

RESEARCH IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, CONFLICTS AND  
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# RESEARCH IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, CONFLICTS AND CHANGE

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# BUILDING SOLIDARITY ACROSS ASYMMETRICAL RISKS: ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN PEACE ACTIVISTS

Michelle I. Gawerc

## ABSTRACT

*Social movement scholarship convincingly highlights the importance of sharing the same risks for building solidarity, but it often unintentionally conceals the reality that certain risks cannot be fully shared. Using interviews with activists involved in Combatants for Peace (CFP), a joint Palestinian–Israeli anti-occupation organization, this article illustrates how radically risks can differ for activists in relation to their nationality, as well as make clear the tremendous impact asymmetrical risks can have for movement organizations and their efforts to build solidarity. I argue that for movement organizations and joint partnerships working across fields of asymmetrical risk, solidarity is not about sharing the same risks; rather, it is about trust and mutual recognition of the risk asymmetries. Moreover, that solidarity building across risk asymmetries involves three general measures: a clear commitment to shared goals, a willingness to defend and support one another, and a respect of each other's boundaries. In the discussion, this argument, which was developed through an in-depth analysis of CFP, is applied to the joint struggle in the Palestinian village of Bil'in to indicate generalizability.*

**Keywords:** Asymmetry; risks; solidarity; trust; activists; Israel/Palestine

## INTRODUCTION

Solidarity means running the same risks.

— Che Guevara (Boal, 1995).

Complexities arise [...] when activists work to create solidarity among diverse constituencies.

— Einwohner, Reger, and Myers (2008, p. 8)

It is well understood, throughout social movement studies, to mobilize and sustain commitment to the cause among participants in social movement organizations, a sense of solidarity needs to be cultivated (Einwohner et al., 2016; Hunt & Benford, 2004). Likewise, numerous articles stress the importance of risk-sharing for fostering solidarity (Gamson, 1991; Hirsch, 1990; Mollin, 2017; Nepstad, 2001; Smith, 2002). While these articles convincingly highlight the importance of publicly sharing risks, the framing of this argument unintentionally conceals the reality that in many social movements and social movement organizations, the risks *cannot* readily or fully be shared. This is clear, for example, in the anti-apartheid student movement at Columbia University, when South African students faced significantly more risks than American students (Hirsch, 1990), the global justice movement, where middle-class white activists in Seattle faced fewer risks than poorer activists and people of color in New York and Toronto (Wood, 2007), and in the joint Israeli–Palestinian peace movement, where Palestinian activists face significantly more risks than Israeli activists (Gordon & Grietzer, 2013; Hallward, 2009).

Numerous scholars emphasize the need to consider the context which is clearly important in shaping the type of solidarity constructed among movement organizations (Einwohner et al., 2008; Featherstone, 2012). Relatedly, Fireman and Gamson (1979) called for more empirical research to identify useful strategies for increasing solidarity under *different* conditions. That said, there has been little research since investigating how movement organizations build solidarity in locales where the risks of participation differ substantially in terms of race, class, gender, and/or nationality, and how disproportionate risks within a movement threaten its cohesion (for an exception in the case of the latter, see Wood, 2007).

Yet, as can be seen from the Einwohner et al. (2008) quotation that introduced this chapter, we know from the literature that there are significant challenges engendering solidarity for groups working across inequalities and difference (also see Bystydzienski & Schacht, 2001). Indeed, activists in these groups are often linked, in various ways, to the resources and goals being pursued by the movement (Bernstein, 2008). Moreover, their sense of agency and empowerment tends to differ dramatically because of the participant's contrasting social locations (Gamson, 1991). In addition, they cannot take for granted shared beliefs and lifestyles, which can foster solidarity (Nepstad, 2004), and trust cannot be assumed, as it is often a process to build (Gawerc, 2016). Furthermore, the identity promoted is rarely reinforced in the local setting (Smith, 2002), participants often experience cross-pressures (Einwohner et al., 2016), and the same



actions taken by one or some members can have radically different consequences than those taken by other members based solely on one's social location (Wood, 2007). These differences make building solidarity extremely difficult. Therefore, how groups navigate these challenges in building solidarity is beneficial as a focus of the current study.

This research addresses these issues by examining how Combatants for Peace (CFP), a joint Palestinian–Israeli peace movement organization, cultivated solidarity despite the asymmetrical risks to focus on ending the Israeli occupation and all forms of violence between the two sides. Asymmetrical risks, as I use it here, refers to the differing dangers anticipated or faced by individuals or groups due to where they are socially situated in terms of race, class, gender, nationality, and/or some other identity. I base this, in part, on McAdam's (1986, p. 67) definition of risk that states, "Risk refers to the anticipated dangers – whether legal, social, physical, financial, and so forth – of engaging in a particular type of activity." However, the important point for the present study is that actions are often riskier for some than for others due to social location. Uneven risks include the prospect of being responded to with violence, the likelihood of harassment by the authorities or targeted violence, the amount of legal protection available, the financial consequences and the ability to insulate oneself from them, and the type of reactions from other groups one belongs to, including one's community.

CFP is an outstanding case for this study given the substantial asymmetries in risk faced by Palestinian and Israeli activists, which include all of the above. This case makes clear that risks cannot always be shared and they may have a significant impact on cohesion. At the same time, it shows that solidarity can be developed however uneven the risks may be. I argue that solidarity in CFP was based on trust and mutual recognition of the asymmetrical risks, and required activists to make clear their commitment to their shared goals, be willing to defend and support one another, and respect the boundaries of the other group. To establish generalizability, I use secondary literature to indicate that these measures similarly hold true for another case of joint Palestinian–Israeli struggle: the Palestinian-led struggle in the village of Bil'in in the occupied West Bank. This research details the risks, their impact, and the measures required for solidarity across the asymmetrical risks. It also provides analysis of each measure and their importance individually and together, for solidarity.

## THEORY

According to Melucci (1996, p. 23), solidarity is "the ability of actors to recognize others and to be recognized, as belonging to the same social unit." In addition to being identified with a group, solidarity also connotes a commitment to the group (Gamson, 1991). Several researchers, have noted the importance of risk-sharing in fostering solidarity. As can be seen from the quotation that introduced this chapter, Che Guevara, while not a researcher, reportedly defined solidarity as "running the same risks" (Boal, 1995, p. 3). Relatedly, Nepstad (2001, p. 29) pointed out that Salvadorian martyr Archbishop Romero refused to hire

security guards even after he began receiving death threats and stated “he would accept the same risks that the Salvadoran people faced.” Gamson (1991) similarly highlighted the importance of publicly sharing risks for building solidarity and commitment, providing illustrations in the base communities in El Salvador and in the anti-Vietnam War movement in the United States (see also Hirsch, 1990 and Smith, 2002).

While these articles highlight the benefits of risk-sharing for solidarity – in the building of a sense of belonging, identification, and commitment – they unintentionally conceal the reality that there are different risks participants *often* face which depend on where one is socially situated. Indeed, in the case of El Salvador and the base communities, as one North American activist noted in 1978, “the people [of the Santiago shantytown] are there to stay [while we] have the security of knowing we can return [to the United States] at any time” (Mollin, 2017, p. 237). Also in Gamson’s discussion of the teach-in against the war in Vietnam at the University of Michigan, he reveals that the participants included non-tenured faculty and graduate students, and it is reasonable to assume that these two groups experienced greater risks than the tenured faculty. Thus, this often portrayed image of movement participants facing similar risks distorts the reality and the activist experience (e.g., Gordon & Grietzer, 2013). Consequently, it also misrepresents the challenges movement organizations face when it comes to building solidarity, as well as the practices required for it.

