, Barghouti’s politics fuses post-national leanings with rights discourses and a narrative of the dispossession and injustice suffered by Palestinians. For example, Barghouti explains that he is “completely and categorically against binationalism because it assumes that there are two nations with equal moral claims to the land and therefore, we have to accommodate both national rights. I am completely opposed to that...” According to Barghouti, the state is not legitimized by nation or indigenusness but by its fulfillment of rights. For this reason he argues that the only just and viable solution to the Palestine-Israel conflict is a secular, democratic single state. A founding purpose of this state is to address the historical rights of all segments of the Palestinians, those in the OPT, in Israel and the Diaspora and to ensure that they have full civil, political and national rights and to return to historic Palestine. It also offers protection for Jewish nationals in Palestine:

The only way that we can exercise our right to self-determination, without imposing unnecessary injustice on our oppressors, is to have a secular, democratic state where nobody is thrown into the sea, nobody is sent back to Poland, and nobody is left in refugee camps. We can coexist ethically with our rights given back to us. (Barghouti 2009)

Other prominent figures in the solidarity movement have emphasized the utility of rights discourse. Norman G. Finkelstein argues that activists should structure their arguments about the Palestine-Israel conflict around human rights principles and away from potentially more divisive topics

and phrases such as “Zionism.” In his writings and lectures, Finkelstein relies almost exclusively on the research of human rights organizations and international legal bodies. Typically, the objective of his remarks is to show that a “consensus” exists amongst organizations, jurists, UNGA member states and/or scholars that shows that Israel’s human rights record in the OPT is “abysmal” and proscribes an end to Israel’s colonization of Palestine. Recently, Finkelstein has sharpened the argument for using human rights discourses. He argues that there exists a “prior consensus” within American public opinion in support of human rights that the role of the solidarity movement is to “energize.” Finkelstein concludes a widely circulated lecture on political strategy by asking,

Shouldn’t we use a vocabulary that registers and resonates with the public conscience and the Jewish conscience, winning over the decent many while isolating the diehard few? Shouldn’t we instead be asking, Are you for or against ethnic cleansing, for or against torture, for or against house demolitions, for or against Jews-only roads and Jews-only settlements, for or against discriminatory laws? (Finkelstein 2008)

The mode of grievance framing exemplified by Barghouti and Finkelstein resembles many of the Zapatista’s frames that scholars credit for their international popularity. Clifford Bob argues that the immense international appeal of the Zapatista uprising was an effect of the conscious efforts by the leadership of the uprising to portray themselves as emerging from “civil society” rather than “conventional political and economic institutions” (2001: 325) such as the state, political parties and social classes. The Palestinian BDS and anti-Wall leadership also emphasize that they represent a substantial swath of Palestine’s civil society and NGO community and are largely independent from Fateh and Hamas. Both insurgencies also frame themselves as non-violent challengers to militarized states. After putting down their weapons only days after launching an armed rebellion the Zapatistas “quickly came to appear less violent than the Mexican government” and its “heavy-handed counterattacks” (Bob 2001: 326). Palestinians broadcast a parallel message of weakness through the videos of their anti-Wall protests that they circulate on the Internet and in international lectures. BDS activist Ali Abunimah argues that the non-violent character of the BDS campaign is one of the reasons

it deserves widespread support (Abunimah 2009). Finally, both movements are purposefully ambiguous about the ultimate form of political solution they are fighting for. The Zapatistas' action frames emphasized the worldwide injustices of neoliberal economic policies and the ability of a global and diverse civil society while being unclear about the type of post-neoliberal states that they were fighting for. Although members the Palestinian transnational movement, and especially solidarity activists in the US and Europe, have invested a considerable amount of time and effort into debates of the relative merits of the one and two-state solutions, as Barghouti's comments indicate activists prefer to emphasize grievances, agency and rights discourse over the complexities of state-building.

The solidarity movement's framing repertoire finds agency to redress these injustices through BDS. The campaigns for boycott, divestment and sanctions are not just a tactic but also a crucial way in which activists create transnational linkages and conceptualize their own ability to challenge Israeli policy. Activists argue for the viability of BDS in ending the Occupation of Palestine by citing it as a central tactic of the transnational anti-apartheid movement, which is credited for being an indispensable element in South Africa's democratic transition. Palestinian BDS leaders as well non-Palestinian activists regularly liken their cause and strategy to the South African example. The 2004 PACBI statement reads:

In view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community of scholars and intellectuals have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in their struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott,

A popular and widely circulated article by activist Will Youmans titled, "The New Anti-Apartheid Movement: The Campaign to Divest From Israel" writes,

Divestment's underlying logic is compelling as it is simple. South Africa's Apartheid government operated a partite system of administration: one component of the government privileged whites exclusively and fundamentally because they were white, while the other subordinated blacks. This was on the basis of race. In the same way, Israel clearly privileges humans of Jewish ancestry over those of Palestinian descent. The movement's logic is bolstered by the historical and experiential proximity between the black South Africans and the Palestinians. In 1999, *CNN* reported that Nelson Mandela told the Palestinian assembly, "the histories of our two peoples correspond in such painful and poignant ways that I intensely feel myself at home amongst my compatriots."

(Youmans 2002)

The apartheid analogy has become an especially prominent tactic in the movement's framing strategy. In 2009 activists in over 40 cities hosted events, as part of "Israeli Apartheid Week" a global event comprised of local teach-ins, lectures, film screenings and training sessions. The idea of organizing an "Israeli Apartheid Week" originated in at the University of Toronto in 2005 and was recently endorsed by PACBI.

The solidarity movement has coalesced to a considerable extent around the accuracy and utility of the apartheid analogy, but in mainstream and elite circles the analogy remains highly controversial. Although a growing number of respectable figures (Jimmy Carter, Ehud Barak, John Dugard, Desmond Tutu) and organizations (B'tselem, the Association for Civil Rights in Israel) have acknowledged the resemblance of the two situations, it is impossible to enter the claim into mainstream conversation without being furiously denounced. It is difficult to assess the resonance of the apartheid analogy with the greater public. However, there are reasons to believe that there is a considerable growth in the number of people who find it plausible. For example, Jimmy Carter's *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* reached number 1 on the *New York Times* best sellers list. Furthermore, a number of prominent American social scientists including John Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt and Tony Judt have used the analogy in their books and commentaries.

