Breaking Apart the Call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS): Dispossession and Displacement as Two Faces of Settler Colonialism

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Abstract

This thesis critically analyzes "Palestinian Civil Society Calls for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel Until it Complies with International Law and Universal Principles of Human Rights" — the BDS Call — by distinguishing in it two images of the Palestinian people. The Palestinian nation is figured both as a) an Indigenous people and b) as a refugee or diasporic people. I argue that these two images are produced by the two faces of settler colonialism to which the Palestinian people have been subjected: dispossession and displacement. Theorizing dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism clarifies the variegated historical experiences of Palestinians through their diverse encounters with the Zionist settler colonial project. Some Palestinians were dispossessed in their homeland, others were displaced from their homeland, and others lived through an assemblage of both processes. These distinct processes have given rise to different lived experiences for Palestinians historically and contemporarily, and this contextualizes and helps to explain the perennial issue of fragmentation within their national movements, including the BDS movement. This thesis pursues three lines of argument resulting from this critical analysis of BDS. First, it gives order to three tensions running through the Movement's demands, including the BDS movement's position on historic injustice, what is demanded of Israel, and the inclusion of the right of return. Second, the thesis traces a lacuna in the BDS program: its omission of the Palestinian diaspora. Third, the thesis demonstrates how BDS is informed by and responsive to Palestinian fragmentation, and argues that this approach to BDS reveals the movement's radical potential.

Cette thèse analyse de manière critique « l'appel au boycott, aux désinvestissements et aux sanctions contre Israël jusqu'à ce qu'il applique le droit international et les principes universels des droits humains » — l'appel BDS — en y distinguant deux images du peuple palestinien. La nation palestinienne est représentée à la fois comme a) un peuple autochtone et b) comme un peuple réfugié ou diasporique. Je soutiens que ces deux images sont produites par les deux visages du colonialisme de peuplement auquel le peuple palestinien a été soumis : la dépossession et le déplacement. La théorisation de la dépossession et du déplacement en tant que deux visages du colonialisme de peuplement clarifie les expériences historiques variées des Palestiniens à travers leurs rencontres avec le projet colonial de peuplement sioniste. Certains Palestiniens ont été dépossédés de leur patrie, d'autres ont été déplacés de cette dernière, et d'autres encore ont vécu une combinaison des deux processus. Ces processus distincts ont donné lieu à différentes expériences vécues par les Palestiniens au cours de l'histoire et aujourd'hui. En s'intéressant à ce double enjeu, cette thèse contribue à la contextualisation et à l'explication de l'éternelle question de la fragmentation des mouvements nationaux palestiniens, y compris le mouvement BDS. Cette thèse poursuit trois lignes d'argumentation, lesquelles résultent de cette analyse critique du mouvement BDS. Premièrement, elle rend compte des trois tensions qui traversent les demandes du mouvement, à savoir la position du mouvement BDS sur l'injustice historique, ce que le mouvement exige d'Israël, ainsi que la question de l'inclusion du droit au retour des réfugiés. Deuxièmement, la thèse retrace une lacune dans le programme BDS : son omission de la diaspora palestinienne. Troisièmement, la thèse démontre comment le mouvement BDS est informé par la fragmentation palestinienne et y répond, et soutient qu'une telle approche du mouvement BDS révèle son potentiel radical.

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Introduction

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement is a Palestinian-led campaign promoting boycotts, divestments, and sanctions against Israel until it meets the following three demands:

> 1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall
> 2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
> 3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194

The problem explored in this thesis is how the aims of the BDS movement are complicated by 'two images of Palestinians' that correspond to two different narratives for identifying the fundamental injustices to be repaired. On the one hand, Palestinians are figured as an Indigenous people that have been *dispossessed*. On the other, they are a refugee or diasporic people that have been *displaced*. These distinct frames produce varying threads in the objectives of BDS and the approaches adopted by the movement. Can these strands be harmonized, or is BDS facing a trade-off as a theoretical program? What are the possibilities going forward in terms of making sense of and prioritizing these different demands?

This thesis offers an analysis of the BDS movement by interpreting the BDS Call[1] through 'two images of Palestinians'. I argue that these two images are the product of two faces of settler colonialism that the Palestinian collective have been subjected to in the form of dispossession and displacement. Theorizing dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism can clarify the variegated experiences of Palestinians through their diverse encounters with the Zionist settler colonial project. Some were dispossessed in their homeland,

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[1] Whenever 'BDS Call' or 'Call' is used in this thesis, it is in reference to the official document that lays out BDS's political program. The full BDS Call is listed in the appendix and will be referred to throughout the thesis. The online BDS Call document can also be found here: https://bdsmovement.net/call

others were displaced from their homeland, and others lived through an assemblage of both processes. These distinct processes have given rise to different lived experiences for Palestinians historically and contemporarily, and this contextualizes and helps to explain the perennial issue of fragmentation within their national movements, including the BDS movement.

This thesis pursues three lines of argument by interpreting the BDS Call through 'two images of Palestinians', and they each serve a distinct purpose. The first gives order to three tensions in the movement, with the goal being to *analytically* read the Call and clarify key debates permeating discourse on BDS. The second *critically* reads the Call, and it does this by tracing a lacuna in its political program. The third offers a *strategic* reading of the Call by demonstrating how BDS is responsive to Palestinian fragmentation.

First, I give order to three tensions running through the movement's demands, including its position on historic injustice, what is being demanded of Israel, and its inclusion of the Palestinian right of return. These dilemmas point to a fragmented Palestinian collective that has been sundered through settler colonialism's two faces, which complicates BDS's normative program due to the experiential differences across this collective. The challenges confronting the movement as a result point to a potential trade-off that BDS is facing as a political program.

Second, I point to a flaw in the BDS program in its apparent omission of the Palestinian diaspora. This is significant because the literature around BDS references the right of return in the context of both refugee and diasporic Palestinians. This omission of the diaspora in the Call muddles the movement's demands because it is unclear whether the right of return is invoked under BDS with respect to only refugees or both refugees and the diaspora. The failure to clearly include the diaspora – a core segment of the Palestinian collective – in the BDS program

perpetuates the settler colonial basis for the diaspora's fragmentation from this collective, with all the exclusions and unaddressed injuries this implies.

Third, I demonstrate how BDS is informed by and responsive to Palestinian fragmentation, and argue that this approach to BDS reveals the movement's radical potential. This thread in the thesis's argument looks at how BDS is reconstituting the identity of the 'Palestinian' as a revolutionary subject partaking in an anticolonial struggle.

The outline for the thesis is as follows. The literature review will revisit writings on BDS, dispossession, displacement, and settler colonialism. 'Breaking Apart the Call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions' puts forth a conceptual analysis of the BDS Call through the frames of settler colonialism, dispossession, and displacement. 'Dispossession and Displacement as Two Faces of Settler Colonialism' explicates dispossession and displacement as two distinct faces of Zionist settler colonialism. 'Two Images of Palestinians: Conflicting Currents in the BDS Call' organizes debates around BDS by discerning three tensions in the movement, which include its position on historic injustice, what it is being demanded of Israel, and its inclusion of the right of return. 'A Spatial World of Dispossessions and Displacements' revisits the history associated with Palestinian fragmentation and presents this condition as a larger issue confronting BDS. 'BDS and the Palestinian Diaspora' identifies a lacuna in the BDS Call and the literature on BDS more generally by elucidating the movement's ambiguous position with respect to the diaspora, before explaining why the diaspora is relevant for BDS for overcoming fragmentation and for its more general campaign demanding justice and self-determination. The last section, 'Reconciling Two Images of Palestinians', gestures at BDS's potential to surmount fragmentation and harmonize the tensions in its political program by looking at the movement's reconstitution of the 'Palestinian' as a revolutionary subject partaking in a national liberation struggle.

Literature Review

The review of BDS will consider where the literature on this topic has been focused thus far, before identifying gaps through which this thesis can contribute. The review of dispossession will examine the use of the term as a tool of social criticism. The review of displacement will survey writings on refugees and diasporas generally, and then in relation to Palestinians in particular. Lastly, the review of settler colonialism will focus on how it differs from classical colonialism, before discussing applications of this framework to Palestine-Israel.

The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Movement

There are few existing scholarly works on BDS, as well as a dearth of well-informed theoretical examinations of the BDS position. One of the reasons for this lack of theoretical articulation is that many interested in writing on the subject are either advocates or opponents of BDS. Much of the original research on the movement, in other words, has been carried out by activists themselves (Morrison 2015, 39), and so the bulk of the literature around BDS can be understood as a "call for mobilization" (Ibid., 14) on the part of either participants in/supporters of BDS or else anti-BDS activists hoping to combat its momentum. I hope for this thesis to be part of what Morrison (2015) refers to as a third body of work that moves beyond explicit arguments for or against BDS (16).

Positive writings on BDS pivot around the grassroots and transnational form of the movement, its internationalist elements, and its anti-normalization principles. Bakan and Abu-Laban (2009) use a Gramscian approach to appraise the movement as resisting Zionism's hegemonic place in western ideology. Omar Barghouti (2010), a co-founder of BDS, produced a book the following year that contextualizes how and why BDS arose, addresses criticisms of the movement, and draws parallels between BDS against Israel and BDS in South Africa. Wiles

(2013) outlines the impetus for the BDS Call, considers the movement's economic impact, discusses arguments in favour of the academic boycott, and highlights the multi-faceted operation of BDS activism across various locales globally. Maira (2018) was a response to the growth of BDS in the United States and focuses on the academic boycott. Lim (2012) was a reaction to Israel passing legislation outlawing BDS[2], and recapitulated the strategic, practical, and moral imperatives in support of the campaign.[3]

Various criticisms of BDS have likewise emerged in response to the movement's growth. These include Fishman (2012), Babbin (2014), Nelson and Brahm (2014), Dyrenfurth and Mendes (2015), Felson and Sheskin (2016), Pessin and Ben-Atar (2018), and Nelson (2019). Arguments made against BDS accuse it of being an anti-Semitic movement either in principle or in practice, of violating norms of academic freedom when discussing the impact of the movement on academia, of existentially undermining the Israeli state, and, of course, advance

[2] The "delegitimization network" that BDS represents was classified by the Reut Institute, a leading Israeli think tank, as an existential threat to Israel (Ananth 2013, 130). Israel has responded by passing laws outlawing the boycott, with many criticizing these bills as authoritarian (Ibid., 134-135; see Barghouti 2014, 409). This goes beyond efforts at preventing dissent in just Palestine-Israel, as the Israeli government has "implement[ed] a transnational strategy to suppress BDS" (Bot 2019, 422). This has included entire task forces and action plans dedicated to identifying laws in other countries that could be used to outlaw BDS (White 2018, 98). Where efforts at outlawing BDS have been unsuccessful, smear campaigns have been established – funded by the Israeli government – to equate BDS advocacy and anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism (White 2020, 65).

[3] Angela Davis's (2012) chapter in this volume connected justice in Palestine with the intersectional nature of anti-colonial struggles globally. Davis's call for solidarity amongst anti-colonial actors forecasted the reinvigoration of an internationalist tradition between African-Americans and Palestinians, one that was specifically revived through the "Ferguson-Gaza moment" of the summer of 2014 following protests against the extrajudicial killing of Michael Brown (Erakat and Hill 2019, 9). These developments stamped BDS with an internationalist element that is now inseparable from political analyses of the movement. This internationalist character, and in particular the solidarities forged between different anti-racist and anti-colonial movements globally, has characterized much of the recent literature on BDS. See Lubin (2014), Davis (2016), Fischbach (2018), Erakat and Hill (2019), Kelly (2019), and Rickford (2019) for work on Black-Palestinian internationalism and solidarity; see Salaita (2016) for a study of the commonalities and shared interests between the seemingly disparate struggles of Palestinians and Indigenous Americans and the potential for BDS to facilitate decolonization beyond the Palestinian locale; see Osuri (2020) for the operation of the transnational BDS movement in India in response to "Israeli-style settler-colonialism" inspiring the Modi administration's activities in Kashmir; see Tabar (2017) for the way in which BDS is reviving a historic tradition of Third-World Internationalism in Palestine. At the essence of these literatures are understandings of settler-colonialism as an international phenomenon that moves beyond the borders of particular nation-states and as undergirding a global structure of oppression.

arguments disputing the practical efficacy of the campaign. These attacks have come not only from partisan defenders of Zionism, since the movement has also been condemned by left-wing critics of Israel such as Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein.

Arnold (2019) explores the discourse around BDS, observing that its advocates typically utilize the following frames: anti-racism, anti-colonialism or anti-imperialism, human rights, Jewish identity, and freedom of speech/academic freedom (230). The anti-racist frame understands Israel as either an inherently racist state or a state with policies that are specifically racist, and so BDS activism perceives itself as a fundamentally anti-racist movement (226). The anti-colonialism or anti-imperialism frame is linked to the anti-racist frame. It understands Israel as a settler-colonial state that violates international law and views Israel and the US as centers of global imperialism (226-227). Another frame defends BDS in terms of human rights, which understands the movement as wanting to acquire basic rights for Palestinians (227). The Jewish identity frame concerns Jewish advocates of BDS utilizing a type of 'strategic essentialism' to make themselves visible as "affirming a different Jewishness than the one in whose name the Israeli state claims to speak" (Butler in Arnold 2019, 228). Finally, the freedom of speech/academic freedom frame defends the right to critically engage with BDS in light of a historic and contemporary Zionist hegemony over discourse in the West (Arnold 2019, 229), as well as addressing the lack of academic freedom for Palestinians in Palestine (Ibid., 229-230).

Arnold also highlights anti-BDS frames. The first and most popular one depicts BDS as a form of anti-Semitism that singles out the Jewish-state in a hateful and discriminatory manner (231). The second frame is 'Jewish self-hatred' and is meant to repudiate the 'Jewish Identity' frame by responding to the strategic essentialism of Jewish supporters of BDS by labelling them as 'self-hating Jews' (232). The final frame also concerns academic freedom, but this time from

the perspective of 1) Israelis that feel unjustly alienated from academia due to the academic boycott, and 2) those that believe BDS subverts neutral discourse or the right to hold divergent opinions due to an alleged dominance of liberal viewpoints in academia (233-234).

Most of the existing literature thus focuses on defenses of, or attacks on, BDS. McMahon (2014), Bruyneel et al (2019), Chalcraft (2019), David Feldman (2019a), Ilana Feldman (2019b), and Jones (2019) provide starting points for critical analysis of BDS beyond these frames. McMahon (2014) highlights contradictions surrounding the campaign, before identifying BDS's power in transgressing the limits of the existing discourse on Palestine-Israel. Bruyneel et al (2019) approach BDS as challenging and reframing political theory's dismissal of emancipatory politics. Chalcraft (2019) connects BDS's non-hierarchical, de-centralized, inclusionary, grassroots, and trans-local qualities to other recent radical democracy movements (287-288). David Feldman (2019a) looks at a tension in BDS in its relationship to the rule of law and social revolution. Ilana Feldman (2019b) understands BDS as surmounting Palestinian fragmentation by reframing Palestine as a political space. Finally, Jones (2019) seeks to dispel what he views as an overly simplified and misleading comparison between the BDS campaigns in South Africa and Palestine, whereby the analogy between them masks critical differences in the two contexts[4]. These critical engagements with BDS beyond the frames mentioned by Arnold are important for studying the movement outside the scope of the existing literature. The activist-oriented writings that overwhelm this literature can be limiting precisely because they "emerge directly from the battle over BDS", meaning that "They reproduce the conflict as much as they illuminate it. They do not generate fresh questions or a new framework of analysis" (Feldman 2019a, 2).

[4] See Ananth (2013, 138-139) and Sadeldeen (2019, 211) for more on the limitations of this analogy.

In sum, the momentum that BDS has gained in the previous decade demands a more thorough exploration that takes a step-back from advocacy. I hope to provide a conceptual roadmap of the different possibilities contained in the BDS Call. Such an analysis of the movement through a focus on the Call document specifically has not been given by anybody so far in the literature, and so there is a lot of work to do here. My thesis can be fruitful as a resource for people that want to learn more about BDS or do further work on it in the future. It is an opportunity to assemble an archive of materials and then to analyze that archive so as to provide a foundation for others to build upon. The BDS Call, the manifesto that succinctly captures the goals of the movement, is a fecund document teeming with openings that should be traversed and exhausted.

Dispossession

I posit that dispossession is a necessary concept for analyzing the BDS Call, and this is a term that has its own literature. It is only by bringing this literature to bear on the questions raised by the BDS Call that the later analysis can be properly situated. There are, however, limitations to this endeavour given that much of the conceptual literature on dispossession has been written in relation to the Anglo-American world and not Palestine. The following analysis therefore interpolates these writings on dispossession to a political context where they do not always seamlessly translate.

Keeping this limitation in mind, this section reviews Robert Nichols's theorization of dispossession in conjunction with work done on the concept by Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou to advance the approach this thesis takes in interpreting dispossession as a concept in the BDS Call. The insights foregrounded here include how, beyond dispossession elucidating the ways in which property is directly divested from Indigenous peoples under settler colonialism,

dispossession can also point to the logics of ownership that are imposed by colonizers to justify theft in the first place. These logics are predicated on normative standards of ownership associated with liberal-capitalist subjecthood that otherize Indigenous peoples to portray them as valid targets of violence and abuse.

'Dispossession' has historically referred to a type of "coercive appropriation of property, typically on a large scale (affecting more than one individual), and typically of private property by a public entity (the state or its agents)" (Nichols 2018, 4). The term first emerged to describe a series of historical developments by which feudal land tenure systems were torn down and replaced by liberal-capitalist social and proprietary relations (Ibid., 10), and so dispossession tended to be viewed here as a juridical category alongside other legal vocabularies, such as 'expropriation' or 'eminent domain', for describing historic land-theft and the emergence of a post-feudal state system.[5] In the past century, however, dispossession has received attention by critical theorists generally, and Indigenous scholars in particular, as a privileged term for naming the dynamic process of theft under settler colonialism. Nichols traces this history in the hopes of moving beyond deployments of dispossession that take for granted, and reinforce, liberal-capitalist systems of proprietary relations, and instead reorients the concept to describe a set of historical developments by which these liberal-capitalist institutions were expanded into non-European societies (10). This reorientation is informed and inspired by the works of Indigenous scholars whose variegated perspectives on dispossession inform his synthesized definition of the term:

> in large sections of the globe, Indigenous peoples have not only been subjugated and oppressed by imperial elites; they have also been divested of their lands, that is, the territorial foundations of their societies, which have in turn become the territorial foundation for the creation of new, European style, settler colonial societies. So

[5] For a full genealogy of dispossession, see Nichols' (2018 and 2019) tracing of this history that situates the use of this concept as a tool of social criticism.

> dispossession is thought of as a broad macrohistorical process related to the specific territorial acquisition logic of settler colonization (Nichols 2019, 5)

Dispossession is thus tied to studies of settler colonialism, which is itself "an ongoing structure of dispossession that targets Indigenous peoples for elimination" (Ibid., 163).

To retheorize dispossession in this way, however, Nichols is first forced to confront a "basic conceptual ambiguity at the heart of dispossession" that has made this historical process especially difficult to unravel (8). Nichols explains that

> to speak meaningfully of dispossession appears to presuppose a prior relation of possession. It seems limited then as a tool of radical critique since its normative force derives from a generally conservative defense of previously existing property relations and, moreover, tends to reinforce the very proprietary models of social relations that these critical traditions…seek to undermine. Recourse to the language of dispossession by critical theorists appears therefore contradictory and self-defeating (2018, 8-9).

Right-wing populists have utilized these contradictions to accuse Indigenous peoples in North America and Australasia of putting forth contradictory claims, the first of which is that they are "the original and natural owners of the land that was stolen from them, *and* that the earth is not something in which one person or group of people can have exclusive proprietary rights" (Nichols 2019, 6, italics original[6]).

Nichols's notion of 'recursive dispossession' attempts to address this issue. He reconstructs dispossession to refer to "a process in which new proprietary relations are generated but under structural conditions that demand their simultaneous negation. In effect, the dispossessed come to 'have' something they cannot use, except by alienating it to another (Ibid., 8). Nichols's work on dispossession points to how the relationship of Indigenous peoples to their land is systematically transformed through changing normative configurations of law, property, and race in a way that generates these proprietary relations to begin with.

