A language of resistance: The pro-Palestinian linguistic landscape of Cape Town (South Africa) and its physical, lingual, and functional complexity

Alexander Andrason

This article is dedicated to the pro-Palestinian linguistic landscape (PPLL) of Cape Town. An analysis of 239 signs reveals that the linguistic landscape of this research site is highly complex. The signage is diverse with regard to its physicality (modality, materiality, and compositionality), lingualism (languages used, their formal properties, and mutual configurations), and functionality (authorship, readership, purposes, domains of use, and thematic scope). Overall, the properties of the PPLL in Cape Town largely coincide with those characterizing the linguistic landscape of resistance in Palestine, particularly its street-art subtype. The two principal differences between Cape Town and Palestine concern the use of Arabic as a genuine resistance element in the landscape – absent in Cape Town but prominent in Palestine – and the incorporation of several local (South) African elements into the PPLL in Cape Town.

Keywords: linguistic landscape, street art, language contestation, Palestine, South Africa

1. Introduction

It is widely recognized that *linguistic landscape* (LL) – or a dynamic constellation of linguistic signs displayed publicly – constitutes both a barometer of societal relations and a tool through which such relations can be shaped (Landry & Bourhis, 1997; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Gorter & Cenoz, 2024). On the one hand, LL provides tangible evidence that dissents and conflicts exist and that some ideologies are being imposed or, in response to this imposition, challenged. On the other hand, LL empowers different actors to render their message visible – to reinforce their dominant position or to protest against it. In other words, LL manifests and indexes power and resistance to it, as much as it performs this power and resistance and enacts them (Marten et al., 2012; Rubdy, 2015; Hanauer, 2015; Shiri, 2015; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Pütz & Mundt, 2019; Shohamy, 2019; Gorter & Cenoz, 2024).

The present article is dedicated to this resisting capacity of LL and analyzes the complexity of a pro-Palestinian linguistic landscape in Cape Town – the PPLL in short. To tackle this issue, I use an approach to LL that has proven useful in my previous work carried on the African continent (Andrason, 2025; Andrason & Karani, 2025; Andrason & Phiri, forthcoming). This approach entails the study of the following facets of the Capetonian PPLL: its *physicality* (i.e., modality, materiality, and compositionality), *lingualism* (i.e., named languages present in orthographic texts and their formal properties and relationships), and *functionality* (types of authorship and readership, as well as the purpose of the signage, the domains of its usage, and themes; see Marten et al., 2012; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015, 2024; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Pütz & Mundt, 2019; Cocq et al., 2020).

The choice of Cape Town as my research site is deliberate. First, pro-Palestinian attitudes have a long tradition in South Africa. For instance, anti-Apartheid movements and their leaders, such as Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, openly supported the Palestinian cause and saw their own liberation as deeply intertwined with that of Palestinians. Second, South Africa is the country that, in 2023, lodged a case against Israel at the International Court of Justice for violating the Genocide Convention – an accusation that was upheld as plausible in the provisional measures issued by this court in 2024 and in its advisory ruling in 2025. Third, within South Africa, Cape Town has historically harbored a large Muslim population, sometimes referred to as Cape Malays (Haron, 2002, 2015). Several parts of the city have indeed been shaped by the Islamic religion, culture, and architecture, and are still inhabited by Muslims, who overwhelmingly sympathize with Palestinians.

Fourth, since 2023, Cape Town has hosted a series of pro-Palestinian demonstrations, the largest and most consequential in South Africa, and pro-Palestinian events, whether cultural, academic, or related to sports, take place there every week. All of this renders this city one of the most suitable research sites for my topic, not only in the country but on the African continent and perhaps even globally.

To achieve my objectives, I structure the text as follows: in Section 2, I review scholarly literature on the LLs of resistance in Palestine; in Section 3, I explain the theoretical framework underlying my research and the method of data collection and analysis; Section 4 introduces original evidence which I evaluate in Section 5; in Section 6, I recapitulate my main findings and reflect on their ramifications.

2. The LL of resistance in Palestine

Scholarly literature demonstrates that Palestinians and their supporters mobilize an array of resources available in an LL to express and enact resistance against the oppression they have suffered: occupation and genocide. As noticed by many scholars (Parry, 2010, p. 10; Larkin, 2014, p. 162; Young, 2022, p. 18) in Palestine, "exist is to resist". Therefore, by bearing testimony to the reality of Palestinian lives, the very presence of such Palestinian and pro-Palestinian voices in the LL of Palestine constitutes one of the essential resistance tools. LL echoes (documents) this resistance and carries it out (executes it) (Peteet, 2016). This harnessing of LL as an element in the struggle reflects, in turn, *sumud* (صمود [sˤuˈmuːd]) – a value or an attitude characterizing Palestinians at large. *Sumud* refers to steadfastness, i.e., "endurance [and] perseverance" (Ajour, 2021, pp. 255-256; Meari, 2014). It teaches one to "remain […] persistent in the face of difficult circumstances [by] doing all the mundane tasks, […] trying to […] survive in what remains of Palestine" (Larkin, 2014, p. 162) and living one's life (Young, 2022, p. 32). The LL is a tangible manifestation of this quotidian living-life exercise.

In Palestine, one manner of resisting the oppression via LL is legal and somewhat covert. It entails harnessing existing language policies to contest the linguistic dominance of Hebrew (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Suleiman, 2017; Amara, 2018a) by reclaiming the use of Arabic in official signage, especially, names of streets and statal institutions (see Trumper-Hecht, 2008; Waksman & Shohamy, 2010; Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012; Amara, 2018b) as well as in signs placed on shop facades and private business and in advertisement (Amara, 2018a; 2019; Farram & Hortobágyi, 2020). This strategy has gradually become less effective – especially as far as street and institutional signs are concerned – because in 2018, Arabic lost its status as an official language on territories incorporated into Israel before and after the Nakba (Suleiman, 2019). Nevertheless, in both contemporary Israel and the West-Bank, the oppression continues to be challenged by using the Arabic language on street signposts and signs put on local institutions as well as by resorting to it in billboards, information notices, and many other publicly visible spaces (Amara, 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Ujvari, 2021; Farram & Hortobágyi, 2020). Yet, a more impactful way of reclaiming LL and resisting occupation more overtly has increasingly consisted of vandalizing Hebrew official signs: by defacing them and/or spray painting over them in Arabic (Ujvari, 2022).

This last tactic forms part of the most vibrant strategy of inscribing Palestinian presence and overt resistance into the LL of Palestine – *street art* (S-ART), be it graffiti, art printed and attached to objects, or artistic production involving any other material/medium found in the landscape (Peteet, 2016; Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014; Lehec, 2017; Oshinski, 2018; Alım, 2020; Karim, 2022; Young, 2022). The popularity and relevance of S-ART for resistance stem from the fact that, in Palestine, art and politics are closely intertwined having inspired and influenced each other for decades (Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014; Alım, 2020).

To begin with, Palestinian S-ART is eclectic and diverse regarding its form and content (Alım, 2020). This diversity derives from the fact that Palestinian S-ART is a dynamic phenomenon: its location (placement), vitality (temporality), production (risk), and audience (authorship and readership), as well as language (orthographic texts) and message (themes and purpose of use) have substantially fluctuated over the last decades (Peteet, 2016).

Palestinian S-ART exploits different supports. During the time of the first Intifada, it was mainly placed on the exterior of buildings: homes, businesses, and institutions. After 2000, the Separation Wall became its primary – or at least, the most conspicuous – location (Peteet, 2016; Young, 2022) although family houses and private buildings continue to be prominent artistic canvas in refugee camps (Lehec, 2017). A particular type of support – e.g., the stone wall of a building or the Separation Wall itself – is often selected strategically. That is, the support or some of its elements are incorporated into a S-ART installation as parts of its theme and message (Peteet, 2016; Gagliardi, 2020; Karim, 2022). The vitality of S-ART oscillates between ephemeral/erasable and durable/permanent. While the former type was typical of the first Intifada, it is still attested due to the defacement (movement) combatting the "beautification" of the Separation Wall. The latter type is characteristic of the Separation Wall, as the reputation of some S-ART pieces renders these works the constant features of the wall structure – attractions inscribed into the landscape nearly permanently (Gagliardi, 2020, p. 448; regarding the critique of beautification, see Parry, 2010; Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016). Likewise, the production of S-ART may vary significantly, ranging between hastened and clandestine on the one hand and lengthily and open/threat-less on the other hand (Peteet, 2016).

The authorship and readership of Palestinian S-ART is diversified too (Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016). The authors of S-ART can be communal/local, i.e., people living in Palestinian towns and refugee camps. After 2000, authors have increasingly been global: international visitors and famous foreign artists (Peteet, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Young, 2022; Karim, 2020). While a single S-ART piece (e.g., a graffito) may be one artist's work, complex S-ART installations (e.g., larger graffiti frames) emerge due to the collaboration of many authors (Gröndahl, 2009). Correspondingly, the aimed readers of S-ART can be local/Palestinians or global/non-Palestinians. The former readership was typical of the first Intifada although it still prevails in refugee camps (Lehec, 2017). The latter characterizes 21st-century S-ART (Peteet, 2016) which tends to be placed in areas frequented by tourist (Young, 2022) and principally targets international public (Peteet, 2016).

