

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

SIMON BRONNER, et al.,

Plaintiffs,

and SIMON BRONNER,
DERIVATIVELY ON BEHALF OF
NOMINAL DEFENDANT, THE
AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION,

Derivative Plaintiff,

v.

LISA DUGGAN, et al.,

Defendants.

1:16-cv-00740-RC

**OPPOSITION TO PLAINTIFFS' MOTION
FOR LEAVE TO FILE SECOND AMENDED COMPLAINT**

COME NOW the Defendants hereto, by and through their undersigned counsel, Whiteford, Taylor & Preston L.L.P., and hereby oppose the Plaintiffs' latest Motion for Leave to Amend the Complaint. The Motion for Leave is another in the long line of Plaintiffs' improper litigation tactics which should not be countenanced by this Court: not only does it constitute an improper effort to revisit Plaintiffs' prior losses and to resurrect derivative claims that have been dismissed, but it would cause undue delay, result in greatly expanded expenses to the Defendants -- all to the prejudice of the Defendants, and would be futile in any event. The Motion should accordingly be denied.

Standard on Motion to Amend the Complaint

The decision to grant or deny a party's request to amend its complaint rests within the sound discretion of the district court. *Lover v. District of Columbia*, 248 F.R.D. 319, 320 (D.D.C. 2008), citing *Foman v. Davis*, 371 U.S. 178, 182, 83 S. Ct. 227, 9 L. Ed. 2d 222 (1962). The Supreme Court has held that leave to amend should be freely given, *unless* there has been undue delay in bringing the proposed amendment, or the movant has acted in bad faith, with dilatory motive; where the amendment would lead to undue prejudice to the opposing party; or where the proposed amendment would be futile. *Id.*; see also *Pierce v. Mattis*, 256 F.Supp.3d 7 (D.D.C. 2017); *Francis v. Perez*, 256 F.Supp.3d 1 (D.D.C. 2017); *Afram v. United Food & Commercial Workers Unions*, 958 F.Supp.2d 275 (D.D.C. 2013).

Similarly, if a proposed amendment substantially changes the theory on which the case has been proceeding, and is proposed late enough that the opponent would be required to engage in significant new preparation, or if the amendment would result in a defendant being put to added expense and the burden of a more complicated and lengthy trial, the court may deem the proposed amendment prejudicial and deny the motion to amend, Wright & Miller, *Federal Practice and Procedure*, §1487. See, e.g., *Williams v. Norfolk Southern Ry.*, 126 F. Supp. 2d 986 (W.D. Va. 2000); *Walsh v. Ford Motor Co.*, 1983 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 12210 (D.D.C. 1983) (denying plaintiff's motion to amend the complaint, noting that the defendant had already moved to dismiss the pending action, and that defendant had been required to adjust to plaintiff's changing theories of

liability, at significant expense). In this matter, the Defendants have already moved to dismiss the action (one motion for judgment on the pleadings is still pending), and have engaged in extensive document searches and production. Plaintiff's proposed second amended complaint, which adds theories of liability and parties, will require, among other things, that the Defendants expend significantly more resources to litigate the dispute. By way of a few examples only, Defendants would need to analyze and then strategize against more than double the factual allegations currently existing, and would likely need to conduct document searches and reviews that they could have done previously.

The Plaintiffs' Motion runs afoul of each of the foregoing factors.

The Motion to Amend is Futile,
As Plaintiffs Seek to Resurrect Dismissed Derivative Claims

As this Court is well aware, the Plaintiffs already amended their Complaint once, in response to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and in the hopes of saving their derivative claims for damages allegedly suffered by the Association. Such amendment was useless, however: in its Memorandum Opinion and Order of March 31, 2017 [Docs. 27, 28], the Court specifically found that Plaintiffs had not fulfilled the statutory requirements for bringing a derivative action, and dismissed, with prejudice, any claim for damages suffered by the Association.¹

¹ Although the Court has heretofore declined to dismiss Plaintiffs' claims for waste in their entirety, the Defendants have since filed a Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings and that Motion remains pending.

But despite the Court's clear pronouncement on Plaintiffs' derivative claims, the newly proposed claims in the second amended complaint rest on such causes of action, thereby seeking to resurrect claims and legal theories which have already been dismissed. In the entire proposed second amended complaint, there is only one allegation of individual harm – specifically, that Mr. Barton was not allowed to vote on the Resolution (Proposed Second Amended Complaint at ¶¶ 123 -- 137).² Nowhere do Plaintiffs assert any fact that would show that any of them were personally harmed by the Defendants' actions. There is no claim that any Plaintiff suffered monetary damage or reputational harm; there is no allegation that any individual Plaintiff was mistreated, maligned, oppressed or disadvantaged. To be sure, there are allegations that the funds of the *Association* have been misused, that the *Association* has suffered reputational harm, and that the *Association's* business has been hijacked. Still, Plaintiffs have not claimed damage to themselves, personally.

