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Abstracts of Presentations

Tariq Da'na

Settler-colonialism and Military-Security Production in Israel: A Political Economy Perspective

This paper presents an anatomy of the organic relationship between production and high tech developments in the field of Israeli military-security production, the structure of settler colonialism, and the continuing occupation of Palestinian lands from a political economy perspective. The paper argues that the rise of Israel in the global military and security innovation constituted one of the pillars of strength in the Zionist ideology, an ideology that was practically manifested during long decades of expansionist colonial projects and regional wars, that led to it being a major catalyst for innovation and high military-security productivity. Nevertheless, the paper considers the fact that Israel's military-security superiority is a result of the structural dependence on government aid and private investment from the United States, especially post June 1967 war. In addition, the speaker highlights other characteristics that determine Israeli military and security production; such as the brutal purposes of these innovations, their involvement in war crimes around the world, and their importance in ensuring the viability of the Israeli war economy and the high incomes it brings to the public and private sectors.

Lamees Farraj

The Reality of the Palestinian Labour Force: The Job as an Extortion and Bargaining Tool

The Palestinian labour market is witnessing many challenges and obstacles, following the changes in the political and economic conditions. Labour in Palestine has been affected by many factors that resulted in the composition in its current form, most notably working inside the Green Line, and the inflation of the public sector, not to mention the civil society and external funding.

The paper presents the composition of the labour in Palestine, and the mechanisms of control and undermining using the source of livelihood as a tool for a bargain. The data of the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics indicate that the number of workers in Palestine is 1,010,400 workers, including 209,500 workers in the public sector, 667,600 workers in the private sector, and 133,300 workers inside the Green Line and settlements. This means that about 20% of the workforce is subject to the ruling authority, while 13% of the workers work inside the Green Line, and their livelihoods are subject to the extortion of the occupation, in addition to workers in the civil society institutions, who number about 42,000 workers. Accordingly, the paper assumes that about 40% of Palestinian employment, and thus a similar proportion of Palestinian families, are directly undermined. The paper argues that the economic mechanisms used by the colonial powers, such as grants and conditional aid, which are imposed first on the Palestinian Authority, in addition to the economic facilities provided by the occupation and granting permits to workers, lead to curbing and thwarting the Palestinian struggle, and inducing dependency and undermining.

Tareq Sadeq

The Political Economy of Israeli Settler Colonialism: Suppression of the Palestinians and the Commodification of Rights

Israel imposes a system of settler colonialism on the Palestinian people, in which it has not been able to carry out large-scale expulsions until now, except for the Nakba in 1948 and the 1967 war. However, this regime adopts a set of policies that constitute an environment that expels the Palestinians from their land. On the economic level, the settler-colonial regime has no economic policy in its literal sense. But it has a set of plans within the overall plan of creating an expulsive environment to tighten the control over the Palestinian economy, prevent it from developing, and subjugate it to the Israeli economy.

The paper discusses Israel's tightening of its control over the Palestinian economy, as part of these plans, through controlling all the elements of the Palestinian economy: the land and its resources, the population, and the borders. In addition to this, Israel implements a policy of destroying infrastructure and besieging the remaining Palestinian-populated areas. All of these policies result in the weakening of the Palestinian productive sectors, and thus the ability of the Palestinian economy to operate, so that Israel entrenches dependency by forcing Palestinians to work inside the Green Line. Dependency is also entrenched through the control over commercial crossings, the thing that restricts the foreign trade of the Palestinian economy and limits it to the Israeli economy. In light of the decline in the productive sectors, the productivity of one sector has increased significantly since 2008, namely the trade sector, as a result of the Palestinian Monetary Authority's policy of encouraging loans. This increase in the productivity of the trade sector has led to the emergence of a new capitalist class in the Palestinian society; the class of large merchants, who monopolize the markets, control prices and can flood the markets with imported goods or cut them off completely. On the other hand, the flow of donor funds to the Palestinian Authority and civil society institutions contributed to the emergence of a new middle class whose income depends on conditional donor funds. Dependence on the Israeli economy and donor funds subject the Palestinians to Israeli plans that create a repulsive environment. The paper also addresses the economic benefits that the Israeli economy derives from settler colonialism; Like any colonialism, the Israeli economy reaps benefits from the exploitation of Palestinian resources, but it also reaps benefits from the commodification of rights, as a new private sector of retired senior Israeli army officers is emerging to reap profits from selling the Palestinians some of their rights of movement, construction and production.

Basem Ezbidi

The Political Economy of the PLO Crisis

There is an opinion that attributes the stumble, and perhaps failure, of the task of liberating the Palestinians in the past six decades to the structural contradiction between the idea of national liberation and emancipation and their related items on the one hand, and on the other hand, the intellectual and institutional structure of the supposed tool of organizing emancipatory actions - that is, the Palestine Liberation Organization, which took upon itself the representation of the Palestinians and the expression of their will Free. Various reasons are usually invoked to explain the contradiction between the goal (liberation) and the means (the PLO), some of which are subjective, such as the nature of leadership, program, strategy, and tools, and others that are objective, such as the structure of the conflict, its colonial root, the specificity of the colonizer, regional conditions, and so on. My contribution deals with an aspect neglected by many, which is the profound impact of the political economy (or money) on the program and strategy of the Palestine Liberation Organization and on stripping it of the ability to achieve actual emancipation.

