

JOURNAL OF RESISTANCE STUDIES

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EDITORIAL

What we (do not) want to publish in the Journal of Resistance Studies

Jörgen Johansen, & Stellan Vinthagen

Journal of Resistance Studies

Entering the fifth year of publishing JRS we can look back at a number of articles on a wide variety of topics within resistance studies. The interest is growing and the field of resistance studies have expanded. From the editorial side we have encouraged authors to describe, analyze, and build theories of resistance in new areas of the complexity of human power relations. The history of resistance studies has moved from a focus on more or less organized social movements to new areas of resistance. We now see a considerable expansion of resistance studies in what James Scott labelled “everyday resistance”. New studies have taken the concept and theories of “everyday resistance” to workplaces in industrialized countries and in military organizations. More studies in a wide variety of fields are done and even more to come.

Let us give some examples. There is a new interest in developing the Gandhian ideas of Constructive Program into a field of different kinds of Constructive Resistance. We have recently published a special issue on *The Materiality of Resistance: Resistance of Cultural-Material Artefacts and Bodies*. The fall issue this year will focus on forms of Digital Resistance. These examples show that nowadays authors from a multitude of academic fields publish studies and develop theories that naturally falls under the heading of resistance studies. Naturally, for us this is like a dream come true. When we started the quarterly forerunner of JRS, the *Resistance Studies Magazine*, more than a decade ago, our hope was to participate in the growth of a new academic field and establish a ground for academic texts to be published. In 2015 we decided to go for a peer reviewed journal and hoped to gain more recognition within academia; and the *Journal of Resistance Studies* was born.

We have not been disappointed. The numbers and qualities of submissions to JRS have surpassed all expectations.

However, this brings us to a new challenge; what are the boundaries of what we want to include in the term “resistance studies” within a publishing policy of JRS? As mentioned in the first editorial (JRS 1-2015) our point of departure was a tentative definition of resistance as “a subaltern practice that might undermine power”. We wrote: “Ultimately, we need to recognize that the whole project of the Journal of Resistance Studies is to explore the field of “resistance” and its relations to “power” (or “domination”), and that no one of us yet knows what that terrain looks like, where it begins or ends, what it encompasses or does not.”

And these have been central questions during our discussions trying to determine if submissions fit our idea of what JRS should publish, or not. We have rejected many articles of high academic quality when they have failed to fit what we regard as a sufficient resistance focus. The majority of these texts have been assessed to fit better in journals focusing on social movements. Since social movement studies are a field that easily finds its own outlets, we think it only makes sense for us to publish texts on movements that do not fall into mainstream movement research, or that do not explicitly discuss how movements relate to the concept of resistance.

Our aim has been to instead broaden the scope of power relations and contexts, as well as the type of agents and practices that might be helpful to regard as “resistance”. We have, for example, broadened the types of agencies from the typical stakeholders within social movements to a much more diverse group of activists. In this issue we have a text analyzing resistance at the middle level within the Swedish Army. That would have been difficult to imagine five years ago. But we hope it is seen as an indication that it is possible to identify cases of resistance within almost all power relations and kinds of conflicts.

Several questions have popped up in our editorial discussions about the borders of what counts as resistance studies. In these discussions we have always arrived at the same conclusion: that we want to broaden our understanding of resistance and bring in new and surprising perspectives of what counts as resistance, but without diluting the meaning of resistance. Thus, although we encourage novel approaches to what counts

as “resistance”, we need such texts to explicitly discuss what makes their novel examples of practices into “resistance”, and that such discussions relate to other texts or definitions of resistance. So, for example, we would have no problem if someone wants to discuss how meditation and mindfulness might be a form of mental or personal resistance to the internalization of modern truth regimes of productivity, rationality and individualism, as long as it is shown in the text how a resistance framing is helpful to view meditation in a new and relevant perspective. At the core of the question of borders is clearly the question of what we label as “resistance” and why. And, every elaboration of “resistance” must always connect to a power analysis to become meaningful. Basically, something becomes “resistance” by being related to and having (at least potentially) an impact on specific power relations. Therefore, no article in the JRS can discuss resistance without outlining what power it affects, and how. Our policy is quite simple. In the JRS we do not want to publish articles that use the concept of “resistance” in a generous and unsystematic way to all kinds of practices and contexts without explaining why it makes sense, or that discuss conventional examples of social movement activism and use the label of “resistance” without discussing in what way something becomes “resistance” and how it contributes to view it as “resistance”.

On the other hand, we do want to encourage authors to submit articles that explore the borderland of “resistance”. And, here we can imagine several questions or categories of interest. Firstly, we might ask, if resistance has to necessarily be done with certain political intentions or is it the consequences that will decide if it is resistance or not?

Many studies of everyday resistance show that the consequences are often more recognizable than the intentions. Lack of organizational structures and outspoken goals blur most of the potential intentions. But the actual consequences are often clearer and more detectable.

Will the same be true for other kinds of resistance; are the consequences what should decide our categorization of acts of resistance? This seems as an even more relevant question when we study acts of constructive resistance. Campaigns within the wider environmental movement to build ecological systems for electricity production based on water waves, sun, and wind can be viewed as part of the tradition of Gandhi and his Constructive Program. Today more people are engaged

in building alternative energy systems than in protesting climate change or nuclear power stations. Some of the campaigns for constructing sustainable energy production are clearly a conscious act of constructive resistance, trying to undermine the dominance of the fossil industry and nuclear system. If an ecovillage during its struggle against a nuclear waste site decides to build their own solar panels, it will be seen as an obvious case of constructive resistance. But should all installations of solar panels be seen as acts of resistance? Probably not. So, what are the relevant and correct criteria for labelling “resistance”? While of course not aiming to publish articles that discuss alternative energy systems, we would be happy to publish articles discussing and analyzing such questions in JRS; both articles coming from a theoretical perspective and those with illustrative case studies and discussions of theoretical implications.

Secondly, although resistance of course might be violent in different ways, conventional armed struggle by guerrilla movements or paramilitaries falls outside what JRS want to publish. We do not see these means as part of what we understand with resistance studies although they might aim to resist state armies or other dominant military organizations. The reason is that we have chosen to focus on unarmed resistance in all its forms, assuming there are other journals where such war research topics are most welcome.

On the other hand, we think it is an often-overlooked fact that no armed movements use only military weapons and violence. There are always elements of non-armed resistance in their campaigns and wars, and collaborations with non-armed actors. Propaganda, diplomacy, protests, and construction of alternatives (as for example establishing a rebel governance system in “liberated” territories) have always been integrated part of the overall strategies. These parts of resistance and armed struggle are under-researched and there is a need to understand better their role, function, and how they interact with the use of violent means. JRS would like to see more case studies and analytical articles on the role and function of the non-armed elements and actors in guerrilla wars; may that be FARC, ISIS, the Naxalite movement, IRA, or any other armed movement. We see a need to present more nuanced views on their arsenal of tools for resistance.

Thirdly, “sabotage” is an interesting example of a means often related to armed struggles and war, which we think is often too quickly categorized and deserves to be explored more, particularly when it is used within unarmed struggles. We are critical to how some articles in other journals have sometimes framed unarmed sabotage as “terrorism” also when there has been no risk of harming humans, and think the framing of sabotage as “resistance” might be more relevant and fruitful. Depending on the definition of it we have seen movements normally regarded as nonviolent take up different forms of destruction of objects and processes. So far, it has been in the periphery of resistance studies and deserves more exploration. Most examples are probably from times of war, but we have seen more of it also in peace- and environmental movements as well as privacy groups and animal rights networks. When the anti-colonial Gandhian movement encouraged Indians to burn foreign textiles (as part of promoting Indian textile production) it could be defined as an act of sabotage. In order to stop commercial whaling, the animal rights organization Sea Shepherd sank whaling ships, for example in Iceland. We have also seen how the state uses sabotage to undermine activists, as for example when the “action” branch of the French foreign intelligence services (DGSE) sank the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* to prevent them from protesting French nuclear weapon tests in the Pacific Ocean. Hackers or “crackers” have sabotaged computer systems and activists from the Plowshares movement have “disarmed” military equipment and arms by hammering on them in factories and at military bases. Environmental movement groups like Earth First! have destroyed bulldozers, trucks, and other machinery by putting sugar in the gas tank or iron filings in the oil. The examples are numerous and JRS would welcome articles mapping, analyzing, defining, and studying the impact of such acts of sabotage in the context of resistance.

Fourthly, a last point on our “wish list” for future contributions to JRS is articles that focus on less successful examples of resistance. The majority of case studies on resistance are on those who has to some degree been successful. This is understandable, but it might be that cases whiteout the same success rate could be just as interesting and important for the understanding of resistance. We welcome articles analyzing why some actions, campaigns, and movements did not achieve all their goals.

The “What went wrong?” question is under-researched and deserves more attention. Scientists are often quoted saying they learn more from mistakes than successes; and the same is probably the case for resistance actions and movements. But while scientists are very good at documenting mistakes, failures, and unsuccessful experiments, resistance movements tend to focus on their successes and forget what went wrong. In order the “learn from history” such movements need to painfully document and evaluate also their most embarrassing and fatal cases. Therefore, JRS would welcome articles analyzing acts of resistance that did not reach the expected outcome.

The four categories of possible topics for articles for JRS mentioned above should be regarded as a start of a brainstorming session and not seen as limitations for what we want to publish. Other topics could deal with “untasteful” resistance (from fascists, religious fundamentalists, etc.), the role of ethical political considerations for what counts as “resistance”, or the limits of who can do resistance. Could for example powerful leaders, as governments, do resistance (clearly against larger imperialist states, but could they also “resist” its own people)? The only real limit, in a nutshell, is the labeling of “resistance” without discussing that label.

Can Resistance Scholars Hear the Subaltern Speak?

Sean Chabot

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It is a hot and humid afternoon on August 22, 1964, when representatives of the civil rights movement enter the conventional hall in Atlantic City to make a case for seating delegates of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) at the Democratic Party's National Convention. Proponents of the proposal argue that African Americans in Mississippi deserve to appoint their own elected officials, because the state's Democratic Party systematically denies them the right to vote and participate in the political process. The session starts with testimonies by prominent witnesses for the MFDP. Aaron Henry, son of an African American sharecropper and chair of the MFDP, appears in suit and tie, and reports calmly and concisely on the terror experienced by African American Mississippians attempting to register and vote. He also indicates that he is a strong supporter of the national Democratic Party and president Lyndon B. Johnson. Then Joseph Rauh Jr., the MFDP's white legal counsel and also a supporter of Johnson's presidential campaign, challenges the all-white Mississippi delegation by declaring: "Are you going to throw out of here the people who want to work for Lyndon Johnson, who are willing to be beaten and shot and thrown in jail to work for Lyndon Johnson? Are we for the oppressor or the oppressed?" (New York Times Archives, 1964). Soon after, Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., dressed sharply as usual, eloquently highlights the moral significance of the decision before the committee. Looking at the MFDP delegation, he states: "You cannot imagine the anguish and suffering they have gone through to get to this point." And he ends his presentation by proclaiming: "If you value your party, if you value your nation, if you value the democratic process, you must recognize the Freedom party delegation" (New York Times Archives, 1964). So far, the committee meeting has proceeded smoothly and cordially, according to the institutional norms of civil discourse and political practice.

Observing my comrades in the civil rights struggle, I am both impressed with the quality of their testimonies and somewhat nervous about my own. I am comfortable speaking to local people in Mississippi, but have never spoken at a national event that will be covered by national television. Right when I decide to just tell my story with the language I normally use, I hear the Credentials Committee calling Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer to the witness table. After I take a seat and wipe the sweat off my face, I move toward the microphone. While my voice is a little hesitant at first, it gains strength and passion when I describe growing up on the plantation and failing my first attempt at voter registration. Then I share how local white police officers arrested and molested me following a voter registration workshop in June of 1963:

I was placed in a cell with a young woman called Miss Ivesta Simpson... And it wasn't too long before three white men came to my cell. One of these men was a State Highway Patrolman and he asked me where I was from. And I told him Ruleville... He said, "You are from Ruleville all right," and he used a curse word. And he said, "We're going to make you wish you was dead."

I was carried out of that cell into another cell where they had two Negro prisoners. The State Highway Patrolmen ordered the first Negro to take the blackjack. The first Negro prisoner ordered me, by orders from the State Highway Patrolman, to lay down on a bunk bed on my face. And I laid on my face, the first Negro began to beat me. And I was beat by the first Negro until he was exhausted. I was holding my hands behind me at that time on my left side, because I suffered from polio when I was six years old.

After the first Negro had beat until he was exhausted, the State Highway Patrolman ordered the second Negro to take the blackjack. The second Negro began to beat and I began to work my feet, and the State Highway Patrolman ordered the first Negro who had beat to sit on my feet – to keep me from working my feet. I began to scream and one white man got up and began to beat me in my head and tell me to hush.

One white man—my dress had worked up high—he walked over and

pulled my dress. I pulled my dress down and he pulled my dress back up... (Brooks and Houck, 2011: 44-45).

I see that the officials and audience at the hearing are shocked by the brutality of what happened, and decide to end my speech with a plea to the American people:

All of this is on account of we want to register, to become first-class citizens. And if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America. Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off of the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings, in America (Brooks and Houck, 2011: 45)?

How should we, as resistance scholars, interpret and respond to public speech by subaltern subjects like Fannie Lou Hamer, subjects who generally lack discursive access, lines of social mobility, and political influence (Spivak, 1988; Morris, 2010; Guha, 1982-1999)? Our most common response is to focus on whether and how they contribute to *contentious politics* (Tilly and Tarrow 2006). Do the words of subaltern resisters increase the capacity of protest groups and social movements for mass mobilization and public persuasion, or not? Do they have significant effects on the political processes of ruling institutions and their cultural legitimacy in mainstream society, or not? From this perspective, the relevance of Hamer's testimony is limited at best. Some scholars adopting this approach argue that, although her performance impressed many supporters and turned her into a popular icon, it failed to change the Democratic Party and could not prevent the civil rights movement's decline after the 1964 Democratic National Convention (McAdam, 1988). Others propose that Hamer's real political importance lies in her organizational capacities and efforts as one of the black "women leaders" of the civil rights movement, not in her passionate truth-telling (Robnett, 1997). Contentious politics scholars, therefore, prefer to emphasize Hamer's mobilizing work and leadership, rather than pay careful attention to her disruptive testimony as a subaltern subject.

In contrast, scholars influenced by political anthropologist James C. Scott (1985, 1990) regard subversive subaltern words and deeds as hidden forms of *everyday resistance*. They point out that most oppressed

individuals and groups avoid direct confrontations with authorities and political systems, favoring “the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: footdragging, dissimulation, false-compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth” that often don’t require much organization, mobilization, or leadership. They criticize historians and social scientists for concentrating on highly visible campaigns of public contention and mass social movements, while ignoring the invisible language and acts of resistance that do not make headlines or directly challenge domination. Scott and affiliated researchers undoubtedly open up new avenues for studying subaltern resistance. Yet they are ambivalent about subaltern “fighting words” that explicitly contest the elites and social order. Although they would appreciate Hamer’s cultural heritage and courage as poor sharecropper, they might question whether her public performance contributes positively to the material interests of herself and other lower-class Black people in Mississippi (idem). Thus, even researchers devoted to exploring subaltern resistance are usually not prepared to listen to contentious subaltern speech in the face of dominant rulers and institutions.

What can we, as resistance scholars, do to improve and expand our capacity to hear subaltern subjects speak? First of all, we need to become more fully aware of how epistemic violence destroys the ability of subaltern individuals and groups to speak and be heard, while recognizing our complicity in silencing subaltern knowers and dismissing subaltern knowledge. As Gayatri Spivak (1988) notes in “Can the Subaltern Speak?,” epistemic violence occurs when dominant forces normalize conventional discourses and make subjugated ways of thinking and communicating disappear. To understand how epistemic violence works, we need to study how communication involves particular power relations between speakers and audiences. While privileged speakers can often influence audiences, subaltern speakers per definition heavily depend on listeners. Public speech only emerges under conditions of reciprocity between speakers and audiences: Speakers in general, and subaltern speakers in particular, need audiences that are willing and able to hear them (Dotson, 2011: 237). As resistance scholars, we need to make an existential choice: Do we want to be part of audiences that distort or silence what subaltern voices like Hamer’s are articulating?

Or do we want to be part of audiences committed to learning how to listen constructively to subaltern stories and testimonies, while taking responsibility for our own complicity in epistemic violence?

Besides epistemic violence, resistance scholars also need to consider how we engage in the *politics of listening*. As social and political scientists in neoliberal universities, we are susceptible to pressures to see ourselves as neutral observers of social reality who use legitimate scientific procedures to produce observable, measurable, and valid knowledge about the world. To do so, we often treat individuals or groups we research as “objects” that serve to support our theoretical arguments and empirical findings. In the process, however, we not only fail to recognize that those we research are “subjects” in their own right, with their own capacity to know and act upon social conditions, but also that we (“the researchers”) are part of intersubjective relationships with “the researched.” Susan Bickford’s *The Dissonance of Democracy* (1996) is particularly useful for developing a politics of listening that allows us to hear the subaltern speak as creative subjects rather than given objects. Without denying the importance of speech, she argues that focusing on listening allows for more dialogical and interactive understandings of political action. She writes: “To highlight the role of listening is to confront the intersubjective character of politics. Communication inherently presupposes different beings and the possibility of something between them; it points to both separateness and relatedness” (Bickford, 1996: 4). Although Bickford primarily discusses how listening shapes democratic conflict and citizenship in general, her perspective also helps rethink relationships between “the privileged researcher” and “the subaltern researched.”

Another way to improve our capacity to listen is to highlight “fearless truth-telling” as a vital and generally neglected form of subaltern speech for Resistance Studies. Here, Michel Foucault’s writings on what ancient Greek philosophers call *parrhesia* urge us to investigate the rare cases when subaltern subjects disrupt dominant discourse legitimating the social order. For Foucault (2001, 2011), *parrhesia* is a way to respond to the “regimes of truth” that rule normative thinking by taking responsibility for self-formation and creating partially autonomous ways of life in relation to others. As an alternative orientation toward governing the self and others, it is therefore relevant for exploring speech

by subaltern resisters like Fannie Lou Hamer. Thus, researchers can learn from the lived experience and counter-discourse of the researched, while the researched can gain political power by being seen and heard by researchers with enduring access to dominant discourse.

Having sketched the conceptual background, it is now time to shift attention back to Fannie Lou Hamer, her life story, and her subaltern speech. The first section considers how epistemic violence shapes Hamer's truth-telling and interpretations by her audiences, including resistance scholars. The second section examines her words and deeds from the perspective of the politics of listening, while the third does the same from the perspective of fearless truth-telling. The conclusion briefly discusses the contemporary relevance of subaltern truth-telling and reflects on future possibilities for subaltern-oriented research in Resistance Studies.

Epistemic violence and subaltern testimony

Hearing the subaltern speak requires more than just good intentions and progressive ideas on the part of audiences. It involves paying careful attention to the deep roots of epistemic violence that normally prevent observers from *seeing* subaltern people as fully human subjects and *listening* to them as capable knowers. It also involves basic understanding of subaltern standpoints based on their descriptions of lived experiences and social conditions. In her speeches and texts, Fannie Lou Hamer often tells stories about her upbringing as daughter of sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta, arguably the poorest and most viciously racist part of American society at the time. At the age of six, for example, she was playing near the shack that she called home when the plantation owner came to ask whether she could pick cotton as well as her brothers and sisters. After answering that she didn't know, the white owner said that she seemed strong and mature enough to be a great cotton picker. In exchange for picking thirty pounds of cotton a week, he offered her the kind of rewards that appealed to a Black child in the South who regularly went to bed hungry: fish, cheese, candy, and a gingerbread cookie. When she told her parents about the landowner's proposal, they did not discourage her—despite knowing that their white boss was deceiving Fannie Lou like he had done with her brothers and sisters. The next day, she started working twelve to fourteen hours a day—from “can see to can't

see”—and continued doing so throughout her youth. After becoming involved in the civil rights movement as an adult, she eventually realizes that the white landowner had taken advantage of her at a young age in order to perpetuate an oppressive system: “So I picked the 30 pounds of cotton that week, but I found out what actually happened was he was trapping me into beginning the work I was to keep doing and I never did get out of his debt again” (Lee, 2000: 2-4). Here, in her own language, Hamer shows that she is a “knower” of her predicament as a subaltern, as someone forced into poverty, exclusion, and abuse without the capacity to make herself be seen, treated, or heard as a dignified human being.

Hamer’s example demonstrates the meaning and practice of epistemic violence in everyday life. Based on similar subaltern voices and perspectives, feminist theorists conceptualize *epistemic violence* as the disappearance of a subaltern group’s cultural knowledge and erasure of a subaltern person’s existence as “knower” due to social structures, spaces, and relationships of “pernicious ignorance” (Dotson 2011: 244). Such pernicious ignorance does not necessarily originate in bad intentions or deliberate acts of audience members, but emerges from enduring systems and processes of representation, silencing, and objectification by privileged audiences and institutions. Whereas “epistemic justice” occurs when speakers enjoy reciprocal relationships with audiences, allowing their words and speech acts to be received as they intended, “epistemic violence” arises when speakers are unable to speak for themselves without being ignored, dismissed, or stereotyped by their audiences. In turn, epistemic violence is often closely associated with other forms of direct, structural, cultural, and routine violence (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2003).

Hamer encountered many other forms of epistemic violence in her life. Because of the long working hours, for example, Fannie Lou could only attend her Black school after harvest time. And since her school year was already shorter than the school year of white students, she was only able to pursue her education between December and March (Lee, 2000: 5). Although she was an engaged and talented student until she dropped out at age twelve, Fannie Lou’s lack of schooling prevented her from gaining the “cultural capital” (the social skills and cultural habits promoting social mobility in unequal societies) that allow people to

sound educated or appear sophisticated in public life (Bourdieu, 1986). As civil rights movement activist, therefore, Hamer had no trouble speaking to and with subaltern audiences, consisting of local Black people in Mississippi who appreciated her heartfelt language and easily identified with her dramatic stories of despair and hope. But while she was highly popular and effective as organizer in the Delta, she faced various manifestations of epistemic violence in her interactions with white people in the South and mainstream society as well as with Black leaders in the civil rights movement.