For example, in each of the new Counts they propose, it is alleged that "Plaintiffs are entitled to recover damages from the Individual Defendants that the American Studies Association incurred as a result of (the Defendants' actions)." *See* proposed second amended complaint, ¶¶194, 197, 207, 215 (and 244). Moreover, the only claim for damages in the "Prayer for Relief" section at the end of the 82-page proposed second amended complaint requests that the Plaintiffs be awarded: "... 6) Actual damages on behalf of the American Studies Association from the Individual Defendants" The attempt

² This is the same claim made before; that Count is not new and is pending.

therefore to resurrect the dismissed derivative claims is obvious. This is the precise type of tactic that requires the denial of the Motion for Leave, D.C. Nonprofit Corporations Act, § 29-403.04, and is indicative of Plaintiffs' continued campaign to harass those who hold opinions different from their own.

Further, the Plaintiffs' proposed Amended Complaint doesn't even attempt to satisfy the requirements under the D.C. Nonprofit Corporations Act to hold the individual defendants liable. Plaintiffs claim, and baldly so, that the individual defendants "... are not exculpated by §29-406.31" because "their conduct was not in good faith." *See, e.g., ¶197*, proposed second amended complaint. However, in order to hold the individual defendants liable here, Plaintiffs must allege and establish not only that the Defendants' actions were in bad faith, but they must also allege and establish that subsection (d) of 29-406.31 does NOT apply. *See* §29-406.33 (a) (1). Subsection (d) provides as follows:

"Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a director or a charitable corporation shall not be liable to the corporation or its members for money damages for any action taken, or any failure to take any action, as a director, except liability for (1) The amount of a financial benefit received by the director to which the director is not entitled; (2) An intentional infliction of harm; (3) A violation of 29-406.33³; (4) An intentional violation of criminal law."

Importantly, Plaintiffs' proposed second amended complaint alleges none of these exceptions, nor could it. In short, Plaintiffs are again asserting derivative claims, though calling them something else. And, allowing the Motion for Leave would turn the law regarding derivative actions on its head: every member of any organization would be able to claim as damages the damages suffered by the organization.

³ This section concerns liability of a director *to the corporation* for unlawful distributions.

Similarly, Plaintiffs again seek to invoke *ultra vires* theories in some of the purportedly new claims (Counts Three and Four) and reference the *ultra vires* subsection of the statute, D.C. Code §29-403.04. However, that section *only* allows damages in a derivative proceeding. *See* D.C. Code, § 29-403.04(c). But, again, as the derivative claims have been dismissed, this is an improper attempt to circumvent this Court's prior ruling and to resurrect previously dismissed causes of action, just dressed up differently.⁴

The proposed second amended complaint, therefore, presents nothing new but derivative claims that have already been dismissed. As the Court has already held, Plaintiffs' argument -- that a letter issued two days before suit was filed satisfied the "demand on the Board" requirement -- was entirely unreasonable and unsupportable. Nonetheless, Plaintiffs now seek to reintroduce all of the derivative claims that this Court has already dismissed. Their position is no stronger now than it was in the Amended Complaint, and these claims must fail as a matter of law. Granting the Motion for Leave would thus be futile.⁵

⁴ All of this further raises the question of this Court's continuing jurisdiction to preside over this dispute. The Court's earlier ruling did not accept the Defendants' argument that the damages did not reach the \$75,000 "legal certainty" threshold. But with the derivative claims on behalf of the ASA having been dismissed and the only damages being claimed are those incurred by the ASA, it would be within this Court's discretion to dismiss the case on that basis. *Compton v. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.*, 64 F.Supp. 3d (D.D.C. 2014)(matter of Court's discretion whether to retain supplemental jurisdiction).

⁵ Also regarding futility of proposed claims, the proposed second amended complaint makes allegations "upon information and belief" (¶188) that the Defendants "invaded" the ASA Trust Fund for the promotion and defense of the Resolution. Yet the Plaintiffs admit in the proposed second amended complaint that **they do not have sufficient information to support the allegations they nonetheless make** regarding the alleged "invasion" of the trust fund ("At this time, we have insufficient documents to determine whether funds were withdrawn from the American Studies Association Trust Fund specifically to cover expenses related to the Resolution")¶188. This despite the fact that the Plaintiffs have produced nearly 17,000 documents, including the ASA's IRS forms 990 for the years 2010 through 2015. That their lawsuit is primarily a publicity-focused fishing expedition has never been clearer.

There are additional reasons why the amendment would be futile. For example, the proposed second amended complaint seeks to add four new Defendants and hold them liable for events leading up to and including the passage of the Resolution. However, those claims would clearly be barred by the statute of limitations, at the very least, as the Resolution was passed more than three years ago. *See* D.C. Code §12-301. The same would be true for the alleged “misrepresentation” claims leading up to the election prior to the Resolution and the Resolution itself. And, on those claims, Plaintiffs do not even allege that they relied on any alleged misrepresentation. Said another way, there are no allegations in the proposed second amended complaint that the Plaintiffs themselves changed their vote because of any representation by any party. *See Hercules & Co. v. Shama Restaurant corp.*, 613 A.2d 916, 923 (D.C. 1992) (Plaintiffs’ reliance on the representation is a necessary element).

