

Facing the facts of the Gaza genocide: Refusing complicity, organizing solidarity

Organization

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Abstract

As a collective, *Organization* has a strong commitment to exposing and challenging domination and oppression, to amplifying scholarly activism, and to standing in solidarity with the oppressed, the dispossessed, and the Indigenous peoples of the world. Therefore, we cannot remain silent observers of the genocide in Gaza, of the oppression of the Palestinian people, and of the political, academic and organizational systems that are complicit in it. In this editorial, we call on MOS scholars to approach and study the genocide in Gaza and the oppression of the Palestinian people as a form of organized violence rooted in settler colonialism and processes of racialization that render Palestinian life disposable, and sustained by corporate, state, and academic infrastructures. Careful analysis exposes how the systematic targeting of health, education, and knowledge infrastructures is entangled with organizational processes involved in arms production, digital platforms, finance, universities, and humanitarian logistics. Building on the critical tradition of the journal, this editorial calls on *Organization's* epistemic community to act in solidarity with the people of Palestine through constructing alternative knowledge infrastructures and instituting an academic boycott of Israeli institutions. We urge scholars, editors, and students to reconfigure professional practices and mobilize their work against genocidal, colonial and oppressive organizing.

Keywords

Ethics, Genocide, Palestine, Israel, Settler Colonialism

What makes it possible for us as human beings to face the facts, to manufacture new ones, or to ignore some and focus on others?

-- Said (1984: 47) *Permission to narrate*

We write this editorial in the last week of August 2025 as the State of Israel continues its genocide in Gaza. Israeli military campaigns have destroyed water and agricultural infrastructures, schools, universities, hospitals, public libraries, and housing (Albanese, 2025). Despite the International Court of Justice's (2024) instruction to the State of Israel to ensure unhindered humanitarian aid provision, multiple reports point to Israel's weaponization of mass starvation in Gaza (De Vogli et al., 2025; Forensic Architecture, 2025; ICJ, 2025). Overall, Israel's military actions have displaced and expelled people from their lands, and created famine conditions (Forensic Architecture, 2024, 2025; World Health Organization, 2025).

Even as there have been pockets of outrage and waves of mass protests, notably including student mobilizations, this live-streamed genocide has escalated with the complicity of Israel's Global North allies. States and institutions across the world, with few exceptions, have looked away or supported continued attacks on Gaza, and even censored, silenced, and incarcerated dissent. We refuse this complicity.

As colleagues, as critical researchers, as human beings cohabiting this planet, "we"—the utterance that is always missing a group it claims to represent (Butler, 2015)—address the genocide in Gaza. As a collective, *Organization*, has a strong commitment to exposing and challenging domination and oppression (Zanoni et al., 2025). We stand firmly in solidarity with and have

consistently sought to co-create and expand epistemic spaces for the oppressed, the dispossessed, and the indigenous peoples of the world.

Why Gaza, why the Palestinian people?

The genocide in Gaza—more broadly, the Occupied Palestinian Territories—has a history that stretches over six decades (Pappe, 2010, 2024). Gaza has been referred to as the world's largest “open-air prison” or a “prison camp” (Levy, 2010; Lim, 2012). Berger (2012: 48) drew attention to two forms of exclusion Palestinians face: “seven million Palestinians have been excluded from the right to live as they wish on land internationally acknowledged to be theirs; and now increasingly, with every week that passes, they are being excluded from their right to any future at all as a nation.” In pursuit of its Zionist agenda, Israel has repeatedly exempted itself from international obligations, judgments of international courts, and defied UN Security Council resolutions (Lim, 2012; Pappe, 2024).

Today, Israel's aggression in Gaza is globally recognized as an example of a crime against humanity. While body counts are a crude measure of the war's impact, initial (pre-peer-review) independent surveys of deaths in Gaza between October 7th 2023 and January 2025 report between 63,600 and 86,800 fatalities (approximately 3–4% of Gaza's population), with women, children, and older people (aged ≥ 65 years) estimated to account for more than 56.2% of deaths (Spagat et al., 2025; see also Nasari et al., 2025). Humanitarian missions have attested to the deliberate targeting of hospitals (Qureshi et al., 2024), and the highest fatality numbers of healthcare workers, UN staff, and journalists in any recent conflict zone (De Vogli et al., 2025). Cumulatively, Gaza materializes the moral failure of over 60 years of international institutions—such as the United Nations and its member states—which were established to uphold peace, justice, human rights, and dignity after the Second World War.