Palestinian S-ART varies regarding its purpose and themes. During the first Intifada, S-ART was, above all, "print weapon" (Peteet, 1996 p. 139): a means to drive and carry out the insurgence both in terms of "civil disobedience" (Peteet, 1996, p. 145) and "direct action" (Peteet, 2016, p. 338). It constituted "a communicative device" (Peteet, 1996, p. 155) – perhaps the most important one (Young, 2022) – employed to announce orders, directives, and activities, advertise strikes and demonstrations, and divulge information (Peteet, 2016; Oshinski, 2018; Karim, 2022). Nevertheless, S-ART also acted as a "territorial marker" for land reclamation (Peteet, 2016, p. 337) and a "self-reflective and self-critical" roster (Karim, 2022, p. 52) that indexed Palestinian history and memory (Peteet, 1996; 2016). Gradually, this latter usage in terms of a "critical […] commentary" (Peteet, 2016, p. 338) as well as the assertion of international solidarity with Palestine became two principal functions of S-ART (Peteet, 2016). On the one hand, S-ART currently focuses on the violations of human rights, mirrors Palestinian history, culture, and literature, comments on politics, and commemorates people (e.g., martyrs and prisoners) opposing the occupation and genocide (Peteet, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Alım, 2020). On the other hand, S-ART (especially on the Separation Wall) is harnessed to raise awareness and communicate international support within the frame of "global struggles against [settler] colonialism, exploitation, and capitalist greed" (Larkin, 2914, p. 161). Additionally, S-ART is the platform for the expression of emotions: fear, anger, grief, and despair, as well as joy, love, pride, and hope that a better future is possible (Larkin, 2014; Salih & Richter-Devroe, 2014; Peteet, 2016; Karim, 2022). Overall, S-ART may pertain to numerous domains –

religious, economic, social, historical, cultural, and political (Lehec, 2017). The themes pervasive in S-ART include belonging (i.e., forming part of a nation, land, community, home, and family), Israeli violence (visible in imprisonment, discrimination, harassment, segregation, othering, and everyday hardships), and resistance (manifest through resilience, uprisings, martyrdom, and catastrophic events of the past, especially Nakba of 1948, Naksa of 1967, and the two Intifadas) (Karim, 2022). In each of these themes, a spectrum of voices can be heard reflecting different opinions, political affiliations, and ideologies (Alım, 2020).

Palestinian S-ART varies regarding sign types. Two main semiotic classes can be distinguished: orthographic and non-orthographic. Initially, orthographic signs mainly drew on Arabic. Gradually, English became the primary language used in signage (Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Young, 2022) sometimes accompanied by other global languages, e.g., Spanish and French (Peteet, 2016, p. 338). Non-orthographic signs are equally relevant – if not more – and draw on Palestinian symbols and iconography. These include Handala (حنظلة) created by Naji al-Ali, the Palestinian flag, the keffiyeh, the Dome of the Rock, keys, Palestinian embroidery, the map of pre-1948 Palestine stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River, the red color and the remaining colors of the flag, silhouettes of children and elders, portraits of fighters, martyrs, and prisoners, and elements of Palestinian nature, especially olive tree (Peteet, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Alım, 2020; Karim, 2022). The instruments of oppression can also be exploited as part of symbology, e.g., the Separation Wall and (a hand on) barbed-wire, as is also true of devices used to combat it, such as slingshots, stones, and burning tires (Peteet, 2016; Alım, 2020; Karim, 2022). Additionally, international artists resort to global liberation symbols: peace doves, balloons, and a peace/victory emblem, as well as images of freedom fighters and victims of racism from other countries (Larkin, 2014; see further below). S-ART also exploits a range of *rhetoric devices*. On the one hand, it can draw on irony, sarcasm, mockery and satire harnessed to ridicule the occupation army (Peteet, 2016; cf. Kanaana, 1990, 2013). On the other hand, its genre may be more plaintive and mourning deploring the lives lost and oppressions endured (Peteet, 2016). Very often, S-ART makes use of comparison and parallelism to render a message more approachable to international audiences. It refers to tragic moments in Jewish history and invokes racial oppressions worldwide, especially those committed in Apartheid South Africa and the USA (Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016; Karim, 2022). All such symbols form "a grammar" (Lehec, 2017, p. 9) highly metaphorical, metonymic and allegorical (Karim, 2022), complex and multilayered, and both subtle and mighty.

The LL of resistance in Palestine in general and its S-ART subtype specifically challenge the epistemic violence perpetrated by Israel, which holds "monopoly on the circulation of information and knowledge" on the occupied territories (Peteet, 1996, p. 155), and Western countries (mainly the USA and EU), who have defended and/or justified the oppression inflicted on Palestinians (Peteet, 2016; Young, 2022). The LL provides a means for Palestinians and their supporters to "refus[e] to be silenced" (Peteet, 2016, p. 338) – because "silence is complicity" (Peteet, 2016, p. 343) – and accept the current situation as normal. While the LL documents Palestinian lives and reality – by both calling for actions/interventions and narrating views/history (Peteet, 2016) – it also contributes to the construction of the (local and global) Palestinian and pro-Palestinian community (Lehec, 2017; Young, 2022 p. 32), shaping its "collective consciousness" (Alım, 2020, p. 73) and sharpening its identity.

3. Theoretical background

3.1. Conceptual framework

In my study of PPLL, I draw on the most comprehensive LL approach that merges linguistics *sensu stricto* with ethnography (see Andrason, 2025, Andrason & Karani, 2025, and Andrason & Phiri, forthcoming, drawing on Marten et al., 2012; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015, 2024; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Pütz & Mundt, 2019; Cocq et al., 2020). In this approach, the various LL properties of signs are clustered into three groups, as mentioned in the introduction: physical, lingual, and functional (Andrason, 2025; Andrason and Karani, 2025; Andrason & Phiri, forthcoming).

Physicality concerns the modality, materiality, and compositionality of signs. In the present research, a *sign* is understood as any meaning-form pairing (Evans & Green 2006) as long as "the producers [and/or] interpreters [thereof are] at least to some degree aware of this relation" (Zlatev et. al., 2023, p. 84).[1] (This precludes "unintentional signals"; Zlatev 2023, p. 84.) *Modality* equals "sensory" or "perceptual faculty" (Zlatev et. al., 2023, pp. 84, 89), i.e., visual, auditory, haptic, olfactory, and gustatory. In this article, signage modality is limited to visual signs and comprises of two modes: orthographic (i.e., texts; cf. Van Mensel et al., 2016; Cocq et al., 2020) and non-orthographic (e.g., figures, symbols, colors; Marten, et al., 2012; Pennycook, 2019; Pütz & Mundt, 2019). *Materiality* concerns the type of support on which a sign is located. A support can be ephemeral or permanent, physical or digital, and static or mobile (Marten et al., 2012; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Pütz & Mundt, 2019; Shohamy, 2019; Cocq et al., 2020). The feature *compositionality* refers to the spatial limits of a sign – or the granularity of "frames" (Backhaus, 2007, p. 66). Granularity can be minimal and yield micro-frames (e.g., an individual one-word inscription); alternatively, it can be maximal and yield macro-frames (e.g., constellations of inscriptions on a graffiti wall; cf. Cocq et al., 2020).

Lingualism concerns the properties of orthographic texts, in particular the languages present in signs, their formal properties, and the manners of their coexistence. That is, a sign may be monolingual containing a single language or multilingual drawing on two or more languages; of course, a language used by local community may also be absent from the LL of the area (Gorter & Cenoz, 2015; Van Mensel et al., 2016). In multilingual signs, languages coexist in four main ways. First, languages may constitute *translations* of each other: *full* (the whole content is restated in different languages, e.g., l_1, l_2, and l_3), *partial* (while l_1 conveys the whole message, l_2 and l_3 restate only the fragments of it), and *overlapping* (l_1, l_2, and l_3 share some part of the message although no language conveys its whole content). Second, languages included in a sign exist in a complementary relationship where each language expresses different part of information (Reh, 2004). Furthermore, an orthographic text can draw on various languages in a more blended manner, exploring *code-switching* (insertional, alternational, and congruent), *borrowing* (manner and pattern), and *hybridization* (see Muysken, 2000 and Matras, 2009). Formally, the orthographic material present can be *simple* (a word or a proper name) or *complex* (large passages containing sophisticate vocabulary, various lexical classes, and elaborate syntactic structures; Andrason, 2025; Andrason & Karani, 2025).

Functionality concerns the authors and readers of signage, as well as the purpose of signs, their domains of use, and thematic scope (Marten et al., 2012; Gorter & Cenoz, 2015, 2024; Van Mensel et al., 2016; Pütz & Mundt, 2019; Cocq et al., 2020). The *authors* of signs can draw on the authority of regional, statal, and international bodies (top-down signage) or, instead, reflect the agency of individuals and local communities (bottom-up signage; Marten et. al., 2012; Pütz & Mundt, 2019;

[1] The original definition proposed by Zlatev et al. (2023) does not require the fulfilment of both conditions; compliance with one of them (i.e., either producers or interpreters) is sufficient.

Shohamy, 2019). *Readers* may be internal (autochthonous and local) or external (visitors including tourists and global audience).

3.2. Method

Data collection activities were long-term and lasted over a year and a half. From October 2023 till July 2025, I drove and walked the selected parts of the city and attended pro-Palestinian demonstrations and events, e.g., film screenings and public lectures. I spoke to some authors and custodians of signs and listened to the stories shared with me by local community members who lived in the areas where signs are located. In so doing, I reviewed the LL of a considerable segment of Cape Town's central metropolitan district. This includes 33 neighborhoods that span from the North East (Sea Point, Green Point, Three Anchor Bay, and Mouille Point) to the East (Waterfront, De Waterkant, Bo-Kaap, City Center, Gardens, Oranjezicht, Vredehoek, Zonnebloem, Woodstock, Walmer Estate, University Estate, Salt River, and Observatory) and further South (Rondebosch, Mowbray, Rosebank, Newlands, Clermont, Kenilworth, Wynberg, Plumstead, Steenberg, Lavender Hill, Cafda Village, Retreat, Heathfield, Elfindale, and Southfield). The total area of my fieldwork is delineated in Figure 1. It can also be consulted in 2-D and 3-D modes on earth.google.com (see https://lnk.ink/CapeTownFieldworkArea) and kmzview.com (see https://lnk.ink/FieldworkArea).

Overall, the above-mentioned activities allowed me to take more than 400 pictures and three videos (of a total length of three minutes) that document 239 signs. This dataset can be viewed as (nearly) comprehensive at the time of completion of my fieldwork, especially as far as non-mobile signage is concerned. That is, I aimed at documenting *all* signs that existed instead of drawing on some randomized sample. To ensure this, I revisited each neighborhood several times and interacted with the inhabitants who directed me to the signs that I might have omitted. In other words, my data arguably (nearly) exhaust the pro-Palestinian signage of the area and are therefore representative of it.[2]

Figure 1. Fieldwork area

[2] While there may be some signs that, despite my best efforts and the assistance of local communities, have not been documented, their number is certainly low and has no significant bearing on my findings.