As to the *ultra vires* claim, the proposal claims that the Defendants failed to make elections that reflect the “diversity” of its members. Plaintiffs would now have this Court interpret the bylaws of the ASA to mean that “diversity” means holding opinions that the Plaintiffs agree with it. As to the “freezing of the membership roles,” there is nothing in the bylaws or statutes that specifically prohibit freezing the membership role. As this Court’s earlier ruling made clear, in order for an act to be *ultra vires* in its context it must be “expressly prohibited by statute or bylaw.” Further, Plaintiffs’ new proposed claim as to “influencing legislation” is in direct contradiction to this Court’s earlier ruling: “. . . the bylaw plainly reads as a restriction only on using propaganda to influence legislation . . . the boycott resolution was not an attempt to enforce legislation in any meaningful sense of

the term ... Although one may be able to draw an indirect link between any resolution and some potential piece of legislation in that it calls attention to a public issue, that connection is far too attenuated to make the boycott resolution 'expressly prohibited' by the bylaw." [Doc. 28 at p. 33.] Plaintiffs "new" claim that the Resolution is an attempt to influence some potential legislation in Israel (proposed second amended complaint, ¶ 149) is not only a claim that could have been brought before, but is also "far too attenuated" per this Court's opinion.

The Timing of the Motion Suggests Both Dilatory Tactics and Ulterior Motive

The timing of Plaintiffs' Motion for Leave is worth noting. In their Motion, Plaintiffs claim that they did not have sufficient basis to bring these additional claims until they had reviewed Defendants' document production - which, again, they claim was untimely. The facts, however, belie such a position. Nearly two months ago, on September 12, 2017 during a meet-and-confer requested by the Plaintiffs in regards to a Motion to Amend their Complaint,⁶ Plaintiffs advised the Defendants they were going to add two additional persons as Defendants, Jasbir Puar and J. Kehaulani Kauanui. Plaintiffs also at that time announced they were going to add three new claims: freezing of the membership rules; failure to elect "diverse" candidates; and attempt to enforce legislation. At no time during that meeting did Plaintiffs indicate that they needed any additional information to enable them to add Ms. Puar and Ms. Kauanui (or anyone else) as parties, nor that they needed any information regarding any of their

⁶ The Plaintiffs had once previously amended their Complaint.

new claims. Moreover, as late as November 2, during a telephone call -- just a week before they filed the instant Motion -- counsel for Plaintiffs indicated again that Puar and Kauanui would likely be the only ones added as defendants in their proposed second amended complaint.

Notwithstanding their position on September 12, 2017, the reality is that Plaintiffs have always known of all four of the proposed new Defendants, and of their roles relative to the Resolution, for a much longer time. For example, Ms. Kauanui was identified in the initial Complaint filed over a year and a half ago. Her role was described in the Complaint thus:

i. J. Kehaulani Kauanui was a councilmember of the ASA at the time of the adoption of the Boycott Resolution and whole-hearted supporter of that resolution. She is an advisory board member of the U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI), "a campaign focused on a boycott of Israeli academic and cultural institutions, responding to the call of Palestinian civil society to join the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel." (<http://www.usacbi.org>) She has been quoted as stating that the decision by the American Anthropological Association to put an Israel boycott resolution to a full membership vote was "a huge win for keeping both Palestine and academic boycott on the table within the association." Alex Kane, The Year Ahead in Academic Boycotts of Israel, Mondoweiss (Jan. 6, 2015), <http://mondoweiss.net/2015/01/academic-boycotts-israel/#sthash.1nnpNWkc.dpuf>.

Complaint, ¶69 (April 2016). Ms. Puar was also identified in Plaintiff's initial disclosures, and was also the subject of one of the Plaintiff's request for documents, served several months ago. Mr. Salaita was similarly identified, and his role on the National Council and his views discussed, also ¶69 of the original Complaint. Regarding Mr. Stephens, not only was he referenced several times in the initial

Complaint, but the Plaintiffs also deposed him for 7 hours in August 2017. Their own statements, both in formal pleadings and in correspondence, belie Plaintiffs' current position - that they could not have brought the Motion for Leave sooner.

The timing of the Motion, however, does fit the distinct pattern in the Plaintiffs' filings. Throughout, they have sought to bolster a public relations campaign aimed at discouraging other individuals and organizations from considering such resolutions. The Plaintiffs may have "needed" more documents from discovery before making their move, but only to strengthen their efforts in stirring up public opinion and in harassing both Defendants and other academic organizations.