Genocides are not comparable, and focusing on one does not diminish another. In North America through the 18th century, and before it, Indigenous peoples were “killed, driven away, romanticized, assimilated, fenced in, bred White, and otherwise eliminated” (Wolfe, 2006: 388) in a colonial project of genocide and land dispossession (Coulthard, 2014). From 1933 to 1945 Nazi bureaucracies identified, isolated, and exterminated European Jews. In 1930, at least 5 million Ukrainians were exterminated during a Soviet state induced famine (Bilinsky, 1999). Nearly a century later, those politics of terror continue to resonate, with the Russian invasion and occupation of Ukrainian territory. The Partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 led to communal riots and severe food shortages. A direct consequence of hastily implemented British policies, it still shapes the region's politics (Butalia, 2017).

In the Global South, colonial and settler-colonial structures are intertwined in contemporary liberal democratic politics and its inherently violent business practices. For instance, the Rohingya have faced genocidal violence for over four decades. After August 2017, more than 700,000 fled to Bangladesh. Their displacement coincided with regional investments in Myanmar's Rakhine State by India and China (Habiburahman, 2019; Habiburahman and Alamgir, 2024), and was followed by direct violence, expulsion, and systematic dehumanization. In these ways, liberal political values—promoted under North-centric banners of democracy and development—have translated colonial logics of annihilation into contemporary practices of expulsion.

Israel's genocide exposes the Global North's imperial architecture in the current conjuncture. The Global North has long justified such occupations and their military-industrial complex (Hanlon, 2024) by invoking a civilizing mission, dictating the shape and contours of states, markets, and justice globally. In the name of freedom, human rights, and democracy, the US and its allies also bully the Global South, through economic sanctions, trade tariffs, and by assassinating

heads of democratically elected governments, while claiming a higher moral ground (Prashad, 2008, 2012). Even the United Nations and the International Criminal Court (ICC) appear weak, only able to beseech, not halt, Israel's violence. Consider the UN's inability to credibly protect its staff as they are killed by Israeli forces, and the irrelevance of the ICC ruling that Israel's leadership has to answer for crimes against humanity. "The so-called moral architecture of Western democracies — with a few honorable exceptions — has become a grim laughingstock in the rest of the world," observes Roy (2024).

As academics and citizens, we cannot remain silent observers of the genocide in Gaza. We are enmeshed in the very systems that sustain genocide. Through our taxes, we fund governments whose policies and military aid directly or indirectly sustain Israeli war efforts. Through the capitalist system, we participate in global markets where companies trade with and profit from Israeli occupation and violence. And through our universities and academic associations, we are tied to Israeli institutions that are complicit in the ongoing genocide. We therefore feel an urgent responsibility to question and reshape the complicit systems of which we are a part.

Why Management and Organization Studies (MOS)?

MOS scholars draw on multidisciplinary perspectives to examine managerial and organizational structures, norms, and processes that shape human activity. In this vein, MOS research investigates not only the state, corporations, and non-profits, but also global finance, philanthropic foundations, and alternative forms of organizing that sustain, contest, and enable (typically capitalist) markets. Beyond static understandings of organizations, MOS scholarship unravels the complex interplay of institutions that bind groups, communities, and societies together, along with their shared assumptions and subjectivities.

As critical scholars, we are aware that the knowledge we produce as a discipline has never been politically neutral. The orthodoxy of MOS has often framed itself in objective and technocratic terms but has contributed to and legitimized exploitation and different forms of inequalities in the process. Critical scholarship traces the origins of management ideas and practices not only to shop-floors and chemical factories, but also plantation slavery, showing their entanglement with Euro-American colonial, neo-colonial, and settler colonial geopolitics (Banerjee et al., 2009; Cooke, 2003; Srinivas, 2022; Varman and Srinivas, 2025; Wiegatz et al., 2024). Furthermore, critical MOS sheds light on how organizational forms enable and conceal systemic violence, from the bureaucratic rationalization underpinning genocide and apartheid (Clegg, 2009), to the organizational logistics and routine management processes such as control, accounting, and categorization that sustain violence (Arnold and Costas, 2024).