Subsequently, I compiled a spreadsheet in which I analyzed the 239 signs according to the physical, lingual, and functional parameters discussed in Section 3.1. To be exact, regarding physicality, I annotated the visual modality of each sign (figures, symbols, and colors), their material support (permanent or ephemeral, static or dynamic, and physical or digital), and compositionality (coexistence in larger frames). Regarding lingualism, I annotated the nature of orthographic texts (i.e., their meaning, the extent of their lexico-grammatical complexity, and the script used), their mono- or multilingualism, patterns of language coexistence (full, partial, overlapping translations or complementary messages), and language-contact properties (code-switching, borrowing, and hybridization). Regarding functionality, I annotated the authorship (top-down or bottom-up) and readership (local or foreign) of signs as well as their purpose, domains of use, and themes. This spreadsheet database constitutes the foundation of the evidence that I will present in the next section.

4. Findings

4.1. Physicality

The physicality of the signs found in the PPLL of Cape Town is highly diverse. To begin with, the PPLL draws on two types of modes: orthographic and non-orthographic. The signage of the former type includes inscriptions written in a language or a few languages. I discuss the lingual properties of these signs in Section 4.2 dedicated to lingualism. The latter type explores visual signs that extend beyond texts codified orthographically and involve symbols, colors, and the depictions of people, nature, places and objects, as well as material objects themselves.

The Palestinian flag is a ubiquitous symbol in the PPLL. It features abundantly as a flag *sensu stricto* – a piece of fabric carried in demonstrations (2.a) or hanged on buildings, usually, shops, private houses, and mosques (2.b).

(a)  (b) 

Figure 2. Flags in demonstrations (a) and on buildings (b)

Even more commonly, flags are depicted. For instance, they appear on stickers put on private cars (3.a) or public benches (3.b). They can also be painted on carton boards that are exhibited in shops' windows or carried by people in rallies and public gatherings (3.c).

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 3. Flag stickers on cars (a), benches (b), carton boards carried in rallies (c).

Equally pervasive are Palestinian flags (spray) painted on buildings. Such depictions may constitute more or less conspicuous elements in complex graffiti compositions (4.a), spreading across large parts of walls (4.b) and roofs (4.c) and covering the entire facades of individual houses (4.d) and assemblies of blocks of flats (4.e).

(a) (b)

(c) (d)

(e)

Figure 4. Flags painted on buildings: walls (a-b), roofs (c), facades (d), and assemblies of blocks (e)

Flag symbology may be more figurative. In such cases, the Palestinian flag is confined to the contours of another symbol: a dove (see the middle dove in 5.a), a fist (5.b), a fist with a flame (5.c), a kite (5.d), or the map of Palestine (5.e):

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

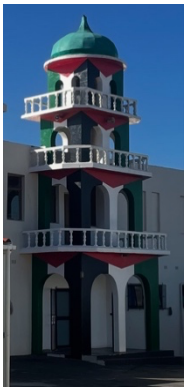
Figure 5. Flag shaped to other symbols: a dove (a), fist (b-c), kite (d), and Palestine contour (e)[3]

Additionally, it is the symbology of the four colors of the flag – black, white, green, and red – that is exploited without creating the impression of a flag(-like) shape. This emblematic usage of the flag color pallet can apply to orthographic (6.a-b) and non-orthographic signage (6.c-f):

[3] The first dove in (5.a) draws on the South African flag while the third one draws on the flag of Yemen, Egypt, or Iraq. See also the flag of Sudan in (27.a).

(a)

(b)



(c)

(d)

(e)

(f)

Figure 6. Flag colors in orthographic (a-b) and non-orthographic signs (c-f)

The symbolism of the flag colors may be accompanied by actual flags and/or their depictions, forming complex mosaics as in (7). Another common element in the PPLL is keffiyeh. Keffiyehs are often worn by Capetonians, not only in pro-Palestinian demonstrations and gatherings but also in several everyday activities. I was able to document two keffiyeh types: the Palestinian black-and-white keffiyeh (8.a) and the red-and-white variant used in Jordan and more widely across the Arab peninsula (8.b).

Figure 7. Flag colors accompanied by flags

(a) (b)

Figure 8. Keffiyehs – black-and-white (a) and red-and-white (b) – as garment

Keffiyehs also transpire through their depictions on walls (9.a). Alternatively, the fishnet pattern of a keffiyeh is used as the background of another symbol, e.g., the map of Palestine (9.b) or as an ornamental element in a larger S-ART composition (9.c).

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 9. Painted keffiyehs (a) and keffiyeh patterns (b-c)

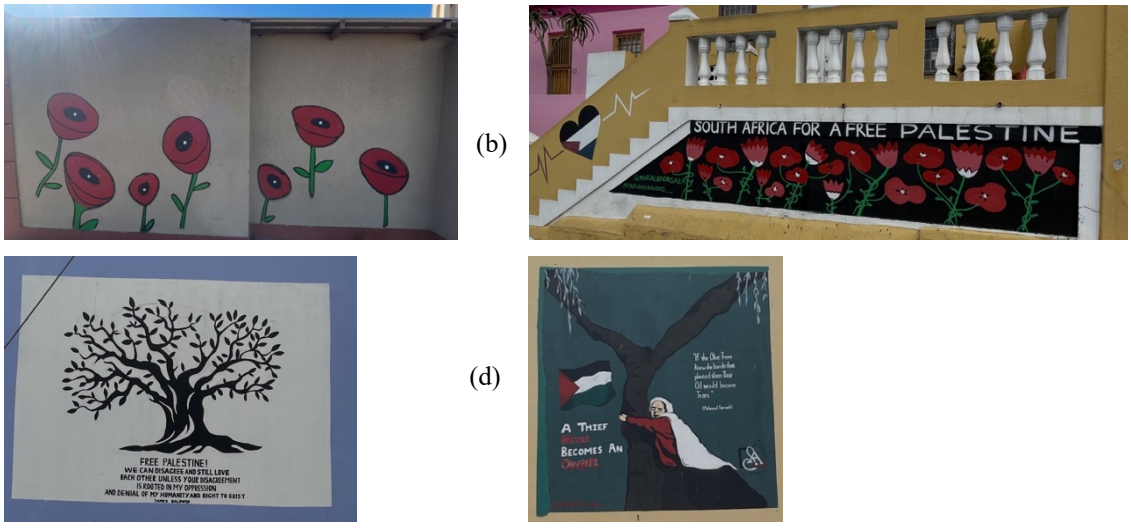
A Palestinian architectural feature that is highly visible in the PPLL is the Dome of the Rock (10.a). Its image often forms part of larger artistic configurations that include flags (10.b-d), human silhouettes (10.b-c), keffiyehs (or keffiyeh pattern) (10.c-d), and other symbols such as hands, flowers (10.d) and keys (10.e), as well as orthographic texts (10.d).

(a) (b) (c)

(d) (e)

Figure 10. The Dome of the Rock: depicted alone (a) and accompanied by flags (b-d), human silhouettes (b-c), keffiyehs (c-d), and other symbols (d-e)

The PPLL also includes symbols referring to Palestinian nature and ecology, especially poppy flowers (11.a-b) and olive tree (11.c-d). These symbols can be painted alone (11.a and 11.c); alternatively, they coincide with other symbols (e.g., a flag and a woman dressed in Palestinian clothes; 11.d) and orthographic texts (11.b-c).



(a) (b)

(c) (d)

Figure 11. Natural elements: poppy flowers (a-b) and olive trees (c-d)

Watermelon is another element related to flora that commonly features in the PPLL (12). The symbolism of watermelon stems from its colors that match those of the Palestinian flag.

Figure 12. Watermelon images

Several signs found in the PPLL exploit the symbol of a key – a metonymy (cf. Zlatev 2024) for the hope to return to the lost houses and the right to the properties seized by oppressors. As elements in the PPLL, keys may be physical objects (13.a), or they are depicted (13.b).

(a) (b)

Figure 13. Keys: physical objects (a) and depicted representations (b)

Another common symbol in the PPLL is the map of the pre-1948 Palestine. This geographical shape can be filled with the Palestinian flag (see 5.e) or a keffiyeh pattern, marking the territory to which Palestinians have been confined over the many decades (14; see also 9.b above).

Figure 14. The map of Palestine

Handala (حنظلة) or the personification of the Palestinian people and their refugee status, is also attested in the PPLL. It usually appears together with other symbols, e.g., the Palestinian flag, Dome of the Rock, keffiyeh pattern, key, watermelon, and poppy flower (15). The PPLL hosts other types of human silhouettes, both adult (male and female) and children (16; see also 6.a, 11.d, 13.b above and 20.a-b below), and depicted as individuals and families (5.d; see also 24.a further below). Several of such images portray anonymous fighters or protesters (5.c and 9.a).

Figure 15. Handala images

Figure 16. Human silhouettes

Nevertheless, human depictions may be more specific referring to concrete persons such as Naji al-Ali, the creator of Handala (17.a), or Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian-American journalist killed by the Israeli forces in 2022 (17.b; see also Ismail Haniyeh, the political leader of Hamas assassinated by Israel; 20.c).

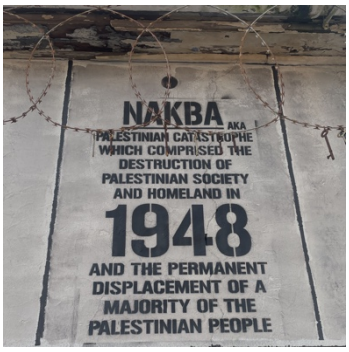
(a) 

(b) 

Figure 17. Named martyrs: Naji al-Ali (a) and Shireen Abu Akleh (b)

A cluster of features commonly exploited in the PPLL involves the instruments of oppression. These principally include barbed-wire and concrete-wall structures (like the Separation Wall) which instead of being depicted are often creatively incorporated into complex S-ART installations as their physical components (18.a-b). Other signs connoting oppression, typically painted, are Israeli armored vehicles (see 18.d below), the Israeli flag and the star of David (interposed with the universal prohibition sign; 18.c), as well as chains and handcuffs (see 19.c and 20.c below).

