



PALESTINE
WILL BE
FREE

Palestine will be Free

**Dark Opacities Lab, Zine
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*from
the
river
to
the
sea
Palestine
will
be
free*

From the river to the sea Palestine will be free.

We begin here as a way to utter what we know must come true. It is in the insistence, the steadfastness, the resolve with which we must utter it in order to, at the very bare minimum, acknowledge the insistence, the steadfastness, and the resolve that the Palestinian people have shown time and again how to value and hold on to life and the possibility of a liberated future.

This future is to come,

this future is happening now.

Empires are crumbling,

the student intifada reminds us

and leads the way: all eyes on Palestine,

liberation in our lifetime.

Long live

Palestine.

1. TO FRAME

There is a **genocide** happening and we watch it unfolding on our phones, our computers, day in and day out since early October 2023. It is the devastation we see daily, the unmitigated violence, the forced starvation, the deliberate targeting of children that we look, and we don't look away. We cannot look away, we should not look away, please do not look away. We owe the Palestinian people that, this another bare minimum. This is an unfolding Nakba, 75 years and too many months; it is these last several, of over forty thousand deaths, *the toll incalculable*, that we continue to look, to share, to mobilize on the streets, and in the encampments.

Sitting in this space, in so-called Canada, we must acknowledge sitting in a locus of power. The Western nation-state, the ivory tower, the language of decolonization is diluted when it is not serving the actual process of giving the land back. Our setting both should and should not matter in this world on fire, insofar as we might feel in our bones the bonds we must build to practice solidarity on the scale of speaking up and speaking out for the Palestinian people. As Robin D.G. Kelley reminds us, "solidarity is not a market exchange," and where we

encounter those that attempt to silence, we must create these moments and these spaces, minor as they be, to help us better inhabit a world in which we know our bonds are to those in struggle, and to those fighting for liberation¹.

These are existential questions we must ask, and we say this to continually study, and to build, and to learn, and to fight when and however much we can, for Palestine, for Sudan, for the Congo. The interconnectedness of struggles for indigenous sovereignty and against the genocidal drive of colonizers, we must continue to study, build, learn, and fight where and when we can.

¹ Robin D.G. Kelley, Jack Amoriglio, and Lucas Wilson. "Solidarity is Not a Market Exchange: An *RM* Interview with Robin D.G. Kelley, Part 2." *Rethinking Marxism*, 31 (2), 2019.

2. TO ENVISION

To that end, Dark Opacities Lab engages *The Palestine Poster Project Archives* (PPPA) as a way to visually frame our *collective* thinking. This archive includes nearly 20 thousand posters in relation to Palestine, composed by nearly 4 thousand different artists, and was created and compiled by Dan Walsh as part of his MA thesis for the program in Arab studies at Georgetown University, completed in 2009. This ongoing project, which has posters from as recent as early 2024, is an invaluable resource in the documenting of the scale of Palestinian resistance and the place of aesthetics and design. In thinking through the political vernacular of these posters, we are necessarily asked to reckon with the place of visibility and visual culture in the realm of the political.

In acknowledging the antagonisms we live under, while perhaps an obvious notation, it is still worth noting the way that such an archive represents the complex aliveness of Palestinian resistance. The scale of the archive furthermore is a reminder both of the ongoingness of occupation, but also of the level of global solidarity and the kinds of rich work that artists are doing as a testament to the accumulation of bonds with the Palestinian cause. This is

only growing, and we know this because these images have only been proliferating and circulating in ways that we regularly encounter both online and in the streets. To have a repository of this kind and on this scale, as just one space in which such gathering and disseminating speaks not just to the commitments these artists are making in producing such work, but to the growth of the movement for Palestinian liberation, in service of the intifada. But let us not be mistaken, the recent rise in numbers for such a movement is more about the consciousness that comes with witnessing what we see in videos and photographs over social media. Even still, these posters serve to galvanize both *within us* and *amongst us* a visual presence of what we must attend to and what we must attune ourselves to. What *is* more, it acknowledges the life of the radical traditions in the present, the ones that remind us of our continuous fight against settler colonialism, ongoing fascisms, and global white supremacy in the name of self-determination and liberation.

To that end, Dark Opacities Lab presents four symbols of Palestinian resistance based on the PPPA's archive of posters and indexing of such symbols and icons toward the project of liberation.