In reality, the Motion seems to be an effort to "ratchet up" the pressure on third parties who might consider a boycott against Israeli academic institutions. It is not coincidence that the Plaintiffs waited two years after the Resolution was passed and then filed this case at the time another larger association was considering a similar resolution. That Association was the American Anthropology Association.⁷ Shortly after filing the action in April 2016, a press release was issued, setting forth the allegations of the lawsuit and denouncing the ASA (see <http://brandeiscenter.com/lawsuit-asas-boycott-israel-violates-law-professors-sue-american-studies-association>). After the Court issued its ruling on the Defendants' Motion to Dismiss [Doc. 27] (March 31, 2017), Plaintiffs' counsel issued another press release, trumpeting the Court's

⁷ Plaintiffs' proposed Amended Complaint acknowledges that the American Anthropology Association's attempt to pass a Resolution failed. Proposed second amended complaint, ¶ 81.

decision as a victory for Plaintiffs, in which Plaintiffs' counsel Kenneth Marcus was quoted thus:

Today's victory is much bigger than merely the ASA . . . When the MLA [Modern Language Association] attempted a boycott vote, this case was cited, by those on both sides of the issue, as one of the reasons the resolution was defeated. Academic activists are beginning to think twice before adopting anti-Semitic and unlawful policies that undermine the pillars of higher education.

See Exhibit 1; see also <http://brandeiscenter.com/initial-victory-for-plaintiffs-in-path-breaking-lawsuit-against-asa-for-its-boycott-israel/> . As the Court is aware, these events were followed by harassment of and threats of harm to the Defendants.

The Plaintiffs have perpetuated this pattern with their most recent filing. On Thursday, November 9, at 2:42 a.m., the Plaintiffs filed the instant Motion to Amend the Complaint. Later that very same day, Plaintiffs' counsel issued a "press release" regarding the *proposed* second amended complaint, which recited verbatim several emails produced by Defendants in this case. Again not coincidentally, the press release immediately preceded the annual meeting of another academic association that was considering an academic boycott of Israel, this time the Middle East Studies' Association's (MESA) whose national conference was scheduled to take place between November 18 and 21 (see **Exhibits 2A - 2C**, excerpt from the MESA national conference program). In other words, this forum is being used as a platform from which Plaintiffs and their supporters can mine for data with which to harass anyone whose views differ from the Plaintiffs' and their supporters.

Within a day of the Plaintiffs' "press release," the Defendants did begin to receive electronic hate mail, which specifically referenced the press release.⁸ This is particularly troubling in light of the concerns long expressed by Defendants, of which the Court is well aware, and which were addressed in the Protective Order, the purpose of which was to protect the parties from "harassment, threats or harm, if publicly disclosed." Plaintiffs will undoubtedly assert that they neither condone nor support such harassment, but the fact remains that they have long been aware that Defendants have been subjected to such threats, and Plaintiffs' press release was instrumental in inciting and fostering further harassment.

The Proposed Amendment Would Unduly Prejudice the Defendants

The Motion for Leave should also be denied because granting it would greatly expand the preparation and expenses necessary for Defendants to litigate the new claims. *See Lover, supra.* The expanded scope and prejudice is apparent on several fronts.

First, the mere length and breath of the allegations would double the already 105 paragraph/31 page existing Complaint. The proposed Complaint is 82 pages in length with 244 separate paragraphs. Defendants have already been put to great (and unnecessary) expense in responding to the two *prior* Complaints and 252 requests for production. With nine lawyers at their disposal, it has become apparent that the Plaintiffs will take whatever steps they can to drive up the costs of the Defendants.

⁸ Defendants can provide this under seal should the Court so require.

Second, as even a cursory read of the proposed Complaint makes clear, the new Complaint is a thinly veiled attack on another organization which is not even a party to this case – the U.S. Campaign for Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (“USACBI”). The Plaintiffs have (improperly) now alleged that ASA simply adopted the USACBI platform and Plaintiffs seek to litigate against these Defendants grievances Plaintiffs have against USACBI. USACBI is referred to 217 times in the proposed second amended complaint.

That Plaintiffs’ grievances lie with others is evident throughout the proposed second amended complaint. By way of a few examples only:

- Plaintiffs spend several paragraphs discussing a gentleman by the name of Omar Barghouti, a nonparty and a founder of the BDS movement, who calls for complete “right of return” to Israel, rejects any two-state solution and calls for the end of the state of Israel as a Jewish state. ¶¶ 38, 39, 40.
- Plaintiffs focus on USACBI’s platform, which apparently states that a boycott should be continued until Israel complies with their demands. ¶ 39.
- A nonparty, Mark Yudoh, is quoted from a newspaper article referencing a Defendant Plaintiffs seeks to add. He accuses her of speaking of “Jews deliberately starving Palestinians, ‘stunting’ and ‘maiming’ a population.” ¶ 59.
- Indeed, the proposed Complaint sets forth USACBI’s mission on specific terms. *See* ¶ 36.

In their attempt to in essence litigate a claim against USACBI, Plaintiffs continually reference statements made by USACBI or persons associated with it but now fail to set forth the language of the ASA Resolution itself ⁹ – the heart of the case. *See* proposed second amended complaint, ¶¶ 78 – 101; 117 – 122. This is a telling omission; the ASA’s Resolution is specifically different from USACBI’s Platform and those pronouncements of others set forth in the proposed complaint, and Plaintiffs know that.

