Towards a Shared Israeli/Palestinian Academic Freedom:

A Constructive Appeal Facing the Pro/Anti Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Campus Cleavages

Professor Edward Edy Kaufman

Interdisciplinary Center at Herzliya and Haifa University, ISRAEL Department of Government and Politics, University of Maryland, College Park.

Singer Scholar in Residence at the University of Oregon Fall 2015. JDST Judaic Studies

Synopsis 1:

Worldwide, academics and intellectuals have often united in taking a leadership role in the struggle for democracy. But in the case of ethno-political conflicts, and in our specific case where there is an asymmetry between the occupier and an occupied, such actions can be stymied. Since 1967, with ups and lately downs, only a minority among Israeli and Palestinian scholars, researchers, teachers in institutions of higher education, think tanks and colleges have experienced working together. The vast majority of Israeli academics and intellectuals have remained indifferent, concentrating on their own careers and research agendas. There are also Israeli "blocking groups" that do not acknowledge Palestinian identity and work to discourage collaboration. In the case of our Palestinian peers, most academics and intellectuals have opposed, passively or actively, the establishment of such relationships across the divide. Collaboration is seen by many as "normalizing" an abnormal situation. Even if the few academics and intellectuals who participated have made substantial contributions to the advancement of peace, their work only represents a small fraction of the potential of this sector of society. Furthermore, these apparently fragile relations have been known to collapse when facing escalating violence and when it seems that negotiations are leading to no positive results.

Synopsis 2:

The current proposal, sponsored by Norway, calls upon Israeli and Palestinian academics and intellectuals to focus on their own ascribed values and fulfilling their principled commitment to "academic freedom," as a platform to grow cohesive professional and personal relations that can translate into shared work experience within and across their own societies. The experience gathered over years of work within a UNESCO funded project was instrumental for refining a set of ethical guidelines governing academic and intellectual cooperation between the two sides, i.e. guidelines that seek, above all, to protect "academic freedom," providing new ground rules for working and staying together based on ethics rather than unconditional cooperation. Meanwhile, restrictive policies related to the occupation of the Palestinian territories have been a key obstacle to academic freedom, and have also generated polarization within each of our communities. Hence, those among us who adhere to the principle of equality, human rights and a just peace, should be ready to embrace social responsibility and play together an increasingly exemplary role within our respective civil societies.

ORIGINS

-PROJECT STARTED BEFORE BDS [2005] CODE OF ETHICS UNESCO

-12 ACADEMICS PROJECT UNESCO, BARCELONA MUNICIPALITY AND NORWAY : 2005 EDITED BOOK WITH WALID SALEM "BREAKING THE WALL - THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN ACADEMICS AT TIMES OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS"

- INDIVIDUAL LEVEL STILL WORKING TOGETHER ACROSS THE DIVIDE (EXAMPLES: BOOKS, OP-EDS, TEAM TEACHING) – YES WE CAN

- WHAT UNITES ACADEMICS GLOBALLY? HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES AT UNIVERSITIES? ACADEMIC FREEDOM?

-MAXIMIZE WITH CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOOLS- PARADIGM SHIFT, OUT OF THE BOX

-UPDATE 10 YEARS LATER: BOOK THREE LANGUAGES + EXPERIMENTING: M.A. STUDENTS RESOLUTION HAIFA UNIVERSITY + UMD

Presentation Structure:

1. COLLAPSE OSLO FLOURISHING "PEACE INDUSTRY"
2. ADVERSARIAL PRO- BDS AND ANTI- BDS
3. PARADIGM SHIFT NOT COMPROMISE- ADHERENCE TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM –SHARED PRINCIPLES
4. INTROSPEC BOTH SIDES, CONFLICT ANALYSIS [DIAGNOSIS]
5. PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES AND ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES
6. ACADEMIC FREEDOM UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES AND ASSYMETRICAL CONFLICTS
7. CONCRETE PROJECT – GUIDING PRINCIPLES
8. CURRENT SITUATION ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN UNIVERSITIES
9. SEARCHING THIRD PARTY - NEGOTIATIONS UMD, NYU, OREGON

B.D.S. Background:

-BIRTZEIT 1996 CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC BOYCOTT, SMALL GROUP MINORITY OPPOSED TO OSLO [TWO STATE SOLUTION]. OMAR BARGHOUTI

-2005 THE CONTINUTED ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND POLITICAL POLARIZATION CULMINATED IN WAVES OF DEADLY SUICIDE BOMBINGS AND ISRAELI IDF RENEWED CONTROL OF WEST BANK.