The relentless force of epistemic violence once again appeared a few days after Hamer's testimony in Atlantic City. On August 26, 1964, MFDP delegates met and unanimously decided to refuse the compromise of two symbolic MFDP seats at the convention proposed by the administration of president Lyndon B. Johnson. Before this decision, Hamer had persuasively declared to her colleagues that "We didn't come all this way for no two seats" (Lee, 2000: 99; Carson, 1981: 126). But many of the male Black leaders disagreed, arguing that the compromise represented a small but tangible victory. Although he was an ardent MFDP supporter, Martin Luther King, Jr. favored a pragmatic approach: "out of thesis and antithesis should come synthesis" (Lee, 2000: 99-100). But Roy Wilkins of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) felt that the MFDP should take a back seat to established Black elites (often called "the black bourgeoisie") and strongly disapproved of Hamer's influence: "You all are just ignorant. You have put your point across. You should just pack your bags up and go home" (Lee, 2000: 100). In response to such blatant epistemic violence, Hamer immediately canceled her membership in the NAACP and grew increasingly critical of "progressive" Black civil rights leaders and their white liberal allies. She began focusing primarily on local grassroots organizing and encouraging poor Black people to rise up: "How much have the people with suits done?... Preachers and teachers look down on little people, but now these little people are speaking up" (Lee, 2000: 116). Soon Hamer's grassroots radicalism even led to rifts with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the MFDP's parent organization, over whether uneducated local people were capable of leading struggles for Black liberation (Lee, 2000: 119). In

short, epistemic violence shaped perceptions of subaltern Mississippians in everyday life and the civil rights movement.

Resistance scholars have probably studied the American civil rights movement in more depth and detail than any other resistance struggle. Yet research on epistemic violence and subaltern speech in the face of powerful authorities remains limited. Prominent social movement scholar Doug McAdam (1988: 119), for example, recognizes the significance of Hamer's 1964 testimony for the Freedom Summer campaign:

The highlight of the appearance was Fannie Lou Hamer's emotional account of being savagely beaten in jail following her arrest for participating in voter registration activities... Hamer's electrifying testimony moved even the hardened party regulars on the Committee, as well as a national television audience... It began to look as if the moral force of the challenge might actually prevail. Almost unbelievably, the MFDP was poised to play David to the Mississippi Dixiecrat's Goliath.

But for McAdam, Hamer's testimony represents the emotional dimension of the MFDP's political strategy at the Convention, the subaltern voice of passion to complement the pragmatic lobbying of state delegations. His argument not only implies a problematic dichotomy between rational negotiation (by male leaders) and moral persuasion (by subaltern women), but also overlooks the substance of Hamer's subaltern speech or her status as subaltern "knower." Feminist sociologist Belinda Robnett (1997: 19-23), in contrast, concentrates explicitly on subaltern Black women like Fannie Lou Hamer and highlights their activities as "bridge leaders" and grassroots organizers. Like the majority of resistance scholars, however, Robnett focuses on improving academic theories and frameworks, rather than listening to subaltern speech for its own sake and on its own terms.

From the politics of speech to the politics of listening

Feminist and critical theorists have long argued that political emancipation requires inclusion of the "voice of the voiceless" to ensure representation and participation by subaltern people excluded from existing systems of domination. They commonly assert that allowing members of marginalized and silenced groups to have their say disrupts hegemonic discourse, expands the political power of counter-hegemonic speech, and

contributes to radical forms of democracy. As Gayatri Spivak (1988) points out, though, benevolent intentions by progressive scholars are not enough to perceive the subaltern as equally human subjects and hear their words as reasonable speech rather than primal expressions of pain or pleasure. In her eyes, even researchers seeking to liberate the subaltern tend to “speak for” and silence them. According to Spivak, therefore, *the subaltern cannot speak* in the sense that hegemonic discourse prevents them from being heard on their own terms, including by researchers claiming to take their side. I suggest that Spivak’s critique is valuable yet one-dimensional. Although her argument is strong from the perspective of “the politics of speech,” it does not adequately consider “the politics of listening.” If the subaltern cannot speak because they are not being heard, can resistance scholars learn to listen to—and thereby amplify—subaltern speech like Fannie Lou Hamer’s testimony? Can we enhance our capacity for “counter-hegemonic listening” or are we doomed to merely reproduce hegemonic ways of silencing the subaltern?

The politics of speech usually highlights social inequalities between speaker and audience, showing how one exerts “power over” the other, with the audience either silencing or validating the speaker. In contrast, the politics of listening emphasizes that communication is an uncertain and open-ended process that involves various forms of social interaction and political struggle among speakers and listeners. Although the speaker’s and listener’s social positions, locations, and contexts matter, some social forces contribute more to reproducing oppressive conditions and others contribute more to resisting them. While the resistance researcher is generally privileged in relation to the subaltern researched, this does not necessarily mean that we are unable to learn to speak and listen in ways that facilitate rather than stifle subaltern speech and ways of life. Instead of playing it safe by *retreating* from engagement with subaltern words and deeds, therefore, we need to accept *responsibility* for how we speak and listen in our studies of subaltern resistance, while openly acknowledging our flaws and challenges. As feminist philosopher Linda Alcoff (1991-1992: 29) points out: “It is not *always* the case that when others unlike me speak for me I have ended up worse off, or that when we speak for others they end up worse off. Sometimes..., we do need a ‘messenger’ to

advocate for our needs.” But how can we hold ourselves responsible as resistance scholars engage with struggles by the marginalized and muted?

To address this question, I draw on work on the politics of listening by feminist political scientist Susan Bickford (1996). She points out that most scholars see and hear their research subjects from a distance—from a position of neutrality and expertise in relation to the individuals and groups they are studying. In contrast, Bickford’s approach prioritizes the *practice of listening to others*, the practice of intensively focusing on and engaging with speakers as unique human beings rather than abstract objects. Her perspective is clearly relevant for researchers studying political speech by subaltern resisters. It emphasizes that listening is intertwined with speaking, and that both are creative acts based on persistent effort by researchers and subjects alike (Bickford, 1996: 141-173). More specifically, Bickford’s approach identifies three concrete areas of focus for resistance scholars seeking to engage in counter-hegemonic listening that contests and subverts dominant discourse on the subaltern.

Bickford’s first point is that political listening occurs when the self (the listener) demonstrates *openness* toward the other (the speaker), especially when the differences and disagreements between them are significant (Bickford, 1996: 146-147). Listeners should avoid prioritizing or imposing their own preconceptions and worldviews, while paying careful attention to the contexts and statements of each speaker, without rushing to judgments or conclusions. Such attention involves “stilling the self,” but also actively imagining the place and perspective of the speaking other—even if the listener cannot easily understand or accept what the speaker says. As Bickford (1996: 147) writes: “This kind of listening and speaking together engages both agency and situatedness: I cannot hear you except against the ground of who I am, and you are speaking, not in the abstract, but to me—to who you think your listeners are.” Openness as orientation is particularly important and challenging for scholars studying the speech of subaltern resisters normally ignored and muted in mainstream society. It implies shifting emphasis from making persuasive scholarly arguments and gaining academic approval to exploring the everyday lives of subordinated subjects based primarily on their (not our) particular styles, standpoints, and stories.

As resistance scholars, practicing openness in studying Fannie Lou Hamer is far more difficult than it might seem. Hegemonic discourse encourages us to either romanticize her as an exceptional individual or categorize her as a particular type of subaltern resister. As mentioned earlier, McAdam (1988) uses academic language to classify her as a strategic moral persuader and Robnett (1997) similarly identifies her as an indigenous bridge leader. While neither interpretation is wrong, both constrain our openness toward Hamer as a unique human being, whose everyday struggles are both situated in particular contexts as well as connected to wider struggles for human emancipation. Despite our differences as academics in today's neoliberal universities, we can learn to avoid imposing our "academic self," and prioritize how Fannie Lou Hamer's testimony speaks to us as fellow human beings, by carefully examining video of her speeches and (auto)biographies on her life stories.

Bickford's second point is that political listening entails not only openness as an orientation, but also *pathbuilding* as a practice of forging relationships between listeners and speakers (Bickford, 1996: 148-153). Pathbuilding is a delicate process that attempts to avoid the extremes of not hearing what the other is saying and allowing the other's opinion to replace one's own. As Bickford (1996: 148) articulates it:

We do not simply float over to another's position in our heads; we create together a concrete worldly means of getting at each other's perspectives. Or, rather, of getting as close as we can get; we cannot inhabit others' perspectives or hold their opinions as they do, we are still travelers coming from somewhere else.

Thus, resistance scholars can learn to hear the subaltern speak by building connections across differences and engaging in dialogues with each other, as long as we remember that—as privileged academics—we can never fully define or capture the existential conditions of subordinated others. In the process, we have to recognize that this kind of listening is risky, because it might compel us to change our familiar ways of thinking and being-in-the-world. We might come to realize, for example, that our established fields, theories, and empirical studies fail to shed sufficient light on the daily realities of particular subaltern resisters.

As resistance scholars, the first move toward pathbuilding is changing our habit of taking a detached and neutral position as social scientists in academia. We need to acknowledge that scholarship in our field mostly appeals to fellow academics and lacks relevance for activists (especially subaltern activists) directly confronting oppressive authorities and institutions (e.g. Flacks, 2005). Once we commit to connecting with subaltern subjects and learning from subaltern stories, we can begin engaging in dialogues across and beyond our differences. This process is often painful, because it involves taking responsibility for our academic training, choices, institutions, and subjectivity. In writing this essay, for instance, I regularly encounter my shortcomings as researcher accustomed to relying on historical documents or secondary literature to narrate “what really happened,” instead of examining the everyday lives, circumstances, and interpretations of distinct subaltern individuals like Fannie Lou Hamer. I also try to discipline myself to worry more about how I engage with Hamer as subaltern subject than about pressures to publish my essay, increase my academic capital, and become a successful scholar. At the same time, I also wrestle with how to build paths with an historical figure who is no longer available for face-to-face communication. Here, listening involves moral and sociological imagination to gain some understanding of her life story and existential dilemmas. How did being a child of two sharecroppers shape her sense of self and purpose? How did she think voting and running for office would empower her and other subaltern people in Mississippi? How did the disappointing 1964 convention affect her and her activism? Reading and reflecting on such far-reaching questions helps relate to Hamer as a fellow human being rather than just as a convenient object for our academic projects (Mills, 1993; Lee, 2000). But it also makes us aware of how rarely contributors to Resistance Studies (including myself!) do the kind of pathbuilding necessary for practicing the difficult art of political listening.

Bickford’s final point is that how we speak and listen to each other shapes our *common worlds*, our intersubjective relationships constructed in shared social spaces (Bickford, 1996: 159-173). These common worlds might seem consensual and orderly, but actually emerge from the presence of multiple perspectives and dissonant voices. According to

Bickford (1996: 162): “We have the capacity to hear something about the world differently through the sounding of another perspective: we are able to be surprised by others and by our own selves.” Although political communication often leads to disagreements and misunderstandings, it can also open up possibilities for subjective, relational, and social transformation. The main purpose of political listening in the world is therefore not to (re)produce consensus or control public discourse, but to continue conversations across borders and expand fields of political action toward autonomy and dignity for all. As resistance scholars, we are influential participants—rather than just neutral observers and researchers—in shared social spaces with our research subjects. How we see, hear, and respond to subaltern resisters is an urgent academic as well as political question. If we treat subaltern resisters as mere “objects” for our social-scientific analyses and explanations, we reinforce the hierarchies and inequalities of our current world. But if we engage with subaltern resisters intellectually, emotionally, and politically as equally human “subjects,” we might help make less-hierarchical interactions and relationships possible, where in the words of Karl Marx: “the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.” In the end, listening to subaltern resisters can only flourish if we live in shared social spaces with them—whether these spaces are face-to-face or virtual, within or across historical periods.

How can we, as resistance scholars and social scientists, live in a common world with subaltern speakers and resisters like Fannie Lou Hamer? For starters, we need to accept our complicity in dominant ways of thinking that rely on abstract categories, binaries, analyses, and judgments for developing valid knowledge. We commonly identify Hamer as a black woman, civil rights activist, local organizer, or indigenous leader to support our arguments for how she was distinct from other kinds of resisters, and for how she contributed to the civil rights movement as a whole. By doing so, we separate our “academic world” from her “experiential world,” instead of starting from her life story to gain deeper understanding and connection to her. If we seek transformation of our oppressive world-system, however, we can appreciate how Hamer’s world in many ways closely intersects with our own. Her words and

deeds—from her subaltern standpoint—then enable us to hear and see something differently about our world and ourselves.

The concept of *transcommunality*, coined by Afro-indigenous sociologist John Brown Childs, is especially useful for listening with the purpose of constructing common worlds. If we see ourselves as a diverse community engaged in struggles over knowledge and power, then transcommunality refers to “the constructive and developmental interaction occurring among distinct autonomy-oriented communities and organizations, each with its own particular history, outlook, and agenda” (Childs, 2003: 10). Although much has changed since Hamer’s time and place, for example, the current treatment of African American men and women by brutal police officers and an unjust criminal justice system is eerily familiar. Recognizing commonalities in our worlds facilitates listening to commonalities in our words. Aren’t Black Lives Matter resisters also questioning America and asking why subaltern African Americans still face daily threats to their lives? And don’t both Fannie Lou Hamer and the Black Lives Matter movement speak for and to all of us—across race, class, sexuality, nationality, and educational status? While mainstream media and academia generally perpetuate hegemonic discourse on Black Lives Matter, we need to experiment with counter-hegemonic methodologies for listening to subaltern participants struggling with and for human dignity. By practicing transcommunality, we can both recognize each other’s distinct roots, standpoints, social contexts, and ways of speaking, and form cross-cutting alliances with each other as co-conspirators confronting the pervasive militarism, police brutality, school-to-prison pipeline, prison-industrial complex, and fascist tendencies in our neoliberal world-system.

Subaltern testimony as *parrhesia* or fearless speech

So far, I have argued that resistance scholars can learn to hear the subaltern speak by paying attention to epistemic violence and by reflecting on how to listen. But how do we decide what kind of subaltern speech to research and amplify? And what can we learn by opening our eyes and ears to what subordinated people do and say? I propose that subaltern speech is particularly significant when it involves a kind of truth-telling that ancient Greeks call *parrhesia* and Michel Foucault (2001) translates

as “fearless speech.” To support and develop this claim, however, I need to first clarify the concept of parrhesia and show how it differs from the modern understanding of truth that prevails in social science research, including in Resistance Studies. After doing so, I return to Fannie Lou Hamer’s testimony to show how she exemplifies parrhesia in her speech, life, and subjectivity.

In his early work, Foucault (2011) focuses on how dominant discourses produce and reproduce “regimes of truth,” disciplining how we think, speak, and act in particular situations and institutions. Academic regimes of truth, for example, compel resistance scholars and other social scientists to use conventional methodologies to do our research projects and develop our arguments in ways that conform to established rules, norms, procedures, and institutions. Even if we present ourselves as critical of oppressive systems, we generally adopt widely-accepted scientific standards for making, supporting, and communicating our perspectives on resistance campaigns and social movements. We tend to separate ourselves as researchers from the subjects we research, engage in contentious debates with fellow scholars rather than reciprocal dialogues with subaltern resisters, and see ourselves as contributing to academic Resistance Studies instead of political struggles with those we study.

Starting around 1980, Foucault begins exploring another politics of truth. He shows that while modern regimes of truth rely on intersections of power and knowledge to construct docile subjects and normalize oppressive institutions, some forms of ancient truth-telling involve human subjects who can constitute themselves as truthful beings capable of truthful speech and ways of life. Foucault meticulously examines the classical Greek practice of *parrhesia* to critique modern understandings of (academic) truth and consider the potential of fearless speech to transform truth-telling subjects and political struggles against subjection (Rabinow and Rose, 2003: 130). I suggest that *subaltern parrhesia* is a particularly important form of speech that resistance scholars need to hear and examine.

In his work on parrhesia, Foucault acknowledges the value of studying how structures of discourse shape what is considered true and untrue, valid and invalid knowledge. Yet he contends that what is lacking in such epistemological analysis is attention to how truth-tellers,

participating in “games of truth” with relatively powerful authorities and audiences, form themselves as subjects in their acts of *truth-telling*. In other words, he is less interested in big philosophical questions about what is or isn’t really true than in “the problem of the truth-teller, or of the truth-telling as an activity... who is able to tell the truth, about what, with what consequences, and with what relations to power” (Foucault, 2001: 5). For modern scientists, *objective* methods for gathering, analyzing, and using evidence about external reality determine what is true. In ancient Greek culture, however, speakers’ unique subjective qualities shape whether fellow citizens regard their speech as more or less truthful. Personal and social standards for positive manifestations of parrhesia are particularly high. Parrhesiasts must express themselves in transparent language and demonstrate persistent courage in what they say and do in relation to people with power to punish. As Foucault (2001: 19-20) specifies:

[P]arrhesia is a verbal activity in which a speaker expresses his personal relationship to truth, and risks his life because he recognizes truth-telling as a duty to improve or help other people (as well as himself). In *parrhesia*, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy.

Contrary to modern science, therefore, parrhesia involves subjects who are capable of living as well as telling the truth of their existence, and are recognized as such by others in their community. And contrary to manipulative rhetoric designed to persuade audiences, parrhesia implies fearless speech motivated by speakers’ ethical commitment to their subjectivities as truthful subjects, and to their truthful intersubjective relationships with fellow human beings. In short, *truth-telling* in specific moments, spaces, and interactions goes hand in hand with *truth-living* over the long haul.

Foucault suggests that due to our modern structures of power and discourse, contemporary examples of fearless speech are extremely rare or even non-existent. In my view, however, Fannie Lou Hamer’s testimony at the Democratic Party’s convention in 1964 is a clear case of subaltern

parrhesia that deserves further exploration by resistance scholars. First of all, Hamer's truth-telling is explicitly grounded in her *personal relationship to truth*, in how her lived experiences have made her into the subject speaking her truths. Instead of highlighting her organizational leadership in the SNCC or MFDP, therefore, she begins her testimony by vividly describing what happens to her in jail, after being arrested for voter registration activism. Her words indicate that she courageously suffers the violence inflicted on her by police officers and fellow inmates, just as she suffers the violence of systemic racism, sexism, and oppression in everyday life. Her unrestrained truth-telling, moreover, comes from who she is—a poor, uneducated, religious Black woman struggling for survival and freedom—rather than from instrumental attempts to influence political decision-makers or persuade wider audiences. Thus, the contrast between her subaltern parrhesia and Martin Luther King's sophisticated rhetoric is stark.

Second, Hamer speaks her truths about racial, sexual, and economic violence despite clear *risks* to her way of life, reputation, and status within the civil rights movement. Unlike established movement leaders like King, CORE's James Farmer, and NAACP's Roy Wilkins, who try to convince MFDP delegates to accept President Johnson's compromise, Hamer speaks primarily from a sense of duty and responsibility toward Black subaltern subjects in Mississippi. The insulting remarks by Wilkins about MFDP delegates are particularly painful. After the convention, therefore, Hamer not only breaks her ties with the NAACP, but also becomes increasingly alienated from her own SNCC and the civil rights movement. Nevertheless, her truth-telling demonstrates her subjective capacity to use freedom to opt for frankness over rhetoric, experiential truth over obedience to expectations, danger over security, criticism over flattery, and moral responsibility over self-interest and moral apathy. She does so not only for herself and fellow subaltern people, but also in name of society: "Is this America, the land of the free and the home of the brave, where we have to sleep with our telephones off of the hooks because our lives be threatened daily, because we want to live as decent human beings, in America?" (New York Times Archives, 1964; Lee, 2000).

And last but not least, Hamer's fearless truth-telling resonates because it intertwines with how she "lives in truth." Her tireless organizing

and daily engagement with Mississippians show that her personal and communal struggles are inseparable from her political struggles, and that her words are inseparable from her deeds. Far from using her growing popularity to increase her own influence as civil rights leader, she instead draws on her social connections and capacities to directly enhance the dignity, autonomy, and living conditions of subaltern people in their own spaces and communities. Several years after her famous public speech in 1964, for instance, she initiates the Freedom Farm project. Having experienced several political defeats and recovering from the death of her daughter Dorothy due to malnutrition, Hamer decides to focus primarily on fulfilling urgent human needs rather than pressuring established authorities to promote legal reforms and civil rights. Whereas prominent civil rights movement leaders and organizations speak and act *for* subordinated African Americans, Hamer wants oppressed Mississippians to gain capacity for self-sufficiency, self-empowerment, and self-government, so that they can learn to speak and act for (as well as among) themselves (Lee, 1999: 136-162).

Freedom Farm consists of six major components, each focusing on a particular local problem and enabling cooperation among participants in the project. The most important component is acquiring common land for Black families as the first step in achieving freedom from economic dependency and freedom to take care of themselves rather than depend on government aid or charity. As Hamer repeatedly stresses during her speaking tours: “Give us food and it will be gone tomorrow. Give us land and the tools to work it and we will feed ourselves forever” (in Lee, 1999: 154). Freedom Farm participants raise pigs, donate some to starving families, and plant various crops on their land to meet urgent need for *food*, the project’s second key component. Members also harvest vegetables and grow cotton, sharing produce with hundreds of families in the region. The third project concentrates on *housing*, developing processes for using federal housing mortgages to turn shacks into livable and secure homes. The fourth initiative emphasizes education, providing funding to local Black youth pursuing higher education or vocational training, and addressing the lack of schooling and intellectual oppression experienced by Black elders. They also support several producer cooperatives—including a clothing shop, sewing coop, plumbing business, and

laundromat—to expand opportunities for *employment* of young and old. Finally, Freedom Farm engages in *social service* by pooling resources and performing mutual aid for families and communities in crisis, without relying exclusively on government handouts. Each aspect of Freedom Farm addresses an existential challenge confronting poor Black people in the Mississippi Delta, including her own family. And each aspect of Freedom Farm is a way of “truth-living” that adds symbolic meaning and material substance to Fannie Lou Hamer’s parrhesiastic “truth-telling” (Lee, 1999: 136-162).

Conclusion: Learning to hear subaltern speech in Resistance Studies

In *Politics*, Aristotle famously declares that what sets human beings apart from other animals is our capacity for reasonable speech. While other animals also have access to voice to convey raw feelings of pleasure or pain, only we are blessed with “the gift of speech... to express what is useful for us, and what is hurtful, and of course what is just and what is unjust” (Aristotle 2017: chapter II). Only we, as political animals, are able to think, communicate, and act in ways that allow for virtuous decision-making, government, and ways of life. But after originally claiming that the power of speech is universal among human beings, Aristotle later divides human beings into “slaves” and “masters,” assigning different natures to each. Most people are like “slaves,” who can merely serve the common good with their bodies—not with their minds or words. Just a select few are “masters,” fit for moral discourse, free participation in political life, and rational governance of the community.

