Chapter 10. The environment as a site of struggle against settler-colonisation in Palestine

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<1>Introduction

The Zionist settler-colonisation of Palestine is primarily an ecological distribution conflict (Martinez Alier, 2002) because it is focused entirely on dispossession of land, water and other environmental resources. Israel since 1948 and the military occupation of West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1967, as well as precursor Zionist colonisation under British Mandatory and Ottoman Empirical rule, have been predicated on dispossession of Palestinian resources. Unlike classical colonisation, which exploits indigenous labour for the purpose of capital accumulation in the colonising state, settler colonialism has no long-term interest in indigenous labour. On the contrary, the settler colonial process actively expels or exterminates indigenous people in the process of resource dispossession (Veracini, 2010). Palestinian resistance to settler colonisation should therefore be understood as a struggle for environmental justice.

In classical colonialism, value is extracted from the resources and labour of the colonised lands for the benefit of a colonising (usually European) country (Verancini, 2010). In such contexts, community development has often been used to integrate indigenous peoples into social, economic and political structures which serve the interests of the colonial power. By contrast, the purpose of settler-colonisation is access to land and resources by a settler population expelled from their origins, usually in Europe. The settler-colonist therefore seeks to remove and replace the indigenous population and has therefore largely not employed community development strategies. Britain, which had used community development strategies extensively elsewhere through its Colonial Office, did not do so during its Mandate of Palestine, where the policy objective was explicitly to facilitate Zionist settler aspirations rather than Palestinian economic, political or labour integration.

Palestinian popular resistance to settler-colonialism has taken a range of forms, from scholarship and legal challenge, through non-cooperation and non-violent confrontation to armed struggle and the occasional targeting of civilians In the current context of an Israeli settler state, its occupation of the West Bank, annexation of East Jerusalem and military blockade of the Gaza strip, Palestinian community development has been employed in ways that both resist and collude with Zionist settler-colonisation. The distinction between collusion and resistance is a central tension, in response to environmental justice struggles against the settler colonisation of Palestine.

<1>Environmental justice and settler colonialism

Dispossession of land and resources is at the heart of the settler colonising process. By the beginning of the 20th Century, the early Zionist colonisers in Palestine adopted a strategy of conquest of land by Jewish labour for their utopian experiments in social organisation and agricultural production, and established a range of institutions to facilitate this, including the Jewish National Fund (JNF) (1901), to obtain land exclusively for Jewish occupation (Davis and

Lehn, 1988) and the Histadrut (1920) for exclusively Jewish labour (Piterberg, 2008). As Simon demonstrates in Chapter 8, the JNF has been a means of ethnic cleansing and environmental injustice throughout its history, whilst portraying itself as an agent of environmental protection (see also Sahibzada, 2010; Davis, 2010; Sawalha et al, 2011; Benjamin et al, 2011). It contributed to the Nakba (Khalidi, 1992) and since 1948, as an arm of the Israeli state it has enforced apartheid discrimination within the Green Line, and facilitated the ethnic cleansing of Palestinian Bedouin in the Naqab / Negev desert. The Histadrut meanwhile has continued to pursue exclusionary and discriminatory labour practices whilst presenting internationally as a trade union.

Within the 1967 military occupation areas, Israeli policies in the West Bank pursue settler-colonial objectives, preventing farmers from reaching their land, justifying and legitimising barriers, evictions and confiscations. Access is blocked in the name of military orders, through selective confiscations, denial of permits, through classifying land as having natural or strategic value or through straightforward violent intimidation. Agricultural land is contaminated with raw sewage from settlements or the leachate of unregulated waste dumps. Untended land is regarded as abandoned and confiscated by the occupying State. Lack of regulation leads to pollution from Palestinian waste recycling (Applied Research Institute Jerusalem, 2012), construction (Gharib, 2013) and industrial development. Thus, through a range of mechanisms, Israel is progressively dispossessing Palestinians of their resources (al-Butmeh et al, 2013).