BDS has also provided an answer to one of the foremost problems facing an emergent transnational movement: how to find targets for collective action across borders. Executing a BDS campaign consists of finding connections between the situation in the OPT and the broader world. For example, the various campaigns for an academic and cultural boycott of Israel emphasize that collaborative projects between Israeli and non-Israeli institutions normalize the occupation and dispossession of the Palestinians by muting protests against Israel's rogue status. Proponents of the

academic campaign argue that not only are Israeli schools and academics complicit in the Occupation of Palestine, but so are non-Israelis who in collaborating with them overlook the ways in which seemingly a-political academic work negates the impact of Israel's arbitrary state violence. Judith Butler notes that a significant innovation of Omar Barghouti and PACBI has been to “revise and expand our operative notions of academic freedom” by implicitly suggesting that “academic freedom only gains its meaning within a broader conception of freedom on the condition that other basic political entitlements are first secured.” In the OPT, where the IDF regularly restricts the access of students and professors to their local universities and prohibits them from returning home after studying abroad, the ‘academic freedom’ of Palestinians is not suspended, but the basic conditions necessary to exercise free inquiry are absent. Barghouti’s argument, and Butler’s reading of it, problematize contemporary doctrines of academic freedom that are unable to “rise to the occasion and condemn the widespread abrogation of rights” (2006: 9; 10; 11) and urges academics to consider the ways in which these doctrines deflect attention from large-scale violations of human rights.

Barghouti and Butler both make compelling arguments for the academic boycott of Israel. However, with the exception of the UK’s University Teachers and the University College Unions’ decision to endorse an academic boycott of Israel, the campaign for academic boycott has not gained the same traction as consumer boycotts and divestment campaigns. The “framing” of academic boycott follows the same logic as these other measures; both identify a link between a local or national institution and the oppression of the Palestinian and ask involved parties to sever this connection out of moral, legal or professional obligation. Why then has the academic boycott campaign been relatively unsuccessful in gaining institutional supporters? Part of the reason is that the arguments put forward for the academic boycott rely on interpretations of the principle of academic freedom—a principle which is

still unsettled. Unlike activists working on consumer or financial BDS campaigns, advocates of the academic boycott are attempting to use the Palestinian cause to re-shape the norms of their targets.

Example and emulation

The Palestinian solidarity movement consciously emulates the examples of other social movements.

The transnational anti-apartheid movement is a favorite exemplar for Pro-Palestinian activists because of the similarities between the apartheid regime and Israel's treatment of the Palestinians and because the strategy of boycott, divestment and sanctions appears adaptable to the Palestinian cause.

Movements relate to past examples in complex and multiple ways. Scholarship on emulation usually focuses on the ways in which successful examples of collective action help current movements choose tactics and transcend objective barriers to mobilization. Movements also negotiate these examples in complex and dynamic ways. In the pro-Palestinian context, the successful example of the anti-apartheid movement is an encouraging instance of transnational agency but it always carries with it potential pitfalls.

Sean Chabot and Jan Willem Duyvendak argue that research on the diffusion of collective action tactics gives an image of diffusion as a simple transfer of repertoires while neglecting the reality that the diffusion is “dynamic, ambiguous and malleable”; the application of a repertoire results in “adaptation and reinvention” (2002: 706; 711). Although the solidarity movement often references its debt to anti-apartheid activism the actual implementation of the tactics of the anti-apartheid movement support Chabot and Duyvendak's hypothesis. Because Israelis are largely not viewed as colonial settlers or racists, as white South Africans were, constructing protest frames and actions is considerably more difficult. As described in Chapter One, activists in New York City found that their protests against Israeli chain stores did not resonate with a mass audience and thus had to seek out new targets

such as the Africa-Israel company in order to make their case. Attempts to replicate key elements of the boycott against South Africa such as the academic boycott have been largely unsuccessful and Hampshire's successful divestment campaign being a lone success.

The distinguishing feature of solidarity with Palestine in comparison to anti-apartheid activism is that its targets are more obscure. A short list of institutions that the anti-apartheid movement helped convince to sanction South Africa includes the International Table Tennis Association which in 1956 expelled the South African team from its competitions, the UNGA which in 1977 passed a resolution calling for an arms embargo and Chase Manhattan Bank which in 1986 refused to roll over the country's debt (Schwartzman 2001: 117). A major reason for this divergence is that while South Africa, especially after the Soweto uprising (1977), was widely seen as a racist effect of European imperialism, Israel is often discursively constructed (in the US at least) as a sympathetic victim of European anti-Semitism and Arab-Muslim aggression (Massad 1993). Anti-apartheid activists challenged the indifference of the public to South Africa's political system. By contrast Palestine solidarity activists often have to accomplish the much more difficult task of re-structuring historical consciousness of the Palestinian-Israeli contrast. Not surprisingly, some of the BDS movement's most significant successes have come through working with institutions that were already aware of and sympathetic to Palestinian grievances. UNICEF and OXFAM, for example, provide material relief to Palestinians in the OPT and actively work to raise awareness of the deleterious effects of the Occupation on health and human security in the territories.⁷

The example of the transnational anti-apartheid movement looms large in the consciousness of the BDS movement not only as a replicable model of successful collective action but also as a source

⁷ For example 2 June 2009 OXFAM statement *Gaza: "frontline of Collective Punishment"* (OXFAM 2009).

of identity and a mobilizing narrative. During the anti-apartheid movement “solidarity” with Black South Africans “was constructed as a fundamental value that defined the collective identity” of the movement (Thorn 2006: 295). By contrast, in the transnational movement for Palestine a belief in the efficacy and justness of the BDS repertoire, based on its power in the Apartheid context, serves a parallel function. Francesca Polletta argues “some stories are more effective than others not because of the content or skill with which they are told but because of assumptions made about their tellers.” (2006: xi-xii) BDS activists have recognized the importance of attracting prominent members of the South African anti-apartheid movement to affirm the similarity between the two causes. In this regard, no one is more prominent than Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was solicited by H-SJP to endorse their divestment campaign and wrote: “see what these students have accomplished as a replica of the support of their College of our struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Hampshire College's decision to divest should be a guiding example to all institutions of higher learning” (Tutu 2009). The endorsement helps to bring respectability to a controversial issue but it also solidifies a shared sense of promise and community.