This essay proposes that, however good our intentions, resistance scholars tend to hear what the subaltern say as voice rather than as speech, as passionate noise rather than as reasonable articulation of their lives and conditions. We typically revert to the logic of hegemonic discourse that urges us to pay attention to “masters” in society (whether master authorities or master resisters) and to silence or speak for today’s “slaves.” But this does not mean that we can’t improve our capacity to hear subaltern resisters speak. To become better counter-hegemonic listeners, we can prioritize the *words and stories of subaltern speakers* like Fannie Lou Hamer, instead of focusing primarily on our own academic

interests and perspectives. We can examine the *epistemic violence* that makes subaltern subjects invisible and inaudible, while compelling us to mute or distort their speech. We can explore our part in the *politics of listening* and take responsibility for our openness, pathbuilding across differences, construction of transcommunal relationships, and common worlds with the subaltern resisters we encounter. And we can highlight the rare yet transformative cases of *subaltern parrhesia*, when courageous truth-tellers like Fannie Lou Hamer unexpectedly force mainstream audiences to recognize and respond to their experiential truths. This essay is clearly just a first step toward appreciating the value of subaltern speech and knowledge for resistance struggles and resistance studies. Each subaltern speaker and story deserves much more in-depth and detailed investigation than I have offered here. But at the very least, resistance scholars should now collectively agree with fearless novelist Arundhati Roy (2004:1) that: “[T]here’s really no such thing as the ‘voiceless.’ There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.” Only then can we start the never-ending process of learning to see the invisible, listen to the unheard, and struggle together for a world shaped by dignity rather than subalternity. Imagine the new possibilities and pathways for Resistance Studies!

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Do military leaders resist organizational challenges?

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Abstract

Armed forces in many Western countries have been facing societal change processes for more than twenty years; including value changes, government savings and, more recently, by the unstable security environment. The starting point here is that there is a relationship between processes of societal change and organizational challenges. The purpose of this study is to examine how military leaders manage and respond to different kinds of organizational challenges, focusing on resistance. The empirical material was collected using a grounded theory approach. Informants possessing wide experience of leadership participated in this study. The qualitative analysis describes the coping strategies, acceptance and resistance found among military leaders when dealing with organizational demands. Challenges caused by societal changes are experienced as negative aspects of organizational structure. This may be an explanation for why military leaders cope with them applying both resistance and acceptance. However, our main conclusion is that resistance to change stays within a culture of obedience.

Introduction

Military organizations in many western countries have faced transformation processes for more than twenty years; including value changes, government savings and, more recently, the unstable security environment. According to research, processes of normalization, globalization, professionalization, and social and technical acceleration have challenged military organizations in many ways (Moskos et al.,

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2000; Forster, 2006; Rosa, 2013; Norheim-Martinsen, 2016). This article examines how leaders manage and respond to different kinds of organizational challenges, focusing on resistance. Our ambition is to elaborate on a typology of organizational challenges and theories on resistance in organizational settings. There is a theoretical knowledge gap within the military organizational context. Military organizations are seldom associated with the concept of resistance, only in the context of armed conflict. There are a few studies that focus on resistance within the military organization (Levy, 2017; Levy & Michael; 2011), organizational cynicism as a form of resistance in the context of a major organizational, negative, attitude towards management (Bergström, Styre & Thilander, 2014), or misbehaviour on a tactical level (Ruffa, Dandeker & Vennesson, 2013). A few researchers have focused on military leaders resisting societal change (Levy, 2010) but no studies on middle level military leaders' coping strategies displaying resistance to organizational challenges have been made. This lack of knowledge forms the background of this study.

Why is it important to focus on resistance from a leadership perspective? Why are we using the Swedish military organization as a specific context and how can this study contribute? Firstly, Sweden is a western European country which, like many others, has been challenged by transformation processes. One of the most radical changes was the transformed threat perception that followed the end of the Cold War. In the 1990s and 2000s, most European parliaments made political decisions that resulted in the transformation of the capabilities of their armed forces and reduced resources. This situation placed most European military organizations in a state of scarcity. The result of this was organizational change, transforming the Swedish Armed Forces from a system built on conscription to an all-volunteer force in 2010. However, during the 2010s, military budgets increased. With huge recruitment problems, the government decided to reactivate conscription from 2018 putting the organization into a state of post-scarcity. This second major organizational change is placing Sweden in the frontline as compared to other countries who have not yet reactivated conscription.

As a result, on the one hand the military organization is affected by societal processes, and on the other hand this conflicts with the

organization's inherent military logic and structure (Ydén, 2008). Like other military organizations worldwide, the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) is characterized by a bureaucratic, hierarchical and meritocratic structure (Alvinus, Johansson, Larsson, 2016; Castilla & Benard, 2010). Leaders in bureaucratic organizations are the bearers of organizational values. They maintain the hierarchical order within an organization and they can be held responsible if necessary. Resistance from a leadership perspective tends to be a discourse and is unusual to study in the military context. This is due to the fact that the military organization is not only characterised by a bureaucratic, hierarchical and meritocratic structure, it is also characterised by a strong obedience logic (Yden, 2008). In the military context, leadership, obedience and skills go hand in hand, the more obedient you are the more skilled you are. Ydén (2008) describes how this obedience relationship is expressed in the thirteen axioms of military logic – we have selected two of them: *The more punishment a soldier is rewarded with, the greater his motivation and the more positive his attitude will be to his commanding officer. And: Your commanding officer is always right. If, in spite of everything, he is wrong, your commanding officer determines who is right* (Ydén, 2008:121-22).

The combination of pressing societal change processes, the strong obedience culture described above and organizational challenges consequently demands more research attention with special focus on studying resistance among leaders in a military context. We believe that it is necessary to explore this in order to understand possible change processes within the organization, not only in the military organization but also in other organizations characterized by hierarchical and bureaucratic structures. Consequently we choose a qualitative exploratory approach with a small sample.

A typology of organizational challenges conceptualized as *dark sides*

Organizational research has shown an increased interest in studying organizational challenges from different theoretical perspectives, however the focus has tended to be on studying success factors such as what makes organizations more effective (Vaughan, 1999). However, we live in a time when organizations are vulnerable to rapid social changes that

also take place at an increasingly swift pace, known as social acceleration (Rosa, 2013). This results in high levels of expectations imposed on organizations and individuals to continually increase productivity within reduced time frames. Consequently, there is an increased risk of negative effects on the psychosocial environment for employees and managers alike, since there is little time to synchronize the internal and external processes of organizations. These combined factors increase the risk of negative organizational challenges (Rosa, 2013), negative characteristics such as organizational narcissism and organizational greed and negative consequences such as organizational anorexia (Alvinus, Johansson and Larsson, 2016) or “organizational dark sides” (Linstead, Maréchal, & Griffin, 2014; Vaughan, 1999). Vaughan (1999) has studied why various things go wrong in social organizations. She argues that organizational dark sides can be understood as a “routine nonconformity” (Vaughan as cited by Linstead et al. 2014:171) that has three unfavourable effects: mistakes, misconduct and disasters in the organization. These effects arise in an interaction between environmental factors, the organizations themselves, cognition and choices (Linstead et al. 2014).

The duty of the armed forces is to defend the territory, security and independence of the state. The authority to use violence distinguishes the Armed Forces from other organizations. It is not only its responsibility that makes the organization highly complex, but also its geographical dispersion over multiple regions and an enormous diversity of technically-advanced resources and occupational categories (Ydén, 2008). From a resource-dependence perspective, organizations dependent upon external sources for their resources – such as government agencies – are obliged to adapt to the wishes of an external source, as well as manage this dependence internally (Pfeffer & Salancik 2003: xii-xiii). As early as the 1960s, sociologist Abrahamsson described the military profession (organization we would say) as carrying a culture characterised by a negative worldview. This alarmist instinct was used as a mechanism of survival for the profession – in the process of gaining resources (Abrahamsson, 1972). In the 1990s, political scientists within the field of security studies began to pay attention to, and critically analyse, the previously largely neglected processes of threat construction. In this context, the role of the military as securitising actors (Buzan et al., 1998: 27-28, 57) and producers of threat images (Eriksson, 2004: 90) was recognised.

Other scholars state that “organizational dark sides” has existed as a term for structural organizational dysfunctions within various academic disciplines. They have been categorized under the terms *organizational anorexia*, which derives from the economic sciences, *organizational greed*, which derives from the social sciences and *organizational narcissism*, which has been studied by the psychology discipline (Alvinus et al. 2016). Organizational anorexia pertains to downsizing, resource reduction and safety risks (Brännmark 2012). Theorell (2012) writes that one consequence of organizational anorexia is an imbalance between resources and tasks which can create stress for employees. Greed at the organizational level also bears upon the domains of acquisitiveness and the balance between giving and taking between the employees and the organization. In *Greedy Institutions*, Coser (1974) describes the ways in which individuals fight to maintain a balance between individual freedom and the demands imposed by the various institutions and organizations to which they belong. Narcissism is a human attribute, but a number of researchers have begun to diagnose organizations in the same manner. For example, Grant and McGhee (2013) believe that narcissism derives from individuals with a strong faith in their own superiority over others and develops in an organizational culture that seeks external reward above all else. Organizational narcissism is most evident in the context surrounding the leader, and from there gains a foothold in the organization (Grant & McGhee 2013). A blindness to unethical behaviour often arises in the organization, and subordinates begin to mimic the narcissistic leader’s behaviour and unethical attitude, thereby normalizing this behaviour and perpetuating the unhealthy culture. Outsiders perceive these behaviour patterns as strange. If the media become aware of this unethical behaviour, the result is often organizational collapse as competence and creativity in the form of employees depart (Rosenblatt & Sheaffer 2001).

Alvinus et al. (2016) tie these three organizational dark sides together and apply them to the military organization. The results show that all three characteristics could be identified in existing research. Another study (Alvinus, Ohlsson & Larsson, 2017) shows the presence of the three organizational dark sides within the Armed Forces. The focus of the study was on the ways in which the senior officers managed organizational demands and led to a model for doing so. Researchers have

identified five strategies that leaders employ to manage organizational challenges and characteristics: (1) repairing mistakes at the individual and organizational level, (2) catching up with an ever-increasing pace of work, (3) reproducing prevailing structures, (4) using informal processes as necessary and (5) managing different loyalties, such as the balance between working life and private life (Alvinus, Ohlsson & Larsson 2017).

As we have mentioned before researchers have recognized that postmodern military organizations are going through different societal transformation processes which means military organizational members experience negative organizational challenges. We believe that all organizations have organizational characteristics such as narcissism and greed and organizational challenges such as anorexia to some extent, but military organizations are experiencing challenges to them as consequences of societal demands. The above-named studies describe how military leaders respond to societal and organizational challenges, however none of them have discussed or problematised any resistance strategies which may be linked to the change processes.

Resistance theory

Since the 1950s, organizational research has been devoted to studying resistance among subordinate staff, although Taylor (1911) actually dealt with resistance issues much earlier. According to Collinson and Ackroyd (2005), the concept of resistance is a multi-faceted term, usually studied from a management perspective in order to describe the behaviour of subordinates. The concept resistance refers to other terms such as misbehaviour and dissent which can be displayed formally or informally (Huzell, 2005). The concept of resistance is associated with the labour process and from a subordinate perspective mostly in civilian contexts (Collinson & Ackroyd, 2005; Huzell, 2005; Karlsson, 2008). In his book, *Den smidiga mellanchefen – och andra motståndsberättelser* (The clever middle manager and other tales of resistance) Karlsson defines resistance and organizational disobedience as : “*Everything that employees do, think and are that their managers do not want them to do, think and be.*” (Karlsson, 2008:132).

In military organizations, resistance is studied as a form of defence capability. Other studies have focused on military organizational resistance

to social change (Andreski, 1968; Moskos, 1977, Wong, Bliese & McGurk, 2003) or resistance in civil-military relations in the form of struggles with civilian control (Feaver, 1996; Moskos, 1977). On an individual level resistance is described from a bottom-up perspective. According to Levy (2017) there are four strategies among soldiers expressing their resistance when they are dissatisfied with the force's performance. These are loyalty, neglect, ideological exit or voice. Those strategies can be passive or active to some extent. Because of the characteristics of military organizations such as bureaucracy, hierarchy and meritocracy, military leaders tend to be extremely committed and satisfied (Alvinus, Johansson & Larsson, 2017). Studying resistance strategies among military leaders, however, appears to be an unusual approach. We argue that it is necessary in order to understand armed forces as transforming organizations.

Historically speaking, a political scientist and anthropologist James C. Scott (1985; 1990) provides different perspectives on resistance when studying societies. He describes hidden strategies and unnoticed tactics used by subordinates or oppressed groups. Scott (1990) terms the actions as "infrapolitics" focusing on domination systems where resistance is conducted offstage as a "hidden transcript". In his earlier work, Scott introduces an idea of "everyday resistance" hidden behind visible historic 'events' such as organized rebellions. Studying the slave societies, Scott (1985) focuses on non-observable cultural resistance as a response to power and domination. His ideas continues to hold a firm position in resistance studies, although the distinctions and links between individual and collective infrapolitics and individual and collective open resistance (insubordination and insurrection) have increasingly been problematized (Mumby et al., 2017).

The idea of hidden transcripts and every day resistance may be valuable studying military organization, characterized by a strong obedience-logic. The reason that there is a lack of sufficient knowledge on the resistance strategies of military leaders may depend on the organization's hierarchical obedience culture in which power is strongly centralised in a top-down perspective (Ydén, 2008). Obedience is expected from the bottom to the top. However, there are studies of leadership resistance in the civilian context (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999; Karlsson, 2008). Karlsson has studied resistance from middle

managers and concluded that power is seldom centralised but must be understood as relations together with resistance. Karlsson argues that resistance among both employees and managers is motivated by the establishment of dignity and autonomy in their work. This is especially interesting to study in a military organization where military managers are socialised to identify themselves with their organization. Could we expect middle level military leaders to behave like civilian employees and claim dignity and autonomy? If this is the case, resistance may be more widespread in the military organization than previously understood. In addition, this might mean that the best interest of the organization is not always valued higher than the dignity of individual (Alvinus, Johansson, Larsson, 2017), and that the military organization is indeed changing even in its basic characteristics.

The organizational context – characteristics of the Swedish Armed Forces

The Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) is one of the largest central state authorities and it is headed by a Supreme Commander. The central command of the SAF is located in the Headquarters (HQ) in Stockholm, which also houses the Operative Unit supervising missions in Sweden and abroad. The current task of the SAF is to safeguard national security, command national and international operations and support society if its resources are needed.

Even if it is still one of the largest national employers, the SAF has undergone some fundamental changes since 1989 (Bergström, Styrhe & Thilander, 2014; Holmberg 2015). Historically speaking, the armed forces' policy changed from anti-invasion defence to what has become known as an expeditionary defence, in which it increasingly participates in international peacekeeping and peace-enforcement missions (Bergström et al. 2014; Holmberg & Hallenberg 2017). In 1992 the Defence Bill proposed a major downsizing process for the organization. The disbanding of regiments, relocation and mergers of units and the creation of a uniform armed forces, began to be implemented (Bergström et al. 2014). The decreasing numbers of employees was a consequence of the above-mentioned decisions. According to the Swedish National Audit Office (see Bergström et al. 2014), about 6 500 people left their

jobs at the SAF. Bergström et al. (2014) concludes that the reform of the SAF was thus without a clear idea of the organizational future vision. It became a colossus built on shaky foundations. Nowadays a new security situation challenges the SAF once again (Holmberg, 2015), forcing new kind of management and leadership strategies to face the unpredictable future.

Method

Selection of informants

In accordance with the guidelines for generating theory on an empirical basis (Grounded Theory) as developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the selection of informants was carried out with the aim of gathering the greatest possible variety of experiences. Attempts were made to find interviewees including both men and women with a variety of advisor experience in the military context. Such a selection may be described as a convenience sample inasmuch as it is not random but instead utilises chosen contacts to make the selection of informants (Essaiasson et al., 2007; Morse, 2007). The empirical material consists of 10 in-depth interviews, three of these were with women. The informants possessed wide experience in a number of leadership positions, as well as participation in international operations. Informants came from the army, navy and air force branches. The informants' ages varied from 40 to 50 years at the time interviews were made.

Data collection

The interviews were conducted between January and May 2017. Five of them were conducted at the Swedish Defence University, five were conducted by telephone. The reason that some of the interviews were conducted by telephone was the hectic work situation of informants and geographical distance. The interviews lasted 45-90 minutes. All of the interviews were conducted by the first and the second author, but all interviews were analysed by all three authors in order to achieve interrater reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The methodological approach was qualitative and inductive according to the Grounded Theory method (Glaser, 2011, 2015; Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which means that

theories are formulated towards the end of the research and as a result of data analysis. The interviews conducted for this study adhere to an interview guide consisting of open-ended questions, followed-up with individually tailored questions such as “tell me more”, “in what way”, “can you give me an example” etc. The themes chosen were as follows:

Background questions

- Age, rank, work experience in recent years.
- Leadership experience.

Views on the Armed Forces as an organization

- How do you view the Armed Forces as an organization?

Personal perceptions of organizational challenges and leadership strategies

- What challenges you most in everyday life?
- What challenges the organization? How are these challenges manifested?
- How have these challenges changed over time?
- How are all these challenges managed?
- Differences at the tactical, operational and strategic levels?
- Differences in how employees manage them?

How do you respond to the following aspects?

- Downsizing (organizational anorexia).
- Higher levels of demand (organizational greed).
- Organizational self-centeredness, re-organization (organizational narcissism).

Anything else to add?

Data analysis and presentation

All interviews were recorded and transcribed in full, after which they were analysed strictly in accordance with Grounded Theory application (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 2011, 2015). The first step in this analysis consisted of what is known as open coding, which involves identifying units of meaning or codes in each individual interview. These

could, for example, include special lines of thought, feelings or actions related to the interview's sphere of enquiry. An example of a code is given below:

I then instructed officer cadets that there is no way of saying “no, we can't deliver what you are expecting” in our vocabulary, and I dare say that that applies to all categories of officers.

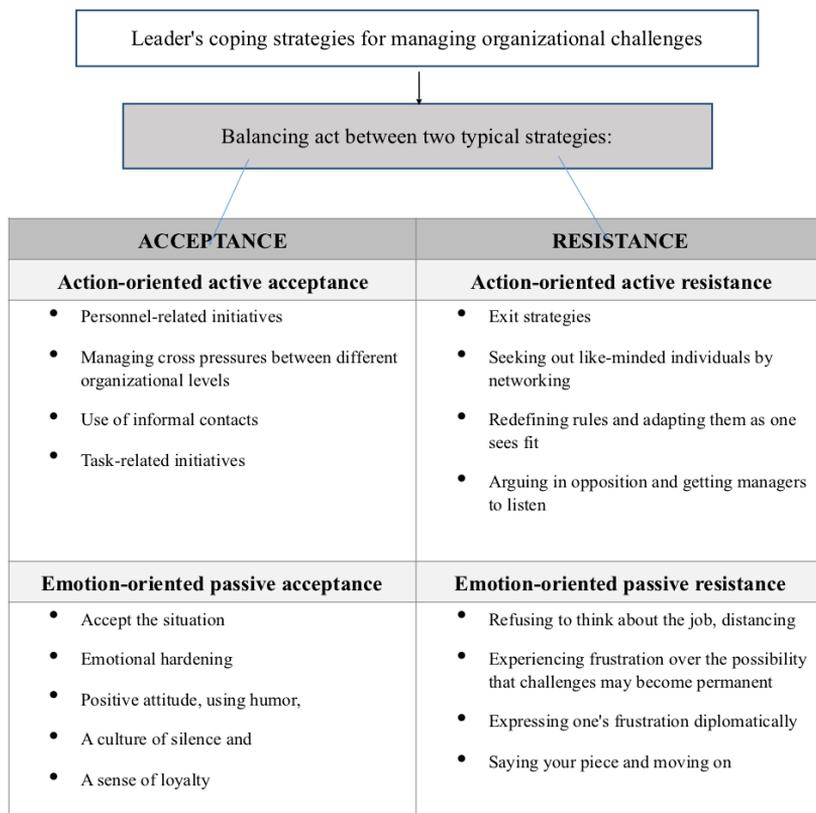
This quote was coded as “*Instructed to accept the situation*”. Step two in the analysis consisted of evaluating and categorizing the codes according to similar content. From the above example, the code “*Instructed to accept the situation*” was then sorted into the category “*Passive acceptance – emotion-oriented*”, which in the third step was sorted into the overarching category “*Acceptance*”. The fourth and final step involved a comparison between overarching categories, categories and codes, generating a core variable “*Balancing act between acceptance and resistance to organizational challenges*” which is presented in the Results section below, followed by all the overarching categories, categories, codes and illustrative interview excerpts. We feel this order of presentation provides most clarity as to these respective parts in relation to the model as a whole.

Results

The analysis of the interviews shows that leadership strategies for managing organizational challenges may be understood as a balancing act between a) acceptance, on the one hand, and b) resistance, on the other. These categories can, in turn, be described as action-oriented active or emotion-oriented passive. Relating to organizational challenges through action-oriented acceptance means actively accepting the challenges that the organization is facing. Steps are taken to get the staff onside in various types of decisions, communicating the message even though the individual may not necessarily agree with it, and working to facilitate various types of organizational change processes. Emotion-oriented passive acceptance involves individuals conforming to what is happening in the organization and, simply put, “accepting the situation”. The organizational socialization process has taught individuals to cope emotionally with the challenges that exist within the organization.

The aforementioned strategies are also layered with resistance strategies, both action-oriented active and emotion-oriented passive. The former entail that, as an individual, you can no longer cope with organizational challenges of various kinds and so opt to leave the organization and seek new work. Organizing with various minority groups within the organization is another example of resistance. Emotion-oriented passive resistance can exemplify the distancing strategies used to cope with frustrations associated with organizational challenges. The same informants could bear witness to all of these strategies, chosen in different situations and circumstances. This is thus a common occurrence, but it is also worth noting that strategies interpreted as some form of acceptance

Table 1: Leader's coping strategies



dominated the responses. These categorical terms will be defined below in greater detail with appurtenant codes and quotations. A theoretical elaboration of the results is presented in the discussion section.

Acceptance

Acceptance means that the leaders in the organization studied confirm and conform to challenges identified within the organization. Members of the organization find various means of relating to the challenges actively and/or passively.