In Gaza, where 70% of the population are refugees, the occupation takes the form of a blockade and periodic military attack with resultant environmental injustice. Exit from, and entry to the Gaza strip is tightly controlled by the Israeli military. Access to fresh water is close to zero (UNCTAD, 2015). The southern end of the coastal aquifer on which Gaza depends is depleted to the extent that it is saline with backfill from the sea and the over-pumped Israeli side, and close to collapse. Refill of the aquifer has been blocked by the damming and abstraction of water from Wadi Gaza in Israel (Koppelman and Alshalalfeh, 2012; al-Shalalfeh et al, 2018). Most of the agricultural land is located around the periphery of the strip and farmers are regularly targeted by Israeli snipers (Safi, 2015). Israel imposes severe restrictions on the entry of agricultural materials, from fertilisers to wells. Internal movement to the West Bank and export of agricultural produce is significantly limited by time, quantity and arbitrary checks. Fishing, once a major industry in Gaza, is likewise decimated as Israel's imposed coastal exclusion zone – and regular attacks on boats within it – restricts fishing, unsustainably, to young and reproducing fish that inhabit the (contaminated) area closest to the shore.

In the summer of 2014, Israeli bombardments from the air, land and sea resulted in over 2,000 dead, mostly civilian and around half, children. Safi (2015) reports considerable additional damage to an already denuded environment, in terms of food security, air quality, damage to water infrastructure, soil degradation, chemical contamination, coastal pollution and ecological destruction. Environmental health problems are considerable and expected to increase as a result of Israeli attacks, including the use of toxic chemicals in munitions (see also BMJ, 2009; Naim et al, 2012; Garrity, 2015).

<1>Community development and anti-colonial struggle

The historical origins of community development in British colonial administration have been well documented. Mayo (1975), for example, describes the contradictory function of community development in British colonies, where it was promoted as a means to integrate colonised populations into a modern capitalist economy, democratic polity and labour discipline orientated around the interests of the colonial power in particular, and the western states in general. Based on an ideology of 'civilising' native populations, community development in British colonies was intended to improve living standards of indigenous people – preferably at their own instigation but failing which, with their participation (voluntary or otherwise) – whilst at the same time exploiting their labour and dispossessing their resources. Colonial community development policies were also designed to undermine threats from nationalist movements for independence, and later to shape movements for self-determination towards British interests post-independence, in particular to ensure that they were 'safe' from communism. Despite these manipulative intentions, community development programmes served to mobilise solidarity and collective action and in some colonial contexts made considerable contributions to anti-colonial struggles (Mayo, 2008).

The colonial occupation of Palestine was unusual in several respects. Successively colonised by British and Zionist occupiers since the Ottoman Empire, it is Zionist settler-colonisation which has shaped social relations since the nineteenth century. The British Mandate of Palestine between 1920 and 1948, whilst falling under the remit of the Colonial Office, was orientated towards Zionist, not British colonisation whilst protecting British interests. Mandates were established under the League of Nations and, although colonial, they were ostensibly designed to facilitate ultimate self-determination for the indigenous population. However, the Palestine Mandate embedded the policy of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which committed the British government to 'the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. Thus, rather than facilitating Palestinian self-determination, policies were generally orientated towards facilitating settler colonisation by Zionist Jews, mostly from Europe (Kattan, 2009). The pressures on the Colonial Office and Mandate administration in Palestine were therefore somewhat different from other colonial contexts. Policies towards Palestinian Arabs were focussed on repressing resistance to Zionist dispossession and there was little appetite for developing a Palestinian economy or encouraging Arab participation (Seikaly, 2015). European Jewish settlers imported their own models of community development such as the kibbutzim and Labour Zionism, which were orientated towards the objectives of Jewish nationalism, utopian socialism, land appropriation, constructing a settlement economy, and displacement of Arab labour. Although not operating along what would be regarded as community development principles, Palestinian welfare was somewhat dependent on the *waqf* (Muslim religious endowment) institutions well after this system had been abandoned in many other Islamic societies.

