boycott as a tactic of resistance is far from unprecedented within Palestinian histories, but in fact was used from the 1880s through the Mandate era and onward (pp. 41–48). This situation of the centrality of boycotts to the First Intifada helps demonstrate how BDS activism may be seen as a resumption of pre-Oslo Palestinian collective resistance within and without the Palestinian homeland. Also crucial is the author’s clarification of how descriptions of Israel as an “apartheid state” as well as the use of apartheid as a wider, actionable rubric within which to frame and agitate against Israel’s oppression of Palestinians did not suddenly arise alongside the BDS call, but can be traced to the linkages anti-apartheid activists began to make in the wake of the Sharpeville massacre (pp. 30–31).

Maira references how neoliberalization and liberal ideologies are uniquely primed to accommodate Zionism at various points, as establishment invocations of “rights” and the need for “dialogue” themselves become tools for silencing academic support for Palestinian freedom (pp. 97, 107, 116–17). Yet while she makes generous reference to Stephen Salaita—the premier scholar to address this intersection in works such as Israel’s Dead Soul (Temple University Press, 2011)—it would have been fascinating to read a more sustained consideration of why this is the case. While space does not permit the tracing out of an extensive genealogy, such an investigation might consider the particulars of American liberalism as adumbrated by figures such as John Dewey, Eric Voegelin, Judith Shklar, and Edmund Fawcett, to name but a few. If not precisely ahistorical in character, such thinkers (often liberals themselves) at times depict liberalism as an atomized reaction to particular historical incidents, a reaction that in turn spurs a retreat to individualistic idealism. This could provide one solution to understanding how liberal thought can often unquestioningly defend Israel as necessitated by the Holocaust and ignore outright or retrospectively validate preceding histories of Zionist settlement and dispossession of Palestinians. Given the current prevalence of the question of academic freedom, a historical overview of the concept—not as an otherwise enshrined but presently embattled guarantee so much as a tenuous framework that has always been put even further into question, and fortified, at moments of antagonistic conjuncture between donor interests, faculty speech, and research—would have been particularly timely.⁵

These minor points aside, Boycott! should be required reading for all new to BDS work and seasoned organizers and scholars alike.

Omar Zahzah is a PhD candidate in comparative literature at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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REVIEWED BY RASMIYEH R. ABDELNABI

Chiara De Cesari’s Heritage and the Cultural Struggle for Palestine is the product of fifteen years of research and writing on heritage making, cultural preservation, and resistance through development in

Palestine. De Cesari—an anthropologist and senior lecturer of European studies and cultural studies at the University of Amsterdam—has authored numerous articles and coedited an anthology on transnational memory, but this is her first book. De Cesari conducted the bulk of the research for this book in 2005 and 2006, over a fifteen-month period, with short trips to the region in subsequent years. The book is an ethnography that focuses on the proliferation of urban regeneration initiatives and museums in the West Bank and East Jerusalem by Palestinian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). De Cesari argues convincingly that NGOs and museums are initiating processes of institutionalization and governance in the absence of a stable state and against the daily struggles produced by Israeli settler colonialism, while putting Palestine (unofficially) on the map through their involvement in transnational cultural and development processes.

In chapter 1, De Cesari focuses on historical efforts toward heritage preservation sans state building before and after 1948 by Palestinians. She focuses on two main shifts: the first is before 1948, when Palestinian intellectuals worked to document Palestinian culture and folklore; and the second begins in the 1960s, when the Palestinian liberation movement politicized peasant material culture to shape a collective Palestinian identity and history based on a specific narrative using music, dance, and embroidery with deep connections to historic Palestine. The rest of the book focuses on De Cesari’s larger thesis regarding development by way of heritage making. De Cesari documents how certain organizations have shifted from practicing and protecting folklore to initiating urban regeneration and creating museums (p. 197) and argues that Palestinian heritage organizations are resourcefully developing state-like institutions despite the insurmountable difficulties of statelessness, Israeli military occupation, and settler colonialism (p. 200).

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on two NGOs: the Hebron Rehabilitation Committee (HRC), founded by Yasir Arafat to gain control of the Old City over Israeli settlers but lacking formal political power, and Ramallah-based Riwaq, which focuses on restoring old Palestinian buildings, helps draft legislation and bylaws on heritage preservation, and maintains a national registry of historic buildings in Palestine (p. 120). While De Cesari’s argument about NGOs taking over state-building efforts is an important one, this argument could have been stronger if she had more deeply engaged with the literature on the adverse effects of NGOization on Palestinian civil society. She cites all the relevant works but does not fully connect the ways HRC and Riwaq respond to the consequences of their establishment such as disruption of social cohesion, the creation of an elite population as a side effect of professionalization, and the loss of grassroots mobilization efforts. For example, De Cesari discusses the social fallout in the Old City of Hebron as the HRC brings people from all over the West Bank to live in the city’s buildings to prevent it from becoming a ghost town, but she also indicates that the HRC, which depends heavily on foreign development agencies to maintain its programming and support of the Old City’s residents (pp. 90–97), has not been able to stop Israel...
from advancing its plans to settle more of the Old City. Just recently, Israel announced that it would be razing the Old Hebron Market to build a new Jewish settlement.

In chapter 4, De Cesari examines the ways in which private citizens and NGOs have taken it upon themselves to create museums in light of the Palestinian Authority’s failure to create a national museum. During the post-Oslo period, Palestinians saw a need to display the collective Palestinian experience in public spaces (p. 176). De Cesari argues that these efforts—like the newly built Palestinian Museum—institutionalize heritage work, “promote radical, democratic practices,” and provide a space for citizens to participate in the making of a Palestinian state (p. 194), and furthermore, that heritage and culture making provide an avenue for “material claims to sovereignty” (p. 5). Palestinians connect to the land through their lived experiences and cultural practices. While this argument is a critical one because these spaces keep Palestine alive locally and globally, it does not take into account the role of foreign funding and its influence on NGOs and their projects, as other scholars such as Rema Hammami, Tariq Dana, Sari Hanafi, Linda Tabar, Toufic Haddad, Raja Khalidi, Sobhi Samour, and Mandy Turner have explored.

This book provides an important opening for a critical discussion regarding the ways in which the word “Palestine” has not lost meaning and the ways in which Palestinians continue to assert their existence tangibly despite an aggressive and unrelenting Israeli settler-colonial project bent on erasing Palestinians as natives of the region. De Cesari also illustrates the ways in which Palestinian NGOs expertly inserted Palestine in the development narrative on a global scale. A further investigation of her informants’ ambivalence toward a state and its impact on their work would have been welcome. What does statehood mean to them? The NGOs she focused on work in the absence of state institutions, but is the role of a state only to draft policies, provide some limited services to a certain group of citizens, maintain some semblance of sovereignty, and help build a more aware citizenry? What about advocating for legal and civil rights for all or working to dismantle the Israeli settler-colonial project?

Rasmieyh R. Abdelnabi is currently working on a PhD dissertation titled “The Feminization of Resistance, Social Reproduction, and Palestine: Women’s Work toward Surviving and Thriving” in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.


REVIEWED BY YOUSEF MUNAYYER

“How and why are rights used for aggressive purposes?” (p. 2). This is the central question Clifford Bob sets out to answer in Rights as Weapons: Instruments of Conflict, Tools of Power. The author answers this question by providing a typology for classifying various tactics in which actors use rights in offensive, aggressive, defensive, and calculated ways against opponents. The breakdown is thorough and analytically useful beyond the cases he uses for empirical assessment.

Bob, a professor of political science at Duquesne University, has focused his career on the study of transnational civil society and has made important contributions to this field with previous works