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1. Introduction

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1. Introduction

This vicarious responsibility for things we have not done, this taking upon ourselves the consequences for things we are entirely innocent of, is the price we pay for the fact that we live our lives not by ourselves but among our fellow men, and that the faculty of action, which, after all, is the political faculty par excellence, can be actualized only in one of the many and manifold forms of human community.

– Hannah Arendt¹

- 1 In an international initiative published in fourteen languages, Palestinian civil society organizations in the West Bank invited the international community to unite in Bethlehem to participate in a weeklong campaign aimed at solidarity-building and to draw attention to living conditions under occupation. Marking its third summoning, the “Welcome to Palestine 2012” campaign sought to bring together local Palestinian activists and marginal global sympathizers in an act of symbolic nonviolent contestation of the Israeli occupation while providing a transnational advocacy and networking platform for the Palestinian cause. On April 15th 2012, the declared day of action, approximately 1,500 European and North American citizens headed to international airports with the anticipation of participating in the “flightilla” to Israel. Though relatively few international solidarity activists successfully partook in the campaign due to repression by the Israeli authorities and the enforcement of a no-fly list by compliant private airlines, their actions testify to a particular form of collective action. Seemingly passionate about their chosen political cause, participants mobilize for collective goods of which they are not the direct beneficiaries, posing a direct conundrum to much collective action theory which asserts that an individual’s rational interest is to mobilize based on the benefits to be gained (Olson 1965). Furthermore, just as the conflict itself has traversed its geographical boundaries, these activists are operating outside their national borders in the name of “the Palestinians”.
- 2 Since the beginning of the second Intifada in late September of 2000, the “Welcome to Palestine” campaign represented just one episodic event of a wave of many international nonviolent direct action grassroots efforts to contest the Israeli occupation. In an effort to transform the interpretation of Israel’s policies toward the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) to a human rights and justice-based perspective while diffusing a Palestinian narrative, an expansive network of individuals and organizations have become involved, both actively and passively, in the struggle for Palestinian rights. International activists have showed solidarity with the Palestinians in a variety of fashions, including coordinating global campaigns such as the Boycotts, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, the Free Gaza Movement flotillas, the annual Israeli Apartheid Week, etc., and participation in local pro-Palestinian support groups which organize their own actions and try to appeal to their governments and international organizations to put pressure on the state of Israel. Another approach has been the formal institutionalization of “transnational social movement organizations” (TSMOs) (Pagnucco and McCarthy 1992; Sikkink 1993; Smith, Pagnucco and Romeril 1994) based within the West Bank and Gaza and which are involved primarily in protective presence missions, documenting and reporting human rights abuses, advocacy, and direct action. In an effort to understand the “social movement industry” (SMI) (McCarthy and Zald 1977) advocating for Palestinian rights through solidarity activism as well as the increased level and range of civilian activities now directed against the occupation, and though this is only one example of transnational solidarity’s activism, this study will focus on the work of TSMOs active in the West Bank and the volunteers these organizations recruit.
- 3 At first glance, and seeming contradictory to the limits of rationality given that the participants of concern are not the direct beneficiaries of the fruits of their labor, solidarity activism poses several paradoxes requiring an alternative means of analysis which takes into account both motivational and structural factors. On the one hand, given the apparent contradiction implicit within this form of activism, an attempt to demystify an individual’s decision to participate in transnational solidarity activism is a necessary direction of research to unpack the phenomenon at hand. Such an investigation aspires to lead the researcher to an understanding of the

actors' rationales for action and thus a revelation of what it is that motivates these activists and how they justify their volunteerism. Furthermore, strong attention will be paid to the "epistemological resources" inherited or adopted by activists which induce one's propensity to act, and which provide a logic and vocabulary to make sense of one's engagement. On the other hand, rejecting agency as the only means of explaining transnational activism, political processes and opportunity structures that enable and facilitate such activity must also be taken into account. Here my interest is to explore more general global trends as well as specificities of the Israel/Palestine case in order to explain how it is that activists end up where they do.

4 As such, with a clear topic of research in mind, the next section will attempt to provide a more thorough presentation and transmission of my ideas in an effort to articulate the central research question and related sub-questions structuring this work. I will then continue to an exploration of the theoretical grounds and related thinking tools, extracted for the most part from social movement theory and more specifically works on solidarity movements as well as transnational activism, that have framed the thought process which has gone into the analysis of this research. After an exploration of the theoretical basis upon which this work attempts to construct itself, I will then provide a quick overview of existing works on transnational solidarity in Israel/Palestine, moving on to a clarification of the primary aims and justifications of this research. Next, I will explain the methods used in order to extract the empirical data, without which this study would not have been possible, and I will conclude with a plan indicating the manner in which the rest of this work will proceed.

1.1. Research Question

5 Using the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the solidarity activism organized around it, I conduct a sociological study of activism, focusing both on the organizational and individual level. In a first step, while bridging social movement theory on solidarity movements and transnationalism, I intend to question the processes and resources that enable international solidarity institutions to take shape in Israel/Palestine and which motivate international activists to take part in nonviolent direct action activism. In a second step, I use Bourdieusian analytical tools to address issues at the deeply quotidian, micro-level which theories of organizational sociology do not sufficiently address. In this way I investigate the manner in which activists interact with the spaces of occupation, more deeply analyzing their practices while abroad, and focus on the discourses mobilized to justify their actions while attempting to contextualize the strengths but also the weaknesses of their self-induced involvement in the conflict. Most scholars analyzing transnational action in the region begin with an ontological acceptance of the presence of internationals in spaces of resistance throughout Israel/Palestine, but my work seeks to understand the factors behind their transformation into solidarity activists.

6 Furthermore, having been an outsider using my physical presence as a symbolic channel of change, my reflection on my own subsequent participation has raised a number of questions as well as doubts about the practices of internationals in the field. In some respects, occupation is just one system of social injustice among a number of others and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one example of conflict among many. In light of this, why do individuals feel responsible for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? How do the actions of internationals in the OPTs relate back to their previous experiences, their socio-economic background, their plans for the future, etc.? To what extent are the activities of internationals politically meaningful?

7 These questions indicate the principal issues which my research will address. Linking them together, I aim to focus on what resources, processes, and epistemological beliefs enable and motivate individual international actors to participate in nonviolent solidarity activism against the occupation in Israel and the Occupied Territories in addition to what factors challenge and limit their practices.

8 To address this question, I will focus on the participation of internationals in organizations and social movements still operational today. The majority of social movement organizations active in the region, both local and global, emerged following the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, however, a few cases date some years before in the aftermath of

the Oslo Accords. As such, my study will primarily be concerned with the subsequent institutionalization of a transnational anti-occupation network in Israel/Palestine that took place between 2000 to the present day. Having established the principal research question driving this endeavor, this chapter will now move on to develop a few conceptual issues which have been central to the delimitation of the research included in this study.

1.2. Towards a Conceptualization of Solidarity Movements

- 9 Though the number of works treating solidarity movements and their participants are relatively limited within the social sciences, there are several terms and concepts which prove meaningful for the framing of this study. The term “solidarity”, derived from the literature on social movement theory, is used to describe “social movement organizations” (SMOs) (McCarthy and Zald 1977) and more generally social movements (SMs) in which groups of individuals participate in contentious collective action despite not being the direct, principal beneficiaries of those efforts. In the last three decades, this category of participants has increasingly preoccupied social scientists. Reynaud labels them “moral activists”, describing the arrival of new forms of “partial” and “non-exclusive” collective identities in the mid-twentieth century (1980: 280). McCarthy and Zald refer to “conscience constituents”, defining them as the “direct supporters of a SMO who do not stand to benefit directly from its success in goal accomplishment” (1977: 1222). These individuals could thus be considered to be altruistic advocates.
- 10 Yet, in contrast to solidarity movements of the 19th century and early 20th century, some scholars suggest that contemporary solidarity movements have undergone a process of politicization as a result of the rise of new social and political cleavages within post-industrial societies in the mid-20th century (Passy 1998). As opposed to merely providing disadvantaged populations with material goods and moral support, contemporary solidarity movements are also involved in actions targeting power holders with specific political claims and demands (Passy 2001: 11). Based on these developments, Passy (2001) characterizes solidarity movements as conduits of “political altruism,” which she defines as an activity carried out collectively with a clear political objective and satisfying Bar-Tal’s five characteristics of altruism. Though Passy relies on Bar-Tal’s conceptualization of altruistic behavior, she equally scrutinizes whether individuals can act without egoistic self-interest. To balance this paradox, Wuthnow’s (1991) theory of “acts of compassion” is employed to highlight the underlying individualistic orientation inherently implicit in volunteerism and altruism. Moreover, Passy derives the origins of solidarity movements to three specific epistemological traditions: Christianity, Humanism, and Socialism. As participants in solidarity movements do not themselves experience the grievances, which the movement is in opposition to, their mobilization is instead based on these three “master frames” (Snow and Benford 1992) which provide material as well as symbolic resources.
- 11 In conjunction, scholars have witnessed a general shift in the characteristics and the structure of social movements since the 1960s and 1970s. Like other “new social movements” (NSMs), contemporary solidarity movements are increasingly driven by the new middle class, as opposed to the working class (Parkin 1968), in pursuit of post-materialistic issues such as human rights, peace, environmentalism, etc. (Inglehart 1977). Furthermore, new social movements are managed in a far less centralized and hierarchical fashion, comprised of “supporters” as opposed to “members” (Byrne 1997). In terms of nature and function, solidarity movements embrace a strategy-oriented logic of action targeting external institutions in order to achieve their goals (Kriesi et al. 1995). Though these theorizations have principally been drawn from studies of solidarity movements within Western Europe at both local and national levels, the wide range of literature on transnationalism in social movement theory provides useful analytical tools to study transnational contentions exemplified within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1.3. The Transnational Dimension of Social Movements

- 12 Using Tarrow's definition, "transnational contention" refers to "conflicts that link transnational activists to one another, to states, and to international institutions" (2005: 25). Although examples of transnational collective action can be drawn from history—such as the Anglo-American antislavery campaign in the early to mid-19th century, the international women's suffrage movement from the late 19th to early 20th century, the anti-footbinding campaign in China led by Western missionaries and Chinese intellectuals from the late 19th to early 20th century, etc.—contemporary conditions foster more frequent and denser patterns of transnational collective action.
- 13 Some scholars argue that the increase in the number and stature of intergovernmental political institutions and international organizations (IOs) in the last three decades has provided a new arena and, in some cases, a new target for contention at the international level (Keck and Sikkink 1998; della Porta, Kriesi, and Rucht 1999). Tarrow and della Porta suggest that the development of "complex internationalism" has stimulated cognitive recognition of the changing environment, prompting "relational changes" among activists and encouraging movements to organize horizontally in transnational coalitions in order to pursue "vertical" targets and assemble "cross-national resources and global strategies" (2005: 7-10). Furthermore, "rooted cosmopolitans", that is "people and groups who are rooted in specific national contexts, but who engage in regular activities that require their involvement in transnational networks of contacts and conflicts" (2005: 237) are described as the forerunners of transnational activism.
- 14 Transnational activism is also facilitated by "rapid electronic communication, cheaper international flights, diffusion of the English language, and the spread of the script of modernity" (Tarrow 2005: 5; see also Meyer, Boli, and Thomas 1987; Bennett 2003)) while challenging the state's monopoly on the collection and diffusion of information (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 200). These catalytic enablers along with the internalization of liberal principles and values therefore intensify both the consciousness and concreteness of global interdependence (Robertson 1992; della Porta and Kriesi 2002: 3), supporting the materialization of a "global civil society" (Lipschutz 1992) in which national citizens voluntarily extend their sense of civic responsibility to an international scale.
- 15 Sceptical of the inevitability of the increase in transnational activism due to the internationalization and globalization of the world system, many scholars have attempted to develop models based on political opportunities and actor-agency to address the phenomenon of transnational collective action. Keck and Sikkink hypothesize that transnational interactions are most likely to develop around issues where (a) domestic actors are blocked or hindered from appealing to their governments, activating the "boomerang" effect; (b) local activists or "political entrepreneurs" endorse transnational networking believing that it will advance their cause; and (c) conferences and other spaces for international contact advance networking opportunities (1998:12). Despite scattered examples of transnational collective action, the ascent of a truly transnational social movement is extraordinarily rare. Instead, transnational networks and coalitions are more likely, which require lower levels of formal organizational integration yet still permit the diffusion of ideas and information (Bandy and Smith 2005: 3).
- 16 Beyond transnational contention between European and North American countries, few empirical studies have explored aspects of transnational dissidence organized across the global North-South divide. Olesen (2004) recounts the integration of solidarity activists within the Zapatista struggle, describing their relationship as "highly globalised in the sense that it is based on mutuality"; whereas Third World solidarity activism common during the Cold War exhibited "a one-way character in which there was a clear distinction between providers and beneficiaries of solidarity" (256). Coy (1997) describes the work of Peace Brigades International, a TSMO providing international protective accompaniment for human rights activists in Sri Lanka as well as in other countries—such as Haiti, Columbia, Guatemala, Canada, etc.—where nonviolent political activists are targets of political violence. Although the literature on transnational action organized between the North and the South is increasing, there are nonetheless many opportunities for further research.

1.4. The Case of Transnational Solidarity in Israel/Palestine

- 17 Despite the growing number of studies dealing with Palestinian and Israeli nonviolent direct action resistance since the beginning of the second Intifada (Hermann 2009; Pallister-Wilkins 2009; Lamarche 2010; Norman 2010; Hallward and Norman 2011), documentation on internationals participating in solidarity activism in the region and critical analysis of their role has been more limited. Perhaps the most sensationalized group of internationals active in the region, International Solidarity Movement (ISM) has received the most attention both from the media and scholars alike. Seitz (2003) describes the work and participants of ISM while underscoring the struggles met in the first years of its formation, focusing specifically on the coordination challenges and the management of differences in opinion between Palestinian and international activists. In particular, Seitz draws attention to fears maintained by internationals of being a “colonial activist” and the guilt of knowing that the Israeli army sees their blood as more “valuable” than a Palestinian’s.
- 18 Pollock (2006) undertakes an analysis of ISM as an example of youth engaging in a dialogue with globalization, as opposed to its mere experience by participating in transnational activist networks aimed at combating social injustice and human rights abuses. Embracing the “think globally, act globally” mantra, ISM activists “both defy and utilize a global inequality” as a point of entry in order to participate in and support nonviolent resistance against the Israeli military and settler occupation in the OPTs (Pollock 2006: 191). Additionally, Pollock examines the tactics and strategies employed by ISM activists accompanied by a social analysis.
- 19 Scruggs (2011), shifting the focus from ISM to Christian Peacemakers Team (CPT), a faith-based group providing nonviolent support in the West Bank, highlights the differing perspectives between CPT volunteers and Palestinian activists on the meaning and purpose of non-violence as a method of resistance. While these authors offer valuable insights into the activities of some internationals within the OPTs, some avenues of research remain unexplored. It is following a realization of certain shortcomings that my research question came to light, and upon which I justify the pertinence of my work.

1.5. Aims and Justifications

- 20 The principal aim of my research is to use a constructivist approach taking into account both political opportunity structure and activists’ agency. Additionally, I hope to provide a descriptive and analytical account of international solidarity activists who bring their physical bodies into spaces of contention within a particular conflict situation as a means to promote peace and ease oppression. Recent criticisms in the media have labeled internationals coming to the West Bank and taking part in demonstrations as “occupation tourists” while others have extended full support to the courageous individuals who use their bodies as human shields. My research hopes to strike a balance between these two views as well as contributing fresh insights into issues which have been overlooked in previous studies.
- 21 While most academic studies on transnational social movement organizations in Israel/Palestine have focused on the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), my research aims to adopt a more robust scope with regard to the TSMOs active in the region. As opposed to focusing solely on one organization, I will incorporate other less-sensationalized organizations carrying out similar work on the ground.
- 22 With respect to terminology, I wish to demystify the term “pro-Palestinian” which is often used to describe international activists participating on site in the transnational campaign against the Israeli occupation. To what extent are these individuals “pro-Palestinian”? Are these individuals accepting and promoting Palestinian culture and society on a broad level or are they reserved for showing support for specific individuals and groups internalizing practices and values which are similar to their own?
- 23 Also, I aim to put the term “global civil society” within a sociological context. Though the term “global civil society” is often employed in an all-inclusive manner, giving the impression that every individual has equal access and participates similarly within this imagined society, I suggest that only certain strata of society are actively engaged in this paradigm. Furthermore,

my research will be a commentary on the spread of liberal and post-materialist values and how these values draw actors into settings that do not relate to or impact on them directly.

24 By combining both a meso-level and micro-level analysis, I wish to draw a distinction between the goals and missions of an organization versus individual motivations. While the organizations analyzed in this study will be described as proponents of political altruism, to what extent does the application of this philosophy correspond to the motivational incentives and actual practices of volunteers? Are the actions of international volunteers truly driven by altruism?

25 On a more conceptual level, I want to use the example of transnational solidarity action in Israel/Palestine as an opportunity to forge a link between existing scholarship on transnationalism and solidarity movements. While a number of studies have reviewed solidarity movements within a national context, particularly in Western Europe, little attention has been paid to transnational extensions of solidarity, especially those outside of the European and North American context. As such, I hope to contribute to the fields of social movement studies and transnational studies, each of them thematic areas of research which find themselves at a multi-disciplinary crossroads.

1.6. Methods and Sources

26 In order to approach my research question, I have adapted a primarily sociological approach using the ethnographic method. Second, I have consulted online texts and emails from relevant organizations and actors to gain a greater insight into the more structural and technical elements needed to answer my research question.

27 In selecting the TSMOs which were the subject of this study, I focused on international and local organizations active in either Israel or the West Bank which take a firm political stance against the Israeli occupation, are volunteer-run as opposed to professionalized, and are predominately engaged in solidarity and support work with Palestinian communities. In other words, I focused on TSMOs evoking a strong discourse and engagement towards political altruism. Based on this criteria, I have compiled a list of the most active organizations whose main function is to bring in international volunteers to provide protective accompaniment, participate in and monitor demonstrations and other forms of direct action, monitor checkpoints, write reports, post film footage and photographs, etc. As such, though this list is not exhaustive, it is representative, incorporating the most visible and active TSMOs as examples of transnational solidarity in the region. Accordingly, I have selected the following TSMOs:

- International Solidarity Movement (ISM)
- Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)
- Ecumenical Accompaniment Program in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)
- Operation Dove Palestine Solidarity Project (PSP)
- International Women's Peace Service (IWPS)

28 Additionally, I have also included local Israeli SMOs active in solidarity activism for Palestinian rights that, given certain circumstances, integrate a few international volunteers. Though these organizations will not be deeply discussed as the focus is TSMOs, testimonies of volunteers from the following organizations were considered in my analysis:

- Solidarity
- Ta'ayush
- Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW)
- Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR)

29 Lastly, I have included international volunteer-activists who participated in nonviolent direct actions organized by Palestinian Popular Committees in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Only individuals who came explicitly to work with a particular movement or organization and consistently participated over a minimum of three weeks were considered.

30 As random sampling was not possible given the nature of this project and the particular groups and individuals studied, I chose my interviewees by haphazard selection, based according to

connections made while in the field and direct contact with pertinent actors. As a participant-observer in both Israeli-led and Palestinian-led direct actions, I either met internationals directly in the field or met individuals who then put me in touch with pertinent contacts.

31 Once I was able to establish a network, I conducted a total of 17 formal interviews, 16 one-on-one and one group interview with four participants, with international solidarity activists over a period of two months (January 2012-March 2012). In these interviews, I asked a series of semi-structured, open-ended questions designed to address personally held beliefs and value systems of my sample as well as indicate mechanisms and processes for the phenomenon under study. Additionally, I interviewed one Palestinian activist and two Israeli activists to integrate their views on the presence of third party actors in the field. Furthermore, informal conversations also contributed to my analysis.

1.7. Plan

32 I will proceed by presenting my results in four parts. First, I will provide a brief historical account of transnational solidarity in Israel/Palestine since the Oslo Peace Accords followed by an in-depth description of the principal transnational organizations with a focus on their operational capacity and organizational structure. Second, relying heavily on social movement theory, I will indicate the specific opportunities and processes that can be used to understand transnational solidarity activism in the Israeli-Palestinian context and put forward an analysis of the factors motivating internationals to take action, therefore bridging together structure and agency. Third, using Bourdieusian “thinking tools” to study the everyday, I will illustrate how international solidarity activists engage with their terrain, examining the relationships and interactions they partake in during their “transnational moment”, that is the temporal period in which international activists and/or volunteers enter a foreign country momentarily, forming transnational relations as they intermesh with local actors in activism. Lastly, I will review my findings and contributions while underlining the limitations of my work and suggesting potential prospects for further research.

Notes

1 Arendt, Hannah. 1987. “Collective responsibility”, in Bernauer, James William (ed.), *Amor mundi: explorations in the faith and thought of Hannah Arendt*. Boston: Martinus-Nijhoff.

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2. A Roadmap to Transnational Solidarity in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

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2. A Roadmap to Transnational Solidarity in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

- 1 In September 1993, Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, and Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), famously shook hands on the White House lawn following the signing of the Oslo Accords. Yet, as peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians finally seemed within reach after nearly 25 years of ongoing military occupation and conflict, practices on the ground attested to another reality. Throughout the 1990s, Israel endorsed land expropriation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories by permitting the construction of settlement infrastructure and settlement expansion thus complicating the feasibility of a sovereign Palestinian state. Meanwhile, although Arafat, representing the PLO, negotiated an agreement with the Israelis, many Palestinians were opposed to the Oslo Accords long before it was signed. As the proposal refused to recognize the right of return for the millions of Palestinian refugees and compromised the territorial integrity of historic Palestine, in 1974 the first Rejectionist Front was established in direct opposition to the negotiated settlement, some supporting a retaliative armed struggle.
- 2 Since its initiation, members of the Rejectionist Front include the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Arab Liberation Front (ALF), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF), Al-Sa'iqa, Fatah-the Uprising, Fatah-the Revolutionary Council, the National Salvation Front, the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and others (Chasdi 2002: 309). In response to the killing of 29 Muslims in the 1994 Cave of the Patriarchs massacre in the Ibrahimi mosque, Hamas launched their first suicide bombing campaign within Israel's borders, mimicking the strategy until then only used by the Islamic Jihad, legitimizing Israel's security concerns and calling into question the credibility of peace negotiations (Norman 2010: 30-31). Notable setbacks also included the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin at a pro-Oslo Accords rally in 1995 by an extremist right-wing Zionist, Benjamin Netanyahu's destructive leadership from 1996-1999, and so forth (Said 2000: xi). Finally, the failure of the Camp David talks in 2000 and the continuation of the occupation incited outrage and disappointment among Palestinians, culminating in the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000 and subsequent engagements in violent and nonviolent resistance.
- 3 In an exploration of transnational solidarity activism in Israel/Palestine, I will undertake a meso-level analysis of the TSMOs engaged in solidarity work and political altruism in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. In doing so, I will first provide a detailed introduction of each organization, assigning them in groups in terms of their religiosity or secularity, in order to contextualize their involvement as a third party in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Next, I will put forward an examination of action repertoires, or the operations strategy of collective action (Tilly 1986: 541), for the sake of demonstrating what it means for the given organizations to endorse Palestinian rights. Lastly, I will analyze the organizational structures facilitating such action repertoires by focusing primarily on the types of volunteerism, the recruitment process, and the sources of financial resources. As such, the aim of this section is to situate transnational solidarity activism in Israel/Palestine by highlighting the specificities of the voluntary organizations while demonstrating how they operate.

2.1. Organizations of Transnational Solidarity

- 4 Increasingly in the last two decades, social scientists have noticed a general rise in the number of TSMOs (Smith 1997; Sikkink and Smith 2002). Given that transnational social movement organizations are the principal structures through which international volunteers become engaged and hence transnational activism is mobilized in the West Bank, one cannot understand this phenomenon without an examination of the organizations themselves. Who are the principal actors responsible for the resurrection of such organizations? What arguments are proposed by each organization to support their projects? What cultural and philosophical resources do these organizations draw from and build upon? In order to address

these questions, a contextual background highlighting the origins and values proposed by the organizations, which have been the subject of this study, will be explored. Though this list is not exhaustive, there are predominately six organizations, religious and non-religious alike, engaged in mobilizing international solidarity in the region.