So far, the apartheid analogy had helped solidarity activists construct a collective identity and map some elements of their strategy. However, identification with an analogy, narrative or identity can also foreclose potentially productive interpretations and deny activists the opportunity to recognize the complexity of their own situation. The late Edward Said exhorted the Palestinians and their allies to recognize and act upon the differences between Palestine-Israel and the twentieth century's other anti-colonial movements. He emphasized that because of Europe's history of anti-Semitism there existed a far more widespread and durable sympathy in Europe and the United States for Israel than for other nations with a colonial-settler history. A major difficulty in marketing the apartheid analogy is the

hesitancy of the general population to see Israelis as perpetrators rather than victims of violence. It is plausible that as a result activists will shift the discursive terrain more towards concepts and frames, such as international law, that offer a neutral baseline for judging the legitimacy of Israel's actions in the Occupied Territories. To a certain extent this shift may already be taking place. For example, at the beginning of the second *intifada* there was significant enthusiasm for proliferating and defending the slogan "Zionism is racism." Similar to the apartheid analogy, this equation became a flashpoint of discussions of Palestine-Israel, provoked fierce denunciations from Zionist activists and confused many of the people it addressed. Currently, although there is widespread recognition of the racist characteristics of the Israeli state within the pro-Palestinian movement, "Zionism is racism" has largely fallen out of favor as a shorthand explanation for the oppression of the Palestinians and has been replaced with a more complex repertoire of arguments and comparisons.

Framing and state-centered social movement processes

The principle framework of social movement theory posits a "state-centered" process of political action in which the state functions as the principle site of historical change by creating the context for collective action and determining the limits to which changes can be made. In this section I argue that a state-centered perspective remains a useful tool for explaining the development and limitations of political framing related subjective elements of protest by engaging with a recent article by Polly Pallister-Wilkins which argues that the anti-Wall protests in Bil'in and other West Bank towns are not accounted for by state-centered paradigms.

Pallister-Wilkins' article, "Radical Ground: Israeli and Palestinian Activists and Joint Protest Against the Wall" (2009) argues that the Palestinian-Israeli anti-Wall protests in Bil'in and other West Bank villages "challenge many of the logics of state-based social change encompassed in much of social movement theory." They do this by, "eschewing the 'politics of demand' and choosing not to make "appeals to the State of Israel as they believe they would not be listened to."(Pallister-Wilkins:

398) Pallister-Wilkins writes that these protests manifest a “convergence of protest-anarchism with more traditional anti-occupation activism.” (Pallister-Wilkins: 396) These protests and are the most recent symptom of a larger resurgence in anarchist-protest traditions that are evidenced in the Zapatista rebellion and the seizure of abandoned factories by workers in Argentina and India (Pallister-Wilkins: 395).

Thus, Pallister-Wilkins’ argument is a bi-level one. She claims that the subjective dimension of the anti-Wall protests has a heavy anarchist element that does not mesh with social movement theory’s stereotype of a movement that makes claims upon the state. There is also an added level to Pallister-Wilkins’ argument; she implies that because Palestinian and Israeli protestors have chosen to emphasize certain themes they have begun to change the objective dynamics of their struggle in ways that traditional social movement theory cannot comprehend.

The first claim accurately represents *some* of the subjective elements of the anti-Wall protests, although Pallister-Wilkins is unable to harmonize important examples of “claim making” against the Israeli state with her thesis that the central gesture of the anti-Wall protests is anarchist. The residents of Bil’in in particular have made serious efforts to use the Israeli courts to alter the path of the wall and to gain reparations. Refusing to come to grips with this plank in the anti-Wall struggle means that Pallister-Wilkins severely circumscribes the framing tactics of the residents of Bil’in and their allies. The Israeli High Court’s ruling contains substantial contradictions, is largely sympathetic to the IDF’s position and legitimizes the colonization of Palestine. However, Palestinians have incorporated its selective recognition of Palestinian grievances and gestures towards legal redress into their rhetoric. This suggests that the subjective perspectives of the movement are not as anarchist as Pallister-Wilkins suggests. Activists believe that they can use the state to legitimize their claims in certain cases and press the de-legitimation of Israeli colonialism through the institutions of the Israeli state.

Even if the claims of the anti-Wall movement were not directed at the Israeli state, as Pallister-Wilkins argues, this would not clarify the relationship between the state and its challengers. State-

centered social movement theory posits that states shape collective action in three main ways: by licensing certain avenues of political activism and prohibiting others, repressing challengers and socially constructing discourses of legitimate and illegitimate protest. This section is primarily concerned with the third relationship, i.e. the connection between states and the framing strategies of activists.

To understand this relationship, we must broaden the scope of our inquiry to beyond Palestine-Israel and look at the broader context under which the discourses of the joint anti-Wall demonstrators have acquired their legitimacy. The importance of human rights and other rights discourses in international relations is traceable to a considerable extent to the efforts of NGOs and activists to circulate these ideas; however, states, originally the targets of rights discourse, have played a crucial role in legitimizing these discourses by writing them into international institutions and treaties. The aim of the protestors is to appeal to foreign publics who have been educated in rights discourses through the domestic legislation and official language of states and to get states to apply their own normative or legal values on human rights to Israel. The European Union's focus on human rights and its extensive trade relationship with Israel make it a target for activists. Activists have courted prominent EU officials and delegations to the West Bank. In 2008 Louis Morgantini the Vice President of the European Parliament spoke at the third annual Bil'in International Conference on popular resistance and participated in a demonstration against the Wall. Lawmakers from European states and the EU regularly visit Bil'in and other Palestinian villages protesting against the Wall at the invitation of Palestinian activists in order to assess the Wall's impact and Israel's counter-demonstration tactics.

Since the writing of Pallister-Wilkins' article, communication with EU officials has become an increasingly prominent part of the anti-Wall movement. In January 2010, an 11 member EU delegation visited Nil'in during a wave of arrests of anti-Wall leaders and their relatives. Omar Barghouti responded by announcing that "We will tell them: the EU cannot continue to be impartial. The EU has great leverage over Israel, if they want to use it. The least they can do is stop military

cooperation." Khalida Jarrah of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and a member of the Palestinian Parliament also spoke of great communication with the EU and told the delegation "this message must reach the international community. We haven't seen a strong reaction from the international community. The popular resistance movement is a political movement, which requires a political solution, and political support" (Ma'an News Agency 2010).

In sum, a state-centered focus provides an effective lens to examine the joint Palestinian-Israeli protests in Bil'in. The Israeli state shapes the context in which protest takes place and protest strategies in the main address Israel and other states to change the route of the wall. At the inter-state level, the ascendancy of human rights discourses and international law has shaped the discourse of the protesters. These protests are one link in a much larger chain of transnational activism; but their reverberations are widely felt throughout the solidarity movement.