The overarching category of acceptance comprises two categories: a) action-oriented active acceptance and b) emotion-oriented passive acceptance. Action-oriented active acceptance consists of the following codes: 1) personnel-related initiatives, 2) managing cross pressures between different organizational levels, 3) use of informal contacts, 4) task-related initiatives.

Personnel-related initiatives relate to the various ways in which leaders express consideration downward in the hierarchy. According to one informant, unity and personal initiatives for the well-being of all offer a means of persevering through the difficulties that exist in organizations, such as downsizing, extensive demands in terms of availability and an increased workload.

In the instances where you might have a planning conference or planning day we always try to hold it in a good location, so that we enhance the social fellowship within the group, like on the job, quite simply to build a good team, so that people see the advantages of working in a place where they have their secure government job as a foundation, but where it's also really fun to work, so that they don't just see their everyday lives as having an awful lot to do.

Managing cross pressures between different organizational levels entails managing the flow of information between senior executives and their subordinates. Communicating decisions and explaining why certain decisions had to be made regardless of whether or not the employees like them is an important function. One informant at the middle-management level explained:

I'm fairly positive about myself and have a tendency to look at what I can do here and now, which can of course be frustrating for employees in that I don't see things from their perspective, but I can't help it, but there's no need to place any focus or expend any effort on it. So I try to be clear in my communication: "we get what we get", and when the employees demand to express their opinions upward to headquarters, we say, "yes we have done so at such and such a time"; we are always reporting downward continuously, updating, yes, putting all our cards on the table in some way.

The use of informal contacts is a strategy for managing organizational challenges. Informants occasionally experience organizational inertia, and goals must sometimes be achieved within short timeframes. This results in leaders opting to use informal contacts with a view to "greasing the enterprise's inertia". One informant with a special forces background describes his use of contacts:

It's because I personally have a broad contact network, that's what I would say. First and foremost, I strive not to let my employees have to mess with those aspects, but rather I take personal responsibility and resolve them. I have my lines of communication that I know things have to pass along, but usually they are very slow, so I usually make contacts under the table in those cases, thereby speeding up various preparations, given that I know where the various people sit and we have a personal relationship and, as I perceive it, trust in each other.

Task-related initiatives pertain to strategies intended to encourage employees to "go for" certain tasks, to be motivated to perform them. Materiel maintenance is one example. Historically speaking this has not been a problem, however the current, heavier workload and diminished timeframes for performing maintenance work in particular have resulted in employees not having enough time and finding the work unpleasant. Here is how one manager deals with this:

I have instituted a special prize for the technicians, and it is given not to technicians but rather by the technicians to someone else who has, during the past year done, not favours for the technicians, but rather worked for better maintenance. And the reason why I instituted this

and pushed through its implementation was, like, not to give out some prize, but rather to show that the technicians are there and that someone has been skilful in their craft, and so forth. So, to promote the technical side in some way, so that people will understand and think a little, “yes, maintenance is important”.

The emotion-oriented passive acceptance category consists of the following codes: 1) accept the situation, 2) emotional hardening, 3) positive attitude, using humour, 4) a culture of silence and 5) a sense of loyalty.

Accepting the situation is a strategy that quite simply entails being reconciled to the challenges that exist in the organization. According to numerous informants, this has to do with being trained specifically in accepting the situation:

Yes, from a professional standpoint I do instruct officer cadets that there is no way to say “no, we can’t deliver what you are expecting” in our vocabulary, and I dare say that this applies to all categories of officers.

Emotional hardening is another coping strategy intended to promote acceptance of organizational challenges. Quite simply, it means that the individual does not take on emotional stresses for the sake of the organization.

I think that I may have felt more affected individually, before, but now, I try not to take on, like, the problems of the entire Armed Forces. You do get a little hardened too.

A positive attitude and the use of humour make the difficulties in the organization easier to handle. A positive viewpoint makes it easier to cope with various types of challenges. It “lightens” the mood and enables the person to look at the organization comically. One informant talks about humour as an important tool:

I have so many different things I have to attend to with my staff; the same individuals with me need to be at two or three meetings simultaneously sometimes, and it doesn’t work well, so naturally we try to clone our employees... we have tried several times and it’s not working... Yes, there is a touch of morbid humour in this; we snicker at it a little and you just

have to make the best of the situation.

The culture of silence means that certain difficulties are not discussed. A heavy load of tasks is imposed from higher organizational levels, and the middle managers dare not speak out. One informant believes that it is important to clarify that the culture of silence exists, and how challenges are accepted through it:

That's true, but it is also true that, as a manager, you have to just say "yes, but this does not fit into our operation" and you can sort of deal with it. But not everyone does so /.../ So the possibilities in terms of our becoming like a normal workplace, it's just that it imposes more demands on us to actually become a good, comfortable workplace; there are after all a whole lot of things that can't be handed over and that are still pressing, and there is no one who puts a stop to it.

A sense of loyalty to your duties, enterprise and organization offers a strategy for accepting any challenges. Loyalty is prized, and employees are socialised into the corporate culture. One informant points to loyalty as a common denominator for all employees:

Everyone who enters the Armed Forces is moulded into a system where you do what you can with what you have, and everyone wants to deal successfully with tasks and everyone is extremely loyal in terms of getting the job done, and I would assert that this applies to the entire Armed Forces.

Resistance

In parallel with acceptance, there are also resistance strategies. Resistance can also be practised actively or experienced more emotionally. Resistance has to do with actively attempting to alter or rectify organizational challenges. This may occur at the individual level, or at other levels within the enterprise.

The overarching category of resistance consists of two categories a) action-oriented active resistance and b) emotion-oriented passive resistance. Action-oriented active resistance consists of the following codes: 1) exit strategies, 2) seeking out like-minded individuals by

networking, 3) redefining rules and adapting them as the individual sees fit and 4) arguing in opposition and getting managers to listen.

Exit strategies are an active form of resistance and involve trying to withdraw from membership of the organization. The choice is made to seek other employment, usually in the civilian sector. One female manager expressed her desire to leave the Armed Forces because of the organizational challenges that exist.

Well I have thought about quitting if I find something else, but I haven't succeeded in getting anything. But have I thought about it? Yes, absolutely; I have actively applied for jobs and been to interviews.

Seeking out like-minded individuals (networking) is a resistance strategy that has to do with grouping into networks with like-minded individuals to talk about yourself and to gain an understanding of your own personal situation. In this case it concerns women's networks, as women are still in the minority in the Armed Forces. The respondent also states that even though the network is for women to be able to vent and to take up uncomfortable issues that concern the military organization, it is regarded with a certain skepsis and negativity by the surroundings. The existence of the network is ridiculed and it is regarded as a deviation from the norm. The following is quoted:

Well, this thing with girls and women in the Armed Forces, you find some that you can pal around with, preferably a bit on the outside as well, to get energy; you see yourself in someone and listen to someone and chat, it's incredibly valuable, it strengthens you.

Redefining rules and adapting them as you see fit has to do with resistance to the configuration of working hours. Working hours consist of a given timeframe, but the option of taking flex-time is also available. Employees do not always report their actual working hours but adapt them to their own needs. One informant talks about career time, a phenomenon that benefits your own career:

Career time, as it is aptly known, is the hours that you put in above and beyond your regular working hours and log in some way, and I would say that it is unbelievably common among ambitious individuals. /.../

It's about being loyal to your employer, that's why you do it, I assume. And it's certainly a cultural thing as well, and at the same time as you're doing it you can certainly enter it in your flex-time, but in some way you create, maybe you produce more than someone else who just puts in eight hours, and if you're compared with someone who puts in their eight hours then it looks like you're doing more, that sort of thing.

Arguing in opposition and getting managers to listen is a resistance strategy that includes communication with strategic managers. It has to do with shedding light on the stresses that exist and getting managers to make some sort of change, such as allocating more resources. Two informants describe this very type of resistance strategy:

I find that you encounter resistance to your suggestion when you one, you can maybe change internally through an employer decision or management decision, it does not have to be any outside resources that are linked. But as I see it, it seems a bit like it doesn't always have to mean that you have to get more resources, that you have to reorganize yourself, but rather that you have to do what you can with what you have, then you get the counterarguments against you.

It's usually about getting a higher manager, that is someone who is my superior, to understand what the problem is, you can't just come in and say "No, but this isn't working", "Why isn't it working?", you have to have a ton of proof for why it isn't working, so it's partly about getting managers, who may be bad at listening actually, it's about getting them to listen and understand.

The emotion-oriented passive resistance category consists of the following codes: 1) refusing to think about the job, distancing, 2) experiencing frustration over the possibility that challenges may become permanent, 3) expressing your frustration diplomatically and 4) saying your piece and moving on.

Refusing to think about the job, or distancing, is a coping strategy that is associated with stress management. Refusing to think about the job is a means of distancing oneself and reducing the emotional stresses that organizational challenges entail. Even if a clear identification exists between the organization and its members, a strong sense of loyalty

(Alvinus, Johansson & Larsson, 2017) and acceptance occasionally, in individual cases, there is a need for relief in the form of distancing:

I believe that if you're disengaged then you won't have to think about the job all the time.

Experiencing frustration over the possibility that challenges may become permanent is an emotional manifestation of organizational stresses. There is a fear that things will never be smooth and calm, which leads to this frustration. One informant describes the increased workload and the associated feelings of resistance:

Most tasks can be overcome if you just consider them in a distinct time period, but the problems arise if you are working in the process the whole time and ultimately view it as a sort of normalization.

Expressing your frustration diplomatically is a resistance strategy and outcome identified in the data. Another informant reports experiencing frustration about certain work activities, but chooses to be more diplomatic in expressing this:

But then it's just the same type of frustration if we take a look with our manager at headquarters when we talk with him or her, then that individual perceives that we are frustrated, then perhaps we don't express ourselves in the same way as certain managers who make the plans for materiel, and that we manage, it gets a bit more diplomatic.

To speak your piece and move on is the final resistance strategy identified. It has to do with expressing frustration by speaking with others, but it also includes an element of acceptance, as you choose to move on.

When I get irritated with things, I go to the mess and complain, then I move on.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine how leaders manage different kinds of organizational challenges. The Armed Forces' organization is a part of society and, as such, is compelled to observe the norms of civil society, even as internal demands to maintain its hierarchical, meritocratic and bureaucratic structure are present (Alvinus et al. 2017). The demands

of the civilian society and other change processes in society contribute, at times, to organizational tensions and strained relations with the political leadership (Ydén, 2008). This may explain the results of this study. The coping strategies, acceptance and resistance, found among military leaders for managing organizational demands show similarities with previous research on how organizational members, on the one hand, and leaders, on the other, manage day-to-day difficulties (Alvinus, Johansson & Larsson, 2017; Bergström et al. 2014; Larsson, Berglund & Ohlsson, 2016; Scott, 1990). Despite the similarities, the strategies identified are somewhat different and new for military organizations and constitute a new theoretical finding. Below, this is concretised based on the study's primary results concerning acceptance and resistance.

The study's results on acceptance can be understood in Hirschman's (2006) terms of exit and silent exit. Exit, in turn, means a loyal acceptance of a phenomenon that Hirschman discusses further in terms of cost. Silent exit is a form of acceptance and is the most common way to passively express dissatisfaction. In this study, both active and passive acceptance strategies were identified and the latter took place on an emotional level. Hirschman is based on a bottom-up perspective, while Agevall and Olofsson, who wrote a preface to the Swedish edition of Hirschman's book (2006), call for a development of the top-down perspective to understand how an organization's leadership can affect the opportunities to both exit and protest (Hirschman, 2006: 32). We believe this study can contribute a piece of the puzzle. Since we have studied military leaders at an upper middle level, tendencies are to be emotionally passive while activity is directed towards subordinates and superiors. Through its mandate and leadership position in the organization, the organization's obedience logic influences by consolidation and reproducing it onwards. This means that individuals not only maintain their own but also affect the emotional state of others, which is in line with Hochschild's emotional labour theory (2012). This in turn means that emotional expressions are ruled by the employer and the organization by allowing and encouraging certain expressions but suppressing others. In the military organization, the obedience logic is the governing emotional regime (see Reddy, 2001) and, in Karlsson's terms of resistance, aim to achieve dignity and autonomy. In the military organization dignity and autonomy are with

the collective and organization and not the individual. This is confirmed in previous studies of organizational commitment among strategic managers in military organizations (Alvinus, Johansson & Larsson, 2017).

Organizational challenges and societal change processes challenge the military organization, in particular the obedience logic. In the military context obedience is considered to be the foundation stone and a precondition for organizational membership. It creates discipline, efficiency (Ydén, 2008) and predictability in the leadership-subordinate relationship (Weber, 1948), where everyone knows their place, mandate and powers. Social change such as demands for gender equality, normalisation (SAF becomes like any other state authority and less exclusive), increased social and technical acceleration (Rosa, 2013) challenge the organization's obedience logic, which is easily expressed in the following axiom (Ydén, 2008: 122): *"If the map or regs do not match the reality, it is the map and regulations that apply. Reality must adapt."* This attitude towards external demands and changes contributes to increased resistance among employees and leaders of the military organization. Not only in the relationship between employee and leader, but in the relationship between military organizational affiliation and society's change processes that occur at an ever-faster pace (Rosa, 2013). Using Scott's theoretical approach (1990), the military organization, the hierarchical order and the culture of obedience forms subordinate groups under domination. This hierarchical power relation is "acceptable" in public which means that soldiers and middle-level leaders are oppressed and they accept their domination (or culture of obedience), but in Scott's view they are always questioning their domination offstage, using different forms of "everyday resistance" strategies and individual infrapolitics (Scott, 1985, compare Mumby et al. 2017).

As the study shows, resistance is actively and emotionally passive. In light of the organization's hierarchical structure with an inherent obedience logic, emotional distancing is not only a stress management strategy (Larsson, Berglund & Ohlsson, 2016), it is also emotional resistance to the organization's constant demands for accessibility, both physical and mental (Alvinus, Johansson & Larsson, 2017; Coser, 1974). Even female networks within the military organization are a subgroup

deviating from the organization's original obedience logic. The network serves its purpose for women to speak and highlight different types of problems (see, for example, the #Metoo movement in the Armed Forces #givaktochbitihop in Dagens Nyheter, 2017). From an organizational perspective, this is resistance because in female groups where men are not members, positive feelings are allowed, but it also gives expression to dissatisfaction and resistance. An avenue for further research would be to explore the links between individual and collective infrapolitics (Mumby et al. 2017) within the military organization, and whether and why some instances of resistance move from the hidden arena to the public. It is likely that social media and blogs spur the transfer of resistance in this direction - making this distinction matter less (Courpasson, 2017).

The study of leaders' resistance strategies in the military organization, characterised by the strong obedience logic, may contribute to Karlsson's (2008) definition of resistance which reads as follows: "everything that employees do, think and are that their superiors do not want them to do, think and be". Resistance in this case is about expressing feelings that you are not permitted to feel as they violate the organization's inherent structures.

Finally, from an organizational point of view, military organizations are greedy institutions. According to Coser (1974), military organizations are among the most greedy as they demand that their members to be prepared to sacrifice their lives and health if necessary, in addition to imposing high levels of demands as concerns competence, perseverance and loyalty (see also Vuga & Juvan, 2013). Nevertheless, even if they can be termed as greedy, we are still not associating military organizations with difficulties and challenges such as scarcity and self-centeredness as stated in Alvinus, Johansson and Larsson (2016). However, by identifying resistance strategies among leaders, we believe that the military organization may be less greedy towards organizational members in the same sense as Coser (1974) states. However, this statement needs to be validated quantitatively.

Consequences caused by transformation processes may challenge the greediness of organizations, and lead to changes in perceptions of time (due to social acceleration), new types of norms and values, policies, strategies and practices. Potential challenges, caused by transformational

processes, to organizations in general and the armed forces in particular may be experienced as negative aspects of organizational structure. This may be an explanation as to why military leaders cope with them using both resistance and acceptance (in terms of everyday resistance). The existence of resistance strategies within a culture of obedience is one of our main conclusions.

Suggestions for future studies may include operationalising and validating the theoretical model quantitatively. We also suggest a qualitative triangulation combining methods, such as discourse analysis and phenomenology. These could be used in order to close the theoretical and methodological knowledge gaps on leader and follower resistance (as well as acceptance) strategies. Another suggestion for further research could be to study the same purpose as this study but from a gender perspective.

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The Rainbow Flag as Part of the 'Apartheid Wall' Assemblage: Materiality, (In)Visibility and Resistance

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Abstract

*This paper explores the case of a mural, 'Through the Spectrum,' painted with the colors of the rainbow flag in 2015 by the Palestinian visual artist Khaled Jarrar on a section of the 'Apartheid Wall' separating Israel from the Palestinian territories. Through attending to the materiality of the assemblage of the Wall, with the mural of the rainbow flag as one element, the paper investigates the production of resistance. The paper demonstrates how the resistance against the visual politics of Israeli occupation also involves and becomes intertwined with the politics of visibility practiced by the globalized LGBTIQ community. Moreover, it also focuses on how this resistance, through its materiality, in some ways challenges the visual field of occupation. It is argued that the materiality of the Wall, in conjunction with the mural, human actors, and discourses, makes possible and contributes to producing one expression of the Palestinian resistance of *sumūd*, steadfastness.*

Introduction

On June 29, 2015, the Palestinian visual artist Khaled Jarrar painted a section of the 425-mile-long West Bank Barrier separating Israel from the Palestinian territories, the so-called Apartheid Wall², with the colors of the rainbow flag. The mural was titled 'Through the Spectrum.' Four hours later, the mural was whitewashed by persons who self-identified

1. In this text I use the name given by the Palestinians, the Apartheid Wall or the Wall of Racial Separation, *jidar al- fasl al- cunuri*, and not the more neutral name given by the Israelis, the Wall of Separation.

as part of the Palestinian community (Vartanian 2015; Guardian 2015). This incident immediately stirred a debate in the Palestinian community, in Israel and the pro-Israeli community as well as internationally, bringing issues of LGBTIQ³ rights and visibility in Palestine, the Israeli occupation, and the politics of ‘pinkwashing’⁴ into focus.

As the main symbol for the globalized LGBTIQ community, the rainbow flag is today used in the global North as well as the South and ‘appears as a challenge to oppressive heterosexual gender and sexual norms, and as a symbol for sexual possibilities, freedom and rights’ (Laskar, Mulinari, and Johansson 2016, 192). However, as a cultural artefact, the rainbow flag is continuously interpreted and reinterpreted, mobilized, and used in multiple ways within a variety of contexts. When, as in this case, the flag is ‘plugged into’ a political field such as that of the Israeli/Palestine conflict, it can also bring about rather unpredictable effects.

As posited in an earlier article (Laskar et al. 2016), the case of ‘Through the Spectrum’ may serve as an example of how the rainbow flag is being mobilized and appropriated for other purposes than to promote equal rights for LGBTIQ people, both by the power (such as the Israeli state), as well as by actors located within or outside the hegemonic center (such as Jarrar). In this article, however, the focus has shifted from solely directing attention toward the symbolic aspects of the flag and the mural to including its ‘thing power,’ that is, ‘the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle’ (Bennett 2010, 6). Moreover, the mural is analyzed as incorporated and gathered into different assemblages such as the Apartheid Wall (Farinacci 2017), as well as queer assemblages (Puar 2007). It is suggested that the mural produces its effects through operating in conjunction not only with human actors but also with other elements, particularly with the Apartheid Wall on which it is painted. The main question this paper poses is: How does the materiality of the Wall, in conjunction with the mural, human actors,

2. The acronym LGBTIQ refers to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer.

3. That is, as a means of defending the Israeli state against potential criticism of its treatment of Palestinians (Puar and Mikdashi, 2012).

and discourses, make possible and contribute to shaping and producing certain practices of resistance?

Hence, the text is an attempt to respond to a call made by scholars within the field of resistance studies, not only to attend to language and discourse in the study of power and resistance but also to include the role of materiality (Törnberg 2013; Baaz and Lilja 2017; Von Bush 2017; Johansson, Martinsson, and Lilja 2018).⁵ Attending to materiality as an active force in shaping the very conditions and forms of resistance involves rethinking the relationship between the material and the human in the practice of resistance and recognizing 'the extent to which the human being and thinghood overlap, the extent to which the us and the it slip into each other' (Bennett 2010, 6). Thus, resistance is understood here not only as a social action practiced by humans but as practices that are shaped and performed through the collaboration or intra-active processes of various types of bodies and forces, human as well as non-human ones (Barad 2007; Bennett 2010). With Barad (2003), one may speak of material-discursive practices that point toward the ways meaning is created through the intra-activity between materiality and discursiveness.

The aim of this paper is to engage with the materiality of resistance through the Apartheid Wall and the event of the painting and subsequent whitewashing (i.e., covering the mural with white paint) of the mural 'Through the Spectrum,' and, by directing the attention to materiality, also to 'contribute to our understanding of the discursive productions – and the resistance against it' (Lilja 2016, 3). The material environments, such as squares, streets, or walls, for that matter, are not only to be seen as support for political action but do also have an agentic force (see, for example, Butler 2015).

The Apartheid Wall has been described as 'a technique of strategic land appropriation that poses as an antiterrorist technology' (Brown 2010, 29). Being the main physical obstacle between Israel and Palestine, obstructing access to work, public services, and education for the Palestinians, as well as separating families (Larkin 2014, 134),

4. Materiality is considered to include a variety of types of matter, such as built environment (buildings, walls, squares), cultural artefacts (clothes, flags), nature (trees, rivers), or living bodies (of humans or animals).

the Wall is at the heart of Israeli spatial domination and the everyday reality of occupation (see Johansson and Vinthagen 2014). It is a central part of Israel's settler-colonial project, working according to the logic of necropolitical power (Mbembe 2003) and the structural violence of the occupation being implanted in the Wall (Abu Hatoum 2016).

However, at the same time, the Wall has, since the first Intifada in 1987, also functioned as a significant space for the Palestinian culture of resistance. This includes serving as the subject of a newsletter bulletin, the object of internal battles between Hamas and Fatah, and a site to be covered with murals and graffiti that portray Palestinian heritage, history, and identity (Peteet 1996; Larkin 2014). Over the years, the Wall has also become an international symbol of both occupation and resistance serving as a 'global canvas' for international artists and activists who cover it with references to both the Palestinian resistance against the occupation and transnational discourses and political struggles around the world (Gould 2014; Larkin 2014).

