

Borders and Maps

From the late 1970s to the early 1990s, the Central American solidarity movement organized to stop US intervention and to support national liberation and social justice movements in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. The movement came into conflict with the US government, and the FBI and CIA pursued a sustained campaign to disrupt this solidarity activism. Between 1981 and 1987, the FBI investigated over one hundred thousand people and three thousand organizations across the United States. The FBI focused its harshest efforts on the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), classifying the group's support of leftist national liberation movements as "terrorism." Federal agents infiltrated the Dallas chapter of CISPES and coordinated dozens of break-ins at activist offices and homes nationwide. In addition, as an informant who infiltrated Dallas CISPES revealed, the FBI and CIA provided the Salvadoran National Guard with the names of Salvadoran leftists deported from the United States. The National Guard's death squads assassinated many of these activists in El Salvador and even extended their reach to California: in 1987, members of the National Guard kidnapped a Salvadoran refugee outside a Los Angeles CISPES office and then raped and tortured her.

As these attacks demonstrate, both repressive violence and radical resistance circulated transnationally. "Borders and Maps" illustrates how activists contested the ideological, political, and economic dominance that the United States exerted in the world from the 1970s through the immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001. Three frameworks guided the US state over these years: the Cold War, global capitalism, and antiterrorism. While overlapping, each framework produced distinct maps of danger and erected new borders. Radicals responded with their own maps of the world, rewriting US state logics through principles of national liberation, global justice, and solidarity against white supremacy, settler colonialism, and neocolonial regimes.

In responding to dominant cartographies and in crafting their own, activists fueled varying causes. For example, they supported liberation movements in Central America and Palestine, opposed the brutal apartheid regime in South Africa, and worked to end predatory national debts and abuse of workers supported by US corporations and US-backed financial entities in the Global South. Radicalism moved—imaginatively and organizationally—across geographies.

Immigration profoundly shaped radical activism. The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 enabled a more multiethnic and multilingual United States by removing some of the decades-old restrictions against migration to the US by people from Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Many migrants fled wars and inequality directly backed by the United States; they also brought critical knowledge into oppositional movements. Although the US government, especially under President Reagan (1980–88), worked to close the doors to leftist refugees in these years, immigrant communities became home to diasporic radicalisms. Immigrants' knowledge of the effects of neoliberalism, their experiences as workers in the US service economy, and their status as frequent targets of state repression made them key players in international solidarity, global justice, and labor organizing.

"Borders and Maps" starts with the transition from the anti-Vietnam War movement to other modes of international solidarity. The United States withdrew troops from Vietnam in 1973, and in 1975 communist forces in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos declared victory. Millions of people, primarily Southeast Asian civilians, died in US-backed wars in the region, and millions more were made refugees. Though the anti-Vietnam War movement did not end US aggression in Southeast Asia, it did help curtail bombings, stop the US draft, reveal lies by the military and political elites, and foster transnational activism. It also radicalized millions of Americans. As US wars in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam came to a close, large numbers of radicals continued to embrace anti-imperialism and international solidarity, particularly with socialist and communist struggles.

Section A, "Anti-Imperialism beyond Vietnam," tracks these reverberations. It focuses especially on Central America solidarity but also includes sources from Puerto Rican independence, opposition to US military occupation in South Korea, Indigenous internationalism, and a growing Arab American left. Jimmy Carter's presidency (1976–80) marked a reprieve from strident Cold War rhetoric, as he expressed support for the United Nations and extended amnesty to Vietnam War draft resisters. Reagan embraced anticommunism fervently and placed the locus of Cold War containment in Central America. During Reagan's presidency and that of his successor, former CIA director George H. W. Bush (1988–92), the United States backed the right-wing Salvadoran government against leftist rebels. In Nicaragua the United States covertly funded a proxy army, known as the *contras*, that sought to overthrow the socialist Sandinista revolution. Bush aimed to implement what he called a "new world order" of US hegemony over global diplomacy following the Cold War. He pursued, and largely won, United Nations approval of the US-led Gulf War (1991).