As Wood (2007) indicates, asymmetrical risks complicate the process of cultivating solidarity because they underscore differences between activists, hinder the ability of more at-risk individuals to identify with those less at-risk, and provoke fragmentation among differing identities. Yet, there is evidence solidarity is present in movement groups who work across risk asymmetries. Indeed, this is clearly seen in the various partnerships between Palestinians and Israelis focused on ending the occupation, whose risk asymmetries are substantial (e.g., Gawerc, 2017; Gordon, 2010; Hallward, 2009). Given that such groups cannot rely on equal risk-sharing and the complications this creates, the question becomes: How do movement organizations and joint partnerships foster solidarity across asymmetrical risks? What are the measures through which solidarity can be built and maintained?

While there is no literature focused specifically on how solidarity is fostered when the risks cannot be fully shared (for a partial exception, see Gawerc, 2017), there are studies that look more broadly at what is involved in fostering solidarity across inequalities. This literature indicates that trust is the basis for such groups (Gawerc, 2016; Smith, 2002; Wood, 2005) and it is of the utmost importance for privilege and power asymmetry to be acknowledged and managed (Einwohner et al., 2016; Gawerc, 2013; Hallward, 2009). As Kraemer (2016) argues, recognizing privilege, along with being willing to fight to end it, initiates the trust-building process, which is so crucial in building solidarity. Gawerc (2017) reveals that solidarity may require dominant group members, at times, to engage in actions on their own, to relieve pressure from those more at-risk.

In this chapter, building on such studies, I argue that solidarity is based on trust and mutual recognition of the risk asymmetries rather than purporting to share the

same risks. Moreover, I propose three general measures to help in explaining how solidarity can be built across asymmetrical risks. The measures comprise of activists: (1) clarifying their commitment to shared goals, (2) defending and supporting one another, and (3) respecting the boundaries of the other group/s.

The initial measure, for solidarity building across asymmetrical risks, relates to activists' commitment to shared goals, as they need to be convinced that the "collective entity [is] worthy of personal sacrifice [...] [and should] take priority over the needs and demands of everyday life" (Gamson, 1991, p. 45). Indeed, the literature suggests that this involves knowing others are similarly committed (Gamson, 1991; Hirsch, 1990) and while a need for all movements, this is likely to be particularly important for those that work across difference and inequality since shared beliefs cannot be taken for granted (Nepstad, 2004) and trust cannot be assumed (Gawerc, 2016). This is particularly true for non-dominant group members who often have additional reasons to mistrust dominant group members (Hackl, 2016; Pallister-Wilkins, 2009). In such movements, dominant group activists often must prove themselves to their compatriots who are less privileged and oftentimes have more to gain if the movement should succeed in reaching its goals (Golan, 2011; Myers, 2008).

Second, I argue that a willingness to defend and support one another is also a central measure for solidarity building across asymmetrical risks. While this measure too is likely critical for all movements, as it encourages activists to take risks by reassuring them that they are not alone and their compatriots will stand by them (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001), it is likely more important for movements that work across uneven risks as well as the activists who face greater threats (Hackl, 2016). For example, those whose necks are disproportionately on the line are likely to want to know that they can count on the more privileged participants to stand by them, prevent their arrest, help them get out of jail, and/or publicize their situation to help ensure their security (Wright, 2016). This measure, which takes the form of support and commitment to one's comrades, is theoretically critical to counter the often-diminishing identification of individuals more at-risk from their peers who face less risks for the same actions (Wood, 2007).

Third, I argue that respecting each other's boundaries – particularly of those who face greater risks – is also crucial for solidarity. Theoretically, it could enable activists to feel safe (as they establish their own limits) as well as respected in the organization, and as Flesher-Fominaya (2010) indicates, satisfying these emotional needs is critical for cohesion. As noted, this is likely to be particularly important for more at-risk activists given both the disproportionate risks they face (Pallister-Wilkins, 2009) as well as the additional challenges they tend to have identifying with their more privileged counterparts (Wood, 2007). Moreover, ideally, this practice of respecting each other's boundaries could also help to manage the tendency of dominant groups to dominate decision-making (Munkres, 2008), which at least in the case of Israel–Palestine played a role in the break-down of numerous joint peace efforts (Gawerc, 2012; Maoz, 2004). Thus, this measure provides a way for groups to manage the risk asymmetries by enabling activists to determine their own boundaries, while also helping to

assure equality and a culture of respect, all of which are helpful in developing a sense of solidarity.

I argue, ultimately, that through these three measures CFP was able to build solidarity notwithstanding the acknowledged uneven risks. And, in the discussion, I apply this theoretical frame to another example of joint struggle between Palestinians and Israelis to indicate generalizability.

## METHODOLOGY AND GROUP STUDIED

This research focuses on one of the most prominent joint Israeli–Palestinian peace movement organizations in Israel/Palestine today: CFP. There are a handful of Israeli organizations (e.g., Ta’ayush, Anarchists Against the Wall (AAtW)) that engage regularly in solidarity work with Palestinian villages whether in protests of the wall or in olive picking or helping to build structures, and have managed to build a strong culture of solidarity. However, CFP is unique in that it defines itself as a joint/bi-national movement organization. It is one of the only joint Israeli–Palestinian movement organizations engaged regularly in non-violent protest activities.

The organization was jointly founded in 2006 by former Israeli Defense Force soldiers and Palestinians who were formerly engaged in the armed struggle for Palestinian liberation. The Jewish Israeli founders were from the Israeli organization, Courage to Refuse which formed during the Second Intifada, and consisted of combat officers and soldiers that refused to serve in the Occupied Territories. A foreign journalist brought to the Israelis’ attention that there were Palestinians in the West Bank who were similarly refusing to take part in the armed struggle and after the foreigner brokered a connection (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2001), members of the two groups decided to meet. After a year of secretive and intense meetings, they decided to form CFP (see Gawerc, 2016).

CFP was one of a range of Israeli organizations that began to take action after the eruption of the Second Intifada in September 2000 and Israel’s military response. Fleischmann (2016) divides these groups into two categories: radical and alternative.<sup>1</sup> The radical groups such as Ta’ayush and AAtW took the form of Palestinian solidarity groups who worked closely with Palestinian villages and were committed to “going to places where the occupation and expulsion actually take place,” in order to “confront racism and discrimination where they happen” (Dana & Sheizaf, 2011). The alternative groups, in contrast, took varying approaches to reveal the hidden realities of occupation, while balancing universalism and particularistic values in their framing. She characterizes CFP as one of the central alternative groups because, while it engages in resistance and solidarity activities and condemns and brings attention to the oppression and suffering of Palestinians, it has historically been in support of a two-state solution, which allows Israeli activists to continue to identify as Zionists. It should be noted that the framing on the Palestinian side similarly allows the Palestinian activists to identify as Palestinian nationalists and to stay somewhat within the consensus.