(a)



(b)

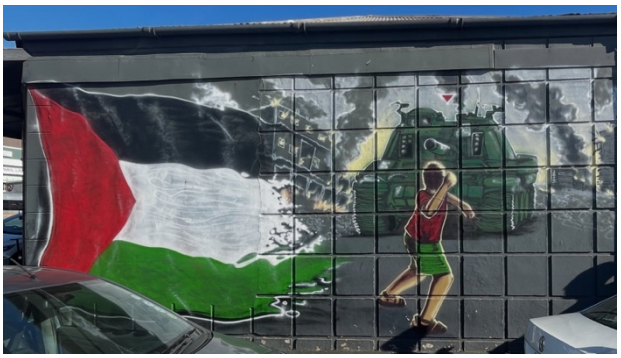
(c)

(d)

Figure 18. Oppression tools and symbols: barbed-wire and walls (a-b), the star of David (c), and Israeli armored vehicles (d)

The symbology of the PPLL may also draw on the devices associated with fight against the oppression. Among them, the most prominent are depictions of (throwing) stones (19.a) and lifting fists (3.c and 5.b above) – often while holding a stone (19.b) – and hands breaking chains (19.c). Additionally, some signs contain an inverted red triangle, which has been used in pro-Palestinian videos and images distributed on social media to pinpoint Israeli military targets (19.a).

(a)



(b)

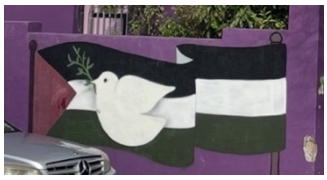
(c)

Figure 19. Resistance tools: stones being thrown (a), raised fists (b), and broken chains (c)

Apart from exploiting the symbology that is widely associated with Palestine and their cause, the PPLL of Cape Town also draws on several international symbols: peace doves (20.a-b), balloons of liberation (20.d), which replicate Banksy's graffiti on the Separation Wall (cf. Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016), victory gesture (20.c), heart (see 8.b above) and heartbeat diagrams (5.e), the emblems of love and life, as well as coffins and candles symbolizing loss of human life (see 32.b in Section 4.3).

(a)

(b)



(c)

(d)

Figure 20. International symbols: peace dove (a-b), victory gesture (c), and balloon of liberation (d)

The supports of signs are highly diversified. First, signs vary between being ephemeral and permanent. The former type includes signs that are inscribed on paper and carton boards as well as those printed on plastic tags, all of which can easily be removed, effaced, and destroyed. Exemplary cases are posters with the demand **No education as normal till boycott is formal**, which were displayed across the University of Cape Town (UCT) and in their majority torn down by the opponents of the Palestinian cause (21.a). The other type, much more prominent, includes signs placed directly on concrete and brick walls and buildings, whether private houses, shops, or mosques. One sign appears on a metal sheet imitating a street signpost (21.b). In several instances, such permanent signs have become genuine architectural features admired by the local community and tourists (see Section 4.3). This does not mean that they cannot be removed. This was the case of a mural that had been painted on the city-owned block of flats and contained three inscriptions (**we stand with Palestine**, **free Palestine** and **free Gaza**) accompanied by the depictions of Palestinian flag and a watermelon. Against the will of the building's inhabitants, the city erased the graffiti and repainted the wall (21.c).

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 21. Ephemeral (a) and permanent (b-c) supports

Second, supports vary between being static and mobile. The former type is typical of signs painted on murals and buildings, adverts fixed to walls, or stickers glued to benches (see the various signs discussed above). The latter type includes signs that tend to be carried by people, either as part of their apparel (e.g., keffiyehs (8.a-b) and t-shirts (22.a)) or tools held in demonstrations (e.g., flags and posters (2.a and 8.b)). Another common class of mobile supports are cars – both private (3.a) and public taxis (22.b) – that are marked with stickers (3.a) and elaborate images (22.b).

(a) (b)

Figure 22. Mobile support: garment (a) and vehicles (b)

Third, supports may be physical (tangible) or digital (virtual), i.e., those appearing on social media, especially Instagram, Facebook, and X (23). Physical supports are significantly more common than digital ones, although this may stem from the nature of my fieldwork that centered the physical landscape of Cape Town.

Figure 23. Digital support

Signs are also diversified as far as their compositionality is concerned. That is, the frame of a sign can be minimal as is the case of individual and isolated inscriptions (see 3.a-b above). However, much more commonly, signs form complex macro-frames. The canonical examples of this are graffiti that span entire walls and facades and contain mosaics of smaller images and inscriptions (24.a) as well as installations in which painted signs coexist with printed ones (24.c) or are accompanied by elements of local architecture, e.g., barbed-wire (24.b).

(a)

(b)

(c)

Figure 24. Macro-frames in Bo-Kap (a-b) and Salt River (c)

4.2. Lingualism

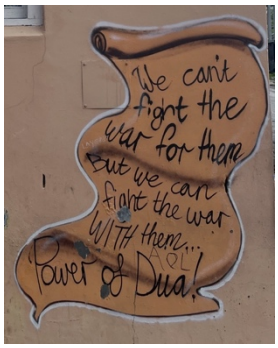
As explained in the previous section, signs present in the PPLL of Cape Town may include texts apart from making use of diverse non-orthographic symbols. Such orthographic inscriptions can draw on four languages – English, Arabic, isiXhosa, and Afrikaans – and be mono- or multilingual.

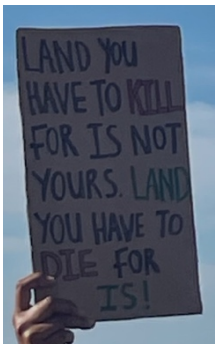
English – one of the eleven languages recognized in the South African constitution and one of the three languages entertaining an official status in the province of Western Cape in which Cape Town is situated – is by far the most prominent in the PPLL. This is consistent with the situation characterizing the LL of Cape Town and South Africa more generally, where English is signifyingly more visible than any other language, including the remaining languages acknowledged in the administration of the country and the Western-Cape province (Andrason, 2025). This prominence of English transpires through several phenomena. To begin with, most monolingual signs are in English. Such monolingual English signs can be permanent (e.g., painted on murals) and ephemeral (e.g., printed on paper), static (e.g., placed on buildings) and mobile (carried by people and put on vehicles),

as well as physical and digital (23). Remarkably, all texts found in digital signs are written in English with the sole non-English element in some of them being the name of the association **al-Quds**, lit. 'the holy (city)', i.e., Jerusalem – a regularly Romanized (and thus never written in Al-Abjadiyah) borrowing from Arabic. Monolingual English signs also instantiate all purposes, domains, and themes attested in the PPLL (see Section 4.3). The formal properties of monolingual English texts vary in complexity, ranging from one or two-word inscriptions and short phrases (25.a-b) to complex passages containing a gamut of lexical classes and syntactic structures (25.c-e). Lastly, the predominance of English is evident in the fact that all multilingual signs (see further below) include English as one of their languages.

(a)

(b)





(c) (d) (e)

Figure 25. Monolingual English signs: simple (a and b) and complex (c, d, and e)

Arabic is the second most conspicuous language in the PPLL. It is virtually the only language other than English that features in monolingual signs (see, however, next paragraph). Nevertheless, the number of Arabic monolingual signs is very limited – 6 in total (4.b, 10.d, 26.a-d). Two of these form part of larger constellations containing English signs as well (26.c-d). The Arabic text can be codified in Al-Abjadiyah (26.b-c), transcribed with Roman characters (4.b, 26.d), or draw on both strategies simultaneously (26.a). It also varies between simple and complex. To be exact, the sign in (26.a) appears on a flag hanging from a mosque. It contains two phrases of the Shahada, i.e., **لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا ٱللَّٰهُ** 'There is no god but Allah' and **مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ ٱللَّٰهِ** 'Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah', as well as the inscription **Labaik Ya Gaza Labaik** 'Gaza, here we are at your service', a Romanized transcription of **لبيک يا غزّة لبيک**. The remaining monolingual Arabic signs are painted on walls. The signs in (4.b), (26.b), and (26.d) draw on short expressions: a single word: **فلسطين** 'Palestine', a noun phrase **masjidus sard** 'the mosque aṣ-ṣadr' (with a non-standard morpheme boundary and a simplified transcription representing **ṣ** as **s**; cf. **مسجد الصدر**), and a phrase **dammi falastini** 'my blood is

Palestinian', which is a transcription of **دمي فلسطيني** – the title of a famous song by Mohamed Assaf. Both texts are vowelled.[4] In contrast, (26.c) contains the unvowelled clause **غدا عندما يبدأ السلام** 'tomorrow when the peace begins'. Lastly, (10.d) analyzed in Section 4.1, includes several Arabic names written in both Al-Abjadiyah (**محمد المالخي**) and Roman characters (e.g., **Faraj** for **فرج** and **Nihad** for **نهاد**).

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

Figure 26. Monolingual Arabic signs written in Al-Abjadiyah (b-c), the Roman script (d), and both scripts (a)

Additionally, I was able to document a monolingual inscription in isiXhosa – **ndithembe** 'I trust' or 'trust me'. This text appears within a constellation of signs that form a complex graffiti mural (some of its composite parts are presented in 9.c, 13.a, 18.b, and 21.b). Contrary to this artistic graffiti itself, which is painted and carefully executed, the isiXhosa sign is written with a pen, hastily, most likely by a by-passer rather than the graffiti artist themself. It is barely visible from a distance and is meaningful only within the semantic frame of the entire wall – it expresses the hope that Palestine will be free despite the oppression suffered that is depicted by the S-ART mural.[5]

Multilingual signs are significantly less common than monolingual ones. They can be bilingual or trilingual. There are 11 signs that draw on two languages. In nearly all of them, English coincides with Arabic, which is, in turn, almost always written in Al-Abjadiyah. Most English-Arabic signs are translations, usually full (27.a-c, 27.e) or partial (27.d). Specifically, **حرية سلام عدالة** equates to **freedom peace justice** (27.a); **فلسطين حرة** equates to **free Palestine** (27.b); **التراث لمن يحفظه** equates to **heritage is for the one who preserves it** (27.c; cf. 5.d with the same Arabic and English text); **روح روحي** equates to **soul of my soul** (see 34.d further below); and **كيب تاون هنا فلسطين** equates to **Cape Town here is Palestine**. The text in (27.e) contains a Quranic quote from Surah Al-Imran Ayat and its English translation. In contrast, the Arabic text in (27.d) **الوجود مقاومة** only corresponds to the last part of the

[4] Arabic texts written in Al-Abjadiyah can contain diacritics indicating vowels (vowelled texts) or omit them (unvowelled texts). The former approach is common in educational materials as well as in printed editions of the Quran, whereas the latter approach predominates in other contexts, e.g., literature, (print and digital) media, and personal notes.

[5] I do not provide the image due to the poor quality of the inscription. It is however documented in my database.