There was, however a lively popular resistance movement against Zionist colonisation and British collusion, which grew in the 1920s and in particular following the 1929 riots and subsequent repression and the 1936 general strike and Arab revolt which was ultimately crushed in 1939 (Qumsiyeh, 2011; Cronin, 2017). As Qumsiyeh has shown, popular resistance has been a continuous part of Palestinian society throughout the Zionist occupation, at times mobilising grassroots community development and at others involving more centralised structures on the basis of political expediency and possibility. This has periodically emerged into more active confrontation, such as the 1936-39 Arab revolt, and the intifadas of 1987-93 and 2000-02.

During the first intifada, considerable numbers of Palestinians found themselves political prisoners in Israeli gaols and this led to a structure of self-organised popular education in the prisons (Rosenfeld, 2011) which had a combined impact of strengthening the political organisation of the movement but ingraining a hierarchical structure somewhat divorced from community struggles. Some prisoners were released as part of the Oslo accords, and elements of this structure transferred to the wider struggle, which potentially enabled a more focussed, top-down organisation required for the armed uprising of the second intifada. After this was defeated in 2002, and the construction of the separation wall increased the confiscation of land, resistance became more grassroots and community led (Zwahre and Scandrett, 2014), mobilising the popular struggle committees.

In Palestine today, there is another resurgence in popular resistance, employing principles of community development and nonviolent confrontation as evidenced across the West Bank (the Bab al-Shams camp against the E1 extension of Jerusalem in 2013), Israel (Day of Rage against the Prawer Plan in 2013 (H, 2013)) and Gaza (March of Return in 2018 (Baroud, 2018)).

<1>Community development as popular struggle

In Palestine, community development cannot be separated from popular resistance to the occupation which has been occurring since the early Zionist colonisation. As Qumsiyeh (2011) defines it, popular resistance involves six components:

> Popular resistance in Palestine is a movement of direct action intended to accomplish what other similar movements have done before:
> - pressuring opponents to understand the injustice that they engage in.
> - weakening the grip of opponents on power.
> - strengthening the community, including forms of empowerment and steadfastness (*sumud* in Arabic).
> - bolstering the ability to withstand injustice and do something about it.
> - building self-sufficiency and improving standards of living.
> - achieving justice, including the right to return and self-determination. (Qumsiyeh, 2011: 30)

Just as community development under conditions of European colonisation was employed for the purposes of the colonisers and the colonised, so under Zionist settler colonisation, Palestinian community development can become part of the popular resistance or for normalising the occupation

<2>Al Ma'sara community centre

Al Ma'sara is a village in the Bethlehem Governorate with a population of under 1,000, with the main industry being agriculture (Applied Research Center Jerusalem, 2014). Land therefore constitutes a major source of employment nearly all of which is in Area C and therefore under control of the Israeli authorities. The village is surrounded by settlements which are continually encroaching on land, and access to land is constrained by direct confiscation or indirectly through constant intimidation by settlers, their security guards, and the Israeli military.

Use of A'-Shmoh Community Centre has changed over the last 20 years. In 2000-2002, during the second intifada, when the Israeli army shut down most of the West Bank, schools were closed and movement was even more restricted than usual. In these extreme circumstances, the community centre became a temporary school for the children where they were taught by community volunteers.

When the intensity of violence subsided, schools reopened and the community centre focussed on language lessons for the local community: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew: useful for the increasing numbers of European, North American and Israeli solidarity activists who were coming to the West Bank. In the following years, land dispossession escalated: illegal settlement and infrastructure was constructed and the apartheid wall was erected. The A'-Shmoh community centre became a base for planning and training of nonviolent resistance by villagers and international activists and a de facto headquarters of the Al Ma'sara Popular Struggle Coordinating Committee (Zwahre and Scandrett, 2014). In coordination with popular struggle committees in other villages, resistance took many forms: marches towards stolen land; blocking settlement roads; erecting 'counter' settlements; non-cooperation with the occupying authorities, varieties of unarmed and nonviolent confrontation with the Israeli military with a view to forcing a crisis in the occupation and make it ungovernable.