CFP believes that:

the conflict cannot be resolved, through military means, by either of the parties [...] [and] that only through joint action [...] [Israelis and Palestinians] break the cycle of violence and put an end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

They define their approach as “that of nonviolent struggle” (CFP, n.d.). While they also engage in educational activities, they are clear that they are an action group and not a dialog group. Most of their funding comes from small donations through crowdfunding and their website (predominantly raised from the US and Israel), as well as funds raised through their friend organizations in the US and Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Their organizational structure is noteworthy because each national group has some autonomy. Their guiding principles explain:

[While] CFP is a joint Palestinian–Israeli Movement [...] it acknowledges the existence of two separate peoples within it. Thus, the two national groups in CFP have a certain degree of autonomy to manage their affairs in accordance with the Movement’s creed and goals, while taking into consideration political, social and cultural considerations of both of the two groups. (CFP, n.d.)

In terms of the participants in CFP, it should be noted that the organization was originally male-dominated, given that the founders were all combatants and used their former involvement in military activities to gain legitimacy. Beginning in 2008, however, the organization broadened its membership requisite to include non-combatants given the mutual belief that in “militarized societies such as ours [Israeli and Palestinian] everyone was in one way or another involved in the violence” and that to bring change, “they needed everybody” (Fleischmann, 2016, p. 373). Consequently, CFP now includes many more women, however, mostly on the Israeli side. The ages of the participants are diverse, although most are between the ages of 20–60, with the Israelis typically a little younger than the Palestinians. In terms of the Israelis, they are almost all Jewish, and as is the case in the broader Israeli peace movement, it disproportionately consists of middle-class and highly educated European (Ashkenazi) Jews.<sup>3</sup> The Palestinians are largely all from the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, and predominantly Muslim, with some from the cities and some from the villages. Compared to the Israelis, they are much less well-off.

As part of a larger study focused on constructing and sustaining collective identity, I collected data on CFP in the three-month period before the 2014 War in Gaza (April–June 2014), and a three-week period several months after the war ended (December 2014). In the three-month pre-war period, I conducted 22 interviews with Israeli and Palestinian peace activists in the organization (11 Palestinians and 11 Israelis) and, in addition, observed events, actions, and meetings. Given the impact the July–August war in Gaza had on Israeli–Palestinian organizations, I returned for three weeks in December to learn more about how the organization managed during the war. I interviewed 12 participants (6 Israelis and 6 Palestinians), who were key informants which I met with during my previous visit to the region. The 10 men and two women interviewed



were aged 30–50 and were from different geographical locations in Israel and the occupied West Bank. These semi-structured interviews were conducted in English or Hebrew. I also offered Palestinian activists the choice of conducting the interview in Arabic with the help of a translator. This chapter relies largely on the data collected in December 2014, since I asked the participants directly about how they fostered solidarity across the uneven risks, but the interviews and observations from the earlier trip also provided useful insights.

The data were coded and analyzed using Atlas.ti; individual themes were utilized for the unit of analysis. This required coding single sentences, single paragraphs, and groups of paragraphs. Although the coding was largely inductive, I also coded concepts derived from the literature. The inductive generation of codes was important, however, as it allowed me to recognize unforeseen themes and patterns. Indeed, the inductive coding revealed the radically different risks faced by Israeli and Palestinian activists (thus challenging the assumption in much of the social movement studies literature that the risks can be shared) as well as the three general measures required for solidarity building across such uneven risk.

The section *Asymmetrical Risks in the Context of the Israeli Occupation* specifies the asymmetrical risks in the environment wherein the Palestinian and the Israeli activists operated. Names of research participants have been anonymized.

## ASYMMETRICAL RISKS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION

Because of the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian territories, Israeli and Palestinian activists faced starkly different risks when it came to participation in a joint Palestinian–Israeli peace movement organization. These differences included the approach of the different legal systems they faced, the likelihood of their being hurt and harassed by the Israeli military, the impact joint anti-occupation activism could have on their ability to make a living and support their families, and the responses received by their respective civil societies.

First, it should be noted that the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian West Bank created a situation where national affiliation determined the legal system under which activists were tried. Whereas Israelis arrested in the West Bank were tried in civilian courts, Palestinians would be tried in Israeli military courts (Abu-Zayyad, 2016). The consequence is that activists who stood accused of the same crime (and from the same protest event) would be “arrested, prosecuted, and sentenced in drastically different systems — each featuring staggeringly disparate levels of due process protections” (Omer-Mann, 2016). In the words of Noam, an Israeli activist:

Given the structure of the conflict, the Israeli Jews are, by definition, more privileged. The Palestinians [...] are under more risks. For example, when I was arrested in the demonstration, I felt that I was covered by the lawyer; I'm covered by the Israeli legal system, and by the [Israeli] Supreme Court. Nobody would put me in jail for a puppet demonstration [...] but Haitham or Osama or Walid, they might be [...] [It's not so far-fetched] that Haitham will get half a year of administrative detention [arrest without trial] if he crosses a line [...] So that

makes a difference, because we are not running the same risks. Even if we want to run the same risks, we are not.

Haitham, a Palestinian activist, explained:

A Palestinian can go to jail for six months without a trial, and it can be extended for another six months, just because the [Israeli authorities] decide he is dangerous. An Israeli, even if he creates the biggest demonstration ever, he will only be taken for one or two hours, then they will release him.

The reality at protests, according to activists present, was that Palestinians were also more likely to be subjected to violence by the Israeli army; this was especially true if there were no Israelis present or if the Israelis and Palestinians were separated by the separation wall. Samir, a Palestinian activist, relayed that the Israeli soldiers were less likely to “shoot or use a lot of tear gas” when there were Israelis present. Marwan, also Palestinian, similarly noted:

The Israelis’ presence makes it a little different, because they [the Israeli army] will think differently [...]. At the last demonstration in Bethlehem, the Israelis and us were separated by the wall, so they threw a smoke bomb at us [the Palestinian protesters].

Relatedly, Palestinian involvement in anti-occupation activism could also lead to harassment by the military. As Khalil, another Palestinian activist, stated: “You can be arrested or have your permit taken away or asked for an interview with Intelligence, or wounded or killed. All the options exist.” This, too, was something that the Israeli activists did not have to face. As Yael, an Israeli activist, remarked:

The sacrifices [made] are different [...] I’m secure. Nobody can take me from my home in the middle of the night. No one can put me in jail for no reason [...] They risk more than me in terms of their families and their relationship with the Israeli authorities. I’m not afraid what the Israeli Secret Services will do to me. What can they do to me? [...] [But] the military can harass them any minute, anywhere on the West Bank.

In addition, as Khalil indicated, Palestinian anti-occupation activists who worked in Israel risked losing their work permits to enter Israel due to participating in a protest. The consequence could be a loss of one’s income, and possibly, one’s job. For the Israelis, activism in the organization rarely threatened their job and income. As Marwan noted:

If you talk about activities on the ground, like in the village, people [Palestinians] are afraid to participate. The Israelis can come and go [but Palestinians cannot] [...] Like the other day, I didn’t want to show myself in the demonstration. I came afterwards [for the CFP meeting] because I didn’t want them [the Israeli authorities] to take my [work] permit. I need to work. These differences between both sides are a big deal.

Rimon, an Israeli activist, added:

As soon as they are photographed, the Shabak [Israel’s internal security service] has this very sophisticated face identification software and they just run the photographs through it [...] Then they call them in—and that’s the end of the guy’s employment. Think of the implications of this—his family goes hungry if he gets caught at a demonstration.

