

# Introductory and Editorial Note

**Na-iem Dollie**

Chief Editor

*Education as Change*

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4252-6978>

[eac1@unisapressjournals.co.za](mailto:eac1@unisapressjournals.co.za)

As the horror of surviving settler brutality in occupied Palestine continues to unfold, rays of hope are found in the multiple and expanding pockets of resistance, creativity and courage of oppressed Palestinians, students and scholars.

This Themed Section or Special Issue, titled “Higher Education under Israeli Occupation in Palestine”, was conceived before the recent catastrophe (or post 7 October 2023 Nakba) and mass slaughter of Palestinians by the Israeli state. It is an outcome of discussions held between the External Academic Relations Office of the University of Birzeit and the Division for Internationalisation of the University of Johannesburg in 2023.

The articles submitted for consideration were written before the apartheid Israeli state—with the diplomatic, military, political and economic collusion of the governments of the United States, Britain and Germany—decided to intensify and expand its genocidal war against the Palestinian people and against the resistance organisations that have emerged after more than 75 years of occupation. The articles provide trenchant insights into the educational, social and political mind-sets of scholars and academic communities whose daily existence is under threat, and who live under conditions of repression and forced removals previously experienced by South Africans under pre-1994 apartheid.

In this context and against this backdrop, guest editors Prof. Amir M. Khalil and Prof. Jihad A. Alshwaikh, both from Birzeit University in the West Bank, together with *Education as Change*, have put together a compilation of Palestinian voices, creative scholarship and pedagogy that, despite the social and academic carnage wrought by the superimposed Israeli state on the land of Palestine, reflects a deep commitment to a collective humanity and to academic rigour.



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Dollie

Once all the articles have been published, the guest editors will publish their Editorial.