As settler and soldier violence increased and such direct confrontations became more dangerous, tactics changed and the popular resistance / community development diversified further: a kindergarten, financially supported by international supporters who are provided with information when family members are arrested; a women's cooperative producing traditional embroidery for international fair trade; alternative tourism for building international solidarity; community media training, arts projects, education in human rights all take place in the context of anti-colonial resistance. Resource dispossession is being challenged through everyday Palestinian organic resistance. Living on and cultivating land right up to barriers with the illegal settlements, sometimes with international volunteers, helps to prevent confiscation. Farmers' cooperatives share the cultivation of land of those farmers denied permits or imprisoned. Rights of access are insisted, by group actions where necessary, and nonviolent non-cooperation practiced with settlers and military.

<2>Youth and community in Aida refugee camp

The Aida Youth Center is among the few community centres in the Aida Camp in Bethlehem, of 5,500 inhabitants, all refugees from the 1948 Nakba and their descendants (UNRWA, 2015). The camp is now dominated by a 20-foot high reinforced concrete wall punctuated by watch towers from which heavily armed Israeli soldiers monitor every activity. Although largely in Area A (and therefore 'security' is devolved to forces of the Palestinian Authority) incursions by Israeli soldiers into the camp are a regular occurrence, arbitrary arrests frequent, including of children who are routinely held in administrative detention, without charge, trial, evidence or justification. Community centres such as the Aida Youth Center and nearby Lajee Center are regularly raided or fired at by soldiers. Peaceful protests are met with tear gas, rubber-coated bullets and, not infrequently, live ammunition (UNRWA, 2015). There have been instances of death threats announced by megaphone from armoured vehicles and of blackmail applied to Palestinian Authority police to repress their own children. In October 2015, an unarmed child was assassinated by an Israeli sniper (Levy, 2015).

Young people are presented with a narrow range of options between suicidal violence and traumatic collapse, but still regularly achieve imaginative yet fragile alternatives in the form of nonviolent resistance. Community workers aim to facilitate this, and often demonstrate considerable creativity in combining arts, anger and defiance.

One project built a model 'train of return' for the purposes of carrying refugees back to the location of their family property, now in Israel or on annexed land. The right of return of refugees is a legal entitlement according to international law, mandated by the UN Security Council Resolution 194, yet persistently denied by Israel. The train was of course met with a violent response by Israeli soldiers. For the refugees of Aida, constructing and symbolically riding the train in the direction of the lands to which they are entitled (although many will never have seen) as far as the steel gates in the Israeli wall, was a creative way to keep hope alive whilst confronting the Israeli forces with their rights. Such creativity in resistance – and community workers who promote it – is increasingly shunned by some international funders under pressure from Israel, either directly or via their own government, who prefer to fund projects which acquiesce in the occupation.

<2>Food insecurity in Gaza

Food insecurity is an acute problem in the besieged and congested Gaza strip, with a population of two million in a narrow strip of land 25 miles long (PCBS, 2017). Following the 2014 attack, the percentage of households requiring food assistance increased from 66% to 72% (Safi, 2015). The Union of Agricultural Works Committees (UAWC) operates at a level of grassroots organisation which seeks to challenge food insecurity through economic empowerment and technical support for farmers, and supporting cooperative work for improving quality and sharing of experiences. This work combines with political mobilisation in support of food sovereignty, which requires an end to occupation.

Community workers help establish local committees of farmers and fisherfolk who organise collective responses to common concerns, most of which is dominated by the Israeli siege. The activities of UAWC include the repair and maintenance of wells and irrigation technology, largely dependent on the reuse and recycling of materials within Gaza: metals from bombed buildings are separated from rubble and smelted and re-cast in order to produce components for pumps. Where products can be imported, UAWC works with the committees to prioritise purchases of items of high capital value, such as boats, to optimise benefit for the community.

Export to Europe for high value crops such as strawberries is an opportunity for income even though export licences controlled by Israel are unreliable. UAWC negotiates for international funds to invest in agricultural development for the committees for crop production, such as poly-tunnels and hydrological management systems to maximise crop production with limited access to water. Moreover, UAWC insists that food security is only possible with food sovereignty: for Palestinians to have control of their own resources. International funds which come with strings as concessions to the occupation are rejected as counter-productive.