2.1.1. Religious Organizations

- 5 Among the solidarity social movement organizations operating in the West Bank, a number of them are based on a religious identity and mission. First conceptualized by Ron Sider, a Canadian-born theologian and social activist, Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) offered members of the “peace churches”¹ a new opportunity to bear witness to their faith. Headquartered in the United States with regional support groups in the UK, the Philippines, Canada, the Netherlands, Australia, New Zealand, and Indonesia, CPT is a faith-based organization committed to “building partnerships to transform violence and oppression” while “reflect[ing] the presence of faith and spirituality” in order to promote a world vision which “embrace[s] the diversity of the human family and live[s] justly and peaceably with all creation” (Christian Peacemaker Teams 2010). Alongside operations in other conflict zones —such as Iraq, Columbia, Uganda, Congo, etc.—CPT currently maintains a peacemaker team in Hebron, also known as Al-Khalil in Arabic, located approximately 30 kilometers south of Jerusalem in the southern West Bank with a population of approximately 160,000.²
- 6 Increasingly since the 1990s, Hebron’s old city and surrounding districts have been transformed into spaces of tension between remaining Palestinian inhabitants and the growing number of ultra-Orthodox settlers. In 1997, three years following the Cave of the Patriarchs massacre in the Ibrahimi mosque³, Hebron was partitioned into two areas, H1 and H2 (refer to Figure 2 in Appendix 1), the latter of which came under Israeli military control. Although the population of approximately 30,000 Palestinians living in H2 is permitted to stay in their homes, the measures that have been taken by the Israeli authorities as well as the violent behavior of the settler population drastically restrict the movement and complicate the daily lives of the families who have decided to stay in their homes.
- 7 In 1998, CPT set up a full-time peace corps, headquartered in the H2 zone of Hebron and active in the greater South Hebron Hills region. Staffed by a continual flow of veteran and newly-recruited volunteers, CPT provides support for “Palestinian-led, nonviolent, grassroots resistance to the Israeli occupation and the unjust structures that uphold it” in hope that “by collaborating with local Palestinian and Israeli peacemakers and educating people in [their] home communities, [they] help create a space for justice and peace” (Christian Peacemaker Teams 2010). As such, CPT draws on Christian teachings coupled with a priority of peace and justice in its support of Palestinian nonviolent resistance and steadfastness against the occupation.
- 8 Having similar attributes to that of CPT, Operation Dove is one of many projects organized by the Pope John XXII community, which was founded in 1973 by a Catholic Italian activist-priest, Father Oreste Benzi. The Pope John XXII community is based in Rimini, Italy and maintains Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since 2006. Of the wide range of programs “committed to remove the causes of injustice” present in 25 countries around the world, Operation Dove was first started in 1992 in response to the war in Yugoslavia as a way to support “the active building of peace in war zones, through a nonviolent presence in the opposing fronts of conflict areas in order to ‘build bridges and soothe wounds’.” In conjunction with operations in Albania, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, East Timor, Congo, Chiapas (Mexico), and Chechnya (Russia), Operation Dove sends a non-violence peace corps, made up of only Italian volunteers, to Palestine (Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXII).
- 9 With the help of CPT, Operation Dove set up permanent operations in the village of At-Tuwani following an invitation by the South Hebron Popular Committee and the Israeli peace group Ta’ayush in 2004. At-Tuwani is a small village located in Area C, with a population of 200-300 inhabitants, outside the city of Yatta (refer to Figure 5 in Appendix 1). Less than one kilometer away from the small village rests the Ma’On settlement, which was established in the

early 1980s, and the Havat Ma'on outpost.⁴ Given the unusually close proximity between the villagers of At-Tuwani and the neighboring settlers, confrontation between the two parties has become a frequent event. Children on their way to school, shepherds grazing sheep, farmers cultivating the land, etc. became subjects of settler violence. Based on these conditions, with the help of CPT and Ta'ayush, the village was able to solicit international volunteers in order to ease the hardships of daily life. Though principally a religious-based organization, Operation Dove expands its horizons by instrumentalizing a dialogue on human rights and exercising itself in the international arena in order to legitimize its actions in conflict zones.

10 The third major religious organization active in the region, born out of the "Ecumenical campaign to End the Illegal Occupation of Palestine: Support a Just Peace in the Middle East," the Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI) was established in 2002 under an initiative proposed by the World Council of Churches (WCC), a fellowship of over 300 churches worldwide "seeking unity, a common witness and Christian service" (World Council of Churches 2012). Recognizing UN resolutions as the foundations of a just peace while using the Geneva Conventions as an indicator of the responsibilities of the state of Israel as an occupying power, EAPPI brings groups of international ecumenical accompaniment volunteers, referred to as Ecumenical Accompaniers (EAs), to the West Bank to "experience life under occupation." During their term, volunteers "work with local churches, Palestinian and Israeli NGOs, as well as Palestinian communities in various capacities, to try to reduce the brutality of the occupation and improve the daily lives of both peoples" (World Council of Churches 2012).

11 Under the direction of the World Council of Churches and through its coordinating body in Geneva, Switzerland, EAPPI embodies the efforts of approximately 30 church groups and ecumenical partners from the following twelve countries: Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Furthermore, EAPPI maintains a broad range of operations in the West Bank with teams placed in Bethlehem, Hebron, Jayyous, Jerusalem, Nablus, Ramallah, Tulkarem, and Yanoun (refer to Figure 1 in Annex 1). While in the field, EAs "provide protective presence to vulnerable communities, monitor and report human rights abuses and support Palestinians and Israelis working together for peace"; and once back in their home country, "EAs campaign for a just and peaceful resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict through an end to the occupation, respect for international law and implementation of UN resolutions" (World Council of Churches 2012). Bridging a Christian discourse of salvation with the endorsement of international humanitarian law and UN Security Council resolutions, EAPPI constructs a model for civil disobedience rooted in international norms and religious doctrine.

2.1.2. Non-religious Organizations

12 While performing nearly identical missions, secular TSMOs in the West Bank develop their collective action framework upon principles of liberalism and socialism, disconnecting from a religious discourse. The most sensationalized TSMO present in the region, the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) materialized for the first time almost unwittingly in December 2000. Marching for the removal of an Israeli military base located on the outskirts of Beit Sahour, a small Palestinian town just outside of Bethlehem reputed for its nonviolent resistance against the occupation, Palestinian activists joined by Israeli and international activists successfully entered the military base and carried out a nonviolent action. While the Israeli army had been systematically suppressing Palestinian protest since the outbreak of the second Intifada, using violence if needed, on this particular occasion, the demonstration surprisingly took place without complications and a French activist even managed to place a Palestinian flag atop a military watchtower. From this moment, the power of aligning foreign and Israeli activists alongside Palestinian nonviolent activists as a protest strategy was realized and developed into a permanent project.

13 Of the initial group of co-founders, mentionable names include: Ghassan Andoni, a Palestinian activist of Beit Sahour, a physics professor at Birzeit University, and the director of the

Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between Peoples; George Rishmawi, also a Palestinian activist from Beit Sahour; Neta Golan, an Israeli activist married to a Palestinian man, living in the West Bank; Huwaida Arraf, an American-Palestinian human rights activist and lawyer; and Adam Shapiro, and American Jewish activist and documentary filmmaker. Constructed by a conglomerate of transnational activists, ISM aspired “to support and strengthen the Palestinian popular resistance by providing the Palestinian people with two resources, international solidarity and an international voice with which to nonviolently resist an overwhelming military occupation force” (International Solidarity Movement). Made famous following the deaths of ISM volunteers Rachel Corrie and Tom Hurndall in 2003, today there are ISM support groups⁵ mobilizing volunteers across the globe. Upholding the pragmatic utility of non-violence⁶ and emphasizing the need for direct action to contest the “facts on the ground”, ISM solicits international mobilization as a means to compose and diffuse a new narrative and image of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while demonstrating support for the Palestinians and their nonviolent resistance throughout the West Bank and minimally in Gaza.

14 Since 2002, the International Women’s Peace Service (IWPS) has brought “human rights volunteers” to the village of Deir Istiya, located in Area B bordering Area C, in the Salfit district of the northern West Bank approximately 15 kilometers southwest of Nablus and 7 kilometers east of Salfit, with a population of less than 4,000 (refer to Figure 4 in Appendix 1). In addition to its close proximity to the Separation Barrier, Deir Istiya has been subject to similar conditions of life under occupation as described with regard to other areas in the West Bank. Given the direct impact of the occupation in addition to the willingness of Deir Istiya’s community to resist nonviolently, IWPS became involved in the region.

15 Since its initiation, the IWPS consistently “provides an international presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories with the aim of supporting nonviolent resistance against the occupation and intervening against and documenting Human Rights violations” (International Women’s Peace Service 2010). Though based in the village of Deir Istiya, IWPS is active throughout the Salfit district and is the only organization active in the region. Unlike the other organizations, IWPS is only open to women volunteers, evoking a feminist approach to peacemaking. In summary, IWPS is based on the conviction of women’s increased capacity in peacebuilding roles, working to facilitate the inclusion of Palestinian women in both grassroots resistance and the peace process while underscoring the termination of the occupation in respect of human rights and international law as their overall objective.

16 The most recently developed of the affiliations thus far mentioned, the Palestine Solidarity Project (PSP) is a “Palestinian project dedicated to opposing the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land through nonviolent direct action” which was launched in the summer of 2006 from the village of Beit Ommar, located 11 kilometers northwest of Hebron in the Southern West Bank with a population of nearly 17,000. With funding from the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute in New York⁷, PSP was co-founded by Rebekah Wolf and her husband, Mousa Abu Maria. Wolf is an American citizen of Jewish descent, who first came to the West Bank in 2003 as an ISM volunteer. Wolf’s activism eventually led her to the village of Beit Ommar where she met her current husband, Mousa Abu Maria, a former political prisoner, nonviolent activist, and member of the Beit Ommar Popular Committee. Inspired by ISM, Wolf and Abu Maria created the PSP in order to mobilize international participation in support of nonviolent resistance in Beit Ommar and neighboring villages.

17 Located in area C, Beit Ommar is encircled by five neighboring Israeli settlements—Karmeit Tsur, Kfar Etzion, Migdal Oz, Bat Ayin and Allon Shevut (refer to Figure 3 in Appendix 1). Though once a prosperous agricultural village, economic and social life in Beit Ommar has suffered, at least in part, as a result of the occupation. In response, some of Beit Ommar’s community is committed to resisting the occupation in the belief that “peace and security are rights not just for some, but for *all* the people of the world.” International participation is thus a valuable resource “dedicated to supporting Palestinian communities resisting the Israeli occupation” who are subject to “intimidation, violence, economic strangulation, and a history of displacement” (Palestine Solidarity Project). A pronounced exemplification of the intersection between the “local” and the “global” as well as diffusion processes, PSP has

imitated the action repertoire of other TSMOs which bring international volunteers to support protest and steadfastness in order to better guarantee the survival, efficiency, and success of Beit Ommar's grassroots civil disobedience movement.

18 Following the outbreak of the second Intifada and the breakdown of political willingness to make peace, there was an emergence of transnational solidarity organizations which attempted to support alternative means of survival and contestation "in the meantime". Furthermore, the high profile of the conflict and the long sought after peace has encouraged organizations to launch projects, as well as donors to provide financial resources, aimed at reconciling peace. Together, these six organizations represent the accrued efforts of "rooted cosmopolitans", in other words, "people and groups who are rooted in specific national contexts but who engage in regular activities that require their involvement in transnational networks of contacts and conflicts" (della Porta and Tarrow 2005: 237) in their struggle for the advancement of a given cause. Activist-priests, Diaspora descendants, transnational couples, professional activists, university professors, human rights and peace activists are among the individual profiles which have instituted organizations engaged in the protection of Palestinian rights and the advocacy of an end to the occupation. United only by their solidarity with Palestinian rights, the organizations and their founders otherwise represent groups versed in different epistemological discourses.

19 Though the organizational identity is articulated in variant terms, each organization, religious and non-religious, adopts systems of moral universalism encouraging individuals, regardless of race, religion, or citizenship, to rise up against that which is normatively framed as "wrong". First, there are Christian faith-based organizations, such as CPT, founded on religious culture and symbols drawn from the Bible, advocating Christians to serve the poor and the suffering in their pursuit of a life similar to that of Jesus Christ. Deviating from a purist approach, EAPPI and Operation Dove merge Christian teachings with international law, intermingling two different "doxa" (Bourdieu, 1977) not commonly grouped together. Moving away from a religious affiliation, ISM and PSP pursue the defense of human rights, justice, and peace whereas IWPS builds on these cultural foundations while incorporating a gender perspective. Thus, as opposed to witnessing the replacement of the traditional advocates of solidarity by the "new middle class", as suggested by Passy (2001) in the case of national solidarity movements, instead there is evidence of a cross-fertilization, both in terms of interactions between different community bases and intermingling of social philosophies, between Christian, humanistic, and socialist traditions in the development of a collective identity based on the pursuance of Palestinian rights. Having reviewed one branch of civil society organizations striving for Palestinian rights, I will now attempt to explain what it means to defend Palestinian rights in terms of operations strategy and what organizational structure is appropriated in order to fulfill the organizations' missions.

2.2. Operations Strategy and Organizational Structure

20 With a bearing on the most active organizations engaged in facilitating transnational Palestinian rights solidarity activism in Israel/Palestine, alongside the social and cultural resources on which they draw from, the objective is now to provide a synthesis on the specific action repertoires of these organizations as well as the organizational structure which permit a given type of collective action. As such, this section will attempt to address the following questions: What does it mean for these six organizations—CPT, ISM, EAPPI, IWPS, Operation Dove, and PSP—to defend Palestinian rights? What are the limitations of their organizational support and solidarity? Furthermore, how are the organizations structured? How do they mobilize resources? How do they recruit and train volunteers?

2.2.1. Operational Capacity

21 Together forming a network of advocates for Palestinian rights, the TSMOs that predominately facilitate solidarity activism in the West Bank collectively subscribe to particular operational elements, which distinguish them from other categories of organizations. Once in the field, Palestinian rights TSMOs are engaged in an array of activities in specific spatial locations which are designed to ease the pressure on the daily lives of the select communities. In

varying degrees, each organization provides the following services: a) protective presence to threatened communities; b) monitoring and documenting of human rights abuses; c) support for Palestinians and Israelis working for peace and d) advocacy.

22 With regard to protective presence, this type of engagement strategically employs internationals to accompany targeted Palestinian communities based on the assumption that the physical presence of international witnesses will reduce the likelihood and intensity of violent or harmful interactions between Israeli soldiers or settlers and Palestinians. Though other instances may occasionally arise, the most common accompaniment work involves escorting children on their way to school, consorting with shepherds while they are grazing their sheep, assisting farmers during the harvest season, staying with families who have received demolition orders on their homes, and attending nonviolent demonstrations. Some Israeli peace groups are involved in similar accompaniment work. However, practical considerations generally limit the already marginal group of Israeli activists to accompanying Palestinians on Saturdays. As even the most extreme Israeli activists are not prepared to move to the West Bank and establish a permanent presence there, the placement of international volunteers in remote, vulnerable communities where they are available on a 24-hour basis allows for the development of a more effective and efficient on-the-ground response team.

23 Closely related to accompaniment work, monitoring and documenting human rights abuses remains a significant prerogative for organizations defending Palestinian rights in the West Bank. Protective presence missions are simultaneously a monitoring task, resulting in documentation should an incident arrive or conditions be judged inhumane. Beyond the aforementioned accompaniment assignments, volunteers also monitor major checkpoints, such as the Qalandia checkpoint (Ramallah-Jerusalem) or the Huwara checkpoint (Nablus); checkpoints within the organizations main area of operations; and occasionally “flying checkpoints”, which are temporary surprise checkpoints lacking permanent infrastructure. Equipped with handheld camcorders, international Palestinian rights defenders are prepared to film in order to produce hard evidence in support of any potential reports, covering incidents and events which would otherwise go unreported. The monitoring and reporting carried out by volunteers simultaneously acts as a pedagogic formation for the volunteers themselves, resulting in the acquisition of a particular knowledge production and establishing confidence in one’s “subjective” and “objective competencies” (Mayer 2011: 229). Additionally, organizations collect data on the number of people waiting on either side of the checkpoint, the time it takes to cross the checkpoint, the number of children searched, and so forth. Resulting reports are then distributed to international NGOs (INGOs) such as the International Red Cross Committee, the United Nations, and Amnesty International; foreign consulates and diplomats; local activist and NGO networks; and, lastly, on the respective organization’s online website and perhaps Facebook or other social network engines.

24 Simply demonstrating solidarity and support is an important element of the organizations’ work. Indeed, for some volunteers this facet was appraised as the most important:

“I think the solidarity part is the most important thing even if you can’t maybe change anything at least you show the Palestinians that they have friends in the world. That not all people outside of Palestine are like the settlers or the Israeli soldiers but that that they also have friends. And most people appreciate that, are grateful for that and I think that’s the best part of our activities, whether we are in Sheikh Jarrah or go to demonstrations, just that we are present there.”⁸

“But on a personal level it is very satisfying to be connecting face to face with Palestinians in that struggle and standing side-by-side with them. You know, someone from the UK, which was very instrumental in creating that situation, I think it’s good that people from the UK can stand next to the Palestinians and say ‘I’m with you’.”⁹

25 Yet, although solidarity organizations broadly support the end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and recognize the Palestinian right to self-determination, their cooperation is conditional. Cooperation and support is contingent on the communities’ willingness to resist the occupation nonviolently, either actively through symbolic demonstrations of contestation or even passively by maintaining a presence on their land, referred to as “steadfastness.” In addition, these organizations predominately network on a community-level, partnering

with Palestinian communities directly impacted by the construction of the Separation Barrier; the encroachment of neighboring settlements; bureaucratic displays of violence such as the closure of roads, the refusal of building permits, the destruction of unauthorized domiciles; and physical violence and harassment by the military or settlers.

26 As opposed to “bottom-up” peace initiatives funded by international donors during the Oslo years to create a dialogue and renewed trust between Palestinians and Israelis (Bocco and Taiana 2011: 73), organizations of the post-Intifada years privileged the Palestinian side in support of a “peace on the ground”. As a CPTer remarked, “[w]e have to always support the leadership of the Palestinian people, or wherever we are working, the local nonviolent leaders.”¹⁰In other words, as these organizations value pacifist resistance, an emphasis was placed on noncooperation and nonviolent strategies in order to avoid creating new and more extreme cleavages between the two parties, further jeopardizing a peaceful end to the occupation. Second, operations were organized at the grassroots level in order to provide resources for disfavored communities enduring physical and material costs, particularly those in Area C under Israeli administrative and security control. Based on these circumstances, as well as certain particularities of Gaza, TSMOs have predominately operationalized solidarity projects in the West Bank in a select number of Palestinian villages willing to cooperate with international partners. As such, on-site solidarity with Palestinians only arose in a few areas, just as the nonviolent struggle itself is isolated to a select number of communities as opposed to a mass phenomenon (Pallister-Wilkins 2009: 396).

27 Furthermore, these solidarity movement organizations do not function within an isolated world, but instead establish contacts at a local level and collaborate closely with other collectives believed to share similar values and aspirations. Inter-organizational ties act as a means to express countenance for the work carried out by particular Israeli and Palestinian peace groups. While support may be understood as of primarily symbolic and social meaning rather than economic or material, these interactions lay the foundation for the development of complex transnational networks based on the “principled-issue” (Sikkink 1993) of Palestinian rights. Accounting for the various contacts within Israeli society, as provided by an EAPPI volunteer:

“We’ve met a lot of Israeli sort of NGOs and peace groups but they would be Israelis involved in campaigning against militarism, they’re a very particular group. We’ve met Breaking the Silence, we haven’t worked with Ta’ayush but other groups do. Um, ICAHD, B’tselem, PeaceNow, Women in Black, Ma’schom Watch, Grassroots Jerusalem, Physicians for Human Rights, and we did visit a settlement.”¹¹

28 Other examples of Israeli civil society peace groups include Rabbis for Human Rights, Yesh Din, Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), Solidarity, Anarchists Against the Wall (AATW), etc.; and on the Palestinian side, Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between Peoples (PCR), Alternative Information Center (AIC), Holy Land Trust, Popular Committees, Popular Committee against the Wall and Settlements, and so forth. While alliances and the intensity of those alliances will vary from one organization to another, there is nonetheless an observable process of networking between the “local” and the “global” with recognizable overlaps and commonalities. TSMOs essentially provide one of many interlocutors for local organizations through which they may transmit their cause to the international arena, with a possibility of mobilizing additional resources.

29 Lastly, inter-organizational ties also serve a pragmatic function as each of the mentioned organizations function with limited means, both in terms of financial and human resources. First, certain occasions may require the manpower of two or more organizations pulled together. For example, should there be an order for the demolition of two houses in a Palestinian village located in Area C, any attempt to block the Israeli military from doing so would require as many people present as possible. Second, as the Palestinian rights TSMOs are run by volunteers as opposed to professionals, there may instances in which experts would better manage certain information or tasks. For example, as opposed to merely posting an article on the organization’s website, important data collected at a checkpoint would have more impact should it be analyzed by a professional human rights organization, such as

B'Tselem, with greater technical expertise and a wider range of contacts. Networks of support thus reinforce the development of a unique community or branch of civil society fighting for Palestinian rights who then become engaged in a continuous exchange of social capital both exclusively among themselves and through mediated contacts. Though the organizations have no concrete authority, their power rests in the diffusion of collected information and the consequential delegitimization of the Israeli occupation.

30 Whether through the dissemination of organizational documents, lobbying politicians, or merely recounting eyewitness testimonies, advocacy also represents an important component of transnational solidarity activism. Either during the volunteers' service period or once they return to their home country, "spreading the word" bridges the realities of today with the hopes for tomorrow. According to a number of volunteers, in contrast to the overwhelming strength of the Israeli narrative, both a consequence of the Holocaust memory and a product of the Zionist lobby, the Palestinian narrative has historically been incapacitated and overlooked:

"Well, it's more extreme here. Of course, media is not neutral at all, at least the mainstream media. But especially for these places, it's quite extreme [media bias] and you see in Europe, most of all, especially if you look at the older people, there is still some guilt over the Second World War, so it's still quite pro-Israel, mainly because of that, I think."¹²

"Unfortunately, they [the Palestinians] feel like their voice isn't being heard outside, so I think they're happy that the internationals are around. As the Palestinian voice isn't being heard, I mean, it is not as strong as the whole media machine of the Israelis and the Palestinian voice doesn't have same weight as an international voice."¹³

"In say the 50s and 60s, people would have been very pleased for the Jewish people that they had somewhere after the horror of the holocaust...And my parents would have been sort of human, people, humanistic humanitarian people, they'd have been, if they had been sufficiently in touch with the fact that the Palestinian people had been pushed out of their own land I think they'd have talked more about that. So I think it only gradually came into people consciousness that, yes, that was great that that state was set up but look at the Nakba side of it."¹⁴

31 Furthermore, insufficiently equipped with financial resources and the network base to launch a reactionary campaign, the Palestinian community does not have the capability, nor perhaps the will, to change international public opinion regarding the conflict on its own. While coverage on episodic events—such as the Shabra and Shatila massacre of 1982, popular resistance during the first Intifada (1987-1993) and the second Intifada (2000-2005), the Gaza War (Dec. 2008-Jan. 2009)—raise questions and debates both on the individual and institutional level, advocacy efforts must be organized in a more systematic and ongoing fashion.

32 In order to augment the reach and magnitude of the Palestinian rights campaign, solidarity movement organizations encourage their volunteers to advocate for Palestinian rights. While on their mission, volunteer-activists may write articles for media sources back in their home country, post information and photos on their Facebook or other social networking pages, lobby their Consulate Generals in Israel, or perhaps organize a delegation to come join the organization in the field. Also, each organization has its own media contacts to which information may be transmitted. As a CPT volunteer recounts: "Our media list, there are so many on our media list that we have to send out separate emails. And that's really important to get the word out to them."¹⁵ Each organization headquarters will have a list of media contacts for volunteers to refer to and use. Mentionable media contacts include Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabia, Agence France Presse (AFP), BBC, ARD TV¹⁶, and Reuters. Otherwise, advocacy work mostly begins once the volunteers have returned to their home country.