On that point, the proposed Complaint shows what Plaintiffs’ real motivation is in this lawsuit: to challenge and threaten anyone or any organization who disagrees with Plaintiffs’ position on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Plaintiffs previously attempted to hide this motivation in their prior Complaints: the Resolution “was an overtly political act that was spearheaded by the individual defendants. *The larger political issues however highly charged, are not germane to the resolution of this lawsuit.*” Complaint and Amended Complaint, ¶ 2 (emphasis added). The new proposal drops that pretext, and seeks to make the larger political issues the focus.

A trial court may deny a motion to amend the complaint if the amendment would result in undue prejudice to the opposing party. *Foman v. Davis*, 371 U.S. 178, 182, 83 S. Ct. 227, 9 L. Ed. 2d 222 (1962); *Lover*, 248 F.R.D. at 324. The appellate courts have recognized that undue prejudice to a defendant may arise if an amendment would delay litigation or “expand[] the allegations beyond the scope of the initial complaint.” *Lover*, 248 F.R.D. at 322 (quoting *Paris v. Frazier*, 195 F.3d 761, 763 (5th Cir. 1999)). Prejudice has been found

⁹ The prior Complaints did reference the ASA Resolution language.

likely where the expanded scope of the proposed amendment would require additional discovery. *Id.* The Court is well aware of the breadth of documents and information that the Plaintiffs have pursued against Defendants, including their demands for documents concerning the Defendants' affiliations with other organizations that promote academic boycotts. Defendants have produced nearly 17,000 documents over several months, most of which has consisted of email from and to the individual Defendants. There is little doubt that the Plaintiffs would, if permitted to amend the Complaint as proposed, seek the same broad categories of documents in the possession of Ms. Puar, Ms. Kauanui and Mr. Salaita, as well as any and all communication between any of the Defendants and these three individuals. As for the latter category of documents, all of this material could have been identified and reviewed previously, during the months of review of the Defendants' documents. If the proposed second amended complaint is permitted, Defendants' documents – particularly their email – will have to be reviewed again for such communication and other documents. The fact that the Plaintiffs took such pains to specifically identify Ms. Puar, Ms. Kauanui and Mr. Salaita in the original Complaint begs the question – why were they not added originally? One thing is clear, though – their absence in the original or the Amended Complaint was not because the Plaintiffs did not know of their identities or their roles relative to the Resolution. *See Societe Liz, S.A. v. Charles of the Ritz*, 118 F.R.D. 2 (D.C. Cir. 1987) (denying leave to amend, where court concluded that plaintiff had knowledge of the occurrences giving rise to the proposed amendments well before the motion, as well as knowledge of the proposed new defendants).

The Plaintiffs' prior Complaints make it clear that they had knowledge of these "new" parties, and their roles relative to the ASA's Resolution, at the time the original Complaint was filed. The Plaintiffs are plainly aware of their need to explain the delay in proposing yet additional amendments and the addition of new parties - but their explanations do not indicate any more substantial basis for such claims than existed in April 2016. The true reason for these late additions is clear - it is an effort to ratchet up the pressure on the ASA and any other entity considering a similar resolution.

The prejudice caused by the additional discovery that will be necessitated by the addition of defendants and the undue delay in bringing these claims merits denial of the Motion.

Conclusion

The Plaintiffs' proposed second amended complaint is a continuation of their public relations campaign through litigation, whose focus is not truly the well-being of the ASA, but punishment of persons and entities who dare take contrary positions regarding boycotts of Israeli academic institutions. Moreover, the central focus of the proposed new complaint is a series of derivative claims, which the Court has already disallowed. And however the Plaintiffs attempt to dress up their latest effort to lengthen and broaden this litigation, permitting the proposed amendment would add claims against parties about whom and about whose roles they have long known, to the distinct prejudice of the Defendants. For these reasons, the Motion should be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

John J. Hathway, Esq. #412664
Thomas Mugavero, Esq. #431512
Whiteford, Taylor & Preston L.L.P.
1800 M Street, N.W., Suite 450N
Washington, D.C. 20036-5405
(202) 659-6800
jhathway@wtplaw.com
tmugavero@wtplaw.com
Attorneys for Defendants

Jeff C. Seaman, Esq. #466509
Whiteford, Taylor & Preston L.L.P.
7501 Wisconsin Avenue
Suite 700W
Bethesda, MD 20816
(301) 804-3610
jseaman@wtplaw.com

EXHIBIT 1

The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc. (LDB) is an independent, non-partisan institution for public interest advocacy, research and education. The Center's mission is to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and to promote justice for all.

Contact: Nicole Rosen
202-309-5724

**Initial Victory For Plaintiffs in Path-Breaking Lawsuit Against ASA
For its Boycott of Israel**

Judge denies ASA's attempt to dismiss lawsuit, Rejects spurious First Amendment claim

Washington, D.C., April 3 – The United States District Court for the District of Columbia (D.C.) has rejected efforts by the American Studies Association (ASA) to suppress a lawsuit filed against the Association by its own members challenging the ASA's adoption of a boycott of all Israeli academic institutions. The judge ruled in favor of the ASA professors in four out of six claims, and authorized the case to go forward.

