The launching of the academic and cultural boycott of Israel in the U.S. academy was met with many challenges including attempts at silencing, but also problems related to liberal Zionism, and Arabs' gate-keeping practices. After more than a year of teaching Palestine, the issues of boycott and normalizations are also met with some challenges related to local contexts, but also to a larger limitation in the understanding of the terms and their implications for the academy, especially for an academy that aims at transforming the status quo, and in the long run for a real decolonization.

The difficulties in both locations are related to a misunderstanding of the relations between Israel and the U.S., the impact of colonization and neocolonial practices. In my paper, I attempt to explore critically the relationship between Israel and the U.S. and discuss the ways the boycott and normalizations can be expanded to achieve decolonized space in the academy and the society at large. It will do so by analyzing the Eurocentric background to the relations between Israel and the U.S., the work of Orientalism, the impact of colonialism, and neo colonial practices that keep that relationship alive, and prevents decolonization in the U.S. academy, as well as in Palestine, and thus a continued colonization of the Palestinian people. Thus, de-normalization is a concept that must be read beyond the economic and political aspects to include culture and the academy, who are central pillars in maintaining the status quo.