33 While most of the Palestinian rights TSMOs do not oblige their volunteers to engage in advocacy efforts, with the exception of EAPPI¹⁷, and therefore fail to maximize the potential of their participants, volunteers nonetheless seem to engage in a minimal level of advocacy. Yet, for the most part, their advocacy remains at a very informal level, consisting mostly of discussions with family and friends. As a returning activist explained:

"When I returned back to Italy after the 3 months in the summer, I organized at a high school some lessons, because its important that children also have the possibility to know about this nonviolent resistance. And then I organized a press conference with some journalists from my town and they

wrote an article about the situation here. And also I speak with friends. For me, the objective, maybe you can't reach the government, so you have to reach slowly where you live."¹⁸

34 Among other advocacy opportunities, volunteers mentioned organizing screenings of informative movies or documentaries, trying to recruit youth as volunteers, giving lectures, talking with local politicians, etc. Despite its seemingly small scale, this advocacy strategy is claimed to have more impact as the narratives will be personalized, giving more weight to the issue than if it were reported in the news:

"I think it's the personal stories that touch and everyone understands these stories because if you give the slogans people say 'I can't understand because I don't know the situation'. But if they see specific examples of injustice then they realize, hopefully."¹⁹

"I think we have an important role in this thing. It is different when you hear about the conflict from the newspaper or television. I live in a little town so it could be easier to involve people in this if you speak directly with them. They can say 'oh there is a young guy from our town that went to Palestine. What he went there to do. And what happened in Palestine?' So I think if you speak directly with the people that maybe know you it's a good way to spread, to let the people know what happens here. It's very different from the newspaper from the media."

35 However, some individuals also expressed the limitations of such a grassroots approach, especially with regard to close family and friends:

"I sort of write regular emails about the situation here, not that many people read them. I think people back home were really interested when I first came here and they wanted to talk to me when I got back. But now it's kind of this routine, 'ya, ok [he]'s been away for 3 months in Palestine'. It's kind of back to normal. It sort of drains the interest because I've come so often."

36 Also, some international volunteers may write articles, though, these articles generally do not appear in mainstream media sources, but in marginal print or online sources, and often contribute to a reproduction of information that is already "out there":

"When I came here, I didn't think of the Palestinians as my main audience. I wanted to write articles for the Swedish population. I was thinking about writing a lot of articles and informing people about the situation here and after a while, I wrote some articles for the ISM web and some newspapers back home. Not the big ones, printed daily or weekly newspapers. But after awhile, I felt like the situation just repeated itself and I couldn't think of more articles to write"²⁰

"... And to me that [doing on the ground work with Ta'ayush] was much more satisfying maybe than sitting in an office, traveling around talking to people, writing things. Because so many people do that. There's so much information about here. And what more can people write about to be quite honest."²¹

37 Nonetheless, there is a grassroots diffusion of information, challenging the state's monopoly (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 200), that might otherwise not make it to an international audience. Moreover, it should be noted that advocacy efforts of these TSMOs are directed toward the international arena, based on information extracted from the local level, while mostly bypassing the national level consisting of both Israeli and Palestinian audiences.

38 On the whole, advocacy is mostly carried out on a horizontal scale, relying on the will of the volunteers to reach out to their communities both to spread awareness and mobilize action. Horizontal advocacy, however, is difficult to envision without the facilitation of new technologies and the Internet. The very use of digital cameras and video cameras in the field and the possibility to immediately upload visual or textual data onto online platforms, allowing them to be diffused instantly and indiscriminately, is a factor that cannot be taken for granted. While it is difficult to measure the impact of such a diffuse and decentralized tactic, it can be assumed that grassroots efforts may at the very least encourage greater comprehension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over time:

"And I think EAPPI contributes to that [awareness] because it has started 10 years ago and they send every year 12 people who go back to Switzerland to record. And if every one of those 12 people has talks to 200 people and then they talk to more people, or the blogs that are distributed all over. It's like a snowball."²²

"Well, plainly that [grassroots advocacy] has had a huge effect over the last few years, its been changing. It is now much easier, I think certainly since Operation Cast Lead, I mean, the big

problem for the Palestinians in media image and coverage was the suicide bombings campaign, that just turned everyone away. But, now, and I think it's partly social media but certainly the Internet has had a huge impact on what people know, at least those who want to know."²³

39 Yet, the end effect and the potential impact of that understanding is uncertain. Regardless of this, my aim here is not to assess the performance of these voluntary organizations and whether or not they have the power to bring down the occupation, but rather to understand the level and extension of their operations and equally their organizing structure.

2.2.2. Organizational structure

40 Having explored the range of activities which Palestinian rights TSMOs perform, our attention will now turn towards an understanding of how these organizations structure themselves and, conjointly, how they mobilize resources, both financial and human.

41 To begin with, none of the Palestinian rights solidarity organizations mentioned in this study are registered with the state of Israel or with the Palestinian Authority; instead they are registered abroad. In contrast to, for example, the UNRWA international protection officers mandated within UN-registered Palestinian refugee camps during the first Intifada or the TIPH project currently operating in the West Bank, local authorities do not sanction grassroots solidarity organizations. As such, these organizations are unable to obtain work permits for potential international employees. While it is unclear whether the solidarity organizations were refused registration or whether they bypassed it in order to avoid bureaucratic delays and overhead costs, as a result of their unrecognized status, volunteers may only enter the country on tourist visas, thus limiting them to a maximum stay of three months per trip in the country. In some cases, visas may be renewed by traveling to a neighboring country, such as Egypt or Jordan, and reentering Israel/Palestine via a land border.

42 Also, volunteers are not necessarily sure of being permitted entrance into Israel. As demonstrated by the refusal of entry to activists planning to attend the "Welcome to Palestine" campaign in Bethlehem in the spring of 2012, the Israeli border control have become increasingly suspicious of possible pro-Palestinian activists. Should volunteers want to avoid being rejected entry at the airport especially, or at a land border, they are recommended by their affiliated organization not to carry anything that may reveal their intention to work in the Occupied Territories. If asked, volunteers usually deny having plans to go to the Occupied Territories, with the exception of perhaps religious sites, such as Bethlehem. When asked the purpose of their trip, most will reply tourism, religious pilgrimage, or studies, depending on their situation. The same goes for the volunteers' departure from Israel. As security checks when leaving Israel can often be more difficult and thorough than upon arrival, the discovery of a volunteer's activities during their visit could result in a 10-year ban from entering Israel based on security precautions.

43 As a result of the visa issue and the increasing difficulty for Palestinian rights activists to enter Israel, each solidarity organization experiences a high volunteer turnover, due to a near constant change of volunteers in the field. This turnover then strictly limits the possibility of developing a hierarchical structure. ISM and its volunteers like to think of themselves as the least hierarchical: "We don't have this hierarchy that you usually see in the other organizations or foundations or whatever. We don't have that. We are just a group of people who change all the time, and we reach consensus about what we are going to do."²⁴ But all of the organizations involved in this study demonstrated a fairly flat, horizontal organizational structure.

44 Of the six organizations, EAPPI seemed the most layered as it is the only organization with on-site paid staff. According to an EA, EAPPI's Jerusalem office employed Palestinians to take on the following paid positions: a) a field officer charged with making contacts with the local community and then directing the volunteers where to go; b) an advocacy officer responsible for training the volunteers about how to advocate for Palestinian rights once back home; c) a project manager to take care of administrative and coordination issues for the Jerusalem office; and d) the overall program manager overseeing all the EAPPI placements in the West Bank. Palestinians with permits to live and/or work in Israel primarily fill these positions. When in the field, however, EAPPI volunteers operate independently in teams, numbering usually from

two to six volunteers, relying on their training and recommendations from their field officer to conduct operations throughout the day.

45 Like EAPPI, the remaining five organizations organize themselves in horizontal teams of as few as two volunteers to as many as perhaps 15 volunteers, wherein each volunteer theoretically has as much authority as the other. Not only do the volunteers work in teams, but they also live together in communal living quarters, often including the organization's office or headquarters. Decision-making, particularly the division of tasks, is generally made by consensus as the whole group is either directly or indirectly involved. However, intra-group social dynamics may lead to the development of power relations or informal group leaders. Volunteers are generally provided with cell phones, except for self-financed volunteers, to ensure 24/7 accessibility:

“You don't have a time in which you close your office. Our telephone is 24-hours open, so if there are problems during the night, the Palestinians call us, it has happened in the past, it can happen in any moment, maybe now, so really, the Palestinians know they can contact us when they need.”²⁵

46 In some cases, the organizations may also have “local advisors” who are not paid staff, but rather local community members who try to influence or direct the activities of the given organization. Since these organizations are designed to support and show solidarity with local nonviolent resistance, it would thus seem necessary to consult with local nonviolent activists. A CPTer described it as follows:

“So we don't charge in and do things, we come in and we support. When we see what it is that can be useful, we ask our advisors, ‘is it useful?’ If they say ‘yes’, then we do it. We meet with our advisors probably once a month. We have 6 or 7 advisors here in Hebron. These are people who know us and understand who we are and also who are very in touch with the system, with what's going on. And so, we constantly ask them, if we have a good idea that we could do, we ask them if it's a good idea or not. And sometimes they'll say ‘ya that's great’ or sometimes they'll say ‘Oh, don't do that’. Ya, so, that's very important to us, to recognize the leadership of the local people on the ground. And you walk with them, not in front of them, not behind them, side by side.”²⁶

47 Similarly, other organizations also have periodic meetings with local contacts and organizational affiliates in order to evaluate current projects, brainstorm possible improvements, and plan upcoming events.

48 Though the organizations featured in this study present similar organizational structures, the recruitment process, and hence the level of selectivity, vary from one to another. As demonstrated by McAdam, the recruitment or application process induces its own “natural selection” (McAdam 1986: 73), in part explaining why only a limited number of the total of individuals whose attitudes correspond with the collective action in question, referred to as the “latitude of acceptance” (Petty and Cacioppo 1981), actually engage in the act. Thus, a SMO's recruitment process has a large impact on an individual's eventual engagement in activism. At one extreme, ISM is the least selective organization, which does not even require any prior-registration. Thus, anyone interested and willing to come to Palestine with the means to do so may participate in ISM. This was summarized by an ISM volunteer as follows:

“When I was asking my friends about things and they described it, I was like ‘that is a really weird organizational structure’. And I actually had a friend show up, who I didn't know was coming to Palestine, and he came and joined ISM, and he said the exact same thing. At the same time, it makes total sense because it has to be fast. If most people are going to be here no more than 3 months and many of them, maybe the majority, no more than 3 weeks, it has to be fast. And it has to treat people like adults because you are putting people in sketchy positions. And it has to give principles of consensus is a core principle of ISM is critical but at the same time it's also weird because you have people, like some of the long term organizers, people who are core members and founders, who have to play this weird thing, because everyone has an equal voice, and it's completely open membership activist groups.”²⁷

49 As membership is open and unselective, ISM volunteers have less accountability to the organization, and therefore less responsibility to follow ISM's basic rules. The infraction of these rules, especially with regard to appropriate behavior, may in turn cause tensions between foreign activists and the local populations they interact with.

50 In contrast to ISM, all the other organizations require potential volunteers, at a minimum, to complete an application form or a questionnaire (refer to Table 1, p. 34). Additional requirements may include references and interviews. One EA described the recruitment process as follows:

“You apply, you fill in a form. I think again for the UK and Ireland it’s run by the Quakers. They usually get about 100 applications and they take 20 people. And I think they probably interview between 30-40. So obviously they weed out a lot at the application stage. So then I got an interview and at any stage I didn’t expect to be appointed and then I was.”²⁸

51 For many prospective volunteers, as described by an ISM volunteer who had considered volunteering for EAPPI, the application process may have a deterrent effect, “And it was a very complicated application form, you have to ask 3 or 5 people to write a recommendation and I could not even think of one person I could ask that question.”²⁹ CPT, perhaps the most selective organization, even requires potential volunteers to attend a 10-day delegation in the West Bank, accompanied by current CPT volunteers, to gain an insight into what it is the organization does.

Table 1: Organizational Structure

	CPT	ISM	EAPPI	IWPS	OPERATION DOVE	PSP
Types of Service Periods	<p>Full-time: 3 years, min. of 9 months per year, each 3-month terms</p> <p>Part-time: 3 years; minimum of 4.5 months per year, split into 2 terms; when home, participate in advocacy and fundraising</p> <p>Reserve Corps: 3 years; 2-16 weeks per year</p>	<p>Open: No recommended minimum; No official maximum</p>	<p>Short-term: Fixed term of 3 months; may participate in a maximum of two terms</p>	<p>Long-term: 3 years; minimum of one 3-month term in 1st year, followed by terms of 1-3 months in 2nd and 3rd year</p> <p>Short-term: Minimum of 4 weeks; Maximum of 3 months</p>	<p>Long-term: 1-3years; three 3-month terms with one month of vacation between each session</p> <p>Short-term: Flexible, 1-3 month terms</p>	<p>Open: Recommended minimum of 2 weeks; No official maximum</p>
Recruitment Process	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in a 10-day delegation 2. Complete application form (includes personal information, “faith context”¹, family information, life experiences, education, personal statement, 5 references, etc.) 3. Interview and reference check 	<p>No prior contact or registration required</p> <p>Contact coordinators upon arrival in Israel/Palestine</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete application form (includes personal information, education, work and volunteer experience, knowledge of Israel/Palestine, skills, motivation, 3 references) 2. Interview 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete application form (includes personal information, personal statement, prior experience, cultural background, skills, practical information, etc.) 2. Interview 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete application form (components unknown) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete online questionnaire (includes personal information, previous experience, motivation, understanding of organization’s principles, language skills, etc.)
Financial Resources	<p>Stipend for full-time and part-time volunteers</p> <p>Church-sponsored and individual fundraising</p> <p>Donors: Churches, private donations</p>	<p>Self-financed</p> <p>Some support groups provide travel grants</p> <p>Donors: Private donations, private grants</p>	<p>State-sponsored, church-sponsored, individual fundraising (varies according to country)</p> <p>Donors: Church-based groups; Indirectly: States, EU, UN, etc.</p>	<p>Self-financed</p> <p>Accommodation provided</p> <p>Donors: Private donations</p>	<p>Stipend for long-term volunteers</p> <p>Self-financed for short-term volunteers</p> <p>Donors: EU, private donations</p>	<p>Self-financed</p> <p>Accommodation provided if commit to 2 weeks or more</p> <p>Donors: Private donations, private grants</p>
Training	<p>4 weeks (prior arrival)</p>	<p>2 days (after arrival)</p> <p>Some support groups offer training prior to departure</p>	<p>1-2 weeks (prior arrival)</p> <p>(Varies according to sending country)</p>	<p>6 days (prior arrival)</p> <p>Also suggested to attend 2-day ISM training</p>	<p>1 week (prior arrival)</p>	<p>1 day (after arrival)</p>

¹ Must declare your religious denomination, local congregation, and name of a pastor/clerk of meeting/priest.

52 Aside from the recruitment process, the types of service periods (refer to Table 1) each organization offers will have an impact on the both the quantity of prospective volunteers and, to some extent, the type and quality of volunteers recruited by each organization. Organizations like ISM or PSP, which do not have a fixed service term, allow individuals the freedom to situate their volunteer experience according to their own schedule, exhibiting the most individualist model of volunteerism (Wuthnow 1991). This flexibility, however, as it is appropriated to the needs of the volunteers and not the organization or the community’s they serve, may result in an inconsistency in the number of volunteers available throughout the year. While vacation periods, especially over the summer, usher in a higher frequency of volunteers, the “off-season”, namely the non-vacation periods, see very few, if any at all, volunteers recruited. In contrast, the remaining organizations—CPT, EAPPI, IWPS, and Operation Dove—have stricter service periods, ranging from short-term to long-term commitments (refer to Table 1).

53 Although these organizations may offer their volunteers the opportunity to specify a preferred volunteer period, the objective is to assign volunteers according to need in order to have a minimum number of volunteers in the field at all times, permitting for the permanence of operations. Typically, short-term engagements attract a much larger volunteer pool. In

addition, the type of service periods offered by each organization act as an extension of their strategy. Organizations with flexible or short-term service periods aim to bring in the highest volume of volunteers the organization can support in order to facilitate broader and more expansive advocacy networks; organizations with long-term or reservists positions aim to recruit more committed and/or available individuals to produce a more experienced and skilled group of volunteers on the ground. Thus, as demonstrated by McAdam's model of high-risk/cost activism, the level of costs and risks assumed by the volunteers will have an impact on volunteer mobilization.

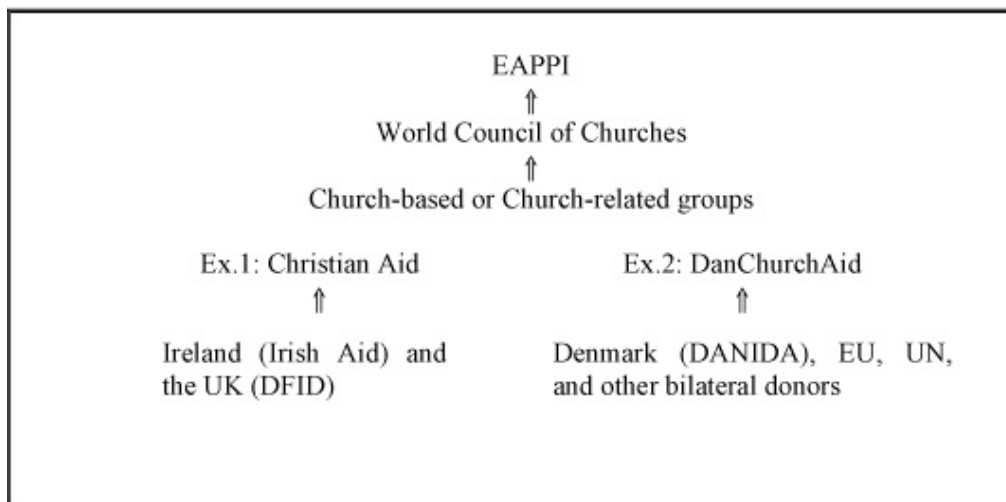
54 Furthermore, an organization's capacity to provide financial resources for its volunteers (refer to Table 1) will also have an impact on its action repertoire. ISM, IWPS, and PSP maintain the will to protect Palestinian rights, however, these nonpartisan organizations do not have the means to recruit volunteers. Receiving only private donations, these organizations require their volunteers to finance their way, though some organizations may provide accommodation. Self-financed volunteers then generally come to the West Bank for shorter periods of time. As the cost of living is generally lower in the West Bank than in the volunteers' country of origin, a volunteer can manage on a relatively small budget. To finance their trip, self-financed volunteers rely on a variety of means depending on their situation: savings, social security, help from parents, grants and scholarships³⁰, etc. A number of American Jews interviewed also reported participation in Taglit-Birthright³¹ in order to cover airfare costs: "As being a Jewish American I was able to take advantage of a Birthright trip. This is my first time to Palestine. So that made it economically feasible."³²

55 Despite the contradicting perspective and ideology narrated by the Taglit-Birthright program, the economic opportunity proved irresistible. For those organizations church and/or state-sponsored and thus with greater economic means, stipends are provided for volunteers. Some programs, such as for certain EAPPI sender countries and the CPT reservists, require volunteers to do individual fundraising to finance their trip. As a CPT reservist explained:

"To come here, we have to do fundraising. My church puts a good amount, almost pays my way for one trip here a year. And I have many friends in intentional communities and I'm old enough that I've built deep friendships, who contribute to CPT and it's more or less a bank account in your name where they send money and you kind of withdrawal on whatever you fundraised to make the trips."³³

56 However, organizations that provide funding for their volunteers are inherently more selective as they do not have the means to accept all of their applicants. Regardless, as emphasized by Tarrow, the actualization of transnational collective action draws on financial resources either directly from the volunteers themselves or institutions within their home countries, underlining the importance of local networks and opportunities (Tarrow 2005: 2).

57 Returning briefly to the issue of donors, the willingness of state actors to finance these programs challenges theories that suggest the involvement of non-state actors in the sphere of world politics diminishes or negates the power of states. On the contrary, rather than representing a "zero-sum conception of power" whereby the increase in the power of non-state actors equates to a loss of power on the part of state actors, state-funding of civil society initiatives suggests "a changing logic or rationality of government" wherein "different types of nonstate actors are often funded, actively encouraged and supported by states both to mobilize political constituencies, to confer legitimacy to policy-processes, to implement policies, and to monitor and evaluate them" (Sending and Neumann 2006: 651-652). This confusion, however, is somewhat understandable given the difficulty in locating state-funding to begin with.

Table 2: Diffusion of State Funds

- 58 As opposed to Operation Dove to which the European Union is a direct donor, state contributions to CPT and EAPPI are less clearly identifiable as they are masked through a diffuse funding process. Taking the example of EAPPI (refer to Table 2), this program is directly funded by the WCC whose contributions come from church-based or church-related specialized ministries. These church-based entities, however, donate money the origin of which can be traced back to states, as well as regional and international organizations. Only two examples of donors to the WCC, Christian Aid and DanChurchAid, are provided out of a long list of contributors. While this work has not developed a detailed investigation of the source of funds, this issue proves to be a promising subject for research in the future. Nonetheless, while at first glance one might have the impression that these initiatives are competing with states, instead it is civil society that can be understood as another channel through which a state may express its international interests. In this case, there is strong evidence which points to the effort of predominately European states supporting a peaceful resolution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict while avoiding direct, public defamation of the Israeli state. Therefore, the involvement of these non-state actors within the sphere of world politics does not necessarily diminish or negate the role of states, and hence their power, within these processes.
- 59 Lastly, the quality of the organizations' volunteers is also a function of their training, that is the investment the organization is willing to make in their volunteers (refer to Table 1). The training provided is generally a function of the strategic aims of the organization, its financial resources, and the volunteer turnover rate. For example, CPT, which prefers a more professionalized volunteer peace corps mostly comprised of devout Christians with strong fundraising capacities, obliges and finances its volunteers to take part in a four-week training program. Those organizations that experience a more frequent volunteer turnover and have less financial resources, like ISM and PSP, invariably have the shortest training programs; IWPS and EAPPI fall in the middle of these two extremes.
- 60 Overall, the structure of each organization has embedded consequences on the action repertoire of social movement organizations. Using an illustration from the recruitment process, the type of service periods, funding opportunities and training programs, this section has tried to demonstrate the opportunities, as well as the limitations, for collective action as experienced by grassroots Palestinian rights TSMOs active in the West Bank. Offering an alternative to existing political and social institutions, transnational social movement organizations provide Palestinian activists with additional resources and possibilities which might otherwise not be available to them. However, the presence of such organizations is largely dependent on the structural elements which provide the conditions and opportunities for the emergence of transnational networks.

Notes

- 1 This term refers to the Church of the Brethren, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and the Mennonites. These three Christian churches and their communities are recognized for their Christian pacifism and Biblical non-resistance.
- 2 Alongside CPT, the Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron (TIPH) is another organization providing “an international civilian observer mission.” Formalized in 1997 following an agreement between both Israeli and Palestinian authorities, TIPH was mandated to provide protection services for Palestinian civilians, responding to the UN Security Council Resolution 904 following the massacre in the Ibrahimi mosque. Member countries include Denmark, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey (Temporary International Presence in the City of Hebron).
- 3 When an extremist American-born Jewish settler, Baruch Goldenstein, opened fire on worshippers in the Ibrahimi Mosque killing 29 Palestinian Muslims.
- 4 While the construction of settlements is generally authorized by the Israeli state, outposts are unauthorized constructions, thus making them illegal according to Israeli law and subject to demolition given a court order.
- 5 Namely in Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, the United States, and the United Kingdom.
- 6 Whereas other organizations are very strict with regard to their interpretation of non-violence, ISM does not take such a firm stance. In other words, while other organizations refuse to participate in demonstrations or direct actions where, for example, Palestinian youth are known to throw stones and Molotov cocktails, ISM will nonetheless give continued support, therefore calling into question to appropriateness of categorizing the resistance as nonviolent.
- 7 In 1974, the Institute was founded in honor of A.J. Muste, a former labor, civil rights and anti-war activist. The organization provides grants in support of grassroots projects, which are anti-war, anti-nuclear, anti-death penalty, anti-discrimination, and/or endorse the use of nonviolent action.
- 8 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 9 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.
- 10 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
- 11 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
- 12 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.
- 13 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
- 14 *Ibid.*
- 15 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
- 16 The consortium of public-law broadcasting institutions of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- 17 Though it varies according to the sending country, EAPPI volunteers must carry out a minimum number of presentations or talks with any given audience and are also encouraged to lobby politicians and continue to write articles.
- 18 Interview with Participant M., held March 5, 2012.
- 19 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
- 20 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 21 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.
- 22 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
- 23 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.
- 24 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.
- 25 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.
- 26 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
- 27 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.
- 28 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
- 29 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 30 This is especially the case among unaffiliated university students on exchange—in universities such as Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Al-Quds University, Birzeit University, etc---who partake in direct actions in the West Bank.
- 31 An umbrella Zionist organization which gives young Jewish adults from around the world aged 18-26 the opportunity to visit Israel on a 10-day peer-group educational trip. Airfare to and from Israel is included.
- 32 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.