According to the plaintiffs, the boycott adopted by ASA in December 2013 was a concerted effort by a small number of BDS activists, including founding members of the U.S. Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel (USACBI), who abused their leadership positions in ASA to make anti-Israel activism the central focus of the Association. They charge that ASA's activism breached its contractual duty to its members, and that the boycott was pushed through in violation of the ASA's own rules governing how votes should be conducted.

"The Association suffered and its members suffered when a handful of zealots decided to push a personal, political agenda against one country," stated Jerome Marcus, an attorney for the plaintiffs. "We are very pleased that the D.C. Court recognizes that the law is violated by such a severe abuse of power and by the misuse of Association revenue, resources and membership dues."

"This is an important victory, not only for our clients, but for everyone who is concerned about the anti-Semitic BDS movement and its deleterious impact on academic institutions," stated Kenneth L. Marcus, president of the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law, which also represents the plaintiffs. "This decision will send a clear message about the need to resist unlawful BDS resolutions."

After the lawsuit was filed in April 2016, the ASA called on the D.C. Court to dismiss all charges. However, late Friday, the court ruled against the defendant's argument for dismissal, and the case will move forward. Specifically, the court ruled in favor of considering the plaintiff's claims for waste, breach of contract and violation of the D.C. Nonprofit Corporation Act. The court recognized that the ASA may have misused members' dues and Association resources, and failed to enact the resolution in accordance with ASA bylaws that require affirmative votes of two-thirds of voting members on the first full day of the meeting.

"The circumstances of the ASA's purported adoption of an anti-Israel BDS resolution are deeply shocking," stated Harvard University Law Professor Jesse Fried who served as an expert adviser to the litigation team representing the plaintiffs. "The purpose of the ASA, like other academic organizations is to promote scholarship, teaching, and the exchange of ideas. A handful of insiders at the ASA decided to use their power and the ASA's resources—that is, other people's money---to flip this purpose on its head and turn the ASA into a vehicle for selectively impeding scholarship, teaching, and the exchange of ideas. The insiders then claimed victory even though fewer than 20% of members expressly approved the BDS resolution, in a vote marred by alleged manipulation and procedural irregularities. I applaud the plaintiffs for bringing this much-needed lawsuit to restore the ASA to its proper purpose, and am extremely pleased that Judge Rudolph Contreras is letting plaintiffs proceed with most of their claims."

In addition, the court flat out rejected ASA's attempt to hide behind the First Amendment, finding a favorable ruling would not infringe on First Amendment rights. Specifically, the court agreed with the plaintiffs' argument that defendants

"voluntarily assumed certain obligations toward the ASA when they took on leadership positions within the organization, and they violated those obligations through their roles in passage of the boycott resolution." The court went on to say that "Individual Defendants voluntarily assumed roles where their right to expression would be limited by bylaws, the common law and statute." The case will now move to the discovery phase of the trial.

"The D.C. Court held for a principle that is basic corporate law," stated University of California Berkeley Law School Professor Steven Davidoff Solomon, an expert adviser to the plaintiffs. "The First Amendment does not give license to override a company's organizational documents agreed to by its members. Instead, like an organization, a non-profit is a creature of its organizational documents and must follow them in all it does."

The judge did dismiss the plaintiffs' ultra vires claim which charged that the boycott of another country is outside the scope of ASA's charter. The plaintiffs are evaluating the Court's decision with respect to this aspect of their claims. "While we are disappointed with the court on the ultra vires claim, that part of the lawsuit is not necessary in demonstrating that ASA's boycott is unquestionably unlawful," stated Kenneth L. Marcus.

The four plaintiffs are American studies professors Simon Bronner, Michael Rockland, Michael Barton, and Charles Kupfer. Two are recipients of the ASA award for outstanding abilities and achievement. One is a founding member of a respected American Studies department and another is a member of ASA's governing council and the editor of the Encyclopedia of American Studies. After numerous unsuccessful attempts since 2013 to address the matter within the Association, the professors filed this suit as a last resort to return the ASA to the academically-focused organization it had been for 60 years.

The lawsuit alleges ASA is in violation of the D.C. Non-Profit Corporation Act. In addition to violating DC law, the lawsuit reveals the defendants attempted to prevent informed discourse. In fact, no research performed with scholarly vigor was presented and the ASA refused to circulate or post to the ASA's website several letters opposing the resolution, including one signed by approximately 70 ASA members and another opposing the resolution from eight former ASA presidents.

"This boycott has nothing to do with human rights: the ASA has not even as much as considered boycotting any country for their human rights record. That they only do for the Jewish State," stated Northwestern Pritzker Law School Professor Eugene Kontorovich.

Since the filing of the ASA lawsuit, the American Anthropological Association and the Modern Language Association have both backed down from passing boycott measures.

"Today's victory is much bigger than merely the ASA," added Kenneth L. Marcus. "When the MLA attempted a boycott vote, this case was cited, by those on both sides of the issue, as one of the reasons the resolution was defeated. Academic activists are beginning to think twice before adopting anti-Semitic and unlawful policies that undermine the pillars of higher education."