In addition to the different risks Palestinian activists faced with the Israeli authorities, along with the consequences for their freedom, livelihoods, and families, there were also different risks when it came to the participants' civil societies. Several of the Palestinians highlighted the challenge of participating in a joint movement, given the taboo against normalization. In the Palestinian context, normalization has been defined as

the participation in any [initiative] [...] that aims [...] to bring together Palestinians [...] and Israelis [...] without placing as its goal resistance to [...] the Israeli occupation and all forms of discrimination and oppression against the Palestinian people. (PACBI, 2011)

Those who engage in normalization are viewed as assisting Israeli propaganda efforts in maintaining the deceptive and harmful illusion of normalcy in a blatantly abnormal situation of military occupation. While this organization was clear in its opposition to the Israeli occupation – and thus not seen by Palestinian CFP activists as normalization – it could be understood as such by the broader society, given the frequent lack of agreement on its parameters. The Palestinian activists all indicated that this taboo posed problems for them. As Ihab explained:

On a societal level, meeting with the other side is not necessarily an acceptable Palestinian idea [...] [It] is seen as a form of normalization in a lot of ways— [...] [not as] part of the Palestinian resistance [...] So, they don't really look fondly upon these kinds of activities. I faced a lot of opposition from my family [...] It affects the Palestinian [participants] [...] because it's not necessarily a good thing to be known as 'Ihab, the normalizer.' It has negative connotations inside the society.

Khalil similarly added:

The Palestinians face more risks from their own street [than the Israelis do from theirs]. They are more at-risk for revenge because not everyone on the Palestinian side agrees with working with Israelis [...] Because [of] the occupation [...] [and the] oppression that Palestinians face [...] it's harder for the Palestinians to accept the other side.

While some Israelis also found participating in the organization challenging, largely due to friends and family members that did not agree, the amount of pressure and the risks involved differed substantially. As Shai stated: "For the Israelis, the most dramatic risk would be of being secluded, of being severely criticized. Not much more than that." Keren, in agreement, noted: "I know that I can be called names – a traitor, whatever – and I'm perfectly alright with this. The limits or risk for us as Israelis, are much fewer." While being a left-wing activist in Israel had become increasingly difficult over the years – and was particularly challenging during the wars in Gaza – the activists were all clear that the risks could not be compared.

Not surprisingly, as the section *Impact of the Asymmetrical Risks* highlights, building on Wood (2007), these uneven risks had a significant impact.



## IMPACT OF THE ASYMMETRICAL RISKS

The asymmetrical risks manifested themselves within the organization in a plethora of ways, including the degree of empowerment and despair felt, the different levels of cautiousness when discussing tactics, the varying levels of difficulties identifying with the movement organization, the varied ways one could stand up for fellow activists in one's community, and the visibility of activists at protests.

For starters, many of the interviewees commented that the Israelis in the organization felt more empowered than the Palestinians, who tended to feel disempowered and hopeless. This did not only have to do with the disproportionate risks, but the oppressive larger reality including Palestinians having to pass checkpoints to return to their homes, villages, and communities still under occupation and the struggles this yields, while the Israeli Jews will return to Tel Aviv or West Jerusalem, both of which feel miles away from the occupied territories. And as Gamson (2011) indicates, while hope is a mobilizing emotion and critical for a sense of collective agency, hopelessness is a demobilizing emotion and poses a significant challenge for movements. Consider the following quotes:

Noam: There's a serious problem right now of passion. I think the Palestinians are much more hopeless at the moment, than the Israelis in the movement. They don't see any way out of this situation. They are tired of struggling nonviolently; they are tired of convincing themselves and their people that what we are doing is useful.

Haitham: The most important thing is believing [...] [but] our faith is going up and down with all that's around us—and also our hope. Because you can't have your whole life just saying to people, 'nonviolence, hope, tomorrow will be better.' Palestinians have been hearing this for 50 years [...] At some point, they will say to you, 'go away, you're telling me lies!'

Due to asymmetrical risks, Palestinians were also, understandably, much more cautious and hesitant when discussing possible tactics, or preparing to implement tactics previously agreed upon. As Shai noted, "They get reluctant." Thus, the discussions over tactics highlighted the differences between the two groups (Wood, 2007), and it lead, at times, to frustration and conflict. As Nirit, an Israeli activist, indicated:

Many times, the Israelis want to do something and the Palestinians [hesitate and sometimes] withdraw. They say, now is not a good time. It's frustrating [...] I can totally understand them of course. It is much easier for us [Israelis] in a way to take this position of saying we have to fight [...] because I am not going to pay the price, probably, but *they* are [...] So yeah, it is hard.

The uneven risks, particularly the stigma attached to Palestinians who work with Israelis, also made it harder for Palestinians to identify with the organization. Notwithstanding the solidarity they felt with CFP, the taboo against normalization had led some of the Palestinian activists to feel hesitant participating and, at times, embarrassed by their participation in a joint movement in the context of occupation. As Ihab noted, "Questions arise like, 'Am I doing the right thing? Am I going in the right direction?'" Naseef similarly relayed:

The occupation and the settlements [particularly in the context of the normalization taboo]—they do affect [...] I get embarrassed [by my participation at times]. For instance, two days

ago, the Israeli army came and demolished a house and caused problems in one of the villages we are working in. So I get embarrassed by delivering our [joint] message [of nonviolence] when the occupation is still perpetuating these actions.

Likewise, the taboo also made it harder for Palestinians to publicly stand up for fellow Palestinian activists out of fear of the repercussions from other Palestinians. And this, of course, could make the Palestinian activists feel more alone and at-risk in their own society, in addition to alienating some from the movement. As Niv, an Israeli activist, described:

[The normalization taboo] is not new but it has grown much more powerful [...] And a journalist attacked us [recently claiming we are normalizers] [...]. They attacked Zaid, the leader on the Palestinian side, on Facebook. And I [asked] Haitham the other day, 'Where were you [all]?' I mean, the [core] family was there, but many of the others [...] they met and they gave him personal support, but they didn't publicly or at least on Facebook [stand up for him]. So, of course, I was exaggerating a little bit when I said you don't have Asabiyya [i.e., solidarity], but I think it is not strong enough [on the Palestinian side] to withstand this [for all of them].

Finally, the impact of the unbalanced risks also manifested themselves through the visibility of activists at protests. Recall Marwan revealing how the risk of losing his work permit, often caused him to skip protests altogether. For Palestinian activists who attended the protests, they often sought to minimize the risks in other ways. In the words of Shai, an Israeli activist:

In the protests, you can see all the symptoms. The Israelis are much louder than the Palestinians. The Palestinians get much more passive. They get more reluctant. They get more low profile probably because some of them might be harassed later.

These asymmetrical risks, as Wood (2007) suggests, highlight the differences between Israelis and Palestinians. Moreover, they increase frustration, conflict, and misunderstanding between the groups, and they make it harder for Palestinians to identify not only with their Israeli compatriots, but also with the movement organization itself.

Notwithstanding the impact and the challenges posed by such risks, as the section *Trust and Recognition of Asymmetrical Risks for Solidarity* stresses, the activists were able to foster solidarity across the asymmetrical risks, enough for one Palestinian activist to call CFP "my political home" and state that "this is a kind of solidarity, a kind of brotherhood."