Street art and graffiti have, within the specific context of the Arab world, been described in terms of 'counter-spaces of resistance' (Jarbou 2017). Graffiti played a significant role during the first Intifada: first as an oppositional practice in itself challenging Israel's supremacy; second, as a significant medium for internal communication; and third, by contributing to the creation of 'counter publics' of many different and contradictory Palestinian voices (Peteet 1996; Larkin 2014). Today, both artists and viewers live in a changed political context than that of the first Intifada (Larkin 2014). For one thing, with the emergence of an 'electronic intifada,' most messages are being digitized and circulated globally on the internet, and the graffiti on the Wall alone can no longer serve as a significant medium for mobilizing communal Palestinian resistance (149). Hence, it is vital to take into consideration that even though the mural 'Through the Spectrum' was painted on the Wall as a 'global canvas,' it is to a great degree the circulation of the images of the mural on the internet and the debate it created on social media that determine its impact.

Moreover, the politics of (in)visibility play a central role in my understanding of the events connected with, and the controversy surrounding, the mural. I turn, therefore, to Hochberg's (2015) argument

that visual politics is vital in Israeli Zionist settler colonial projects; that is, who can see and whose vision is obstructed, who can be seen and who is confined to invisibility. By using the case of the mural 'Through the Spectrum,' I will show how the visual politics of Israeli occupation (and the resistance against it) also involves, and becomes intertwined with, what Stella (2012, 8) calls a 'new politics of visibility' of the globalized LGBTIQ community. The investigation of how the assemblage of the Wall, with the mural of the rainbow flag as one element, produced resistance, will thus also focus on how this resistance possibly challenges or subverts the visual field of occupation. The case further illustrates how power and resistance are to be viewed as entangled (not separated, dichotomous, or independent) (Lilja and Vinthagen 2009; Johansson and Vinthagen 2014), and, in fact, that practices of resistance might undermine certain relations of power, and simultaneously strengthen others, and/or lead to production of new technologies of power.

The article will proceed as follows: In the next section, the second one, I attend to the so-called politics of (in)visibility regarding both the Israeli occupation and LGBTIQ issues. Next, I present a short explanation of assemblage thinking, emphasizing the productivity of assemblages. Then, in the fourth section, I highlight relevant studies that have attended to materiality and resistance in relation to the Apartheid Wall. This is followed with a section on the materiality of the mural 'Through the Spectrum.' The sixth section is focused on the rainbow flag and the seventh on the white washing of the mural. Next, I discuss the limitations and complications of visibility as a practice of resistance in relation to the Israeli/Palestine conflicts and LGBTIQ issues and community. Finally, I summarize the conclusions of the article.

Politics of (In)visibility

In *Visual Occupations: Violence and Visibility in a Conflict Zone* (2015), Hochberg analyzes the tension between the visible and the invisible, focusing on the unequal distribution of 'visual rights' in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She points out how control over what is allowed to be seen is central to Israel's regime of the visual. It drives the regime to make deliberate attempts to make invisible both the Palestinian people and the extreme conditions caused by what the Palestinians refer

to as ‘the catastrophe,’ *Nakbha*, that is, the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the displacement of a large number of refugees (Schicocchet 2012).⁶

According to Hochberg (2015), the so-called ‘visual field of the occupation’ is organized around three principles: 1) concealment, 2) surveillance, and 3) witnessing. Through the principle of concealment, the Palestinians are effectively erased from the visual field of Israel (Hochberg 2015), with the Apartheid Wall playing an important role in this operation, being both ‘a material and visual structure’ (Abu Hatoum 2016). For the Israelis, the Wall embodies ‘a national anxiety’ of seeing Palestinians or being in proximity to them (Abu Hatoum 2016), while, at the same time, it hides and makes Israelis themselves unaware of the Palestinians and the occupation (Hochberg 2015). For the Palestinians, the Wall is an ever-present and nearby visual reminder of their occupied status, ‘manifesting the destruction of their material and visual landscapes along with the destruction of their cities and the obliteration of their spaces’ (Abu Hatoum 2016, 360).

The second principle (Hochberg 2015), surveillance, includes technologies usually connected with surveillance, such as borders, cameras, watch towers, and drones, but also the visual right that Israeli soldiers have to survey and secure the obedience of Palestinians, directing a gaze at the Palestinian body as an object of military surveillance. The third principle, however, witnessing (visual testimony), is a rather complex one. According to Hochberg it is:

Often leveraged as a way of gaining support for the suffering of Palestinians and provoking Israeli state and military personnel to engage in an ethical relationship with Palestinians. At the same time, witnessing also forces Palestinians to continually position themselves as visibly suffering and to be willing to testify about their suffering (2015,117).

Hochberg points to the intense interest of both the global media and the local Palestinians themselves in making visible the Israeli/Palestine

5. The 1948-9 Arab-Israeli War resulted in the displacement of more than 914,000 Palestine refugees. By 2005, this population had grown to more than 4.4 million.

conflict and the Palestinian suffering for a global audience. The risk with this hypervisibility of the suffering of others is that it may become nothing but a 'spectacle of sheer voyeurism' (Hochberg 2005, 117), and does not necessarily lead to any political action or social change.

Further, in reaction to the Israeli attempt to surveil and to picture every Palestinian as a terrorist, human rights organizations and the media have in turn tended to picture the Palestinian subject as a mere victim. At the same time that Palestinians are made hypervisible as victims, they remain invisible as political actors and are thus reduced to a stereotypic image.

Even though queering the analysis of the visual field of occupation is outside the scope of this article, I want to point out that Israel's attempts to control what is seen are also deployed in relation to Palestinian queers. As Shulman (2011) states, not only does Israeli pinkwashing manipulate the hard-won gains of Israel's LGBTIQ community, it also ignores the emerging Palestinian LGBTIQ movement. The racial politics of occupation are not separated from but rather intertwined with sexuality (Ritchie 2011). For example, the checkpoint system operates according to a mechanism that controls and prevents both 'sexual deviance' and transgressions of ethnic and national borders (Hochberg 2010), and most queer Palestinians account for their experiences at checkpoints (and with Israeli police and soldiers generally) in consistently negative terms (Ritchie 2015). It is, however, fundamental to Israeli state formation that the struggles against the occupation and for LGBTIQ rights are viewed and treated as separate (Ritchie 2014).

Israeli queers are only included in the nation as long as they do not demand transformation of the relations between Israelis and Palestinians and as long as they participate in the demonization of the Palestinians (Ritchie 2014). Palestinian queers are in turn only recognized by Israel as long as they do not insist on their Palestinianness and right to national independence. Stories of victimized Palestinian queers 'seeking refuge' in gay-friendly Israel consequently serve to justify the different forms of state violence against Palestinians.

Ritchie (2014, 118) concludes that the only acceptable 'out' (read 'visible') queer Palestinian is one 'victimized by a homophobic and

backward Palestinian “culture”.’ I will argue that while the mural “Through the Spectrum” is on the one hand mobilized to reiterate this narrative, on the other hand, by acknowledging the significance in painting the mural specifically on the Apartheid Wall, a potential is emerging of making Palestinian queers visible, as something other than ‘suffering victims.’

In the next section, the mural is conceptualized and described as part of the Wall as an assemblage.

Assemblage Thinking

Assemblages are conceptualized as made up of complex combinations of elements, such as objects, bodies, signs/utterances, organizations, norms, events, and territories, all of which enter into relations and interactions with one another and come together for varying periods of time (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Bennett 2010; Müller 2015). Moreover, an assemblage can be defined as ‘a gathering of heterogenous elements consistently drawn together as an identifiable terrain of action and debate’ (Li cited in Baker and McGuirk 2017, 8).

Using the concept of assemblages can be one way to dissolve the dichotomization between materiality and the social/cultural and to try to grasp how non-humans and humans are entangled (Hodder 2014). In this text, assemblage thinking⁷ is used as a methodological-analytical framework (Baker and McGuirk 2017) to understand the situation and event of ‘Through the Spectrum.’ Drawing on Von Busch (2017), who suggests a methodology of ‘unpacking’ assemblages, examining how the different elements ‘support, multiply, and act together as a unit’ in shaping resistance (76), I explore how human actors and non-human objects act together in the production of resistance. As suggested by Baker and McGuirk (2017), the ‘field’ or the ‘study area’ of an assemblage is actually a series of interrelated sites and situations. In my exploration, the empirical materials consist of secondary sources gathered from both old and new media concerning ‘Through the Spectrum,’ regarding both

6. Assemblage thinking refers to ‘a diverse set of research accounts that may or may not engage directly with formal theories of assemblage, such as those of Deleuze and Guattari or DeLanda’ (Baker and McGuirk 2017, 427).

the painting of the mural and also the event of whitewashing, as well as the reporting after both these events. I illustrate this with voices from different audiences that have responded to the mural.

My understanding of the Apartheid Wall as an assemblage is much indebted to Farinacci's study, 'The Israeli-Palestinian Wall and the Assemblage Theory: The Case of the Weekly Rosary at the Icon of Our Lady of the Wall' (2017), which examines the effect the physical presence of the Wall has on the Palestinian Christian population who live in the Bethlehem governorate. Through extensive field work, she has explored the weekly recitations of the Rosary along the Wall near Checkpoint 300, through which the Elizabethan nuns of the Caritas Baby Hospital have been invoking Mary's help to take apart or undo the Wall. This weekly ritual, which has been going on for a decade:

Represents both political dissent against the bordering action enacted by the Wall, as well as giving visibility to the plea of the Palestinian Christian right to live in this territory in the face of their status as an ethno-religious minority (86).

According to Farinacci (2017), the Wall as an assemblage gathers not only actants of surveillance and control but also a combination of religious practices, rituals, and materials that together have created and established a novel Christian shrine. More concretely, the assemblage consists of elements such as guns, soldiers who check IDs, cameras, watchtowers, gates, barbed wire, army vehicles, checkpoints, eight-meter-high segment slabs, interactions with religious bodies, Holy masses, Rosary beads, and a new prayer especially written to be recited at the painted icon of the Virgin Mary (Our Lady at the Wall). The human actors and non-human actants interact and interconnect in different ways with the Wall.

In line with this analysis, I view the Apartheid Wall as an assemblage gathering a multitude of elements, both architecture and the surveillance technology, as well as the practices of painting murals/graffiti and discourses against the occupation and Palestinian national independence articulated by a multitude of actors. This also includes the assembling of the bodies of Jarrar and his fellow artist painting the mural, as well as the Palestinians who performed the whitewashing, the materiality of the mural, and the whitewashing itself. Additionally, through the mural, you

may say that the Wall also becomes part of or incorporates certain parts of queer assemblages: queer subjectivities, the rainbow flag and other emblems associated with queerness, discourses on LGBTIQ rights, Israeli homonationalism, and so on. Queerness as an assemblage is defined by Puar as ‘a series of dispersed but mutually implicated and messy networks’ (2007, 211). It ‘deprivileges a binary opposition between queer and not-queer subjects’ and, in contrast to centering these subjects as a resistant force, it ‘underscores contingency and complicity with dominant functions’ (211). As clarified by Engel (2011), assemblages (including queer assemblages) should thus not necessarily be considered ‘counter-hegemonic constellations’ but are rather the form in which movements of power relations also develop and are materialized.

One of the most fruitful aspects of assemblage thinking is how it forefronts spatial dimensions of power and politics and offers a perspective that is more processual and ‘socio-material’ (Müller 2015). Assemblages can actually be said to consist of and produce spatialities. They ‘claim a territory’ and are realized through ongoing processes of territorialization (stability), deterritorialization (transformation), and reterritorialization (Müller 2015; Baker and McGuirk 2017). As Müller (2015, 29) emphasizes the productive nature of assemblages, he posits that they ‘produce new territorial organizations, new behaviors, new expressions, new actors and new realities.’ While they establish new territories as they develop and hold together, they also ‘constantly mutate, transform, and break up’ (29).

I argue that through the event/s of ‘Through the Spectrum,’ an assemblage is gathered that produces a number of different effects, including practices of resistance. In the next section, various practices of resistance against/produced by the Wall are highlighted, along with their different material qualities.

The Apartheid Wall and the Materiality of Resistance

In descriptions and discussions about the barrier that separates Israel from the Palestinian territories, its material nature is often pointed out; that it is a long and serpentine physical construction of segments of concrete, watch towers, gates and fences, and that its materiality takes

on different shapes and varies depending on which territories it intersects (Gould 2014). Parts of it consist of 30-foot-high ready-made concrete segments, but the majority of its length consists of lower brick walls, gates and an electronic fence flanked by paved pathways, barbed-wire fences and long, narrow ditches (see, for example, Farinacci 2017). The surveillance technology is an integral part of the barrier. In some areas where there is an actual wall, it is often surrounded by a series of electric fences and, in others, it is also equipped with a combination of wires and cameras topped by a watchtower (seldom staffed by a guard). In some places, the barrier cuts through and has demolished cities, villages and neighborhoods; in others, it is built in a fairly open landscape.

However, lately, scholars have shown an increased theoretical interest in what the materiality of the Apartheid Wall does, as well as the materiality of the different practices of resistance against it (see, for example, Gould 2014; Farinacci 2017). Rather than rendering matter as passive and fixed (Barad 2003), material objects can be considered to possess a certain 'vibrancy' and aliveness (Bennett 2010), or, as explained by Latour from a sociological perspective, 'Objects *do* do something, they are not merely the screens or the retroprojections of our social life' (1996, 236). Matter can be said to have the capacity to change courses of events, modify actors and discourses and, actually, to 'kick back' against human will and intentions, for example by resisting attempts to manipulate them (Barad 1998, 116). Therefore, materiality needs to be investigated and its implications analyzed in their own right.

In her study, Farinacci (2017) addresses the productivity of the Wall, understood as an assemblage. She identifies five dimensions in which it can be said to exercise agency. Those are: 1) Palestinian land appropriation, 2) control and surveillance of the lives and movements of the Palestinians in general and Christians in particular, 3) community and family fragmentation and separation, 4) acts of *sumūd* or steadfastness developed by the Christians, and 5) the development of a Christian ritual landscape among its cement slabs. Without delving more deeply into the different dimensions, I want to emphasize that the assemblage of the Wall can be said to produce both power and resistance. At the same time that it produces devastating effects, such as appropriation of land and separation of family members and communities, in addition to exercising continuous

control, it also produces specific forms of resistance. Moreover, new types of bonds and relationships are created (between Israeli soldiers and nuns, between Christians and Muslims), as well as new types of activists (nuns and priests).

In investigations of the materiality of the resistance, it is also apparent that, depending on the shape the Wall is materialized in, the practices of resistance display variations. Bishara (2016) investigates how resistance against the Wall performed by youth in the Aida refugee camp differs from other Palestinian movements against the Wall. The eight-meter wall lies within approximately 15 meters of homes, and the activists have broken holes in the wall, taking significant risks of being discovered by the Israeli army. Here, the Wall not only hinders movement into Israel but has also separated the inhabitants in the camp from nearby Palestinian areas. Additionally, the Wall has led to an intensified militarization of the camp, with the Israeli army conducting regular raids, arresting and shooting at young people, and throwing tear gas at residences. The activists participating in the local resistance against the Wall express a physical sense of threat. Bishara argues that they are breaking the holes to 'perform confrontation', further stating that the particularity of this form of resistance emerges from the shattered organizing against the Wall at the national level, as well from the specific materiality and violence of the Wall in this location.

Humans and things can be said to act in cooperation to create these particular possibilities of resistance, what Hodder (2014) defines as a dependency, a 'sticky entrapment.' The bodies (activists) performing resistance are shaped by the materiality of the Wall; the entrapment, the physical separation from loved ones and from access to social services, the militarization of their living space, the threats to their lives, as well as the Wall being transformed by the embodied resistance by the activists.

In Farinacci's study (2017), a very different practice of resistance is described but, similarly to Bashar, she acknowledges the resistance as endowed with materiality. Since 2004, the Italian Elizabethan nuns of the Caritas Baby Hospital have gathered every Friday close to the vehicular entrance to and from Bethlehem to recite the Rosary and sing in front of the Our Lady of the Wall icon (painted on the Wall at the request of the nuns and itself now a site of pilgrimage and veneration). The

Caritas Baby Hospital is directly affected by the Wall due to its proximity to Checkpoint 300, which, as a major access point in the region, also represents one of the most significant places where Israeli presence is powerful, with massive security measures deployed. The recitation of the Rosary has been described by one of the nuns, Sister Anne, as 'our pacific intifada':

This is how we have defined it in order to exhort from Mary this miracle: that the Wall might fall, that there could be peace in this land, that these children and families might live in peace and be able to move around as they please. (101)

The recitation of the Rosary begins at the checkpoint, in plain view of both the Israeli soldiers and the line of Palestinian drivers who wait to exit through the checkpoint. Not only do the beads of the rosary assist the praying Christians by materializing each Hail Mary, but they also make it possible for them to approach the checkpoint and become their particular 'weapon' in their fight against the Wall. The weekly recitation of the rosary, the singing and walking in front of the icon, creates what Farinacci calls 'a ritual landscape.' Moreover, the venue of the ritual has become relevant as 'a Christian border-disputing shrine' (97) that challenges Israeli power.

As stated above, while most of the Wall is equipped with surveillance technology aiming to prevent anyone from approaching or touching it, and it is rare that large sections of grey cement are left unprotected, nevertheless there are exceptions to the pattern (Gould 2014). These exceptions make it possible to turn the Wall into a work of art with a multitude of murals, graffiti and slogans, for example, the Wall in Bethlehem, which is covered with murals and is probably the most popular site for international visitors (Larkin 2014).

Larkin (2014) explores graffiti particularly along sections of the Wall around greater Jerusalem. He notes that the Palestinian Jerusalemites have begun using the Wall as a space for commercial advertising, both for local business and global marketing. For example, shop owners, car services and supermarkets whose properties directly face the Wall use hand-sprayed messages to advertise their prices and products. Larkin interprets this graffiti as expressions of resistance against the economic

drain that the Wall imposes on the Palestinians, an expression of *sumūd*, that is, life must go on. The graffiti contributes to actual survival. Thus, both Farinacci (2017) and Larkin (2014) define the resistance against the Wall as practices of *sumūd* or steadfastness, a kind of non-violent resistance directed at the occupation that includes both an approach of “remaining on the land” as well as “life must go on” (Johansson and Vinthagen 2015).

If physical confrontation is one way to resist the Wall in the Aida refugee camp, the weekly ritualization by the nuns is another, as graffiti and other art are yet others. In contrast to the activists in the Aida refugee camp or elsewhere, the artists do not actually try to destroy the Wall to make it ‘come down’ or to be able to pass through it, but instead they paint messages on it. Some of the messages address the future destruction of the Wall, such as ‘All walls come down eventually’ or the more humorous ‘Make hummus, not walls.’ Others focus on ‘forms of escape’: painting ladders, windows, cracks and segments of the Wall falling like dominos (Larkin 2014, 151). However, the writing and painting are not only symbolic or rhetorical practices of resistance but also have a materiality to them, being embodied spatial practices of resistance that make material marks on the Wall and have a number of material effects. As suggested by Butler (2015), when bodies gather and claim the public, they also create the public through taking hold of and ‘reconfiguring’ the matter of material.

The material forces of the geography of the landscape and the built environment such as the architecture of the Wall, including the surveillance apparatus and the surface, interact with the bodies of the Palestinians who resist the occupation and the Wall. The living human bodies of the artists also interact with the material means they are using to produce the mural. All these material bodies, forces and means provide the artists with ‘what they have to work with or against’ (Baaz and Lilja 2017). As I will demonstrate in the following sections, the marks made on the Wall, as well as the unmaking of them, that is, through painting the mural as well as the whitewashing of it, transforms both matter, human actors and discourses.

The Painting of a Mural

On the afternoon of June 29, 2015, vertical stripes of the colors of red, orange, yellow, green, black, blue and brown covered several concrete slabs of the Apartheid Wall. The eight-meter-high stripes could be spotted from far away. The mural made material marks not only on the Wall but also on the landscape.

'Through the Spectrum' was painted on a segment of the Wall close to the Qalandiya checkpoint. This location has a particular significance. The checkpoint is located by Ramallah, the largest city on the West Bank, in a zone called Area A, which is governed by the Palestinian Authority (PA). Being the main checkpoint between the West Bank and Jerusalem, Qalandiya is used by the Israeli military to control Palestinian access to East Jerusalem and Israel, and the thousands of Palestinians that travel into Jerusalem daily have to show permits to pass through the checkpoint for work, medical care, education, etc. More than any other checkpoint, Qalandiya has become an infamous symbol of the whole system of hundreds of checkpoints that have militarized Palestinian space.

The segment of the Wall near the Qalandiya checkpoint is covered with murals and graffiti, most of them against the occupation, including portraits of both the late Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat and jailed activist Marwan Barghouti. Jarrar's mural was painted close to a watchtower, between the mural of Barghouti, a slogan to 'free' him, and other political slogans. As Jarrar himself explained (Vartanian 2015), his idea of using the rainbow 'as a symbol of freedom and equality' was fed when he followed the news about the U.S. Supreme Court decision to legalize same-sex marriage in the United States, and how millions of people all over the world used the 'celebrate pride' filter provided by Facebook: 'I wanted the world to see that our struggle still exists and I felt there could be no better place to have that dialogue than on the concrete slabs of the most visible icon of our oppression.' Thus, he chose to paint the mural on the Wall because of its visibility as an 'icon of oppression.' He continued, 'My goal is to send out a message to the whole world, which is still celebrating freedom, about the oppressed people living under military occupation mainly embodied in the Qalandiya checkpoint and the Apartheid Wall'.

The choice of painting the mural on a section of the Wall by the Qalandiya checkpoint was deliberate, since both the Wall and the particular checkpoint ‘embody’ the military occupation. To Jarrar, the rainbow colors are the ‘freedom colors,’ and he uses them to remind the world of the lack of freedom of the occupied Palestinian people. Hence, the celebration of gay marriage as a celebration of ‘freedom’ is juxtaposed to the oppression of the Palestinians under Israel’s military occupation. Through painting the mural, Jarrar mobilizes the Wall, as well as the rainbow flag, in the struggle for Palestinian nationhood.

The ambivalent role performed by the Apartheid Wall is well captured by the organizers of the exhibition, ‘Three Cities Against the Wall’ (New York, Tel Aviv, and Ramallah), as they posit: ‘Ironically, there is also an opportunity created by the Wall: this physical barrier makes the oppression of Palestinians more visible. Artists can use the Wall as a metaphor to educate the public’ (*Electric Intifada* 2005). This text highlights both the material and symbolic significance of the Wall. It is, on the one hand, a physical barrier that separates, demolishes and confines, but it also works as a symbol for the occupation. It makes the oppression ‘more visible.’ Jarrar uses the Wall as a ‘global canvas,’ not only as a ‘metaphor,’ but also for its materiality, which in fact makes it possible to paint the mural and ‘send out a message to the whole world,’ shaping the possibility for visibility as a practice of resistance. Its material qualities include its height and the slabs of concrete, creating a large and rather flat surface.