The agricultural works committees with which UAWC collaborates become local sites of community mobilisation against the blockade which are independent of funding, NGOs and political parties, determining their own priorities, embedding inclusionary practices and linking

social and economic development in the harshest of circumstances to political mobilisation challenging the blockade. In 2018, community organisations across the Gaza Strip mounted a sustained 'March of Return' between 'Land Day' 30 March and 'Nakba Day' 15 May, demanding their rights as refugees to return to the lands from which their families were evicted in 1948, and an end to the blockade imposed since 2007. Their unarmed protests were met with Israeli sniper fire, with 111 Palestinians killed and over 12,000 injured (Chughtai, 2018).

<2>Women's resistance

In the Palestinian community, where women are still fighting for equal civil rights, the occupation policies and practices have different implications for women and men. The combination of the occupation policies and the conservatism of a large part of the Palestinian community hinders the status of women's rights. Also, it leads to a reproduction of violence against girls and women (see for example Clark et al, 2010; Haj-Yahia and Clark, 2013) which increases the exposure of women to risks from the occupation. Because women are believed to be less targeted, their involvement in family affairs, which may involve movement inside the community, increases during tense political situations. Many women report taking over tasks from men such as buying bread and cultivating land, risking exposure to Israeli violence as well as harassment from Palestinian men. (al-Shalalfeh, unpublished data) One activist woman explained that she was able to challenge the occupying soldiers by cultivating her land when her husband was in jail to prevent it being confiscated (Zwahre, unpublished data).

Tense political situations, not only give women more domestic tasks but also increase their political participation in acts of resistance. Some inside the Palestinian women's rights movement see that such situations give a woman a leadership role which she does not take in a normal situation, but she might be able to maintain at least partially. However, exposing women to more risk is just an extension to their traditional role where they are expected to sacrifice for the greater interest of their families (al-Shalalfeh, unpublished data). The community is much less welcoming of women's representation in leadership roles, compared to delegating to them responsibilities that expose them to risks but do not increase their decision-making authority. In any case, the belief that women are less targeted than men is unfounded: sexual violence against Palestinian women has been explicitly advocated by Israeli police and Israeli political leaders (Aljazeera, 2017).

Women have been involved in the struggle for political and social independence since the 19th century, through charities at first and later politically. In 1893, women organized their first demonstration against the establishment of the first Jewish settlement in Palestine. In 1929, ten women were killed in the battle of Al Buraq. In 1929 women held their first national conference which was followed by the formation of three women's unions. During the period from 1948 and 1967, women had active involvement in charitable work, which helped relieving the bereaved families as well as equipping women professionally. In 1965, the General Union of the Palestinian Women was established as a popular feminist organisation.. The establishment of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) later in 1964 politicised the agenda of the women's movement as their role become representing the Palestinian political parties, providing social services and mobilizing women for political action. This shift in the women movement's agenda was not reflected in their representation constituting only 7.5% of the members in 1996. The work of the feminist movement was marked by the absence of a unified strategy until 1990 when

the movement held a national conference in Jerusalem and drew a plan for the future. This conference coincided with the start of the peace negotiations. However, hopes for increased women's participation faded with the construction of the Palestinian National Authority. Women's organisations tried to gain independence from the political parties. In 1996 legislative elections, 49% of the voters but only 3.7% of the candidates were women. Five women won which was a victory for the women's movement, although the governments from 1997 to 2007 had only one or two women ministers. In the popular resistance, women have linked colonialism with sexism, both based on the underestimation of women's power.

<1>Community development as normalisation

Attempts at community development which do not embed resistance to the occupation, collude with it. Any attempts to build community capacity, organise events, develop projects, identify collective learning needs, construct or renovate buildings or social enterprise activity inevitably encounter the Israeli military occupation. Community workers are faced with the choice of accommodating the occupation or confronting it. This causes particular dilemmas where funding is required. Almost all sources of funding for community development in Palestine are foreign, and many such international sources are reluctant to fund resistance to the occupation. In this context, funded community work can reify dehistoricised settler-colonial power relations and therefore promote Israeli objectives and development funding thus becomes 'political money' serving Israeli interests.