[6] All italics in quoted passages from hereon are original unless stated otherwise.

Needless to say, there are difficulties that come with referring to this literature when trying to discuss dispossession in Palestine since the conceptual traditions that Nichols draws on were produced in reference to the Anglo-American world. Processes of dispossession unravelled (and continue to take place) differently in Palestine. There are some obvious examples of this, such as the reality of the colonial process there being seemingly incommensurate with Nichols's notion of recursive dispossession since there are well-documented property records from the Ottoman era that Palestinians can have recourse to (see Fischbach 2003). These records are used to maintain formal claims to this day and, although they may not halt the dispossession of land or suffice as a means to recover land that was forcibly stolen, they complicate the legality of Israeli settler claims. Nevertheless, Nichols' renovation of dispossession is helpful for discerning the ways in which externally imposed legal regimes, in this case liberal-capitalist models of social and proprietary relations, have been crucial in efforts to dispossess Indigenous people. Building on this, Butler and Athanasiou's interventions on dispossession complement Nichols' insight. They stress the affective dimensions of dispossession and how these shape the identities of the Indigenous dispossessed. These are, as Nichols also points out, racially charged identities that produce a set of normative exclusions that (attempt to) legitimize acts of theft.

Butler and Athanasiou (2013), like Nichols, theorize dispossession beyond the "conventional logic of possession" (7), as this logic takes for granted liberal-capitalist models of ownership. They instead center "two valences of dispossession" to clarify how "We can only be dispossessed because we are already dispossessed. Our interdependency establishes our vulnerability to social forms of deprivation" (Ibid., 5). This argument is informed by Butler's more general worldview that recognizes humans as having limited autonomy because we are fundamentally relational and interdependent beings, with self-sufficiency being limited through

conditions such as “childhood, illness, age, or infirmity” (Kellogg 2017, 84), as well as the fact that the body is a “social phenomenon” that is “exposed to others, vulnerable by definition. Its very persistence depends upon social conditions and institutions…which means that in order to be…it must rely on what is outside itself” (Butler in Kellogg (2017), 84). This means that we as humans are “always-already *dispossessed of ourselves*, so to speak; we are bound together through a constitutive self-displacement” (Kellogg 2017, 84). This is the first valence of dispossession.

At the same time, Butler and Athanasiou recognize that dispossession does not simply refer to the limits of one’s autonomy or self-sovereignty, but also clearly denotes “when populations lose their land, their citizenship, their means of livelihood, and become subject to military and legal violence” (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, 3). In other words, whereas the first valence of dispossession concerns matters of alterity as the “condition of the subject’s survival”, this second valence is a “condition painfully imposed by the normative and normalizing violence that determines the terms of subjectivity, survival, and livability” (Ibid., 2). This view of dispossession centers the intersubjective relations between the colonizer and colonized and how this shapes the ways in which the bodies of the latter are rendered targets of violence and abuse.

This approach is part of larger shift away from a liberal politics of recognition to a post-Marxist analytic of dispossession, or “a move…away from liberal ‘solutions’ of redistribution – of either goods or recognition – towards thinking through issues of settler colonialism, forced migration and empire” (Kellogg 2017, 84; see Coulthard 2014). Kellogg (2017) situates the importance of the body in this new theorizing of dispossession, and this is inspired by her reading of Butler and Malabou’s (2011) intervention on Hegel’s *Phenomenology*. Butler and Malabou (2011) re-read the Master-Slave Dialectic not through the conventional focuses of

recognition, work, or desire, but through the themes of body, shape, and plasticity[7], and ponder how Hegel's "new way of thinking about 'having' a body and how coming to 'be' a body necessarily involves a kind of *dispossession*" (Kellogg 2017, 84). Kellogg believes that Butler and Malabou's revisiting of Hegel's parable should be situated within "the political history of…juridically defined property relations; the history of regarding of both the body and land as *property*" (2017, 85). She uses this insight to build on the two valences of dispossession by interpreting them as referring to "a *logic* of property relations, one between those who 'have' property (either land or the property of their own bodies) and those who are *juridically* defined as propertyless" (Ibid., 85).

Butler and Athanasious's approach to dispossession interrogates the logic of property relations and the exclusions arising from it. This perspective moves beyond a reductive discourse that perceives dispossession strictly through a territorial optic, though it also draws attention to the logics by which territorial dispossession is rationalized under that optic. By centering the importance of the body as also being subject to a type of dispossession, it effectively reveals how racially charged logics that otherize Indigenous peoples are inextricable from the paternalistically imposed liberal-capitalist models of subjectivity that fuel dispossession in colonized locales.

Overall, it is thought-provoking to contrast Nichols' study of the Anglo-American world with the situation of Palestine, as the latter presents unusual conditions that can deepen our understanding of dispossession. Dispossession in Palestine has occurred alongside a clear national liberation struggle and elusive quest for statehood - something that Edward Said (1995) details in *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination*. This

[7] 'Plasticity' here referring to Malabou's use of the term for "thinking of how structures and forms of life previously considered rigid are in fact 'plastic' and in constant mutation and transformation" (Dalton 2019, 238).

points to a set of exceptional circumstances that have shaped the process of, and struggle against, dispossession; specifically, the timing of the colonial process and the unique temporal and political subjectivities this has produced for Palestinians. Bamyeh (2003) describes Palestine as experiencing "a logic fully out of joint with its times" (825) because for Palestinians the modern era begins with colonization, which is "in contrast to almost all other Third World political experiences" (Ibid., 826). Hughes (2020) rightly attributes this to the belatedness of the Israeli settler colonial process, or what Krikler (2019) refers to as the "paradox that lies at the heart of Israel's emergence" given that Israel arose as a settler colonial state in the post-WW2 era, with its existence running against this period's pattern of decolonization (311). Peteet (2007) similarly remarks how "Palestinians do not always fit easily into contemporary theoretical frameworks" because, in an era of postcolonial studies, Palestinians "remain firmly in the grip of modern colonialism" (631). She notes that though this poses difficulties, it also provides opportunities for "probing engagement with theory, its possibilities and limitations, and an opportunity to critique, challenge, and/or carry in new directions contemporary theoretical frames" (Ibid., 631). Without running the danger of overemphasizing the uniqueness of the Palestinian case, there is a lot more potential for research to be done here in light of a shift towards a "new global politics of the dispossessed" (Nichols in Kellogg 2017, 85).

Displacement

Studies on displacement benefit from interdisciplinary work that draws from fields such as urban studies, geography, architecture, and anthropology, amongst others. Displacement, as opposed to dispossession, has also proven less tractable as a theoretical concept. This is partly due to the development of the field of forced migration studies. The reality of displacement varies radically depending on the context being studied, meaning that attempts at producing an abstract

framework for examining this process has often not revealed much beyond people being displaced due to political emergencies. Whereas dispossession can help elucidate something about the structure of settler colonialism across regions, displacement has typically spoken to a historic or contemporary condition without providing much in the form of an over-arching structure by which theory has helped to make sense of facts on-the-ground in a way that cuts across local contexts.[8] That being said, recent efforts at theorizing displacement have sought to overcome this case-specific approach in the hopes of generating a more structured framework for the study of forced migration.

Part of the trouble with theorizing displacement is that it can result in two related, but distinct, outcomes on the part of the displaced: they can become refugees or enter into a diaspora. The intersections between these two outcomes, as well as their divergences, have shaped studies on forced migration, and so this review of displacement will look at these two outcomes. The terms that we use to categorize different outcomes of displacement are significant because they carry different legal-juridical resonances. They therefore impact how groups can make political claims. This is most clear, in the Palestinian case, with the distinction between 'refugee' and 'diaspora'.

Refugees and Diasporas

The study of refugees has historically been tethered to disparaging assumptions relating to them lacking any agency or means by which they can positively navigate their precarious situations, thereby justifying the necessity of vast humanitarian apparatuses to govern their condition.[9]

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[8] For example, anthropologists conducting ethnographies have provided insights on the realities of displacement and the unique subjectivities that emerge depending on the case study, with such analysis confounding or undermining prior normative work on displacement in a way that precludes theoretical uniformity.

[9] As refugees became increasingly problematized in the second half of the twentieth century, it was Arendt that provided a dominant lens for perceiving refugee precarity. Arendt viewed the rights of humans as inextricably linked

These depictions of refugee subjectivity have proven problematic since "there is no possibility for the re-articulation of politics" (Sanyal 2014, 560). Conversely, and in response to such assumptions, there have been counter-efforts to highlight refugees as agentive in a way that has romanticized their situation and is inattentive to how humanitarian and bureaucratic systems of control have in fact entrapped them in what are systems of detention (Pasquetti and Sanyal 2020, 8). Such depictions romanticize refugees by accentuating their "ability to reverse power relations and re-appropriate the meanings of the categories imposed on them" (Ibid., 12). These competing perceptions of displaced peoples – as either passive and helpless or else overly romanticized in their subaltern agency – has produced a theoretical impasse in social science writing on refugees.

Pasquetti and Sanyal et al's (2020) monograph posits that a more systematic theorization of "the productive powers of displacement" is missing from the field, by which they mean how displacement creates new legal, political, and moral dilemmas for states and global actors and how these conditions are negotiated by refugees in varying contexts (12). The condition of being a refugee has to therefore be understood as both an "institutional experiment from above", as well as a human experience from below, with the aim of unsettling analysis of refugees as being "subject to systems of oppression that offer them no way out" (Ibid., 10). This emphasis on not essentializing them one way or another should also be tempered, they argue, by a relational

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to the nation-state, such that "the end of the latter necessarily implies the obsolescence of the former" (Agamben 1995, 116). This foundational analysis on the precarity of displaced peoples proved resilient in depictions of them as occupying a liminal position of uncertainty that is akin to political limbo (See Schiltz et al (2019) for a study of the omnipresence of this perception of uncertainty in literatures on forced displacement). This discourse was further entrenched by Agamben's theorization of refugees as embodying the notion of *homo sacer* and being reducible to 'bare life' (Agamben 1995). Influenced by the Aristotelian tradition that views humans as distinct from other animals due to "our capacity to speak and engage in political praxis", Agamben coined 'bare life' to refer to when humans are stripped of their political life, likening them to "humans as animals in nature without political freedom" (Owens 2009, 569). This Agambian notion gained a hegemonic presence in the study of forced migration, with the discourse surrounding refugees and refugee camps becoming enveloped in a Foucauldian and Agambian conceptual language of bare life, governmentality, and biopower - each of which run the danger of emphasizing "passive victimhood" for people in these spaces (Pasquetti and Sanyal 2020, 12).

approach to studying refugees, which seeks to draw connections across regional divides to show how contexts operate in relation to one another (2). These relations are often traced by "longer trajectories of imperialism, racism and power that underpin many practices of hospitality, humanitarianism, and the portrayal of refugees today" (2).[10]

Diaspora studies has followed a different route than refugee thought. The late twentieth century saw the consolidation of diaspora studies as an academic field. Though diasporas have always been a part of the human experience, globalization and the transnational connections it fostered invigorated this discipline – hence why diasporic communities can be viewed as the "exemplary communities of the transnational moment" (Clifford 1994, 302). Technologies of transportation and communication have facilitated greater connections between the homeland and diasporic populations (Ibid., 304), and these increased connections and the unique set of relationships that have emerged between dispersed persons, the homeland, and the host-country have made dilemmas of identity a core feature of diasporic studies.[11] Diasporic formations have been understood along these lines to "denote countercultures of modernity, connections that develop laterally and beyond the nation-state" (Salih et al 2021, 3). Needless to say, these complex relationships have resulted in novel collective identities for diasporic populations.

These complex identities provoke conceptual issues when it comes to defining the 'diaspora'. On a simple level, diaspora refers to "a group of people that has been dispersed or has expanded to at least two countries of the world" (Schulz 2003, 8). However, this term has been

[10] Ghanayem (2019) uses the story of Palestinian-American woman Rasmea Odeh to illustrate what she refers to as a 'colonial loop of displacement'. This is a notion that understands the United States and Israel as being two "comparable and interconnected settler nation-states that rely on displacement – understood here as a range of practices that includes expulsions, removals, enclosure, imprisonment, and similar immobilizing tactics written as policy" (Ibid., 73). Odeh was ensnared in two legal cases – charges of terrorism in Israel and immigration fraud in the United States – that subjected her to exclusionary regimes, unjust trials, and ongoing criminalization regardless of where she was displaced. Ghanayem's analysis is in line with the shift prescribed by Pasquetti and Sanyal.

[11] Safran (2001) understands diasporic identity formations through a triangular socio-cultural relationship involving the diaspora, the homeland, and the host-country.

problematic as a theoretical category since it has historically been associated with the unique experience of the Jewish diaspora, with this case serving as the model for other forms of diasporic existence (Ibid., 8). Attempts at generating a broader understanding in response to restrictive definitions have been difficult. To begin, 'diaspora' has been associated with not only a group of people being dispersed to two or more countries, but has more generally come to be used as "a metaphor to signify a global condition of mobility" in which migrants are at the core (8). There is also a debate about whether diasporas should be understood as needing to be the product of a forceful departure or traumatic severing from the homeland (9). Then there is an issue relating to the capacity for diaspora to act as an umbrella term that can embrace variegated notions of what it means to reside outside of a territorial home, such as being an exile, migrant, or refugee (9). The notion of hybridity helps capture some of these nuances, but the overlap between diasporic subjects and refugees in particular remains a salient debate in the field.

This is part of the reason that this thesis, when talking about the depiction of Palestinians as a displaced peoples under BDS, refers to them as both a refugee *and* a diasporic people, as the debates in the literatures on displacement and forced migration point to the divergences and intersections of the two terms. These conceptual ambiguities are clearly present in writings on Palestinian refugees and diasporas.

Palestinian Refugees and Diasporas: The Politics of Displacement(s)

At the beginning of the twentieth century about 1.4 million Palestinians lived in 1,300 towns or villages across historic Palestine (the modern-day state of Israel, the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) in the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip) (Green and Smith 2016, 82). The displacement resulting from the creation of Israel is referred to as the 'Nakba' (Arabic for catastrophe) and the displacement that resulted from the 1967 War the 'Naksa' (Arabic for

setback), and it was due to these developments that Palestinians came to constitute the “largest and most protracted case of displacement in the world” (Samy 2010, 3).[12] About 15,000 Palestinians were killed and 800,000 were driven from their homes during the Nakba, scattering them into the West Bank, Gaza, and various countries in the region and across the world (Green and Smith 2016, 82). Many more were driven from their homes but remained within the new Israeli state. During the Naksa approximately 300,000 more Palestinians were displaced (Ibid., 82). With about 7.4 million of the current global Palestinian population of 11.2 million having been forcibly displaced from their homes, displacement can be seen as defining the Palestinian condition both as a “historical tragedy situated in the ethnic cleansing and associated state crimes of 1948” and also “an ongoing form of persecution” (82). Many Palestinians experienced displacement on multiple occasions.

The mass displacements from the Nakba and Naksa were meant to be addressed through the Palestinian right of return, a notion rooted in UN Resolution 194[13]:

> [The General Assembly resolved that] refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the governments or authorities responsible (UNRWA 1948).

The lives of displaced Palestinians remain anchored around these two things: the founding catastrophe (the Nakba) and their long-awaited right of return. The importance of these two cannot be overstated as points of historical and political orientation.

The term ‘diaspora’ is problematic when used to describe this scattered Palestinian population since it has been deployed as a metaphor for various groups of displaced peoples such

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[12] See Davis’s (2010) work *Palestinian Village Histories: Geographies of the Displaced* for a history of this displacement process.

[13] See Quigley (1998) for a comprehensive breakdown of UN Resolution 194.

as expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities (Safran 1991, 83). These experiences are not the same and cannot be collapsed into one another, and yet questions still proliferate about whether 'diaspora' can capture these distinct experiences - with a concurrent issue arising in that "blending together varied juridical categories of subjects and communities, such as exiles, refugees and displaced" runs the danger of 'diaspora' losing its "analytical rigour and meaning" (Salih et al 2021, 4). This can be seen in cases where diaspora appears to be used interchangeably to refer to those living as refugees (see Banat et al 2018). At other times it cannot account for what it means to enter a diaspora from a condition of forced exile, since, although not all diasporas are permanently banished from their homelands, this is the case for exiles that are unable to return home (Habib 2013, 76).[14] Exile can be understood as a particular strand of forced displacement, with its essence not being explicable through a nebulous concept like diaspora that stresses open-ended qualities like hybridity or mobility (Ibid. 75). This is especially relevant for the Palestinian experience, because while diaspora might be helpful for naming a "particular social category that voluntarily and legally lives outside of Palestine", it is of limited use when trying to describe "the permanency of refugeehood amongst Palestinians" (Guignard 2016, 137), or the inability of exiles to return home (indeed, many refugees view themselves as 'exiles'). Given the differences between the lives of the overseas diaspora versus diasporas in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, let alone the differences between Palestinian diasporas and refugees more generally, there has been considerable debate on the use of this term for describing the Palestinian experience:

[14] Diasporic communities can emerge through a condition of exile, which implies forced displacement as opposed to voluntary expatriation (Pavel 1996, 306). Common traits in an exilic diasporic condition include the exile's refusal to "break the psychological link with their point of origin" as well as their "faith in the possibility of homecoming" (Ibid., 306). In this situation, the homeland becomes wrapped up in imaginaries surrounding the moment when diasporic subjects were "wrenched from their motherland", resulting in a "moment of rupture" that serves as the focal point of lasting trauma and an ongoing fantasy of return (Mishra 1996, 423).

> Who is to be defined as belonging to a 'Palestinian diaspora community'? Is it only those who were dispersed from their homeland in 1948 and 1967; or all those who reside outside of the borders of 'historical Palestine'? Is it a requirement to have been 'dispersed' and exiled from territory/country? Where does one place the refugees of the West Bank and Gaza, who reside within the territory of Palestine but were expelled form their homes in 1948? (Schulz 2003, 21).

The role of internally displaced Palestinians in these debates also remains controversial.[15]

These conceptual ambiguities are significant because different categories of displacement carry different legal-juridical resonances. This influences how these groups can make political claims, and this is most clear with the distinction between refugees and diasporas. Peteet (2007) remarks how "the juridical status of the refugee is pivotal in problematizing a Palestinian diaspora" because 'diaspora' is unable to "encapsulate the varied juridical categories of Palestinian belonging and identity (from stateless refugees to citizens to residents to the complex array of legal identities of those under occupation)" (635). 'Refugee' retains a political-legal dimension that 'diaspora' does not since refugee status, especially in the Palestinian case, entails having access to resources from the international community - not to mention the right of return being grounded in international and not state law (636).[16] Labelling Palestinians as members of a diaspora can thus depoliticize their plight and diminish the politico-legal currency attached to the

[15] Literatures on internally displaced Palestinians have referred to them as "refugees in their homeland", "internal refugees", "refugees in Israel", and "1948 refugees" (Daoud et al 2012, 1164). After the 1948 War, those who remained in the new Israeli state became a minority in their own homeland, with about 200,000 to 250,000 Palestinians potentially qualifying under the category of 'internally displaced' (Schulz 2003, 73). Internally displaced Palestinians have historically been excluded from studies on Palestinian refugees since they do not qualify under the legal definition of 'refugee' according the Geneva Convention (Schiltz et al 2019, 2), and this is despite internally displaced Palestinians constituting huge numbers (Gabiam and Fiddian-Qasmiyeh 2017, 733).

[16] The modern concept of refugee itself originated from the displacements following the breakup of empire and the consolidation of the nation-state. The simultaneous emergence of administrative regimes during this time were meant to account for the exclusionary identities of nation-states, and so the category of refugee and the interventions associated with it have always been highly political in nature (Peteet 2007, 636).

term refugee[17], on top of indicating a "potential acceptance of the Palestinian dispersal", which runs counter to international obligations and to the ongoing desire for return (Schulz 2003, 20).