Anti-imperialists contested Reagan and Bush by arguing for the right to self-determination and by revealing the US sponsorship of Third World violence. They also drew comparisons to recent memory, as through the ubiquitous bumper sticker, "El Salvador is Spanish for Vietnam." Activists embraced multiple tactics, including nonviolent direct action, direct aid and travel brigades, and refugee sanctuary—the last especially through churches. The movement contained many differences of ideology and demographics. One strand limited itself to opposing US intervention, drawing in liberals as well as radicals and gaining considerable mobiliz-

ing power. Another strand went farther, supporting left-wing movements in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Palestine, and Puerto Rico. Nonintervention presented the whitest face of the movement, while refugees and immigrants participated in greater numbers in backing radical groups of the Global South.

Section B, “From Anti-Imperialism to Global Justice,” demonstrates how radicals responded to corporate globalization with a globalization of their own—what was variously termed the antiglobalization, alterglobalization, or the global justice movement. While capitalism could move more freely after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, everyday people faced militarized borders. In US electoral politics, Democrats and Republicans coalesced around deregulation and privatization. Meanwhile, new cohorts of activists sought a radicalism that did not reproduce ethnic, linguistic, religious, or sexual exclusions, problems that had marked many leftist governments worldwide. A growing number of radicals reframed the idea of the global, organizing at scales both smaller and larger than the nation-state. They pursued anticapitalist “globalization from below” and built ties with nonstate organizations and communities in the global South. Often embracing anarchism or other “horizontalist” politics, many worked toward more radical conceptions of affinity than encompassed by either “national liberation” or “human rights.”

Left critiques of corporate globalization also presented a referendum on US domestic politics, challenging anti-immigrant vitriol amid a weakened labor movement. Given how NAFTA and other policies undermined union power, the acceleration of globalization posed a fork in the road for organized labor, pitting labor’s history of racial exclusion against its internationalist legacy. But several hopeful directions for worker organizing emerged, including immigrant labor organizing, independent worker centers, and the campus-based antisweatshop movement that targeted major universities whose collegiate sport apparel was produced in countries where exploitative labor practices were widespread.

Section B tracks these trends. It begins with the anti-apartheid movement, which mobilized in radical union locals, built student-labor coalitions, and popularized the economic tactics of boycott, divestment, and sanctions. These tactics carried influence in the 1990s. Illustrating these ties, section B places anti-apartheid materials alongside sources from the global justice and immigrant worker movements. It includes items on the use of large-scale direct action, which reached its height in 1999 when fifty thousand people shut down the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle. It further demonstrates how immigrant worker organizing intersected with antiracism and by what tactics immigrant workers won power.

Section C, “Not in Our Name,” uses an oft-repeated activist slogan to highlight how US radicals opposed wars of occupation in the Middle East. As the US security state shifted its declared enemy from (Soviet) communism to (Muslim) terrorism, US military intervention assumed a civilizing mission. Against such a rationale, radicals worked to reveal the economic and political interests—as well as the racist and sexist ideologies—driving US approaches to the Middle East. Arab American, Muslim, and Jewish activists played key roles in bringing critiques of Zionism into antiwar politics and in building feminist and queer Palestinian solidarity. Activists’ opposition to wars in “our name” gained even greater importance after the attacks of September

11, when the US invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, instituted widespread domestic surveillance and detention under the USA PATRIOT Act, and employed systematic torture in the military prisons at Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib.

“Not in Our Name” tracks sources from the 1970s through the initial aftermath of September 11. Materials from the early period include Iranian American radicalism, Palestinian solidarity, and radical critiques of Zionism. While often tentative in the early 1980s, these politics gained greater energy after the first intifada—the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza that took place from December 1987 until 1993, when the Oslo Accords were signed. Feminist and queer challenges to occupation, orientalism, and Zionism played pivotal roles in challenging Islamophobia and thereby in strengthening antiwar activism. Activism against the 1991 Gulf War was brief but prompted many radicals to pursue more purposefully antiracist and people of color-led organizing. In the aftermath of September 11, activists of color and immigrant radicals—especially Arab American, South Asian, and Muslim people—moved toward centerstage in confronting the repression targeting their communities. As much as 9/11 was a world-altering event, both radical and state responses reflected the ideological, social, and tactical maps each side had drawn over the preceding decades.