> International organizations—and many local Palestinian NGOs— project a view of development divorced from the power relations at play under Israeli settler colonialism… As a result, the dominant development framework obfuscates, and thereby strengthens, the reality of Israeli settler colonialism in the oPt [occupied Palestinian territories]. (Hanieh, 2016: 33)

There are a number of community development initiatives in both Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory which serves to normalise the occupation and ensure that development is only addressed within terms set by Israel and the Zionist settler-colonial project – as well as a Zionist environmental movement eager to collaborate with Palestinians, strictly on Israel's terms (Tal, 2002). For example the Israeli government has funded settlers of illegal Efrata colony in the West Bank to build ecological farms and agricultural schools on private Palestinian land from which Palestinians are excluded, and calling on international volunteers to work for this 'environmental' project.

In response to support in Britain for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign, the Board of Deputies of British Jews (a body which claims to represent British Jewish interests but actually promotes pro-Zionist propaganda and attacks Palestinian solidarity in Britain) published *A better way than boycotts* (Moses, 2015), which lists initiatives which advocate 'peace' without decolonisation. Under the heading of 'Supporting Peace by Bringing People Together', many of these appear to reflect community development values and practices to address collective problems whilst refusing to question the roots of the problem in the political context of settler-colonisation. The sub-text is that a solution to the 'conflict' can be achieved by Jews and Palestinians living peacefully together as coloniser and colonised, in which 'Israelis campaign

for concessions to their government, and Palestinians doing the same with theirs' (Moses, 2015: 40). But Palestinians citizens of Israel are denied 'nationality rights', which limits on discriminatory grounds what concessions can legitimately be campaigned for. In the West Bank, Israelis in illegal settlements have full Israeli rights, access to the Israeli government, whereas Palestinians are subject to Israeli military governance. The complex of passes, permits and access rights across the occupied territories is part of the Matrix of Control imposed by Israel on Palestinians (Harper, 2000). Any concessions which question the settler-colonial foundation of the state is prohibited even in the Left's political ideology (Haaretz, 2017). At the time of writing, a precedent was established when the Israeli army evicted Palestinian communities based on the Military Order No. 757 which is meant to enable the evacuation of unauthorized settlement outposts: Israel has dealt with native Palestinian residents as illegal residents and has considered area C its own land (Hass, 2017).

One of these normalisation projects addresses environmental concerns in the region. EcoPeace Middle East (formerly Middle East Friends of the Earth) is an Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian NGO which focuses on addressing environmental problems by bringing together activists of different ethnicities and nationalities, including through community development initiatives. The Board of Deputies describes their work as:

> EcoPeace/MEFoE brings Palestinian, Israeli and Jordanian environmentalists to cooperate on environmental issues and to support sustainable development. Examples of successes include Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian mayors agreeing to rehabilitate the Jordan River.

> The environment is a necessary area for mutual dependency, and this inter-dependence is highly significant. Since 1994, Jordan stores its water in Israel's Sea of Galilee in the winter, with Israel giving the water back to Jordan in the summer. ECOPeace Israel's Director, Gidon Bromberg, pointed to this project noting 'prior enemies can create positive interdependencies once they start trusting each other'. (Moses, 2015: 43)

EcoPeace's Jordan River project is an example of how normalisation operates to legitimise Israel's occupation. The Jordan River flows from the Syrian-Lebanese mountains, through the Sea of Galilee within the Israeli Green Line, to the Dead Sea along the border of the occupied West Bank and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordon. Access to this water has been a source of conflict between Israel and the riparian Arab countries and populations of the region. There have been a number of internationally brokered attempts to provide an equitable sharing of access to this water between riparian countries on the basis of international law and conventions on transboundary water courses. These have all been blocked by Israel who instead constructed the National Water Carrier, a system of canals and pipelines which has diverted the Jordan water from the Sea of Galilee to central and southern Israel, forming a major source of water for domestic and agricultural use. The water flow in the Jordan River has since declined by more than 96%, with an accompanying ecological and social disaster (Isaac and Hilal, 2011).