Part of the contribution that this thesis makes to the literature on BDS is to highlight the movement's ambiguous position with respect to how exactly the Palestinian diaspora weighs into its demands, given that it is refugees that are inculcated in the third demand's invocation of the right of return, not the diaspora. As argued later, this is significant for the view that BDS promotes redress for Palestinians across its fragmented collective. This lack of clarity under BDS reflects the conceptual confusion typifying literatures on refugees and diasporas more generally.

Settler Colonialism

Settler colonial studies is a relatively new field of inquiry that had yet to even be consolidated when the BDS Call was announced on July 9, 2005. Despite this, settler colonial theory (hereafter referred to as SCT) as a paradigm started to be applied to Palestine as early as the mid-90s (Amoruso et al 2019, 454), with the critical moment in what Busbridge (2018) refers to as the 'settler colonial turn' being Wolfe's seminal (1998) work *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*. The disillusionment following the Oslo Accords is the other factor that triggered this settler colonial turn in Palestine (Amoruso et al 2019, 545).[18]

Settler Colonialism

Wolfe (1998), Wolfe (2006), and Veracini (2010) are all foundational works in SCT, and each theorize settler colonialism as a distinct field of inquiry by defining it against conventional

[17] Mahmoud Darwish and Edward Said rejected the term diaspora for this reason and preferred its cognate term exile since it did not depoliticize the plight of displaced Palestinians (Williams 2009, 83).
[18] Though the term 'settler colonialism' may not be present in the actual Call, the official BDS website makes various references to it. Under the informative section of the website titled 'What is BDS?', there is a page devoted to "Israeli Settler Colonialism and Apartheid". Section five of this page is dedicated to explaining what settler colonialism is specifically, and even references the work of Patrick Wolfe.

understandings of colonialism (Veracini 2010, 9).[19] Wolfe (2006) states that settler colonialism is founded on a "logic of double elimination" that has both negative and positive dimensions:

> Negatively, it strives for the dissolution of native societies. Positively, it erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base – as I put it, settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event. In its positive aspect, elimination is an organizing principle of settler-colonial society rather than a one-off (and superseded) occurrence (388).

Settler colonialism aims to destroy and replace indigenous lifeworlds. Wolfe stresses, however, that this is not synonymous with a genocidal program. Though "The question of genocide is never far from settler colonialism" (Ibid., 387), there are essential differences between the two in that while the logic of elimination can entail "the summary liquidation of Indigenous people", in many cases Indigenous peoples are not wholly eliminated since very often "the native repressed continue to structure settler-colonial society" (390). There are instead an array of "biocultural assimilations" that further the erasure of Indigenous lifeworlds so that their land can be cleared, both literally and symbolically, to become the new base for settler colonizers (388).

What makes settler colonialism appealing is its juxtaposition with classical colonialism. Veracini (2010) explains that while settler colonialism is a "global and genuinely transnational phenomenon", existing national and imperial historiographies failed to recognize it as such (2). Similarly, colonial studies and postcolonial writings had both "developed interpretive categories that are not specifically suited for an appraisal of settler colonial circumstances" (Ibid., 2). SCT is thus partly meant to address lacunae in each of these aforementioned literatures.

Settler colonialism accounts for an ambiguity at the core of the term 'colony', which can have two different connotations (3). A colony can refer to both "a political body that is dominated by an exogenous agency", as well as "an exogenous entity that reproduces itself in a

[19] For a full conceptual evolution of settler colonialism, see Veracini's (2013a) paper *'Settler Colonialism': Career of a Concept.*

given environment”, with both understandings, though they denote different situations, still implying “the localised ascendancy of an external element” (2-3). Settler colonialism as a compounded term reflects both of these attributes, the first being “the permanent movement and reproduction of communities” and the second “the dominance of an exogenous agency over an indigenous one” (3). Settler colonialism is thus closely related to both colonialism and migration (3). However, because “not all migrations are settler migrations and not all colonialisms are settler colonial”, settler colonialism is structurally distinct from both (3). What settler colonialism emphasizes is the replacement of Indigenous peoples:

> The primary subject of settler-colonization is the land itself rather than the surplus value to be derived from mixing native labour with it. Though, in practice, Indigenous labour was indispensable to Europeans, settler-colonization is at base a winner-take-all project whose dominant feature is not exploitation but replacement (Wolfe 1998, 163).

This makes Indigenous people inherently dispensable in settler colonial contexts, as opposed to classical colonialism where they are a necessary source of labour (Veracini 2010, 8).[20]

Colonialism is also typified by a continuity in its form since the drive to exploit natives is meant to reinforce “the permanent subordination of the colonised” (Veracini 2011, 2). Conversely, settler colonialism does not rely on a permanently exploited Indigenous population but is instead “characterized by a persistent drive to ultimately supersede the conditions of its operation” (Ibid., 3). Settler colonialism is driven by a need to eliminate Indigenous alterities, be this against physical bodies or symbolic identities. Colonizers and settler colonizers can thus be seen as wanting very different things, since whereas colonialism aims to reproduce itself, the

[20] Veracini (2014) likens this distinction between colonialism and settler colonialism to the operation of viral and bacterial phenomenon. The analogy points to how “both viruses and bacteria are exogenous elements that often dominate their destination locales”, but whereas viruses need living cells to operate, bacteria can attach to surfaces and “may or may not rely on the organisms they encounter” (Ibid., 615). This is similar to how both colonizers and settler colonizers are exogenous elements that establish dominance over foreign locales, but it is only classical colonialism that is predicated on “the presence and subjugation of exploitable ‘Others’” (615).

goal of settler colonialism is to extirpate itself since it only "justifies its operation on the basis of the expectation of its future demise" (3). An example of classical colonialism would be Britain's rule in India, whereas settler colonial states include the US and Canada.[21]

SCT has been helpful in analyzing the dimensions and continuities by which the logic of elimination targets the native and enshrines settler claims. It has also provided a framework for studying colonialism as an enduring force in the modern world (Davis et al 2017), and it does this by dehistoricizing colonialism and drawing attention to how settler institutions and policies continue to shape society and are not simply "an unfortunate but already transcended national past" (Macoun and Strakosch 2013, 426). Notwithstanding these insights, SCT has also been charged with an array of political and ethical dangers that has brought this paradigm under fire.[22] These limitations remind us that settler colonialism, like any theoretical concept, is an imperfect heuristic tool that must be subject to ongoing critical revaluation.

Settler Colonialism in Palestine

[21] This distinction furthermore raises questions regarding decolonization since decolonization is not the same as settler-decolonization (Veracini 2011, 5). Postcolonial studies have been tormented by questions relating to what constitutes a genuinely decolonized condition, as post-colonial states have witnessed the durability and recasting of colonial hierarchies in different and adaptative forms (Stoler 2016; Getachew 2019). Given that colonialism is structurally distinct from settler colonialism, decolonization under the former circumstances should, at least in theory, differ from decolonization under the other. This raises an additional set of conceptual and practical difficulties when theorizing decolonization.

[22] The binaries put forth by SCT (whether this is between structure-event or settler colonialism-colonialism) have been critiqued as being restrictive (Russel 2020, 155), as leaving little space for Indigenous agency, being too pessimistic on future outlooks, and not acknowledging the diversity of Indigenous identities and actions (Konishi 2019, 285, 304), or as reifying the "polarity between settler and native" (Amoruso et al 2019, 457; Wolfe (2013) responds to charges of binarism in *Recuperating Binarism: a heretical introduction*). SCT's structuralism has also been labelled as incapable of transcending itself in that "it posits a structural inevitability to the settler colonial relationship", meaning it can "delegitimize Indigenous resistance and reinforce violent relationships" (Macoun and Strakosch 2013, 426). Stoler (2016) warns against this approach to SCT as a description of Israel's relationship with Palestinians, writing that the concept is often summoned as "an ontological state rather than a fractious historical condition" (60). She instead highlights the resistance of Indigenous peoples and views the settler colonial enterprise as "a protracted moment in colonial statecraft but far less fixed and unsettled that it sometimes is portrayed" (Ibid., 60-61). SCT's insights should thus be taken with a degree of caution given that the empirical evidence actually points to "the instability, impermanence, and contingency of the settler-colonial order of things" (Hugill 2017, 8).

Fayez Sayegh's 1965 work *Zionist Colonialism in Palestine* remains the most influential writing on Zionist settler colonialism. He discerned early on how Zionism is distinct from other colonial projects, observing that while settlers going to parts of Africa or Asia were motivated by traditional imperialist motivations whereby they could coexist with the Indigenous populations while they exploited them, Zionist colonialism in Palestine is "incompatible with the continued existence of the 'native population' in the coveted country" (Sayegh 2012, 208).[23] His account is also significant because he clearly identifies the racial exclusions inherent to Zionism, writing that the Zionist settler state had a "racial complexion and racist conduct pattern" that drove its "addiction to violence" and "expansionist stance" (Ibid., 214).[24][25] Sayegh's foundational analysis provided a historical reference point for appraising Zionist colonialism once SCT proliferated as the dominant school of thought for studying Palestine-Israel in the past two decades.

Applications of SCT have shifted perceptions on Palestine-Israel. Conventional studies on colonialism in Palestine mark the 1967 War as a pivotal turning point in the dispossessive process there, as the onset of the West Bank occupation marked the last instance of colonial conquest through overt warfare. Despite this change, SCT would ground Zionist objectives as displaying continuity over time in the ultimate goal of replacing Indigenous collectives with exogenous ones, with this logic having informed Zionist practices pre-1948, post-1948, and post-1967 (Veracini 2013b, 28).[26] And yet, despite the logic guiding Zionist actions not changing

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[23] Farsakh's (2008) paper on the political economy of Israeli occupation observes how it is different from other colonial enterprises in that it seeks to "facilitate maximum territorial incorporation of the land but without creating an Israeli dependency on Palestinian labor" (Ibid., 5).

[24] See Svirsky and Ben-Arie (2019) for a study of the 'logic of double elimination' in Palestine-Israel and how, as Wolfe recognized, these "operations of erasure" cannot be understood but as being mediated by race (464).

[25] One of Sayegh's lasting legacies is his instrumental role in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379 on November 10, 1975, which determined that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination. This was later revoked by the UN in 1991 as a precondition for Israel's participation in the Madrid Conference (Hijab 2009, 571).

[26] Relatedly, Wolfe (2012) argues for the reframing of the Nakba's centrality in this regard, as he believes it should be seen as a point of consolidation rather than as a point of origin given that the Zionist settler colonial project far preceded the establishment of Israel and can be seen as the product of centuries of European colonial history –

after the 1967 War, the critical difference between pre and post-1967 Israel is that its "capacity to reproduce a successful settler colonial project has substantially declined" (Veracini 2013b, 28). Veracini insists that Israeli settler colonialism was successful prior to 1967 given that "the military conflict for Greater Palestine was resolved in 1948 and sealed in 1967" (Veracini 2019, 571). During this time, Zionist settlers had entrenched their ability to stay in the region by decisively winning the military conflict against the Indigenous residents (Ibid., 571). Compared to that period, settler colonialism in Israel post-1967 can be viewed as largely unsuccessful because "if settler colonialism is about establishing legitimate claims to specific locations, Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza ultimately has very little to show for after over forty years of unrestrained rule" (Veracini 2013b, 28).[27]

Regardless of the specifics of Veracini's arguments, SCT has supplied a matrix of concepts for integrating, at least partially, the Palestinian question into Indigenous Studies in North America. Notwithstanding the limitations presented by this framework, SCT can help clarify and distinguish dimensions of Zionist settler colonialism that are not commensurate with, or otherwise obscured by, conventional approaches to studying colonization.

<u>Breaking Apart the Palestinian Civil Society Call for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions</u>

This thesis offers an analysis of the BDS Call by conceptually breaking apart its demands. This is a different approach than the one guiding Jones (2019). Jones provides a powerful argument for why the Palestine-South Africa parallel can be misleading by clarifying the differences between the two cases. While this dimension of his paper is persuasive, there is another facet to his article whereby Jones offers an evaluation of BDS itself by labelling it as being "politically

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which is why he claims that "Zionism is a particularly revealing archive for research into the logic of settler colonialism" given that the deliberate planning and clarity of purpose that went into it meant that "no campaign of territorial dispossession was ever waged more thoughtfully" (Ibid., 137).

[27] See Barakat (2018) for a powerful critique of Veracini's analysis.

incoherent" (199) and writing that because the movement supports diverse political solutions it actually "expresses rather than surmounts Palestinians' disorganization and division" (206). His reasoning for these conclusions is grounded in the absence of substantive political goals that the movement sets for itself and its lack of appropriate strategic planning (206, 217). Hence, he condemns the fact that the movement lacks consensus on either its end goals or the means by which it wants to achieve them (199). In other words, BDS lacks a detailed political program that would ostensibly take a position on, amongst other things, a future one or two state 'solution'. Jones asserts that this lack should be replaced with a "clear analysis of Israel/Palestine and appropriate strategic planning" (217).[28] The non-doctrinal strategy of BDS is viewed as a weakness here rather than a strength, and the diversity of approaches is taken to preclude a clear analysis.

While Jones arguably misrepresents the reasoning for why the Call has been articulated in the way that it is or why it centers the specific goals it has set for itself, there is more to be said about his view that the Call is incoherent, or that it actually expresses Palestinian disorganization and division rather than surmounting it. These issues will be approached here from a different angle by examining the problems that arise when conceptually interpreting the Call and situating it within a history of fragmentation. Even if the Call were more detailed and substantive as Jones would like, the questions arising from this interpretative analysis would not be any less pressing. Whereas Jones grounds his conclusions in his practical gripes with the Call, this thesis takes a different approach by scrutinizing the concepts undergirding the BDS document. This is not to imply that conceptual and practical problems are unrelated, but whereas Jones takes the practical

[28] Sadeldeen (2019) attributes this lack of strategic planning in Palestine-Israel to the "boomerang model" BDS has adopted, which "assumes that pressure exerted in the West will eventually come back to be applied in Israel" (203).

implications of BDS as his starting point, in this thesis the Call's conceptual foundations serve as a point of departure to then circle back to the practical dilemmas implicit to it. While some of the insights revealed through this analysis may complement or even substantiate Jones' claims, this can also open new avenues for inquiry.

This thesis reads the BDS Call as putting forth 'two images of Palestinians': they are figured in the document both as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed *and* as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced. By disentangling dispossession and displacement as two distinct faces of settler colonialism, debates around BDS can be revisited through an unexplored lens that provides fresh insights.

Different Concepts in the BDS Call

The Call makes reference to a diverse set of theoretical concepts, with some that come to mind through a first reading including civil society, civil rights, human rights, international law, colonialism, apartheid, and self-determination. There are other notions that can be inferred through a reading of the Call, including transnationalism and internationalism (see the fifth paragraph that makes reference to the "international community", "international solidarity", and "moral consistency", each of which reflect how BDS "has propelled a new framework that…centers Palestinian rights as *integral* to left movements for global and social justice (Maira 2018, 11)), ethnonationalism (the first paragraph states that "Israel continues to expand Jewish colonies…Israel was built mainly on land ethnically cleansed of its Palestinian owners"), and Indigeneity (see the previous quotes). Finally, the Call can also be interpreted through three concepts that will be the focus of this thesis: settler colonialism, dispossession, and displacement.

Settler Colonialism and the BDS Call

The Call identifies a “tripartite structure of oppression” (Ananth 2013, 136) in the form of the three demands that elucidate different facets of the Zionist settler colonial project.

The first demand is that Israel ends its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantles the Wall. This goes against a narrative on this issue which “requires that, at the least, an equality between the two parties be assumed and/or represented”, which is “readily apparent in the discursive mobilisation of the language of ‘war’ and ‘peace’” (McMahon 2014, 77). This narrative on the parity of power between the two parties allows for Israeli actions to be justified through the guise of self-defence (Ibid., 77). It also, as Abdulla (2016) points out, “suggests equal footing between two competing groups that desire self-determination rather than a case of settler-colonial dispossession and erasure of the indigenous native” (51). Against this, the language of ‘occupation’ and ‘colonisation’ here denote power asymmetries between the involved parties – specifically between settler colonizers and Indigenous peoples (McMahon 2014, 77). BDS is in part a response to the Oslo paradigm, a paradigm that was guilty of equalizing the two sides in this struggle, and counters that narrative by looking “directly at the root causes of the conflict in the region – not seeing Palestinians and Israelis as two people that have some intractable historical disagreement, but rather explaining the situation as a colonial conflict between a native population and a settler colonial state, backed and supported by Western powers” (Ziadah 2015, 96). By challenging the discursive hegemony on the parity of power between the two sides, the first demand in the Call goes directly against Jones’ (2019) claim that “There is no analysis of power relations in Israel/Palestine” under BDS (204).

The second demand is that Israel recognize the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality. This is a challenge to Israel’s alleged uniqueness as a nation-state. Zionism attempts to merge the exilic identity and iconography of Judaism with a

political ethos that responds to the horrific history of European antisemitism. Zionism has politicized this unique religious identity to establish a "homeland for religious exiles" that is at the same time marketed as the only "modern democracy" in a region typified in the West by imaginaries of a barbaric and backwards people (McMahon 2014, 77).[29] Against this framing of Israel as exceptional, the BDS campaign's "universalist conception recasts Israel as a state like any other, with the same obligations and responsibilities" (Ibid., 77). In conjunction with the first demand, this challenge to the discourse depicts Palestine-Israel as "a struggle of a people against a system of oppression and exploitation, not another, exceptional people" (77).[30]

These observations are part of a larger shift in rejecting the idea that settler colonialism in Palestine-Israel is an exceptional case in which "a unique set of logics play out", with this move promoting analysis "beyond the boundaries of particular states, to the larger systems of power in which they are situated and to which they contribute" (Hawari 2019, 170). The transnational activism that BDS promotes and the internationalist agenda that it is supporting - two themes that are present throughout the Call - indicate a clear recognition of, and a response to, global regimes of settler colonial disenfranchisement.

The Call's third stipulation demands that the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as enshrined in UN resolution 194 is respected, protected, and promoted. The reference to UN resolution 194 is crucial. It dates back to 1948 and is associated with the Nakba, and this subverts the entire temporal framing that has dominated Palestine-Israel

[29] Shihade's (2016) article *The Place of Israel in Asia* details how leaders in the early Zionist movement had advertised their settler colonial project in Palestine to Western leaders as part of "the West's front against the Barbaric East – civilization and democracy posed against despotic Asia" (133).

[30] Feldman (2019b) explains how Palestinian solidarity movements have long had to grapple with allegations of exceptionalism as an impediment to action. The discourse of exceptionalism on Palestine-Israel is perpetuated by referring to it as a 'complex situation' that is too complicated for outsiders to understand, which "[suggests] that any action is likely to be misguided" (Ibid., 197).

which restricts analysis of Israeli transgressions to 1967 and thereby overlooks how these injustices go beyond colonization in the OPT and include "Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line (the 1949 Armistice Line) and beyond, including the Palestinian refugees wherever they are" (Abdulla 2016, 52). For decades Israel has consciously sought to limit the Palestinian people to those living in the 1967 occupied territories, with the goal being to "deceptively reduce the question of Palestine to a mere dispute over some "contested" territory occupied by Israel since 1967, thus excluding the UN-sanctioned rights of the majority of the Palestinian people" (Barghouti 2010, 6-7):

> Discursively, Palestinian-Israeli politics started in 1967. By hearkening back to 1948, this demand violates the manner in which the discourse delimits the temporality of Palestinian-Israeli politics (McMahon 2014, 78).

The inclusion of the right of return in this third demand illuminates and dismantles the origin myths of the Israeli state by showing how its existence was predicated on Palestinian dispossession and displacement. The use of the term 'ongoing Nakba' by Palestinians is in line with this shift in the narrative, and the Israeli political and educational systems go to great lengths to censor this word and the history associated with it (see Rashed et al 2014 and Naser-Najjab 2020). It is in this sense that the third demand holds the greatest transformative power in its disruption of the discourse given that "The discourse's temporality of Palestinian-Israeli politics is militantly reproduced because a change would induce the excavation of some long-buried questions to which Zionism is incapable of providing satisfactory answers" (McMahon 2014, 78). The detemporalization of the Palestinian tragedy to before 1967 falls in line with Wolfe's logic of elimination that theorizes settler colonialism as a structure and not an event.