In the trajectory of critical scholarship, particularly in *Organization*, scholars examine genocide and war as the "organized destruction of human life" (e.g. Bloomfield et al., 2017; Habiburrahman and Alamgir, 2024). Critical research traces the patterns of violence rooted in the logics of colonial administration: that is, displacement, dispossession, engineered famine, and the structured organization of life in camps. Here, violence is instrumental and institutional. Studies reveal how the militarization of cultures is deeply linked with neoliberal capitalist values—values that normalize militarized violence under the guise of economic priorities (Alamgir et al., 2022; Varman and Vijay, 2022). How lives are erased or displaced to serve the corporate-state nexus (Banerjee, 2011; Varman and Al-Amoudi, 2016). The specter of militarism also haunts the management of humanitarian aid and the organization of life in camps, exposing a strong entanglement between aid, control, global geopolitics and the organization of harm, domination, extermination, and dispossession (see Choudhry et al., 2025; Habiburrahman and Alamgir, 2024; Sassen, 2014; Varman and Vijay, 2022; Zarni, 2011).

Stokes and Gabriel (2010) warn us that through only viewing genocide as an “exceptional” event, we risk overlooking the long *durée* of organizational and managerial processes that render it possible. For genocide is an organizational effort: it mobilizes institutions, including the state, military, universities, and civil society organizations, in an ideological setting that naturalizes such violence and legitimizes its expression. From that perspective, the genocide in Gaza urgently requires a critical MOS inquiry, critiquing complicity, exposing power structures that uphold organized violence, and calling to account MOS researchers (see Dunne et al., 2008).

MOS and the economy of occupation and genocide

The ascendance and expansion of capitalist markets is a story of trade in enslaved people, colonial invasions, and the loot European powers acquired from South and Central America, Africa, and Asia (Vergès, 2019). Empire-building corporations institutionalized this violence. The British East India Company—often seen as the first multinational corporation of the world—used military power to secure its commercial interests, most notably in the Opium Wars (Xie, 2023). The Dutch East India Company dominated the spice trade through mass killings and displacement on the Banda Islands (Van Lent et al., 2022). These corporations transformed occupied territories into captive markets under draconian trade restrictions, securing an economy of occupation and exploitation (Wolfe, 2012). Corporations such as IG Farben, Krupp, and Siemens supplied weapons, chemicals, and infrastructure for the Nazi war effort and were complicit with the Nazi regime, as were Ford, GM, and IBM (Lo, 2019). Israel’s violent occupation and ongoing genocide follows this historical pattern, with private companies directly supplying the infrastructure and technologies that sustain large-scale organized violence. After the Nakba, Palestine’s labor and goods markets, trade relations, and most other policies remain deeply dependent on Israel (Shikaki, 2021).

Since the October 2023 attack by Hamas, we have witnessed Israel’s shift away from an economy of occupation to one of genocide. This shift signals a new means of organizing that dramatically intertwines the forces of business, war, and violence. Corporate practices produce forms of structural, epistemic, symbolic, and even direct, physical violence (Böhm and Pascucci, 2020), particularly through mechanisms of dispossession in resource extraction and development projects (Banerjee, 2018, 2023; Lesutis, 2024; Vélez-Torres and Méndez, 2022). This business of violence extends directly into overt or covert military action and warfare (Lumineau and Keller, 2025; MacKay and Munro, 2012; Malešević, 2017; McCann, 2017), as businesses profit from wars (Lo, 2019) or fund and partake in private security or paramilitary operations (Böhm and Pascucci, 2020).

War and genocide require infrastructure, housing, food, military equipment, cloud services, AI, and many other security and basic services. A range of Israeli and global corporations (many of them Western household brands) deliver these commodities. Corporate entities across sectors are making windfall profits by aiding the Israeli state’s violence against the Palestinian people. Israeli companies like Elbit Systems and IAI are leading exporters of “cutting-edge” military technology, such as drones, hexacopters, quadcopters, and AI-powered targeting tools. Their profits have surged even as Palestinian bodies are the laboratories to ensure their technologies are “combat proven” (Loewenstein, 2023; Wind, 2024). These firms then retool and market these products and services globally, for instance, to US Police departments, authoritarian regimes, and intelligence agencies.