English message, i.e., **existence is resistance**. Overall, these English-Arabic composites attest to alternational code-switching and their language varies between sequences of nouns or simple phrases (e.g., 27.b) to complex literary passages (27.e).

(a) (b) (c) (d)

(e)

Figure 27. Bilingual English-Arabic signs – alternational code-switching

There are two additional English-Arabic signs that attest to insertional code-switching and a more blended type of language coexistence. In (28.a), the English adjective **free** modifies the Arabic nominal head **فلسطين** 'Palestine'. While the Arabic element exerts a governing syntactic role, suggesting that Arabic is the matrix code, the word order of this phrase matches English (adjective + noun) rather than Semitic (noun + adjective). In (28.b), the Romanized Arabic noun **ummah** (for the original **أُمَّة** – the only exception to Al-Abjadiyah in multilingual signs) is used vocatively without, however, the customary vocative particle **يا** 'o!'. It introduces the predicative nucleus of the clause – the English imperative verb **unite**. This bilingual clause is accompanied by the Shahada that is entirely written in Arabic (and Al-Abjadiyah).

(a)

(b)

Figure 28. Bilingual English-Arabic signs – insertional code-switching

Apart from English and Arabic, bilingual signs may draw on isiXhosa. As was the case of monolingual signs, there is only one instance of this – an inscription added with a pen to a complex

graffiti wall: **From Salt River to the Sea** | **Avuyile**. The isiXhosa material itself consists of a proper name **Avuyile** – the signature of the author of this short text.

Lastly, there is one trilingual sign (29). Its text draws on Arabic and English – which as explained above are the two languages prevalent in monolingual and bilingual signs – as well as Afrikaans, which is the other common language used by the Capetonian Muslim community after English. The inscription is written in both Al-Abjadiyah and Roman characters. The first two lines are in Afrikaans: the first of them, i.e., **افركانس سى كومفندان** constitutes an Abjadiyah transcription of the Afrikaans phrase found in the second line **Afrikaans se komvandaan** 'the origin of Afrikaans'. The next two lines form another unit. Specifically, the third line, spelled in Al-Abjadiyah is an Afrikaans-Arabic hybridization. The first two words, i.e. **افركانس سى**, are the Abjadiyah transcription of the Afrikaans possessive **Afrikaans se** 'of Afrikaans', although **افركانس** could also be a translation (or transcription) from English, matching the text of the line below. In contrast, the last word is an Arabic noun **أصل** [ʔasˤl] 'origin'. As a result, this line arguably combines three languages: English, Afrikaans, and Arabic. The fourth line is in English.

Figure 29. Trilingual sign, see text for explanation

4.3. Functionality

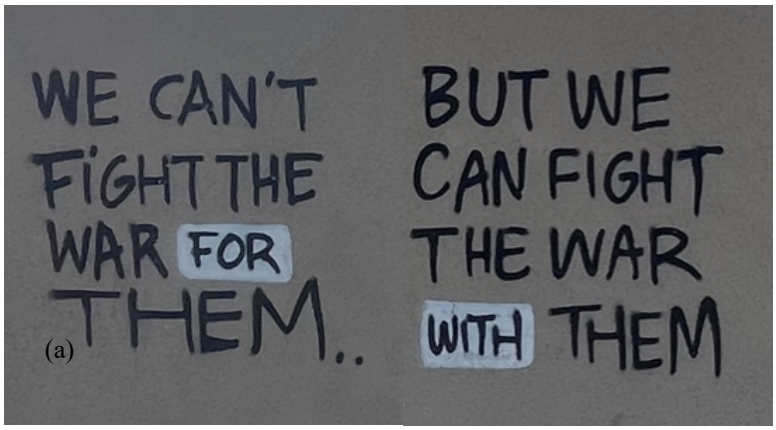
As explained in Section 3.1, the issue of functionality principally concerns four phenomena: the authorship and readership of signage, its purpose and the domains of use, as well as the themes that the signs engage with.

Regarding their authorship, the signs that I collected during my fieldwork are, with no exception, bottom-up. They have been created by either individuals, informal groups of individuals, or more organized collectives all of whom recruit from local community members. In contrast, I was unable to document canonical top-down signage, i.e., signs that would have been placed by governmental authorities, following municipal, regional, or statal policies. (In fact, as I mentioned above, the municipal government erased one sign and tried to do so with several others as well.) The first class of bottom-up signage refers to signs created by individual authors in their own personal

capacity. These signs are highly diversified ranging from ephemeral to permanent and from static to mobile. They appear *inter alia* on posters carried in demonstrations, stickers put on cars, graffiti pained on private houses, and inscriptions written with a pen on previously painted murals. Some of these signs are accompanied by signatures, although most of them are anonymous. The signs of the second class are created by unofficial groups of individuals. The most prominent of such groups is @muralsforgaza – a community-based pro-Palestinian collective of street artists, who have decorated several houses in Bo-Kaap. Each sign of this type tends to be marked with the name of the group and its Instagram handle as well as the name of the member of the collective who painted a respective mural. The third class contains signs created by organizations which, although grassroot, have a more formalized structure, existing within the frame of a university or a broader Muslim community. The most visible of them are @uct4palestine (that authored several physical posters on the university campus), Youth for Al-Quds S.A. (that created a number of digital announcements) and the various faith groups active at mosques (that are responsible for decorating several of them) and churches (e.g., Saint George's Catedral).

Apart from leaving their signatures, the authors of the various types of signs are sometimes discernable through the use of 1st person pronouns: singular (e.g., ***-i*** in **dammi** 'my blood' (26.d); **I** in **If I must die**… (25.e); and **ndi-** in **ndithembe** discussed in Section 4.2) and plural (e.g., **we** in **we can't fight the war for them but we can fight the war with them** (30.a; see also 25.c.) and **we know all the well that our freedom is incomplete w/o freedom of Palestine** (see 35.b below)). Additionally, the authors may indicate their origin by naming a specific neighborhood. The most noticeable of these is **Salt River** (30.b-c).

(a)



(b)

(c)

Figure 30. Authorship indicated by pronouns (a) and neighborhood names (b-c)

Similar to the authors of the signage, its readership is in most cases – at least originally – local and thus community internal. This especially holds true of posters (physical and digital) advertising events: demonstrations, movie screenings, musical events, meetings, lectures, etc. However, several other types of signs are also created having Capetonians as their intended audience. Most of such signs are flags, inscriptions and colors decorating mosques, stickers put on cars, and graffiti painted on houses. Overall, there are two principal target groups of local readers. The first group includes other supporters of Palestine, e.g., Cape Muslims, pro-Palestinian staff and students at the University of Cape Town (31.a), and like-minded inhabitants of certain neighborhoods, e.g., Bo-Kaap, Salt River, and Woodstock (31.b). The other group includes supporters of the Israeli state, e.g., some Jewish South Africans living in Sea Point (one of the hubs for the Jewish community in Cape Town), neoliberal members of the Parliament (who oppose the pro-Palestinian policy of the national government), and the municipal council (who tried to remove several pro-Palestinian signs). Much less often signs are addressed to non-local readership. Such foreign readers may be Palestinians, especially those living on the occupied territories (see the inscription on the flag in (26.a) which is directed to the inhabitants of Gaza), the Israeli state (see **land you have to kill for is not yours** in 25.d), and the international powers complicit in the oppression and genocide (see (25.a) directed at Germany and the European Union). Additionally, although not targeting them *per se*, certain signs have gradually attracted the attention of non-local visitors, both national and international, becoming tourist attractions incorporated into city-sightseeing routes. This is especially the case of the S-ART in Bo-Kaap.[6]

Potential readers are sometimes identified with 2nd person pronouns (e.g., **you** in **you must live** in 25.e), imperative verbal forms (e.g., **call for an academic boycott of Israeli institutions now! Ask your lecturers …** (31.a), **boycott Apartheid Israel** (31.c), and **Don't stop talking about Palestine** (31.b), see also **Escalate!** (23) and **Umma unite!** (28.b)), vocative expressions (**Ya 'Gaza** 'O! Gaza' (26.a)), and combinations of the above-mentioned (e.g., **Germany and EU stop your racism** in (25.a)).

(a) (b) (c)

Figure 31. Readership indicated by imperative forms (a-c)

The purpose of the pro-Palestinian signage in Cape Town is highly varied. The most relevant reasons for the creation of signs – not mutually exclusive – are communicative, territorial, emotive, and commenting. Communicative signs announce activities and advertise events: demonstrations, walks,

[6] The local community has, to some extent, capitalized on it. Indeed, several inhabitants, some of whom were previously unemployed, work as guides walking tourists across the painted houses in Bo-Kaap. It should also be noted that Bo-Kaap has a well-documented history of graffiti protest, and the painted houses of this neighborhood were a form of resistance during Apartheid too. In other words, the use of art and houses to protest injustices constitutes an inherent part of the culture of (parts of) Cape Town.

movie screenings, talks, masses, songs, festivals, and lectures (32.a and 32.c). They may call for occupying spaces and mobilize the members of an institution (to which the authors of a particular sign belong) to cease the collaboration with its Israeli partners. These signs are mostly digital and, if physical, ephemeral, e.g., posters put on walls on university campuses (which are sometimes removed by opponents). Territorial signs explicitly mark an area as pro-Palestinian. The reason to do so may be twofold. First, the signage reifies that the population who lives there overwhelmingly supports the Palestinian cause as is the case of Bo-Kaap, Woodstock, and Salt River. Second, the signage reclaims a territory that is associated with support for Israel such as Sea Point. The marking of inherently pro-Palestinian areas can be achieved with all types of signs, although the most common are permanent graffiti adorning houses, shops, and mosques. The marking of non-pro-Palestinian areas is typically ephemeral (posters and stickers) and mobile (present during demonstrations like the gatherings at the Promenade in Sea Point but absent on other days). Some areas can be regarded as genuine battle fields where different groups fight linguistically and claim the space as theirs. Perhaps, the most noticeable of them is the UCT campus where both groups (pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli) have been vocal. Commenting signs reference the history, culture, literature, and politics of Palestine. This signage educates local (and international) audiences about the loss of land, rights, and lives; about tragedies suffered and resistance acts undertaken; and about critical cultural and political figures, including freedom fighters and martyrs. Some such commentaries constitute entire timelines revealing the settler colonialism of Israel, starting in the 19th century and continuing till now (24.b-c). Emotive signs channel the feelings of the authors and indirectly those of the local community too. In most cases, emotive signs convey negative sentiments: sadness, grief, and despair, anger and rage, as well as pain and fear (see 9.a and 11.d above). An impactful illustration of this is the symbology of a coffin and candles in (32.b). Nevertheless, some signs express positive sentiments too, especially pride, hope, and love (see heart symbology in 8.b). Additionally, although the overarching aim of all signage is to convey support for people in Palestine, a few signs have been created to express this solidarity in an overt manner. For instance, (32.c) announces a university gathering organized to display camaraderie and support for Palestine and (32.d) asks readers to be aware of the events currently occurring in Gaza.