The Call can thus be seen as utilizing a settler colonial framework in its cognizance of power relations, its rejection of Israeli exceptionalism, and its reframing of the temporal

narrative. Hence, Maira (2018) observes that BDS centers "discourses of settler colonialism, apartheid, and antiracism to challenge foundational narratives of the Israeli state and the displacement of Palestinians beginning in 1948" (11). Svirsky (2017) argues that appreciating Indigenous resistance means recognizing how power is challenged by expanding discussions and actions beyond "the common institutional and normative boundaries" (28)[31], and makes similar observations as Maira on BDS in this regard:

> BDS weakens the dominance of the normative discourse about Israel-Palestine…because it refuses to engage with the traditional topics and assumptions of that discourse while at the same time it confronts Israel's violence on a new terrain of action in which Israel finds itself struggling (Ibid., 28).

All these observations convey that the Call offers a powerful reading on Palestine-Israel through SCT. But where do dispossession and displacement enter in? This is, after all, at the essence of settler colonialism: the efforts of foreign colonizers to *take land* from Indigenous owners by extinguishing their claims (the dispossessive element) and eliminating their presence (displacement through elimination or usurpation from territory). These acts of appropriating land clearly do not occur in a uniform manner across a colonized locale, but are instead dynamic and multi-faceted processes. It is in this regard that the Call can be interpreted as putting forth two faces of the Zionist settler colonial project in the form of dispossession and displacement.

Dispossession and Displacement in the BDS Call

The first two demands in the Call align with an image of Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed, whereas the third demand figures them as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced.

[31] See Svirsky's eye-opening (2015) article *BDS as a Mediator*.

I have already noted that the first demand alters the narrative on power relations between Palestinians and Israelis in that it "requires that people think and speak of Palestinian-Israeli politics in terms of a relatively empowered foreign party violently *dispossessing* a relatively disempowered *indigenous* party" (McMahon 2014, 77, italics added). However, the reference to Israel's apartheid wall in the first demand is crucial. What can the reference to the Wall in this first demand tell us about reading the Call through the frame of dispossession?

The 'West Bank Barrier' has become an iconic symbol of Israeli occupation and apartheid. This apartheid wall is a fundamentally frontier phenomenon that is connected to the dispossessive process, hence why Busbridge (2017) refers to it as a "border with feet" and Weizman (2007) refers to it as a "shifting colonial frontier" (179).[32] Viewing the apartheid wall as a frontier accords with the observation that "settler colonial states have no borders, but open frontiers" (Shihade 2016, 140), with these frontiers shifting and expanding, just like how the apartheid wall "has been routed and re-routed a number of times" (Busbridge 2017, 379) for reasons varying from security concerns to the straightforward mandate of the Israeli settler movement. The apartheid wall should therefore not be conflated with a rigid and unchanging boundary:

> Israel built 85% of the barrier not on the Green Line that divides Israel and the West Bank but instead well inside the West Bank. Indeed, the final path of the wall would leave 9.5% of the land of the West Bank on the western, or Israeli, side of the wall (Bishara 2017, 38).

At 708 kilometers long, the apartheid wall is double the length of the Green Line and at times cuts as deep as 18 kilometers into the West Bank (Busbridge 2017, 337-338). This is what is

[32] Hughes' (2020) notion of 'unbounded territoriality' describes how the frontier functions as "a mobile index of expansion" in settler colonial contexts, and this views land beyond a territorial boundary as being "eventually and inevitably part of the settler polity" even if it has yet to be annexed (216).

referred to as the 'seam zone', which is the land area in the occupied West Bank that is east of the Green Line but west of Israel's apartheid wall. The wall is thus a de-facto colonial frontier, with its "performance of separation [obscuring] the ways in which it enables Israel to continue its settlement project in the West Bank and deepen its control over the Palestinians as a colonized population to be managed and disciplined" (Busbridge 2017, 374).[33]

Butler and Athansiou (2013) make clear that dispossession should not be viewed solely through the prism of territoriality, as this obscures the logics that legitimize the appropriation of land from its Indigenous owners. In this sense, while the first demand describes dispossession in terms of the overt seizure of territory, the second demand can be read as discerning the racially charged logics undergirding Israeli colonization. Palestinians display an acute awareness of how the two are related. Building off the example used above, Palestinians do not simply refer to the West Bank Barrier as an apartheid wall, but instead call it *al-jidar alfasl al'unsuri*, which literally translates to "the racist separation wall" (Bishara 2017, 38). Bishara (2017) asserts that, more generally, in both the US and Israel "not enough attention has been paid in the dominant discourse to the perspectives of those who live or will live next to the walls, to the toll militarization takes, to the histories of connected landscapes eviscerated by entrenching barriers,

[33] This is a cardinal reason for why a two-state paradigm is simply no longer be tenable, as the 1967 borders that were meant to be the basis for a future Palestinian state have been superseded. This was the impetus for the ICJ's 2004 ruling that declared the wall illegal under international law, as "the court determined that the barrier might lead to a de facto annexation of Palestinian territory in the West Bank" (Bishara 2017, 39). This is exacerbated by the over 700,000 Israeli settlers that have colonized the West Bank (including parts of Jerusalem) (Crowley 2020, 72). This expansion of Israeli settlers has furthermore fragmented the Palestinian economy and society in the West Bank because while the wall is meant to separate Israelis from Palestinians, it also separates and fragments Palestinians from Palestinians by "cutting off villages from each other, and sometimes even dividing them in two, with some residents left on the 'Israeli' side of the wall while others are relegated to the West Bank" (Busbridge 2017, 378). These walls cut off access to schools and hospitals and impede access to agricultural land and water resources – not to mention their role in home demolitions (Bishara 2017, 39). The Israeli settlement enterprise profits from these acts since Israel gains control over fertile lands and mountain water reservoirs, which Jewish settlers are "offered lucrative incentives" to colonize (Abdulla 2016, 59). For all these reasons, Abdulla (2016) insists that not only is the "so-called two-state solution both unjust and impossible", but it was also "never remotely viable to begin with" (70) and was used as a sham and smokescreen by Israel to conceal further colonization.

to the way in which *walls can palpably intensify racism*" (38, italics added). The function of the wall as a frontier beyond which lies the 'other' is telling of how Palestinians in the West Bank are criminalized and their bodies are subject to the normative violence of Zionism. It is no coincidence that the building of the Wall coincided with security hysteria on the part of Israeli authorities concerning threats from the West Bank, and, verily, this obsession with security was a foundational influence on occupation policy dating back to Oslo and the neoliberal securitization policies it entrenched.[34] The racist violence stemming from the Wall is also displayed in the settler invasions/attacks on Palestinian villages and the destruction of their crops beyond the wall. As the literature review made clear, dispossession cannot be separated from these racially charged logics, and so the mention of racism in the second BDS demand and throughout the Call document more generally supports a reading of BDS through the frame of dispossession.

The third demand depicts Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced from their homes, with them having a right to return to those homes as stipulated in UN resolution 194. Though this third demand only makes explicit reference to refugees, with the Call stating that "a majority of Palestinians are refugees, most of whom are stateless", the fact that it refers to UN resolution 194 can be read implying the diasporic element, since many of the refugees that were displaced in 1948 eventually entered, and forged, the Palestinian diaspora.[35] As mentioned earlier, recourse to UN Resolution 194 subverts the temporality on Palestine-Israel by transgressing the circumscription of the discourse to 1967. In this way, the third demand offers an implicit history of Zionist settler colonialism through indirect reference to its pivotal

[34] See Morrison's (2020) *Whither the State? The Oslo Peace Process and Neoliberal Configurations in Palestine*.
[35] Notwithstanding the complex debates regarding the term 'diaspora' raised in the literature review, as well as how this may enter additional categories like exiles into this discussion, the use of diaspora is here understood to refer to those Palestinians that are not refugees, though they may have been refugees at some point, and had been scattered to spatially proximate countries or otherwise throughout the globe outside of the MENA region.

moment: the Nakba. By shifting the temporality back to this time and centering this iconic event, diasporic Palestinians enter into the BDS discussion since both refugee and diasporic Palestinians emerged through Israel's creation. That a return is being sought in this demand furthermore establishes the international element of displacement, with Palestinians seeking a return to Palestine from outside of the official territorially circumscribed boundaries of Palestine-Israel (this is not to overlook how Palestinians in Palestine-Israel are also implicated in the right of return, as many Palestinians still inside this territory were internally displaced from their homes, meaning the right of return applies to them as well).

This reading of the Call through the frames of dispossession and displacement, however, raises some immediate questions, especially the reading of the third demand that is presented here. Is it not the case that the Palestinians referred to in the third demand are also an Indigenous people that were dispossessed, on top of being a refugee or diasporic people that were displaced? Afterall, as Shihade (2016) writes, the Israeli settler colonial state sought to "end its own mythical diaspora by creating an immense *diaspora* of the actual *indigenous* people" residing there (140, italics added), and Barghouti (2010) similarly writes how BDS reminds the world that "the *indigenous* Palestinian people include the refugees forcibly *displaced* from their homeland" (7, italics added). In fact, can each of the three demands not be read through *both* the frames of dispossession and displacement? Are Palestinians dispossessed through colonization not displaced as well? And, if so, what is the need for this thesis's core distinction if that is the case? Reading the third demand through the frame of dispossession appears to undermine the argument put forth here. This problem needs to be addressed before presenting the tensions in the BDS Call that arise from this interpretation.

To restate the problem, this thesis thus far has only asserted a tension between dispossession and displacement. Is it not the case that most Palestinians were both dispossessed and displaced? And is dispossession not a kind of displacement, and displacement a kind of dispossession? If not, why not? Is the logic of dispossession and displacement more closely related than acknowledged in this paper's thesis? And, if so, what do the tensions between a reading of dispossession and displacement precisely consist in?

Dispossession and Displacement as Two Faces of Settler Colonialism

The constant pairing of dispossession and displacement in literatures on Palestine-Israel is telling of how closely associated the two terms are, as well as how this association is taken for granted.[36] That these two terms have different meanings and implications problematizes their association in this way - both as a reflection of what Palestinians have gone through for over seven decades and as a description of two phenomena that can be subsumed within the more general analytic of settler colonialism.[37] If dispossession is about divesting someone from their land, property, or possessions, and if displacement is about the involuntary or coerced movement of an individual or people away from their home (especially if this displacement takes them out of the national territory they reside in), then it is clear that these two phenomena are not interchangeable and that their divergences need to be better developed.

Identifying dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism does not require us to view them as two completely separate or independent processes that may or may

[36] For texts that conjoin dispossession and displacement under Zionist settler colonialism, see Said (1995, xiii), Bernard (2007, 681), Williams (2009, 93), Barghouti (2010, 61), Samy (2010, 364), Daoud et al (2012, 1165), Shihade (2012, 109), Shihade (2014, 454), Busbridge (2017, 376), Meari (2017, 507), Banat et al (2018, 149), Maira (2018, 7), Feldman (2019b, 197), Brocket (2020, 136), and Salih et al (2021, 14), amongst others.
[37] Describing dispossession and displacement as 'two faces of settler colonialism' is not meant to imply that either of these processes are unique to it or do not manifest outside of settler colonial contexts. Though dispossession does have a strong association with settler colonialism, most displacements today are not settler colonial.

not be conjoined. However, there are cases in which they come apart. A person can be dispossessed without being displaced insofar as dispossession does not necessarily require kicking a person or a people out of a territory, whereas displacement explicitly requires shoving a person or people out of a territory (notwithstanding internal displacement). One can remain in a territory and not be displaced, but still experience dispossession. Families in the West Bank can have their houses bulldozed because of legal or archaeological reasons determined by Israeli authorities. They are not displaced from the territory here, but are just being kicked out of their homes. Nichols (2019) exposes how dispossession is about the transformation of a person's relationship to their land, but in this case it does not require removal. Displacement suggests removal, and in the Palestinian case there is an extensive history of them being displaced without being dispossessed in that they retained legal titles to their land without these titles being undone legally. Peteet (2007) captures the prevalence of this dynamic when noting how "it is now almost a cliché in reports on Palestinian camps that refugees punctuate narratives of exile by displaying the key to their former homes" (634). This complicates the identity of Palestinians as diasporic subjects given that "house keys and deeds to lands lend an immediacy that may not be as pronounced in the classic and defining instances of diaspora" (Ibid., 634). This also clarifies why there are procedures in Israeli law for transferring titles for Palestinians displaced in 1948 and 1967 - here they were displaced but not dispossessed. This is a very different picture than the one Nichols paints of Indigenous dispossession in North America, and there is a reason that the way we talk about dispossessed and displaced peoples varies greatly between North America and Palestine.

There can be dispossession without displacement, or displacement without dispossession. Dispossession can be a part of the process of displacement, and vice versa, but there are crucial

instances in which the two break apart, though in many cases they do accompany one another. One of the broader points that this thesis makes is that there needs to be more attention paid to how variegated processes of dispossession and displacement really are, and taking their association for granted simplifies their operation as two distinct faces of settler colonialism. This is why Nichols' notion of recursive dispossession as a subsystem within a multifaceted settler colonization process is so valuable, "not because it is exhaustive but because it is distinctive and useful for unraveling the vagaries of dispossession, historically and present" (2018, 22).

The disjuncture between these two processes permeates the literature on Palestine-Israel. The rest of this section will review how Palestinians have been dispossessed but not displaced, displaced but not dispossessed, and, of course, been subject to an assemblage of both processes.[38] It will then explain why this is relevant for Palestinian history, politics, and for analyzing BDS.

Palestinians can be dispossessed without being displaced from the locale through an assortment of tactics that Israel uses to "divest Palestinians of their land" while not usurping them from the territory, with these methods being utilized by Israeli authorities differently against Palestinians in Israel versus Palestinians living under occupation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem (Hijab 2009, 574). These include "home demolitions on grounds of illegal construction (homes are built 'illegally' because permits are denied); acquisition of land for state

[38] Allan's (2020) ethnography on Palestinian fishermen in Lebanon presents dispossessions and displacements that are not commensurate with the conventional territorial logics for studying settler colonialism. Her work is in line with a larger shift prescribed by Mawani (2016), who argues that "the role of the sea in law and settler colonialism is a much larger project that still needs to be written" (Ibid., 110), and this history has been obscured by the binaries imposed by SCT and legal history, such as the ones between settler and native, colony and settler colony, and land and sea (113). The latter division renders land "the primary site and surface" of SCT and legal histories of colonialism (116). This overlooks insights from maritime studies that reveal how the sea is "a domain of territoriality and a site of power in need of critical analysis" (116). Allan's ethnography is a step in this direction, as it documents how the Nakba was not only a "flight by land" but also a "flight by sea", though only the former is depicted in the canonical texts on the subject (2020, 100). What this research on how Palestinians "lost the sea" (Ibid., 101) reveals is that even if Palestinians were not dispossessed or displaced from their land, in many cases they were dispossessed or displaced at sea, which complicates normative understandings of both processes.

or military purposes; allowing houses to become dilapidated and then declaring them unsafe after which they are taken over by the state; construction of Jewish-only communities, etc." (Ibid., 574). That Palestinians can be dispossessed but not displaced is also clear in instances of Palestinians being dispossessed of their history and culture as part of settler colonialism's exclusionary logic. This functions as a "narrative transfer" in pursuit of eliminating the native, and under this arrangement "it is rights – not bodies – that are transferred, and indigenous peoples become the subject of a transfer that does not necessarily *displace them physically*" (Veracini in Naser-Najjab 2020, 315, italics added). Butler and Athanasiou's approach to dispossession is apropos here, as this reshaping of Palestinian identities through the normative and normalizing violence perpetuated against them complements the more overt violence of colonialism by rendering Palestinians the victims of a type of bodily dispossession. The logic of dispossession against Indigenous peoples can thus vary in its relationship with displacement, as dispossession does not always require "being physically eliminated or displaced", but can instead entail "having one's cultural practices erased, being 'absorbed', 'assimilated' or 'amalgamated' in the wider population" (Veracini 2011, 2).

Conversely, the history of Palestinian displacement without dispossession has shaped the course of Palestinian-Israeli relations writ large. According to Fischbach (2003), "Palestinian refugee property extends far beyond the property question itself. Indeed, the property issue lies fairly close to ground zero in the entire Israeli-Palestinian conflict" (359). Palestinian refugee property claims from the Nakba and Naksa spawned an array of historical, logistical, and political challenges that all parties to the conflict have had to confront. Shortly after the Nakba, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) was established to grapple with the complications posed by the property appropriated from Palestinians by Israel during its

creation, and was responsible for conciliating claims between parties and sorting out issues of repatriation and compensation (Fischbach 2002, 34). These were not and are not dilemmas that Israel can easily ignore because even though they can forcefully impose solutions to Palestinian refugee claims by sweeping them under the rug, such actions would not have juridical legitimacy (Tamari 1999, 83). There is an added absurdity to these scenarios of displacement without dispossession if one considers the cases of Palestinian refugees from West Jerusalem living to this day "within a 20-kilometer radius of their former homes – within eyesight of their properties" to which they still have deeds (Ibid., 81). Israeli authorities expend a great amount of effort in trying to acquire these legal rights from Palestinians, and the moral, legal, and political challenges they are forced to address are evidence of how Palestinian displacement does not necessarily entail dispossession.

There are also, clearly, instances in which the two are conjoined as either concurrent, interconnected, or complementary processes. First, at any given moment a combination of Palestinian dispossession and displacement can occur concurrently:

> More than 30,000 Palestinian Bedouins in the Negev area of southern Israel are facing imminent displacement, hundreds of Palestinian families in Jaffa are under eviction orders, whole villages in area C of the West Bank are facing demolition orders, as is the al-Bustan neighbourhood of Silwan in Jerusalem. Such policies have been ongoing for more than 64 years under different guises (Al-Azza 2013, 77).

There are then instances in which dispossession and displacement are interconnected. Meari's (2017) study on Area C of the Occupied West Bank situates how this scheme to divide the OPT into three separate areas is a "continuing settler colonial technique aimed at *dispossessing* Palestinian lands and resources, *displacing* Palestinian communities, and *replacing* them with Zionist settlers" (507, italics added). Beyond these more explicit instances of dispossession paired with displacement, looking to the experience of Palestinians within apartheid Israel

demonstrates how these two faces can accompany one another in more subtle but still complementary ways. Stoler (2016) expands on the nuances of these processes, clarifying how "the dispossessions and dislocations that accompany [colonialism's] violence take place not always in obvious and abrupt acts of assault and seizure but also in more drawn-out, less eventual, and occluded ways" (343). An example of this is Sa'di-Ibraheem's (2020) study on the "temporalities of dispossession" targeting Palestinians in Israel. She documents how a "prolonged displacement process" occurs by which neoliberal privatization and urban renewal projects form new regimes of accumulation and dispossession, which first divest Palestinians from their property and subsequently displace them from their age-old homes (Ibid., 342).

Dispossession and displacement can thus be conjoined while also breaking apart. But how is this more nuanced take on the relationship between dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism helpful for analyzing BDS?

Though the answer to this will only be properly developed in the later section on Palestinian fragmentation, these two faces of settler colonialism are helpful for analyzing BDS because they convey two images of Palestinians that draw attention to the different *experiential circumstances* reflected in these two narratives. These divergent experiences of the settler colonial project in Palestine point to histories, injuries, and considerations that do not always neatly align, especially when it comes to the interests and objectives that Palestinians hold depending on whether they were dispossessed but not displaced, displaced but not dispossessed, or subjected to a combination of both. The next section will show how BDS's normative program is complicated by this interpretation of the Call through two images of Palestinians.

Two Images of Palestinians: Conflicting Currents in the BDS Call

The two images of Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed and as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced point to at least three tensions in the BDS program. These include different understandings of historic injustice, what is being demanded of Israel, and controversy over the right of return.[39] The first has to do with normative understandings of the injustices that have been committed against Palestinians historically and contemporarily. This shapes what is being demanded of Israel in terms of the end goals of the movement and how this will determine what Palestine-Israel will look like both figuratively and literally should BDS prove successful in meeting its objectives. The right of return is the most contentious of the demands being made and amplifies these first two problems, on top of raising the question of trade-offs in the BDS demands.

