

Resistance and Restriction: Palestinian Solidarity in Berlin's Universities

Abstract

This research studies how student activists have resisted the repression of Palestinian solidarity in Berlin's universities. Students have increasingly experienced police brutality on campus and the repression of academic freedom when expressing solidarity with Palestinians. While the repression of the movement has been effectively documented, the methods used to navigate this remain underresearched. Through semi-structured interviews and an online material analysis, this project has underlined how repression has not prevented student solidarity but reshaped it, encouraging the use of alternative mechanisms of resistance. Students have reclaimed academic discursive spaces, employed grassroots initiatives, used visual symbols and established solidarity networks on a personal, community and public scale. In turn, these mechanisms contribute to a holistic and resilient approach to resistance that is mirrored by the wider solidarity movement in Berlin. Hence, state and institutional attempts to delegitimise and demobilise the movement have failed. Ultimately, the perseverance of activists in Berlin channels the resilience of Palestinians themselves in their hope and struggle for freedom from occupation and violence.