33 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.

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3. Passages to Transnational Engagement in the West Bank: The Transition from Ideas to Actions

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3. Passages to Transnational Engagement in the West Bank: The Transition from Ideas to Actions

“Who we are raised to be is relatively consistent with the broader social world we encounter as adults.”

– Doug McAdam, *Freedom Summer*

1 According to social movement theorists, globalization and internationalism have been said to afford certain conditions upon which transnational activism may flourish. The spread and contagion of ideas, the expanded reach of campaigns and causes, and the exchange of know-how and forms of contention from one activist network to another are among the primary mechanisms which support the establishment of a wider range of political opportunities and potential spaces of intervention for “challengers” (Tarrow 2005). Yet, the facilitation of transnationalism is not sufficient to explain the variability of transnational interactions. How can we understand the augmentation of social movement organizations involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since the second Intifada? Why did similar organizations not exist before? Furthermore, while similar organizations exist in other settings—such as in Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Nepal, etc.—how can we understand the intensity of engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? What factors permit the success of these TSMOs? As suggested by Bob (2005), structural factors have a significant role in the distribution of aid and services; for every group whose cause attracts the attention of people around the world, a cast of other appeals is disregarded. In addition, what motivational factors encourage individuals to become volunteers? As the majority of volunteers participating in Palestinian solidarity activism neither share a collective identity with the Palestinian people nor will directly benefit from the results of their efforts, how can we understand their engagement? To what extent are their motivations altruistic?

2 In an attempt to understand both the particularities and generalities of transnational solidarity activism in Israel/Palestine, I will begin by rendering a framework of the political opportunity structure within the West Bank which has laid a foundation and given rise to incentives for international actors to become engaged in Palestinian solidarity activism on the ground, incorporating micro-structural and motivational elements which encourage international actors to action. As stressed by McAdam, “neither a strictly structural nor an individual motivational model can account for participation in this or any other high-risk/cost activism” (1986: 88). As a single approach is not adequate to treat such a dynamic phenomenon, I will incorporate both structural and motivational models in order to account for transnational engagement in high-risk/cost activism in the West Bank (McAdam 1986; Passy 1998).

3.1. The West Bank and Political Opportunity

3 When considering the emergence of Palestinian solidarity organizations following the dissolution of the opportunity for peace, the standing political structure and its evolution from the year 2000 until the present day have supported the rectification of transnational links. In order to give perspective to the emergence of transnational social movement organizations supporting nonviolent Palestinian resistance, I will outline the conditions within the West Bank—as it has been the territory of focus—which have provided for the rectification of such organizational structures. The aim is to establish how a demonstrated formation of transnational networks developed within the West Bank, as opposed to Gaza Strip and other conflict areas in the world. As argued by many political opportunity and resource mobilization collective action theorists, collective action is not merely the consequence of grievances or cleavages. Instead, to act collectively requires activists and supporters to become cognizant of and go after accessible prospects, gather resources, formulate their interests in a manner which

encourages partnerships and membership, and target mutual opponents as well as objectives (Tarrow 2005: 6; see also McCarthy and Zald 1977; McAdam 1999).

4 In the midst of the failed peace agreement and renewed clashes between Palestinian civilians and the Israeli army, a number of transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs) dedicated to peace and concerned with the protection of unarmed Palestinian civilians set up grassroots operations in the Occupied Territories. While examples of international protection teams providing support for Palestinian civilians existed during the first Intifada, such as the teams mandated in January of 1988 by UNRWA to provide limited protection in UN-sanctioned Palestinian refugee camps through the Refugee Affairs Officer (RAO) program (UNRWA 2003), constrictions on international organizations prevented the proliferation of similar programs prior to the 1990s.

5 Empowered by internationalism and the space it provides for international and domestic actors to form alliances (Tarrow 2005: 25), TSMOs versed in the principles of non-violence, justice and civil disobedience aimed to establish a nonviolent international peace corps, predominately in Area C. Their hope was to actualize a long-term international physical presence to prevent or at least minimize the frequency of house demolitions, forestall the expansion of settlements, stop the construction of the Separation Barrier, and limit exchanges of violence in solidarity with the anti-occupation effort.

6 In the “post-second Intifada years” (Norman and Hallward 2011: 2), the unwillingness to wait for negotiations to recommence and pessimism towards the possibility of peace in the near future has incited a grassroots approach, as pointed out by a solidarity activist:

“Politics are not really realistic. It takes a lot of time and a lot of pressure. And I don’t think the pressure is there yet to change that. So, first, you just have to start with people, people who are already slightly interested in it [ending the occupation], and start telling it to their friends, and their friends again. Like some kind of snowball effect.”¹

7 Thus, there was a sense of urgency to support Palestinians to resist against the changing “facts on the ground” which themselves were slowly eradicating the physical and geographical feasibility of creating an independent Palestinian state and, furthermore, taking away the livelihoods of Palestinian civilians who refused to leave their land. Yet the presence of transnational solidarity activism in the West Bank cannot be understood without underlining the importance of the political context in Israel/Palestine and the local leaders and grassroots movements who have essentially played an active role in the soliciting of and partnering with international activists and volunteers.

8 Crucial in its bearing upon the chosen action repertoire utilized by direct action anti-occupation groups, the shifting practices of the Israeli occupation have formalized a structure inducing a specific form of action. Increasingly since the mid-1990s, Israel has remodeled the way in which it administers the OPTs, unconcerned with the administration and management of the Palestinian population, with the exception of those living in the “seam zones”² or passing through checkpoints, yet determined to continue the extraction of “nonhuman resources” such as land and water (Gordon 2008: xix). As thoroughly explained by Gordon, immediately following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Israel employed the following “bureaucratic-legal mechanisms” in order to ensure “de facto confiscation: (1) the construction of military bases; (2) the establishment of Jewish settlements; (3) the establishment of Jewish outposts; (4) the construction of bypass roads; [and] (5) the transfer of Jewish citizenry across the Green Line into the OT [Occupied Territories]” (Gordon 2008: 120). More recently, in 2002 the Israeli government authorized and began the construction of the Separation Wall along and within the West Bank, encircling Palestinian villages and cutting Palestinians off from their land. Thus, the culminating realization of the contradiction between Israel’s discourse on coexistence and peace compared to its actual practices on the ground initiated a new phase within Palestinian resistance.

9 Unable to find effective means of change or protection through political and juridical institutions, some Palestinian activists and communities turned to an alternative form of contestation. Led predominately by local popular committees, which first emerged during the first Intifada yet fell dormant during the 1990s and early 2000s due to the forced centralization

of political power within the PLO (Norman 2010: 36), communities and villages have become increasingly engaged in nonviolently resisting the “policy of separation” (Gordon 2008) either through protest, noncooperation, or intervention (Norman 2010). While the use of violent strategies such as suicide bombings and rocket attacks at the onset of the second Intifada and intermittently since have often dominated the narrative on Palestinian resistance, as stressed by Norman and Hallward, “nonviolent resistance did, and continues to, take place throughout Palestine in various forms” (2011:6). Furthermore, the stalemate between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities have prompted Palestinian actors, both the government and civil society, to resort to the international arena to circumvent a domestic deadlock, referred to as a “boomerang effect” (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 12).

10 While examples of nonviolent resistance and transnational alliances predate the construction of the Separation Wall, the material visibility of the wall provided both symbolic and physical structures persuading Palestinians as well as Israelis and internationals to take action (Abdallah and Parizot 2011). The shock of such permanent structures have been essential in creating an “emotional shock” to mobilize local and global citizens (Mayer 2010: 237). As emphasized by other commentators, the wall itself has created a localized opportunity for Palestinians to contest “a visible aspect of the Occupation” (Pallister-Wilkins 2011: 1869), embodying a specific location where the evocation of oppression could be assigned. While the first example of anti-wall demonstrations occurred in the village of Mas’ha, approximately 37 kilometers southwest of Nablus, this model of contestation quickly spread to other Palestinian villages in the West Bank whose land had been expropriated as a result of the Wall, impinging settlements, the bypass roads, etc. Today, similar protest strategies are employed in the villages of Bil’in, Nil’in, Kufr Qaddum, Al Ma’asara, An Nabi Saleh, Kufr A-Dik, Beit Ommar, and a number of others, though less consistently.

11 Although engagement at the national level poses more problems for Palestinian communities given the social and political cleavages within Palestinian society, organizing local collective action targeted at protesting predominately against the wall, as well as checkpoints, settlements and outposts, developed a space of convergence between actors which had previously not interacted, or at least on a very limited scale. For many villages, their resistance tries to address basic questions of survival, framing the anti-occupation struggle as “a social struggle as much as a political one” (Pallister-Wilkins 2009: 400). Perhaps unlikely to transform the current political situation, at least in the short-term, these acts of resistance are mostly symbolic in character, representing a now customary ritual between the two opposing sides.

12 Furthermore, it is in the presentation of such a clear dichotomization between the two sides of the conflict, wherein the Israeli army and settler communities in the West Bank are juxtaposed to unarmed Palestinian civilians. TSMOs active in the Palestinian cause thus have little difficulty pinpointing an enemy or adversary. As opposed to other conflicts in which a number of non-state armed actors—such as rebel groups, militias, criminal organizations, warlords, etc.—may blur a separation between the “good” and the “evil”, this is less the case for international volunteers participating in nonviolent resistance social movement organizations fighting against the occupation. It is in fact the focus on and heavy criticism of the Israeli state that has in many ways empowered nonviolent civil dissidence itself.

13 Whereas Palestinian collective action during the first Intifada was framed as a nationalist struggle “not only a resistance movement *against* Israel but a nationalist movement *for* Palestine” (Norman 2010: 27), local grassroots collective action since the second Intifada up until today has been conceptualized differently. Though the nationalist element is undoubtedly in the background as many Palestinian civil society organizations and activists promote Palestinian self-determination, the focus has shifted towards a discourse on human rights, justice, dignity, and liberty while stressing the importance of non-violence and community organization. As observed in a conference held in Beit Ommar on civil dissidence, while Palestinian flags and *dabke*³ performances reinforce a Palestinian and more generally an Arab identity, the debate was focused on the human rights of Palestinians, the violation of which called for a nonviolent response by Palestinian civil society with the help of foreign partners. Unsure of the advantage and practicality of waiting for the day for the Palestinian political

leadership to ameliorate the situation, thus taking the risk of missing a window of opportunity to act, political activists and grassroots leaders have stressed the importance for the Palestinian people to “do something” at the local level before it is too late. Even if their actions are primarily of symbolic value, the Israelis and the international community cannot say that the Palestinians did not resist.

14 As opposed to focusing on the development of a truly nationalist movement, grassroots and community actions have been the dominant trend of Palestinian resistance since the second Intifada. The possibility of an active yet diffuse and relatively decentralized grassroots campaign could not be imaginable, however, without the technological and communication tools available in the 21st century. If internationalism has provided the structures and spaces for transnational activism, globalization has enabled greater access to tools which facilitate the spread and intensity of transnationalism. Computers and digital cameras, the Internet, email and blogs, the ease of creating a website, and social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, have played a major role in extending the spatial limits and diversifying the number of opportunities available to Palestinian and equally Israeli activists interested in participating and soliciting transnational networks.

15 In discussions with Palestinian activists, particularly those under fifty years of age, Facebook was often praised as an efficient and effective means to get the word and the image out from the occupation. For the most involved of the Palestinian grassroots activists, their Facebook pages are used as political soapboxes more than for apolitical networking. The choice of language, that is Arabic or English, also indicates who is the main targeted audience; for those looking for transnational resources, English would of course be the strategic language of choice. Youtube has also been a valuable tool where activists upload videos in an effort to expose the Israeli army and settlers, highlighting issues which are often ignored in the press. Posting pictures of demonstrations, videos of conflict with the army, fact-finding articles and reports, eyewitness accounts, etc. are in many cases easier than organizing direct action events.

16 In addition to providing outlets for alternative information regarding the Israeli occupation, new technologies have also been essential in attracting international volunteers and sympathizers. First, internationals are able to find out about what is actually going on, should they take an interest. Second, opportunities to volunteer with solidarity organizations are easily found by interested parties using the Internet. As opposed to having to meet a former volunteer, potential volunteers can merely conduct a Google search, resulting in the presentation of related links. It is for this reason that it is important for Palestinian organizations and movements to set up their own websites to attract transnational resources. In addition, the same information outlets that allow Palestinian activists to spread an alternative vision of their lived reality is equally important for international volunteers seeking an outlet for their own experiences. While supporting the Palestinian cause, volunteers are able to publicize their own individualistic vision of the world and their efforts to make change. Thus, the technological and communication devices of today have provided Palestinian organizations in the post-Intifada years with the necessary tools to reach out beyond their local or even national community, striking a distinguishable difference between organizing during the first Intifada and the second Intifada.

17 In the course of the last decade, the framing of the Palestinian cause among certain actors has thus transformed from a single-issue to a multiple-issue framework which allows the incorporation of a greater multitude of actors, both local and global (Esterovic and Smith 2001: 198; Marullo, Pagnucco and Smith 1996). As detailed by Esterovic and Smith, support for a local campaign is commonly constructed around “a *shared* set of transnational principles”, such as human rights, as opposed to merely the advocacy of a single individual’s case, such as an activist imprisoned for administrative detention without just cause (2001: 205). Yet, while the Palestinian cause and other similar campaigns are capable of ushering in transnational networks and resources, the likelihood of the movement conjuring “sustained mass mobilization” is unfortunately very improbable (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 200).

18 The incapacity to mobilize the masses, both on the Palestinian and Israeli side, to contest the terms of the occupation has also contributed to the desirability of transnational networks.

Though “strong external pressures from an unsympathetic, and occasionally repressive, dominant society have often been conducive to inter-group solidarity” (Marx and Useem 1971: 102), such as in the case of Palestinian-Israeli coalitions, the deficient number of Israeli citizens willing to participate in such coalitions hinders their strength and potency. Equally problematic on the Palestinian side, the inability of the various fractions within Palestinian society to unite against the occupation has hindered the force of the movement. While international involvement is thought to provide a makeshift alternative in the absence of strong Israeli support for Palestinian resistance, some maintain that such an approach is inadequate and bypasses the central issue of Israeli and Palestinian relations. One American-Israeli activist challenged the relevance of an international presence:

“I think Israelis should be doing it. I don’t know if there are enough Israelis to be there to support all the protests which are happening, but I think it is the role of Israeli citizens to be in Bil’in and be in the front lines for these things, not for internationals. Because in a certain way, if the only reason internationals are there is to be an audience and also keep the soldiers from shooting directly at the people, so they’re just cannon fodder? I think it should be Israelis because Israelis are invested and Israelis are going to be here when this is all over. If the conflict ends tomorrow and this is all out of the news two weeks after, the Swedes who were here are not going to come help rebuild anything.”⁴

19 Digressing from the state of “insider” and “outsider” activist coalitions (Marx and Useem 1971), the level of security for international activists also has an impact on the plausibility of transnational solidarity work in the field. In the field, international solidarity activists are inevitably exposed to the threat of injury or death, especially those which use their bodies as “human shields” to protect Palestinian civilians and activists. For most organizations, the threat of injury or death is relatively nonexistent and with the exception of ISM volunteers, there have been no casualties in the field. The exception to the rule, ISM, which is reputed for participating in Palestinian protests even when violence is used, such as throwing rocks or Molotov cocktails at soldiers, the threat of injury or death remains plausible given the use of weapons—such as high-speed teargas canisters, rubber bullets, sound bombs, live ammunition—targeted against demonstrators. Those willing to take such risks are generally more radicalized and are willing to “fight against oppression” at any cost. Notwithstanding the thousands of Palestinians who have lost their lives since the outset of the second Intifada, thus far, two ISM international activists, Rachel Corrie and Tom Hurndall, have died in Gaza among a number of other activists who incurred serious injuries both in Gaza and the West Bank due to targeting, whether intentional or not, by the Israeli army.

20 Yet, as opposed to other conflict zones or perhaps undemocratic countries, the Israeli and Palestinian authorities are relatively cautious about the treatment of international activists. While Islamist groups have murdered two international activists⁵, instances of kidnappings and killings of international solidarity volunteers are relatively rare. The feasibility of visibility and mobility thus allow international volunteers to participate in nonviolent resistance without the worry of risking their own lives. Demarcating the difference between separate conflicts, one activist explained that while an international presence on the ground may work in the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this model may not have the same relevance in other contexts:

“[E]very conflict has different ways to resolve the conflict. The way in which we act in this conflict is good for this conflict, but maybe not, for example, for Somalia conflict or Iraqi conflict. Because we stay very exposed, not only to the Palestinians but also for the soldiers. In other conflicts, if you expose yourself as we do here, you will be kidnapped or killed. So, I don’t know if I choose this conflict, I don’t think for this reason, but I think in this kind of situation, this kind of way of action was the best for this conflict. For other, maybe should be a different way of action.”⁶

21 Moreover, though some activists are “braver” and more risk seeking than others, a factor which in itself impacts the type of engagement undertaken by volunteers, most have a clear concern over the safety and preservation for their life, and are unwilling to give themselves up for the cause. As jokingly expressed by one activist, “the possibility of being killed or kidnapped is quite important in the choice. For me, now, because I am very young and I want to live, it is important.”⁷

22 Additionally, although the organizations in this study are not officially recognized by the state of Israel, it is quite difficult for the state to effectively manage the flow of international Palestinian solidarity activists coming in and out of the country. In instances such as the “Welcome to Palestine” campaign, when a concentration of activists enter the country on a synchronized date, enforcing a blacklist is manageable. In most cases, however, activists come to the country individually at any given time during the year. Once the activists have entered the country, deportation is an option. However, as it must be approved by a judicial hearing, collecting sufficient evidence to justify deportation remains a challenge. In the end, the Israeli state is only really left with the option of enforcing a travel ban for activists upon their departure from Israel. Once again, sufficient evidence must be presented demonstrating the supposed threat of the given individual.

23 While Gaza has been subject to the increasing pressures of occupation, particularly since the enforcement of a blockade initiated in 2005 following the unilateral withdrawal of the Israeli civilian and military presence, in contrast to the West Bank, sustained transnational networks and coalitions supporting nonviolent civil dissidence have been less marked. Among a range of issues, the difficulty of access, the lack of a nonviolent grassroots resistance movement, the level of insecurity, and so forth, have discouraged similar transnational networks as those which have matured in the West Bank. The “Free Gaza Movement” flotilla campaigns, active since 2008, have demonstrated a clear desire to draw the international community’s attention to the severity of the blockade while trying to provide humanitarian aid for a population under economic strangulation. Though these campaigns have demonstrated a certain level of effectiveness, particularly the 2010 expedition which became largely publicized following the Israeli raid on the Turkish ship *MV Mavi Marmara* resulting in the death of nine Turkish activists, establishing a long-term presence in Gaza has proved more difficult.

24 Based on a political opportunity approach to social movements, I have presented a number of structural issues which can help to shed light on the development of transnational advocacy networks and a permanent international presence supporting nonviolent Palestinian resistance. While other factors inevitably play a role, I have tried to develop a foundation for the emergence of transnational solidarity social movement organizations in the West Bank in the late 1990s and early 2000s, using the elements that seemed to hold the greatest importance. Combining both theory and a case example, I have tried to put forward some of the specificities of transnational activism with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, more specifically in the West Bank. Having established a basic understanding of the factors facilitating international grassroots intervention and the creation of the organizations participating in solidarity activism in the West Bank, the micro-structural factors “pulling in” international volunteers will now be discussed.

3.2. International Solidarity Activists: Biography and Opportunity

25 In an effort to understand differential involvement in movement activity, namely why and how individuals become involved, I will explore the biographical background of solidarity activists in order to understand the mobilization and engagement process leading up to their transnational moment. As argued by a number of social movement theorists, “attitudinal affinity” (McAdam 1986: 65) is insufficient in accounting for collective action participation (McAdam and Paulsen 1993: 643; see also McPhail 1971). Instead, individuals are influenced by microstructural factors “expos[ing] that individual to participation opportunities or pull[ing] them into activity”, without which the individual would likely remain inactive (McAdam and Paulsen 1993: 644). While emphasizing structural availability, I have also tried to include individual motivational aspects, primarily out of interest in these narratives.

26 Combining both a structural and motivational approach, I will try to reveal the characteristics and biographical background of these individuals. Who are these “self-conscious internationalists” (Tarrow 2005: 2)? What is their socio-economic background? How can their identity help us to understand their inclination towards transnational engagement in defense of Palestinian rights? What structural factors were crucial in the

recruitment process? Through an illumination of the individuals participating in transnational solidarity activism, I hope to shed light on the phenomenon of transnational contention in the West Bank.

3.2.1. Nationality

- 27 With regard to the provenance of international solidarity activists, the dominant majority originated from European and North American countries. Among the 20 participants, countries of origin included the United States (7), the United Kingdom (1), Canada (1), Italy (4), Ireland (1), the Netherlands (1), Norway (1), Spain (1), Sweden (2), and Switzerland (1). Field observations and conversations with local activists also indicated minor participation of South African, Asian, and South American citizens, yet a “white” majority is dominant. In general, activist-volunteers came from countries in which the principles of democracy, liberty, inalienable freedoms, human rights, the rule of law, and so forth are widespread and internalized by certain groups.
- 28 Of the twenty participants, a total of six were American Jews, three of which spoke Hebrew fluently and recently acquired Israeli citizenship. Since their *aliyah*⁸ to Israel, each of the three had become active in local Israeli activist groups. Among them, one worked for Grassroots Jerusalem, a local NGO, and frequently participated in anti-settlement demonstrations in the village of Nabi Saleh; one volunteered for Ta’ayush and had previously been active with Solidarity; and the last was a volunteer for Rabbis for Human Rights. Both the liberties granted by Israeli citizenship and their language skills afford them the opportunity to be engaged in a more localized, embedded, and long-term capacity—a self-validating explanation on the part of these three participants which often led them to criticize non-Jewish and/or non-Hebrew or Arabic speaking volunteers.

3.2.2. Age, Profession, and Education

- 29 In terms of age, volunteers typically fell within two polarized age groups, youth in their twenties and retired elderly, corresponding to similar results presented in previous studies on ISM volunteers active in the West Bank (Seitz 2003: 51; Pollock 2006). In terms of theory, according to Nonna Mayer (2010) along with other social movement scholars, there are moments in life which are more favorable than others for activism due to the question of temporal availability. Referred to as “biographical availability” (McAdam 1986: 83), individuals generally become active within a “narrow range of years marked by the confluence of relative independence from parental authority and the absence of intense adult responsibilities” (McAdam 1986: 85). One retired, divorced single mother emphasized the connection between her availability and her activism:
- 30 Furthermore, given the localization of volunteers in a foreign country for a given amount of time, as compared to volunteering in one’s own community, the absolute freedom from work or family responsibilities is imperative.