BDS and Historic Injustice

The two images of Palestinians align with two different frameworks for understanding the injustice that occurred. As discussed, dispossession is deployed in the context of Indigenous peoples suffering territorial (and other) injustices, and this is a structural process that occurs over a period of time according to SCT. Displacement, on the other hand, deals with a group/groups of people being forced to leave their homes, and this is typically in the form of a specific event(s) wherein the injustices can be temporally delineated in a clearer way.

[39] This is obviously not saying that BDS inaugurated these debates, as these dilemmas spawned well before BDS, but instead what is argued here is that the two images of Palestinians – rooted in dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism – can give better *order* to these pre-existing debates. These two frames for interpreting BDS are helpful for organizing and perceiving the dilemmas raised by various authors that have written on BDS up to this point. What these authors have in common, though they may not state things in these terms, is that they are grappling with the questions posed by Palestinians' disparate experiential histories with dispossession and displacement and the implications that such variations pose for forming a national movement, addressing injustices, and achieving self-determination.

Jeremy Waldron's 'Supersession Thesis' put forth an influential framework for perceiving historic injustices against people under colonialism. Waldron argues that injustices can be superseded by changes in circumstances to the point where a situation that was unjust historically can be brought under the fold of justice at a later time.[40] He makes three distinct arguments when explicating this position, including the fading of entitlements over time, the impossibility of verifying counterfactual alternatives, and injustices that are overtaken by circumstances, each of which create the conditions for historic injustices to be superseded (Waldron 1992, 27).[41] The argument most relevant for injustice in Palestine is the idea that changes in circumstances have created a condition whereby it would be unjust to revert back to the original holdings. For example, such a reversion would require injustices against Israelis today that are not responsible for the acts of people in the past, such as forcing them to leave their homes or upending their lives. Framing Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic people that are displaced, as reflected in the third BDS demand, aligns (though not perfectly, as will be touched on below) with this framework that understands injustices as specific events because they were usurped from the territory that, not wholly but certainly to an extent, the more overt violences of these settler colonial structures are circumscribed by, thereby putting a type of temporal and physical distance from the original injustices of displacement.[42]

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[40] In a series of papers published starting in 1992, Waldron argues that historic injustices can be superseded by changes in circumstances whereby holdings that were originally acquired through acts of injustice eventually coincide with what justice requires (See Waldron 1992, 2002, and 2004).
[41] See Patton (2005), Nine (2008), and Sanderson (2011) for critiques of Waldron's Supersession Thesis. Sanderson (2011) puts forth an especially incisive critique of Waldron that addresses each of his three arguments for supersession in a comprehensive manner.
[42] This section does not seek to defend Waldron's framework, as it is certainly not without its flaws and ethical dangers (see the above sources critiquing Waldron's Supersession Thesis), nor does it aim to argue that Palestinians as a dispossessed people or Palestinians a displaced people are mutually exclusive positions that one must take in these debates, as both of these realities exist and would need to be accounted for in redress campaigns. It is instead meant to demonstrate how the two images of Palestinians implicit to the BDS Call complicate redress since they can beget different normative frameworks for addressing the injustices of settler colonialism that are not commensurate.

Conversely, viewing Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed rejects the notion that injustices in Palestine can be delineated to specific events on a timeline, and instead views these injustices through a macro-historical structure. Wolfe's now famous conception of settler colonialism as structure and not event better aligns with an image of Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed since it posits that injustices under settler colonialism persist in the form of a structure that endures overtime, meaning that injustices cannot be relegated to distant events in the past. Nichols (2019) favours Wolfe's framework over Waldron's in approaching issues of historic injustice under settler colonialism, specifically because the "structure not an event" explanation points to the "endurance of the colonial relationship of domination over Indigenous peoples" (184), or, in other words, it posits how these injustices were a constantly occurring wrong that cannot be temporally delineated to the past whereby Indigenous peoples, at some point, ceased to be affected by it:

> If colonization were a discrete "event" locatable at a specific historical moment, then the passage of time would seem to place increasing distance between us and the relevant locus of concern, thus diminishing the normative force of the critique of colonization. If, however, colonization is reframed as an enduring structure of domination, then the passage of time would seem to compound, rather than dilute, the normative concern (Ibid., 184).

The problem with this rebuttal to Waldron in the case of Israeli settler colonialism is that Nichols is writing in reference to settler colonialism in North America and Australasia, which are cases in which the displacements that have occurred have always been accompanied by dispossession, given the vast internal displacement that Indigenous peoples in these places have been subjected to whereby they were driven from their ancestral lands onto reservations that were far removed from their homes. In the case of settler colonialism in Palestine, structures of dispossession and structures of displacement indicate two outcomes that are more distinct. For example, Stoler (2016) speaks to the experiential differences amongst groups of Palestinians when writing that

their varied subjectivities around the globe witness "the coterminous presence of colonial and postcolonial conditions assigned to *differentiated populations subject to different relations to the past* and living under widely different legal strictures, economic conditions, and political possibilities in the present" (62, italics added). Her use of "colonial and postcolonial conditions" here aligns with a distinction between Palestinians still overtly subjected to colonial structures inside of Palestine-Israel and Palestinians outside of it whose lives have been shaped by such histories in the form of postcolonial durabilities. Habib (2013) also speaks to the significance of these geographic and experiential differences:

> While the Palestinians living in occupied Palestine may experience colonialism in the consistent and continuous violations of his/her human rights: from home demolitions, to road closures and check points, to limited access to life sustaining needs, to terrorising acts; the Palestinians abroad may experience colonialism in the form of marginalisation, dislocation, and discrimination on the basis of that identity (74-75).

These experiential differences animate the core dilemma of Schulz's (2003) study on the Palestinian diaspora: "Palestinians in the diaspora were on an unwanted pilgrimage, thrown all over the world, whereas Palestinians in the homeland were under a grim siege, barred from moving outside their homes" (228).

Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic peoples that have been displaced did not experience Zionist settler colonialism in the same way as those that remained in Palestine. This is not meant to imply that refugees and diasporics have not been subjected to ongoing structural injustices, and this thesis rejects the notion that injustices against displaced Palestinians have been superseded as, undeniably, their experiences of displacement from their homes have patterned the course of their entire lives (and the lives of their children) and continues to cause injury.[43]

[43] Peteet (2007) similarly rejects how a unilinear view of history that "selectively denies continuity between past and present" has been used to deny rights to displaced Palestinians (637), or, as Mahmoud Darwish states, "We are not looking back to dig up the evidence of a past crime, for the Nakba is an extended present that promises to continue

This thesis is also conscious of how Waldron's same line of reasoning has been utilized by certain right-wing elements to undermine the claims of Indigenous peoples seeking to address historic injustices against them and establish contemporary campaigns for justice. The point being made here is that the structures of settler colonial injustice that displaced Palestinians have been subjected to have differed from those that dispossessed Palestinians in Palestine-Israel have endured. The experience of a refugee is different from the experience of a Palestinian living in Palestine-Israel, and the experience of a Palestinian in the spatially proximate, and certainly the overseas, diaspora is undeniably different from both.[44] There are entire literatures devoted to how the experiential differences between the diaspora, refugees, Palestinians under occupation, and Palestinians in Israel have fostered political disconnects between these parties.[45] The variables to be considered when theorizing and redressing historic injustices would also seem to vary.

This section is also not meant to put forth an inappropriate or insensitive comparison of conditions of suffering or injustice, but it is difficult to envisage a scenario in which future discussions on redress for Palestinians will not draw these types of distinctions. In fact, the entire history of Palestine-Israel, as will be demonstrated in the section on Palestinian fragmentation, is not only a history of these distinctions being implicitly and explicitly drawn in discussions over resolutions, but is also a history of Israeli authorities intentionally facilitating the geographical

into the future" (Darwish in Williams 2009). The lives of Palestinian refugees especially complicate Waldron's framework on supersession, as there are instances where refugees intentionally try to prevent changes in their condition so as to not undermine their historical claims (See Allan 2013 and 2018 and Ilana Feldman 2018).

[44] This is not to mention the different categories of Palestinians within Palestine-Israel, as they can be divided between those in the West Bank under occupation, the Gaza Strip under siege, and the Arab-Palestinian citizens of 'Israel' (or '48 Palestine) subject to apartheid.

[45] See Hilal (2010) for an especially great source on this topic.

and political fragmentation of Palestinians to circumvent efforts at establishing justice, redress, and self-determination by instrumentalizing these experiential differences against them.

BDS and Israel

BDS is ambiguous about its end goals, and this ambiguity is an intentional strategy informed by a history of paternalistically imposed thresholds that set the parameters for the acquisition of Palestinian 'statehood' so long as Palestinians are willing to make the proper concessions. From this view it makes sense why the Call omits any mention of statehood, but problems nevertheless arise through this lack of articulation; specifically in terms of what exactly the movement is demanding of Israel beyond the three demands. It is not the case that Israel could meet the BDS demands in a vacuum, as their fulfillment would transform Israel as a nation-state - especially in relation to its Zionist identity. Despite the movement representing a type of pressure politics that is making demands of Israel, on the pro-BDS spectrum there can be a tendency to adopt a fatalistic perspective with respect to Israel's willingness to actually meet these demands, and this is understandable given the impunity of Israeli actions throughout history and the asymmetrical power relations.[46] However, this should not cause analysis of BDS to overlook the obvious fact that demands are still being made of Israel, and so ambiguity on the larger implications of the Call are relevant if one considers how anti-BDS activists can instrumentalize these ambiguities to undermine the movement. Many have already done so. Leaving BDS's long-term vision open-ended thus leaves room for interpretation that can discredit the movement or perpetuate an

[46] Viewing BDS from this perspective helps clarify why it, according to Feldman (2019a), is typified by a tension in it as being a rights-seeking movement and a revolutionary movement, as many are cynical about the potential for Israel to internally change in favour of Palestinian rights, especially in the midst of a shift to the right in domestic Israeli politics (Sadeldeen 2019, 208), meaning an idyllic rights-seeking campaign can appear as far too passive and unassertive.

irreconcilable discourse between supporters and critics of BDS – as well as confusing BDS advocates themselves.

This is most clear when the Call is interpreted in relation to a future one or two state 'solution'.[47] The first demand which depicts Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed evokes a two-state resolution, while the third demand, which figures Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced, aligns with a one-state resolution.

The first demand – which calls for an end to the occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and the dismantling of the Wall - can be interpreted through the two-state paradigm. This demand is not simply calling for an end to additional colonization on top of land that has already been colonized and settled, but instead views inaugurated processes of colonization in the OPT as reversable. The requirement to dismantle the Wall falls in line with this since the destruction of this 'border with feet' or 'shifting colonial frontier' would be a critical component of a return to the pre-1967 boundaries upon which a two-state resolution could be salvaged. The second BDS demand would complement the first through its attack on apartheid Israel, which would, in a two-state scenario, require that the apartheid regime ends and that Palestinians in Israel are granted full equality. These two demands in conjunction allow for the possibility that Israel retains its Zionist character by remaining a Jewish state under the two-state paradigm (notwithstanding the view that Zionism is inherently racist and exclusionary, meaning that equality for Arab-Palestinians in Israel contradicts Israel's Zionist character).[48]

[47] While this thesis entertains a discussion of a 'two-state solution', the discourse surrounding this paradigm is at this point, especially almost 30 years after the Oslo Accords, disingenuous and nauseating, with the term itself now being impossible to separate from an insincere and treacherous history. The term 'solution' is also rejected as utopian and offensive to those who have suffered as a result of this history. In this thesis the word 'resolution' is used instead whenever discussing a one or two state 'solution'.

[48] Israel's identity as a Jewish state is premised on Jewish exclusionary privilege over non-Jews (See Saïd 2020). The erasure of these exclusionary privileges through the second demand thus undermines Israel's Zionist identity. Interestingly, Veracini's (2013b and 2019) analysis of settler colonial citizenship offers a different, and much

Conversely, the third demand, by bringing displaced Palestinians into the equation by invoking the right of return, would imply an existential threat to Israel with respect to its Zionist identity. This return would not be exclusive to the OPT or Gaza, as displaced Palestinians are seeking a return to their homes in '48 Palestine. This adds an international element to the discussion by including displaced parties that are outside of historic Palestine, as opposed to just internally displaced persons. Such a return would require Israel to take in larger numbers of displaced Palestinians. The ensuing changes would point to a one-state resolution and demographic hysteria on the part of Zionists because of what such changes would imply for Israel's identity as a Jewish state. Even if this third demand does not require a full return of displaced Palestinians (and in all likelihood it will not if one accounts for the possibility of the overseas or even immediate diaspora being allowed to return), the return of refugees alone would suffice to induce these existential questions.[49]

McMahon's (2014) article on the challenges facing BDS is in line with this lack of clarity. BDS is officially "agnostic" on the one-state/two-state debate, and this has been characterized as being "strategically important" by supporters and "intentionally disingenuous and dishonest" by critics (Ibid., 67). This lack of clarity is compounded by the inconsistent targets of BDS activists. For example, through the second demand that calls for an end to Israeli

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darker, reading on the implications of this second demand. As opposed to colonialism where citizenship is indefinitely denied to natives, under settler colonialism citizenship can be "among the most powerful tools available for consolidating settler colonial projects" given that "settler colonialism is at its strongest when it can speak in universalising terms" and erase Indigenous alterities by universalizing and normalizing a 'settler colonial citizen'.

[49] These alignments of the BDS demands to one or two state resolutions are not meant to be rigid delineations but are, once again, an interpretation of the Call that is meant to approximate and order the disparate strands in the document. That being said, the first two BDS demands can also be read as necessitating a one-state resolution since so much land in the West Bank has already been colonized. Crowley (2020) makes clear that it is unlikely that Israel will be willing to remove its settlers given that the process of withdrawing 5,000 settlers from Gaza in the early 2000s was an extremely convoluted process and it would naturally be even more so for the 700,000+ settlers in the West Bank. The demands for an end to occupation, colonization, and equal rights in no way precludes a one-state or binational resolution to the conflict – indeed, they may further underline its necessity.

apartheid, BDS sets as a target both ’48 Palestine and the injustices in the OPT. Despite the Call being clear on the need for both focuses, McMahon observes that activists selectively choose which demands they will follow. Not for nothing, certain BDS advocates qualify their support as a divestment from Israeli occupation and colonization and not Israel itself (73), or will explicitly “avoid reference to Palestinian refugees and Palestinians citizens of Israel despite their stated adherence to the 2005 BDS Call” (Jamjoum 2011, 144). McMahon writes:

> There is an abiding tension in the BDS campaign as to whether the mechanisms of boycotts, divestments and sanctions are directed at the occupation and/or the state of Israel more generally; is the campaign about ending colonisation or deZionising the state of Israel? The contradictory effect of this is that, while the second tier of the call unites Palestinians as a people, it fractures the campaign’s solidarity with those interested exclusively in the occupation, most notably those supportive of the two-state solution (2014, 74).

According to McMahon, the literature on BDS is “replete with this tension” (73).[50] Bueckert (2020) similarly writes “there is something seemingly contradictory about activists responding to a call from Palestinians themselves, while simultaneously being willing to distance themselves from that original call when circumstances require it. If the BDS call widened the goals of the solidarity movement to incorporate Palestinian refugees and equality within Israel, this is perhaps weakened when groups are free to ignore them” (210). Support for BDS is thus torn between a focus on the OPT, which is more politically acceptable (insofar as it is acceptable to criticize Israel in the West, particularly in NA), and the larger aim of ‘deZionising’ Israel.

Whereas McMahon grounds the challenge to Israel in the second demand that requires an end to apartheid and the establishment of a democratic state that grants equality to all citizens,

[50] He points to various writers on BDS being inconsistent in this regard, such as Hijab (2009) who claims that “part of the reason that boycott and divestment are successful is because they do not question Israel’s existence as a state but rather challenge its occupation where Israel engages in the most egregious and visible violations of international law”, with this meant to be a strategic choice that accounts for how the vast majority of states in the West would not entertain a resolution in which Israel’s existence was not ensured (571).

thereby rendering apartheid Israel as the target as well as Zionism's inherently racist exclusions, Krikler's (2019) reading of BDS centers his critique on the third demand's inclusion of the right of return, which would threaten to erase the ontological character of Israel as a Jewish state.

Krikler, like McMahon, divides the strands composing BDS between those focused on Israeli policy in the OPT and others that, in his words, "will call into question the legitimacy of the Israeli state as it exists within the borders that emerged from its War of Independence" (2019, 322-323). The former and, for him, more acceptable form of boycott would be one requesting a two-state resolution and is therefore not calling into question Israel's existence (Ibid., 322). This version of BDS would reflect more of a negotiating tactic that requires the withdrawal of Israel from Palestinian territory and the dismantling of the Wall, recognition of East Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state, and Israel's acknowledgement of responsibility for refugees from the Nakba and their descendants (322). This would entail a highly conditional right of return that would have to be symbolic in certain cases or else compensate those not resettled, and this has to do with the conflicting approaches to historic injustice outlined in the previous section as he writes "Identifying the historical processes one has to accept, which one has to try to reverse, and to what extent is no easy task" (327). This two-state approach would also require the end to discrimination against Arab-Palestinians in Israel, a goal that Krikler states in odd terms, referring to the

> removal of any discriminatory laws or policies in Israel that, in effect, making into second-class citizens Israeli nationals who are not Jewish, albeit – and this is not insignificant – second-class citizens with full franchise rights (322).

In this sense Krikler, as opposed to McMahon, does not understand the second demand as rendering 'Israel proper' as the target.[51]

He writes that these more benign boycotts that have "limited aims" can be contrasted with those other boycotters that seek "the effacement of the Israeli nation state and its replacement by a state – no longer called Israel – that incorporates present day Israel and the occupied territories, a state that will be the home for both present day Israeli Jews and all Palestinians, whether those in Israel, in the occupied territories, or in the Palestinian diaspora, especially in the refugee settlements in the Middle East" (323). He concludes that this form of boycott that demands the replacement of the Israeli nation-state as a "sine qua non for peace and for ending the boycott is morally fraught, running the risk of implicitly subscribing to a wish for the disappearance of Israeli society" (328). For Krikler, the first image of Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed (and beyond the 1967 boundaries, for the most part) is more tolerable. For those dispossessed from their homes in '48 Palestine, things have to be taken on a case-by-case basis that accounts for the complexities of the historical process, and the issues he raises here align with the problems that Waldron accentuates.[52] Conversely, displaced Palestinians are, for Krikler, a different story, and it is this second image of

[51] The deployment of the term 'Israel proper' reinforces and legitimizes Zionist colonial geographies. The term "'48 Palestine" or "apartheid Israel" is therefore used in this thesis when referring to the territory Israel conquered in 1948 and falsely claims uncontested ownership over. Similarly, though different parts of historic Palestine are distinguished in this paper, for example through delineations between '48 Palestine, the OPT, or Gaza, each of these territories are understood as being under Israeli occupation. All of 'Israel' is Palestinian territory – not just the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

[52] For example, he talks about how "a meaningful two-state solution would still have to face the question of how ethically to deal with the by now very sizeable population of Israelis in the West Bank" (328), thereby stressing their needs in light of how usurping them after they have already settled would be unjust (here he glosses over the *structure* of dispossession that these Israeli settlers willingly took part in through their choice to colonize the OPT).