(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

Figure 32. Purpose of signs: announcing activities (a and c), conveying emotions (b), expressing solidarity (c), and raising awareness (d)

The signs found in the PPLL of Cape Town pertain to various domains, which, once more, are not mutually exclusive: religious, economic, educational, cultural (including sport), and political. To be exact, many signs are placed on places of worship (mosques) or carry a message pertaining to religion. For instance, they quote passages from the Quran, refer to religious formulations such as the Shahada, and invoke names of Allah and the prophet Muhammad. Another well-represented group of signs is placed on shops or pertains to economic activities (33.a), e.g., the boycott of Israeli goods. Some signs are found on the university campus and/or concern education. They often denounce the "scholasticide" / "educide" – the obliteration of the Palestinian schooling system, destruction of libraries, killing and wounding of students and staff – and call for the termination of the collaboration of South African universities with Israeli institutions. Many signs concern culture, e.g., cinema, music, and literature, or reference cultural figures such as Naji al-Ali. A subtype of cultural signs pertains to sport activities, especially hikes. Another robust group of signs are related to the politics of Palestine, not only modern (i.e., from the 19th century to the 21st century) but also ancient (33.b). Such signs may refer to specific political figures and/or express support for determined parties and political organizations, e.g., Hamas (see 20.c).

(a) (b)

Figure 33. Domains of signs: economic activities (a) and Palestinian politics (b)

Two main themes permeate the PPLL of Cape Town: Israeli violence and Palestinian resistance to it. The depictions of violence center destruction and deaths caused, land grabbed, and segregationist racist policies enforced by the state of Israel (34.a-b). The depictions of resistance reveal the rudimentary means with which Palestinians must face their oppressors and the young age at which they are forced to engage in the fight. A subtype of a resistance theme pertains to *sumud* – enacting resistance through one's existence (34.c) – as well as the struggle carried out by Capetonians themselves, e.g., through prayers and boycott (25.c, 30.a, 31.a). Another common theme is the relationship between the Palestinian people and Palestine – its geography, landscape, and nature (see the various signs discussed in Section 4.1). This theme brings to the fore the idea of belonging of Palestinians to their land and inversely exposes the settler colonial essence of the Israeli state (14, 25.d). Lastly, several signs concern the opposite of violence and resistance to it, i.e., peace and freedom (27.a, 28.a), although these are often the result of active fight and struggle too (see 19.a-c). Apart from the themes focusing on Palestinians and Palestine, the PPLL occasionally raises the issue of local South African heritage: its culture and language(s) (27.c, 29) and the history of struggle for freedom during Apartheid. This last theme underscores similarities between Palestinians and South Africans and their realities (see further below).

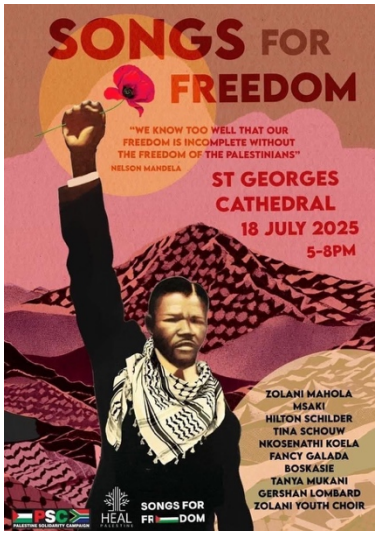
The genre used in the PPLL is typically serious – mourning, plaintive, lamenting, nostalgic. Although one must have hope for a better future, reality is tragic. A moving example of this is the sign in (34.d) depicting an adult and a child and containing the text **soul of my soul**. This is a reference to Khaled Nabhan, a Palestinian grandfather who deplored the death of his granddaughter Reem before being killed himself by the Israeli forces. The pervasiveness of this serious genre is related to the fact that even positive emotions are embedded in sadness and grief (see above). In contrast, there are no examples of satire or any attempt to ridicule Isreal and its army (a strategy that is widely harnessed by Palestinians and their supporters on international social media platforms). Occasionally, the signage exploits provocative semiotics as a stylistic device. Of course, by supporting Palestine, all signs – regardless their specific purpose, domain, and theme – defy the narrative that is manufactured by the governments of the USA and EU and propagated by several outlets in the global north. Nevertheless, some signs are particularly audacious as they reference and express sympathy with Hamas (20.c), which is classified by a large part of the West (i.e., the EU, the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as Japan and Israel) as a terrorist organization.[7] These signs question the legitimacy of the Israeli state and a "two-state solution", or equate the Israeli regime with Germany during World War II (see next paragraph).

(a) (b) (c) (d)

Figure 34. Themes of Israeli violence (a-b) and *sumud* (c), and a mourning genre (d)

In some cases, the signage resorts to comparisons with the instances of racism and oppressions known from other places and/or times. Three comparative loci are attested. Two are historical. The first pertains to an Apartheid period in South Africa and the well-documented sympathy of South African freedom fighters towards the Palestinian cause. These signs tend to exploit the figure of Nelson Madela – who may be wearing a keffiyeh (35.a) or holding the hand of a Palestinian child – and his statements (35.b). The other historical reference is pre-1945 Germany. These signs establish a similarity between the racist character of the Third Reich and the Israeli state (35.c). The only contemporaneous comparative reference explores an analogy between the genocide in Gaza and a genocide taking place on the African continent, i.e., in the Democratic Republic of Congo (35.d). Additionally, one sign quotes James Baldwin – a famous Black homosexual North American writer who denounced the perpetual (and thus spanning from the past till the present) racism of his own country and the West (11.c).

[7] However, the remaining countries in the world, especially those in Africa, Asia, and South and Central America (e.g., China, Norway, Qatar, South Africa, and Turkey) do not officially classify Hamas as a terrorist group, nor is Hamas included in the list of terrorist organizations developed by the United Nations Security Council.

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(d) 

Figure 35. Comparisons: Nelson Mandela (a-b), pre-1945 Germany (c), and Congo (d)

5. Discussion

The evidence presented in the previous section reveals the following physical, lingual, and functional properties of the PPLL of Cape Town:

(a) *Physicality*: The PPLL draws on two modes within visual sensory/perceptual modality: orthographic and non-orthographic – the latter comprising of an array of symbolic devices, such as (colored) depictions of people, nature, places, and objects, as well as physical objects themselves rather than depicted ones. The symbolic material may refer to Palestine (the Palestinian flag, the colors of the flag, keffiyeh and keffiyeh patterns, the Dome of the Rock, poppy flowers, olive trees, watermelons, keys, the map of Palestine, both the area before 1948 and what currently remains of it, Handala, as well as human silhouettes of Palestinians, male and female, adult and child, individual and in groups, named and anonymous), instruments of oppression (barbed-wire, walls, tanks, the Israeli flag, the star of David, chains, and handcuffs) and tools used to combat it (stones, fists, hands breaking chains, and an inverted red tringle). Additionally, the signage exploits international symbols (peace doves, balloons of liberation, victory gestures, coffins, candles, hearts, and heartbeat diagrams). The supports of signs – or their materiality – can be ephemeral and (more often) permanent, digital and (more often) physical, and (equally often) static and mobile. Compositionality ranges between isolated signs and thus individual micro-frames on the one hand and (more common) graffiti and installations of various signs that form composite macro-frames.

(b) *Lingualism*: The PPLL draws on four varieties: English, Arabic, isiXhosa, and Afrikaans and contains signs that are monolingual and multilingual. English is the most prominent language. Most monolingual signs (of all types of supports, purposes, domains, and themes) are in English. They range in complexity from one or two-word inscriptions and short phrases to complex syntactic structures containing words of various lexical classes. The other language attested in monolingual signs, although much less commonly, is Arabic. Arabic texts can appear in Al-Abjadiyah, be Romanized, or exploit both strategies simultaneously, and like English inscriptions, vary between simple and complex. Additionally, there is one monolingual inscription in isiXhosa, linguistically simple and hastily added to a carefully crafted complex graffiti. Multilingual signs, bilingual or trilingual, are significantly less common. Bilingual signs almost always draw on English and Arabic and, as far as Arabic is concerned, tend to be spelled in Al-Abjadiyah. Most bilingual texts are translations, full or less often partial, attest to alternational code-switching, and their language varies between simple and complex. The cases of English-Arabic insertional code-switching and a more blended language coexistence are much fewer. There is one additional bilingual English-isiXhosa sign. Like the monolingual isiXhosa inscription mentioned above, this sign is added to a complex graffiti wall and the isiXhosa material itself is lexically simple comprising of a mere proper name. Lastly, there is one trilingual sign that draws on Arabic, English and Afrikaans (spelled in both Al-Abjadiyah and Roman characters). This text exhibits a complex profile alternating transliterations, translations, and hybridizations.