## TRUST AND RECOGNITION OF ASYMMETRICAL RISKS FOR SOLIDARITY

In this deeply asymmetrical context, where activists from both communities faced risks that differed substantially based on where they were socially situated, trust, as Wood (2005) and Smith (2002) suggest, was key. Indeed, many of the activists attributed their solidarity to how well they knew each other, their shared vision and commitment to ending the occupation and the conflict through non-violence, and their personal relationships, which they developed over the years (see Gawerc, 2016). Consider the following quotes:

Samir: The sense of solidarity is very strong, because we went step by step and really got to know each other. It took us two years to create trust, and to trust each other [...] Solidarity came from knowing each other, [recognizing] our shared goals, and understanding our [different perspectives].

Noam: There's something deeper and stronger that binds us together. I think it's the [...] process that we went through together, the constant humanization that we are committed to, which lies on the grounds of opposing violence of any kind [...] and our very strong inter-subjective relationships in the movement, which create a very firm ground for a mutual struggle.

For the activists in this organization, trust itself was based on their commitment to try and manage the acknowledged mutual risks. As Shai noted:

It's important for us to [always] remember the basic paradigm on which CFP acts [which] [...] is not a symmetrical conflict paradigm, but an asymmetrical occupation paradigm [...] Acknowledging this is important [for true solidarity].

The Palestinian activists, particularly, needed to know that their Israeli colleagues recognized and operated in ways that accounted for the differing realities and risks. Moreover, they needed to know that they would not dominate leadership roles and decision-making in ways that privileged people often do (Munkres, 2008). As Samir emphasized:

From the beginning, we were clear that there is no symmetry between the situations. But in CFP, we are very equal. We have two coordinators, we have two steering committees, [and] the mechanism [of] how we take decisions—the Israelis cannot decide for me at all [...] [Actually,] the Israelis come to ask us what we [Palestinians] want to do because they understand that their ideas may not work in our situation [or for us given the risks we face].

Indeed, one of the working principles for CFP is equality, which they suggest entails recognizing the lack of symmetry in the political situation, committing to confront the power relations that exist in the region, and striving for equality in the organization. Reflecting on it, Meir, an Israeli activist, noted:

From the first minute I was in the organization, the [asymmetries and the] power relations between the two sides was an open issue. So maybe in a strange way, when you make note of the asymmetry and when you make it an open issue, you also create a [stronger sense of] "we."

For this movement organization, trust and solidarity involved engaging in the measures introduced earlier: a clear commitment to shared goals, defending and supporting one another, and respecting the boundaries of the other group

### *Making Clear Their Commitment to Their Shared Goals*

First and foremost, solidarity for this bi-national cross-conflict organization required the activists to make clear their commitment to their shared goals. Noam would not have been surprised, as he believed that their commitment to "embodying [their] belief in action" the basis of their solidarity. While it is important for participants in any movement organization to make clear their

commitment to their shared goals (Gamson, 1991), it is especially important for activists that work across difference and asymmetrical risk, since trust cannot be taken for granted (Gawerc, 2016). Moreover, as Myers (2008) argues, activists from dominant groups often must prove themselves to their colleagues. Indeed, given the reality of the 50 year-long occupation, the presence of dialog groups in the region that do not take a stand on the occupation, and the Palestinian societal taboo against normalization, it was especially important for the Israelis to make clear their commitment through visible actions to ending the occupation (Golan, 2011). In the words of Khalil:

I identify more with CFP than [any other joint organization], because it addresses the needs of the Palestinians [...] Palestinian [society] sees that we take initiative and we go and do demonstrations against the occupation, against the settlements, as well as conducting activities in solidarity with the Palestinian hunger-strikers and the prisoners. So even those people who accuse CFP of doing normalization [...] see that we are actually trying to change the situation.

It was critical for the Palestinian activists to know that the Israeli activists were doing all that they could to further their shared goal. Consequently, the Palestinian activists took heart when their Israeli colleagues were willing to be arrested in the struggle against the occupation. In the words of Ibrahim, a Palestinian activist: "Through it, you feel that they are [truly] invested in the cause."

In fact, many of the Palestinian activists were drawn to the organization – or open to participating in it – because the Israeli activists refused to serve in the occupied territories, as it is a condition of their participation. In addition, some refused to serve in the military at all. This effective withdrawal of support by the Israeli activists from the military occupation was crucial for the Palestinian activists. As Khalil noted:

[In CFP] some of them were part of the army, but now they reject it. And even if they do join the army, they don't serve in the occupied Palestinian territories. It is important.

At times, the uneven risks have meant that the Israeli activists needed to be willing to act alone. In fact, during the 2014 Gaza War, the risks to Palestinians for their participation were so great, particularly given the strengths of the normalization taboo at the time, that few Palestinians were willing to participate in joint protests. The Israeli activists recognized through their conversations with their Palestinian colleagues that they would need to take actions on their own and in their own community. The Israeli side of CFP organized several protests in Israel and became one of the leading organizations in the protests against the 2014 Gaza War (see Gawerc, 2017).

For the Palestinian side, the actions taken by the Israelis further strengthened their affinity with the organization. As Ihab shared:

[When I saw the protests through the media], I felt proud and identified with the organization more because they actually undertook these activities by themselves, not necessarily with the Palestinians. And it showed what they believe in, their convictions, and their identities, which are against the war, which was very good.

Marwan also mentioned:

CFP get[s] less critique in our society than other organizations, but that's mainly because of the Israeli partners—the refuseniks. They don't serve in the occupied territories, and they do [...] demonstrations of this kind. So people accept them more than other [joint] organizations [...] The Israelis' actions are to our credit on the Palestinian side. I think we depend a lot on their action [...] [And in part because of it, I feel that] CFP is my political home. This is a kind of solidarity, a kind of brotherhood.

While the situation was unbalanced, it was also important for the Israelis to know that the Palestinians were committed to non-violent resistance and their partnership. As Shai noted:

The bi-national steering committee meeting on Skype during the 2014 Gaza War was very moving, very important [...] It was important for us to know [...] that the Palestinians didn't move an inch in their position or solidarity with us. The fact that now Israelis are hurting their people didn't inflict on their solidarity with us at all. It was important for us to hear.

As Shai's quote suggests, during more difficult times, it is important to receive oral confirmation of the other's commitment, especially if the activities of the other group don't give clear assurances.

To foster trust, then, it was critical that the activists make clear their commitment to shared goals. While this was essential for both groups, it was particularly important for the Israelis to do, since they played the role of the dominant group needing to prove themselves. At times, the asymmetrical risks also meant that they needed to be willing to act alone within their own community. In doing so the Israelis were able to establish their strong commitment to shared goals while also relieving pressure on the Palestinians, whose civil society would see these actions, recognize the organization's commitment to ending the occupation, and thus viably perceive the organization – and the Palestinian involvement in it – as more legitimate. As the quotes by Marwan and Ihab indicate, these actions by the dominant group served to strengthen the trust, their identification with the organization, and the sense of solidarity.

### *Willingness to Defend and Support One Another*

A clear commitment to shared goals, however, is far from solely sufficient to ensure solidarity across asymmetrical risks. In this deeply asymmetrical environment, CFP activists prove mutual solidarity and trust through defense and support of one another. Thus, it is critical for participants to know that they are not alone, and if arrested or injured – or experiencing other injustices – their friends would be there to help (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001). While this need went both ways, given the substantially greater risks faced by Palestinians, it was particularly important for the Israeli activists to do whatever possible to ensure their Palestinian colleagues were safe.