Palestinians that he is anxious of. Redressing injustices against them in the form of return would render the boycott "morally fraught" since it requires the deZionising of Israel.[53]

The two images of Palestinians can thus align with the one or two state resolutions. An image of Palestinians as dispossessed in the first two demands can be reconciled with a two-state resolution. The image of displaced Palestinians, on the other hand, could only point to a one-state resolution, and this is the breaking point for some supporters of the boycott or otherwise Zionist apologists like Krikler that provide conditional support for BDS so long as Israel's colonization

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[53] The argument in Krikler (2019) is more generally indicative of the inability of Zionist apologists to salvage Zionism from its racist character, as well as the cognitive disconnect in bridging Israel's more overtly violent and expansionary policies in the OPT with Zionism's exclusionary logic in apartheid Israel. He is fine with Palestinians in Israel being granted full rights, but the return of displaced Palestinian refugees would be "morally fraught" because it would demographically change Israel's character as a Jewish state, and this reasoning on its own is telling of how "the settler colonial project is obsessed with demographic concerns" (Veracini 2013b, 33). He maintains that for BDS to be "truly historically grounded", it has to pay respect to not only how Palestinians have been dispossessed, but also "the fact that the historical process – including a murderous antisemitism – has delivered into existence a nation (in the main no longer made up of settlers) democratically bound up with the present Israeli state" (Krikler 2019, 324). There are two things to note here. The first is how he writes "the historical process…delivered into existence a nation", as if there were not specific and intentional agents responsible for the Zionist settler colonial project and the ensuing dispossession and displacement of Palestinians, almost as if to diminish the association of the creation of Israel, as well as the Zionist ideology driving this creation, with the racist crimes against Palestinians, and instead attributing what happened to a convenient and nebulous "historical process" that arbitrarily resulted in the establishment of Israel. This is also apparent when he talks about "responsibility for the Palestinian refugees of the late 1940s" (322), as if they magically became refugees during this last part of the decade and it was not the direct result of Israel's creation in 1948 specifically, or when he talks about Israel winning its "War of Independence", as if Israel were established through a venerable liberation struggle and not the colonization and ethnic cleansing of an Indigenous people. The selective phrasing he uses to articulate his argument tip-toes around the violent origins of Israel. The second thing to note is that Krikler talks about how the historical process "delivered into existence a nation" whose people are "democratically bound up with the present Israeli state" (324), thereby subtly positing that Zionism's exclusionary logic can be reconciled with democracy. Rouhana and Sabbagh-Khoury's (2015) study on 'settler-colonial citizenship' challenges Krikler's assumption that Zionism is compatible with democracy. They write "the simple democratic idea of a state for all its citizens posed fundamental challenges to Zionism and to the concept of a Jewish state, finally bringing the fundamental contradiction between being a Jewish state and claiming to be a democratic state to the surface of political discourse" (Ibid., 217). Israeli academics have tried to write off this problem of as being "a 'tension', but not a contradiction, between being Jewish and being democratic", but this work has been challenged by other academics who claim that "this is a fundamental contradiction that cannot be bridged" (217). Other Israeli academics have even tried to reconcile this issue through the notion of an 'ethnic democracy', which has been rejected by others as "a desperate, politically motivated futile academic exercise, attempting to paper over a profound and irreconcilable contradiction" (218). What this makes clear is that it is not, as liberal Zionists or apologists like Krikler argue, the third demand that existentially challenges Israel. Instead, it is the second demand calling for an end to racism against Arab-Palestinians that is truly subversive. In this regard, McMahon is right to put the focus on the second demand and not the third as rendering 'Israel proper' as a target of BDS, since it is *only the second demand that challenges Zionism's racist exclusions on principle.* The third demand only challenges Zionism through demography. It is racial equality under Zionism, and not the hysteria around land or demography, that threatens to existentially unravel the Israeli state in its Zionist form.

of ’48 Palestine is not threatened. It remains to be seen whether a proper accounting of these two images (and therefore the histories attached to them and the related conceptual and practical problems they carry) will emerge from potential negotiations around BDS, or if the former image of Palestinians as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed will take priority and occlude the other, more controversial image of Palestinians. That it would be the first image and not the second that would take priority, and not the other way around, is evident through the controversial right of return that animates this second image of Palestinians in the third BDS demand.

BDS and the Right of Return

The right of return has been said to serve as “the most obstinate stumbling block preventing the resolution of the conflict” (Peled and Rouhana 2004, 318). The Call’s third demand establishes the right of return through recourse to UN resolution 194, a ruling that Palestinian refugees understand as integral to their return claim (Albadawai 2020, 48), and asserts that every one of the seven million Palestinian refugees has a right to decide whether they want to return to their homes, have their property restituted, or otherwise receive compensation for injuries resulting from their displacement. The crux of the controversy is that the right of return can appear as a de facto endorsement of a one-state resolution to the conflict since that is the only path that appears to be compatible with the return of refugees (Jones 2019, 208). This third demand has thus helped produce and exacerbate the extreme partisanship and irreconcilable discourse around BDS since anti-BDS actors assert that a return of displaced Palestinians would eliminate Israel’s character as a Jewish state as it was envisioned by its Zionist founders.[54]

[54] Beyond BDS, there have been efforts by self-proclaimed ‘Israeli liberals’ to argue that the Palestine-Israel ‘conflict’ cannot be resolved unless the right of return is dismissed altogether (See Schwartz and Wilf 2020).

Just as these anti-BDS actors view the right of return as a breaking point, so too do Palestinian refugees generally understand their right of return as being unnegotiable. Salman Abu Sitta (1999) has done important work on the right of return for Palestinian refugees and has asserted that it is still 'sacred, legal and possible', with 'sacred' here referring to how it is beyond compromise. The strength of this desire for return has also not diminished overtime. Albadawi's (2020) local surveys on fidelity to the right of return amongst refugees demonstrates that they have "overwhelmingly reaffirmed the importance of the right of return claim", with them displaying a continued desire to return home and oppose alternatives such as compensation or resettlement (57). This is in spite of Israel's conscious policy of having established 'facts on the ground' on land conquered through the Nakba and Naksa, and Williams (2009) points to how Palestinians refuse to allow this to negate their eventual return, with "the possibility and nature of return for dispossessed and diasporic Palestinians [not being] conjured away by the production of 'facts' such as these" (95). Part of the reason that return is so important for Palestinians is that, beyond its material dimensions, Palestinians consider it to be just as much a collective right as an individual right, meaning it is critical to their vision of self-determination (Jamjoum 2011, 147-148). It is in this sense that return is "not bound specifically to individual memory or experience of expulsion" (Albadawi 2020, 45), or limited by the fact that refugees experience displacement "in uniquely personal ways" or "understand their right of return claim in the context of different life experiences" (Ibid., 57). Return instead has a uniting element to it in that it functions as "a core component of the Palestinian cause; namely, the right of self-determination which cannot be negotiated or compromised" (57). Many Palestinians therefore assert that any sustainable settlement must include a right of return (Abdulla 2016, 62).

Thus, just as some Israelis view BDS as a red line because of the inclusion of the right of return in the third demand, this demand is integral to representing displaced Palestinians who view return as inseparable from their movement for justice and self-determination. The apparent irreconcilability of these two positions points to the final tension in the Call that this section raises, and this concerns the potential trade-off that BDS is facing as a political program.

The third demand represents the interests of displaced Palestinians, since it is these actors especially that hold their right of return as being sacred. It is this third demand, however, that is also at the root of the first two tensions in the Call outlined above because it is through the inclusion of the right of return that the 'second image' of Palestinians in BDS emerges, given that it is what adds refugee and diaspora Palestinians into the equation. The first image of BDS is defined against this second image, and this first image, relative to the incendiary right of return that characterizes the second, seems benign in comparison – which is why someone like Krikler can view the first image as posing demands that are more acceptable and not "morally fraught". In other words, the first image of Palestinians in the BDS Call, one that poses them as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed, can be seen as divorceable from the second image of them as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced. This raises the issue of how BDS will deal with the first two demands being divided from, prioritized over, or used to negate, the third demand. The right of return's relationship to BDS is one haunted by the possibility of trade-offs that this iteration of the national movement will inevitably have to confront. It is important to remember that the interests of displaced Palestinians, especially in the case of refugees, being sacrificed is nothing new for the Palestinian National Movement. In fact, it has been the overriding pattern in its history.

It is here that Jones' (2019) critique of BDS as reflecting Palestinian disunity becomes truly apropos, and this description of the Call should not be easily dismissed. The question of trade-offs under BDS must be contextualized within a history of fragmentation that has typified the Palestinian body-politic and their national liberation struggles. The three tensions in the Call outlined above can be circled back to, and contextualized within, this larger problematic of fragmentation - which is a condition that was itself directly determined by the different historical experiences, or two faces, of settler colonialism experienced by Palestinians.

A Spatial World of Dispossessions and Displacements

Theorizing dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism situates fragmentation as a larger problem confronting BDS. These two faces sundered Palestinians as a historical-political entity, and this has shaped and complicated the trajectory of Palestinian national liberation since different segments of the collective have experienced dispossession and displacement in distinct ways. This has, undoubtedly, determined the short-term destines of different groups of Palestinians by fragmenting them geographically and politically in a manner that can make their immediate demands separable from one other.

The BDS Call can be read as a response to this fragmented condition and an attempt at coalition building in that it acknowledges three constituencies with overlapping but nevertheless divergent interests. The Call document states that it is endorsed by "The Palestinian political parties, unions, associations, coalitions and organizations [that] represent the three integral parts of the people of Palestine: Palestinian refugees, Palestinians under occupation and Palestinian citizens of Israel", and Barghouti (2006) regards this aspect of the Call as being a "noteworthy precedent" (54). However, the BDS Call does not so much overcome these differences as demarcate them in the three demands, which are in principle separable from one another and

therefore the ground of possible future trade-offs. It should not be taken for granted that the variegated outcomes resulting from different experiences of dispossession and displacement can be truncated to a scheme that reduces Palestinians to just three groups, nor can this inclusion of three Palestinians groups, though it is a critical advancement, be seen as resolving the prior issues posed by fragmentation.

The BDS program must grapple with how it can represent Palestinians across factions despite a Palestinians' political objectives being shaped, to an extent, by whether they were dispossessed but not displaced, displaced but not dispossessed, or both dispossessed and displaced. These distinct experiences resulted in different lived realities that muddle the formation of a common political agenda since Palestinians' immediate goals may, at times, diverge. Hence, Feldman (2019b) notes that "the significantly different circumstances in which Palestinians have lived since 1948 have made a divergence in political mobilizations inevitable" (195). This is not to say that Palestinians across factions can not or do not have common interests or that these interests are mutually exclusive - such as the right to self-determination and addressing historic injustices - but it does render the formation of a shared political program an ongoing challenge in light of this fragmented condition. Far from this being an overcomplication of this issue, the difficulties in maintaining a common agenda as a result of varying experiences of settler colonialism is, at the same time, a history of the Palestinian National Movement.

Peteet (2007) historicizes and analogizes these circumstantial differences arising from settler colonialism's two faces in her statement that the Nakba resulted in "a new spatial world [taking] shape" that was representative of a geographically fragmented Palestinian people that were either locked in or out of Palestine-Israel (627). Feldman (2019b) relatedly writes:

> the fragmentation to which Palestinians have been subjected is itself multiple. Most obvious is the territorial fragmentation. Since 1948 the Palestinian population has been dispersed, living under the authority of different states, and often unable to reach each other across these boundaries (Ibid., 198).

These circumstantial differences effect Palestinians' political possibilities in the present.

Criticisms of Edward Said's depiction of an exilic Palestinian identity falls in line with these observations. Said's (1999) *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives* is a testimony to a people he characterizes as living in exile, with the Nakba functioning as "the singular defining event in modern Palestinian history, one that has caused both the fragmentation, dispersal and destruction of Palestinian society and the formation of a new, exilic national identity" (Mattar 2014, 103). This paradigm of Saidian exile has come under fire for, amongst other things, its "idealization and universalization of exile as definitive of Palestinian experience" (Ibid., 104), something Said himself claims when describing exile as the "fundamental condition of Palestinian life" (Said in Bernard 2007, 666). This Saidian paradigm of exile is reductive precisely because it fails to appreciate the "circumstantial diversity of Palestinian lives" that has resulted from the "geographical, political, and experiential 'fragmentation' of the Palestinian collective" (Bernard 2007, 666).

Conventional discourses on Palestinian political representation have taken for granted a shared identity as the basis for Palestinian nationalism (Ibid., 666), but a paradigm of exile reflects only one type of experience and "does not account for those whose lives are defined not by their experience of displacement" (678), but instead, for example, their experience of dispossession while remaining in the Palestinian locale. Relatedly, not all displacements are the same (Peteet 2007, 633) and different experiences of displacement, such as those that indicate a refugee, exilic, or diasporic condition, complicate the categories that we use to delineate segments of displaced Palestinians. The varying ruptures from the homeland have thus shaped

"contemporary material realities" in a way that should neither be "elided or essentialized" (Bernard 2007, 681), as this produces an overly simplistic image of what it means to be Palestinian, in addition to complicating the establishment of common goals in the present. This points to the need to recognize the conditional disparities amongst the Palestinian collective throughout the world and how this necessitates a "reluctance to collapse the *different experiences of displacement and dispossession into one another*" (Ibid., 680, italics added).

Though the BDS Call is more nuanced in its depiction of a circumstantially diverse Palestinian people than Said's paradigm of exile, it too begs the question of to what extent it properly encapsulates the claims and objectives of this fragmented collective insofar as it truncates this collective into just three groups in a way that elides their many additional differences. It is undeniable that BDS is a direct response to this fragmented condition, but the question remains concerning its potential to deal with this problem in a way that previous iterations of the national movement could not. The sundering of Palestinians through settler colonialism's two faces has had deep-seated implications, as their varying experiences of one or both have rendered them a lot more heterogenous than conventional imaginaries of the Palestinian people would bely, and this poses important challenges for the BDS movement.

Fragmentation and Trade-Offs

The condition of a given group of Palestinians is connected to their encounter with settler colonialism's two faces. For the sake of simplicity here, the collective can be divided between those still in Palestine-Israel (apartheid Israel, the OPT, and Gaza) and those outside of that territory. The inter-group and intra-group fragmentation permeating these two categories is both an inevitable consequence of geographical separation and a conscious condition that has been politically facilitated, which is why Feldman (2019b) maintains that "Fragmentation of

Palestinian society and political community is both a product of concerted efforts – primarily by Israel, but also by Arab governments – and an effect of Palestinian history" (198).[55] That being said, the geographical separations arising from this history are inextricably political insofar as they were a consequence of Zionism's dispossessions and displacements. Feldman explains:

> As fundamental as this geographic separation has been, with as many consequences as it has had for Palestinian political life and organization, there have also been many policies of fragmentation within particular territories. The Israeli government, as a prime example, long sought to undermine the Palestinian subjectivity of Palestinian citizens of Israel. It governed this population as "Israeli Arabs," and within that general category as multiple minorities (Ibid., 198).

These "lines of differentiation" resulting from the geographical and political divisions imposed on Palestinians have obstructed political action and resistance (199; see Hilal 2010, 30-33).

In line with Feldman's argument on the conscious fragmentation of Palestinians, Abdulla (2016) divides Palestinians into five groups - those in the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, Palestinian citizens of 'Israel', and the diaspora[56] - and details how each of these segments has "a particular history, legal status and relationship to the Zionist settler-colonial project" (53), with Zionist settler colonialism intentionally slicing out "territorial clusters from a single geopolitical and national entity" that was historic Palestine (Ibid., 52). This project of "deliberate demographic engineering" was intended to fragment Palestinian territory and perpetuate the dominance of the foreign Jewish population (51).

There are more explicit instances of this that she points to, such as how the Oslo Accords were designed to divide people and land in the West Bank into Areas A, B, and C that are subject

[55] There is a way in which Palestinian fragmentation can be understood as an inevitable consequence of their varying experiences of settler colonialism, with their geographic separation through these variegated outcomes inexorably diversifying every facet of their daily lives.

[56] By diaspora here Abdulla primarily means refugees since she does not make a distinction between refugees and non-refugee members of the diaspora and instead seems to conflate the two in a way that elides their differences, which is common in much of the literature.

to “varying control schemes” ranging from checkpoints, settlements, segregated roads, and the apartheid wall (58). Area A is under the rule of the Palestinian Authority (PA), Area B is under coordinated administration by both the PA and Israel, and Area C is fully under Israeli civil and security control and covers about 60percent of the total area in the West Bank (Morrison 2020, 2469). This division of the West Bank into three areas serves as the most overt metaphor for fragmentation, but there are continuities between this regime of control and those used against displaced Palestinians. The separation of Palestinians in camps or spatially proximate countries makes it easy to otherize them (and separate their interests) from those in Palestine-Israel and non-refugee Palestinians. Abdulla argues that this is how “Israel governs in varying degrees a national population they separated through successive actions”, with the Palestinian people being subject to some form of Zionist settler colonialism regardless of where they are separated in the world (2016, 68) - hence why Rashed et al (2014) writes “Whilst the daily living reality for a Palestinian citizen of Israel inevitably differs from a Palestinian living in the West Bank, Gaza or the diaspora, the underlying techniques employed by the Israeli government are the same” (17).

This fragmented condition provoked a history of trade-offs that has entailed the exclusion of a given group of Palestinians for the factional gains of another. This pattern of concessions is visible in Baumgarten’s (2005) study on three manifestations of the Palestinian National Movement from 1948 to 2005, including the Movement of Arab Nationalists, which embodied the pan-Arab phase of the struggle, Fatah, which was its Palestinian nationalist variant, and Hamas, which is the religious/Islamist iteration. Baumgarten’s study concludes that in spite of the significant ideological differences between these three movements which had arisen at about 20-year intervals from each other, each had followed a similar path by “beginning with maximalist goals and progressively scaling them back, explicitly or implicitly, under the impact

of Israel's overwhelming power" (Ibid., 25). More specifically, these movements started with the goal of liberating all of historic Palestine to eventually settling for a limited Palestinian 'state' alongside Israel in the West Bank and Gaza (43). This trend that Baumgarten captures is evident in the trajectory of the original Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) as well in its forfeiture of refugee interests and neglect of Palestinians in Palestine-Israel.

When the PLO first emerged within the post-war Third-Worldism movement, it embraced an unapologetic anti-colonial agenda that shared principles and formed alliances with other anti-colonial movements worldwide (Dana 2019, 41). During this period, the PLO charter made no reference to the term 'state', and instead centered its objectives on the emancipation of Palestinians as a whole (Ibid., 41). However, after the Arab defeat in the 1967 War there was a 'statification' of PLO liberation efforts that inaugurated a series of trade-offs that sought limited statehood in exchange for the liberation of all Palestinians (41). The PLO had been forced to concede this "liberation precondition" that was originally the starting point of its revolutionary program (41), and sacrificed its longer-term vision for a state-centric pragmatism that depicted its prior anticolonial vision as "utopian, unrealistic, infantile, or adventurous" (Abdulhadi 2018, 49). Concessional gains became a norm during this period, with the PLO being "stripped of structures, functions, and characteristics typically associated with national liberation movements" (Dana 2019, 30) since it had given up the liberation precondition.

There are various negotiating processes toward the end of the century that illustrate these concessional traps suffered by the PLO, but the most glaring is the Oslo saga.[57] Oslo invented a

[57] Beyond Oslo, PLO politics have more generally been permeated by "a tension between self-determination/statehood and return [refugee rights]" since at least the twelfth Palestinian National Council held in Cairo in 1974 (Schulz 2003, 228). The peace process of the 1990s had "accentuated this tension" and revealed the "acute crisis in legitimacy and leadership" facing the PLO in its need to address the goals of both dispossessed and displaced Palestinians (or Palestinians in the locale versus refugee and diaspora Palestinians) (Ibid., 228).

'peace process' that manipulated the Palestinian leadership into giving up the return of refugees in exchange for a "limited state-building project" on small strips of land in the West Bank and Gaza (Jamjoum 2011, 135). Whereas the Intifada that preceded Oslo took seriously the interests of refugees, this message was co-opted by the PLO leadership that sought to hijack the accomplishments of the Intifada for factional gains, with a "small clique of political leaders" that were out of touch with everyday Palestinians monopolizing decision-making power in their name (Baroud 2013, 11). Oslo was thus responsible for "[shifting] the main locus and focus of Palestinian politics to the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS), which were placed under the rule of the newly established Palestinian Authority" (Welchman et al 2021, 351). Though meant to be a form of Palestinian self-government, the PA is overwhelmingly reliant on international aid to operate and for Israeli approval for many of its actions (Jamjoum 2011, 135), making it a complete parody of the historic Palestinian vision of self-determination.

Massad (2006) put forth a masterful account of the trade-offs associated with the 'peace process' and how refugee and diasporic Palestinians began to be excluded from the national program as a result. He explains that prior to the invention of this peace process, "all representatives of the Palestinians inside and outside the [PLO] agreed that the varied interests of the Palestinian people were inherently compatible" (Ibid., 114). The peace process upended this:

> Following the various agreements signed with Israel by the PLO and subsequently by the Palestinian Authority (PA), the interests of the different sections of the Palestinian people effectively were separated and made incompatible if not outright contradictory (114).