4: Strategies of representation, reflexive practices and the social construction of protest: Palestinian videos and the politics of solidarity

A group of blue bodies with blue faces, pointy ears, stringy brunette hair, *kaffiyehs* around their waists and flags in their hands march through paved hills towards a metal fence and a group of soldiers. Seconds later, smoke bombs and tear gas canisters explode in the vicinity and the blue bodies retreat out of the frame, only to return seconds later and throw the unexploded ordinances back towards the soldiers. This is a scene from the Palestinian town of Bil'in, where every week for the past five years Palestinians, Israelis and internationals have attempted to march on the Israeli Wall that bisects the town and allocates some of its most viable agricultural lands to an Israeli settlement. But now there is a new change in tactics. The blue bodies are Palestinians costumed as the "Na'vi", an indigenous community threatened by imperialism in the American science fiction film *Avatar*. The protestors are outnumbered by photographers and filmmakers wearing gas masks so that they can continue to document the confrontation amidst Israel's heavy-handed counter-protest.

Although the march ends with the protestors dispersed and assaulted, the action is a success. A week and half later, a video of the protest has been widely circulated on the Internet. For years, Palestinians in Bil'in and their allies have circulated videos of their weekly anti-Wall demonstrations, but the footage of the "Avatar" video is of a higher quality than the other videos. The relatively clean editing of the film's three minutes and the large presence of documentary filmmakers reflects a conscious attempt to exploit the Internet's unprecedented ability to circulate moving images. As a communicative strategy, the "Avatar" protest has succeeded in its major objectives: obtaining international attention and temporarily re-framing the conflict in terms of colonialism and indigenous rights.

In the past few years, video making has been an increasingly visible tactic in the Palestinian national struggle. Palestinians, human rights groups, documentary filmmakers and solidarity activists have contributed to a growing canon of protest videos on the Palestine-Israel conflict. These videos,

which range from amateur footage of life under occupation to documentaries which are screened at international film festivals, are not only strategic deployments against the dominant Israeli narrative of the conflict; they are also discursively “reflexive practices” that convey assumptions about how Palestinians, human rights organizations and solidarity activists “position themselves as contributing to social and cultural change” (Littler 2005: 229). This section looks at two related examples of video activism: videos of West Bank Palestinians and internationals demonstrating against the Wall (which includes the above mentioned “Avatar” protest), and the videos produced as part of the Israeli human rights organization B’tselem’s “Shooting Back” project. For each example, this section attempts to identify the strategic aims behind it, its understandings of activism and agency or its “reflexive character”, and its contribution to the social construction of activist networks. In a final section, I argue that an information politics rooted in these new media has the potential to create new political opportunities for the transnational solidarity movement for Palestine by changing public perceptions of the Palestine-Israel conflict and creating new contexts in which the movement can expand its membership and express its collective identity through political action.

Bil’in: towards a documentary of *intifada* in a Palestinian village

Videos of protests in towns such as Bil’in and Nil’in that are immediately leaked onto the Internet and sent to the news media and are planned to act as a counterweight to the Israeli government’s monopolization of the conflict’s narrative and claims to accurate information. The overarching purpose of these protests and the videos made about them is to destabilize the discursive arrangement, social realities and racial encoding of Palestinians and Israelis. In other words, they seek to cause viewers to question their pre-conceived notions of the conflict - notions that may have been influenced or even completely formed by the mainstream media's narrative, which in turn is infused with its own conscious or unconscious bias. A common target of protest videos is the popular narrative that Palestinians commit acts of “terrorism” while Israeli violence is merely responsive to and contingent

on these Palestinian acts of terrorism (Chomsky 2001). Videos of the protests in Bil'in emphasize the non-violent elements of Palestinian protest. The documentary film *Bil'in Habibti (Bil'in My Love)* (Carmeli-Pollak: 2006) devotes significant attention to a wheelchair-bound activist's attempt to organize a march of the handicapped against the Wall. This protest was specifically conceived of as a retaliation against the IDF for using counter-demonstration tactics that put the disabled at risk, an inversion of the conventional narrative of Palestinian violence and Israeli response.

Protest footage also challenges the binary interpretation of the conflict as a struggle between a "Western" Israel and a "Non-Western" Palestine. In addition to challenging the claim that Palestinians do not or cannot act non-violently in support of their national goals, protest videos unsettle the conflict's identity binary by including "Western" people from Israel, the US and Europe in the anti-Wall protests. This is especially true for the rough footage shown by AATW on the group's 2009 North American fundraising tour that shows Israeli youth with "white" physical characteristics working alongside Palestinians to protest the destruction of Palestinian-owned farmland underneath the Wall's route. AATW presenters explain why in many videos they are shown undertaking actions such as cutting through parts of the Wall without the participation of Palestinians. These actions are undertaken with the support of Palestinians, but Palestinians themselves are prevented from participating in them because the penalties for such actions, such as long jail sentences, are too severe. Also, Israeli solidarity activists have the ability to move through the West Bank with a freedom that Palestinians do not have. Hasso describes the West Bank as, "racial-spatial subordination [which] expresses itself through a variety of mechanisms: Israeli checkpoints, special roads for Jews that avoid Palestinian villages and towns, segregated marketplaces and restaurants, Jewish settlements..." (2005: 25). The relative freedom of Israelis to navigate these spaces and physically challenge their racial biases re-frames the conflict along the lines of an anti-racist, anti-colonial struggle, rather than merely a struggle between two antagonist ethnic groups.

The framing of the conflict in these videos produces new social realities and discourses. Israelis do not appear as the civilian “white” victims of Palestinian violence but almost exclusively as soldiers tasked with enforcing a regime of “racial-spatial subordination.” The AATW footage captures soldiers in the midst of destroying Palestinian farmland, arresting protestors and shooting at demonstrators. It also documents the injuries suffered by Israelis and Palestinians alike from Israel’s counter-demonstration tactics. *Bil’in Habibti* takes a different approach. The filmmaker interviews an IDF general that confronts Bil’in’s protests every Friday. The General talks about how he works hard to minimize the suffering of the protestors but that the Palestinians invite their own punishment by resorting to stone throwing. In a revealing sequence, the General orders his soldiers to disperse the “march of the disabled” with tear gas. He claims that he did not know that the protestors were handicapped, which is plausible, and chastises the Palestinians for attempting to exploit their suffering. The end result of this sequence is not to dehumanize the General, who comes across as sincere throughout the film. *Bil’in Habibti* is an interesting twist to the Israeli device of the “good soldier” who balances his official duties with a selective sympathy towards the Palestinians. Unlike Israeli documentary narratives, in which the “good soldier” is usually the end of the argument about the morality of the Israeli state and society, *Bil’in Habibti* recognizes the ambiguity that inheres in a soldier’s consciousness but does not allow it to obscure or negate the violent impact of the occupation.