Spyware such as Pegasus is used not only for surveillance against Palestinian activists but is also sold to other governments and intelligence agencies to target their own journalists and activists (Abdelnour, 2023; Kirchaessner et al., 2021). The UN (2025) documents over 1000 such corporate entities implicated in human rights violations and international crimes in Palestinian territory.

Technology behemoths directly profiteer from the genocide. Microsoft provides cloud computing capacity to Israeli state agencies responsible for expansive surveillance of Palestinians. The Israeli Ministry of Defense, police, and military rely on its Azure cloud services to process vast amounts of data that underpin the identification, monitoring, and targeting of Palestinians (The Guardian, 2025). Alphabet Inc (Google) and Amazon are not neutral service providers but are structurally embedded in systems of militarized surveillance that make genocide logistically and technologically feasible.

The genocide is financed directly by Israel's Global North allies, with the United States providing billions in direct military aid and weapon stock replenishment. It is also directly financed and enabled by global banking giants such as Bank of America, BNP Paribas and Barclays; powerful insurance companies including Allianz and AXA; some of the largest investment firms in the world, such as Vanguard and BlackRock, as well as sovereign wealth and pension funds, and faith-based charities (UN, 2025). Thus, we observe the convergence of global capital and state apparatuses actively abetting the dispossession and obliteration of Palestinians for the expansion of settler colonialism.

In the current era of self-destructive growth, even waste and debris from warfare serve as a basis for further capitalist accumulation by construction and waste management companies, incurring enormous climate costs (Abdelnour and Roy, 2025). Forensic Architecture (2025) documents how Israel has even weaponized aid infrastructures. A macabre example is provided by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), which set up the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), a US- and Israeli-backed aid initiative intended to replace UN-led humanitarian operations (FT, 2025a). BCG consultants modeled the operational structure, cost projections, even the financial implications of relocating hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to other countries (FT, 2025b).

Mainstream media coverage and MOS research have perpetuated narratives of Israel as a "Start-up" nation, focusing on its innovative technology, and capacity for rapid market creation, expansion, and re-definition (Abdelnour, 2023). Such narratives conceal the violence that undergirds such innovation and the way home-grown tech companies provide infrastructure for Israel's mass data collection and surveillance (UN, 2025). This wider military-innovation ecosystem integrates businesses, universities, and financial institutions into a tightly knit war apparatus (Abdelnour, 2023). In Israel, this ecosystem is sustained by billions of dollars in U.S. military aid, conscription that militarizes Israeli society, and corporate networks that monetize technologies of violence.

Finally, the UN Special Rapporteur reports the integral role of Israeli academic institutions in this economy of genocide. Universities and research institutes engage in epistemic occupation (Shalhoub-Kevorkian, 2010; Wind, 2024), systematically disallowing, silencing, distorting, and driving out critical academic research by Palestinian and critical scholars in Israeli universities (Pappe, 2007, 2010). Israeli gatekeeping maintains racial hierarchies between Palestinian and Israeli university researchers (Wind, 2024). Israel limits Palestinian citizens' access to education, curtails Palestinian presence and learning on campuses, and excludes knowledge production, pedagogies, and the dissent of Palestinian and critical Jewish-Israeli faculty and students. Palestinian universities are routinely subjected to military closures and raids, their faculty and students to abduction, detention, and torture. Surveillance permeates academic institutions and sites of knowledge production. Journalists, scholars, and activists, including dissident Israeli voices and Jewish coalitions across the world, have repeatedly been targeted and intimidated for advocating sanctions. Since October 2023, all universities in the Gaza Strip have been reduced to debris, occurring alongside the targeted killings of writers, academics, teachers, journalists, and other intellectuals (Wind, 2024).

What now?