This concession of refugee and diaspora rights[58] during this time departs from a history of the national movement being oriented around refugee and diasporic Palestinians.[59]

[58] Massad does an especially great job of distinguishing between refugees and the diaspora.
[59] Displaced Palestinians were deeply engaged in Palestinian nationalist politics historically (Schulz 2003, 5). In fact, for a long time "the center of Palestinian political life lay outside of Palestine", with organizations like the PLO

Even when the PLO, between 1964 and 1974, had "tilted more toward the diaspora in its program for liberation" (Massad 2006, 115), Palestinians in Israel were already marginalized, and this neglect has been part of an ongoing question relating to whether there should be a focus on liberating just the Palestinian lands occupied in 1967 or also the rest of historic Palestine that was conquered in 1948 (Abdulhadi 2018, 60; see Løvlie 2014, 103-104). Oslo forced the PLO to effectively cease representing Palestinians in Israel altogether, who had to develop their own/separate political program (Hijab 2009, 567). Given this exclusion of displaced Palestinians and Palestinians in Israel, the PLO, which would be replaced by the PA, actually only represented about one-third of Palestinians (Ibid., 567).

These concessions, which were embodied in a declaration by the Palestinian National Council in 1988, were demanded by Israel since it "only agreed to negotiate with West Bank and Gaza Palestinians in Madrid and with the PLO insofar as the latter transformed itself into the PA and ceased to represent the diaspora" (Massad 2006, 127). The core issues that had traditionally grounded the Palestinian liberation struggle, such as the status of Jerusalem, the rights of refugees, and the rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel, were completely disregarded at Oslo and other peace summits (Jamjoum 2011, 135), with Oslo making different groups of Palestinians "at odds with each other regarding their fundamental demands" (Ibid., 135-136). Massad writes:

> Israel has succeeded in destroying the political unity of the Palestinian people…Although the Palestinian people remain one spiritually, their material interests are different. The "peace process" from Madrid to the present has not only deepened the difference between these material interests, it also rendered them contradictory in an Israeli-dictated and PA-accepted zero-sum game, wherein so-called gains for native West Bank and Gaza Palestinians must be attained at the expense of real losses on the part of the refugees and the diaspora (2006, 127-128).

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organizing refugees in Lebanon to fight for their liberation (Feldman 2019b, 195). It was only after the PLO's expulsion from Lebanon in 1982 and after the Intifada that political power shifted to the WB and Gaza (Ibid., 195).

This lack of representation for Palestinians across factions during the 'peace process' was one of the primary drivers behind the al-Aqsa Intifada (Schulz 2003, 228).

An Inevitable Negotiation?

The discussion of fragmentation in this thesis is not meant to reinforce or perpetuate the colonial divisions undergirding this condition by attributing them more significance than they warrant. That being said, fragmentation is clearly pressing for a discussion of BDS's prospects. The issues stemming from fragmentation clarify how "Historically, the Palestinian liberation movement was split down the middle regarding the question of its priorities" (Abdulhadi 2018, 63). It is clear that BDS is a direct response to this fragmented condition, but the tensions in its program outlined in the previous part of this thesis illustrate that these issues will not easily disappear.

Different interpretations of historic injustice under BDS point to a fragmented collective that has had different experiences of Zionist settler colonialism, and therefore different relations to the past, which means that normative frameworks for historic redress are complicated by Palestinian fragmentation. The question of what is being demanded by Israel in terms of the end goals of the movement reveals how this fragmented collective has different immediate interests, thereby making it unclear what the post-BDS scenario looks like in terms of the ontological form of the future Israeli and/or Palestinian state (or the binational state that would subsume the two). The dilemmas arising from the right of return clarify how refugees are fragmented from Palestinians that remained in Palestine-Israel and carry a distinct set of demands that render the movement unacceptable for some people. It also makes refugees susceptible to a potential trade-off facing BDS if its advocates do not remain firm on the tripartite demands in the Call. The tensions in the Call outlined in this thesis thus point to the underlying issue of fragmentation. The two images of Palestinians, one as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed and the

other as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced, betray a fragmented collective that was transformed through settler colonialism's two faces.

That BDS is facing similar dilemmas as those that confronted previous iterations of the national movement, and that these dilemmas have so far significantly impacted the discourse around BDS as well as its successes and failures, shows that it is not exempt from this history of fragmentation - meaning it cannot be taken for granted that it moves beyond the issues posed by fragmentation despite the potential the movement presents in opening up a new political space for Palestinians that allows them to organize across borders and "restart the process of reclaiming their national movement" (Jamjoum 2011, 145). Jamjoum maintains that despite BDS's many successes, "the central challenge facing the BDS campaign today is the challenge facing Palestinians in general, namely the absence of a Palestinian national movement that unites all sectors and political tendencies within our fragmented society" (Ibid., 145).

Though not writing in the context of BDS, Dajani (2006) understood fragmentation as pointing to inevitable future negotiations with Israel[60], and attributes this to how the goals of Palestinians are "as disparate as the Palestinian population is dispersed", meaning that the pursuit of these goals present costs that "would not be borne equally by all segments of the Palestinian population" (40-41). A fair allocation of the costs of negotiating with Israel would require Palestinians to acknowledge that "the identity and interests of Palestinians are plural" since "Palestinian refugees in the camps of Lebanon and in the suburbs of Washington, DC, are not similarly situated, even if they all champion the right of return" (Ibid., 41). He writes:

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[60] What Dajani describes as "the ultimate necessity of negotiations" is a consequence of Israel's political and military might in conjunction with the impotence of mechanisms for enforcing international law, meaning Israel is unlikely to make concessions to Palestinians without rounds of negotiations that challenge their demands (2006, 40).

> We must respond to this reality by not ignoring the differences in our circumstances, but by developing a forum within which different interests can be openly debated, reconciled when possible, and prioritized when necessary (41).

This raises crucial questions for the BDS movement: what capacity or potential does BDS have to grapple with fragmentation in ways that previous iterations of the national movement could not? How can it succeed where these prior movements failed? Like previous iterations of the national movement, will the BDS program be undermined by fragmentation?

BDS and the Palestinian Diaspora

To speak of dispossession and displacement as 'two faces' of settler colonialism is not to overlook the many complexions that can animate these two faces. While displacement is one of settler colonialism's faces, it substantively results in a variety of outcomes ranging from a refugee, exilic, or diasporic condition (or other categories of displacement outlined in the literature review). The second image of Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced is used in this section to highlight a lacuna in the BDS program in its lack of clarity in its representation of diaspora Palestinians. The narrative that BDS represents and unifies all Palestinian groups is problematized by this omission of the diaspora in the BDS Call.

Writings on BDS have taken for granted that the movement, at least in terms of how its mandate is articulated in the Call, represents all Palestinians. Though BDS makes critical progress in centering Palestinian refugees and Palestinians in Israel in light of how these two groups have been marginalized historically, the Call nevertheless fails to explicitly mention the diaspora.[61] Some writings on BDS indirectly recognize this when listing the parties represented:

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[61] That being said, as argued earlier the third demand can be viewed as specifically geared to appeal to both the diaspora and refugee populations and highlight their interests, given the invocation of a general right of return grounded in UN Resolution 194 that implicates all displaced Palestinians, regardless of whether they are refugees or now in the diaspora.

> By making the political demands of *Palestinian refugees in exile* outside of historic Palestine, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza all BDS demands, the movement brings the three primary segments of the Palestinian population into the same political frame (Feldman 2019b, 194, italics added).

McMahon (2014, 67), Ziadah (2015, 95), Maira (2018, 16), and Bueckert (2020, 195) similarly only distinguish refugees amongst displaced Palestinians under BDS and overlook the diaspora. Given that these writings do not consider or address this omission of a core segment of the collective, these conclusions run the danger of putting forth an overly-optimistic account of BDS's representativeness of Palestinians.

To an extent these omissions can be attributed to, and are indicative of, the conceptual ambiguities that have characterized literatures on refugees and diasporas more generally. This makes writings on which displaced parties BDS represents at times unclear, or it otherwise contributes to how it is taken for granted that BDS represents the diaspora since many writings on BDS simply conflate the terms diaspora, refugee, and exile altogether. The following passages, though they put forth more inclusive wording for Palestinians outside of Palestine-Israel than the references in the previous paragraph, illustrate this lack of clarity.

Hijab (2009) writes that BDS covers "the aspirations of the entire Palestinian people, whether they are living under occupation, *in exile*, or in Israel" (569, italics added). This is different from the wording of the Call that makes no mention of the word 'exile'. Chalcraft (2019) states "The idea is that boycotters are those who support…the right of return (referring above all to the Palestinians in the diaspora) (298). Here Chalcraft associates the Call's inclusion of the right of return with a call for the return of the 'diaspora' writ large, despite the Call making no mention of the term 'diaspora' aside from one of the many signatories being "Shaml – Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Center, Ramallah". Finally, Morrison (2015) does distinguish between the diaspora and refugees, though for her 'refugee' seems to be a subset of the overall

diaspora population: "the call for BDS represents the three main segments of the Palestinian population around the world – those living in the occupied territories, Palestinians in the diaspora (including refugees), and Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel" (99). The problem is, once again, that the Call makes no mention of 'diaspora', and writings on BDS have focused on the third demand's inclusion of the right of return in the context of refugees, not the diaspora.[62]

There is a way in which each of these examples can simply be instances of imprecise wording, but these authors, when mentioning exilic and diasporic Palestinians, overlook that the Call's third demand specifically states that it seeks to respect, protect, and promote "the rights of Palestinian *refugees* to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194" (italics added), meaning that even if these authors are being considerate of diasporic Palestinians, this is not supported by the Call itself that foregrounds refugee rights specifically and not those of the diaspora more generally. Perhaps the most inclusive and nuanced expression of which parties BDS *should* represent is the following excerpt from Allen (2018):

> The movement's focus on three main forms of oppression affecting Palestinians – the unfulfilled right of return, military occupation, and discrimination against Palestinian citizens of Israel (Morrison (2015, 246) is an intersectional approach. As such, it goes against what has become the Palestinian Authority's (PA) narrower focus on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which sidelined *Palestinian refugees* and Palestinians in Israel and in *the diaspora*. In contrast to the PA's approach, BDS discourse brings this range of Palestinian identity groups into a single framework of analysis and activism (123, italics added).

[62] Morrison writes afterwards that "The BDS call is inclusive in terms of the Palestinians it represents and their corresponding demands – that Israel end the occupation, end discrimination against Palestinian citizens in Israel, and respect the Palestinian right of return" (99), thereby associating her use of "Palestinians in the diaspora (including refugees)" with a right of return writ large, which is commendable since this would mean that diaspora Palestinians would have injustices against them redressed. And yet, in the next sentence she follows a common pattern in the literature by dividing Palestinians into 'three segments' (99), with the issue being that she truncates what should be at least four categories into three by reducing the diaspora and refugees into a single segment of the collective despite their substantive differences.

For Allen's analysis here to be true, there needs to be a clarification of how diaspora Palestinians figure into the BDS demands. 'Diaspora', 'refugee', and 'exile' remain very different categories in studies of displacement, and these authors' lack of clarity in referring to these terms further reinforces the conceptual confusion that has characterized literatures on displaced peoples.

The diaspora's omission is significant for BDS in the context of fragmentation, and it is more generally important for any Palestinian campaign for justice and self-determination.

It is known that diaspora Palestinians play a pivotal role in local BDS campaigns around the world, but there needs to be a clarification of how they weigh into the BDS demands. Having been scattered from Palestine to the ends of the earth, they are often overlooked not only in nationalist politics but also as subjects of academic research. For a while this was due to the absence of diaspora studies. Smith (1986) observed early on how little was known about the Palestinian diaspora that ended up living outside of mandatory Palestine, and this is related to the issues outlined above since this reflected "the general tendency, until recently, to regard such people as "refugees" or as "Arabs" indistinguishable from the remainder of the population in the neighboring host countries" (90). Smith maintains that "if the full dimensions of the Palestinian problem are to be understood, all those Palestinians living outside their former homeland must be recognized as a part of the Palestinian people and as having concern for and interest in the fate and future of what was once their own country" (90). This statement remains true decades later.

Establishing redress for the diaspora is necessary. The injustices against diasporic Palestinians that were victims of forced displacements should not be dismissed because they may occupy relatively more privileged or affluent conditions than refugee Palestinians (and not all diasporic Palestinians are affluent or privileged). This responsibility for justice goes beyond the territorial crimes committed against the diaspora. The two images of Palestinians reveal various

dimensions through which the *meaning* of the injustice that occurred can be understood. For example, a dispossession framework can overlook the structurally different ways in which Palestinians experienced and continue to experience settler colonial injustice outside of Palestine-Israel. Conversely, a narrative on Palestinians as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced can place too much emphasis on a discourse of territoriality, with the issue being that under this narrative it is difficult to account for other injustices such as moral damages, which entail "emotional injury, mental suffering, injury to reputation" and so on (Falk 2006, 483), each of which are considerations that move beyond "the limited concern with land to the broader concern with justice" (Bamyeh 2003, 835). Zionist injustices against Palestinians cannot be temporally circumscribed to the past, nor can they be limited to the prism of territoriality, since these settler colonial structures continue to cause injury (or qualify as cases of enduring injustice that pattern diasporic Palestinians' lives today (see Spinner-Halev 2007) and move beyond injustices that can be strictly limited to the historic loss of land.[63]

A failure to represent the diaspora under BDS is also in line with the fragmentation of Palestinians imposed by Zionist settler colonialism. The Palestinian pursuit of liberation through the statehood paradigm has been problematic since it accounts for "only one dimension of Zionist history and practice, addresses the circumstances of only one Palestinian constituency amongst several. This being the case, approaching a conflict that may require a suite of solutions from a perspective that effectively limits the outcome to one of two – either a "one-state" or a "two-state" solution – is not productive" (Veracini 2013b, 27). The very discourse of a one or

[63] This enters the discussion into the realm of non-material means for redressing injustices that can supplement the return of land, property, and possessions to Palestinians (See Samy 2010).

two state resolution is problematic in this regard since it takes for granted a traditional liberation paradigm requiring “the transition from colonial subjugation to decolonization”, and this

> neglects settler colonialism as a social formation that is distinct from (and indeed largely antithetical to) colonialism. It further fails to understand Zionism as a settler colonial movement, and is unable to address the circumstances either of *Diaspora Palestinians* (those who left the newly created state of Israel in 1947-48) or “Israeli Arabs” (Palestinians who did not leave what is today Israel proper, also known as Palestinian citizens of Israel) (Ibid., 27, italics added).

The literal diaspora’s omission under BDS can thus reify the settler colonial fragmentation of Palestinians by circumscribing the injustices to just Palestine-Israel or at best the spatially proximate countries where refugees are. Diasporic Palestinians require this political space to be expanded beyond the MENA region. This is, after all, more in line with the settler colonial framework that the movement invokes: “the framework of settler colonialism/anticolonial resistance allows for the inclusion of all Palestinians in the liberation movement, whether they reside in the West Bank and Gaza, the 1948 areas, or in the *refugee* camps in the surrounding Arab countries and *throughout the Palestinian diaspora*” (Abdulhadi 2018, 60, italics added).

Despite the Call’s indispensable improvements in its centering of Palestinians refugees and Palestinians in Israel, its omission of the diaspora undermines the claim that BDS represents all Palestinians. Writings on BDS, or key persons involved in the movement, should reassess or rearticulate the role of diasporic Palestinians in BDS’s program, otherwise injuries against them will remain unaddressed. Even if BDS does not advocate for their literal return, which in all likelihood it will not because this might overbear the BDS demands (keep in mind that the return of refugees alone is so controversial), it still needs to be determined if or how the diaspora weighs into these demands. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to put forth an account of what a coherent set of demands on the part of the diaspora would be, but measures addressing and acknowledging racist crimes against them and contemporary legacies of displacement, insofar as

they are discernable, would seem to be obvious starting points. This does not always have to mean material compensation, but some type of redress is absolutely necessary.

Reconciling Two Images of Palestinians: BDS and the Reconstitution of Palestinian Identity

This thesis has repeatedly referred to the 'sundering' of Palestinians through their encounters with Zionist settler colonialism. This specific term was used to describe the splitting apart of the Palestinian collective not only because it stresses the intentionality driving these dispossessions and displacements, but because it also accentuates how these acts of sundering were *momentous* events for Palestinians, i.e. they were of great significance in their bearing on the diverse futures they produced. Whether it was through the Nakba, Naksa, or other episodes in which Zionism's ethos was more overtly manifested in its drive to eliminate the native, Palestinians share a commonality in having encountered Zionist settler colonialism. This is different from saying that Palestinians have had the same experience of it or that they have the same set of relations to past events. This final section gestures toward possible ways in which the two images of Palestinians put forth in this thesis (and thus the corresponding experiential differences attached to them) can be harmonized. It will do this by re-evaluating fragmentation in the context of BDS in light of the radical anticolonial nationalist program the movement summons against this condition.

The emphasis under BDS on the interests of three separate and "integral" parts of the Palestinian people reflects a cognizance of how fragmentation has served as a grave fetter for historic self-determination efforts. Verily, many of the writings on BDS that were listed in the literature review draw attention and praise to its alleged unification of the Palestinian collective. Feldman (2019b) posits that the implications of BDS go beyond the claims it makes regarding Palestinian rights, arguing that "BDS, as both a Palestinian and a global project, also reframes Palestine as a political space" (194). By calling for international solidarity with Palestinians, by

elucidating the global corporate, governmental, and individual connections that support Israeli settler colonialism, and by pointing to the intersections of the Palestinian struggle with other oppressed groups around the world, BDS expands Palestine as a political space by subverting the discourse of exceptionalism that has traditionally precluded meaningful resistance (Ibid., 195). This recenters the locus of concern from the West Bank and Gaza to the whole of the Palestinian collective. Bakan and Abu-Laban (2009) similarly praise BDS in this regard for the "unity of purpose" it represents after "decades of disappointment and fragmentation" (48).

The idea here is that surmounting a fragmented condition requires some form of unification, or putting back together again, of the sundered Palestinian collective in a way that moves beyond the historic and contemporary divisions thrust upon them. That being said, any narrative on the unity of a colonized or national people struggling for self-determination has to be situated within a concatenation of postcolonial failure – one that has often proven such narratives to be patterned by overly-romantic assumptions and/or tragically flawed shortcomings. Writings on BDS as unifying Palestinians can be revisited in light of this long-standing impasse tormenting postcolonial struggles in their inability to enact a genuinely emancipatory politics. BDS's potential can be better appreciated when situated within this discourse.

BDS is relevant for the history of postcolonial studies (and postcolonialism's failures) since the question of Palestine has been inextricably connected to both the development (via Edward Said) and complication (the coexistence of colonial and postcolonial formations in Palestine, the belatedness of the colonial process in Palestine) of the postcolonial paradigm. Birla (2010) poses the following question against an impasse in postcolonial studies whereby its criticisms tend to be reduced to an essentialist nativism or identity politics: "How can we write a history of colonialism that does not presuppose a constant, undifferentiated and/or homogenous

postcolonial victim, while still accounting for the violent transformations and the effectivity of colonialism?" (89). BDS, as an 'Indigenous' Palestinian movement that is at the same time a profoundly historical product that spawned through a genealogy of anticolonial struggle in Palestine[64], offers such an alternative. The BDS Call contains an implicit history of colonialism in Palestine through reference to the Nakba and its legacies, accounts for the transformations and effectivity of colonialism by pointing to how Palestinians have different relations to the past through settler colonialism's two faces, and rejects a constant and undifferentiated/homogenous postcolonial victim by presenting two images of Palestinians in the Call as an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed *and* as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced.