Shooting and racializing: the politics of “Shooting Back”

The footage of IDF soldiers and Israeli colonists harming Palestinians that B’tselem has cultivated through its “Shooting Back” project functions in an analogous way, albeit without the same type of preparation. “Shooting Back” provides Palestinian civilians with hand held video recorders and basic video training. B’tselem has handed out roughly 100 cameras to Palestinians and the project has produced graphic images of masked Jewish settlers assaulting unarmed Palestinian farmers and a short

video of an IDF soldier shooting a bound Palestinian in the foot.⁸ These episodes are representative of a widespread pattern of abuse and harassment of Palestinians in the OPT at the hands of soldiers and settlers alike that has been described in detail by Palestinians in human rights reports, but has not reached the broader public and were often dismissed as fabrication. Oren Yakobovich, who runs the program for B'tselem, explains that the project was launched in part because "from our past experience, in many cases a Palestinian's word is given less weight than that of a soldier, a policeman or a settler" (Azoulay 2008).

This approach can be contrasted with the way in which the Hezbollah have utilized self-made videos in Lebanon. In an essay on the Lebanese Hezbollah's self-made videos of militants attacking IDF forces, Walid el Hourri and Dima Saber write that these videos act as a "metaphor of empowerment" (2010: 71) for the occupied Lebanese viewers who are accustomed to encounter the IDF from the narrow perspective of victimhood. For the Palestinians, "Shooting Back" is also a "metaphor of empowerment", albeit in ways that differ from el Hourri and Saber's framework. Both sets of videos attempt to empower resistance to Israeli military policies by representing another side of the conflict. However, in the "Shooting Back" project, agency comes from the power to represent and deploy a discrete message to a sympathetic foreign audience. Unlike the Hezbollah's videos, which aim to intimidate Israelis by demonstrating resistance, "Shooting Back" courts Israelis and other potentially sympathetic non-Palestinians by portraying (and therefore perhaps defining) the Palestinians as victims of Israeli violence.

The "Shooting Back" project makes a number of assumptions about Palestinian agency. The first is that Palestinian narration is either absent from or suspicious to hegemonic narrative practices. Based on the mainstream media's record of covering the Palestine-Israel conflict, and the broader discourse of untrustworthiness surrounding Arab peoples, this position is inarguable. Therefore,

⁸ The videos are archived on B'tselem's website: *Camera Distribution Project* Retrieved May 3, 2010. (http://www.btselem.org/english/video/CDP_Index.asp).

Palestinians need to use inarguable representation, such as video cameras, in order to make their claims legible. This reading of the political situation, and Palestinian positions within it, leads to a very limited sense of Palestinian agency that is actual compatible with mainstream views. For example, Massad argues, that the presentation of Palestinians as victims of unfortunate and non-contextualized violence has an enduring place in US media commentary on the Palestine-Israel conflict, a framework he calls the “Limits of Racialized Discourse.” In this framework, once Palestinian suffering becomes “unavoidable” (for example after the Sabra and Shatilla massacres) Palestinians become supportable “insofar” (and only in so far) as they “are physical victims, that is *objects* of Israeli violence” but when Palestinians actively resist Israeli domination, or refuse to accept US/Israeli political conditions, “condemnation ensues, as if in outrage that objects have presumptuously assumed the role of subjects” (1993: 97).

Unlike the Hezbollah’s approach, which attempts to shift the balance of power by presenting Lebanese as militarized subjects, “Shooting Back” tends to portray the Palestinians as de-politicized and victimized subjects. What the viewers of “Shooting Back” are meant to identify with is the need to protect the bare life of the Palestinians. But the project stops short of advocating the political program of the Palestinians or decrying the ethno-nationalist ethos of the Israeli state. “Shooting Back” is an interesting title/metaphor for B’tselem’s project. B’tselem is a relatively conservative human rights group, which rarely includes Palestinian political agency as one of the rights it is protecting.⁹ By contrast, Palestinian human rights groups Al Haq and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) assert that under international law the Palestinian people, and all people, have a “right to resist” military occupation and colonialism. These groups distinguish between legal and non-legal modes of

⁹ For example, there is a link on its website titled “Palestinian Violence” which links to a page titled “Attacks on Israeli Civilians by Palestinians.” The equation of Palestinian violence with anti-civilian attacks is incomplete and therefore arguably misleading as Palestinian violence also frequently targets Israeli soldiers and military infrastructure (for example the West Bank Wall). Furthermore, many Palestinian protest tactics, such as stone throwing and the use of slingshots against the IDF, are more symbolic than realistically threatening. Nonetheless, Israel imposes heavy prison sentences for stone throwing and often responds to it with lethal force.

resistance but see Palestinian political action and not just Palestinian life as a cause that they have a duty to defend.

The other set of assumptions made by “Shooting Back” that I would like to question concerns the position and role of the project’s audience and their capacity to engage in a transformative politics. Much like the AATW video presentation and *Bil’in Habibti*, “Shooting Back” arguably holds the promise that watching the footage is an act of activism in itself, what Littler calls “implicit” activism (2005: 233). For many people who see video of masked settlers assaulting Palestinian farmers, watching this footage is the greatest contribution they will make to the Palestinian cause. This is inherent in the strategy of viral campaigns, which aim to build a broad counter-hegemony on a network of weak ties that require minimal investment from activists. These campaigns measure success in large part through viewer counts on websites and the number of times a video clipped is linked to or re-posted.

“Shooting Back” is consistent with the broader problem of human rights activism whose principal strategy is to “mobilize shame” through a constellation of local and international human rights networks, Western publics, international institutions and foreign states. The assumption is that with incontrovertible proof of rampant human rights violations in the OPT, powerful actors will intervene to pressure the Israeli state to curtail its troubling practices. Palestine-Israel is one of the most heavily reported on areas in the world by human rights organizations. Moreover, there is a remarkable consensus amongst researchers that Israel’s human rights record is very poor (Finkelstein 2006). This includes indigenous groups as well as international ones such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. However, the effect of this level of scrutiny on Israeli practices is difficult to measure. In theory, the proliferation of video cameras in the OPT could serve as a restraint on IDF and settler brutality if the state of Israel chooses to try to avoid the criticism of human rights groups. “Shooting Back” is a compelling attempt to make the work that human rights groups do more verifiable, accessible to a larger public and more interesting to media outlets.