(c) *Functionality*: The signs are invariably bottom-up. They can be authored by individuals (this signage is in its majority anonymous and ranges from ephemeral to permanent and from static to mobile), informal groups of individuals (this signage typically comprises of graffiti murals, often signed with the group and author's names and Instagram handles), and more organized collectives (this signage tends to include physical posters, digital announcements, and signs decorating mosques and churches) – all of whom recruit from the local community. Apart from signatures, the voice of authors transpires through 1st person pronouns (singular and plural) and the names of specific neighborhoods. Readership is also mostly local and includes other supporters of Palestine or, on the contrary, supporters of the Israeli state. Much less often signs are addressed to non-local readership: Palestinians, Israelis, and international powers. Additionally, by becoming tourist attractions, several signs have gradually attracted the attention of national and international visitors. The various types of readers may be identified with 2nd person pronouns, imperatives, and vocative expressions. The purpose of signs – the types of which not being mutually exclusive – can be: communicative, i.e., used to announce activities, advertise events, and mobilize members (most of these signs are digital and, if physical, ephemeral); territorial, i.e., to reify a pro-Palestinian area as such (these signs are usually permanent graffiti adorning houses, shops, and mosques) or reclaim a territory that is associated with support for Israel (these signs are typically ephemeral and mobile); commenting, i.e., referencing and educating about the history, culture, literature, and politics of Palestine (these signs are of all types of supports); and emotive (these signs, also highly diversified, tend to convey negative sentiments rather than positive ones). The idea of solidarity with Palestine – which underlies the functions of all signs – is sometimes expressed more overtly. The domains of signs, again not mutually exclusive, can be religious, economic, educational, cultural (including sport), and political. Two main themes permeate the signage: Israeli violence (destruction, deaths, settler colonialism, and racist policies) and Palestinian resistance to it (rudimentary means of fight, the young age of fighters, and *sumud*, as well as the efforts carried out by Capetonians themselves to support the Palestinian cause). Several signs that instantiate these two major themes raise the issue of the relationship between the Palestinian people and Palestine – its geography, landscape, and nature. Lastly, some signs

concern peace and freedom and occasionally local South African cultural heritage. The genre is typically serious (mourning, plaintive, lamenting, nostalgic) and no examples of satire or irony are attested. The style of the signage is sometimes provocative and/or draws on comparisons with other geo-political events: historical (Apartheid South Africa and World War II Germany), contemporaneous (the Democratic Republic of Congo), and atemporal (the racism of the USA and the West).

The findings summarized above reveal a remarkable complexity of the PPLL of Cape Town. The signage is highly diversified with regard to its physicality (it is orthographic and non-orthographic and of varied materiality and compositionality), lingualism (it is multilingual and exhibits different degrees of language complexity and language-contact configurations), and functionality (it varies to a lesser or greater extent as far as its authors, readers, purposes, domains, and themes are concerned).

The properties of the PPLL identified in the study largely comply with those characterizing the LL of resistance documented and practiced in Palestine. As in Palestine, S-ART is the most vibrant strategy of reflecting and enacting overt resistance, and the diversity of S-ART signage in Cape Town is fully consistent with that observed in Palestine. To be exact:

(a) *Physicality*: In both sites (see Larkin, 2014; Lehec, 2017; Peteet, 2016; Alım, 2020 for Palestine), orthographic and non-orthographic signs contribute equally to the landscape and, as far as the latter type is concerned, the same symbology is exploited. Lacking any structure comparable to the Separation Wall, the PPLL of Cape Town makes use of supports typical of the first Intifada Palestina and post-2000 refugee camps (see Peteet, 1996, 2016; Lehec, 2017), i.e., exteriors of buildings. In both Palestine (Peteet, 2016; Gagliardi, 2020; Karim, 2022) and Cape Town, (parts of) supports (e.g., walls and barbed-wire) are often selected strategically and incorporated into a particular S-ART piece. As in Palestine, the vitality of signs in Cape Town can range between permanent and ephemeral. Given that some Capetonian signs were erased while others became well-known attractions inscribed into the city's touristic routes, the PPLL corresponds to the Palestinian LL of both the first Intifada and the Separation Wall (see Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 1996, 2016; Gagliardi, 2020). However, in Cape Town, the production of signs is typically lengthy and open rather than hastened since, contrary to the situation in Palestine (Peteet, 1996, 2016), Capetonians do not risk harsh punishment even though some graffiti and signage may violate municipal bylaws.

(b) *Lingualism*: In Cape Town and Palestine, orthographic texts mainly draw on English and Arabic. In Cape Town, however, the prevalence of English over Arabic is more acute than in Palestine, in consonance with the general LL of Cape Town and South Africa (Andrason, 2025). Accordingly, the PPLL approximates more the S-ART of the post-2000 Palestine, especially that found on the Separation Wall, rather than the signage of the First Intifada (see Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 1996, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Young, 2022). While other international languages are also attested in the resistance LL of Palestine (Peteet, 2016), the PPLL only resorts to local varieties, i.e., Afrikaans and isiXhosa (apart of Arabic which, although not an official language in South Africa and Western Cape, constitutes a common feature in parts of Cape Town because of its central role in religious practice).

(c) *Functionality*: In Cape Town, all signs are bottom-up which corresponds to the Palestinian S-ART (Peteet, 2016; Alım, 2020) but not the LL of Palestinian resistance in its entirety (see *inter alia* Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Trumper-Hecht, 2008; Waksman & Shohamy, 2010; Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012; Amara, 2018b). The types of authors found in Cape Town approximate more those of the first Intifada and post-2000 refugee camps where communal/local creators prevail, rather than the post-2000 signage of the Separation Wall whose creators are often international (see Peteet, 2016; Lehec, 2017; Karim, 2020; Young,

2022). Being predominantly local rather than global, the readerships of the PPLL is also similar to that typifying the First Intifada and 21st-century refugee camps (Peteet, 1996, 2016; Lehec, 2017). Nevertheless, as in post-2000 Palestine more generally (Peteet, 2016; Young, 2022), the relevance of an international audience has increased in Cape Town too. Regarding its purpose, the PPLL combines the characteristics of the First Intifada and the post-2000 Palestine (see Peteet, 1996, 2016; Oshinski, 2018; Alım, 2020; Karim, 2022; Young, 2022). The signage is a communicative print-weapon device, territorial marker, and expression of emotions on the one hand, and a reflective and critical commentary on Palestine and the expression of international solidarity with the Palestinian cause, on the other hand. In both Palestine (Lehec, 2017; Alım, 2020; Karim, 2022) and Cape Town, the LL of resistance pertains to numerous domains (religious, economic, social, historical, cultural, and political) and themes (Israeli violence, opposition to it, and Palestinian belonging) revealing a spectrum of voices and ideologies (e.g., less or more radical). As far as the genre is concerned, only its plaintive/mourning type is attested in Cape Town contrary to Palestine where irony, sarcasm, mockery and satire are also harnessed in signage (Peteet, 2016). Lastly, the resistance signage of both Palestine (Larkin, 2014; Peteet, 2016; Karim, 2022) and Cape Town makes use of comparison, especially with Apartheid South Africa. Parallelism with the USA is less evident in Cape Town than in Palestine.

Overall, as in Palestine (Peteet, 1996, 2016; Young, 2022), the PPLL in Cape Town challenges one-sided framing of the Israeli-Palestine conflict. Like Palestinians and their supporters thousands of kilometers away, Capetonians refuse to be silenced because silence implies complicity. By speaking up, the creators of the PPLL demonstrate an acute familiarity with the oppressions experienced by Palestinians and with the reality of Palestine as well as awareness of broader anti-racist discourses and struggles. In further similarity with Palestinian reality (Lehec, 2017; Alım, 2020; Young, 2022), the documentation and enactment of the resistance via the LL ultimately contributes to the consolidation of the local community. By educating themselves on Palestine issues (and other cases of oppression too) and fighting a LL battle, fiercely contested in some areas, the PPLL sharpens the identity and consciousness of a large part of residents of the Mother City, making them feel helpful and ultimately proud of their own humanity.

While similarities between the PPLL of Cape Town and the LL of resistance in Palestine are evident, there are two aspects in which both sites differ. First, in contrast to Palestine (see Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Trumper-Hecht, 2008; Waksman & Shohamy, 2010; Shohamy & Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, 2012; Amara, 2018a, 2018b, 2019; Farram & Hortobágyi, 2020; Ujvari, 2021, 2022), the use of Arabic in top-down signage of street names and statal institutions, as well as in signs placed on shops and private businesses and in advertisement and other public spaces, does not constitute a relevant subversive strategy inscribing resistance into the landscape. Although Arabic is sometimes used in the LL of Cape Town, in fact, in some neighborhoods quite prominently, this fact reflects the linguistic and cultural diversity of the local community (in part Muslim) instead of conveying the idea of resistance against the violence and oppression suffered by Palestinians *sensu stricto* (Andrason, 2025). In other words, in Cape Town, the mere use of the Arabic language or Al-Abjadiyah does not imply pro-Palestinian attitudes or opposition to the crimes committed against Palestinians. The only instance where a street signpost contributes to the PPLL, appears where it forms part of a larger S-ART (and thus bottom-up) installation (see 21.b). In that case, this sign is not a genuine signpost informing about nearby directions (streets, neighborhoods, cities) but an artistic reference to Palestine. The other dissimilarity – certainly, quite expected – concerns the local flavor of the PPLL. For instance, apart from English and Arabic, the signage draws on isiXhosa and Afrikaans – the two other common languages of the Western Cape and official in this province – and reflects the South

African reality of the anti-Apartheid struggle, the cultural heritage of Cape Town, and a broader African embedding.

6. Conclusion

The present article studied the PPLL of Cape Town. The analysis of 239 signs suggests that the PPLL of this South African research site is highly complex. The signage is diversified regarding its physicality (modes within the visual modality, as well as materiality and compositionality), lingualism (languages used, their formal properties, and configurations), and functionality (authorship, readership, purposes, domains, and themes). Overall, the properties of the PPLL in Cape Town coincide in most aspects with those characterizing the LL of resistance in Palestine, particularly its S-ART subtype, mixing the traits typical of the First Intifada and refugee camps with the post-2000 situation in Palestine. The two principal differences between Cape Town and Palestine concern the use of Arabic as a genuine resistance element in the LL, which is absent in Cape Town but relevant in Palestine, and the incorporation of several local (South) African elements into the PPLL in Cape Town. Overall, as in Palestine, the PPLL in Cape Town is a tangible manifestation of the refusal of Capetonians to be silenced and complicit with the oppression perpetrated against Palestinians.

Acknowledgments

This paper was created within the project "Multilingual worlds – neglected histories. Uncovering their emergence, continuity and loss in past and present societies". This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program (grant agreement no. 101002696).

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my dear friend, Janice Winter, for her invaluable assistance with data collection in the southern suburbs of Cape Town, and to the Editor and the reviewer for their valuable comments on my original manuscript.