Table 3: Age and Sex of Participants

	Male	Female	Total
Under 20 years old	1	0	1
21-25 years old	6	5	11
26-30 years old	0	1	1
31-60 years old	1	1	2
Over 60 years old	2	3	5
Total	10	10	20

- 31 As demonstrated in Table 3, one out of twenty participants were under 20 years old; eleven out of twenty aged between 21 and 25 years old; one out of twenty between the ages of 26 and 30; two out of twenty between the ages of 31 and 60; and lastly, five out of twenty were over the age of 60.¹⁰ In terms of gender, there was an equal distribution between male and female participants.¹¹

32 As such, the most dominant group of individuals is aged between 21 and 25 years old. Within this group, every single one of the participants has either achieved or is currently pursuing a postsecondary education. Of the eleven, three were currently enrolled in Bachelor's programs, two of which were on temporary leave and one on an exchange with Al-Quds University; six had received a Bachelor's degree; one had received a Master's degree; and one was enrolled in a Master's program. The most predominant fields of study were within the social sciences; participants attested to holding or pursuing degrees in the following subjects: Political Science, History, Social and Cultural Development, Middle Eastern studies/Arabic studies, Conflict studies, International Relations, Development and International Cooperation, and Political Psychology. The overrepresented ratio of higher educated solidarity activists aged between 21 and 25 years old may correspond to a result of the organizational recruitment process, yet, recruitment bias cannot be enough to explain this finding. Solidarity activists aged between 21 and 25 years old represent a fairly homogenous subgroup of solidarity activists, perhaps only varying in terms of the particularities and intensity of their ideologies. Possessing a liberalist and reformist cultural capital influenced by the "liberalizing effect of education" (Kriesi 1989: 1078), in conjunction with a leftist political ideology formed from a young age, these youths are inclined both towards an interest and a sense of competency in politics (Lamarche 2011: 301).

33 As explained by some volunteers within this age group, the idea of volunteering in relation to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was something strongly related, among other factors, to their studies and their plans for the future:

"So, as I studied political psychology, there is so much literature on this conflict, so in a way, you read what is there, and it is so present in the literature. And when I went to a conference last year like half of the presentations were about this conflict. So when you start reading it, you just kept going on, I think."¹²

"I studied International Relations, so I'd like to do something practical on the field, so I thought this is the good way to do something practical... I think it's a good way to make experience [for future career]. And I am really interested in this conflict, I wrote my final paper of my graduation on the settlements."¹³

"I study cooperation and development, so I am interested in parts of the world where there are problems, to try to solve them, well, to help to solve them."¹⁴

"This year, I had a university course about the Middle East, and in particular Palestinian-Israeli conflict. But you have to search and find those things because you do not see it everyday. So it's quite difficult. But now, instead of studying Middle East history, I am here."¹⁵

34 In part due to socialization processes as experienced during their studies, this class of "politicized students", referred by some as "Gramscian intellectuals" or "intellectual radicals" (Cleveland 2003), represent the sector of the "new middle class" described as the "social-cultural specialists" who generally embrace more liberal attitudes and endorse institutions which sustain the diffusion and reproduction of their values (Brint 1984; Kriesi 1989). Willing to sacrifice their privilege, even if temporarily, in search of what they believe to be a more fulfilling and moral lifestyle, this subcategory of activists also share a strong resemblance to the emergent "New Left" born out of the 1960s and 1970s which argued for a refocusing of political activity away from labor issues in favor of defending democracy and liberty, wherein young intelligentsia would replace the working class as the revolutionary class (Marx and Useem 1971: 82; Touraine 1971; McAdam 1988; Brinkley 1998). Furthermore, confident in the expertise acquired during a minimum of three years of higher education, solidarity activists are equally confident in their capacity to carry out the work their affiliated organization has tasked them with. Their engagement can thus be considered a logical extension following the development of an interest and competency in politics and international affairs during their academic endeavors, which essentially produces an affinity towards "global citizen action" as a result of increased awareness and moral aptitude.

35 In contrast to politicized university students and recent graduates, the second most representative group, those over the age of 60, exemplify a wider variation in terms of

epistemological and cultural orientation. Within this age group, there is evidence of three main subgroups. First, of the five, three volunteers over the age of 60 were affiliated with CPT. Of those three, two were Christian clergy, a retired Lutheran pastor and a Catholic priest, thus representing a cast of “activist-clergy”; the third was a retired devout pacifist Mennonite led to action according to her faith. Those within this category also did not fit the same educational profile as the young politicized students. While the two religious clergy undertook theological studies as part of their professional formation, the devout Mennonite stopped going to school after high school, explaining “[n]o, I didn’t have a higher education. Fell in love and got married right after high school and started having kids.”¹⁶

36 As opposed to a religious capital, the other two participants aged over 60 could more accurately be described as former educators. As discussed by Reynaud, “social control” experts—such as teachers, educators, nurses, doctors, etc.—trained in transforming their professional opinions into discussions on social impact and change are “moral entrepreneurs” commonly integrated in new social movements (1980: 282). Experienced in working with disadvantaged communities, these two former educators were looking for a more meaningful and valuable way to spend their retirement:

“I feel I’ve only got a certain number of years left in which I’ll be fit enough to do it and I want to do it when I’m still fit enough. Time keeps on moving. And like I’m freer now, my children are almost grown up. I’m freer now than I have been for a long time. And I have a small pension to keep me going.”¹⁷

“Because what do you do after you retire after from work? I see so many of my friends who have done that, and they may be comfortable financially but they don’t do anything. They go on nice holidays, they get a new car, they play with their grandchildren skiing or something like that, and I find that quite sad really. These people have a lot more to offer, they’ve had a lot of experience in the world and yet they kind of just sink into this bourgeois existence. And I’ve been quite disappointed, well I’ve always been quite radical I suppose, that they don’t do similar things. One or two of them have come out here for a couple of weeks and things like that and seen things and that’s quite good because they go back and tell their friends. But others who I would have thought would be very interested in what I am doing and what’s out here, who could spend some time, just don’t seem to want to do it. And so I suppose in a way I am rather unusual in the sense that I’m an older activist surrounded by a lot of young ones.”¹⁸

37 Both have university degrees, one holding a Master’s in American Literature along with various diplomas in Education and Learning support, and the other with a Bachelor’s in History also holding various education certificates. Though much farther along in their life trajectory, these two retirees belong to the first generation of the New Left, sharing a strong similitude with the politicized university students.

38 Aside from the two dominant age groups, the remaining age categories were not very representative of the average profile. One participant was an 18-year-old Jewish American recently having graduated from high school volunteering with Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR). Though he had first come to Israel on a year-long gap year program with Hashomer Hatzair, which he explained as “a kibbutz Zionist-socialist youth movement”, after three months he quit and moved to Jerusalem to volunteer with RHR:

“So, the movement is very based on critical thinking, a very leftist movement, by their standards, and by Israeli standards definitely, not quite left enough for me, a little too Zionist for me. And I realized that once I was there. I mean, there’s just certain things that I really disagreed with about the conflict with my *Madrahim*¹⁹. [...] There’s a lot of stuff which are discussion based, not classes but discussions, everything is ‘how do we look at this as being part of *Hashomer Hatzair*’ ‘how does this effect us’ and very much ‘how does Zionist ideology play into this’, which I was really just sick of. I prefer to look at things without connecting myself to all the... because they have very specific ideology from the founding, and I would talk to the kid who I live with now. I would come visit him sometimes and he works for ICAHD and he was doing a lot more interesting stuff, a lot more stuff that I wanted to do. Even he wasn’t going to so much demonstrations but I saw on the Internet all this stuff and I was always reading Rabbis for Human Rights websites, and Yesh Din and B’Tselem. There are a lot of great organizations with great websites that really report on the stuff that most people don’t report on. So I really wanted to get involved in that and I felt like *Hashomer* wasn’t enough of an outlet and it was too much of a year program. They were too worried about maybe my safety and I didn’t have as much freedom as I would have liked.”²⁰

39 Though this participant was young compared to the others, he fit the same socio-economic
background; a middle class leftist with plans to start university studies in the upcoming fall.
40 The relative uniqueness regarding the remaining three participants—aged respectively 27, 31,
and 32 years old—can be understood mostly in terms of their career and personal life. The
27-year-old, an Italian volunteer for Operation Dove who recently graduated from university
in 2009 with a degree in Language Studies and Economics, had been volunteering on and off
with Operation Dove for the last two years and had yet to start her professional career:

“After my graduation, I wanted to do an experience abroad. So I met one of the leaders of
Operation Dove, so I did the training. And, this thing had got my attention, so I went in Kosovo
for one month with Operation Dove. In Kosovo, they finished the project after 10 years, in 2010.
So, after that, I decided to continue with Operation Dove, and here in Palestine there would be a
need because of the lack of volunteers.”²¹

41 When back in Italy, she lived with her parents and did not express any plans to begin job
hunting. The 31-year old participant is a nuclear plant risk management engineer. The only
participant with a background in the hard sciences, with a Master’s degree in Physics, this ISM
volunteer explained that she had decided to take a year off from work for personal reasons:

“I had been working at the same place for 3 years, and it started to get a bit boring, I was doing the
same thing all the time, so I needed to do something else. I tried to quit my job but my boss didn’t
let me, he offered me a year of vacation instead. And also, I have a friend who works here for the
UN. Since he offered me to stay at his place and I knew I would have a friend when I came here, I
thought it was a good idea or a good opportunity. [...]. Since I have a nice place here, I mean I’m
30 years old, I don’t feel like staying away one week in a shitty apartment with 20 other people.”²²

42 Perhaps an unlikely case, this participant was able to take a year off while still holding onto
her job, an opportunity which most employers would most likely not offer their employees.
Satisfied by her ability to keep her job while livening up her life was complimented by a later
statement, “I like restarts.”²³

43 Lastly, the 32-year-old participant is an American-Israeli Jew who volunteers with Ta’ayush
and previously Solidarity while currently pursuing a doctoral fellowship at the Hebrew
University of Jerusalem. A student of Comparative Hebrew and Persian Literature, this
participant became active through Israeli university contacts during a previous trip to Israel
and has stayed active since then:

“And a couple years later when I was back here for summer, in 2008, I had met David Shulman
through university contacts and read his book, *Dark Hope*, so I guess through the book I heard
about Ta’ayush. It came out in 2006/7, and it’s about Ta’ayush in the early years of the second
Intifada. So I read the book and I knew him, and so, since I was here for three and a half months
so I thought I wanted to do something, finally, to be active. And he suggested I go be active with
Ta’ayush. So through him I made contacts [...] and started going.”²⁴

44 Though also further along in his academic career, this participant resembles a liberalist
Jewish university student who overcame his pro-Israel upbringing and became active with
a Palestinian rights group during visits and studies in Israel. Yet, just as the current profile
and engagement of solidarity activists help to explain their participation, their past is equally
important and relevant to their present trajectory.

3.2.3. Childhood Socialization

45 Evidenced in a study on Freedom Summer volunteers engaged in the African-American
civil rights movement in the Sixties, McAdam underlines the importance of the volunteers’
socialization growing up. McAdam points out that “generally liberal, and occasionally radical,
political views of the volunteers’ parents stamped the volunteers as more leftist politically than
most children of class privilege” (1988: 12). Turning to the solidarity volunteers active in the
West Bank, when discussing their background and contextualizing their current activities with
their past, the majority of participants, particularly the younger ones, attested to having grown
up in a liberal, leftist environment, therefore suggesting the importance of a liberal political
and cultural capital in relation to their present engagement:

“It’s probably like that for everyone, but I am sure it started very early because my parents were open-minded people and my father was already in Gaza working there for the Red Cross in 1971 for 8 months. He’s actually a doctor. And I’ve been growing up in a very liberal thinking environment.”²⁵

“My parents were in the hippy, left-wing movement...so I grew up in an environment where we always talked about politics. Where I learned at a young age that it’s important to do something in the world and fight every kind of oppression.”²⁶

“I grew up in a pretty kind of lefty-liberal environment or at least supportive environment of queers involved in the community and like generally supportive things.”²⁷

46 Thus, their class and socialization growing up put them “in a position where they might have or develop ideological affinities for [leftist] movements’ interpretations of reality” (Sherkat and Blocker 1994: 821). In some cases, a leftist political orientation could also be weaved together with a religious background, as one Operation Dove volunteer accounts for, “Also because my parents, they are quite left and my mother is very religious. She’s catholic and she has this idea of justice and helping the poor, so she likes what I do, so it’s good for me.”²⁸ While two activists admitted to having parents aligning with the right side of the political spectrum, experience with and integration into leftist social networks later on in life seemed to have more of an influence on their present political identity.

47 With regard to Jewish Diaspora participants, in contrast to participants coming from a non-Jewish background, though these participants grew up in an environment supportive of the Israeli state, the new generation of Jewish youth with no memory of or little familiarity with the Holocaust would eventually privilege their liberal, leftist values over national or ethnic ones. Such a realization, however, generally required a provocation. One Jewish-American, in talking about the relevance of a past experience in India with regard to his current activism, demonstrated his political transformation:

“I’ll go back to India. So when I was in India in 2003/4, I was studying Hindi language. So, when I was there, I was living with a family who were basically Hindu nationalists, meaning that they would hate Muslims and they would go to all kind of anti-Muslim rallies and stuff like that. And this city I was in, Jaipur, was a very, it’s a mixed city, between Hindus and Muslims. And the way the father in the family, especially, kind of expressed his racism and all that stuff. I mean I found it offensive but I also found it familiar in a kind of way. In a way that when I’ve been here [Israel] people would talk about Arabs and non-Jews and things like that. And that felt like a big awakening. And because of the racism, I felt uncomfortable with the racism here before, but I think I hadn’t been, I hadn’t really seen it from the outside. I had always kind of seen it as justified by the larger political situation. And being in India, seeing the similar way that people were talking there, it was a moment of realization. So when I came back there the year after that, 2005/6, I spent a year as a Dorot fellow. So, I did that and a lot of what I did that year was kind of just running around East Jerusalem and visit all these places in the West Bank and travel and talk to people. I didn’t do any activism that year but I think I laid the ground work for later stuff.”²⁹

48 A second Jewish participant described a similar experience:

“As a little child, I was pretty much brainwashed by my parents, like most American Jews and my parents are somewhat religious, they sent me to a Jewish day school which I went to until I was fourteen and then I went to public school. And everything I had ever heard was how great Israel was and never anything negative. So, it wasn’t until maybe I was in 10th or 11th grade when Operation Cast Lead began in Gaza and I got in an argument with a friend of mine from Boston who was one of the smartest kids I knew. Kind of an intellectual snob, but still I very much respected him as a smart individual. And it was an argument about Israel and he sort of opened my eyes to a lot of things I hadn’t thought about before.”

49 Despite having grown up in an environment wherein the state of Israel was unconditionally supported, these American Jews embarked on a transformative journey, redefining themselves as a member of the Jewish Diaspora and their relationship with Israel.

50 Although older participants were less likely to talk about their childhood and the environment which they grew up in, such participants nonetheless provided evidence of continuity between their involvement in the West Bank and their past.

51 Regarding social stature, the majority of participants identified themselves as middle class. As one solidarity activist revealed:

“I would say middle class economically, but a higher middle class culturally. Ya, obviously social and cultural capital are much higher than economical. I saw a study some time ago about how many books you have at home and how that influences your kids, and I was one of those families that had like above...well, I don't know what was the average, we have like 1,000 books at home, so ya... I grew up outside Madrid, in a small town outside Madrid. Like in a suburb, kind of middle class suburb. Leafy, you know.”³⁰

52 As widely supported in new social movement theory, the proponents of solidarity activism and other NSMs are typically from the middle class. While there is a strong debate in social theory as to why middle class roots are significant, as opposed to either a structural or value-based approach, I maintain that both are significant. On the one hand, the educated middle class is endowed with certain competencies and levels of expertise given their educational background. Thus, individuals with an education in International Relations, for example, are very likely to pursue professional or volunteer experiences related to a career in foreign policy, government, development, humanitarianism, and so forth. However, it is not merely their professional competencies that explain their rationale. Along the way, these individuals become increasingly attracted to post-materialist goals pursued by government institutions, international institutions, social movements, the non-governmental sector, etc., as the result of the internalization of liberal values which they come to believe in (Duyvendak 1995).

3.2.4. History of Activism

53 For many volunteers, their first sojourn in Palestine resembled a premier initiative to become “active” in the Palestinian cause and more generally solidarity activism. While many of the participants had been to Israel/Palestine several times before, especially CPT volunteers, for most, their initial service term also marked a “first step” in Palestinian rights activism. Moreover, most reflected on having a very limited knowledge of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself before coming to the West Bank, as one volunteer said, “I knew a little, but nothing more than what you usually read in the newspapers and on the television.”³¹ Some exceptions exist, however. One Operation Dove volunteer mentioned having studied the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict from a young age:

“I started to study this conflict since I was at high school. So I read a lot of books. I start with the history, myself and with some friends... so I read a lot of books, a lot of reports. I wrote my final paper at university on the settlements and the occupation in general. So when I came here, I had a lot of theoretical knowledge but I don't know if it helps me to understand what's happening when I am here.”³²

54 This same volunteer also claimed involvement related to the conflict prior to volunteering:

“I was a member of a student association, Cinema Jenin, that works in Jenin. And we work in a youth group in the city, we did activities for training, like rugby training, English courses, theatre courses. I was working from Italy. In Italy, we create the projects, raise funds, and explain people what we do.”³³

55 This individual, however, emphasized that his mother was very active in projects related to the conflict and as a result, he developed an interest as well.

56 An independent activist of Jewish heritage, though brought up thinking that Israel “is where Jewish people belong”, exposure to Palestinian rights activism during college initiated her activism and sparked her curiosity to come to Israel and the Occupied Territories to see things for herself.

“There were a number of experiences which sort of triggered it [interest in the conflict]. Through living with other activists. A good friend of mine, I remember sitting down, she was talking about politics. [...]. I was living with older students that were really active and sort of passionate about what they were doing and I was just on the verge of becoming more politicized. And she was like, ‘I could never date a Zionist.’ [...] and I was like ‘what's a Zionist?’ And she was like, ‘are you fucking kidding me? You're jewish and you don't know what a Zionist is?’ I basically got schooled really quickly. And there was an organization at the college, Students for Justice in Palestine which ran a campaign that I participated in several years later to divest from companies that were supporting the occupation. And the time that I was in college, I was living with a Palestinian and an Israeli and had a really intense experience, sort of learning and hearing this completely different outlook on politics.”³⁴

57 Though this individual would eventually put an end to her involvement in SJP due to a feeling that she did not really belong, her newfound preoccupation with the conflict and the meaning of Israel compelled her to venture to Israel/Palestine.

58 Despite inexperience relative to Palestinian rights activism, many volunteers spoke of involvement at the local or national level in NSMs back in their countries of origin, particularly the more radicalized volunteers absorbed within ISM and PSP. As a 30-year-old Swedish ISM volunteer pointed out, “It [volunteering with ISM] doesn’t relate to that #my past# at all. I’ve been an activist around home, in Gothenburg. LGBT movement, animal rights, and so on but never Israel, Palestine, the occupation, things like that.”³⁵ Another young ISM solidarity activist put forward his activist history in similar terms, adding that many people in his social network had been involved in Palestinian rights activism:

“I personally am not really involved or at least I haven’t really been involved with Palestine solidarity activities in the Portland area but a lot of my friends are. It hasn’t been my focus. Groups that I work with include medical support, climate justice organizing across movements [...] all sorts of resistance movements in North America: social justice, economic justice, environmental justice and other angles. I live and was involved with a housing cooperative. Other things are some one-off actions, like some forest activism. I sort of lost interest in single-issue activism.”

59 Diversely, some youths indicated that their current volunteerism and interest in activism was a newly developed preoccupation, particularly among recent university or high school graduates reluctant to jump immediately into the job market. As one young EAPPI volunteer revealed:

“And then, I was traveling in India [three years ago] and there I met many Tibetan refugees and it was the first time that I actually got interested in such issues, injustice and all that stuff. And then I went traveling in Thailand last year and I met many Israelis, so ya, and it was the first time I got interested in the conflict.”³⁶

60 A Rabbis for Human Rights volunteer shamefully admitted to his inactivity back in the United States, stating “I wasn’t so active, no, other than arguing with my peers maybe and I didn’t feel like there was a way for me to be active.”³⁷

61 While prior activism experiences were generally quite common among the volunteers interviewed, a history of activism was not necessarily a prerequisite. Instead, as in the case of this EAPPI volunteer and other volunteers with a university education, their specialization in subjects such as Political Psychology, International Relations, or Political Science, among others, were judged as sufficient and compelling qualifications for non-religious organizations looking to bring in a generation of idealist “change makers” who would likely go on to work with international institutions or non-governmental organizations. Similarly, religious organizations sought to bring in volunteers versed in Christian doctrine and experienced in nonviolent activism.

62 As opposed to becoming recently radicalized in their old age, older activists testify to a nearly life-long engagement in activism, with the level and intensity of engagement varying over time. One CPT volunteer recounted her involvement in anti-war activism, “I’ve been a war tax resister for about 30 years, I don’t pay taxes, not one bullet, you know a soldier’s helmet, I pay for none of that. It’s part of my theology being a pacifist.”³⁸ An elderly Catholic priest traced his current work in Palestine to previous projects in Canada working with the poor:

“So we were running a homeless shelter and we saw the results of it [government cuts in welfare]. So we would go out regularly, every week we had a vigil, and every month or two we would do a direct action. We planted a garden on public lands at the parliament! We put blood on the buildings as an indication that the cuts in welfare were still bleeding. All of for which we were arrested, so we had many court cases. And I ended up being band for 6 years from the Parliament building in Toronto.”³⁹

63 Finally, a retired adult literacy teacher exhibited her lifelong commitment to justice-seeking:

“I mean, I guess I’ve always been interested and engaged with social justice issues. And I would have been a volunteer and things like that the Simon community in my 20s and recently I worked for an organization called Iona community. So in a way, I’ve always been interested in being a volunteer and taking action in social justice in particular and human rights [...] Just to say more clearly that as my work has been adult literacy, this has always been political. Our approach has

been to give adults the space and opportunity to express their lives and experience as they learn to read, [...] This has also been at the heart of our campaigning work in the areas of adult literacy and community education. So I think that hearing and passing on people's stories is at the heart of the adult literacy work and this is also relevant to the EAPPI and what we do when home in terms of the advocacy – making sure people's stories are heard, as far as possible in their own words, in Europe and hopefully in the US too.”⁴⁰

64 Absorbed within Palestinian solidarity social movement organizations are individuals who demonstrate previous involvement or at least an interest in social and political activism. However, as opposed to having experience with the issue of Palestine and the Israeli occupation, volunteers were more prone to exhibit a link to new social movements and multi-issue activist frameworks. As paralleled in a study of white American civil rights activists in the 1960s, activists commonly pledged activity in other causes and were known to rotate their loyalty from one movement to another (Marx and Useem 1971: 102). Further developed by Keck and Sikkink, human rights and other principled-issue advocates are described as activism shoppers, who “may ‘shop’ the entire global scene for the best venues to present their issues” (1998: 200). Thus, as opposed to a demonstrated partiality towards Palestine and the Palestinian people, those activists with prior activism experiences generally framed their Palestinian solidarity activism in terms of the work they had previously done, whether it be human rights, social justice, environmental justice, anti-discrimination, etc. Additionally, their loyalties, whether with respect to past or future activism, do not necessarily lie with the Palestinian cause. Instead, volunteers might have an interest in volunteering for another issue, as the following activist did:

“At some point soon I want to go back to Nepal. So, I’m thinking I have two places I really feel associated to. I’ve been to Nepal on a lot trekking but I’ve also got, I go trekking in relation to a women’s development group there. So, as well as the Palestine/Israel issue that I’ll be working on, I’d like to go back to Nepal and I’d like to do voluntary work with that particular group because they train young women to be trekking guides. So I could do some work with them, both on organization and teaching English, stuff like that. So that’s the plan for the future whenever I’ve got this advocacy thing over with, or some of my advocacy as I see that as ongoing.”⁴¹

65 The Israeli occupation and the strife of Palestinian communities in Area C thus represent a single issue through which a number of frames and causes converge, transforming it into a multi-issue cause. While Palestinians may primarily frame anti-occupation activism as a struggle for self-determination or against colonization, the nurturing of multiplicity opens up opportunities for activists coming from slightly different activist traditions and ideological streams, however the longevity of dedication by international volunteers is variable and uncertain.

3.2.5. Identity and Activism

66 As underscored by a number of social movement theorists and identity politics scholars, the ability of individuals to identify with the mission and goals of a social movement organization is as essential to the process of engagement as to the livelihood of the organization itself. Using Stryker’s (1968) notion of identity salience, McAdam explains that participation in a SMO is dependent on the individual’s level of commitment to a particular identity, wherein inclusive relationships can only be formed should that individual clearly demonstrate they are an “insider” of the collective group (1981: 24). Furthermore, to associate with an organization reinforcing a particular collective identity is “to reconstitute the individual self around a new and valued identity” based on a willingness or coveting of a particular social attachment and a new meaning of selfness (Friedman and McAdam 1992: 157).