These criticisms notwithstanding, there are compelling reasons to believe that “Shooting Back” contributes to Palestinian agency and may be an important tactic in the struggle against colonialism. Palestinians who participate in the “Shooting Back” report feeling empowered by the ability that the project gives them to represent their situation and the newfound leverage they have on soldiers and settlers. Furthermore, the project has been successful in raising awareness about the indignities of Occupation.

Media and political opportunity: integrating media culture with the political process framework

How do these technologies change the balance of power facing the transnational movement for Palestine? What, if any capacity do they give activists to shape and create favorable political opportunities? Media and information function as an indispensable part of the Palestinian solidarity movement and have the potential to become considerably more significant in the near future. Christian Smith writes that a central thesis of the political process model is that movements “prosper only when challengers enjoy concurrently expanding political opportunities, strong facilitating organizations, and rising insurgent consciousness” (1996: 88). Media orientated activism creates new possibilities for pro-Palestinian activists to enjoy concurrently expanding political opportunities by potentially reshaping public consciousness of the Palestine-Israel conflict; building a wider and more diverse counter-hegemonic coalition; strengthening the consciousness of activists and providing new venues for activism.

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink write that, “Technological and institutional change can alter the ‘moral universe’ in which action takes place by changing how people think about responsibility and guilt and by supplying them with new ways to act” (2000: 37). The experiences of past social movements provides numerous examples of the ways in which new media offers the transnational pro-Palestinian movement the chance to expand political opportunities in at least three significant ways. First, reporting facts can affect change by increasing the number of people who are

aware of the indignities of the Occupation and calling upon them to act in solidarity with the Palestinians. The information politics of the 19th century transnational abolitionist movement are an example of a movement using facts to re-shape the political culture. Anti-slavery activists compiled cogent and detailed books based on the testimonies of slaves (or the fictionalization of these testimonials such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), which helped to cement public opinion in Britain against slavery, and contributed to the UK's decision not to recognize the Confederacy (Keck and Sikkink 2000). Secondly, the embarrassing exposure of Israel's harsh counter-protest tactics in the OPT could pressure the Israeli government to abandon some of its counter-protest tactics, which could incentivize Palestinians, Israelis and internationals to participate in more demonstrations in the future. In 1994, after the Zapatista insurgency was militarily defeated, the attention that the transnational Zapatista network brought to the uprising in Chiapas succeeded in persuading the Mexican government to respect the Zapatistas call for a cease-fire. As a result, the Zapatistas were given the space to continue to their uprising, albeit through non-violent methods (Bob 2001).

Thirdly, the use of new media allows activists the opportunity to rapidly mobilize across borders and to unite different social movement organizations and activist traditions in a common protest. This can include using new media to organize large groups of people in a common demonstration or organizing on the Internet through petitions, creating issue-specific websites and signing petitions. The protests against the World Trade Organization, which took place in Seattle during November 1999, connected social movement organizations rooted in organized labor with extra-movement activists through Internet technologies such as e-mail listservs. As the protests continued activists used the Internet as a source for intra-movement information and to represent the protests/counter-protests to the mainstream media (Smith 2001). Media can also help social movements simultaneously organize in different places around significant events such as the anti-apartheid movement's mobilizations in the midst of the Soweto uprisings and the death of Steve Biko (Thorn 2006: 296).

Today's small media offers increased opportunities for activists to create counter-hegemonic discourses and build wide-ranging coalitions. Communicative technologies can both legitimize and undermine states and resistance movements. The de-colonization movement of the post-WW2 period advanced a counter-hegemony of radical, anti-colonial discourse that was constituted through a canon of counter hegemonic texts exemplified by Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* and Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*. These are historically informed and highly stylized accounts of the decolonization process that were calculated to appeal to the sensibilities of elite European and American audiences (Slisli 2008) as well as other revolutionaries. The Algerian independence movement is the paradigmatic example of a twentieth century anti-colonial movement which, although increasingly outmatched by France's military counter-mobilization and its political overtures to the Algerian people, was able to overthrow the colonial state in part by constructing a wide ranging counter hegemony that extended deep into France's intellectual, political and popular spheres. Reports of widespread torture of Algerian activists and civilians by French forces created a crisis of legitimacy within the French network of juridical, military and political orders that was both promoted and exploited by the Algerian nationalist movement's leaders and the legion of French writers and activists in their support.

The historical ability of other revolutionary movements to successfully mobilize counter claims against a hegemonic ideology of colonialism offers an encouraging example for the Palestinian cause. The inability of the Palestinians to maintain a rebel insurrection in Jordan, Lebanon or the OPT, the failed attempt to imitate the Hezbollah model of resistance during the second *intifada*, the sequesterization of Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah's own immobility within Lebanese and world politics are all evidence that the political environments in which the Palestinian national movement and its solidarity compliment are active are inhospitable to a highly militant politics. In this context, there is an increased burden to build the type of counter hegemony that the Palestinian movement is reaching for.

For a decentralized and marginalized transnational movement, film and especially Internet videos already play the important role of creating networks of communication amongst activists throughout the world. Understanding this role clarifies the movement's dynamics. As we have seen, the solidarity movement is highly decentralized and in most respects non-hierarchical. There is no central party or commanding organization attempting to direct and coordinate the movement's various components even within a specific project. Local groups are given a large amount of leeway in deciding how to apply the directives of the BNC, PACBI and Stop the Wall! The communications strategy of the movement largely reflects this level of decentralization. The creation of a revealing new video spreads throughout a network of Palestinian and solidarity websites extremely quickly, reiterating a sense of collective identity amongst participants. For the solidarity movement, the videos differ from other sources of news because they break through the "conventional wisdom" about how the conflict is represented and in doing so they communicate the promise that the Palestinians and their allies are developing the tools to break Israeli hegemony over the Palestinians and thus promote further participation. The Internet, and the viral video, have increased the opportunity to create broad-based coalitions within the solidarity movement. The re-posting of a video from a human rights group on a news blog or activist website can substantially increase visibility without exacting a significant cost from any of the actors involved.