Contextualizing BDS within this story of postcolonial failure raises thought-provoking questions on the strategy of the movement. BDS's focus on 'context-sensitivity' does not only apply to how campaigns in different parts of the world must be attentive to local conditions and how goals should change depending on this. This context-sensitivity also applies to how different groups of Palestinians live under different conditions that render their immediate objectives divergent, though being divergent does not make them incompatible. This points to how the 'Palestinianness' that the movement invokes is not an essential and timeless one that existed prior to Zionist settler colonialism[65] – a Palestinianness that would be irretrievable anyways and one that likely never existed to being with – but instead puts forth a view of the Palestinian anti-colonial subject that is informed by how Palestinians, as a general historical-political entity, have

[64] See Takriti (2019) for BDS as being the direct product of a vast history of anti-colonial struggle in Palestine.
[65] Kurzwelly et al (2020) clarify how various forms of essentialism have been used as mobilizing tools in colonial and postcolonial contexts, with anticolonial movements "systematically [using] essentialism and reductionist representations of the social world" (66) as part of their politics. This speaks to how essentialist discourses do not only proliferate as tools of domination by colonizers against their colonized subjects, but have also been popularly instrumentalized for "counter-hegemonic ends" (Ibid., 77). The risk with this strategy is that those who adopt an essentialist identity when articulating their liberation program can "[play] into the hands of those whose essentialism is more powerful than their own" (Eide 2010, 76), i.e. the colonial or neocolonial power.

been transformed through their sundering by settler colonialism's two faces. Whereas the former route would inaugurate a Palestinian identity that occludes the substantive differences permeating the collective, thereby perpetuating its susceptibility to the traps associated with a fragmented condition, BDS's novelty lies in its presentation of a heterogenous but coherent Palestinian collective that is bound up in a radical anticolonial nationalist program – one that is informed not by an eliding of differences, but through a recognition of commonality across differences in the form of *solidarity*.

Bruyneel et al (2019) pose the question "How does BDS imagine, challenge, and re-frame political theory's dismissal of radical, emancipatory politics?" (450) and point to how the answer may lie in BDS as a novel form of revolutionary praxis. Their reflection is grounded in a distinction between strategy and tactics. Beyond popular assertions that view BDS as a new tactic in Palestinians' 73-year-long national liberation struggle, they observe that "BDS may in fact be a new strategy as well" (Ibid., 450):

> We are thinking, here, of Article 19 of Fatah's charter, which declares that "armed struggle is a strategy not a tactic" (Fatah, 1964). The point of the distinction would seem to be that, while a tactic is a tool that can be picked up or set down at will and evaluated only instrumentally, a strategy is essentially implicated in the project one is pursuing. Tactics can change, but a strategy can be surrendered only if the whole project is surrendered as well. And, conversely, the project is contained in the strategy (450).

The centering of different "integral" parts of the Palestinian people in the BDS program departs from a pattern of fragmentation in that the underlying solidarity of the Palestinian people, despite their acknowledged circumstantial differences, is at the essence of the project BDS is putting forth, and, as Bruyneel at al claim above, "the project is contained in the strategy", meaning that BDS's solidarity-as-strategy encodes different parts of the Palestinian collective as categorically inseparable from the political project being put forth. Each of the integral parts of the Palestinians people are "implicated in the project [being pursued]", and so the abandonment of a

given group of Palestinians (for the purpose of trade-offs/concessions) is indicative of how "a strategy can be surrendered only if the whole project is surrendered as well".

This solidarity-as-strategy approach is predicated on a view of Palestinians as circumstantially divergent. This is in-line with a post-Saidian paradigm of exile (which responds to the Saidian paradigm of exile mentioned earlier) in that it moves beyond essentializing or monolithic perceptions of Palestinian identity and instead accentuates "the disparities in the living conditions of various groups of Palestinians" (Matter 2014, 104). An acknowledgement of the nuances in Palestinians' lived experiences allows for the establishment of "a Palestinian unity based not on a romantic or nostalgic nationalism, but on a sharpened recognition of particularly, on cooperation across difference" (Ibid., 104). This post-Saidian notion of exile maintains the Nakba (or Naksa) as a fountainhead for originating the varying iterations of dispossession and displacement experienced by Palestinians, and this historical consciousness connects Palestinians across segments by producing "a patchwork of Palestinian identity from the strands of disparate exilic experiences" (108). Bernard (2007) writes:

> Here 'we' refers to a people who are joined *not by their material circumstances*, but by the fact that each of them has had to 'adapt – even though with difficulty – to the dictated reality' (p. 140; p. 168), whatever that may be, which has been imposed upon them by the Israeli government. Thus, it is their *total subjection to Israeli policy,* not a particular way of looking at the world, that connects the members of Barghouti's[66] Palestinian nation. This conceptualization of Palestinian identity puts forth a Palestinian nationalism based on a coalitional, rather than identitarian, politics (681, italics added).

BDS encodes a coalitional nationalism in its strategy of "determining its components in accordance with the *specific nature of the Palestinian question"* (Al-Azza 2013, 73-74, italics added), which reflects "the desire of the Palestinian people to be viewed as one community, albeit *affected differently* by the Israeli regime" (Jamjoum 2011, 140, italics added). In this

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[66] Bernard is referencing Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti here, not BDS co-founder Omar Barghouti.

regard, Feldman's (2019b) insight on BDS as reframing Palestine as a political space can also be interpreted as BDS fundamentally reframing Palestinian identity beyond romantic or essentialist channels towards a more nuanced accounting of what it means to be Palestinian.

This thesis has problematized the narrative that BDS surmounts fragmentation in a way that prior iterations of the national movement could not (especially in its omission of the diaspora), but the openings that BDS presents, as traced in this section, point to possibilities for the movement to productively respond to this dilemma while at the same time posing a radical challenge to our political imaginations.

Conclusion

This thesis critically analyzed the BDS movement by interpreting 'two images of Palestinians' in the BDS Call as a) an Indigenous people that have been dispossessed and b) as a refugee or diasporic people that have been displaced. I argue that these two images are the product of two faces of settler colonialism that the Palestinian collective have been subjected to in the form of dispossession and displacement. Theorizing dispossession and displacement as two faces of settler colonialism clarifies the variegated experiences of Palestinians through their diverse encounters with the Zionist settler colonial project. Some were dispossessed in their homeland, others were displaced from their homeland, and others lived through an assemblage of both processes. These processes gave rise to different lived experiences for Palestinians historically and contemporarily, and this contextualizes and helps to explain the perennial issue of fragmentation within their national movements, including the BDS movement.

This thesis pursued three lines of argument by interpreting the BDS Call through 'two images of Palestinians', and they each served a distinct purpose. The first gave order to three

tensions running through the movement's demands – including its position on historic injustice, what is being demanded of Israel, and its inclusion of the right of return -, with the goal being to analytically read the call and clarify debates permeating discourse on BDS. The second offered a critical reading of the Call by identifying its omission of the Palestinian diaspora, with the danger being that this perpetuates the settler colonial basis for the diaspora's fragmentation from the rest of the collective – with all the exclusions and unaddressed injuries that this implies. The third offered a strategic reading of the Call by demonstrating how BDS is informed by and responsive to Palestinian fragmentation, and argued that this approach to BDS reveals the movement's radical potential.

The 'conflict' in Palestine-Israel erupted again in May 2021 when Israeli authorities continued their long-standing campaign to dispossess Palestinian families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem. Despite attempts to portray this flare-up in Sheikh Jarrah as an isolated incident, for Palestinians this recent episode is "simply a microcosm of life in Jerusalem" and more generally "symbolises the continued ethnic cleansing" of Palestinian lands and homes (Garbett 2021). The injustices in Sheikh Jarrah were accompanied by the Israeli police provocatively storming Masjid Al-Aqsa (the third-holiest site in the Islamic tradition) during the most sacred nights of Ramadan – a violation equivalent to someone launching an attack on the Vatican on Christmas Eve – and Zionist settlers chanting genocidal slogans while marching through occupied Palestinian neighborhoods. Palestinian resistance against these encroachments ignited violence throughout the whole of Palestine-Israel. By the end of the approximately two-week confrontation on May 21, at least 245 Palestinians, including 63 children, were killed by the Israeli Defense Forces in a brutal military campaign launched in Gaza, at least 29 were killed in the occupied West-Bank, thousands of protestors were injured

and/or detained (OCHA 2021), Palestinians in Israel were lynched (MEE 2021), and about 72,000 Palestinians ended up displaced (Lazaroff 2021). Despite a cease-fire being signed, the evictions in Sheikh Jarrah have continued in the months that followed (Aljazeera 2021), on top of renewed dispossession in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Silwan (Reguly 2021) and fresh attacks on Gaza by the new Israeli government (Kingsley et al 2021).

The dispossessions in Sheikh Jarrah were justified through the long-standing Israeli settler narrative of 'making the desert bloom' – a discourse that otherizes Palestinians as backwards and endorsers of terrorism, juxtaposed to Israel's "modernising prowess" and "adherence to Western values" (Falk 2021). According to Richard Falk, the former UN Special Rapporteur on human rights in the OPT, these recent evictions in Sheikh Jarrah "amounted to a metaphoric re-enactment of that massive crime of expulsion accompanying the birth of Israel in 1948" (Ibid.), or, in other words, it was a structured campaign in accordance with the logic of Zionist settler colonialism dating back to the Nakba. A report by Amnesty International in response to this recent Israeli campaign to sunder Sheikh Jarrah residents from their homes declared that "Palestinians' experience of systemic discrimination*, dispossession and displacement is* at the root of the violations we see today" (2021, italics added).

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Appendix

The Palestinian Civil Society Call for BDS (English) (July 9, 2005):

One year after the historic Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) which found Israel's Wall built on occupied Palestinian territory to be illegal; Israel continues its construction of the colonial Wall with total disregard to the Court's decision. Thirty eight years into Israel's occupation of the Palestinian West Bank (including East Jerusalem), Gaza Strip and the Syrian Golan Heights, Israel continues to expand Jewish colonies. It has unilaterally annexed occupied East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and is now de facto annexing large parts of the West Bank by means of the Wall. Israel is also preparing - in the shadow of its planned redeployment from the Gaza Strip - to build and expand colonies in the West Bank. Fifty seven years after the state of Israel was built mainly on land ethnically cleansed of its Palestinian owners, a majority of Palestinians are refugees, most of whom are stateless. Moreover, Israel's entrenched system of racial discrimination against its own Arab-Palestinian citizens remains intact.

In light of Israel's persistent violations of international law; and

Given that, since 1948, hundreds of UN resolutions have condemned Israel's colonial and discriminatory policies as illegal and called for immediate, adequate and effective remedies; and

Given that all forms of international intervention and peace-making have until now failed to convince or force Israel to comply with humanitarian law, to respect fundamental human rights and to end its occupation and oppression of the people of Palestine; and

In view of the fact that people of conscience in the international community have historically shouldered the moral responsibility to fight injustice, as exemplified in the struggle to abolish apartheid in South Africa through diverse forms of boycott, divestment and sanctions; and Inspired by the struggle of South Africans against apartheid and in the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression;

We, representatives of Palestinian civil society, call upon international civil society organizations and people of conscience all over the world to impose broad boycotts and implement divestment initiatives against Israel similar to those applied to South Africa in the apartheid era. We appeal to you to pressure your respective states to impose embargoes and sanctions against Israel. We also invite conscientious Israelis to support this Call, for the sake of justice and genuine peace.

These non-violent punitive measures should be maintained until Israel meets its obligation to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law by:

1. Ending its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands and dismantling the Wall

2. Recognizing the fundamental rights of the Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and

3. Respecting, protecting and promoting the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN resolution 194.

Endorsed by:

The Palestinian political parties, unions, associations, coalitions and organizations below represent the three integral parts of the people of Palestine: Palestinian refugees, Palestinians under occupation and Palestinian citizens of Israel.

Unions, Associations, Campaigns:

Council of National and Islamic Forces in Palestine (Coordinating body for the major political parties in the Occupied Palestinian Territory) • Palestinian Independent Commission for Citizen's Rights (PICCR)

Union of Arab Community Based Associations (ITTIJAH), Haifa

Forum of Palestinian NGOs in Lebanon

Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions (PGFTU)

General Union of Palestinian Women (GUPW)

General Union of Palestinian Teachers (GUPT)

Federation of Unions of Palestinian Universities' Professors and Employees

Consortium of Professional Associations

Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees (UPMRC)

Health Work Committees – West Bank

Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)

Union of Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC)

Union of Health Work Committees – Gaza (UHWC)

Union of Palestinian Farmers

Occupied Palestine and Syrian Golan Heights Advocacy Initiative (OPGAI)

General Union of Disabled Palestinians

Palestinian Federation of Women's Action Committees (PFWAC)

Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (PACBI)

Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign

Union of Teachers of Private Schools

Union of Women's Work Committees, Tulkarem (UWWC)

Dentists' Association – Jerusalem Center

Palestinian Engineers Association

Lawyers' Association

Network for the Eradication of Illiteracy and Adult Education, Ramallah

Coordinating Committee of Rehabilitation Centers – West Bank

Coalition of Lebanese Civil Society Organizations (150 organizations)

Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), Network of Student-based Canadian University Associations

Refugee Rights Associations/Organizations:

Al-Ard Committees for the Defense of the Right of return, Syria

Al-Awda Charitable Society, Beit Jala

Al Awda - Palestine Right-to-Return Coalition, U.S.A

Al-Awda Toronto

Aidun Group – Lebanon

Aidun Group – Syria

Alrowwad Cultural and Theatre Training Center, Aida refugee camp

Association for the Defense of the Rights of the Internally Displaced (ADRID), Nazareth

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights, Bethlehem

Committee for Definite Return, Syria

Committee for the Defense of Palestinian Refugee Rights, Nablus

Consortium of the Displaced Inhabitants of Destroyed Palestinian Villages and Towns

Filastinuna – Commission for the Defense of the Right of return, Syria

Handala Center, 'Azza (Beit Jibreen) refugee camp, Bethlehem

High Committee for the Defense of the Right of return, Jordan

(including personal endorsement of 71 members of parliament, political parties and unions in Jordan)

High National Committee for the Defense of the Right of return , Ramallah

International Right of return Congress (RORC)

Jermana Youth Forum for the Defense of the Right of return, Syria

Laji Center, Aida camp, Bethlehem

Local Committee for Rehabilitation, Qalandia refugee camp, Jerusalem

Local Committee for Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Deheishe refugee camp, Bethlehem

Palestinian National Committee for the Defense of the Right of return, Syria

Palestinian Return Association, Syria

Palestinian Return Forum, Syria

Palestine Right-of-Return Coalition (Palestine, Arab host countries, Europe, North America)

Palestine Right-of-Return Confederation-Europe (Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden)

Palestinian Youth Forum for the Right of return, Syria

PLO Popular Committees – West Bank refugee camps

PLO Popular Committees – Gaza Strip refugee camps

Popular Committee – al-'Azza (Beit Jibreen) refugee camp, Bethlehem

Popular Committee – Deheishe refugee camp, Bethlehem

Shaml - Palestinian Diaspora and Refugee Center, Ramallah

Union of Women's Activity Centers – West Bank Refugee Camps

Union of Youth Activity Centers – Palestine Refugee Camps, West Bank and Gaza

Women's Activity Center – Deheishe refugee camp, Bethlehem

Yafa Cultural Center, Balata refugee camp, Nablus

Organizations:

Abna' al-Balad Society, Nablus

Addameer Center for Human Rights, Gaza

Addameer Prisoners' Support and Human Rights Association, Ramallah

Alanqa' Cultural Association, Hebron

Al-Awda Palestinian Folklore Society, Hebron

Al-Doha Children's Cultural Center, Bethlehem

Al-Huda Islamic Center, Bethlehem

Al-Jeel al-Jadid Society, Haifa

Al-Karameh Cultural Society, Um al-Fahm

Al-Maghazi Cultural Center, Gaza

Al-Marsad Al-Arabi, occupied Syrian Golan Heights

Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights, Gaza

Al-Nahda Cultural Forum, Hebron

Al-Taghrid Society for Culture and Arts, Gaza

Alternative Tourism Group, Beit Sahour (ATG)

Al-Wafa' Charitable Society, Gaza

Applied Research Institute Jerusalem (ARIJ)

Arab Association for Human Rights, Nazareth (HRA)

Arab Center for Agricultural Development (ACAD)

Arab Center for Agricultural Development-Gaza

Arab Educational Institute – Open Windows (affiliated with Pax Christie International)

Arab Orthodox Charitable Society – Beit Sahour

Arab Orthodox Charity – Beit Jala

Arab Orthodox Club – Beit Jala

Arab Orthodox Club – Beit Sahour

Arab Students' Collective, University of Toronto

Arab Thought Forum, Jerusalem (AFT)

Association for Cultural Exchange Hebron - France

Association Najdeh, Lebanon

Authority for Environmental Quality, Jenin

Bader Society for Development and Reconstruction, Gaza

Canadian Palestine Foundation of Quebec, Montreal

Center for the Defense of Freedoms, Ramallah

Center for Science and Culture, Gaza

Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ramallah- Al-Bireh District

Child Development and Entertainment Center, Tulkarem

Committee for Popular Participation, Tulkarem

Defense for Children International-Palestine Section, Ramallah (DCI/PS)

El-Funoun Palestinian Popular Dance Troupe

Ensan Center for Democracy and Human Rights, Bethlehem

Environmental Education Center, Bethlehem

FARAH – Palestinian Center for Children, Syria

Ghassan Kanafani Society for Development, Gaza

Ghassan Kanafani Forum, Syria

Gaza Community Mental Health Program, Gaza (GCMHP)

Golan for Development, occupied Syrian Golan Heights

Halhoul Cultural Forum, Hebron

Himayeh Society for Human Rights, Um al-Fahm

Holy Land Trust – Bethlehem

Home of Saint Nicholas for Old Ages – Beit Jala

Human Rights Protection Center, Lebanon

In'ash al-Usrah Society, Ramallah

International Center of Bethlehem (Dar An-Nadweh)

Islah Charitable Society-Bethlehem

Jafra Youth Center, Syria

Jander Center, al-Azza (Beit Jibreen) refugee camp, Bethlehem

Jerusalem Center for Women, Jerusalem (JCW)

Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC)

Khalil Al Sakakini Cultural Center, Ramallah

Land Research Center, Jerusalem (LRC)

Liberated Prisoners' Society, Palestine

Local Committee for Social Development, Nablus

Local Committee for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Nablus

MA'AN TV Network, Bethlehem

Medical Aid for Palestine, Canada

MIFTAH-Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy, Ramallah

Muwatin-The Palestinian Institute for the Study of Democracy

National Forum of Martyr's Families, Palestine

Near East Council of Churches Committee for Refugee Work – Gaza Area

Network of Christian Organizations – Bethlehem (NCOB)

Palestinian Council for Justice and Peace, Jerusalem

Palestinian Counseling Center, Jerusalem (PCC)

Palestinian Democratic Youth Union, Lebanon

Palestinian Farmers' Society, Gaza

Palestinian Hydrology Group for Water and Environment Resources Development-Gaza

Palestinian Prisoners' Society-West Bank

Palestinian Society for Consumer Protection, Gaza

Palestinian University Students' Forum for Peace and Democracy, Hebron

Palestinian Women's Struggle Committees

Palestinian Working Women Society for Development (PWWSD)

Popular Art Centre, Al-Bireh

Prisoner's Friends Association – Ansar Al-Sajeen, Majd al-Krum

Public Aid Association, Gaza

Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies

Saint Afram Association – Bethlehem

Saint Vincent De Paule – Beit Jala

Senior Citizen Society – Beit Jala

Social Development Center, Nablus

Society for Self-Development, Hebron

Society for Social Work, Tulkarem

Society for Voluntary Work and Culture, Um al-Fahm

Society of Friends of Prisoners and Detainees, Um al-Fahm

Sumoud-Political Prisoners Solidarity Group, Toronto

Tamer Institute for Community Education, Ramallah

TCC – Teacher's Creativity Center, Ramallah

Wi'am Center, Bethlehem

Women's Affairs Technical Committee, Ramallah and Gaza (WATC)

Women's Studies Center, Jerusalem (WSC)

Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counseling, Jerusalem (WCLAC)

Yafa for Education and Culture, Nablus

Yazour Charitable Society, Nablus

YMCA-East Jerusalem

Youth Cooperation Forum, Hebron

YWCA-Palestine

Zakat Committee-al-Khader, Bethlehen

Zakat Committee-Deheishe camp, Bethlehem

The Palestinian Center for Rapprochement between People (PCR)

Alternative Voice in the Galilee (AVIG)