67 The message and collective identity supported by Palestinian rights TSMOs active in the West Bank has an equally determinant factor on the category of individuals who transcend the “latitude of acceptance” to engagement. Using this interpretation of collective action and collective identity, the engagement in Palestinian rights activism in the West Bank can be understood as a symbolic act confirming one’s dedication to a given identity and their desire to engage in experiences which will socialize them into a given social circle with a given cultural

capital. Beyond merely an attitudinal affinity towards the movement, the question of identity always plays into the structural “pull” of embeddedness in social networks.

68 On the part of politically leftist international volunteers, their involvement can be interpreted as a commitment to their liberal values and a desire to distinguish themselves as active and conscious “global citizens”. While various personal motivations and structural factors also play a role, the most basic element relies upon the coherence between an individual’s actual or desired identity and the organizational identity reinforced by its current members and participants. As such, it is not surprising that young white liberals cognizant of their privilege, both in terms of race and class, yet idealistically dedicated to the “betterment of the world” and the spread of liberal values, would thus volunteer for an organization that claims to do exactly that. At the same time, it is their privilege which, to a great extent, allows them to do such solidarity activism in the first place:

“As a white person, I have a lot of privilege and I know that. And as an international in a situation where power is so clearly unequal... two different areas of law. But I am also used to thinking about that, being a person with privilege and trying to use that and try not to feel guilty about it. I don’t feel it so much as guilt as opportunity.”⁴²

69 For the more radicalized volunteers, that is those that subscribe to an “anarchist” or “hippie” identity, participating in an extreme and dangerous collective action proves, in some way or another, their dedication to “the cause”, whatever that cause may be.

70 In contrast to a liberalist discourse, Christian organization volunteers often explained their engagement in religious terms, corresponding to the community with which they have a sense of belonging. As a CPT volunteer proclaimed:

“Well, it [activism in Hebron] was directly related to my faith because I really believe in nonviolence as the way to bring about the kingdom of God that Jesus preached. So, actually, it’s very connected to my faith.”

71 Another Christian activist, in describing her political perspective, paralleled the work of CPT with Jesus’ teachings:

“I don’t particularly like labels. It’s difficult in the United States. Well, I don’t believe in killing people. There are a lot of government policies that I don’t agree with. I believe in the Gospel, to share with our brothers and sisters what we have. And to live in service, been trying to follow Jesus. We are called to serve one another in whatever way we can [...] It’s definitely faith-based for me. Well, I think what I said, to do service to others. I don’t think I can explain it any other way.”⁴³

72 In addition to strong held beliefs in political liberalism or Christianity, an individual’s support for a particular method, in this case non-violence, could encourage that individual to work with organizations taking up similar practices:

“My work is nonviolence. And that is my training in Canada. Ya, I’ve been committed to nonviolence for probably 20 years, which in my lifetime isn’t a long time, but it is, uh, so, I wanted to work with a group committed to nonviolence. And CPT is that.”⁴⁴

73 Going beyond the question of ideology, it should be mentioned that overall, solidarity volunteers demonstrated a keenness towards “alternative living”. Many volunteers spoke of participating in social experiments and community oriented projects such as living in squats, intentional communities, or commune-style living. One volunteer, by applauding the simplistic lifestyle in the West Bank, saw continuity between her living style back home and her current one:

“I already try to avoid that [consumerist lifestyle]. Ya, we don’t have central heating in my house, we don’t have electricity, well, not in winter, we have solar panels. In summer we have enough but in winter we don’t have any at all. And we catch rain water. It’s a group of people that share the same interests who just started living together, with the same ideas. So we always try to escape a little bit from that. The whole capitalistic way of thinking, like we all do a lot of hitchhiking because we don’t want to have our own car, for example, or we don’t want to be dependent on trains, because trains also run on nuclear power, like 80% of the trains run on nuclear power, that is insane as well, so ya.”⁴⁵

74 Other notable trends include vegetarianism or veganism and homosexuality, themselves cornerstones of value systems common in post-industrial societies. Also, most volunteers expressed a strong affinity towards traveling, trying to incorporate this interest with altruistic projects. One volunteer referred to his evolving philosophy of traveling when explaining his decision to volunteer in the West Bank, remarking that one should not just exploit a country or city for their own pleasure, but try to give something back:

“I like to travel. So, this was the first part, and after, it was important not only to travel and stop, but also to travel and maybe do something with the people, like something good. So, if you make the union of these two things, maybe this is the reason I choose.”⁴⁶

75 Beyond a preference for voyaging and operating at a more international level, some volunteers also identified with a liking for Arab culture, connecting their decision to volunteer in the West Bank with their geographical interest in the Middle East:

“In general, I am interested about the Middle East, in general, so the Arab peoples the Arab culture. I did some different experience before and after arrived to choose this kind of project, these kind of people, this kind of idea. But, in general, I am interested in the Middle East and all the conflicts that there are in this area since the 20th century. So, I like really meet people and have relationships, like exchange, speak and meet, and understand the life, the way of life of the people, the historical period that they live in.”⁴⁷

76 The very possibility of following a fascination in foreign cultures and languages symbolizes a contemporary form of middle and upper class identity production, one in which the identity of choice may have little to do with one’s “natural” or born self.

77 Lastly, even the organizational choice, that is the preference of one particular organization over another, demonstrates the importance of identity relative to the choice to engage in collective action. While each of the six projects carry out more or less the same work, many volunteers commented that they would not be willing to work with similar organizations which seemed to embrace an identity and practices derogating from their own. One EAPPI volunteer spoke about the impossibility for her to volunteer for an organization like ISM:

“For me, personally, that we are still not that activist, we are mainly observers. And I really like that position. So I was happy that I’m not a part of the demonstration. Because they were chanting things like ‘Israel’s a terrorist state’ or ‘Palestine from the Jordan to the sea’ which is not my opinion. And, I am generally quite suspicious of groups of chanting people. But I wouldn’t do it [ISM] because I think for me, it would be too much activist and pro-Palestinian. But maybe they are not that really pro-Palestinian, I don’t really know, but my feeling is, I prefer, maybe that is something Swiss. But I like just being outside and to observe. So, it’s easier for me just to observe them in this demonstration of Sheikh Jarrah. I would feel unwelcome otherwise.”⁴⁸

78 While volunteers from the remaining five organizations often referred to ISM volunteers as “troublemakers”, commenting that the organization was not selective enough, the second most common critique among volunteers was the presence of secularists who were against religious organizations. One ISM volunteer explains why she ended up going with ISM as opposed to EAPPI, “I knew about EAPPI and earlier I was thinking if I should go with them to come here but I don’t feel that Christian, so... I didn’t think it was good for me.”⁴⁹ As mentioned before, some ISM volunteers also criticized other organizations for being too hierarchical, showing their preference for a more acephalous structure. Thus, the individual’s choice is not so much based on the work that they do, but their comfort with the identity and practices condoned by the organization. Diverting from the direct character of one’s identity and its relevance to collective action, equally relevant to the question of identity saliency and symbolic action is one’s personal ties and the social networks they revolve in.

3.2.6. Interpersonal Ties and Social Networks

79 Cited by many authors as one of the strongest predictors of recruitment into social movements and social movement organizations membership (see Von Eschen, Kirk, and Pinard 1969; Snow et al. 1980; McAdam 1986), interpersonal ties and inclusiveness in social networks involved in a particular form of collective action strongly encourage an individual to act. While previously highlighted in the case of one volunteer, many volunteers identified organization

members as being involved in their mobilization. As casually mentioned by a CPT volunteer: “So I was doing a lot of justice work, nonviolent direct action and then I met Doug [...] who was a CPTer and he told me about this work and I said I'd like to go and try that.”⁵⁰ As noted by several ISM activists, many of their friends or acquaintances within their social circle had either been to Palestine or volunteered, even if very briefly, with ISM, thus establishing a trip to Palestine as an informal “rite of passage” among extreme left social networks. Of course, it is not the mere acquaintance with a former member that leads to recruitment, but the existence of previously microstructural factors that then incline an individual to take a deeper interest in a volunteer opportunity.

80 In addition to the importance of social ties between organization members and potential recruits, persons or networks not involved in the movement may also have an influence on the decision to engage (McAdam and Paulsen 1993: 654). Individuals or networks supporting one’s engagement—such as parents, friends, significant others, family, religious groups or leaders, community leaders, etc.—can provide the prospective volunteer with encouraging and positive feedback needed to give them a final “push”. While some opinions may be in conflict, for example the advice of a concerned parent versus that of a close friend, the source which the individual perceives as being the most important and relevant will likely outweigh the other.

81 Many young volunteers highlighted their fortune in having parental support of their decision to volunteer in the West Bank, despite security concerns a mother or father might have for the wellbeing of their children:

“I am quite lucky about this thing [parental support]. In general, ya, I think my parents are a little worried, but in general, they never show me this worry. I know that because I imagine. They all the time say ‘do what you think is good, what is good for you, what you like’. So, I send to them my telephone number. When they want, they can call me and speak and just know how’s it going, how’s the situation. [...]. They can call me when they want. They take an attitude, like after a lot of time, you normalize, you become adjusted. Sometimes also my grandmother calls me, so no problem. On this point, I don’t have particular problems with my family, they are happy.”⁵¹

82 One mother emphasized the combination of knowing an activist and the impact of her son, who had a demonstrable interest in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, on her decision to volunteer:

“And then, my youngest son is studying politics, he’s the one that is here now, and he got really interested in Palestine and so we would have been talking a lot about it and he was thinking about coming, but he hadn’t been. And then, I was talking to somebody that I know who had been on the EAPPI program, so he’d been here with EAPPI and I realized it’s just three months and no special qualifications and I felt it was something I could do, this idea of protective presence and support, you know, you didn’t have to be knowledgeable in any particular area. [...] Anyway, so it was more about the fact that Neil always talked about it a lot. Even before he came because he was talking about it as well and we would debate it and discuss it and he was giving me things to read.”⁵²

83 For some individuals, just meeting Israelis and/or Palestinians led them to take an interest in finding a volunteer opportunity.

“I went traveling in Thailand and I met many Israelis, so ya, and it was the first time I got interested in the conflict. So, I came back and it was like, kind of a, not accident, but I saw a flyer for EAPPI, and I was thinking ok, it’s three months and it sounds very interesting, why not. And I was interested anyway in this whole conflict. So I thought, ya, I’ll do it. So I came here.”⁵³

84 For some, however, taking an interest in this particular issue was somewhat coincidental and could easily have gone in another direction:

“I think its sometimes accident as well. I mean, if I would have met Columbian people, well, who have many problems in their life as well, whatever, then I would have gone to Columbia probably, because there is a very similar program in Columbia.”⁵⁴

85 For those students who are looking to become professionalized activists—such as working in the international arena of development or humanitarian aid—having experiences in the field, particularly in conflict zones, is an essential criteria as they begin to build their careers. Thus, their level of embeddedness in social networks consisting of international affairs experts is exhibited by their professional and voluntary experiences, wherein they make contacts and

become aware of other opportunities. When asked whether or not they will put this experience on a curriculum vita, young volunteers from more formal and less radicalized organizations, such as EAPPI or Operation Dove, confirmed that they would. Whereas ISM volunteers, granted it is a less “legitimate” organization, denied any plans to include their experience on a resume.

86 Despite participation in an organization which announces itself as a proponent of political altruism, the structural factors and even to some extent motivational factors at the individual level have little to do with altruism. While volunteers do not receive direct benefits for the work they are carrying out, their participation and support is nonetheless based on expectations of “secondary benefits or solidaristic incentives” (Eterovic and Smith 2001: 199). Secondary benefits may include career training, symbolic confirmation of one’s identity and inclusiveness in certain social circles, a more fulfilling life, a way to pass retirement, adventure, political expression, and so forth. As one volunteer upheld, “you can be egoistic and altruistic at the same time.”⁵⁵ Despite a common distinction of volunteerism as a utopic endeavor, outside the limits of rational behavior, engaging in altruism may indeed prove rational to the interests of the benevolent. Contrary to instinct, as remarked by Wuthnow, altruism need not be conflicting with rational choice should:

“the rules of the game have been orchestrated to make that option [the altruistic one] the most rational (rationally self-interested) choice. To promote altruism, one simply needs to set up the situation in the right way. If pursuing my own interests happens to benefit you too, then so be it” (1991: 40).

87 While the act may seem altruistic from the perspective of the receiver, the act takes on personal meaning and significance to the volunteer, calling into question the basic criteria of altruism, which maintains that the giver must not expect any external reward and that benevolent mission must be the end goal. While the volunteers undoubtedly spoke of their desire to better the world, volunteerism and altruism for that matter cannot be detached from self-interest. Even if the volunteer is searching for something as abstract as identity politics, social assimilation, happiness, or work experience, these ends lie within the category of individualistic concerns.

88 Furthermore, we cannot conceive of engagement without certain requirements, which have been discussed in the aforementioned sections. As opposed to pure motivation, certain conditions must be in place which then provide individuals with the proper cultural and social capital leading them to engage in particular actions. The focus here has been individuals who exhibit a self-pronounced orientation towards the left of the political spectrum with evidence supporting their ideological development from a young age, confounded with recognition and acceptance of a leftist identity further reinforcing the internalization process of certain norms, values, and practices; included in this category are leftist Christians. While volunteers of a different political caliber would undoubtedly promote different ideologies and perspectives, the steps leading to their engagement would likely follow a similar pattern. Thus, motivation and belief as drivers of collective action are insufficient, as engagement should instead be viewed as a process developing over a long continuum running throughout the lifespan of an individual, with every moment as important as the next. That is not to argue for a deterministic view of life, but rather to recognize that individuals exist within a certain realm of choices, those choices being relevant to their biographical past. Having presented a basic overview of the profiles of solidarity activists that were encountered during this study, I will now develop and reflect upon the everyday practices of solidarity activists when talking about their activism/ volunteerism, or while in the field.

Notes

1 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

2 This term refers to the area in the West Bank situated between the Green Line and the route of Israel’s separation barrier intended as a “buffer zone” between Israel and the West Bank, which is mostly populated by Israeli settlers.

- 3 Dabke, meaning “stamping of the feet”, is a form of Arab folk dance common in the Arab countries of the Levant.
- 4 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.
- 5 The first killing was in 2007, ISM activist Akram Ibrahim Abu Sba was reportedly killed by members of the Islamic Jihad. More recently, a well-known Italian activist, Vittorio Arrigoni, who originally came as a volunteer with ISM in 2008 but continued long-term presence in the region, was killed while in Gaza in mid-2011 by Hamas.
- 6 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.
- 7 Interview with Participant U., held March 5, 2012.
- 8 One of the most fundamental criteria of Zionism, the term is used to describe the immigration of Jews to *Eretz Yisrael*, the Land of Israel.
- 9 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.
- 10 Recorded ages correspond to the age of the participant at the time of the interview.
- 11 This finding is not necessarily representative of gender ratios as I tried to achieve an equal distribution of male and female participants for the sake of avoiding gender bias.
- 12 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
- 13 Interview with Participant L., held March 5, 2012.
- 14 Interview with Participant U., held March 5, 2012.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.
- 17 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
- 18 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.
- 19 A term used to refer to the counselor of the Zionist youth movement.
- 20 Interview with Participant W., held March 11, 2012.
- 21 Interview with Participant M., held March 5, 2012.
- 22 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 23 *Ibid.*
- 24 Interview with Participant A., held February 29, 2012.
- 25 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
- 26 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 27 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.
- 28 Interview with Participant U., held March 5, 2012.
- 29 Interview with Participant A., held February 29, 2012.
- 30 Interview with Participant C., held January 21, 2012.
- 31 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 32 Interview with Participant L., held March 5, 2012.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 Interview with Participant N., held February 17, 2012.
- 35 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
- 36 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
- 37 Interview with Participant W., held March 11, 2012.
- 38 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.
- 39 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
- 40 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.
- 43 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.
- 44 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
- 45 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.
- 46 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

- 49 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
50 Interview with Participant S., held March 14, 2012.
51 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.
52 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.
53 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.
54 *Ibid.*
55 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.
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4. Transnational Solidarity in Practice

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4. Transnational Solidarity in Practice

“La croyance de tous, qui préexiste au rituel, est la condition de l’efficacité du rituel. On ne prêche que des convertis.”

– Bourdieu, *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique*

- 1 Even within a social movement built upon challenging the status quo, in this case the cause for Palestinian rights, “structures of domination” are nonetheless strongly embedded and ever-present amongst the individuals and organizations that define a given cooperative unit. Taking the Israeli occupation itself as a “field” of society, defined by Bourdieu as “the site of struggles between holders of different powers which [...] have at stake the transformation or conservation of the relative value of different kinds of capital” (Bourdieu, 1996: 215), many actors are competing with one another for hegemony and control within the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Of the constellation of actors involved in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, solidarity activists personify one community of agents operating in competition with others—such as the state of Israel, the Israeli military, the settler community, international organizations, Islamic Jihadists, the Palestinian Authority, etc.—in both concrete and abstract terms over the fate of the territory of Palestine and its respective population. While the notion of solidarity activism attests to certain criteria which have been discussed throughout this work, such as advocating for benefits which will not directly benefit the volunteer, there are dimensions of everyday practices of solidarity activism which have not been sufficiently captured in theory. Though the limits of this thesis do not permit a comparative analysis of the range of actors active in both the perpetuation and the contestation of the occupation, I would like to focus on the “habitus” (Bourdieu 1977) of international solidarity activists in their field of operation during a specific temporal period, which I refer to as their “transnational moment”.
- 2 To begin, one can ask how it is that solidarity activists justify their actions? What logics of language are used in order to create a space of political and social legitimacy for transnational solidarity activism? Furthermore, how do international volunteers interact with their field and adapt to their new environment? Assuming that acting as a solidarity activist differs from one’s everyday experiences in their “normal” life, what sets of attitudes, commitments, and rules of behavior (Friedman and McAdam 1992: 157) will be expected for the volunteer to subscribe to as they assume their newfound, yet perhaps temporary, identity? As such, how does the specific context of engaging in transnational activism alter one’s practices and beliefs? In order to answer the proposed questions, I will present a micro-level synthesis of the actions and behaviors of individuals whom are recruited as volunteers in Palestinian rights solidarity organizations. First, I will conduct an analysis of the discourse used by international volunteers, which works to validate and justify their presence, demonstrating a direct link between language and power. Next, I will outline the process of socialization experienced by international volunteers in the field, while highlighting the specific symbols and capitals relevant to the functionality of their engagement. As opposed to maintaining a sense of continuity relative to one’s “previous” or “principal lifestyle”, the practices of volunteers while in the field testify to encounters of fluctuation and transformation as they attune themselves with the collective identity of a Palestinian rights solidarity activist.

4.1. Language and Power

- 3 Focusing on the “linguistic habitus” (Bourdieu 1982) of solidarity activists, one dimension of their symbolic and actual role in the conflict, my attempt is to demonstrate the terms and the issues on which their struggle is defined. Thus far, I have tried to illustrate the conditions and strategies of cooperation along with the type of individuals involved whereas now, I will focus on the ways in which solidarity activists define their struggle in the specific social and territorial space which constitutes their activities.
- 4 As progressively demonstrated throughout the body of this work, solidarity activism is presented as an alliance between the local and the global in the name of justice, democracy, human rights, and freedom. Though already demonstrated at the institutional level, the stakes of engagement are equally defended and reproduced at the individual level. When discussing

both the goals and the justification of their intervention in the West Bank, international solidarity activists both recognized and reproduced a logic of judgment against Israeli soldiers and Jewish settlers. Thus, to convince and reinforce themselves of the legitimacy of their presence, it is essential to first stress a depiction of the atrociousness and the barbarity of the occupation in an effort to delegitimize it and the actors involved, as indicated here by an ISM volunteer:

“You hear so many things, so many bizarre things, it’s like every time you get shocked, like ‘WHAT? Are you serious?’ Like putting poisonous snakes in children’s bedrooms for example. Or poisoning the olive trees, that are so ancient. Or, like now, with the checkpoint in front of the school.”¹

5 According to this second-hand description of incidences as experienced by Palestinians living in the H2 district of Hebron city, the living conditions of Palestinians are contextualized as existing outside the boundaries of normality. Words such as “bizarre” and “shocked” indicate that abnormality.

6 Also, it was quite common for solidarity activists to express both their anger about conditions under the occupation as testified by Palestinian civilians. These normative evaluations were generally accompanied with an indication of the manifestation of “injustice”. One EAPPI volunteer explained, “I was just outraged by what’s going on here, the injustice, and so many people living for such a long time under these military laws and they don’t really have any rights.”² A CPT volunteer asserted a comparable attitude, “I think, when you see all the harassments and all the injustice, you can’t believe. I can’t stand it. So I think that’s why I came.”³

7 In an account of the difficulty for a third party intervener to avoid having prejudices, an Operation Dove volunteer designated the killing of children as one of the most gruesome aspects of war: “It is possible someone becomes against all the Israeli citizens, you know, its not easy because there is a lot of anger when you read that 50 children die.”⁴ Reactionary emotions regarding the plight of Palestinian children as a result of the occupation enliven both passion and conviction within the vindictive narrative of solidarity activists.

8 Another component of justifying solidarity intervention included the systematic use of moral declarations of “right” and “wrong”. One ISM volunteer, though at times unclear about certain facets of the occupation and unable to propose possible solutions to the occupation, insisted that “[w]hat is clear is that what is happening is unjust, is wrong and needs to be fought.”⁵ Similarly, an American-Israeli Ta’ayush volunteer described a similar position regarding violence targeted against Palestinian villagers, “And it just felt like there is this amazing little village and these fucking settlers are just beating people up. What’s going on. Like it just felt wrong, metaphysically wrong even.”⁶ Even when questioned about the subjectivity of measures of morality, some activists still defended the objectivity of labels such as “right” and “wrong”, alluding that a sense of morality should be as relevant to any individual in any given situation. In discussing the criteria upon which the Israeli army base the assignment of Israeli soldiers to duty in the Occupied Territories, one activist argued that regardless of one’s background, humans share a basic set of universal morals:

“Even if you score low on an IQ test, you still know the difference between ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. You still have some kind of morality. You know that beating up a kid that is 7 years old is not right. You know that.”⁷

9 Ethical rationalism is further reinforced by a sense of counter-logic to describe the situation in Israel and the Occupied Territories. One CPT volunteer highlights what he describes as a contradictory behavior of Israeli Jews:

“And it’s incredible that a people that have suffered through the Holocaust could turn right around and then you know, ghettoizing people here, pushing them off their land and taking it from them, you know, that just doesn’t make any sense to me. So, we’re here.”

10 One international volunteer for Rabbis for Human Rights characterized the Israeli occupation as an extreme case of anti-democratic practices carried about by a democratic state:

“Also the fact that, so there are many countries, Zimbabwe, Uganda or Eritrea with awful human rights records and awful governments but Israel is very much looked at as an advanced nation, as a Western democracy. So for a country to make such a claim and to be seen as totally on par with the US or Europe and still be making those violations, it multiplies it for me. How can a country like this get away with this, a country that is supposed to be full of democracy and transparency?”⁸

11 Though it can be argued that the United States and Europe do not necessarily have better track records, in the mind of this participant Israel was designated as the least authentic of any democratic country.

12 Other efforts to delegitimize and condemn the practices of the state of Israel included the use of the terms “fascist”, “ethnic cleansing”, “apartheid state”, “oppression”, “repression”, “colonial state”, “terrorist state”, “crazy”, “nonsense” and so forth. In general, however, ISM volunteers, conceived as the most ideological and radical in comparison to other organizational volunteers, used a more extreme vocabulary and expressed a stronger opposition against Israel. Yet, without the use of such labels, which are targeted to delegitimize Israel’s practices, solidarity activists would have difficulty justifying their own actions.