One of the ways CFP sought to do this during protests in the occupied West Bank was by having individual Israelis mark themselves as the leaders as soon as the Israeli soldiers would appear. Utilizing their privilege, these Israelis would



lead the shouts to focus the Israeli military's attention on them. As Noam recounted:

[In the protest], Shai and I were shouting all the time and when you are leading the shouting you are marking yourself as a leader [...] Because the Palestinians are at greater risk, we wanted them [the military] to think that [...] Israeli-Jews are leading this thing, that we are responsible for it. We used our privilege, because we [Israeli-Jews] didn't violate any law [...] [They couldn't] arrest us [...], we didn't do anything [whereas Palestinians could be arrested.]

While this was largely an attempt to look out for the Palestinian participants, given the greater risks they faced, as Hirsch (1986) argued, when leaders are willing to undertake risks, thus highlighting their commitment to the shared goals, it sets an example for the participants on a whole, strengthening the solidarity.

Indeed, often, the Israeli and Palestinian activists would follow this by coming together and holding hands to protect the individuals that marked themselves as leaders from being arrested. It provided, in Noam's words, "an image of protection; an image of [cross-conflict] solidarity" — one that also provided the activists with an "intimacy [since] we are embodying the future and the vision." It should be noted, as Goodwin and Pfaff (2001) indicate, that when such intimate ties underpin a movement, it can also help with managing and mitigating fear.

Returning to the risk asymmetries, however, as Noam noted, "if there has to be a confrontation with soldiers or police, we will be confronting them, not the Palestinians. They will pay a higher price than we do." Samir elaborated:

When the Israelis understand [the risk differentials] they protect the Palestinians. They go in front of the Palestinians, because they know that they're not in real danger. The Israeli military won't shoot them or use a lot of tear gas on them. [While] for the Palestinians, we know how the Israelis treat us. They shoot us [...] It's important that the Israeli partners recognize this [for us to be able to trust them].

While it was harder for the Israelis to protect their Palestinian compatriots in protests where the activists were divided by the separation wall, the Israelis still sought to do so. Speaking about the same protest that Marwan referred to earlier, where a smoke bomb was thrown at the Palestinians, Shai detailed:

Like a large choir we [the Israelis] shouted in one voice, 'This is a nonviolent organization. The only one inflicting violence here is you, the Israeli army. These Palestinians are innocent [...] And it helped move the soldiers back, actually. During the violent few minutes, we were like protecting them with our voices in a way [...] They could have been much more violent.

While this need to look out for one's colleagues was largely the responsibility of the Israelis, as discussed previously, the Palestinian activists would also need to defend their Israeli compatriots, particularly when they were in the occupied West Bank. As Naseef shared:

Three years ago when we went to a protest in a village and helped the Palestinian farmers pick olives, a big group of Israeli settlers came down and they started to beat all the protesters—the Palestinians and the Israelis. Yael and Moshe were hit very, very badly and they had to be taken to the hospital. I was so worried about them that [notwithstanding the normalization taboo] I went and carried an Israeli to a Palestinian hospital! This did strengthen the relationship and build the trust.

Relatedly, it was also critical for the Israelis to trust their Palestinian partners, and to feel safe to go to certain places or drive through certain villages, as suggested by these partners. As Yael reported,

When driving through the West Bank, I must trust [my Palestinian colleagues]. There is always a risk, and the amount of risk that you are willing to take depends on your connection with your partner and how strong it is. I'm a bit calmer when I call Naseef and ask him, 'Is it safe?' and [...] he takes a moment to think about it. For me it's reassuring that he is taking this seriously. So, the key for solidarity, I think, above all, is the personal connection and the trust and the care.

Critically, solidarity also required the activists to be there for one's compatriots, standing by them in times of need. This was especially important for the Israelis to understand and, at times, it meant helping their Palestinian colleagues achieve some justice in their life — particularly, when it came to the Israeli authorities. In the words of Mati, an Israeli activist:

If the daughter of Bassam Aramin is murdered by an Israeli soldier who will never be brought to justice, I have to be there in the High Court by him, fighting with him. It's taking sides [...] [Solidarity requires] this kind of commitment, and the willingness to pay a price, a personal price [...] [We, Israelis, need to be] willing to pay this price.

Because of the asymmetries in this situation, Bassam would likely agree with Mati's sentiment. Speaking about Mati, he remarked:

We are very connected. Imagine a Palestinian ex-fighter and an Israeli ex-occupier going to protect one another. It's unbelievable! [And yet.] I cannot imagine that someone will harm, Mati, for example. No, I will protect him with my body. We have become the same side.

As these participants specify, the need to defend one another goes both ways. At the same time, solidarity and trust also required a cognizance of the asymmetrical risks, along with a willingness of the Israelis to take the responsibility that comes with their unearned privilege by doing whatever was in their power to ensure their Palestinian compatriots were not harmed or arrested, or standing by their compatriots when they were denied justice by the Israeli authorities. As Bassam's quote suggests, such actions create, for those more at-risk, a strong sense of identification with their more privileged compatriots, and ultimately, a strong identification with the movement organization.

### *Respecting Boundaries of the Other*

Finally, solidarity for this bi-national cross-conflict organization required the activists to respect the boundaries set by each group. This was important for cohesion, for each group to feel safe, respected, and at home in the movement. While this ideal was established as a founding principle, respecting the boundaries of the other was a work-in-progress, as some of the following quotes stress. Speaking to the importance of this ground rule though, Shai stipulated:

The first principle [of building solidarity across difference and inequality] is to make sure that each people set their own boundaries, and to be really sensitive not to pressure the other people. We respect the Palestinians' boundaries for their engagement; [and the Palestinians'

respect] the Israelis' boundaries for their engagement as well [...] It's important not to expect them to do something that's impossible for them—on both sides.

Similarly, Ihab noted:

There are differences...between the two sides. The Israelis take into consideration the needs of the Palestinian side and the different obstacles that they face [...] At the same time, we understand that the Israelis face obstacles as well [...] [We] try to work around these and move forward together.

While this need to respect boundaries went both ways, given the risk asymmetries, which often manifested themselves in different levels of cautiousness, this most often took the form of the Israelis needing to respect their Palestinian colleagues' desire to not undertake a certain action at a certain time or go to certain locations in the occupied West Bank. For instance, early on during the 2014 War on Gaza, some of the Israelis attempted to convince their Palestinian colleagues to engage in a joint protest in the West Bank. Because of the Israeli separation wall, the West Bank was the only territory where they could all be together and thus, it was often the site for their protests. The Palestinian activists made it clear, however, that they did not believe it was appropriate, and that they did not want to be confronted with the taboo against normalization. As Haitham explained:

The activities were frozen during the war on the Palestinian side. We didn't do anything because you can't go to the Palestinian side and say 'Stop killing.' [...] [I told the Israelis], the message 'stop killing' should be said to your side! We told them, 'it will kill Combatants, it will destroy it!' [...] [If] you want to make solidarity, go to your president, go near his home, near the Knesset, and make them stop killing, because the message is not for us, it's for them! While it was not fully understood, they understood [and accepted] that we couldn't make anything.