3. TO SIGNIFY



a. scream

How does one speak to the violence of unremitting land theft, ethnic cleansing, and genocide? Are there any words capable of contending with the suffering of living through such grotesque violence? The late Palestinian poet, Mahmoud Darwish, offers "The Girl/The Scream":

On the seashore is a girl, and the girl has a family
and the family has a house. And the house has
two windows and a door

And in the sea is a warship having fun
catching promenaders on the seashore:

Four, five, seven

fall down on the sand. And the girl is saved for a
while

because a hazy hand

a divine hand of some sort helps her, so she calls
out: 'Father

Father! Let's go home, the sea is not for people
like us!'

Her father doesn't answer, laid out on his
shadow

windward of the sunset

blood in the palm trees, blood in the clouds

Her voice carries her higher and further than
the seashore. She screams at night over the land

The echo has no echo

so she becomes the endless scream in the
breaking news

which was no longer breaking news
when

the aircraft returned to bomb a house with two
windows and a door.²

Through his haunting prose, Darwish provides a sobering account of the sonic manifestations of Palestinian suffering. As the girl is forced to reckon with the devastating loss of her father and the horrific negation of their lives, words abandon her. There are no words to capture the burden of such totalizing grief and rage. It is in this absence of words that the scream is unleashed, ripping through the body with a thunderous vengeance.

The scream is a visceral act of rebellion. It is the embodied refusal to remain quiet, the refusal to accept the unacceptable. The scream spits in the face of apathy and complicity, asserting the right to human life in the face of dehumanization. It is the insurgent demand for witnessing and the call for radical solidarity.

While the scream may be brief, its echo can last forever. The task is to listen and respond in kind—ensuring that the echo has an echo that refuses to yield.

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

² Mahmoud Darwish and Catherine Cobham, "The Girl/The Scream," in *A River Dies of Thirst* (Brooklyn, NY: Archipelago Books, 2009), 3.

b. slingshot // stone



What **does one do** in the face of **perpetual aggression**?
In the face of **enormous force**? The tanks, the missiles,
the **drones**, the **bombs**, the **snipers** who **surround**. The
asymmetry will **drive you mad**: the sheer **volume of**
economic power and **weapons** supplied from the world
over when **Palestinians** are supplied **little to nothing**. What
does one do?

Nothing could be more uneven, nothing could be more unethical, nothing could be more inhumane. How much these occupiers, these settler colonizers, have to continually destroy Palestinian people and Palestinian land. The olive trees. The decimation that extends from the human to the land's crops that sustain the native peoples. Palestinians are surrounded day and night, by the policing function of surveillance, by snipers, by tanks; aerially by drones constantly hovering equipped with bombs from the U.S., with chemical weaponry antithetical to the supposed rule of international law.

What does one do in the face of perpetual aggression? In the face of enormous force? There is the slingshot (al-Niqafa) and there is the stone (al-Hajjar), as dual icons, symbols of Palestinian resistance. The lobbing of small objects via slingshot might be rendered within a Western imagination as a tool of youthful play, of boyhood; but to understand its legacy in Palestine, as part of the long durée of the intifada, this logic underscores the colonial relation in glaringly tangible ways. The scale of the haptic relation between hand and slingshot, stone in hand, is not comparable to the technological movement required between hand and gear, button, and the process of steering a tank or drone.

The occupiers deem the practice of using stones via slingshots or catapults as "intrinsically aggressive" and criminally charge Palestinians for terrorism because of it. Terror is not in the eye of the beholder, but in the eyes of the children continually shell-shocked and terrified of the ceaseless murder of their kin and community, of the women and of the men who know such profound loss and continue to care for these kids, for each other, for each other, for each other.

But how does such logic of the criminal, the terrorist, the aggressor, transform how we understand self-defense. This irrationale only reminds us how cruel this world is, how full of massive and interminable contradiction, how deeply unjust we know it to be. The active methods of stone throwing and of launching the slingshot are necessarily acts of resistance. They demonstrate that Palestinians will not cower in the face of overwhelming force. They will not be afraid of the grave consequences, the criminalizing of al-Niqafa, of al-Hajjar, is indicative of the fear of the settler, the native's will for self-determination and liberation.