13 In order to stress the issue of victimization and the disproportionate use of force exercised by the Israeli army, a commonly used technique of solidarity activists, and human rights advocates more generally, is to stress a “concern with protecting the most vulnerable parts of the population” (Keck and Sikkink 1998: 205), namely infants and children. In some cases, it is sufficient just to refer to the Palestinians as the “oppressed people”. One participant even expressed his participation in terms of an interest in marginal populations:

“And so, I’ve always sort of been interested in the ignored population and the people who daily experience injustice and oppression and whose cries are never heard or heard by very few. And I feel like it’s like that with the Palestinians here.”⁹

14 When highlighting the asymmetry between the Israeli army and Palestinian civilians, solidarity activists emphasized the experience of Palestinian children as a consequence of the conflict more than any other segment of the Palestinian population. When summarizing his understanding of the occupation, one ISM volunteer explained with disgust:

“It’s about the military coming in and doing whatever they want because they think they are God. That they can come and arrest kids, and beat them, or shoot them, and that nothing will happen to them because they’re just Palestinians.”¹⁰

15 In conjunction, the priority of the organizations is then to protect Palestinian children subject to violence. An Operation Dove volunteer noted that while the organization is involved in other activities, the primary purpose of their project was to guarantee the safety of children on their way to school, “So Ta’ayush called CPT and Operation Dove, first to accompany the children of Tuba to the village of At-Tuwani.”¹¹ An ISM volunteer asserted the same prerogative when questioned about how the organization allocates its services:

“Well, most of the time, the kids are first. Like, if they need protection. We were talking about that last night when we walked into the city center, they [the soldiers] were putting up a checkpoint in front of an elementary school to check the children’s bags. How dare you, as the army, do that.”¹²

16 As observed on a day out in the old city of Hebron, CPT dedicates half of its daily duty to the monitoring of the movement of children from home to school, passing either through checkpoints or near settlements. CPTers keep logs of how many children’s bags were searched as they walked through a checkpoint, yet do not keep statistics on the number of adults or even women who are subject to a search.

17 While the processes of defamation, as evidenced by the delegitimization of Israeli practices and the localization of vulnerable victims, is primarily designed to reframe the perception of the Israeli occupation, the coinciding effect is the glorification of the work performed by the global civil society. Founded on a reductionist approach, the mere alliance between the TSMOs and the destitute warrants self-righteousness. When discussing his place in the political spectrum, a Rabbis for Human Rights volunteer explained his affinity towards morality above all else:

“Eventually I became more critical but I felt I wasn’t really comfortable arguing for the Palestinian side. I don’t like to say pick a side, I like to say I am on the side of the ‘right’, of justice and peace.”¹³

18 An EAPPI volunteer, skeptical of the political impact solidarity work could actually have, nonetheless affirmed the mere importance of being on the “right” side, “It’s just trying to relieve the suffering a little bit on the ground and to be on the side of the solution, not on the side of the problem.”¹⁴

19 Having themselves witnessed injustice and human rights abuses, solidarity activists validate the importance of their presence and often argue that more internationals should become involved. Though one EAPPI volunteer at first explained her uncertainty as to whether it was her role to intervene, her experience in the field led to a shift in opinion:

“So, I’ve become more convinced that there needs to be internationals. And I mean, the values that are the organization’s and mine, these are universal values. Human rights, equality, it’s not pro-Palestinian, even though we get more, through conversations and meetings, of the Palestinian narrative and we have less to do with normal Israeli people which is a bit sad.”¹⁵

20 Another volunteers also expressed a logic of need for the increased involvement of internationals “on the ground”:

“I used to say there are not so many people that can, that want to go to Palestine to do this work and I think I am more needed here than in Sweden. And we are a lack of people, we should be many more here.”¹⁶

21 This line of argumentation was often supplemented by the inability of Palestinians to have their voices heard. Conscious of the inequalities between international volunteers and the Palestinian communities they work with though less concerned with the transformation of North-South relations, the unison of the privileged and the weak is presented as an acceptable and even desirable solution. When analyzing his own participation in solidarity activism, one Operation Dove volunteer identified his objective as follows, “I am trying to echo and amplify the voice of Palestinians and people on the ground so that the injustices can be heard around the world.”¹⁷ An EAPPI volunteer went a step further and claimed the importance of such an alliance as communicated in an interaction with a Palestinian:

“One of the things that occurs to me is that there are a lot of internationals here and I think, I think Palestinians want that, as we were saying before, it’s the eyes that go back and tell. Many people say, ‘I’m glad you saw this, go back and tell.’ So I think that is important for the Palestinians.”¹⁸

22 With little regard for the effectiveness or long-term effects of an international presence on a grassroots level, the principal rationale of action is first and foremost to resist illiberal practices: “When you don’t think a situation is honest or righteous, you should do something about it. And not let other people handle it. Not trust governments to handle it, for sure not.”¹⁹ A CPT volunteer seemed unconcerned about the question of effectiveness, explaining that worrying to much about making change can add unneeded stress:

“There are laws and cultural aspects that cause societal problems for people and I don’t know if any of the work that we did had an impact, but when I say, I’m called by my faith, and I feel like that I am called to be faithful, not to be effective. I have no power to change these things, but again, it’s like planting seeds. We don’t know if and when it will make a difference. That is a tremendous help in not having burnout. There is a lot of frustration when you are doing something for a purpose of change and if you think that what your doing is to be effective and it doesn’t come to pass, then you just want to quit. It’s like ‘what am I doing this for, am I making a difference?’ I mean I don’t know if it makes a difference or not. But at least people know about it.”²⁰

23 Given the disposition of solidarity activists with respect to the occupation, it is quite common for them to articulate their political identity in terms of their endorsement of human rights and justice. Whether religious or secular, solidarity volunteers promote such universalizing principles as the ideal canons of governance. As one international Ta’ayush volunteer stated when depicting the transformation of his political ideology over the years:

“but this [volunteering in Palestine] is a much bigger thing in terms of the way I’ve developed as a person, the way I see the world, reflecting on the kind of ideas I had when I was younger as a

radical Marxist. Those ideas are still there but the most important thing for me is human rights. If you haven't got an ideology or belief that put human rights at the top, then your ideas are fairly useless to be quite honest."²¹

24 Willingly indoctrinated and prepared to use opportunities offered by transnationalism and hence global civil society to advance their beliefs, human rights stand out as the new secular religion of the New Left.

25 Despite a strong identification with the principles of human rights and justice, solidarity activists limited the application of such principles to criticism of the Israeli occupation. As support is one of the main functions of solidarity activism, when questioned regarding the state of human rights within Palestinian society, solidarity activists, though perhaps willing to discuss their impression, did not consider it their within the role of internationals to become involved in such matters. As one EAPPI volunteer commented when asked about whether or not EAPPI gets involved, for example, in women's rights projects: "That doesn't contribute to the goal of to end the occupation. We don't look into family. I think other people are doing that."²²

26 While maintaining the need for internationals to intervene in situations of conflict, responsibility for other occurrences of violence or human rights violations were generally believed to be within the realm of domestic issues to be managed by the Palestinians, as one CPTer remarked, "I think they have to do their own work. I don't think its useful if we come from abroad and say you must do like we are doing."²³ Despite the bestowal of a discourse on human rights, the practice of that discourse in the case of anti-occupation solidarity TSMOs is practically restricted to issues related to the occupation, giving priority to conflict management. As one ISM volunteer realized, the most urgent matters should be worked on first:

"I think though it is really a big problem with the women. It's difficult to focus on all the fights at the same time. I would also like to include animal rights and everything but it would be too much so I thought maybe its most necessary to work with human rights in the occupation first."²⁴

27 Some volunteers, however, seemed to express hope that the endorsement of human rights in relation to the occupation would encourage Palestinians to apply the same principles in a more widespread and consistent manner. As an EAPPI volunteer reasoned:

"The more that human rights and international law are being talked about then it will make people look at different things. So you would hope that if people are applying it in one context that they start looking at it in another."²⁵

28 Whether proponents of human rights, justice, international law, or Christian service, solidarity activists legitimize their engagement in the West Bank by using principles of moral universalism. Before defending such principles in a transnational space, solidarity activists must first confirm that one or more adversaries do not obey those principles. In the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, those adversaries are primarily defined as the Jewish settlers and the Israeli army, which by logical extension implicates the Israeli state. The delegitimization of the adversary is thus essential to the legitimization of the TSMOs. Yet, criticism is not without its limits. Charged with the single task of contesting the occupation, solidarity activists are limited in the situations where they may apply their universal principles. As opposed to being truly universal, universal principles are strategically employed in particular situations, defining the very identity of the given organizations and its affiliates. Furthermore, these solidarity activists come to the West Bank with a certain disposition already in mind based on previously held convictions, what Hecker calls an "assumed subjectivity" (2011: 236), which are then validated once in the field as the volunteers both absorb and produce a specific type of knowledge and capital.

4.2. Socialization in the Field: Capital, Symbology, and Experience

29 As a solidarity activist volunteering for a transnational social movement organization in a foreign country, the very act of entering into that country in affiliation with an organization

transforms the role of the individual. The spatial context thus plays an essential element in the actualization of transnational activism. Once in the field, however, international activists experience heavy socialization in light of their new environment. Both due to the intensity of their work and the drastically different cultural milieu they find themselves in, activists take up new roles and practices, which have an impact on themselves and the people they are in contact with throughout the process.

30 In order to spread awareness among the locals about their work and distinguish themselves from other groups, such as tourists or even settlers, wearing symbolic clothing enables the integration of international volunteers into the space of occupation. The more formal TSMOs require that their volunteers wear a standardized, “uniform-like” insignia. CPTers wear a red hat with the CPT logo on the front; EAs dress themselves in a khaki vest with “EAPPI” written in bold situated below a yellow dove on the back of the vest; IWPS volunteers equally wear either a vest or t-shirt with the organizations logo visibly displayed. Given the relatively short amount of time that volunteers spend in the field and the speed with which they are expected to be integrated, marked clothing acts as a recognition and distinction device, both to Palestinians who may need their help and to Israeli soldiers and settlers who are further made aware of a legitimate international presence. One EA analyzed the advantages of wearing a vest:

“Well, we’re not in small villages; we’re in communities around Jerusalem. So, it takes a long time [to get used to things and meet people], well, I suppose that’s why we wear those vests so that people recognize we are from the program even if they don’t recognize us. And the important thing in cases like in Silwan where there are so many tourists is that they know that we are sort of not tourists that we’re a supportive protective presence. So the vest gets known.”²⁶

31 In contrast, neither the less organized TSMOs, such as ISM, nor those that operate on a very local level, such as Operation Dove and PSP, enforce a dress code. In the case of ISM, not having an enforced uniform mostly symbolizes the anti-hierarchical ideology of the organization, yet, ISMers generally stand out given their own extreme apparel, which differs little from the manner they dress back home and acts as its own type of uniform. ISMers can be divided into two dominant, yet in normal circumstances typically marginal, identities—the “anarchists” and the “hippies”. In sharp contrast to the socially traditional milieu in which they operate, the “anarchist-types” can be observed wearing tight black clothing ordained with anarchist buttons and pins, combat boots, fully or partially-shaved heads, and a collection of face and body piercings; the “hippy-types” usually have a slightly different “uniform”, dressed in loose-fitting clothes made of natural fabrics and their hair in dreadlocks. For some, however, their alternative clothing is not sufficient to separate them from other actors and thus many strategically wear the keffiyeh²⁷ to clearly demonstrate their allegiance to the Palestinian cause. As a “hippie-type” ISM volunteer illustrated:

“Also for the kids, for example, when we are watching the checkpoints, I wear always a keffiyeh because some of the children are scared of you because they think you are a settler too. So it’s just to make it more comfortable for them, and to make it more annoying maybe for the soldiers. To show them that there is an international presence.”²⁸

32 As for the volunteers of PSP and Operation Dove, as they maintain a permanent presence in small local communities in villages or towns where other foreigners are unlikely to roam, their level of operation excludes them from the necessity of marked clothing. Nonetheless, once again, volunteers still subscribe to an informal uniform. Given the intensity of their daily activities and the amount of time they spend outside, cargo pants, outdoor travel vests, hiking boots, and long-sleeved t-shirts make up the general wardrobe of solidarity activists while in the West Bank. EAPPI, CPT, and IWPS volunteers also wear the same style of apparel in addition to their insignia clothing. As volunteers are advised to dress modestly out of respect for Palestinian culture, particularly as volunteers generally operate in more rural as opposed to urban settings, volunteers are unlikely to be seen wearing revealing clothing—such as sleeveless shirts, shorts, skirts, etc.—hence they adapt themselves explicitly to the temporary social setting. Coinciding with this trend, female volunteers commonly wear their hair back

or cut it short and in some cases cover their head with a scarf or piece of cloth out of respect for local traditions and customs.

33 As discussed briefly when reviewing the structure of each organization, volunteers experience a specific form of socialization that corresponds to the type of work they are doing, namely Palestinian rights solidarity activism, though it varies according to the intensity of the recruitment process and training program. While volunteers may at first “play” the role of a Palestinian rights activist, the field eventually transforms them into an actual Palestinian rights activist. Whether through their own will or enforced by the organization, volunteers become acquainted with a wide range of intellectuals and academic scholars who try to present an alternative narrative to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as well as books that deal with the tactic of non-violence and civil disobedience. In my interviews, the following authors were given notable mentions: Noam Chomsky, Naomi Klein, Robert Fisk, Edward Said, and Walid Khalidi. Also, each organization has its own library with an assortment of books for volunteers to consult during their stay in the West Bank. At the CPT headquarters in Hebron, book titles included *Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Songbook*, *Light Force: A Stirring Account of the Church Caught in the Middle East Crossfire*, *A Palestinian Christian Cry for Reconciliation*, *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, A Man to Match His Mountains*, *A Geographical Atlas of Palestine: The West Bank and Gaza*, *The Olive Tree Dictionary: A Transliterated Dictionary of Conversational Eastern Arabic (Palestinian)*, *New Covenant*, and *No-Nonsense Guide to Fair Trade*. At the ISM apartment in Ramallah, the following works were noted: *Palestine and the Palestinians*, several editions of “*Journal on Palestinian Studies*”, many Arabic language books, *First Aid Manual*, *Lonely Planet: Iran*, and an assortment of fiction.²⁹

34 In addition to a particular literary culture, other environmental surroundings construct a specific cultural space lived and experienced by volunteers during their service term in the West Bank. In terms of role models, pictures and quotes of progressive political activists and intellectuals—such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Leon Trotsky, contemporary Palestinian nonviolent activists, and other historic figures—can be found on the walls in the living quarters of solidarity volunteers. Second, both for pragmatic and political reasons, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) maps of the West Bank are the most common geographical reference for solidarity activists. While these maps are useful considering the level of detail on checkpoints, the Wall, geographic representation, demographic population distribution, etc., it is also their recognition of an altered representation of Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, wherein the borders between the two is less clear-cut and the effects of the occupation made more obvious, according to the territorial “facts on the ground”.

35 This adaptation described as a general process of socialization in the field also temporarily or perhaps indefinitely impacts the “*hexis corporel*” (Bourdieu 1982), that is the physical comportment of volunteers when in the field. As the majority of volunteers come from either Europe or North America, they are accustomed to different social customs, wherein, for example, the exchange of contact, whether physical or verbal, between men and women is common. Some volunteers try adjusting their own *habitus*, at least partially, to the more traditional Palestinian culture, however, but not without difficulty. One Operation Dove volunteer elaborates on this when reflecting on the role of an international in a small Palestinian village:

“I think it’s difficult to be a woman but it’s really difficult to be a man because they [local villagers] have a lot of expectations. Like you’re a man, so you have certain things you do and don’t do. Sometimes they see us cooking or washing dishes, which for them is not a man’s job. On the other side, I think every day about how we don’t have the possibility to have a relation with the women of the village. I think it is one of worst things to be a man here. Because I think there are a lot of wonderful women, persons, that can’t speak with us because they are women. Sometimes we go to visit a family, if the husband is in the house, the wife don’t speak with us. And it’s terrible for me because we are used to a different culture. I am not saying our culture is better or worse, but this is very difficult. So I think in the Arab countries, it is difficult to be a woman but it’s difficult to be a man.”³⁰

36 In addition to cultural differences, language barriers can also complicate the interaction
 between international solidarity activists and their local Palestinian counterparts.
 37 The language skills of solidarity activists have a serious impact on their experience in the
 field and inevitably their perception of the conflict. With the exception of a few American
 Jews who are currently living in Israel for a more extended period of time, solidarity activists
 did not speak Arabic or Hebrew. Even among volunteer-activists who have been coming to
 Palestine for years, their Arabic is very limited and their Hebrew is generally non-existent.
 Furthermore, given the international milieu that describes transnational solidarity in the West
 Bank, English is the lingua franca spoken both amongst solidarity volunteers themselves and
 between solidarity volunteers and the local population, whether Israeli or Palestinian. With
 the exception of a few basic words or phrases in Arabic—such as *shukran*³¹ or *as-salam*
*alaykum*³²—which international volunteers can be heard repeating over and over, English is
 vital to their communication with local Palestinians and their Israeli partners. Their lack of
 language skills thus only facilitates the voice of those Palestinians who speak English and
 enables a certain level of selective censorship. Based on similar observations in the field, one
 Hebrew-speaking American-Israeli Ta'ayush volunteer described international volunteers as
 “semi-present”:

“I think one has to have so much background if you are going to do something like this. I think if
 I didn't speak Hebrew, I wouldn't do this. Just because communication is so crucial to any kind
 of organization, and any kind of political activity, for an individual to express themselves, ask
 questions, and to be present in an action or an activity whatever it is, and not being able to do that,
 I couldn't do what some of the internationals do.”³³

38 Solidarity activists, however, when questioned about communication barriers, commented on
 the difficulty of working in a country without knowing the local language, but did not see it as a
 real obstacle: “Maybe you don't understand what they are saying, but this is not important. We
 communicate with them, and they communicate with us.”³⁴ Language is generally perceived
 as less important in comparison to the experiences lived and the situations witnessed along
 their field experience in the West Bank.

39 Despite a seemingly simplistic presentation of the social harmony lived between international
 volunteers and local Palestinians, the picture is more nuanced. There is no denying that
 contact exists between international volunteers and the Palestinians they encounter throughout
 their journey. The fact remains, however, that internationals generally tend to drift towards
 a social circle that includes other internationals like themselves and perhaps Israelis, with
 whom international volunteers have more in common with than Palestinian activists and
 civilians. With the exception of volunteers that live in isolated, small villages—such as in the
 case of Operation Dove—time spent in Israel or the Occupied Territories outside of activism
 activities testifies to a social divide between those that want to help and the population they
 claim to be helping. When organizing interviews with participants, international volunteers
 often requested to meet in places such as the Jerusalem Hotel, the Austrian Hospice, the
 Educational Bookshop, and so forth, which are known to be expatriate hangouts. Even in the
 field, internationals tended to congregate with one another, demonstrating a shared sense of
 solidarity and belonging; one that is likely more profound between two internationals than
 an international and a Palestinian villager. Side-by-side with other volunteers embarking on a
 similar exploration, moments of solitude and frustration become somewhat more manageable.
 40 Alongside the task of finding one's place while volunteering abroad, as mentioned when
 discussing the operational strategy of TSMOs in the West Bank, volunteers not only render
 a service to impacted Palestinian communities but also engage in a pedagogic formation
 themselves. During their service term, volunteers frequent specific spatial locations and
 witness social interactions that inevitably form their impression and knowledge base of the
 occupation. As expressed and repeated numerous times by volunteers, the power of coming to
 the West Bank is bearing witness to the occupation, “seeing it with your own eyes.” During
 their time in the field, volunteers encounter checkpoints, demonstrations, house demolitions,
 guns, settler attacks on Palestinians, military violence toward Palestinians, teargas, detainment,
 skunk water, barbed wire, the wall, military jeeps, and so forth. Usually in stark contrast to the

environments they are used to back home, solidarity activists often commented on the shock and intensity of working in a conflict zone, yet, over time, they become acclimated. An EA cynically recounted her transformation: “Nothing could have prepared me for this experience [first time at Qalandia checkpoint]. It’s just a shock but you get used to it. All the guns and everything. I don’t even look at it anymore. It’s like a handbag.”³⁵ After some time living in a conflict zone, solidarity activists eventually acclimatize themselves to the environmental setting that makes up the occupation. Yet, the majority of volunteers have little exposure to the “Israeli experience” or even to Israeli society, in general, given that they live and work for the most part in the West Bank.

41 Among the other realities of social life while volunteering in a foreign country, many solidarity activists attested to having to compromise their own ideological convictions in the name of solidarity. Using della Porta and Tarrow’s term, solidarity activists could be described as having “flexible identities”, that is identities geared towards inclusiveness and a positive disposition towards diversity and cross-fertilization, and “multiple belongings”, that is activists with “overlapping membership” in a number of “loosely, structured, polycentric networks” (2005: 238-239). In other words, though there are undoubtedly exceptions, not a single volunteer had been previously affiliated with a Palestinian rights movement before coming for the first time to the West Bank as a solidarity activist. Nonetheless, many solidarity volunteers expressed having been involved with other NSMs with origins in post-industrial countries—such as animal rights, environmentalism, women’s rights, human rights, gay rights, anti-globalization, social justice movements, etc. Thus, as supporters of more post-materialist oriented movements and ideas, some volunteers expressed difficulty compromising their ideological values which contrasted with the social life in Palestine. To begin, one Ta’ayush volunteer commented on the conflicting social lifestyles that generally describe the solidarity activists and the Palestinian communities they work with, stating that “I wouldn’t say it’s a kind of victim-helper relationship, its more complicated than that, but the relationship with most of the people there is not one between people coming form the same social environment.”³⁶ Taking that into account, he went on to speak about some of the frustrations of undertaking solidarity work limited to trying to end the occupation:

“What actually gets to me is the animals, the way that animals are treated in these places. Like I am vegetarian myself, but just to see donkeys standing out in the rain and the sun all the time, chained down, and the way that little kids abuse the dogs. I think a lot of the anger and frustration gets taken out on the animals. That’s really tough to see. And I feel like I can’t really say anything. I remember a couple of weeks ago, it was pouring rain, and I remember that day there was a dog running around the construction sight where we were building, like a little puppy, and the kids were just throwing stones at it, running after it, yelling at it, and I’m like ‘no, it’s a puppy, be nice to the puppy’ and we came up with a name for it. I don’t know if that helped at all, if the dog survived, but trying to humanize it. So that is really tough and frustrating.”³⁷

42 Though the question of gender relations evoked more varied responses among solidarity activists, with some troubled by the role of women within Palestinian society and others not, one ISM volunteer reflected on her experience as a women working mostly with Palestinian males:

“It was so terrible, I was in Silwan and we were keeping watch on the house for the family that was going to be evicted, so we were having shifts and I had the morning shift and we were sitting in their yard together with the men from the family and some neighbors, only men. And then the family got a phone call from the lawyer that the eviction had been delayed, and they were really happy, and they were celebrating, and other men came by from the streets were also informed. But the women in the house, who were also waiting to be evicted, no one informed them so they didn’t know what was going on and I mean they live there, and not one of their husbands or sons or brothers were interested in informing them. And then I just felt like ‘oh, what am I doing here? I don’t want to sit with these patriarchal men all the day’ and they can’t include their own relatives and women in their house. [...] Sometimes I try to think that ok ‘I can show another way of living maybe its inspiring for the women and men to see me here but on the other hand maybe they’re just like ‘oh, there’s that white whore who doesn’t have a husband’ or something.”³⁸

43 While not an issue for all solidarity activists, some asserted discontent about doing activism in a context that does not honor all of the same ideologies as appropriated by the international participant.