From an Israeli perspective, and highlighting the frustration it sometimes caused, Yael noted:

When we do activities in the West Bank, like the Olive Harvest, the danger most of the time is from [Israeli] settlers, but also from Shabak, and possibly from some Palestinians from the villages. We [Israelis] say, 'Okay, this is our job to go to these places, otherwise we can do activities in your backyard and that's it.' Many times they say, 'Let's not go there.' Sometimes it's really frustrating because I want to go to these places. I find myself many times, asking them again, trying to check their limits, but I'm learning to accept [...] their decisions.

Respecting each other's boundaries was also a way of managing the tendency of the Israelis to dominate. And as the literature on Israeli–Palestinian joint efforts is clear, efforts to work equally are critical for organizational survival (Gawerc, 2013). It also allowed Palestinians, who have local knowledge and context of their society, to have equal say — and as the quotes above here speak to, the final say — on what actions are doable and/or appropriate in the occupied West Bank.

While respecting each other's boundaries was not always easy, it was vital for participants to be able to feel respected and safe in the movement organization, and in charge, to some degree, of the risks they were taking. Moreover, it helped to manage the dominance of the Israelis. Both functions were particularly important for the Palestinians, given these power dynamics and the substantially



greater risks they faced. And ultimately, this measure helped to manage the disagreements, conflict, and tension that inevitably accompanies working across uneven risks, strengthening the solidarity.

The section *Discussion and Conclusion* will discuss the case and apply the three measures to another example of joint struggle in the Israeli–Palestinian case, that of the Palestinian-led joint struggle in Bil'in involving Anarchists Against the Wall, in order to ascertain generalizability. AAtW is a Palestinian solidarity group that works with and supports Palestinian villages, at their request, in their struggle against segregation and land confiscation in the occupied West Bank (Gordon & Grietzer, 2013). As noted earlier, Fleischmann (2016) characterized the organization as reflecting the radical component in the Israeli peace movement, compared to CFP, which she classified as alternative.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

While the literature is clear that risk-sharing is beneficial for solidarity (Gamson, 1991; Hirsch, 1990; Nepstad, 2001), this chapter illustrates that it is not always possible for activists to fully share the risks associated with participation in a protest organization, and that the risks can vary substantially because of participants' different social locations. More importantly, building on Wood (2007), this case reveals that asymmetrical risks have a significant impact on the ability of movement organizations to build solidarity. Indeed, asymmetrical risks manifest themselves within organizations in countless ways, highlighting differences between the participants, increasing conflict, frustration, and misunderstanding, and making it harder for more at-risk individuals to identify with their less at-risk compatriots and the movement organization itself, thus disrupting solidarity.

This case, however, uniquely demonstrates solidarity can be built however unequal the risks faced by participants. Solidarity for CFP, I argue, was not based on sharing the same risks, but rather, on trust and mutual recognition of the uneven risks. Moreover, it required three commitments (measures) by the activists: to clearly demonstrate their commitment to shared goals; to show loyalty by defending and supporting one another; and by respecting the other group's distinctly defined boundaries. While this was important for all involved, it was particularly important for the Israelis, since they were members of the dominant group whose participation in the organization garnered less risk. This chapter supports the argument that trust is an important foundation for diverse groups that work across inequality (Gawerc, 2016; Smith, 2002; Wood, 2005), but it goes further by indicating that solidarity – and trust itself – requires activists to be cognizant of the asymmetrical risks (also see Einwohner et al., 2016; Hallward, 2009).

For CFP, the first measure was particularly critical, especially for the more at-risk activists, to be able to see that their compatriots who face less risks are strongly committed to their shared goals and actively undertaking meaningful actions to help realize these goals. For instance, it was very important for the Palestinian activists that their Israeli partners refused to serve in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, were willing to be arrested in the struggle against the occupation, and open to engaging in protest activities on their own during the

2014 Gaza War. These Israeli actions made clear to the Palestinians the degree of their commitment to their shared goals, and it also took some pressure off the Palestinians. Not only did they not need to participate, but their civil society witnessed these anti-war actions through the media and it provided the Palestinian participants with more legitimacy, and consequently, less cross-pressure. This in turn, increased the Palestinians' sense of solidarity with the Israelis and their identification with the organization (see also Gawerc, 2017). As Marwan expressed: "The Israelis' actions are to our credit on the Palestinian side. I think we depend a lot on their actions [...] [And in part because of it] CFP is my political home." While activists from the dominant group also need to know that their partners are committed to their shared goals, this case suggests that because of the asymmetries, those who are more at-risk do not need to do as much to indicate their commitment, particularly, as Myers (2008) points out, if they simultaneously have more to gain should the movement's goals be realized. This need to indicate commitment was also critical in the joint struggle in Bil'in led by the Popular Committee Against the Wall (PCAW) and involving AAtW. Here too, according to secondary literature, it was most important for the Israelis to make clear their commitment both verbally and through confirmatory actions (Hallward, 2009; Pallister-Wilkins, 2009). Indeed, Yonatan, a leading activist in AAtW suggested that solidarity was initially formed through the participants' shared opposition to the Wall and the occupation, which needed to be verbally articulated – and then acted on – by the Israelis (Pallister-Wilkins, 2009). Putting more emphasis on the latter, Muhammad, one of the key activists in the PCAW stated:

We have built trust and strong relationships by participating together in the clashes. Israelis are with Palestinians in the front row [...] It's not like Jonathan is at the beach saying how much he wants peace while Muhammad is being beaten [...] Palestinian and Israeli, their relationship is grounded in a shared struggle. (Blecher, 2006)

In this case, as Muhammad is indicating, the active participation of the Israelis – their willingness to put their bodies on the line thus making clear their commitment to their shared goals – was critical for building solidarity. Indeed, as Snitz (2013, p. 56) points out, Israelis have a choice when they go to the West Bank whether they want to spend their time drinking tea and chatting with some of the villagers or inhaling tear gas at the demonstration, and the preferences of the leading PCAW activists are clear. As one remarked, "After we end the occupation together, there will be plenty of time for tea" (Snitz, 2013, p. 56). This quote indicates that solidarity building and the need of dominant group members to make clear their commitment to the shared goals is an on-going process and necessity.

Second, as the case of CFP indicates, a commitment to defending and supporting one another goes a long way toward building trust and solidarity. After all, this practice assures activists that they are not taking stands and risks alone, and they can rely on their colleagues to be there for them, as they are indeed, a "we." While this is critical for all activists (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001), it is particularly important for those who face greater risks because of where they are socially situated. Indeed, it allows these activists to see that even though they are

at much greater risk, their more privileged counterparts are seeking to manage the risk differentials and will do whatever they can to prevent their arrest, keep them safe, and help in securing some semblance of justice for themselves and their families. Samir highlights the importance of this for Palestinians to be able to maintain trust in their Israeli partners, while Bassam and Mati indicate just how strong identification and solidarity can be, in part as a result of this measure. The secondary literature with its focus on AAtW and the PCAW, also highlights the importance of this measure and indicates that it was particularly important for the Israelis to have the Palestinians' backs. Indeed, according to Kobi, another key activist in AAtW, one of the primary roles of the organization was facilitating the safety of the Palestinian demonstrators (Pallister-Wilkins, 2009). Similarly, Ben-Eliezer and Feinstein (2009, p. 19) indicate that often when a Palestinian would be arrested, an Israeli activist would seek to get arrested to "in order to make it hard for the Israeli security forces to mete out severe punishment methods reserved to non-Israelis." Wright (2016) also relays that in situations of crisis such as when Palestinian families were threatened with demolition or eviction from their home, Israeli activists often dropped all work and family commitments and traveled to the West Bank to be with their compatriots. Moreover, they would arrange protests, liaison with and pay for the lawyers, and mobilize public campaigns (Gordon & Grietzer, 2013; Wright, 2016). Seemingly, this measure is part of the reason Muhammad argued that they built a "true partnership" (Blecher, 2006).