EcoPeace's Jordan River Valley rehabilitation project involves a range of sustainable development and community development initiatives to manage and regenerate the valley, including increasing the water being released from the Sea of Galilee. This has only been possible by collaborating with Israel which has total control of the water, either directly or via the 'hydro-hegemony' through which Israel controls the Palestine Water Authority (Zeitoun, 2012). Access to the River Jordan is entirely determined by Israel and denied to Palestinians by

military order. The EcoPeace approach to 'rehabilitation' of the Jordan Valley is dependent on, and therefore perpetuates, Israeli control through illegal annexation and military occupation (al-Shalalfeh, Napier and Scandrett, 2018). As a result of this and other normalisation projects, EcoPeace was expelled from the Friends of the Earth International confederation.

<1>Community development and international solidarity

Many authors have emphasised the centrality of solidarity to community development. For Bhattacharyya (2004), solidarity is the essence of community whereas McCrea, Meade and Shaw (2017) argue that a practice of solidarity can be forged through the dialogue between community development practitioners and social movement activists. The struggle against settler colonisation in Palestine has built international solidarity into its strategy, especially since 2005 with the Palestinian call for a campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel. The campaign focuses on three demands which represent the direct interests of three sectors of the Palestinian population: an end to the occupation of Arab lands (the populations of Gaza strip and West Bank, including East Jerusalem (as well as the Syrian Golan Heights)); an end to discriminatory laws within Israel (Palestinian citizens of Israel) and the right of return of refugees (the refugee diaspora). This call has mobilised actions to promote boycotts of consumer products from Israel, cultural events sponsored by Israel, formal academic ties to Israeli universities, challenges to institutional links with Israel of trades unions, campaigns targeting companies that invest in or trade with Israel (especially arms manufacturers), lobbying local authorities, churches, pension funds and so on to divest from Israeli companies. Such international solidarity efforts have facilitated considerable opportunities for community mobilisation and politicisation throughout the world, including in the global environmental justice movement.

The Jewish National Fund has been subject to international mobilisations, in particular by Jewish groups opposed to Zionism. Fundraising efforts have been disrupted and legal and public campaigns have challenged the charitable and tax exempt status of JNF branches throughout the world. Environmental organisations have joined with other civil society organisations publicly to distance themselves from the JNF's claim to be anything other than an agent of ethnic cleansing and colonisation.

Friends of the Earth Palestine, the Palestinian BDS National Committee and the Land Defence Coalition have coordinated a campaign to stop international cooperation agreements with Mekorot, Israel's state-owned water company responsible for implementing 'water apartheid': the pillage of natural resources in occupied territory, discrimination against the Palestinian people and vital support for the illegal settlement enterprise. Mekorot is a Trans National Corporation that commits the major part of its human rights violations in the location where it is based and uses international contracts to finance this. The Israeli water sector was developed to steal Palestinian water for Israeli colonisation. Mekorot has been responsible for water rights violations and discrimination since the 1950s when it built Israel's national water carrier. At the same time it deprives the Palestinian communities of the possibility of access to water.

For environmental groups, the normalisation activities of EcoPeace have drawn attention to the nature of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. News of the exclusion of EcoPeace from Friends of the Earth International filtered down to many hundreds of community environmental groups.

<1>Conclusion

Settler-colonisation, Wolfe insisted, is a process and not an event. The same is true of community development (Craig et al, 2011). These processes interact in Palestine, although the primary driver is settler-colonisation and resistance to it, both of which can employ the techniques of community development. Discerning the distinction is crucial for those engaged in community development in Palestine, and for the international community acting in solidarity. Community development which is based on Bhattacharyya's (2004) twin purpose of the promotion of solidarity and agency, cannot be separated from resistance to the occupation, or from environmental justice, with access to land, to water, to resources. The Zionist project of settler colonialism since its origins, concerns basic dispossession of resources and removal of the Palestinian population. In that sense settler-colonialism is an ecological resource conflict and Palestinian resistance, whether at community level, wider movements or international solidarity, is a struggle for environmental justice.

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