44 Another interesting contrast arose when discussing with anarchist participants who, in the context of their work in Palestine, are in support of a Palestinian state despite their anti-statist ideology. One anarchist volunteering for ISM depicted this divergence in philosophies:

“It’s strange because I’m an anarchist and back home I just want to smash the state and here I’m preaching for the Palestinian state. [...] A friend of mine from ISM posted a photo of me where I stand with my Palestinian scarf, Palestinian cap and flag, just like everything was Palestinian colors and I felt a bit ashamed when she posted it. I mean how did I end up here, how can I be for the freedom of the Palestinian people without waving their flag all the time. [...] I realized that, ok, I am not this person that will waive the Palestinian flag anymore but of course, I’m still pro-the Palestinian rights to a state. I think it is a pragmatic solution. We are organized in states today and so Palestinians must have a state because it is connected to many privileges that you don’t have if you don’t have a state.”³⁹

45 Given the political context, most anarchists interestingly seemed to make an exception to their ideology, explaining the importance of a statist-approach with regard to the future of Palestinian rights. As another anarchist confided, “Ya, well in Holland I think that’s creepy if people take up the Dutch flag, but here I think they should. They have every right to do so. To show ‘hey, we have the rights to be here’.”⁴⁰

46 Less critical of the Palestinian political scene than the Israeli one, most solidarity activists did not want to discuss political issues too deeply, arguing that it was not up to internationals but up to Palestinians to decide how they wanted to be governed. Despite this common trend, one volunteer was willing to discuss this discomfort in relation to working alongside the Islamic Jihad:

“One situation came up actually where, a protest that I fully support, supporting the rights of political prisoners, in Hebron, a demonstration organized by the Palestinian Prisoner’s Society, which is a group organized by former prisoners, um that is something I fully support, and they were having a protest for support for Khader Adnan [a hunger striker], whatever he’s done or not done, the way that he is being treated is the way that so many other Palestinians are being treated is unjust and needs to be fought, so I’m fully supportive. Then there was going to be a breakaway march, and at that point, all the flags, all the imagery was black and gold, the flags of Islamic Jihad. Once again, I don’t know so much about it. I don’t think it’s wrong and I don’t know the particularity of their actions but that is outside the realm of what I would want my image represented with.”⁴¹

47 Unwilling or perhaps disinterested in discussing the Palestinian political landscape, solidarity activists typically avoided entering into a critical debate on entities such as the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, the Islamic Jihad, and so forth, cautious not to call into question their support of the “Palestinian side”. Nonetheless, such a paradoxical position testifies to the limited “pro-Palestinian-ness” of solidarity activists, unable to align themselves with the major Palestinian political players but reserved to supporting civilians, more specifically the “victims” of occupation.

48 Moving on to inconsistencies found between the theory of solidarity and its practice, solidarity activists embody a valuable resource for the Palestinian communities they work with, though their value is not always exploited purely according to the terms of activism. Carriers of knowledge and expertise, particularly with regard to technology and English language skills, solidarity volunteers in the West Bank stand out as a privileged population, granted with opportunities that many Palestinians do not have access to. As such, some communities or individuals may try to take advantage of international volunteers in order to exploit them for their cultural capital. When visiting the Operation Dove base in at-Tuwani, a group of village children came knocking on the door around nine o’clock in the evening, insisting the Italian volunteers help them with their English homework. Likewise, one ISMer discussed the high demand for volunteers to give English classes:

“Like English class, for example, we’ve been asked a lot for English class but it’s not a priority, it’s not what we came here to do. And none of us knows how to teach, basically, we do not have

any experience in that. And if we get a call from somebody that has all kind of soldiers in his yard, then we go there.”⁴²

49 On an even more basic level, solidarity activists may potentially be used for free labor by Palestinian farmers who do not have enough manpower to cultivate or harvest their land. Even though the objective of their presence is generally protection, an ISM volunteer described the way in which solidarity activists can be exploited for other ends:

“I came during the olive harvest, so it meant we went to different villages everyday and picked olives from early in the morning till late in the evening. I felt more we were used as free labor than really there for any protective presence because usually when we arrived in different villages, which was different villages almost everyday, we were just asked to start picking olives somewhere. And we were like ‘ok, the settlement is there, isn’t better if we pick olives in the valley where there might be conflicts, and they were like, ‘no, no, we take that another day just take this’.”⁴³

50 In the mind of the locals, international volunteers are a resource, a resource that is not only conceptualized in terms of its political utility but also its social and economic potential.

51 Excluding volunteers holding a negative reflection about their experience in the West Bank, those volunteers which have been deeply and positively impacted by their volunteerism may potentially be recruited to the Palestinian rights movement in a more long-term capacity. Socialized as an “activist” while in the field, volunteers have grasped the strategies and practices of human rights advocates, both when in the field and as a supporter back home. Furthermore, while their transnationalist practices are exclusive to the transnational moment that they find themselves in while in the West Bank, the sustained recruitment and training of international supporters could one day provide the structural and network base for a truly transnational social movement. As a number of volunteers described it, while their initial motivations were primarily self-interested and ideological, spending time in the West Bank added a personalized element to their work. One Operation Dove volunteer illuminated his personal journey:

“For me, maybe you start with the ideas of struggle against injustice or more equality, and human rights. And then you associate faces and person to those things and then maybe you struggle for them. Maybe here is for Ahmed or Mohammed and in Columbia it is for Carlos, and I don’t know, Pedro. For me the philosophy pass in a second, into the background.”⁴⁴

52 Such expressions and visions were particularly common among Operation Dove volunteers who live in a small village and eventually develop close relations with the local villagers. One Operation Dove volunteer depicted her connection to the village:

“So I decided to come here for 3 months, and after when I came back in Italy, each day I pass to think of At-Tuwani because I learn too much. I learn that some people here react everyday to defend their life and their land.”⁴⁵

53 After having such an intense and intimate experience, it becomes difficult just to abandon a community, even if the international volunteer goes back home to their country, they know that the Palestinian struggle continues. In some cases, the internationalization of the conflict has also evoked a sense of responsibility among non-partisan actors in the conflict, especially among citizens whose native countries have played a role in the conflict, whether actively or passively, throughout history.

54 Beyond a process of personalization with the movement, volunteers are inevitably changed by their experience in some way or another. As opposed to coming into the experience as an individual with set values and ideas, those subjective perceptions may be altered by a volunteer’s experience in a different country where the social, political, and economic life are different from what they had previously known. For some, that change of mind may reflect a pessimistic view of the international order, particularly of the media:

“I’ve become more critical but not just back home, but about the world system. The role of the media in our society, what they are saying to us, what is the reality instead. It helps you to make questions to yourself and other people. It gives you a new way to contextualize the world.”⁴⁶

- 55 For others, criticism might be evoked regarding the practicality and feasibility of the enforcement of universalizing principles such as international law:
- “I studied about world governance and these things, but when you come here, and you know that there is international law, you studied that there is international law, but when you come here you say ‘where is this law? Is there something that respects that law?’ Everyone knows that our neighbors, the Israeli settlers can’t stay here. And so why no one came here and pushed them away? It’s just the law.”⁴⁷
- 56 Still, transformations might also take place with respect to an individual’s everyday way of life and perspective regarding living standards:
- “You keep inside you this little world, made of schoolchildren, of shepherds. So, it’s an experience that really doesn’t start and have an end, really, it continues everywhere. Sure, it is different when you are here and when you are back in Italy because here the life is more simple. So, you don’t have distractions, in the evening you don’t say to yourself ‘I will go to the cinema or the pub’, there is nothing, but this change also you when you are in Italy. You feel that there are some things that you don’t need, that aren’t so important. So you see what is important and what is not so important.”⁴⁸
- 57 An elder CPT volunteer framed her transformation in terms of personal consumption:
- “I like the lifestyle to have it very simple. (Is it an escape for you?) Ya, maybe. But I’d like to have it like that in Sweden also. Not buying all these things all the time. When I come home I am very aware of water and all this that we have here. But in Sweden we don’t care about water, it just comes. We try to make people aware of it. But it’s hard when you’re used to it.”⁴⁹
- 58 At the end of it all, the individual is likely to experience a sense of estrangement and detachment, no longer feeling a sense of belonging to their own society or any other:
- “I think it’s, for us as internationals, it’s a strange position, because if you are here, for the people of your country, sometimes you are a strange person, like crazy. And also, for the people that lives here, you are still an ajam, a foreigner, so it’s a strange position because you are not a Palestinian but you are not completely in the average way of the Italians or the Europeans. So, in a way, there will be sometimes, like in a middle position. But the good thing of the Arabs in this area, they make you feel at home, they do their best to make you feel as at home. Yes, there are some big differences between us and them but it’s a strange position for us as internationals. Because in our country, we are seen as strange people, not as strange, but people that made a radical choice. For the Arabs, we are still foreign, we are ajam. We stay in the middle, we try to arrange.”⁵⁰
- 59 In some sense, volunteering in Palestine offers estranged Westerners an escape from what they perceive to be a materialistic and shallow culture back in their home countries:
- “I know Palestinian culture [...]. It’s refreshing to me and I have a very hard time when I go back to the United States, with the consumerism and the independence, with the lack of community, the lack of extended family, the lack of joy in one’s life. So many people are taking medication for depression, they’re bored to death [...], anyway, I love being here with families and the culture. It’s refreshing. And the children. Especially being an old woman now, I feel so discounted in the United States. It’s all about youth, beauty, and money and all this and I’m not interested in any of it.”⁵¹
- 60 For most, that feeling of detachment is most evident once the volunteers return back home and experience a slight form of culture shock:
- “You know, you go back home and you feel very detached from the kind of life that most people lead. And when I go back home, I just can’t believe that people are so concerned about material things. It seems completely, obviously you have needs, but when I live here I’ve got nothing really. I don’t have much and I don’t need much. It’s the people around me that are important to me. And you get that through internationals and through knowing Israeli activists and the Palestinian people. And it’s kind of a remarkable experience in a sense.”⁵²
- 61 While it is difficult to say to what extent international volunteers actually change their living habits once they have returned home and how long such changes in everyday practices persist, be it as it may, the consciousness and awareness of that contrast seems meaningful and compelling to the participants concerned.
- 62 Taken together, while TSMOs provide the structure and opportunity for international volunteers, solidarity activism functions within a wider realm of social relations and processes

that describe and determine the phenomenon as a whole. First, TSMOs operating in the West Bank offer a unique opportunity for both idealist liberals and pacifist Christians, young and old alike, to participate in global society initiatives. While the emphasis in this work has been on leftist groups, the development of a “global consciousness” relates to a broader political spectrum, wherein the proponents of a global civil society are those that wish the spread and success of their own value systems. Conditioned by their leftist upbringing and middle class values, volunteers engage in Palestinian rights not because of their affinity towards the Palestinians, but more due to the internalization of humanist or Christian doctrines which defend the universal rights and humane treatment of individuals.

63 Skilled both with technical expertise and liberal value systems, solidarity activists engage in a process of denunciation of the Israeli state and its practices in order to legitimize their own presence and actions. Regardless of whether or not these volunteers continue to struggle for the Palestinian cause when they return to their home countries, “they bring with them new forms of action, new ways of framing domestic issues, and perhaps new identities” that may one day facilitate more sustainable transnational campaigns (Tarrow 2005: 2-3). Finally, it is the emergence of solidarity activists in the territorial space of the West Bank that actuates new social relations and processes that can have a profound impact on both the volunteers and the individuals with whom they interact. Along the way, common identities by way of experience and interaction are constructed between individuals emanating from different societies and culture (Eterovic and Smith 2001: 200).

Notes

1 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

2 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

3 Interview with Participant H., held March 15, 2012.

4 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.

5 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.

6 Interview with Participant A., held February 29, 2012.

7 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

8 Interview with Participant W., held March 11, 2012.

9 *Ibid.*

10 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.

11 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.

12 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

13 Interview with Participant W., held March 11, 2012.

14 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

15 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

16 Interview with Participant H., held March 15, 2012.

17 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.

18 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.

19 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

20 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.

21 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.

22 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

23 Interview with Participant H., held March 15, 2012.

24 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.

25 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.

26 Interview with Participant L., held February 8, 2012.

27 A keffiyeh is a traditional Arab headdress which has become a symbol of the Palestinian national liberation movement.

28 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

29 Unfortunately, the photograph of the ISM library came out blurred, making the majority of the book titles illegible.

30 Interview with Participant L., held March 5, 2012.

31 The Arabic word for 'thank you'.

32 A greeting in Arabic typically used by Muslims.

33 Interview with Participant A., held February 29, 2012.

34 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.

35 Interview with Participant K., held February 9, 2012.

36 Interview with Participant O., held March 8, 2012.

37 Interview with Participant A., held February 29, 2012.

38 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.

39 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.

40 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

41 Interview with Participant P., held March 2, 2012.

42 Interview with Participant D., held March 15, 2012.

43 Interview with Participant R., held February 9, 2012.

44 Interview with Participant U., held March 5, 2012.

45 Interview with Participant M., held March 5, 2012.

46 Interview with Participant U., held March 5, 2012.

47 Interview with Participant L., held March 5, 2012.

48 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.

49 Interview with Participant H., held March 15, 2012.

50 Interview with Participant T., held March 5, 2012.

51 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.

52 Interview with Participant J., held March 14, 2012.

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5. Conclusion

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5. Conclusion

- 1 Attracted by conflict and war, starvation and disease, natural disasters and underdevelopment, discrimination and injustice, solidarity organizations and their supporters engage themselves in struggles for the acquisition of benefits that they themselves will not receive. In the absence of political solutions addressing the demands of a given people, non-state actors are capable of appropriating functions and responsibilities upon themselves which the state is unwilling or unable to perform. Following paths of possibility and opportunity, contact between non-state actors of the North and the South demonstrate one example of the establishment transnational networks, allowing for the transfer of resources from one entity to another. While transnational networks are by no means unique to the present time period, the enhancement of internationalism given the astounding proliferation of international and non-governmental organizations since the 20th century (della Porta and Tarrow 2005; Tarrow 2005) along with the effects of globalization supporting “the intensification of worldwide social relations” (Giddens 1990: 64) have further enabled transnational possibilities, altering the context in which SMs and SMOs operate.
- 2 Representative of one sector of the Palestinian rights social movement industry, solidarity organizations active in the West Bank working for an end to the Israeli occupation embody one example, among many, of transnational social movement organizations involved in solidarity activism. Where non-violence has been the guiding philosophy of collective action, there has been evidence of sites of resistance in which Israeli, Palestinian, and international actors come together in displays of opposition against the occupation. Responding for the most part to Palestinian demands for the support of the international community, whether as part of local or international collective action, internationals are exploiting their privilege and their identity as a foreigner to offer protection for Palestinians in activities of their everyday lives and extend the voice of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, freedom, and dignity.

5.1. The Contributions of this Dissertation

- 3 In conducting a study on transnational social movement organizations combating for Palestinian rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, I have tried to explore what it means for TSMOs and their volunteers to participate in political altruism, using theory drawn from social movement and transnational studies while integrating data extracted from an ethnographic study. I began by using an organizational sociology, outlining the background of each organization involved in Palestinian rights solidarity work in the West Bank, followed by an examination of the strategies and structures imperative to the realization of the organizations’ shared mission. Taking into consideration the political stalemate between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities, yet the continuation of a “policy of separation”, particularly in Area C of the West Bank, non-state actors mandated themselves to fulfill duties, which they thought some entity or another ought to be performing. While implicitly addressing political questions, the TSMOs themselves have little leverage, but rather, are grounded on the hope that advocacy for an end to the occupation will stimulate a change.
- 4 With a complicit comparison of one organization to another, two primary categorizations of organizations were exhibited as being involved in Palestinian rights solidarity activism: (a) liberal secular organizations condemning oppression and discrimination while using international law in support of their argumentation; and (b) pacifist Christian organizations believed to be enacting God’s will, relying on biblical teachings to delegate their action. Thus, as opposed to witnessing the homogeneity of the middle classes within solidarity groups, diversification and division exists according to the formal doctrines the organizations choose as their source of legitimacy. Interestingly, however, there is evidence of adaptation on the part of some Christian organizations, which, alongside a religious *doxa*, also incorporate support from international law, particularly the Geneva conventions. As such, the distinction between “old” solidarity movements and “new” solidarity movements is less evident, at least in a transnational context.

- 5 The question of financial resources essentially impacts the organizations structure and, hence, its capability to initiate formal projects as well as to train and provide for its volunteers, explaining why organizations with formal, institutional support, such as EAPPI, must function in a more regulated fashion when compared to an organization like ISM, which is not accountable to any state or institutional organization, and therefore functions in a less restricted manner. Other factors, such as the statute of the organization within the country of action, determine the limits of an organizations action. In the case of TSMOs active in the West Bank, as they are not officially authorized by the state of Israel or the Palestinian Authority, they are restricted to operating a volunteer-based organization with a constant turnover.
- 6 Moving from an emphasis on the organizations themselves to a contextual focus, I defined both the structural components supporting the formation of transnational grassroots activism in the West Bank while recapitulating personalized factors which motivated international volunteers to become engaged. Essential to the resurrection of TSMOs combating for Palestinian rights in the West Bank, I indicated the importance of Israel's practices in the Occupied Territories and the continued resistance to what was happening on the ground by certain communities within Palestinian society. With access to the benefits of technological devices and communication platforms in addition to the opportunities provided by internationalism, Palestinian communities have come to pioneer grassroots campaigning. Strikingly different when compared to the way collective action was mobilized during the first Intifada, mobilization since the second Intifada has shifted from a predominately nationalist to a human rights discourse, advocating their cause through the diffusion of information about current events while forging partnerships with international actors. Other relevant issues included the material visibility of the occupation as evidenced by the Wall, checkpoints, etc.; the relative level of security for international volunteers; the ease of pinpointing the "bad guy" and the "good guy"; the transformation to a multi-issue framework; and the inability of the Palestinian rights movement to mobilize the masses of Israeli and Palestinian society. As pretenses to transnational networks, the presence of the aforementioned conditions also demonstrate an explanation for why a transnational nonviolent resistance movement has arisen in the West Bank but less so in Gaza.
- 7 When considering the factors motivating international solidarity activists to take action in the West Bank, their participation can be framed both as a result of their internalization of liberal and/or Christian values through various socialization processes along with the pursuit of individualistic interests. While the solidarity organizations advertise a politically altruistic organizational mission, this theorization does not hold at the individual level. Instead individuals with previously formed worldviews search or come across opportunities with organizations that share a similar identity to their own, in this case based on internationalist liberalism or pacifist Christianity. The importance of identity salience between the organization and its participants is further highlighted when considering the fact that volunteers for a specific organization would not necessarily volunteer for another organization doing similar work if it exemplified a diverging identity.
- 8 As opposed to being pro-Palestinian, most activists are, at heart, either human rights activists or peace activists, taking the example of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a situation wherein their ideas may be defended and put into action. Furthermore, while the term "global civil society" gives its audience a feeling of universality and perhaps equal opportunity, it is more representative of dominant world ideologies working outside of their borders of origin in order to spread and proliferate in other countries and societies of the world. In combating what is identified of a negative manifestation of power, it should be recognized that the action of these organizations is also an archetype of power, one that is based on specific epistemological resources, without which action would be unimaginable.
- 9 Lastly, I used Bourdieusian concepts and ideas to theorize a synthesis of the daily practices and realities "on the ground" that describe the actions of international volunteers while in the field. In order to justify and make sense of the necessity of transnational activism, international volunteers engage in a process of language and discourse formation in which the denunciation of the state of Israel is essential in advocating for their own presence. While the effectiveness

of their operations is less of a concern, it is Israel's actions which are claimed to solicit an international response. Yet, as opposed to being consistent with their endorsement of human rights and similar universalizing principles of moral rationalism, their criticisms are largely limited to the actions of the occupying power, Israel, and rarely touch on the problems within Palestinian society. As a consequence, internationals find themselves compromising their own values and beliefs for the moment in the name of the struggle.

10 In addition to a temporary abandonment of principles, throughout their transnational moment, the participants adjust their own *habitus* in order to accommodate the society which they are temporarily coexisting with. While, for some, these adaptations are easily forgotten once the individual has returned to their home country, for others, it transforms the way they view the world and disrupts their notion of the status quo.

11 By presenting a view of the organizations active in Palestinian rights advocacy, the structural factors that support the evolution of transnational networks, who performs transnational solidarity activism, how it is justified, and what it looks like practically in the field, I have tried to contribute to and enrich the existing body of literature treating solidarity organizations and transnationalism. Relying on theoretical and empirical findings presented in previous research, I have presented a sociological study based on two months of ethnographic work in Israel and the West Bank.

5.2. Shortcomings and Opportunities for Further Research

12 Despite the wealth of information that I have uncovered throughout my ethnographic experience and have tried to relay here, there are nonetheless several shortcomings to this work which may of themselves prompt new opportunities for future research. To begin with, whenever undertaking an ethnographic work there are, of course, implied biases as a result of the interview process. In my case being a young adult granted me access to information that my participants might otherwise have been reluctant to give. As I had participated in a number of anti-wall demonstrations some years prior to this study, I was able to use this fact from the outset to gain the confidence of my participants. Furthermore, by regularly attending demonstrations, conferences, and meetings my legitimacy was solidified within a circle of international activists. The fact of being female and the particularities of my individual character undoubtedly also played a role, though I think in most cases they played to my advantage.

13 As mentioned in the introduction, I interviewed a few Palestinian and Israeli activists in order to gain a local perspective on the volunteerism and activism of international participants. Naïve, perhaps, about what I was expecting to find, what I actually did find seemed far too complex and dynamic to be mentioned in passing. As such, I believe work examining the differing opinions among local actors regarding international activists would be fascinating work and deserving of treatment on its own.

14 In my research, I have only examined international activists while in the field. Though, for the limits of this work, it seemed to me a sufficient and even at times overwhelming task, it would also be of interest to make contact with volunteers before and after their departure. While initiating contact prior to the volunteer's engagement would prove more challenging, doing follow-up work on the volunteers once they had returned to their country of origin could bring to light the level of dedication of the given individual and the pertinent networks within a given national context. Furthermore, in contemplating potential avenues of research, I thought it would be also relevant to work with Palestinian rights activists who advocate in a specific national context, for example French activists advocating for Palestinian rights in France, so as to recycle some of the questions that have been brought up in this work.

15 With respect to the question of networks, unfortunately, I was not able to sufficiently address this matter as thoroughly as I would have liked. While, in some cases, I have given a list of countries which provide funding for a particular organization, questions remain as to the other donors. What is their interest in contributing resources to Palestinian rights TSMOs? What non-state actors participate in funding? Is there competition for resources among local SMOs and TSMOs?

16 Moving away from the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, examinations of other
 17 transnational solidarity movements in different geographical contexts using a similar research
 model would help in continuing to explore contemporary political and social structures.
 Furthermore, as opposed to looking just at volunteer-based organizations, as I have done
 here, an exploration of humanitarian and development actors would also help to reveal the
 sociological underpinnings of political altruism. While at first glance, organizations promoting
 an altruistic and progressive narrative seem attractive and apolitical, deeper investigation often
 reveals it to be otherwise.

5.3. Experience in the Field

17 During my two months of fieldwork, though an academic endeavor, it was a challenging
 journey, both in terms of emotions and ethics. Having previously lived in Israel for half a year
 in 2009-2010, I was able to rely on old friends and referenced contacts to help me find my way
 into the “anti-occupation network”. Despite having a foot in the door with Israeli activists,
 however, searching out international volunteers was another obstacle. In search of observation
 opportunities and possible interviewees, I went to every demonstration and conference, mostly
 in Jerusalem or in the West Bank, that I could get to. I remember often asking Israeli activists
 organizing transportation from Tel Aviv to anti-wall demonstrations in the West Bank, “where
 do you think there will be more internationals?”, a question which in itself revealed my true
 purpose.

18 In the beginning, I do not remember seeing many internationals amongst the ranks of Israeli
 and Palestinian activists. The early months of 2012 seemed to be the rainiest and coldest
 the region had experienced in years, resulting in the small turnout or, in some cases, the
 cancellation of direct actions. While the weather conditions were celebrated, especially by
 Palestinian villagers who are constantly threatened with a shortage of water, I worried that I
 was perhaps in the right place at the wrong time. In the end, however, the various individuals
 and groups scattered around the West Bank became visible, and I was able to put together
 enough data to support this study. Working in such a terrain, however, often proved difficult,
 particularly given the relative disconnectedness of the organizations I sought. In some cases,
 emails were sent and phone calls were made but I received responses only several weeks later.
 19 Throughout the process, I was often questioned as to what my intentions in participating in
 Palestinian rights activism. Just like the internationals I was interviewing, I too was following
 self-interest, a reality which often left me with a feeling of guilt, particularly towards the
 Israeli activists who were so kind as to welcome me and help me in whatever way they could.
 Trying to find a balance between the role of a participant and the role of a researcher was
 often a struggle, yet, walking away from this experience, I am more confident about potential
 fieldwork in the future.

20 In actualizing my interviews, at times I had to force myself to engage and ask questions,
 which in itself, awakened in me a way of being I had never exhibited within myself. While
 some internationals demonstrated a clear suspicion of me, particularly the more radicalized
 ISMs, making it difficult to include a truly diverse and representative sample, others were
 surprisingly open and often even thanked me for having stirred reflection within themselves.
 I cannot express how stunned I was to get the interviews that I did, particularly those in which
 some individuals spoke about astonishingly personal matters, matters I myself am not sure I
 would reveal to a stranger. Though I may have, in some way, played with a certain sense of
 vulnerability often experienced when one is far way from home, it is the responsiveness of my
 participants that has made this study worthwhile.

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