Finally, respecting each other's boundaries — particularly the boundaries of those who faced greater risks — enabled the activists in CFP to feel safe and respected in the organization, and ultimately, at home. While to foster a sense of cohesion it was critical to satisfy the emotional needs of all activists for security and respect (Flesher-Fominaya, 2010), this commitment to respect each other's boundaries was particularly important for the Palestinian activists, given that the risks were greater as a result of their occupied status, their relationship to the authorities, and the appearance in their community that they were normalizing colonial oppression by working jointly with Israelis. In truth, the latter, at times led the Palestinian activists to feel embarrassed as indicated by Naseef (on pp. 97–98) or to question as Ihab did, "Am I doing the right thing? Am I going in the right direction?" Moreover, this practice of respecting each other's boundaries also helped to manage the tendency of privileged groups to control the movement and compatriots (Munkres, 2008), which again was particularly important for the Palestinian activists (see Samir's quote on p. 99 and Haitham's quote on p. 104). All in all, this measure helped manage the felt asymmetrical risks by allowing each side the ability to decide their comfort level and how far they felt they can go. As several interviewees indicated, given the greater risks Palestinians faced as well as their local knowledge and context of their society, they often necessarily had the last word. Interestingly, CFP chose to institutionalize the respect of boundaries early on by providing each of the two national groups with some autonomy in the joint organization and by clarifying that neither group was permitted to interfere with the decision-making process of the other group (CFP, n.d.). Honoring boundaries was also important

for AAtW and PCAW, and like CFP, the literature suggests it was particularly important for the Israelis to respect the boundaries of the Palestinians. Indeed, it was the approach of AAtW in its solidarity work with Palestinian villages, including Bil'in, that they will only join Palestinian-led struggles when asked to join by the villagers themselves (Pallister-Wilkins, 2009). And while in Bil'in, decisions were joint, the power to begin or stop a protest lied solely with the Palestinian villagers (Gordon, 2017). In the words of Snitz (2013, p. 57),

The first principle is that although the struggle is joint, Palestinians are affected more by the decisions taken within it, and therefore are the ones who should make the important decisions.

Moreover, he indicates that "Israelis have a special responsibility to respect Palestinian self-determination, including respecting social customs and keeping out of internal Palestinian politics." These principles, as Snitz (2013) explains, were the result of their awareness that due to their privileged position, Israelis could inadvertently dominate decisions even though the Palestinians have a greater stake in the issue and face substantially greater risks. Also playing a role was their recognition that Palestinians don't immediately accept and trust Israelis, that there are sensitivities given the normalization taboo, and the unwanted cultural influences that the Israelis bring (also see Gordon, 2017). Thus, once again, we can see how this measure was deemed necessary for ensuring that those who will be most impacted have the ability to draw the lines where they feel necessary, as well as creating a culture of respect that meets the emotional needs of activists.

It is fair to ask how generalizable these findings are since this study focused primarily on one movement organization with substantial disproportionate risks, in a context of occupation and asymmetrical conflict. A review of the secondary literature on Bil'in indicates it is likely generalizable to other joint struggles in Israel–Palestine. This is true, even though AAtW has a very different solidarity model than that of CFP, as the organization is clear that they are a Palestinian solidarity group and follow the lead of Palestinians, whereas CFP identifies as a joint Israeli–Palestinian peace group and embodies more of a joint partnership model. Recall also that Fleischmann (2016) characterizes AAtW as being characteristic of the radical component of the Israeli peace movement, with CFP illustrative of the alternative component. In any case, working across the asymmetrical risks required attention to the same measures as discussed in this chapter.

The question remains, however, is it generalizable to other contexts? Perhaps movement organizations can ignore the unequal risks and hold on to the romantic idea that the risks are largely evenly shared, if the risks are not as asymmetrical. Too, the need to respect boundaries and make clear one's commitment to their shared goals may not be as strong if all the activists are biographically similar, with none more at-risk because of their social location. The need to defend and support one another may also not be as critical if all the activists appear to share risks evenly. In other words, the discussed solidarity practices may be much more important for movement organizations that work across

substantial risk asymmetries, as they simply cannot ignore the reality that the risks cannot be fully shared.

The degree of mistrust between the two communities, from which the activists belong, may have also played a role in the dynamics experienced in CFP (and similarly between PCAW and AAtW), by making it even more important for the Palestinian activists that the imbalance in risk be noted, their boundaries respected, and their Israeli colleagues clear and steadfast in their commitment to ending the occupation, as well as standing by and alongside them. In addition, the strong sense of victimhood amongs the Palestinians – a consequence of spending their lives under Israeli military occupation and in the case of Bil'in, having their private land appropriated by the Israeli authorities (Ibhais & 'Ayed, 2013) – may have also played a role in the dynamics seen in these cases.

Nonetheless, there are reasons to believe these findings would be generalizable to other groups however uneven the risks may be. As shown earlier, solidarity in most movement organizations relies on activists making clear to each other their commitment to shared goals as well as seemingly having each other's back, even if more important for activists who face greater risks. These measures are important because they build trust which is foundational (Gawerc, 2016; Smith, 2002; Wood, 2007) and could also help to sustain the identification of those more at-risk with their compatriots, which Wood (2007) also found tends to diminish as a result of risk asymmetries. Similarly, an argument could also be made that respecting each other's boundaries, could also be beneficial – if not critical – for cohesion across disproportionate risks, as it enables activists to feel safe and respected within the group, and meeting these emotional needs is crucial for solidarity (Flesher-Fominaya, 2010).

In fact, it should be noted that it is even more impressive that CFP (as well as PCAW and AAtW) could foster solidarity given the extent to which the risks of participation were asymmetrical, not to mention the degree to which mistrust prevails between the two communities from which the activists hail. While the practices may not be sufficient to build solidarity for all groups working across asymmetrical risks, they are likely to be necessary in the effort to do so.

## NOTES

1. As Fleischmann (2016) argues, most of the moderate peace groups were paralyzed after the Second Intifada (see also Hermann, 2009).

2. They also receive donations from foundations, mostly European, to finance specific projects, as well as receive some funds from larger private donors. And they raise money through their some of their operations, such as lectures and screenings of their film while on tour.

3. Palestinian citizens of Israel are welcome to join and a few have, but they are the exception to the norm. Meanwhile, it should be noted, that Ashkenazi Jews compose the elite in Israel, dominating not only Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel proper, but also Middle Eastern (Mizrahi/Sepharadic) Jews (see Shohat, 1988). In recent years, scholars have started to examine the largely Ashkenazi-led peace movement within the context of the Israeli state and have provided critical perspectives on it (e.g., Svirsky, 2014; Wright, 2016).



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