-20 YEARS LATER: WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW? THIRD INTIFADA; MORE SETTLEMENTS; ISRAEL'S GROWING ISOLATION, MIDDLE EAST TURMOIL

B.D.S. Definition:

WIKIPEDIA: The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement (BDS Movement) is a global campaign, attempting to increase economic and political pressure on Israel to comply with the stated goals of the movement:

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

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

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

4. BDS campaign urges various forms of "non-violent punitive measures" against Israel until it "complies with the precepts of international law" by: "

PRO B.D.S. ARGUMENTS

1. NON-VIOLENT LESSONS LEARNT FIRST INTIFADA:
"NO NORMALIZATION" [*TATBIEH*].
"DO IT YOURSELF" [*SUMMUD*] STEADFASTINESS

2. LESSONS LEARNT SECOND MILITARIZED INTIFADA. "DIALOGUE" POSTPONES RESOLUTION – ONLY PRESSURE ON ISRAEL EFFECTIVE

3. APPEAL FOR WORLD SUPPORT AGAINST ISRAELI APPARTHEID-PALESTINE DISMEMBERED = BANTUSTANS

4. CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME, NO RELATIONS WITH ISRAELI UNIV.

5. THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ENTERPRISE IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES-CREEPING ANNEXATION

6. OPPRESIVE MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE REGION – ONLY EXPANDED AND ACCELERATED THROUGHOUT THE OSLO YEARS.

7. BOYCOTT ISRAEL –CLEAR CUT, NO FURTHER DETAILS NEEDED

8. ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES CONNECTED WITH MILITARY COMPLEX

ANTI B.D.S: PART 1:

-OMAR BARGHOUTI MBA FROM TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY. FALSE PROPHET.

-BDS EQUALS ANTIZIONISM WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO ANTISEMITISM.

-NO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL. DEMOGRAPHIC THREAT JEWISH STATE.

-BDS IS EVER CHANGING AND ADAPTING TO THE SPECIFIC NEED OF THOSE PARTIES LEADING TO BOYCOTT.

-THE WAY TO PEACE IS NOT THROUGH A BOYCOTT BUT TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL ACADEMICS ARE TREATED EQUAL.

-ARAB LEAGUE ECONOMIC BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL SINCE 1945. ENDING WITH PEACE WITH EGYPT (1979), THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY (1993), AND JORDAN (1994) SIGNED PEACE.

ANTI B.D.S: PART 2:

-PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY NOT OFFICIALLY SUPPORTING BDS [NOT AGAINST B.D.S.]

-ISRAEL NOT APPARTHEID. CATEGORIC REJECTION ON GROUNDS OF DISSIMILARITY OF THE REGIMES

-DOUBLE STANDARDS. NO BDS IN NORTH KOREA, SAUDI ARABIA, OR IN UNITED STATES [VIETNAM]

-ACADEMIA SEPARATE FROM STATE ACADEMIC FREEDOM PRINCIPLE

-THE BDS MOVEMENT: STRIPPING OF SOME RIGHTS FOR THE AMELIORATION OF THE PALESTINIAN PLIGHT IS JUSTIFIED

ISRAELI INTROSPECT: PART 1:

-ONLY THREAT TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM IS OCCUPATION

-BIG BROTHER, YOUNG BROTHER: ISRAEL DEMOCRACY IS CHARACTERIZED BY AUTONOMOUS HIGHER EDUCATION.

-UNIVERSITIES NOT AWARE OF ASYMMETRY. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PROBLEM BUT NOT ACTING UPON KNOWLEDGE.

-INSULARITY – IVORY TOWER 'PUBLISH OR PERISH'
HEBREW U.= HARVARD OF THE MIDDLE EAST ; TECHNION = M.E. MIT

ISRAELI INTROSPECT: PART 2:

-NORMALIZATION POSSIBLE UNDER OCCUPATION? OCCUPIED TERRITORY (O.T.) NOT CANADA

-MISSION STATEMENTS: HEBREW U: "UNIVERSITY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE." HAIFA UNIVERSITY: "SHARED ISRAEL."

-ARIEL UNIVERSITY IN O.T. BUT IN COUNCIL OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

-AL QUDS EAST JERUSALEM [NOW OUTSIDE WALL BUT STILL INSIDE ANNEXED] NO RECOGNITION.