From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

C • wall

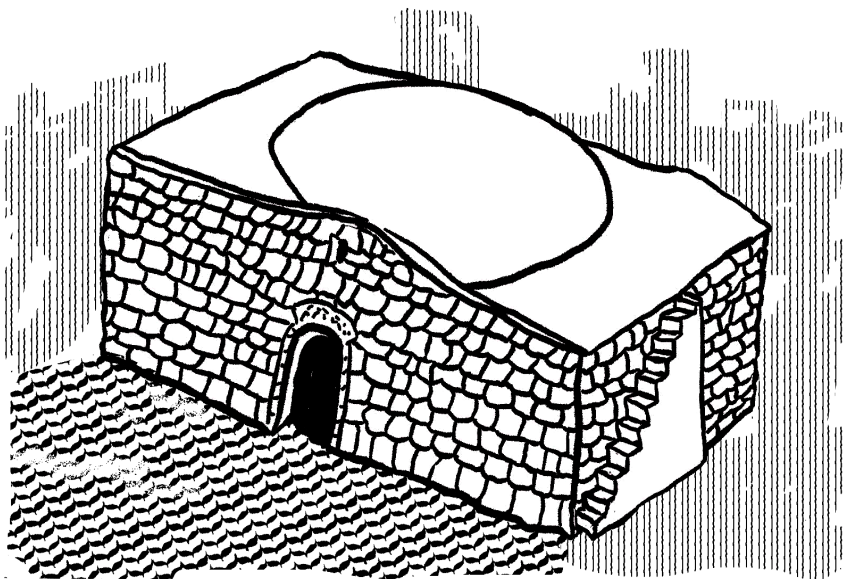


in the West Bank, they built a wall, a separation barrier, a vertical gray slab that rises almost thirty feet high, adorned with horizontal lines of mesh wire. They call it גדר הביטחון (*gader ha-bitachon*) which means "security fence." They say the wall, one hundred forty checkpoints, sieges, and separate roads are necessary security measures and protection against the violence that comes from the other side; from the homes that lie in ruins; from the screams that are silenced under the debris;

from the grey, from the red that painted every street; from the quiet resistance of those invisible, camouflaged, grey and red faces. The wall is a means of self-defense as much as pointing a gun at children is self-defense.

in the West Bank, the *violent* people of the other side were forced to give up their lands so that it may be constructed and flourished. The *violent* people of the other side lost their homes, livelihoods, farms, water sources, and childhood. Instead, they were rewarded with a wall, an ugly grey barrier that is seen from everywhere. No matter if they are at home or school, no matter where they look, no matter how far they go to escape it, even in their dreams, they still see a جدار (*jidar*) behind which is not their جدار (*jar*), as it is a جدار الفصل (*jidar al-fasl*), a segregation wall. The wall is not a security, it is a burden to face every day; it is a reminder of the imprisonment of freedom; it is control, surveillance, and oppression; it shouts the asymmetrical power forces: they use paint to resist this visible, violent architecture, to mock this concrete mass. This violent and cold concrete structure is to be overcome by color, by spray, and by the youngest. They might be invisible behind the wall, however, there soon will be a time when they knock down the wall by spraying over it, a time when all those hidden under the massive grey clouds, those hidden behind the gray slabs, those imprisoned in Palestine will be free.

d. space / / home



From our streets to your resilient homes

Aren't western cities, the ones in the global north, the most
pristine spaces:

public,
democratic
and open to all spaces.

Open to all, as in those who know how to be quiet, to be
silent
who know how to follow the mandates that decide over the
lives in the global south.

Aren't cities in the global north, the materiality of the so-
called development?

the proof of a system for and by the people fighting for
human rights,

Then again, whose human rights?

Walking through the street on my way to work,
right there on the main road,
someone dares to stand and stop:

Their presence, chants, and protests disturb the peace of
my mind.

They question my democracy, the one i have never truly
questioned.

Their solidarity bothers me like it bothers those who think
this is the only way:

From here, we decide

From there, they react

From here, we condemn

From there, they survive

Yet there is a vast difference between my street and your place.

From my street to your home.

Your place is tied to your identity: your so poor developed identity

To your history, the one "no one" has written about

To your politics: the repressive, abusive ones [according to us].

To the things we have chosen to annihilate

Because we have a strong need to believe you need us to be free!

Free from the very same love of your Home

your family

your communities.

We do not understand how you dare to resist for so long,

Is it time to give up?

Yet, you have shown us nothing more than dignity in your life.

And since we don't like that dignity, that one that makes us look bad

We decide to let you go:

What is a home if it is not mine?

Then we go for Domicide:

to disrupt your communities

to break and take your land.

To force you to leave if you dare to live.

To take away your cultural heritage

To exterminate your neighbors

your sense of belonging, the spirits of your place.

We choose to let you go away...

But may your mother be the one that embraces your soul
and protects your home.

From the river to the sea,

Palestine will be free.

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