Toenjes (2015, 59) points out that for graffiti artists who aim to reach certain audiences, it is vital that they choose frames that will have ‘the biggest impact on the target audience.’ She suggests that this is why some Palestinian artists use English-language graffiti, and thus ‘frame’ the Wall in ways that will ‘resonate with transnational actors.’ The importance of the location of the graffiti is a dimension of what she argues are ‘tactical and intentional attempts at transnationalizing the messages and images on the separation wall’ (59). The choice of location refers both to the use of the Apartheid Wall rather than other city walls or buildings, and to the use of specific locations along the Wall.

Hence, it could be argued that visibility as a practice of resistance is produced and shaped by the materiality of the Wall in general, and by the

section at Qalandiya in particular. Moreover, the event assembles bodies in a specific way through the conjoining with the objects used in the act of painting, the painting in itself, as well as the material quality of the Wall. While I do not know anything of the actual performance of the mural, I assume that to paint it you need cans of paint, brushes and aids such as ladders to climb the Wall. All those materials create both possibilities and constraints (Hodder 2014, 25). Material agencies are mobilized to 'align action with the goal of activists and support of their cause,' but at the same time, to address the issues at hand, the objects and tools also need to be manipulated (Von Busch 2017, 75). The strategies of resistance, to 'show the world,' to make visible what is considered concealed or hidden by Israel, are made possible, strengthened and reinforced through the mobilization of the materiality of the Wall.

Even though graffiti and art on the Wall on the Palestinian side are not as surveilled and punished the same way as they were when the Wall was more contested as a border (Larkin 2014), Jarrar and his partner still had to relate to the surveillance technology around the site; the watch tower and the cameras, as well as the soldiers. Thus, 'Through the Spectrum,' as other graffiti and street art on the Wall, is to be considered as one way to undermine and resist surveillance, one of the principal elements of the visual regime of Israel (Hochberg 2015). However, the principle that is more at stake is that of concealment. But even though Jarrar's intention was to make visible the struggle of the Palestinian people, the mural actually elicits multiple readings of what and who is made visible. The next section will attend to the rainbow flag as part of the assemblage in focus, and how the mural also can be interpreted as part of the politics of (in)visibility practiced by the globalized LGBTIQ community.

The Rainbow Flag on the Wall

Whereas I have tried to point out the significance of the materiality of the Wall and how it works as 'an agentive force,' it is also important to attend to the materiality of the rainbow flag. As Holert (2013) states, 'indeed, the materiality, the texture of a particular flag object, is vitally important to its meaning and use.' This quality can in certain cases and situations be seen as intertwined with the symbolic quality and, in others,

more separate from it. For example, as a piece of cloth, the flag might be destroyed (burned or buried), but it might still be able to perform its symbolic function (Jarman 2007). In the case of ‘Through the Spectrum,’ the rainbow flag is not materialized in a piece of cloth but through the colors of the flag that are painted on the concrete slabs of the Wall. Even after it was erased, it made a difference and performed a function as a symbol.

As stated in the introduction, the rainbow flag clearly works as a vital symbol for a globalized LGBTIQ community. However, critical voices within the community have also questioned the universalizing claims associated with the flag (Laskar et al. 2016) and its connotations with Western LGBTIQ understandings of rights and obligations. It also ‘plays a central role in boundary-making between the construction of Europeanness coded as progressive and its others, defined by their “lack of tolerance” towards sexual minorities, inscribing the flag within colonial and racist discourses’ (194).

Drawing on this critique, Laskar, Mulinari, and Johansson (2016) identify a need for alternative readings of the rainbow flag that could make visible some of the diversity and complexity of the connotations of the flag that are produced in places, and by actors, outside the hegemonic center of the transnational queer culture. Through a de-colonial analysis of the rainbow flag as used in ‘Through the Spectrum,’ it is suggested that the flag is being mobilized to transgress the struggle for individual sexual rights and encompass the struggle for social justice as well. Still, when Ahmad, a Palestinian man identifying himself as ‘gay,’ comments on the mural, he does not mention Israel at all and does not seem to associate the mural with the Israeli occupation, oppression, or wider issues of social justice, but focuses solely on how it works as an acknowledgement of Palestinian ‘gay people’: ‘Everyone knew what happened to the Wall. This is perfect. People in the West Bank have to acknowledge there are gay people’ (Vartainen 2015).

‘Everyone knew what happened to the Wall’ refers to the visibility of the messages painted on the Apartheid Wall, and how the news of the rainbow flag painted on the Wall rapidly circulated on the internet. While street art addressing LGBTIQ issues is not an entire novelty in Palestine (for example, in 2014, the phrase ‘Queers were here’ [literally

‘passed through here’] began to appear on the walls of Ramallah, mostly sprayed by hand with face stencils of two young men or women kissing) (Jarbou 2017, 137), the impact is seen as different when the rainbow flag appears on the Apartheid Wall.

Ahmad continued: ‘And one of the main problems we have is that people aren’t proud enough or brave enough to come out to people near them, and that is why homophobia still exists in Palestinian society’ (hyperallergic.com 2015). The mural, Ahmad believes, will contribute to making ‘gay people’ visible, as well as work as an inspiration for gay people to ‘come out,’ an act that he seems to assume is motivated by pride or bravery. Thus, he articulates a dominant discourse of the globalized LGBTIQ community in which visibility is a significant tactic and goal of resistance (Stella 2012). Whereas the striving to get ‘out of the closet, into the streets’ has long been central to LGBTIQ politics in the U.S. and Europe, political strategies based on visibility and recognition have actually become even more prominent since the 1990s: ‘Becoming visible represents a way of resisting social norms that naturalise heterosexual presence in public space and make homosexuality stand out as “out of place”’ (Stella 2012, 8).

Pride parades, for example, are imagined as a ‘collective coming out,’ and ‘posit visibility as a form of resistance and as a means to subvert heteronormativity’ (8). As expressed by Lowder (2017), ‘Pride is our time to be seen.’ The rainbow flag/rainbow imagery has a central role in this practice of resistance organized around visibility.

Ahmad particularly emphasizes the impact of ‘coming out’ as gay through the visibility of the rainbow flag on the Wall. The rainbow flag imagery, as painted on the Apartheid Wall as a global ‘canvas,’ works as a recognition of ‘gay people.’ They are being seen. Now, according to Ahmad, the inhabitants of the West Bank have to ‘acknowledge’ that ‘gay people’ exist. The mural of the flag is thus being mobilized to empower and promote recognition and, in some sense, inclusion in Palestinian society.

A different voice is that of Rana Abu Diab, a 19-year-old Palestinian student from Jerusalem (Vartainen 2015), who encountered the mural on Facebook the same day it was painted. She tells the reporter how she

associates the work with ‘courage,’ sees it as challenging, and considers it a ‘cultural shock’ for Palestinian society. The student is further cited as saying, ‘it was the first time I shared a pro-gay post on my wall and I saw some of my friends doing that as well,’ and she continues:

I am a supporter of gay marriage, so it wasn't irritating to me in any sense, especially that I know that this issue is a field for conflict between us and Israel ... It was good for Palestine to be part of this global conversation. (Vartainen 2015)

The student relates to how Israel accuses Palestine of being homophobic, and she seems to view the mural as a Palestinian response in a ‘global conversation’ about LGBTIQ rights. Thus, the mural (the material aspect as well as the symbolic), contributes to changes in the transnational as well as the local discourses on LGBTIQ rights, for example, that ‘pro-gay’ posts became part of the everyday conversation on Facebook among local Palestinians.

Moreover, both Ahmad's and Rana's statements illustrate how it also contributes to the creation of affective attachments to the globalized LGBTIQ community. In this sense, the materiality of the flag as painted on the Apartheid Wall brings about transformations of bodies and affects.

Now I will shift the focus to another of the significant events that were gathered into the assemblage of the mural and the Wall: the whitewashing of the mural, performed by a group of men who self-identified as Palestinian.

The Whitewashing

Four hours after the mural was painted, on the evening of June 29, a number of men gathered to cover the whole of it with white paint. While the act of painting the mural was done in secret, the whitewashing was more of a public act, documented and posted on the Facebook page of the journalist, Fadi Arouri, who initiated the whitewashing, a photo that then circulated on the internet. In the photo, one man is seen standing on a ladder using a long extending pole to apply the white paint, while the other six men stand on the ground. The photo was commented on by Arouri with a message in Arabic that roughly translates as, ‘Removing the filth, in full swing’ (Vartainen 2015).

Later, Arouri explained his actions on several media outlets. While international media represented the whitewashing as an expression of homophobia and the refusal to promote gay rights, Arouri emphasized that the main objection to the mural was not the colors of the rainbow flag in itself, but that it was placed on the Apartheid Wall:

We believe the colors of the rainbow are a sign of solidarity with the victory of the gay community in America. (...) The apartheid wall is a testament to Israeli racism. All that is painted on it should reflect the struggle of the Palestinian people' (Al-Ghoul 2015).

He continued, 'my friends and I believe that drawing the rainbow flag means we have neglected our rights and our demands to end the occupation and break the wall.' It is not primarily about what the color combination symbolizes, but that it does not belong on the Wall, that it is painted at this place, on this particular surface, during the occupation, that makes it necessary to destroy it. Arouri also stated, 'My personal conviction does not reflect my rejection of homosexuals. I reject this sign of solidarity in an inappropriate place and time. Our national rights and freedoms are more worthy of attention' (Al-Ghoul 2015).

Whether or not the whitewashing was motivated by homophobia, and whatever the intentions of the acts were, it is notable that the LGBTIQ community in Palestine is not mentioned, and how the Palestinian Authority treats its LGBTIQ citizens does not seem to be considered significant within the larger debate over the Israeli occupation (Luongo n.d). Moreover, the erasure of the mural and the white paint replacing the colors of the rainbow flag can be said to have a performative power to separate LGBTIQ rights from the issue of Palestinian nationhood, and to create a division between 'the Palestinian people' and 'homosexuals.'

The attempt to unmake the mark the mural of the rainbow flag had made on the Wall is a material practice that produces a number of effects. The Wall itself is being affected as well as the landscape. Instead of the colors of the rainbow being visible from afar, there was now a large area showing only white paint. It is probable that certain emotions were evoked and circulated among the men who performed the whitewashing, primarily anger over the mural and a sense of togetherness in covering it. These emotions contribute to the creation of the 'we' that Aurori speaks

of in the citations. Regarding the effects on discourses, as I will show in the next section, the event of whitewashing was, for example, used by the Israeli press to portray Palestinians as homophobic.

However, I believe it is important also to connect the whitewashing and the arguments by Arouri with the criticism directed at the use of the Wall as a 'global' or transnational canvas, arguing that Western artists and activists further colonize Palestinian space, both in a physical and discursive sense (Larkin 2014; Gould 2014). From this point of view, Gould (2014), for example, questions the claim that the art and graffiti currently covering the Apartheid Wall are expressions of resistance. While the art and graffiti could be defined during and for some years after the first Intifada as 'globalized testimonies,' representing 'a voice for those who felt voiceless in the international arena' (Peteet 1996, 145), the situation is now different. Most of the graffiti covering the Wall today is in English (as well as Spanish), and there are also many references to European history, for example, the Berlin Wall or the Warsaw Ghetto. Since much of the art and graffiti are produced in relation to the perceived expectations of a globalized public sphere, Gould (2014) argues that they do not necessarily represent 'the infra-politics of the dispossessed':

While such graffiti attest to the interconnectedness of a world in the age of the world picture, they also call into question the tendency to incorporate the insignia into a homogenous narrative of local resistance. Collectively, these images show how European history is redeemed and avenged on Palestinian territory, often without the knowledge, consent, or participation of local actors (5).

Larkin (2014, 51) points out that while the English graffiti articulates and evokes human rights discourses and international slogans for peace, as Nelson Mandela's 'Only free men can negotiate,' the scripts in Arabic 'localize' the struggle by using Arabic proverbs and citations from Palestinian poets and political leaders.

Some of the artists coming from outside Palestine have, in fact, encountered negative reactions from the Palestinian community, such as British graffiti artist Banksy. When he painted murals on the Wall during a tour of the West Bank, he was accused of 'aestheticizing' the suffering of the Palestinian people. As one Palestinian man said, 'We

don't want beautiful. We hate this wall. Go home' (Gould 2014, 6). The 'beautification' of the Wall might, in fact, be seen as a legitimization of it (Larkin 2014, 144), or, as Larkin comments regarding some of the resistance against the art on the Wall, 'Artistic paintings of cracks, fissures, doors, and windows that offer glimpses into alternative worlds (real or imaginary) cannot subvert the wall's concrete reality'(143).

Drawing on this critique, the whitewashing of 'Through the spectrum' can be interpreted as part of an ongoing conflict around how the Wall should be used, if it is to be perceived and treated as an open, global canvas or not, and what is defined as resistance against the occupation and what is not. The Wall has become a highly contested space among Palestinians themselves, around and on which the politics of (in)visibility are played out: what and who has the right to be seen and what and who should be concealed. Part of this struggle is to cover and erase graffiti or paintings that are considered offensive or not to have been painted in the right place or at the right time, as illustrated by this remark from a Palestinian youth:

Someone bricked up the window Banksy painted on the wall. Maybe they didn't like his work, or the idea of a beautiful landscape. For me, the issue is not about rejecting the view but whether it's the right time to imagine it (Larkin 2014, 144).

The whitewashing event could be seen as part of practices of resistance against the further colonization of Palestinian physical and discursive space, with Jarrar's mural of the rainbow flag perceived as another one of the messages drawing on transnational discourses, addressing an international community, hereby diminishing the Palestinian experience of, and struggle against, the occupation. As a matter of fact, the erasure of the mural had been preceded by a rumor that Jarrar had painted over a mural of Arafat, something that caused anger among some Palestinians (and turned out to be untrue). Thus, the 'inappropriate place' mentioned by Arouri in the citation above could refer to the painting of the mural on the Wall altogether, but also to the precise section where it was painted.

Yet, the act of erasing the mark of the colors of the rainbow flag that the mural had made on the Wall was also a mobilization of the Wall and the mural to keep apart the issues of race and sexuality, and

contributed to creating boundaries and divisions between the movement for national independence and the LGTBIQ movement. It could further contribute to rendering the Palestinian queer invisible. This would, in effect, reinforce the structural violence of the Wall and the visual regime of Israel. Or are there alternative interpretations? I will return to this question. In any case, the assemblage of the Apartheid Wall as gathering both the painting of the mural and the whitewashing as events being connected, undoubtedly produces both resistance and power.

In this final section, I would like to point out some limitations with, as well as possibilities for, visibility as a resistance practice, both in relation to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and to LGBTIQ issues.

Israeli Politics of Pinkwashing and the Limits and Challenges of Visibility as Resistance

The day after the whitewashing of the mural, a central news piece on it was published by the *Associated Press*, a piece that later circulated in various publications and media, such as *The Guardian* and the Israeli paper *Haaretz* (Associated Press 2015a; Daraghmeh and Deitch 2015). The voices of several Palestinians who were condemning the mural and who had been part of the whitewashing of it are presented: ‘Muhammad, who only gave his first name for fear of repercussions, said he helped whitewash the flag because “we cannot promote gay rights”’ (Associated Press 2015a; Associated Press 2015b). The text continues:

Gay Palestinians tend to be secretive about their social lives and some have crossed into Israel to live safely. (...) Israel, meanwhile, has emerged as one of the world’s most gay-friendly travel destinations, in sharp contrast to the rest of the Middle East where gay people are often persecuted and even killed (...). (Associated Press 2015a; Associated Press 2015b).

Further, Jarrar was cited in *Haaretz* as stating that the whitewashing ‘reflects the absence of tolerance, [sic] and freedoms in the Palestinian society’ (Daraghmeh and Deitch 2015).

Several of the international and Israeli media outlets that reported on the mural and the whitewashing of it created a picture of a homophobic

Palestine juxtaposed to a gay- friendly Israel. Key words used to describe lives for gays in Palestine included 'secretive,' while gay lives in Israel were linked to 'safety.' Thus, Jarrar's work was used to reiterate the dichotomization of the primitive/Arab/Middle East and the modern/Jew/West fundamental to the Israeli national narrative (Boger 2008), at the same time consequently reproducing the discursive silence regarding Palestine's rights to nationhood and national rights (McMahon 2010). The rainbow flag (as well as the suffering Palestinian queer) are in this context being mobilized to create divisions and boundaries between Palestine and Israel, and being incorporated into the assemblage of Israeli homonationalism (Carson 2013; Puar 2015).

Following the media reports on both the painting and the whitewashing of the mural, Jarrar himself wrote in *The Electric Intifada* (Jarrar 2015) that his intentions were 'hijacked and manipulated' by the international press and that his work had been used in the Israeli pinkwashing. As a result, he felt the need to explain his work 'in his own words,' emphasizing the rainbow flag as a symbol of freedom, linking it to the Palestinian struggle for national independence. In a later interview, Jarrar more explicitly linked the struggle for gay rights and the struggle against the occupation and defined the U.S. refusal to 'do justice to the Palestinian cause' at the same time that they 'make a decision allowing gay marriage' as a 'double standard on rights and freedoms' (Al-Ghoul 2015).

As noted by Laskar, Johansson and Mulinari (2016), when Jarrar explicitly explains that his intention is to expand the rainbow flag to include other freedoms and rights than that of sexuality, he is condemned and even accused of using the flag to spread hatred and anti-Semitism. In this context, these accusations are to be seen as a tool in the dominant discourses on Israeli and Palestinian conflict to silence opposition and delegitimize criticism of Israel (Hallward 2013), and also as part of the strategy of pinkwashing.

The way the mural 'Through the Spectrum' was read and the rainbow flag mobilized by the Israeli media also reiterates the narrative of the Palestinian queer victimized by Palestinian homophobic culture, serving as an illustration of how queer Palestinians are not recognized by Israel in any other sense than as suffering victims (Ritchie 2014). In this way, the occupation and the struggle for national independence are

concealed, and what could be seen as a queered version of the principle of witnessing (Hochberg 2015) is played out.

Earlier it was pointed out how the Palestinian, self-identified gay man Ahmad interprets the visibility of the rainbow imagery on the Wall in terms of 'coming out' in contrast to the invisibility in the 'closet.' Ritchie (2011, 42), however, rejects what he calls 'the normalizing project of visibility' and argues that, 'The politics of recognition and visibility that dominate Israeli (and Western) queer activism privilege a particular vision of the state (as the ultimate source of queer liberation).' The Israeli state, on the other hand, is a violent state through which necropolitics conditions the lives and deaths of queer Palestinians. Thus, Ritchie (2011; 2014) posits that, for Palestinian queer activists, the metaphor of 'the checkpoint' is more productive to use than 'the closet'. By focusing on the checkpoint, the racist violence of the Israeli state is highlighted, rather than a presumed intolerant Palestinian 'culture.' The checkpoints are then seen as 'expressions of sovereign power' and create a queer Palestinian 'suffering' that, according to differs radically from Western and Israeli narratives. The metaphor of the checkpoint, by highlighting rather than evading the violence of the state, more effectively captures the particulars of this 'suffering'.

In the same way that the literal checkpoint system regulates the movement of Palestinian bodies in Israel-Palestine, queer Israeli space is organized around a set of literal and figurative checkpoints that regulate the movement of queer Palestinians (Ritchie 2011; 2014). Even if Palestinian queers try to take parts of queer spaces in 'gay-friendly' Israel, the entrances of bars and clubs function as yet another type of 'checkpoint,' in which Palestinianness is a cause for being denied entry.

Similar to Ritchie, Wagner (2013) argues that LGBTIQ visibility and the politics of occupation are inseparable, and relates visibility to mobility by speaking of an 'Israeli visibility-mobility regime.' He explores the opportunities and limitations of various forms of resistance in the Israeli/Palestinian queer and national contexts and focuses on which forms of visibility can be asserted while moving about and which can be not. For example, the World Pride events that were planned to take place in Jerusalem in 2005 were postponed to 2006 due to Israel's so-called 'disengagement' from Gaza. Since an Israeli Air Force attack on Gaza

that killed 19 Palestinians and created a 'national security alert' in fear of Palestinian retaliation, the organizers had to replace the local Pride parade in Jerusalem 2006 with a heavily guarded stationary event in a confined stadium.

While Jarrar's intention was to mobilize the rainbow flag painted on the Apartheid Wall to 'remind the world' of the oppressed Palestinian people, the mural could 'remind the world' of how the occupation has an impact on Palestinian queers as well. The Apartheid Wall embodies not only a general structural violence against the Palestinians but also the specific visibility-mobility regime Wagner (2013) speaks of, a regime that affects queer Palestinians. The obstruction of free movement limits the possibilities for Palestinian queers to participate in various social contexts and hinders them from becoming visible and recognized in certain ways, for example, as racialized Palestinian queers struggling for both LGBTIQ rights and national independence. The mural and some of the events and debates in relation to it could be considered a contribution to 'the decolonization of the Palestinian queer,' an aim that has been articulated by the Palestinian organization AlQaws for Sexual & Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society (Alsaafin 2013).

Conclusions

This article has used the case of the mural 'Through the Spectrum' to move away from the sole focus on symbolic and discursive aspects of resistance to explore it in combination with materiality. I have engaged with the materiality of resistance through the Apartheid Wall and the event of the painting and whitewashing of the mural. The mural has been explored as an element gathered into and made part of the Apartheid Wall as assemblage (Farinacci 2017), as well as queer assemblages (Puar 2007). Throughout the text, I have tried to 'unpack' and explore the different elements of the assemblages: the Wall, the mural, the rainbow flag, and how the different elements support and act together in forming resistance (Von Bush 2017, 76).

The text has particularly focused on the politics of (in)visibility and the production of visibility as a practice of resistance. It has demonstrated how visibility, as a form of resistance practiced against the principle of concealment (as part of the visual regime of Israel), and the strategy

of visibility practiced by the globalized LGBTIQ community, become intertwined.

While acknowledging the Apartheid Wall as being at the heart of Israeli spatial domination and the everyday reality of occupation, it has also been highlighted as a space created through and for Palestinian resistance. Its height, width and surface serve well as a medium for communication and, thus, enhance and strengthen visibility as a strategy of resistance. However, the resistance is not only supported by the materiality as with any other wall but, since it embodies the violence of the occupation, is shaped and oriented in a particular way. To draw on Butler (2015), the fact that Palestinian bodies come together at the Wall and perform concerted actions using the actual physical barrier that confines and imprisons them in itself signifies persistence and resistance.