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The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law is a non-profit organization designed to protect the civil and human rights of the Jewish people, and promote justice for all. Specifically, LDB combats anti-Semitism on college and university campuses through legal advocacy, public policy education and research. It is not affiliated with the Massachusetts University, the Kentucky law school, or any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice.



Lake McGuire



Destination DC

MESA's 51st Annual Meeting

Washington DC November 18-21

We return to DC for MESA's 51st annual meeting at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel where we have met every three years since 1999. The hotel is located in a lovely residential area near the National Zoo, but a nearby stop on the metro red line makes all parts of DC easily accessible. The program of 230+ sessions (see pages 12-51) spread over four days will offer a smorgasbord to whet the appetite of any Middle East studies aficionado. MESA's affiliate groups meet mostly on Saturday, November 18 (see pages 10-11) and the first program session begins that day at 5:30pm. Panels run all day Sunday and Monday and end at 3pm on Tuesday. The book bazaar will be open Sunday and Monday from 9am to 6pm and on Tuesday from 8am to 12pm (see pages 8-9). MESA's ever-popular FilmFest (see the teaser on pages 6-7) begins screenings on Saturday morning and runs through Tuesday until around 2pm. The MESA Presidential Address & Awards will be held Sunday evening from 6pm to 7:30pm, and the MESA Members Meeting on Monday evening from 6pm to 8:00pm.

As you will see, it's business as usual, except of course for a new administration that is determined to ban nationals of six Muslim majority countries from traveling to the US, and MESA having joined a lawsuit against the ban that is making its way to the US Supreme Court in October. Those traveling to the MESA meeting from abroad, should have a look at the international travel tips on page 2 and keep themselves abreast of any developments that could impact travel.

Hotel

Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel

2660 Woodley Road NW

Washington DC 20008

202 328-2000 • 877 212-5752 • 202 234-0015 fax



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October 20

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Registration

To preregister for the MESA 2017 annual meeting, log into your myMESA account, click "Payments" and follow the prompts. Or, complete the registration form found at https://mesana.org/pdf/2017_MESAprerегистation.pdf and return it along with payment to the MESA Secretariat. Pre-registration is recommended as onsite registration rates are higher. The preregistration deadline is October 24, 2017.

Category	Preregistration	Onsite
full/associate	\$150	\$200
student member	\$90	\$125
student non-member	\$120	\$150
Other non-members	\$200	\$250



SPECIAL SESSION**5047 BDS: A Critical Evaluation**

Organizer: Robert O. Freeman

Sponsored by
Association for Israel Studies

Chair: Robert O. Freedman, Johns Hopkins U

Joshua Teitelbaum, Bar-Ilan U

Cary Nelson, U Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Ilan Troen, Brandeis U

The Boycott, Divest and Sanction [BDS] movement has acquired increasing importance in academia in recent years, including in MESA. This panel will evaluate the central propositions of BDS and subject them to a critical academic analysis. Topics to be discussed include the so-called right of return of Palestinian refugees, an end to the occupation of the West Bank, and the improvement of the status of Palestinian citizens of Israel (Israeli Arabs). An examination will also be made of the fate of the BDS issue in the academic organizations that have dealt with it.

Roundtable**4740 Updating the Conflict in Yemen**

Organizer: Daniel Martin Varisco

Sponsored by
American Institute for Yemeni Studies (AIYS)

HE Amat Al-Alim Alsoswa, Former Minister for Human Rights/Yemen

Daniel Martin Varisco, American Inst for Yemeni Studies

Sheila Carapico, U Richmond

Nadwa Aldawsari, Project on Middle East Democracy

Waleed F. Mahdi, U Oklahoma

Thematic Conversation**5035 Everyday Life of Sectarianism in the Middle East: Ambivalent Articulations of “Sectarian” Difference and the “Other”**

Organizers: Yasemin Ipek and Jenna Rice Rahaim

Session Leader: Yasemin Ipek, Stanford U

Suad Joseph, UC Davis

Joanne Nucho, Pomona Col

Jenna Rice Rahaim, Macalester Col

Ussama Makdisi, Rice U

4777 Waqf and Administration in the Ottoman Balkans

Organizer: Jane Hathaway

Chair/Discussant: Amy Singer, Tel Aviv U

Catalina Hunt, Denison U-Pious foundations (vakifs) in Ottoman Dobruca**Jane Hathaway**, Ohio State U-The waqfs of Ottoman chief harem eunuchs on the Danube in Romania and Bulgaria**Sanja Kadric**, Ohio State U-Poturnaks and their endowments in the Ottoman Western Balkans**M. Safa Saracoglu**, Bloomsburg U-Local elites and governance in late Ottoman Bulgaria**4805 De-Centering the Study of Shi'ism**

Organizer: Mirjam Kuenkler

Chair: Meir Litvak, Tel Aviv U

Discussant: Said Arjomand, Association for the Study of Persianate Societies (ASPS)