Video deployments are likely to play an important role in the formation of activist identity because they are congruent with more general trends in the culture of progressive politics, which put an emphasis on representation over other material sources of power such as class, state and military power. Battles over representation are both a tactic in politics and an expressive act that is fundamental to the construction of the identity of individual activists and the movements they are a part of. In her anti-consumerist manifesto, *No Logo*, Naomi Klein bemoans that by the early 1990s, the North American left had become almost exclusively committed to fighting battles "over issues of 'representation'—a loosely defined set of grievances mostly lodged against the media, the curriculum"

while leaving economic issues untouched (Klein 2000: 107 quoted in, Littler 2005: 230). In a general context, the equation of politics with representation is further evidenced by the growth of media studies, a sub discipline of sociology and the popularity in scholarly and activist circles of works such as Edward Said's *Orientalism* and Ernesto Laclau and Chantell Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* that borrow Antonio Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony while rejecting Marxism's position that history has a determinative economic base.

In the context of Palestinian solidarity, a significant number of books claiming to expose the distortions of previous scholarship (Finkelstein 1995; Finkelstein 2005; Said and Hitchens 2001; Chomsky 1983) and biased media coverage (Friel and Falk 2007) join an even larger number of websites including If Americans Knew, Mondoweiss, MuzzleWatch and Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting that report on trends in the American media's coverage of the Palestine-Israel conflict. A representative view of the importance of representation comes from Norman Finkelstein's lecture "The Coming Breakup of American Zionism": For Finkelstein, the characterization of Israel as a progressive state has been decisive to American Jewry's post-1967 embrace of the Jewish State, but the image of a pure Israel and the Jewish community's attendant support are no longer sustainable amidst the growing chorus of reports on Israel's human rights violations in the OPT (Finkelstein 2008).

These websites document omissions and distortions in the mainstream coverage of the conflict and reflect on the narrow and generally pro-Israel frames of the media. Furthermore, these sites encourage visitors to contact news organizations protesting their faulty coverage and highlight examples of critical analysis and penetrating journalism that go against the grain. As keepers of history and pressure sources on news organizations, these sites blur the conventional lines between activism, media analysis and reporting. More importantly, their ability to mobilize visitors as activists dilutes the barrier between consumers and creators of information. Jo Littler's critique of the "implicit" activism of reading a critical book may very well not extend to the Internet world where aspiring activists enter sites that allow them to transmit the information they have obtained into ever expanding networks.

Conclusion

El Houry and Saber write that it is a “necessity for all dominated and resistance groups to write their own texts and narrate their alternative history as part of the process of resistance and as an inseparable aspect of their revolt against the dominant group/narrative” (2010: 73). Unlike the Hezbollah videos that el Houry and Saber analyze, the video deployments of the Palestinians are created primarily for foreign consumption and highlight certain themes (human rights) or use frames (“Avatar”) that are selected for their expected resonance with foreign publics. Palestinians are taking advantage of the possibilities that video creates to “write their own texts,” but their control over their own narrative is profoundly influenced by foreign influences and demands. The recent innovations in Palestinian protest and solidarity that are described throughout this paper represent a unique stage in the history of the Palestinian national movement, in which aspects of the Palestinian grassroots, internationalized Palestinian elites outside of the major political party-power structures and international civil society are actively forming a global civil society. Activists have been given a new chance to use information to change the larger set of ideas surrounding the Palestine-Israel conflict by presenting information that is likely to be received as true or by authorities. The process by which this knowledge spreads has the potential to form an effective political coalition and offer venues for political participation that construct the identity of the movement.

Conclusion

The conclusion offers an opportunity to state more forcefully the main arguments of this paper, clarify aspects of its methodology that may be unclear and to begin a discussion of related themes and ideas are that the author believes are important.

Summary and theoretical reprise

This paper began by asking under what circumstances do transnational solidarity movements have the ability to influence state policy. My study of the American solidarity movements with East Timor and Central America demonstrated that under favorable circumstances movements, in conjunction with public opinion and elite allies, were able to influence policy. My analysis did not find support for a unilinear path to movement influence but found a generalizable logic at work behind different examples of movement success. My central conclusion that influential movements enjoy concurrently expanding political opportunities, the capacity to frame an issue on their own terms and strong mobilizing structures is consistent with the principal theses of the political process framework. Why then did I center my comparative analysis on the impact of political opportunities rather than the internal characteristics of movements? In my assessment, political opportunities are a productive point of departure for this study in a way that internal characteristics are not for two main reasons. First, political environment to a considerable degree shapes the strategies and characteristics of a movement. The point at which a movement comes to influence considerable power over its environment a consequence of a dialectical process in which historical conditions have overdetermined the movement's principal traits. Marx's often quoted line; *Men make their own history but they do not make it under circumstances of their choosing* captures this logic. Second, as Theda Skocpol argues in *States and Social Revolutions* (1979) a political opportunity centered analysis explains the conjunctural dimension of social change, i.e. why a movement succeeded at certain points rather than others, with more clarity than agent-based explanations. The agency of groups plays an important role in their

ability to recognize and act upon political opportunities. However, opportunities begin to shift largely independent of the efforts or foresights of activists.

Chapter Two argued that US based Palestinian solidarity activists will likely face more consistently unfavorable dimensions of political opportunities than their predecessors fighting for East Timorese or Central American liberation. The strength of the Israel lobby within the US and Israel's own innovations in social control and the engineering of consent for the Occupation within Israel are the chief determinants of this situation. In the East Timorese and Central American cases a movement's advantage in one dimension of political opportunity opened others. For example, the absence of an influential pro-Indonesia lobby in the US during the early 1990's made the solidarity movement for East Timor one of the few voices on the issue, which helped it to persuade members of Congress to their point of view. By contrast, in each of the categories of political opportunity examined in this paper the Palestinians and their allies are at a considerable disadvantage. Consequently, it is unlikely that their ability to influence US foreign policy will increase in the near future.

The salience of political environment does not totally negate the agency of activists. Gaventa's reading of power is useful for understanding the strategic options that are available to the Palestinian solidarity movement. Gaventa notes that the function of authority is to reproduce and strengthen itself through its agenda setting and ideological powers. For those with power, Gaventa's three dimensions of power: participation, agenda setting and the cultural/hegemonic, expand outwards from the first to the third dimension. By contrast, social movements trying to challenge power move from the third to the first dimension. In lieu of elite allies or coercive power, solidarity movements engage in campaigns of information politics in which they use their intellectual resources to subvert dominant ideologies, place their causes on the political agenda and get power holders to execute their demands. Gaventa's insights on strategy are complementary with Antonio Gramsci's notion of a protracted *war of position* in which challengers seek gradual, cultural change before confronting the holders of power directly (Gramsci 1971: 238-239). According to Gramsci this strategy is imposed on challengers by a

developed ideological apparatus. The cases of the East Timorese and Central American movement, demonstrate, how agency can expand under these conditions. In both cases, solidarity movements underwent a lengthy developmental period before leaving the war of position for a *war of maneuver* in which they quickly mobilized once more favorable circumstances arose.