It has further been argued that the mural, through operating in conjunction not only with human actors but also with various objects within the assemblages, makes possible and contributes to shaping certain types and strategies of resistance. The materiality of the Wall and the particular shape this materiality takes in certain territories and in certain segments of the Wall create both possibilities and limitations. That Jarrar painted his mural on a segment of the Wall close to the Qalandiya checkpoint has particular significance.

In addition, 'Through the Spectrum,' as a practice of painting graffiti and art on the Wall, might be understood as part of the specific Palestinian non-violent resistance of *sumūd*, of steadfastness. The very practice that Palestinian bodies in alignment with material means makes a mark on the Apartheid Wall and claims it as a space, is yet another way to materialize the politics of 'remaining on the land' and 'existence is resistance'.

Departing from Ritchie's critique of the LGBTIQ politics of visibility as 'normalizing', this text argues that the mural of the rainbow flag, as painted on the Wall and associated with national independence, creates possibilities to make visible the particular violence against queer Palestinians carried out by the Israeli State. In this way, it challenges not only the principle of concealment but also the principle of witnessing. Even though the mural was erased, the images of the mural had already

circulated on the internet, and, in the international media, the flag is still able to perform its symbolic function (Holert 2013). In fact, one could argue that the whitewashing of the mural and the absence of the rainbow imagery that it created have produced the kind of 'visible invisibility' that Hochberg (2015, 41) speaks of, 'a visibility that calls attention to itself as such.'

The mural in conjunction with the Wall displays how things can, in fact, be said to shape social interaction, to connect people as well as connecting people and things (Bennett 2010; Hodder 2014). Both the mural – the combination of colors and its significance as well as its materiality – and the Wall, its size and how it is placed, are performative; they do something in relation to the locals/Palestinians, as well as others. They transform the Wall as a space, at the same time as they transform the relations between the actors involving themselves in the events. They bind some groups together and divide others, for example as shown in the different positions taken within the Palestinian community. The Apartheid Wall as an assemblage, in concert with the mural, in fact, creates a territory in which the issues of Palestinian nationhood and sexual rights become visible as intertwined, contesting both Israeli politics of occupation as well as some forces within the Palestinian community.

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CLASSICAL BOOK REVIEW

Saul Alinsky: Rules for Radicals

Random House, New York 1971

Reviewed by *Simon Davies*

I was fourteen years of age when I first encountered Saul Alinsky's inspiring and timeless work "Rules for Radicals". All those decades ago - angry and confused - I was ploughing through a turbulent puberty, vowing to cause havoc to a school system that was harsh and prescriptive. Alinsky's book became my bedrock, and was the gateway to a subsequent life of activism.

The year was 1971. Nixon was in the White House and the Vietnam War careemed endlessly on. Nuclear holocaust was still a real prospect, the threat of a Big Brother computerised state was looming and the great rock legends of our era were dropping like flies. For any vaguely sentient young person, it was sometimes hard to imagine a better future to which we might contribute. Despite all the Flower Power songs and the hopeful early moments of student radicalism in the US, it seemed The System was impervious to change.

Still, a few of my more activist peers – even at such a young age - fought on through that despondent period, resisting the impositions of authority in whatever small way they could. Such effort was little more than symbolic. The problem was that none of us had any real insight into how to strategically engage truly entrenched power. We still believed that resistance was all about holding up a placard or huddling around a street corner chanting the lyrics from "Ohio" by Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. I did attend a couple of radical meetings, but the talk of People's Revolution did not inspire me. I just wanted my school to stop strip searching us for drugs (Davies 2018 {2} pp 148-155).

Adamant that I would find an ingenious way to thwart my school's viciously intrusive plan to vanquish an imagined Marijuana plague, I immersed myself in the public library to find guidance. Predictably, the librarians routinely pointed me to the works of Gandhi, but his teachings

were a bridge too far for a silly adolescent like me. I just couldn't make the connection between his amazing actions and the tiny task that I faced. Then, one day, a particularly enthusiastic librarian handed me a copy of *Rules for Radicals*.

“You might find this useful”, she said, excitedly. “I just got this in for you”.

Rules for Radicals was the distillation of Alinsky's lifetime of work as a campaigner and community organiser. It sets out thirteen clear and succinct principles for action written in a way that even I could understand. Alinsky died before his time the following year at the age of 63.

The work inspired me because at that time there were few – if any – simple expressions of radical nonviolent campaigning principles outside the arenas of communist and socialist activity. I was just an ordinary teenager with poor scholastic achievement and like so many other people in my situation, I needed a text that spoke to me in terms that were not academic or protracted. Marx provided a political framework for resistance but – like Gandhi – it was difficult to discover a strategic platform for action from those sources. Sun Tzu and Machiavelli were powerful motivators, but they were a universe removed from my tiny world.

Profile

Alinsky was a genius of community organising and had been an inspiration for grassroots activism in the US and elsewhere for more than thirty years. He demonstrated how creative ideas can undermine the authority of even the most powerful institutions.

It was as a Chicago criminologist, working in the 1930s in the then grey area of social work, that Alinsky took his first steps into the arena of radical activism. During the course of his studies into the demography of organised crime he arrived at the South steel mills of Chicago's west side. Here, Alinsky took the bland notion of community organisation and turned it into a rallying cry for social justice and equality.

Alinsky was a man of fierce imagination. He pioneered a generation of social and civil rights campaigning based on colourful tactics,

ingenious resourcefulness and a radical approach. These tactics rested on a broader foundation: the development of a “civil society” based on strong community partnerships.

There are many actions to recount, but one still stands as the most daring blackmail threat in Chicago’s history. At stake was the future of slum reform, the security of the world’s busiest airport – and the reputation of the entire Chicago administration.

The threat was uncompromising and simple: either City Hall met the demands of the blackmailers, or a small army of urban guerrillas would bring O’Hare airport to its knees.

These momentous affairs at the time were known to only a handful of people, and negotiations were confined to two parties. On the one side was Mayor Richard Daley, head of a vast and corrupt city administration. On the other, Saul Alinsky.

Daley faced a stark choice. Either he reformed the City’s perverted housing policy, or Alinsky would give the green light to a thousand waiting supporters to squat in every cubicle and urinal in the airport. With its facilities blocked for even an hour, the Great Hub of Chicago would be a zoo; within two hours it would become mayhem.

At the eleventh hour, the administration caved in. The mere threat of the “shit-in” was sufficient to guarantee meetings to discuss improvement of the slum areas of Chicago. Ed Chambers, then Alinsky’s right hand man, recalls: “We knew that power was not necessarily what you had or what you did, but what the enemy thought you had. If they think you are going to destroy the plumbing system or the Beethoven symphony, then they will have to act”. The O’Hare action galvanised Alinsky’s reputation as the most innovative community activist in recent American history. Principles such as the one articulated above by Ed Chambers were to become a founding principle of Rules for Radicals.

Such actions brought Alinsky a degree of fame, with an essay in Time Magazine declaring: “It is not too much to argue that American democracy is being shaped by Alinsky’s ideas” while the New York Times observed he “is hated and feared in high places from coast to coast”.

Indeed Alinsky’s networks and campaigns had become so infamous that in March 1972, shortly before his death, Playboy devoted twenty full

pages to a verbatim interview with the man (Playboy, 1972 pp 59-79).

Despite having such an undeniable influence, Alinsky was not given adequate recognition by analysts and commentators in the broader field of nonviolent action. Gene Sharp, for example, in his epic 1973 three-volume work on the subject provides only a single passing reference to the man (Sharp 1973, p.139). While it is certainly true that Sharpe's work is far broader than the scope encompassed by Alinsky, it remains something of a mystery why there is such a gulf in the literature.

This having been said, there is certainly a substantial body of criticism of Alinsky's techniques. Concern has been expressed about his military approach and his organisational philosophy. Stall & Stoecker (1997) have been particularly pointed in such criticism, claiming that Alinsky fetishises war and excludes feminist perspectives. Moreover, his approach, they conclude, creates conflict for communities that simply cannot afford to sustain conflict. Nonetheless, his work – and *Rules for Radicals* – have inspired a wide spectrum of influential people from Barack Obama and Jesse Jackson through to Ralph Nader.

The book

Rules for Radicals is a short tome. At 196 pages it is brief enough to complete on a medium-haul airline flight; a brevity that perhaps helped maintain its popularity through the years.

The book is set out in ten chapters that provide briefings on how to accomplish the goal of successfully uniting people into an active grassroots organisation with the capacity to bring change to a variety of issues. Though targeted at community and neighbourhood organization, these chapters also touch on other issues that range from ethics, education, communication and symbol construction through to political philosophy (Reitzes, Donald C. 1987 pp 265–83).

It is perhaps natural for commentators and even historians to focus on the rules laid out in the book, but there is so much more that deserves scrutiny. Alinsky discusses a great many strategies and tactics behind those rules. He is passionate about language, and the importance of taking back words that have been either appropriated or changed by the opponent (Alinsky pp 49-62). He talks of the ethical and practical

aspects of that eternal question “do the ends justify the means?”, which he summarily dismisses as a pointless question outside a highly specific context (Alinsky pp. 24-47). And as for a narrative about tactics, I remain certain that the chapter on that subject should be required reading for anyone seeking to create an influence (Alinsky, pp 127-164).

Recognising this broader context, it may be instructive at this point to glance at the rules themselves:

1. Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
2. Never go outside the expertise of your people.
3. Whenever possible go outside the expertise of the enemy.
4. Make the enemy live up to its own book of rules.
5. Ridicule is man’s most potent weapon.
6. A good tactic is one your people enjoy.
7. A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.
8. Keep the pressure on.
9. The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.
10. The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition.
11. If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside.
12. The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.
13. Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.

In 2012 - on the fortieth anniversary of Alinsky’s death – I started writing a work that sought to update and expand those rules for the modern era. Although Alinsky’s work sets out the basis of grassroots community activism, some of those concepts have become less relevant to present day campaigning. A couple have even become risky and counterproductive for some forms of activism. The first rule, for example (power is not only what you have, but what the enemy thinks you have), has become almost redundant. An era of analytics and social media will soon reveal with precision the scale of your operation. And in the modern

context it is often more effective to admit that you are small and poorly resourced than to pretend otherwise. Media love the lone maverick!

Alinsky's imagery and language is at times also archaic, polemic and even in some respects, elitist. It is also frequently cast in the masculine gender. Expressions such as "your people" and "the enemy" appear time and time again, and do not resonate with a broader audience. The book is steeped in the language of war: battle, conflict and attack. Indeed, the first chapter of *Rules for Radicals* begins with a quote from the book of Job in the Old Testament: "The life of man upon earth is a warfare" (Job 7:1) (Alinsky, S (1973) p.3). True, the militaristic theme will be inspiring to some, but it does not always sit comfortably with the cold and almost mathematical strategic analysis that is so often needed. Still, in an era of pragmatism and compromise, Alinsky reminds us that there are moments when we must metaphorically take up arms.

However, when – five years later – my project was complete, almost all of Alinsky's rules were included. We had conducted workshops and public consultations across Europe, and it was clear that his work had formed a bedrock for further development. We ended up with a hundred principles, a wide spectrum which reflected the reality that Alinsky was a campaigner who focused on a narrower "on the street" approach to actions

I have no doubt that *Rules for Radicals* will endure, despite condemnation for a militaristic and masculine approach to activism. The text itself is inspiring and informative. And importantly, it provides – even 47 years on – a modern context to ancient strategic thinking.

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BOOK REVIEWS

L.A. Kauffman: How to Read a Protest: The Art of Organizing and Resistance

University of California Press 2018

Reviewed by *Sarah Freeman-Woolpert*, JRS

On a freezing January morning, I joined a group of activists and organizers to distribute fictional copies of the Washington Post in front of the White House. Leading our group was activist and organizer L.A. Kauffman, an experienced historian and participant of radical protest in the United States. As she handed newspapers to shuffling passersby on their way to work, she cried, “Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Trump flees White House!” The newspaper, a collaborative effort between Kauffman, the Yes Men and organizer Onnesha Roychoudhuri, was dated four months into the future and laid out a colorful, rich set of stories for how grassroots women-led mobilization around the United States forced Trump to flee the White House in disgrace. Accompanied by an impressively-researched Action Guide on how to turn this hypothetical scenario into reality, the paper presented a vision and provided the tools to make it a reality.

After meeting Kauffman at the newspaper action, and thoroughly impressed as I was by the paper’s content, I decided to read her book. In this short, illustrated text, Kauffman explores the power of mass demonstrations and marches as a force of social change. She examines the role marches play both in influencing policy and transforming participants themselves. Kauffman does this largely by contrasting two of the most iconic marches in the history of the United States: the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and the 2017 Women’s March on Washington. She mentions additional examples, like the 1993 March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation, and numerous demonstrations against the Iraq and Vietnam wars, but these examples play a supporting role to the overarching comparison. By examining the difference between the March on Washington’s top-down control and coordination, particularly around uniformity of messaging

and all-male leadership, and the diverse, women-led multiplicity of messaging and expression at the Women's March, Kauffman shows how marches have evolved over time and provides insights for movement leaders using marches as a tactic within a larger strategy.

Loosely organized into three sections, *How to Read a Protest* begins by examining the 1963 March on Washington as the first mass march on the nation's capital. Among other indicators of the march as tightly controlled by a central – and all-male – leadership, Kauffman highlights that all the signs carried at the March on Washington had to be approved by the organizers and affirmed the same message. She details the ways this march was planned in collaboration with government officials, how it alienated many Civil Rights leaders with its moderate, toned-down nature — contrasted against the surge of grassroots organizing taking place around the country — and how the crowd was not engaged in singing or other forms of participation as the lead organizers, or “Big Ten,” made their speeches to the crowd.

The book then pivots to 2017, detailing how the Women's March came about through spontaneous, digital organizing; how ideas for a march came together on social media, ultimately led by women of color with a wide variance in the issues, messages, contributions, participatory elements and off-shoot events that folded together into a massive day of action and, most importantly, a significant launching pad for subsequent grassroots organizing efforts as part of a national and global resistance to the Trump presidency.

Kauffman expresses a strong affinity for the latter organizing model, although she affirms the importance of the 1963 March as a trailblazer of future mass demonstrations to come. Nevertheless, the book's structure certainly emphasizes the shortcomings of the top-down organizing model with which the March on Washington was planned, saying Malcolm X “had a point” in his critiques of the march as overly-controlled, which ultimately led him to boycott the march. Kauffman does not so much compare the advantages and challenges of two organizing models for protests – one horizontal and multi-issue, and the other more centrally-coordinated around a single issue. Rather, she presents the Women's March as an evolution of the protest to include more diverse voices and intersectional issues. This is a valuable perspective, given Kauffman's

decades of experience as a movement leader. Still, it can certainly be argued that centrally-coordinated actions have many strengths, and making one clear demand on a particular issue is often more effective in achieving a particular campaign goal. The Women's March has faced its fair share of critique for achieving measurable outcomes, which Kauffman does not cover in great detail.

Ultimately, Kauffman's book is a timely response to those who, in the wake of the Trump election, disparage mass demonstrations as futile one-off events – but she also addresses those who would claim that a historic turnout is sufficient to achieve a movement's aims. Speaking to both groups simultaneously, Kauffman manages to highlight the shortcomings of marches as a tactic: how organizers often experience burnout, neglect to follow up with action steps for participants, and as a result fail to affect meaningful policy change. Yet she also provides a hopeful view of how marches can support a movement's aims, by elevating an issue on the public agenda and catalyzing future organizing efforts. *How to Read a Protest* is an important contribution to a larger, ongoing conversation among scholar-activists about tactics and strategy, movement leadership, and measurements of an action's success. Kauffman provides an artistic, compelling narrative to complement deeper research studies and statistical accounts. Activists and researchers alike should add *How to Read a Protest* to their toolkits for understanding the art of mass organizing and resistance through the lenses of history, gender, and race. This is an important undertaking not just for building strong grassroots resistance to Trump, but for shaping and sustaining a more just and equitable future in the wake of the Trump presidency.

Micah White: The End of Protest: A New Playbook for Revolution

Knopf 2106

Reviewed by *Matthew Johnson*

Micah White, part scholar and part military strategist, has written a remarkable book challenging many ineffectual orthodoxies among (predominately leftist) protesters. He does this through careful and precise analysis of history, his own experiences, and the milieu of the Information Age.

He establishes credibility through his role in spreading the Occupy meme from his editorial perch at *Adbusters*, the eminent culture-jamming publication based in Vancouver, Canada. White was not only responsible for giving Occupy its identity, he also gave it its paradoxically elusive one demand: the abolition of corporate, pay-for-play politics in the wake of the disastrous 2010 Citizens United Supreme Court decision. Speaking as an “Occupier” who was involved in both Washington, D.C. encampments, many aspects of the Occupy movement were either misunderstood or hidden by the mainstream media. White sheds light on its beginnings and the stickiness of its namesake tactic, which failed to evolve into other, unique tactics that in tandem could foment societal transformation to the extent of my own and White’s liking.

While I agree with many of his praises of the movement—and the entirety of his criticisms—there are some elements of his scholarly, 259-page call to action that steer into the realm of propaganda. The first of which is his over-reliance on war metaphors. As much as it can be tempting to compare nonviolent activists and rioters to the mighty Roman army or the barbarian resistance, I am not so sure the metaphor holds. A general critique I have of North American activists—including the “Occupy” version of myself in 2012—is that they toe the line of grandiosity at best and jump headlong into it at worst. A major example of this grandiosity is to transform high-strung students and laid-off workers sleeping in a park into tried and true warriors marching in tight formation against the overwhelming might of the status quo. This war

metaphor may have applied in the context of Gandhi's Great Salt March or even the Revolutions of 1848, but it did not apply to any action I saw associated with Occupy Wall Street or any offshoot of it. Indeed, the lack of honest self-reflection and criticism might be just as responsible for the failure of progressive activism as the external reactionary forces deployed against it.

Another example is White's lionization of the spiritualist Starhawk, whose life-affirming philosophy he cleverly positions as contrary to the deleterious role of organized, reactionary religion in promoting ignorance, intolerance, and, ultimately, injustice. I am not so sure there is a clean line between a revolutionary spiritualism and the same revolutionary Constantinian Christianity that White refers to in order to promote theurgist—as opposed to strictly materialist—ideas in today's context. While I am certain he would not support an armed Christian movement in contemporary North America to depose the Wall Street banksters, he does not directly address the point that fanaticism is far from progressive and tolerant—even when it serves a revolutionary function. He should make his religious leanings clear and abstain from sprinkling them into an otherwise prescient and rational analysis the way a picky eater might sprinkle table salt onto an already tasty meal.

I do not mean to suggest that any part of this book was unenjoyable, however. It is a must-read for anyone lacking revolutionary animus. White has effectively shamed me for not doing more in recent years to change this world, given the simple but profound truth that in today's context a simple tweet can lead to a global uprising. I have little doubt that if this were to occur tomorrow, White would be one of the first to retweet—if not the original tweeter. I just hope he stays on to captain the new movement when it hits its most turbulent seas.

Alf Gunvald Nilsen: Dispossession and Resistance in India

Routledge 2013

Reviewed by *Nalanda Roy*, Georgia Southern University

The book *Dispossession and Resistance in India*, by Alf Gunvald Nilsen, is an engaging and endearing account of an important social movement that is rich both theoretically and empirically. The book deals with the controversial issue of building large dams in the name of development, and the Narmada Valley project in India narrates a story of oppressed communities and their zeal to overcome such atrocities.

Nilsen has provided an interesting account of a radical social movement against a major dam project in post-colonial India. With years of thoughtful research, he was able to successfully analyze and identify the evil claws of globalization and its impact in India. *Dispossession and Resistance in India* makes a significant contribution by communicating to the audience the brutality involved in the laws discriminating against the people, infringing on their rights as well as their freedom of movement and even employment. In the book, the author attempts to initiate a debate and provide a painstaking account of the oppressive nature of the regime in the twenty-first century. For scholars, who are eager to know more about 'land dispossession in India,' this book provides an excellent grounding and foundation for understanding the political perspectives of such minority groups, and their struggle to get recognized among others in the country.

The author has penned down in greater details the painful sufferings of the people and the act of brutality perpetrated by the government of India. In fact, the engagement of the international organizations has had the effect of accentuating local identities, which then gained leverage in negotiations with the state. The mantra of the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) became "Hamara gaon mein hamara raj" (Our villages, our rule). Such strong local identities in combination with the environmental NGOs produced a powerful antidevelopment movement in India. The NBA is a composite organization and movement, composed of organizations

working with the stated purpose of bringing about social change and empowerment of the marginalized. Nilsen had divided the book into nine chapters. Each chapter adds something different in explaining the significance of the issue to the audience. The author gives a vivid account as to how the state responded in the name of social control against the people.

In the book *Dispossession and Resistance in India*, Nilsen explains the militant, particularist struggles for resettlement and rehabilitation. Such demands for resettlement and rehabilitation were gradually transformed into a radical anti-dam campaign linked to national and transnational movement networks. Nilsen has answered the question as to why the anti-dam campaign was initiated and how the people opposed against the brutal tactics of the government. He also clarifies the trajectory of the anti-dam campaign between 1990-2000 and analyses the constraints involved in the making of the Maheshwar anti-dam campaign. Overall, the book discusses the development and transition of this opposition as a Social Movement and adds a voice by discussing the pros and cons of resistance in India. *Dispossession and Resistance in India* helps us to understand the challenges involved in the political participation; the role of media and freedom of the press; human rights violations as well as the issue of corruption in the government. However, maintaining an internally cohesive movement was difficult in this case because even within the local communities, winners and losers emerged in the process of compensation and resettlement. In the case of the Narmada River valley, the majority of those threatened with submergence were tribal minorities.

Setting all such ironies aside, this case study illustrates the fact that a local movement with the ideal configuration of internal factors can gain leverage by linking into external groups and resources. This flexibility (blurring the line between domestic and international issues) enabled it to thrive in the post-Cold War globalized political environment. Perhaps the main reason for the longevity of the NBA is its international recognition. The NBA took off during the late 1980s when the global North-South conflict regarding environmental issues had sharpened. Protecting the environment in the global South became an agenda of international policy in the global North. This led to the recognition

and active support of the Narmada cause from governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) abroad.