“Facts do not at all speak for themselves, but require a socially acceptable narrative to absorb, sustain and circulate them,” observed Said (1984). The fact of genocide in Gaza, and the fact of Israel’s brutal and violent occupation of the historical territory of Palestine, do not yet weigh heavily on those who claim to represent us—here, elected state leaders, academic leaders, and academic associations in the MOS field. Such facts remain enmeshed in a narrative, largely accepted, that neuters them, one where the actions of the state of Israel are deemed necessary, benign, even righteous. Do the Palestinian people have permission to narrate the violence inflicted on them? What makes the facts of genocide be taken seriously?

Said (1984: 47) responded that “Answers to these questions must reside in a theory of perception, a theory of intellectual activity, and in an epistemological account of ideological structures as they pertain to specific problems as well as to concrete historical and geographical circumstances. None of these things is within the capacity of a solitary individual to produce; and none is possible without some sense of communal or collective commitment to assign them a more than personal validity.”

Inspired by Said’s scholarship, we offer this editorial as a collective, reflective praxis. Our writing has emerged after considered, difficult discussions within the journal’s community, including in editorial meetings. It has involved an active process of translating our learning into a commitment to justice for the people of Palestine amidst genocide (Mohanty, 2003; Nagar, 2014). This politically charged, collaborative effort has been grounded in confronting our subjectivities and our domestication as academics. We asked: how do we give an account of oneself/ourselves that reflects our collective responsibility in the face of crimes against humanity? We reflected on our roles as members of universities and as academic activists by approaching our collaboration, resistance, and positionality in activist scholarship as an ethico-political practice (Nagar, 2019). Such critical reflexivity rejects political correctness as a guiding principle dictating the rules of engagement (Lorde, 2017), rejects masquerades of neutrality and balance rooted in unexamined privilege and dominant power structures, and rejects instrumentalizing resistance and activist scholarship (Mohanty, 2003, 2011; Nagar, 2019). Our solidarity evolves through moments of failures: situations where we feel implicated, acknowledge our mistakes, and are challenged by interactions that question dominant communicative practices. Through this labor in action, we respond to the epistemic occupation and erasure of Palestinian thought, and bear witness to the scale of violence and the complicity of institutions such as states, the media, corporate entities, non-profits, the United Nations, and universities (Abdallah, 2025; Abdelnour and Abu Moghli, 2021).

We recognize that we write amidst growing academic precarities—as critical studies departments are shut down, critical scholarship on race, gender, diversity is defunded, and academic contracts are adjunctified (Burrell et al., 2024; Puar, 2012). More generally, universities are increasingly depoliticized spaces where dissent is crushed and fundamental injustices are brushed under the carpet (Sapir and Alimi, 2025). We also recognize that academic leaders—presidents, deans, heads of departments—as power brokers, regulate legitimacy, tethering what is permissible research around myopically defined boundaries of the professional Business School. They often refuse to take a stand on genocide, citing reputational concerns, present and prospective student enrollment, funding pressures, or ranking tables. Is it realistic to expect universities and their Business Schools to heed our call to take a stand regarding genocide and its allied corporate violence? The historic mission of Business Schools was to show how MOS could offer public value for all members of society, how it offered a common good larger than elite interests (Khurana, 2007). Surely, a world where tenets of violence, genocide, and settler colonialism are exposed, challenged and rejected, offers a ground for such aspiration?

Despite academic power brokers' evasions and connivances, students and early career scholars have refused to remain quiet (Saifer and Ahmad, 2025). Organizing workshops and online meetings, and mobilizing during annual meetings of the ICMS, EGOS, and AOM, they prod us to do better. The MOS Scholars for Palestine is one such initiative that has been steadily mobilizing to demand greater accountability in the field. Fundamentally, we respond to Palestinian *sumud* (perseverance). As Ziadah (2011) says it,

We Palestinians teach life after they have occupied the last sky.

We teach life after they have built their settlements and apartheid walls, after the last skies.

. . . We Palestinians wake up every morning to teach the rest of the world life, sir.

As MOS academics, we inhabit economies and institutions complicit in the violence in Gaza, that must be accountable for their epistemic politics. As teachers, we deliver courses on organizational design, responsible business, business ethics, sustainability, corporate social responsibility—that, unless interrogated, risk overlooking genocidal practices integral to contemporary business. As researchers, we lack neither analytical tools nor methods to critically examine organized violence (Abdelnour, 2023). What we need is political will and courage.