There are significant divergences between the East Timorese and Central America solidarity movements. East Timor never attracted the mass support of the Central America peace movement and Indonesia's violent (arguably genocidal) invasion and occupation of the country remains an obscure issue in the US. The Central America movement benefited from having a *war of position* fought for it by the anti-Vietnam war movement which penetrated deep inside American society and created opportunities for the Central America peace movement to mobilize from religious and political organizations. As a result, period between the origination and the *war of maneuver* of the Central America peace movement is extremely small. However, *war of position* remains a useful way of thinking about the pathways to political influence that challenger groups travel. Furthermore, the Central America solidarity movement continued to fight to shape public opinion even as it considerable amount of influence with elected officials.

In Chapter Three I expanded my discussion of political opportunities in order to assess the role of international relations in shaping the transnational movement for Palestine and determining its possibility for success. At the international level the Palestinians and their allies are to a considerable extent stifled by American power. They cannot take full advantage of international organizations to prosecute Israel either through sanctions or criminal tribunals because of the protection that US imperialism affords. The international system has helped form the transnational movement for Palestine in numerous ways. Without access to important institutions the movement has become highly localized in its activities while maintaining a common articulation of the conflict that to a considerable degree informed by international norms, legal principles and the research that international institutions. Because these articles enjoy public legitimacy and are seen as being above partisan affiliations they are

an important way in which the movement creates “hooks” between local circumstances and the conflict.

Both Chapters Three and Four capture some of the ways in which transnational information politics both change political environments by introducing new information and socially construct protest networks by creating opportunities for activists to act politically and imagine themselves as parts of a larger body. In other words, these chapters are investigations into the solidarity movement’s ongoing *war of position*. The central tactic of the BDS movement is to target businesses, schools and cultural icons and persuade them to first recognize and then dissolve their connections with the Occupation. Activists use a familiar repertoire of tactics including consumer boycotts and public demonstrations to pursue this goal.

Chapter Four captured my unresolved mix of optimistic and pessimistic feelings about the capacity of video strategies to contribute to liberation. *The case for optimism runs as follows:* The rise of Internet content and especially viral videos as a source of news and information offers unprecedented opportunities for activists to reach large audiences and provide verifiable information. It also has the additional function of giving activists the chance to participate in the movement in new ways such as forwarding or re-posting videos. The culture of these videos is consistent with other articulations of agency in the solidarity movement and other challenger movements and will for that reason continue to resonate. These cultures focus heavily on the importance of countering misrepresentations through the construction of an alternative media and give primacy to information politics over other forms of solidarity such as armed struggle. *The case for pessimism is:* Investigating the reflexive and relational aspects of these practices has the ability to engender a deeper understanding of how the agency of the transnational movement is imbricated in Gaventa’s third dimension of power. Although the video deployments discussed in this paper are presented by their distributors as potentially transformative acts, they also show how in some ways anti-colonial struggles have become increasingly conservative. In contrast to reflexive texts of the de-colonization of the Postwar era which

argued that there existed an innate connection between violence and liberation (for example Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* and Jean Paul Sartre's introduction to it) the videos discussed in this section illustrate the considerable extent to which challengers have adopted a core element of the colonial hegemony: that violence against it is impermissible. Or, at the very least solidarity activists have recognized the sturdiness of this ideology in the larger civil society. Gramsci's notion that *hegemony* functions a set of coordinates dividing legitimate from illegitimate political action in away that frequently slows down challengers is useful to keep in mind a case where activists are forced into relinquishing armed struggle because it is illegitimate and then champion their embrace of non-violence even as non-violence and its representations yield indeterminate and ambiguous political results. The reconciliation of this dilemma will be found in practice before it is made clear in theory.

Illuminations: Can Social Movement Theory Help Activists?

So far this study has discussed how social movement research helps explain and understand the transnational solidarity movement for Palestine, we now turn our attention to a related question: what can social movement research offer the transnational movement for Palestine? It is my belief that the study of social movement theory can be of benefit to the solidarity movement for Palestine, and social movements in general. As discussed in Chapter Three movements often study their peers and predecessors in order to find tactics and strategies that they can adapt to their own situations. However, these differ from the type of research that I am proposing in two main ways. First, their primary function is often to provide moral support to activists by reaffirming the justness of their cause and by assuring them that they have the agency to redress their grievances. Second, the scope of these inquiries is often very narrow. It is typically limited to the discovery of tactics and strategies that can be appropriated into a local context. By contrast, the value of a theoretical investigation is that it evaluates the significance a movement's successes and failures by putting them by placing them the context of the dynamics and tendencies of a given relations of forces.

What lessons could this type of analysis provide to the solidarity movement? My first piece of advice would be that the movement's participants and its leaders should make more sober assessments of the importance of the significance of their recent BDS victories. At the 2009 Campus BDS Conference numerous presenters, including Keynote Speaker Ali Abunimah, encouraged attendees by telling them that they were moving at a faster pace than the anti-apartheid BDS movement. This suggestion is highly misleading. As demonstrated in Chapter Two, the Palestinians and their allies are operating in uniquely unfavorable political circumstances. Furthermore, these conditions do not appear to be weakening. Although the BDS movement has won a number of interesting and significant victories the larger coercive, discursive and political structures, which oppress the Palestinians, have been untouched by their efforts.

Taking a sober assessment would require recognizing that the transnational struggle for Palestine will very possibly continue for decades. This perspective could be potentially beneficial for activists. The fact that the Palestine-Israel conflict will not be resolved in the near future gives activists the opportunity to develop its intellectual and logistical resources. The histories of East Timor and Central America solidarity movements shows that the breaking down of ideological and material structures of power takes decades and the windows of opportunities for challengers to effect change are typically short-lived. Thus, the solidarity movement should prepare to take advantage of these opportunities if they open while simultaneously working to erode the strength of pro-Israel ideologies that dominate in Gaventa's second and third dimensions of power.

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