Last but not least, *Dispossession and Resistance* is based on extensive ethnographic fieldwork and research. It is certainly a delight to read in every way. No doubt, this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the Narmada Valley movement in general or about contemporary popular resistance movements against dispossession in India or in other parts of the Global South. It will be invaluable to students across the social science disciplines that are eager to know more about the Narmada Bachao Movement in India. Nilsen's book is a truly special and unique work that will leave the audience awestruck with the harsh reality.

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson: As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance

University of Minnesota Press 2017

Reviewed by Ryan Rybka, University of Massachusetts,
Amherst

The Nishnaabeg became worried when the Waawaashkeheshiwag, Moozoo, and Adikwag (deer, moose, and caribou) were nowhere to be found. For about a year, the Nishnaabeg had not seen any trace of the Hoofed Clan, leading them to become anxious, hungry, and guilty. One day, the Nishnaabeg decided to try and stop this helpless cycle by coming together in prayer, song, and offerings. They sent their fastest runners to seek out members of the Hoofed clan to understand what had happened. One runner found and talked with a young deer who explained how her relatives had left due to feeling disrespected by the Nishnaabeg who had not been sharing their meat and killing without necessity. From this information, Nishnaabeg elders, diplomats, and mediators went to the Hoofed clan seeking resolution, culminating in a negotiated agreement that the Hoofed Clan and the Nishnaabeg would honor each other in

both life and death. This story demonstrates the core of Nishnaabeg teachings, closely adhering to responsibility, reciprocity, relationality, and reverence. Beyond these core teachings, Simpson shares this story to reflect upon the contemporary realities of settler-colonialism in Canada. The deer, like the Nishnaabeg people, have directly experienced years of injustice, violence, and exploitation. Simpson urges the Nishnaabeg people to similarly partake in this radical practice by turning away from the Canadian state towards Indigenous ways of being.

As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance (2017) by Dr. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, a Nishnaabeg scholar, is a critically engaging reflexive “manifesto” that seeks to highlight the realities of contemporary Nishnaabeg life. Simpson’s central tenet is a call to action around indigenous nationhood, which she describes as “a radical and complete overturning of the nation-state’s political formations” (10). This non-violent, direct rebut of settler-colonialism, which Wolfe (2006) describes as a structure of creating a new world atop of another in pursuit of land, the “irreducible element,” is envisioned through radical resurgence movements.

This book is broken up into twelve chapters. The first two chapters serve to explain Grounded Normativity and Kwe. Chapter one focuses on defining Grounded Normativity, which is a Nishnaabeg, all-encompassing (emotional, physical, spiritual, etc.) world-view that is devoted to building and maintaining relationships. Grounded normativity guides all aspects of Nishnaabeg thought and action and is thus critical to adhere to in efforts of resurgence and radical resistance. Chapter two is centered around the understanding of kwe, a Nishnaabemowin word meaning woman that differs from a Western understanding by which it cannot be understood as capital or commodity. Furthermore, it exists within a spectrum of gender expressions and adheres to grounded normativity. Simpson explains how her positionality as kwe is, itself, a research method being that knowledge production comes from “combinations of emotion and intellectual knowledge” (29).

Chapter three focuses on settler-colonialism, which Simpson understands to be a structure bent on Indigenous dispossession and confinement by the state. Settler-colonialism has been practiced through the removal of Nishnaabeg bodies directly from the land by treaty,

violence, assimilation, and erasure. Chapter four is centered around Nishnaabeg internationalism which differs from Western versions through its adherence to grounded normativity being that one's nation is not confined to the protocols of the defined nation-state, but rather composed of "a series of radiating relationships" (58) that include all life forms- peoples, land, water, spirit, animals, etc. Chapter 5 is a reflection and critique of capitalism. Simpson makes a bold claim by positing that Indigenous peoples "have more expertise in anti-capitalism and how that system works than any other group of people on the planet" (72). She defends this position by expressing the thousands of years Indigenous Peoples have lived without capitalism and the more recent (hundreds of years) they have collectively resisted its ill-effects. Simpson argues that Nishnaabeg rejection of capitalism is not due to their lack of intelligence or technological incapability, but rather a decisive choice adhering to grounded normativity.

Chapter six is a reflection on stereotypes and how they are but one mechanism of settler-colonialism. Simpson recounts a classroom exercise with indigenous students in which she had them name stereotypes, thus highlighting immediate and individual forms of "personalized violence." Next, she had her class discuss the positive feelings that emerge from seeing someone through "Nishnaabeg eyes" as opposed to "settler-colonial eyes".

Chapter seven is a critique of Canada's deliberate historicization of settler-colonial gender violence. Simpson reflects on 19th century Methodist missions, in which white women missionaries sought out to dismantle and eradicate Nishnaabeg womanhood. Contemporary Canadian responses to historical wrongdoings are unfelt non sequiturs that speak to the fact that the majority of Canadians will do everything to preserve their nation state, regardless of its predication on violence. Chapter eight is a discussion of queer indigeneity. Simpson's resurgence project requires more than just bringing queer individuals into "straight indigenous spaces" (134). Instead, the colonially-inspired gender hierarchy that situates normative married straight, male-female, couples above all others must be eradicated to provide space for all forms of gender expressions.

Chapter nine engages with indigenous pedagogy. The land (Aki) is both research context and process. Nishnaabeg theory production is a “whole-body intelligence practice” (151) that is driven by and for the community. Being that Indigenous knowledge production is absolutely entrenched with the land, the greatest threat to indigenous pedagogy is land dispossession. Chapter ten is a reflection on Audra Simpson’s (2014) mirror metaphor in which indigenous peoples view themselves through a colonizer’s mirror, not unlike colonizer’s eyes. What is seen by indigenous peoples is shame, leading to either inward consequences such as drugs, alcohol, and depression, or outward consequences manifesting in violence. Either result only serves to justify colonial preconceptions.

The last two chapters, eleven and twelve culminate all of this rich theory driven reflection with examples of everyday acts of resurgence. Simpson explores artists such as Jarrett Martineau, Monique Mojica, and Robert Houle’s work in various mediums to explore how they all engage with colonial violence, indigenous refusal, and resurgence. Simpson concludes with the hope that this book will be just a part of much larger indigenous mobilizing efforts seeking liberation from all forms of colonialism.

Simpson’s work is theoretically dense, yet very much accessible. It is most certainly written with an indigenous audience in mind, but also appropriate for non-indigenous individuals who are cognizant that Indigenous communities are the ones leading resistance movements. Beyond Simpson’s ardent research as seen through the countless examples and personal reflections, the greatest strength of this text is her unapologetic use of indigenous language. Many words are defined into English for general understanding, yet many go undefined and contain context, cultural meanings and significance that are purposefully or inadequately fleshed out. These word choices make this work not just a “manifesto” of indigenous resistance but a physical exemplar of decolonization.

Mitchell (2018) and Alfred (2009) both describe the necessity of warriors in indigenous rejuvenation, resistance, and decolonizing efforts. A warrior is rooted in community, and instilled with values and ethics, the same that Simpson defines as grounded normativity. Mitchell (2018) argues that the lack of Indigenous warriors today is due to communities

not investing in their children through land-based teachings; instead, indigenous youth are being trained “by those operating and maintaining the broken systems that are brokering our death” (155). A central purpose for Simpson’s text is to engage with these “broken systems” to which Mitchell alludes, such as capitalism, heteropatriarchy, extraction, and settler-colonialism. All of these systems are absolutely enmeshed within one another and it is difficult to separate and isolate one from the rest. Mining efforts however have caught the attention by many around the world, particularly during the crisis at Standing Rock last year.

In an interview with the social activist and filmmaker Naomi Klein, Simpson describes resource extraction (mining) as being more than just a process of taking material from the earth, but as a mindset that has direct impact on how people understand their relationship with the earth. Mining encompasses all of these “broken systems” such as its reliance on capitalism in which life becomes, exploited, commoditized, and profit producing (Dokis 2015), or assimilation in which life is removed from its pre-colonial state and forcefully incorporated into a colonial one.

This understanding leads Simpson to posit that “the largest attack on Indigenous Knowledge systems right now is land dispossession” (170). Simpson goes on to argue that those doing the most to protect the land are not academics at conferences, but Indigenous members physically on the land. Dr. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) builds on this academic critique by asserting how academics researching indigenous culture are so entrenched in their work that they come to believe that it serves a greater good. Tuck (2009) argues that indigenous focused academic research only serves the academics themselves through their focus on documenting and interpreting Indigenous life-ways as being “broken.” Simpson presents this brokenness in a different way by examining contemporary indigenous poverty. She explains how Canada divorces the effect of poverty from the cause, the cause being centuries of settler-colonialism, which opens space for “a never-ending cycle of self-congratulatory saviorhood” (80).

As We have always done culminates with a discussion about constellations that Simpson defines as networks of people or communities that are centered around grounded normativity. Simpson beautifully explains how “constellations in relationship with other constellations form flight paths out of settler colonial realities into Indigeneity” (217).

Based on the previous discussion about resource and academic extraction, it is critical to reflect on the appropriateness of particular communities with whom to “constellate.” Simpson shares a repeated anecdote in which at every talk she delivers, a well-meaning white person asks how he or she can be part of resurgent projects. After much thought, Simpson states that “there is virtually no room for white people in resurgence” (228). In the entirety of this text, Simpson has made it clear that her audience is not liberal white academics. This work is a manifesto calling for Indigenous nationhood and so she writes to build connection and constellations with like-minded and experienced communities- Indigenous, Black, and brown. However, if indigenous efforts are made that “refuse” to center whiteness, “real” allies regardless of race will show up.

As We Have Always Done by Leanne Simpson is a thoroughly engaging text filled with rich examples, stories, and personal anecdotes that provide a strong understanding of Nishnaabeg culture, past and present. This text is relevant to anyone WHO is interested in the deep complexities of Canadian settler-colonialism, which may also be applicable for any contemporary post-colonial context. The use of Nishnaabeg language, critique of heteropatriarchy, neoliberalism, and the Western academic industrial complex is a form in of itself a decolonizing effort that make it absolutely relevant as a tool to better address our contemporary world.

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Ramnarayan S. Rawat: Reconsidering Untouchability: Chamars and Dalit History in North India

Indiana University Press, 2011

Reviewed by *Vaishali*, Department of History, University of Delhi.

In *Reconsidering Untouchability: Chamars and Dalit History in North India*, the historian Ramnarayan Rawat rewrites the history of *Chamars*, an untouchable community in the northern Indian state Uttar Pradesh. The book has two major parts. In the first part, Rawat sets out to question the political economy imposed on Dalits. In India, the Dalit caste is identified with supposedly impure or filthy ancestral jobs that provide the basis for their untouchability. Rawat examines how the *Chamar* caste came to be related with their supposed ancestral job, i.e. "leatherwork". In the second part, Rawat tries to recover Dalit agency in historical chronicles of resistance, the political and identity movement of Dalits who emerged as a politically conscious collective, while confronting and resisting religious and occupational identities imposed on them by foreign colonialists and Indian nationalists.

Rawat begins the book by referring to a case of five *Chamar* caste individuals who were stoned to death for supposedly poisoning cattle to make a profit out of marketing their hides. In India, the leather business depends on fallen cattles whose hides are sold to a broker at nominal

price, who in turn sell it at high prices to factories. The association in Indian culture between the *Chamars*, leatherwork, and criminality has a long history, which Rawat digs out in his work, with the end goal of challenging the dominant framework of understanding and retelling Dalit history. According to him the dominant framework for understanding Dalit life is to equate caste with the ancestor's occupation, and this explanatory structure has misguided many scholars. It has only served to ignore or completely overlook Dalit agency in their own histories (p. 6). He retrospectively looks at how colonial and post-colonial leaders, historians, sociologist and other scholars came to assume that *Chamars* only served as leatherworkers and landless peasants. However, when Rawat investigates this prevalent assumption of leatherwork as exclusive and the only occupational identity of *Chamars*, he finds how it is created in colonial India when *Chamars* were accused of killing cattle by injecting arsenic into their bodies (p. 46). Through his extensive research, Rawat makes clear that *Chamars* were frequently accused on the basis of non-existing evidence and constructed as a criminal entity by colonial officials with consent of Hindus in white collar jobs. In these cases, stereotypes around professional identity played a significant role, which have evolved over time and become frozen. Rawat emphasises that stereotypes around the professions of Dalits are one of the major causes of the discrimination, exclusion, and untouchability they suffer in daily life today. The silence on these stereotypes in archival documents is puzzling and needs to be resolved (p. 5). Until we find out how these stereotypes were formed and sustained over decades, there will be no solution to the continued exploitation and oppression faced by Dalits in Indian society (p. 5-6).

The question of investigating the origin of the assumption that Dalits were serving in urban leather factories never crossed the mind of many scholars. Rawat has condemned most of the colonial ethnographic accounts such as that of Briggs, who depicts Dalits as dirty and brute (barbarian) tribes of Indian society. Delving into colonial accounts and an extensive variety of local archives on settlements and land records, Rawat concludes that the *Chamars* who worked in the British leather industries were actually cultivators and agriculturalists. According to him, the problem is that while colonial bureaucrats discussed the transformation of Dalits into an urban community from a rural

background, they restricted their freedom and occupational mobility to stereotypes associated with occupation (p. 11). Rawat argues that both the colonialists and nationalists shared the same perceptions about the position of Dalits in Indian communities. While the British considered the *Chamars* to have normally been cowhide laborers since ancient times, so did the nationalists (p. 86).

Rawat elaborates on the significant role played by *Chamars* in the rural economy of British India. According to him, *Chamars* were the primary cultivators and many were not landless peasants. Though the colonial state categorised them as primarily non-proprietary and non-agriculturalist, the presence of *Chamars* in the agrarian history of Uttar Pradesh is an outstanding feature of 19th century India (p. 56). Rawat mentions several examples of gradual growth in Dalits' land-holding, despite various laws trying to prevent Dalit purchase of land (p. 63-70). One can also observe wide occupational mobility among *Chamars*. The most important point is that the *Chamars* were engaged in many other jobs, like peon, driver, or shopkeeper, to supplement their income and enhance their occupational mobility, something that is well known in their close-kin communities (p. 74). The 1911 census recorded about 80 percent of Uttar Pradesh *Chamars* as primarily cultivators and agriculturalists. Only 4 percent of them were recorded to be engaged in leatherwork, although that was projected as their sole traditional or ancestral job (p. 55-56). The huge numbers of *Chamars* as cultivators came as a surprise to colonialists who, prior to the start of the decennial census in 1871, largely saw them as leatherworkers and tenant farmworkers of *zamindars* (Indian landowners) (p. 55-56). He suggests that the association of *Chamars* with leather-work is a colonial construction which was mainly formed with the opening of leather work training schools. These schools were exclusively opened for *Chamars* with a promise of providing them jobs and making them independent. It's colonial ethnographies that associate *Chamar* with leatherwork and then transformed this textual category to an administrative and social category (p. 55).

Rawat also gives a significant account of the Dalit resistance movement. With the political awakening and help of caste associations, Dalits began to confront and challenge the colonial and nationalist

perceptions of caste. Rawat emphasises that Indian History written in the 19th century was only concerned with celebrating the myth of a glorious Hindu past. In this history, there were no *Chamars* or other Dalit castes, since they were not yet considered Hindus. There were no discussions on Dalits in national histories produced by either the Hindu or Muslim middle class intellectuals (p.121). But by the 20th century, Dalits began to produce their own histories and through their writings, political gatherings, and protests they began to challenge stereotypes, occupational identities, oppressive forms of begari (unpaid labour imposed on Dalits by *Zamindars*), and untouchability.

In the chapter '*The Struggle for Identities: Chamar Histories and Politics*', Rawat argues that in the early 20th century *Chamars* and other Dalit groups struggled to articulate a new identity for themselves and were prepared for socio-political action. Rawat argues that the creation or securing of a positive self-image and respectable identity was at the heart of Dalit politics. In the Dalit identity movement, Rawat identifies two phases or strategies chosen by Dalits to reclaim their agency. In the first phase, they claimed origins in the *Kshatriyas*, a high rank in Hindu Varna or caste system. This strategy was chosen by Dalits under the influence of activism launched by *Arya Samajist*, a monotheistic Indian Hindu reform movement that aimed to bring back Dalits within a "pan-Hindu community" and end their conversion to Islam and Christianity. The second phase came when *Chamars* began to claim *Adi-Hindu* status as original inhabitants of India. During this time, *Chamars* continuously sought to confront the Hindu narratives of untouchables by re-writing and validating their own history and forming their own political agendas. However, Rawat also points out that Dalits' own construction of their past neither remained aloof of the influence of that era nor was produced in isolation; instead, it became a part of the practice of writing the larger caste-based history. He found a commonality of themes and methodology between history produced by *Chamars* and Dalit history produced by caste Hindus. Both Dalits and caste Hindus claimed *Kshatriya* origin. Colonial masters, caste Hindus, as well as Dalit writers constructed their narratives of the past by delving into *Puranic* (ancient Hindu) texts. At first, Dalits started taking knowledge from the *Puranic* texts to claim immaculate *Kshatriya* status and situate themselves

as equal to the Hindu castes. This had become a part of their political movement around 1920, when they tried to negotiate their position in Hindu religion as propagated by the *Arya Samaists*. Conversion into other religions with egalitarian principles, such as Islam and Christianity, was a way for Dalits to protest against Hindu caste domination and free themselves from the stigma of untouchability. With the emergence of communal politics of representation, these conversions threatened to transform electoral politics in India. Hence the inclusion of Dalits into the Hindu community became a prime aim of Hindu reforming bodies like *Arya Samaj*. *Chamars* got attracted or trapped into their movements as they strengthened Dalits claim to superior status (p. 142). Rawat also argues that the political consciousness among Dalits facilitated by Congressmen often was manipulated and ultimately aimed to add to the latter's electoral success (p. 156). In the early stages of their political awakening, therefore, Dalit or *Chamar* historians fell short of critiquing the Hindu Brahminical order of caste and tried to locate their origin within high caste hierarchy (p. 123).

Rawat suggests that we can hardly understand Dalit history without taking this intrinsic and complex relationship with the Hindu caste system into consideration (p. 124). He observes that due to such complexity, Dalit writers did not help advance Indian history or clarify how colonialism related to nationalism. He says that the "Dalit perspectives have typically been rewritten to conform to nationalist agendas" (p. 12). Both Dalits and caste Hindus occupy diverse worlds with different agendas, but with deeper understanding of the Dalit history of first half of 20th century, one realises that Dalit writers were barely concerned with questions of economic inequality, lands distribution, and anti-colonial struggle of Dalits. Instead, through their writings they wanted to reclaim the dignity of their community and challenged the dominant Brahminical thought about Dalit origins (p. 12-14, 121). On the one hand, there were upper caste historians who were used to writing on socio-economic contradictions and anti-colonial class struggles, without paying attention to the humiliations done to Dalits (p. 122). On the other hand, Dalit writers were preoccupied with the humiliation faced by their own communities, but their energies were mostly utilized in denouncing the social and economic status fixed on them by both colonialists and nationalists (p. 121).

Here, Rawat wants to draw our attention towards an alternative vision for rewriting and rethinking the Indian past by underscoring the crucial association between dominance and identity within the Dalits' ongoing struggles for liberation (p. 9). He considers the rewriting of Dalit history as a fundamental need for the awakening of Dalit consciousness and for the emergence of a Dalit political movement. Rawat suggests that the major shift in Dalit historiography, as a part of their movement, comes in 1928 when scholars began to produce exclusive narratives of each Dalit category, like *Balmiki*, *Chura*, and *Khatic*. This was a radical departure from first stage of the Dalit identity movement. These histories were written to enlighten Dalit communities about their glorious but forgotten past. They showed that when Dalits raised their voice for equality in these exclusive narratives, they were actually questioning the imposed untouchable identity and their categorisation as 'begar' (free labour), (p. 122). They challenged the traditional occupational categorization of Dalits, fixed by the colonialists and nationalists.

In the chapter '*From Chamars to Dalits: The Making of an Achhut Identity and Politics, 1927-56*', Rawat gives a detailed account of the *Adi-Hindu* movement that claimed Dalits as the original inhabitants of India. This movement is taken by Dalits as part of their movement and historical narrative by the 1930s. He adds that *Adi-Hindu Mahasabha* in 1923 (later replaced as the Caste Federation in 1940, and then by the Republican Party of India (RPI) in 1956) should be credited for challenging and refashioning the traditionally stigmatized Achhut identity under the leadership of *Achhutanand*. This is a term which contributed to the rise of a new political struggle for the liberation of Dalits since it aimed to put caste and class under one umbrella (p. 158). It evolved to represent the higher social status of Dalits and to highlight their resistance to social indignities, disgrace and humiliation. The *Adi-Hindu* movement emerged with important ideological strands. It reconstructed history by claiming Dalits as descendants of the *Dasas*, *Asurs*, and *Dasyus*, royal lineages mentioned in Hindu texts (p. 160). This movement showed Congress its dual face and claimed that unless caste Hindus treat them equally in social-religious and political matters, *swaraj* (independence) would mean nothing but tightening the bonds of their slavery (p. 160). And finally, it favoured protecting Dalit rights

in legislative institutions through separate electorates as Dalits had identified the manipulative politics of Congress and lost their faith in Congress or Hindu leadership (p. 161). After Independence, *Chamars* in Uttar Pradesh tried to intervene in the political alliance with other social groups, but without diluting their commitment to an Achhut identity (p. 178). Thereby, the *Achhut* identity has denied bowing to the more powerful and dominant identities of nation and nationalism, as well as to the politics of Hindutva (p. 184).

Rawat's significant contribution is that he offers a new vision of Dalit history. He identifies Dalits as historical actors in Indian history and offers an alternative way of writing Dalit history as 'history from below,' a method still not explored much in Indian academic circles. He unravels the relationship between domination, imagined or imposed identities, and actual reality in ongoing Dalit liberation movements. Rawat shows how the history produced under the leadership of Adi-Hindu movement exposed the limitations of history produced by colonial and nationalist authors who fixed 'untouchable' as one single category for Dalits. To achieve this goal, he reads the local archives, as well as Dalits' own Hindi literature and pamphlets against the empirical knowledge produced by colonialists. With this approach, he is able to reconfigure the identity of *Chamars*, freeing them from the stigmatized and stereotyped leatherworker identity. One could criticise Rawat for depicting the Dalit movement as solely fighting for social mobility and struggling to seek parity with upper castes through rewriting their own history. But his work is important for all the emerging Dalit scholars who need to be conscious of singular, meta-narratives about Dalits. His work underlines the urgency of formulating new perspectives against the dominant methodological paradigms and the need to give Dalits new voice as they continue to pursue struggles toward removing the structures of domination, inequity, and oppression.