Organization's historical position and renewed call for action

Organization has a strong commitment to support and amplify scholarly activism (Prichard and Benschop, 2018; Zanoni et al., 2025). The journal has a history of studying and advancing racial justice, including through its solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement (see Mir and Zanoni, 2021) and through its Special Issue on Racial Capitalism. Racism against Palestinians has long been ignored (Jaser, 2024). But the current genocide is underpinned by racialization processes that dehumanize Palestinians, thereby causing their lives not to matter (Embrick and Williams, 2023). We, as a community, need to do more.

Building on past commitments, the journal has condemned Israel's actions, endorsed BDS (2025) and PACBI, and issued statements of solidarity with the Palestinian people. During the first virtual conference organized by *Organization* in December 2024, several panels centered their discussion around the unfolding genocide. Palestinian academic Rana Samara delivered the keynote address on the situation in Palestine. In its recent published Manifesto, *Organization* also renews its historical commitment to scholarly activism "to discuss both their experiences and their activism under enduring war and genocide" (Zanoni et al., 2025: 8). It is in this critical tradition that this editorial note responds to the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

We have the privilege of writing amidst a genocide. What shall we do then? As an urgent start to this conversation, as members of the epistemic community that constitutes *Organization*, we call for:

- *Creating knowledge infrastructures*: Call for articles (research articles, commentaries, speaking-out pieces, connexions and acting-up essays/connections, books, media, and artifact reviews), particularly from Palestinian scholars, that attend to the managerial and organizational processes enabling Israel's genocidal violence/practices, so they can be better understood, critiqued, and dismantled. Research must examine the organized destruction of life, complicity of weapons companies, global finance, and academic institutions that provide military collaborations and legitimize Israel's settler colonial narratives. We also call

for research that examines the economy of genocide, organizational processes, and institutional logics shaping and shaped by imperial occupation, settler colonialism, and internal colonialisms that create planetary wreckage and conditions of unlivability. We invite scholars to document forms of resistance, collective action, and organizing for survival, as they endure these conditions. We aim to create safe spaces in conferences, workshops, and webinars that *Organization* is affiliated with, for participants to openly discuss the aforementioned topics. Such knowledge infrastructures are essential for Palestinian scholars facing epistemic erasures, censorship, and incarceration

- *Academic boycott of Israeli institutions*: We are deeply concerned by Israel's ongoing scholasticide, marked by targeted attacks and forced starvation unleashed on university colleagues, and by the destruction of schools, universities, and public libraries in Gaza and the West Bank. We take stock of research that extensively documents Israeli universities' structural complicity in upholding apartheid and the scholasticide of Palestinians (Albanese, 2025; Lim, 2012; OHCHR, 2024; Pappé, 2007, 2010, 2024; Wind, 2024). Until they end their complicity in Israel's violations of international law and they recognize the rights of the Palestinian people. *Organization* refuses collaboration with Israeli institutions, a boycott that does not target individual academics but the universities to which they are affiliated. Therefore, all decisions on submissions will still be in accordance with the Committee of Publication Ethics (COPE) guidelines.¹ The refusal to collaborate is formulated by the anti-apartheid, non-violent Palestinian-led Boycott, Divest, Sanction (BDS) Movement to pressure Israel to meet its obligations under international law. The BDS and PACBI positions on boycott are inspired by previous anti-apartheid movements, such as those in South Africa. In fact, an academic boycott is a strategically necessary tactical response to uphold academic freedom and human rights (AAUP, 2025; BRISMES, 2025). An academic boycott is also recognized and called for by Israeli journalists, academics, and scholars (e.g. Levy, 2010; Loewenstein, 2023; Pappé, 2010; Wind, 2024) who have heavily documented the decades of oppression of the Palestinian people, and faced exile, repression, and incarceration.

We call our readers, reviewers, authors—those who constitute *Organization's* epistemic community—to act with us in solidarity with the people of Palestine.

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Author's note

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Note

1. <https://publicationethics.org/guidance/cope-position/dealing-geopolitical-intrusions-editorial-decisions>

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