- SEPARATION OF ACADEMICS FROM PARTISAN POLITICS.

PALESTINIAN INTROSPECT: PART 1:

-NATION BUILDING – QUASI STATE [P.A.1994] CHANNEL MOST EFFORTS TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE

-POLARIZATION HAMAS/FATAH IN UNIVERSITIES

-PREVENT "FOREIGN INTERVENTION" –ISRAEL CLOSES IN O.T. ARBITRARILY, NO UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY –RESEARCH AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IS JEOPARDIZED

-PREVENT "POLITICAL INTERVENTION" PRESENCE OF PALESTINIAN SECURITY FORCES OFTEN SECRETELY

-PROFESSORS OFTEN EXPOSED TO EXTERNAL THREATS AND INTERNAL MONITORING IN CLASSROOM

PALESTINIAN INTROSPECT: PART 2:

-DIFFICULTY IN WIDENING WESTERN PEDAGOGICAL TRADITIONS

-GRADUATES NO JOBS AVAILABLE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR

-PERIOD OF INTENSE COOPERATION BEFORE OSLO PROCESS COLLAPSED AND SECOND INTIFADA [2000]

-NEVERTHELESS, SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PALESTINIAN ACADEMICS APPEAL TO STOP ATTACKING ISRAELI NON-COMBATTANS. VISIT TO AUSHWITZ.

-ACADEMIC COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL, NOT NOW BUT IN THE LONGTERM

ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN ACADEMIC FOCUS GROUPS/BRAINSTORMING

-CAN WE AGREE BOYCOTTS/SANCTIONS LEGITIMATE NONVIOLENT METHODS OF STRUGGLE?

-CAN WE GET AGREE ON SHARED UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES ADAPTED TO ASSYMMETRICAL REALITY OF OCCUPIER/OCCUPIED NATIONS?

-CAN ISRAELIS AGREE TO BOYCOTT THEMSELVES CERTAIN OFFICIAL POLICIES INCLUDING WITHIN THE ACADEMIC SPHERE?

-CAN WE ASK PALESTINIAN ACADEMICS TO RESPECT THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE ISRAELI COLLEAGUES TO COOPERATE IN RESEARCH BEFORE ENDING OCCUPATION?

PARADIGM SHIFT: UNIVERSALITY NOT EXCEPTIONALISM.

OUR CONFLICT UNIQUE?

"ACADEMIC FREEDOM GUIDING PRINCIPLES" CHAPTERS

-PREAMBLE

-INTERNATIONAL REFERENTIAL FRAMEWORK

-THE BASIS OF OUR INTERNATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

-SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

-**ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF MEMBERS OF ACADEMIA**

-OBLIGATIONS OF THE STATE

"ACADEMIC FREEDOM GUIDING PRINCIPLES" QUOTE

"Academic freedom has long been a sensitive and controversial topic heavily subject to the vicissitudes of the overall political deadlock. Nevertheless, it has experienced even more acute setbacks among students, faculties, and university administrations alike as a result of the failed peace process and prolonged duress of conflict and occupation. Contrary to what is typically associated with the Palestinian Academic Campaign for the Boycott of Israel (BDS), the obstacles to free and pluralistic campuses in Israel and Palestine emanate primarily from the detrimental impact that the Israeli occupation has had on both societies "the UNESCO-based worldwide alliance of institutions of higher education, a principal component of academic freedom includes "the obligation as social institutions to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity, and to develop mutually material and moral aid on an international level."

Israeli and Palestinian universities must act as a model for society in the fields of democratic governance and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The social responsibility of the campus must extend to the community and nation at large by creating open institutions that welcome independent thought, freedom of association and expression, and the cessation of all forms of occupation and injustice committed against colleagues from the other side.

BACK TO EUGENE

-ANTIPODE TO THE HOLY LAND? SAFEHAVEN?

-THIRD PARTY INVOLVEMENT NECESSARY

-SANCTUARY FOR PEACEBUILDERS

-LABORATORY FOR BRIDGING ACROSS THE DIVIDE

-GLOBALIZATION, INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

-EXPORT EXPERIENCE OF COEXISTENCE, AVOID IMPORTING ARAB/ISRAEL CONFLICT –APPEAL CHRISTIAN/JEWISH/MUSLIM STUDENTS AND FACULTY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE

Questions?

Please write questions on the index cards provided and hold them up to be gathered by ushers.