References

Ajour, A. (2021). *Reclaiming humanity in Palestinian hunger strikes: Revolutionary subjectivity and decolonizing the body*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Alım, E. (2020). The art of resistance in the Palestinian struggle against Israel. *Turkish Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 7(1): 45-79. http://doi.org/10.26513/tocd.635076

Amara, M. (2018a). *Arabic in Israel: Language, identity and conflict*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Amara, M.H. (2018b). Palestinian schoolscapes in Israel. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 3(7): 1-18. https://doi.org/10 .1186 /s40862-018-0047-1

Amara, M. (2019). Arabisation, globalisation, and Hebraisation reflexes in shop names in the Palestinian Arab linguistic landscape in Israel. *Language and Intercultural Communication* 19(3): 272-288. https://doi.org/10.1080/14708477.2018.1556676

Andrason, A. (2025). Reclaiming multilingualism: African languages in the linguistic landscape of Cape Town (Observatory, Salt River and Woodstock). *Asian and African Studies 34*(1): 91-139. https://doi.org/10.31577/aassav.2025.34.1.07

Andrason, A. and Karani, M. (2025). Maasai in its linguistic landscape: The case of the Arusha region (Tanzania). *Kervan: International Journal of Afro-Asiatic Studies* 29(1): 31-67. https://doi.org/10.13135/1825-263X/12457

Andrason, A. and Phiri, A. (in press). Nearly extinct African languages in their linguistic landscape: Tjwao of Zimbabwe. *Sustainable Multilingualism*.

Backhaus, P. (2007). *Linguistic landscapes: A comparative study of urban multilingualism in Tokyo*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ben-Rafael, E., Shohamy, E., Hasan Amara, M. and Trumper-Hecht, N. (2006). Linguistic landscape as symbolic construction of the public space: The case of Israel. *International Journal of Multilingualism* 3(1): 7-30. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790710608668383

Cocq, C., Granstedt, L., Lindgren, E. and Lindgren, U. (2020). Developing methods for the study of linguistic landscapes in sparsely populated areas. *Gerum – Geografisk Arbetsrapport*, 1-32. Geografiska institutionen Umeå Universitet.

Evans, V. and Green, M. (2006). *Cognitive linguistics: An introduction*. Edinburgh University Press.

Farram, B. and Hortobágyi, I. (2020). The linguistic landscape of Ramallah, Palestine: A case study of analysing the dominance of English vs. Arabic as L1 in the main street of the City. *Synergy* 16(2): 242-258.

Gagliardi, C. (2020). Palestine is not a drawing board: Defacing the street art on the Israeli Separation Wall. *Visual Anthropology* 33: 426-451. https://doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2020.1824975

Gorter, D. and Cenoz, J. (2015). Translanguaging and linguistic landscapes. *Linguistic Landscape: An International Journal* 1: 54-74. https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.1.1-2.04gor

Gorter, D. and Cenoz, J. (2024). *A panorama of linguistic landscape studies*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Gröndahl, M. (2009). *Gaza graffiti: Messages of love and politics*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.

Hanauer, D. (2015). Occupy Baltimore: A linguistic landscape analysis of participatory social contestation in an American city. In R. Rubdy and S. Ben Said (Eds.). *Conflict, exclusion and dissent in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 207-222). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137426284_10

Haron, M. (2002). The Cape Malays: An imagined community in South Africa – A bibliographical essay. *African Research and Documentation* 88: 35-58. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0305862x00017209

Haron, M. (2015). The 'Cape Malay' culture as represented in the South End Museum and the Dr. Nortier's Rooibos Museum. *S.A. Tydskrif vir Kultuurgeskiedenis* 29(1): 74-97.

Kanaana, S. (1990). Humor of the Palestinian "Intifada". *Journal of Folklore Research* 27: 231-240.

Kanaana, S. (2013). Palestinian political humour during the First Intifada and the Gulf War. *This Week in Palestine*. Available at: http://archive.thisweekinpalestine.com/details.php?id=3960anded=216andedid=216

Karim, R. (2022). *Art as artillery: Art as a method of existence and resistance in Palestine* [Master's thesis, George Washington University].

Landry, R. and Bourhis, R. (1997). Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality: An empirical study. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* 16: 23-49. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927x970161002

Larkin, C. (2014). Jerusalem's Separation Wall and global message board: Graffiti, murals, and the art of Sumud. *The Arab Studies Journal* 22(1): 134-169.

Lehec, C. (2017). Graffiti in Palestinian refugee camps: From palimpsest walls to public space. *Journal of Urban Research* 15: 1-14. https://doi.org/10.4000/articulo.3399

Marten, H., Van Mensel, L. and Gorter, D. (2012). Studying minority languages in the linguistic landscape. In D. Gorter, H. Marten and L. Van Mensel (Eds.). *Minority languages in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 1-18). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230360235_1

Matras, Y. (2009). *Language contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meari, L. (2014). Sumud: A Palestinian philosophy of confrontation in colonial prisons. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 113(3): 547-578. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-2692182

Muysken, P. (2000). *Bilingual speech. A typology of code-mixing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Oshinski, C. (2018). *The Art of resistance: "Sumud," graffiti, and the Palestinian contestation of the Apartheid Wall in the West Bank* [Master's thesis, George Mason University].

Parry, W. (2010). *Against the wall: The art of resistance in Palestine*. London: Pluto Press.

Pennycook, A. (2019). The landscape returns the gaze: Bikescapes and the new economies. *Linguistic Landscape* 5(3): 217-247. https://doi.org/10.1075/ll.18027.pen

Peteet, J. (1996). The writing on the walls: The graffiti of the Intifada. *Cultural Anthropology* 11(2): 139-159. https://doi.org/10.1525/can.1996.11.2.02a00010

Peteet, J. (2016). Wall talk: Palestinian graffiti. In J. Ross (Ed.). *Routledge handbook of graffiti and street art* (pp. 334-344). Abingdon: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315761664.ch25

Pütz, M. and Mundt, N. (2019). Multilingualism, multimodality and methodology: Linguistic landscape research in the context of assemblages, ideologies and (in)visibility: An introduction. In M. Pütz and N. Mundt (Eds.). *Expanding the linguistic landscape: Linguistic diversity, multimodality and the use of space as a semiotic resource* (pp. 1-22). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788922166-003

Reh, M. (2004). Multilingual writing: A reader-oriented typology – with examples from Lira municipality (Uganda). *International Journal the Sociology of Language* 170: 1-41. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl.2004.2004.170.1

Rubdy, R. (2015). Conflict and exclusion: The linguistic landscape as an arena of contestation. In R. Rubdy and S. Ben Said (Eds.). *Conflict, exclusion and dissent in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 1-24). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137426284_1

Salih, R. and Richter-Devroe, S. (2014). Cultures of resistance in Palestine and beyond: On the politics of art, aesthetics, and affect. *The Arab Studies Journal* 22(1): 8-27.

Shiri, S. (2015). Co-constructing dissent in the transient linguistic landscape: Multilingual protest signs of the Tunisian revolution. In R. Rubdy and S. Ben Said (Eds.). *Conflict, exclusion and dissent in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 239-259). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137426284_12

Shohamy, E. (2019). Linguistic landscape after a decade: An overview of themes, debates and future directions. In M. Pütz and N. Mundt (Eds.). *Expanding the linguistic landscape: Linguistic diversity, multimodality and the use of space as a semiotic resource* (pp. 25-37). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788922166-004

Shohamy, E. and Abu Ghazaleh-Mahajneh, M.A. (2012). Linguistic landscape as a tool for interpreting language vitality: Arabic as a 'minority' language in Israel. In D. Gorter, H. Marten and L. Van Mensel (Eds.). *Minority languages in the linguistic landscape* (pp. 89-108). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230360235_6

Suleiman, C. (2017). *The politics of Arabic in Israel*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Suleiman, C. (2019, October 28). *The linguistic landscape of Arabic in Israel: Hybridity and the nation-state.* King's College London talk, London, United Kingdom. https://www.kcl.ac.uk/events/the-linguistic-landscape-of-arabic-in-israel-hybridity-and-the-nation-state

Trumper-Hecht, N. (2008). Constructing national identity in mixed cities in Israel: Arabic on signs in the public space of upper Nazareth. In E. Shohamy and D. Gorter (Eds.). *Linguistic landscape: Expanding the scenery* (pp. 238-252). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203930960-24

Ujvari, M.M. (2021). The linguistic landscape of Palestinian C towns: The case of shop signs in Huwwara. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Translation* 4(4): 160-171. http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v4i1.881

Ujvari, M.M. (2022). Linguistic landscape in the West Bank: Road signs as manifestations of occupation. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies* 4(1): 374-387. http://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v4i1.881

Van Mensel, L., Vandenbroucke, M. and Blackwood, R. (2016). Linguistic landscapes. In O. García, N. Flores and M. Spotti (Eds.). *Oxford handbook of language and society* (pp. 423-449). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190212896.013.5

Waksman, S. and Shohamy, E. (2010). Decorating the city of Tel Aviv-Jaffa for its centennial: Complementary narratives via linguistic landscape. In E. Shohamy, E. Ben-Rafael and M. Barni (Eds.). *Linguistic landscape in the city* (pp. 57-73). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.29308476.8

Young, M. (2022). The art of resistance: Art and resistance in Palestine. *Janus, E-Journal of International Relations* 12: 19-36. https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.dt0122.2

Zlatev, J. (2024). Constraining metaphor and metonymy in language and depiction: A cognitive semiotics approach. *Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric* 69(1): 7-29. https://doi.org/10.2478/slgr-2024-0009

Zlatev, J., Devylder, S., Defina, R., Moskaluk, K. and Andersen, LB. (2023). Analyzing polysemiosis: Language, gesture, and depiction in two cultural practices with sand drawing. *Semiotica* 253: 81-116. https://doi.org/10.1515/sem-2022-0102

About the author

Alexander Andrason

Centre for African Studies, Humanities Faculty, University of Cape Town, South Africa

aleksand@hi.is

Alexander Andrason is a researcher at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cape Town. He holds a PhD in Semitic Languages from the Complutense University of Madrid, a PhD in African Languages from Stellenbosch University, and a PhD in General Linguistics from the University of Iceland. He speaks thirty living languages and possesses extensive knowledge of more than ten ancient and classical languages. His research spans linguistics, cognitive science and complexity theory, anthropology and anthrozoology, as well as LGBTQIA+ studies, pedagogy and philosophy. His interdisciplinary work approaches language as a dynamic adaptive system situated within broader cognitive, sociocultural, political, ecological, and biological contexts. Committed to social justice, he embraces scholarship as a transformative life practice, envisioning a future in which state borders give way to an order grounded in human solidarity and compassion as fundamental principles.