Simon Wolfgang Fuchs, U Cambridge-The salience of alternative Shi'i religious authority in Pakistan**Mirjam Kuenkler**, U Göttingen-Beyond marja'iyyat? Training women as religious authorities**Thomas Fibiger**, Aarhus U-The place and role of religious authority among Kuwaiti Shi'a**Hafsa Oubou**, Northwestern U-Moroccan-Belgian Shi'a Muslims in Brussels: Rethinking religious practices outside traditionally Shi'a centers**4807 Frictions of Governing in the MENA**

Organizer: Mona Atia

Chair/Discussant: Christopher Parker, Ghent U

Katharina Lenner, U Bath-Poverty alleviation as assemblage - (Re-)producing and governing ‘poverty pockets’ in Jordan**Hiba Bou Akar**, Columbia U-On the urbanization of violence: Contested access to housing for Syrian refugees in a Beirut periphery**Mona Atia**, George Washington U-Governing poverty: Moroccan poverty mapping in the margins**Catherine Herrold**, Indiana U-From activism to clientelism: The effects of foreign aid on Palestine's NGO sector

**EXHIBIT 2C
3:30-5:30PM Sunday November 19****SPECIAL SESSION****5048 Academic Freedom Trends and the Work of MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom**
Organizer: Joshua Stacher

Chair: Laurie Brand, U Southern California

Asli Bali, UCLA School of Law
 Nancy E. Gallagher, UC Santa Barbara
 Miriam R. Lowi, Col of New Jersey
 Joshua Stacher, Kent State U
 Virginia Tilley, Southern Illinois U

MESA's Committee on Academic Freedom took on a record number of cases in 2016. From the continuing repression in Egypt to the swift decent into authoritarianism in Turkey, many countries of the region witnessed significant violations of academic freedom, regardless of educational level or type of institution. Nor was the US exempt, as the arrival of new administration committed to a discriminatory approach to, among others, Muslims and Middle Easterners with the issuance of successive travel bans, has made clear. Indeed 2017 has already demonstrated that current trends are likely to continue, and perhaps worsen. This panel seeks to review some of the most important cases from the MENA region and the US of 2017. CAF members will discuss Egypt, Turkey and the Gulf States, while another presentation will highlight the ongoing battles in the academy surrounding the boundaries for the portrayal of Israel by focusing on the response to the UN commissioned ESCWA report concerning Israeli state practices of apartheid. A member of the California Scholars for Academic Freedom will discuss the network and its responses to recent "lawfare" attacks on academics in the UC and Cal State systems. These interventions will seek to place recent developments in broader socio-political and historical context, analyzing them as integral parts of ongoing political transitions, not as developments limited to the academy. The panel will thus provide an important opportunity for MESA members to learn more, not only about CAF's work, but also about the broader context in which our colleagues who are on the front lines of these battles both in MENA and North America are struggling to assert their rights to academic freedom.

Roundtable**4899 Apology Accepted? Combatting Islamophobia Without Sacrificing Critical Perspective in the Academy**
Organizer: Judd King

Chair: Judd King, American U

Sadaf Jaffer, Princeton U
 Nathaniel Mathews, Binghamton U

Thematic Conversation**5036 Is There a Modern Muslim Mediterranean?**
Organizer: Jonathan Glasser

Session Leader: Jonathan Glasser, Col of William and Mary

Sibel Zandi-Sayek, Col of William and Mary
 Judith E. Tucker, Georgetown U
 Eric Calderwood, U Illinois Urbana-Champaign
 Naor Ben-Yehoyada, Columbia U
 Edmund Burke III, UC Santa Cruz

Thematic Conversation**5033 Evaluating Digital Scholarship - Proposed Guidelines for MESA**
Organizer: Amy Singer

Session Leader: Amy Singer, Tel Aviv U

Elias Muhamna, Brown U
 E. Natalie Rothman, U Toronto Scarborough
 Chris Gratien, Harvard U
 Virginia Aksan, McMaster U

4776 Iraq's Many Pasts, Iraq's Many Presents: Memory, Archive, and Representation
Organizer: Zainab Saleh

Chair: Zainab Saleh, Haverford Col
 Discussant: Arbella Bet-Shlimon, U Washington

Briget Guarasci, Franklin & Marshall Col
Making Iraq's marshes a world heritage site
 Zainab Saleh, Haverford Col-Superfluous
nostalgics: Longing for an idealized past among Iraqis in London

Mona Damluji, UC Santa Barbara-
Seeing like an oil company: Photographic archives of modern Iraq

Orit Bashkin, U Chicago-Iraqi home away from home -
Jewish reflections on Iraq in the diaspora

Dina Rizk Khoury, George Washington U-
Writing Iraq's history with and against the post-colonial state archive

4798 Rethinking Security Studies in the Arab World: In/Security Beyond the State

Organizers: Samer Abboud and Waleed Hazbun

Discussant: Marwa Daoudy, Georgetown U

Samer Abboud, Arcadia U-The pre-peace, post-conflict reconstruction of Syria

Hamza Meddeb, European U Inst-Zones of ambiguity. The political economy of insecurity in Tunisia

Nicole Sunday Grove, U Hawai'i
 Manoa-Participatory media and emerging landscapes of security and surveillance

Waleed Hazbun, American U Beirut-The politics of in/security in an era of turbulence