This raises an important question: What is the point of maintaining a liberation organization that has been corrupted by political money and has itself become in dire need of liberation?

Isam Haj Hussein

Corruption in the Management of Palestinian Natural Resources: The Role of the Israeli Occupation

The management and utilization of public resources and natural wealth is one of the important areas managed by the state on behalf of the people who own it. This requires public policies, legislation and approved procedures in accordance with the agreed principles in order to ensure its good management, as it may constitute a fertile environment for corruption, especially if a single party in the political system is the sole decisions maker without effective oversight, the thing that will lead to its abuse to serve the interests of a specific faction or political party, and away from the public interest.

Although most of the Palestinian natural resources are under the control of the Israeli occupation, some of them are managed in whole or in part by the Palestinian side based on the Paris Economic Protocol. In addition, the policies of the Israeli occupation (which serve its colonial and economic goals) have deliberately impeded the development of an independent and feasible Palestinian economy, and sought to keep the Palestinian areas as a market for Israeli products and to control the entry of any materials that contribute to the establishment of an infrastructure for an independent and empowered Palestinian economy. The Israeli interests also remained present in the actions of the occupation authorities related to the Gaza Strip. Despite the occupation's abandonment of gains related to the territory of the Gaza Strip, its economic ambitions were always present in these measures, such as the facilitation of entry and exit of Israeli products to the residents of the Gaza Strip.

Since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority, the management of Palestinian natural resources and wealth has been marred by many forms of corruption by influential parties in the Palestinian Authority that have relations and interests with the Palestinian and Israeli private sectors; the most prominent of which was a group of companies that was established by Khaled Islam, the economic advisor to the President of the Authority at the time Yasser Arafat. The corruption was manifested by facilitating the monopoly process in coordination and cooperation with the occupying governments for goods such as cement, petroleum and tobacco, or through partnership with some Palestinian private sector parties for goods and services such as iron, telecommunications, electricity and transportation, and sometimes through state lands, where revenues were transferred from the public treasury to private accounts, or even through the establishment of private companies under the names of people who are loyal to the regime, these companies obtain facilities from officials in the National Authority and sometimes from Israeli officials for export and import. Part of these interests was associated with the importance of using money and controlling resources as a tool for one group to control governance, and to buy loyalties or to obtain privileges and high financial gains. This was accompanied by the absence of a legal system that prevents monopoly and regulates the process of granting concessions in the management of these resources or the provision of basic and vital services to the Palestinian citizens, in addition to the absence of a real effective official oversight.

The paper will address forms of corruption in this field, its relationship to the economy of the Israeli occupation and its role in it, in addition to the control, influence and exclusivity of relevant decisions by influential Palestinian parties.

Oraib Al-Rantawi

The Political Economy of Palestinian Political Islam

The paper discusses the experience of political Islam in building civil finance networks and the impact of such networks on providing "sustainability" and providing margins of "independence", "finance and regional alliances". The paper also discusses the parallel economy and its impact on perpetuating the political division.

Jamil Harb

Palestinian Food Systems and their Role in Steadfastness and Development

Palestine is characterized by different climates that allow a great diversity of food products. In addition, natural resources, especially water, vary greatly among the Palestinian governorates. Based on this, it is possible to identify two diets in Palestine; the first is the traditional system and the second is the modern one. The first is represented by olive produce, cattle, and rain-fed grape sectors and is concentrated in rain-fed areas, especially the governorates of Hebron, Bethlehem, Ramallah, Nablus, Salfit and large parts of the governorates of Jenin and Tubas. The second is mainly intensive cultivation and intensive animal husbandry in the governorates of Qalqilya, Tulkarm, Jericho and the governorates of the Gaza Strip, and parts of the governorates of Jenin and Tubas.

The traditional system was considered as the basis for preserving Palestinian land, and for strengthening the steadfastness of Palestinians within the reality of being under occupation. This view is correct, but we proceed from another approach based on the fact that the modern food system is more positively effective in strengthening Palestinian steadfastness and contributing to the desired real development. Our approach is based on the very high productivity of modern agricultural patterns (including greenhouses, seedless grapes, guava, avocado and poultry) compared to traditional patterns, which contributes to creating more job opportunities for young men and women. In addition, the efficiency of resource use, especially water, is higher in the modern system due to the adoption of a large number of farms with economical technology systems, despite the high costs of these systems.

In conclusion, we argue that stimulating modern patterns in Palestinian food systems is an opportunity to contribute effectively to strengthening our resilience. This is despite the negative aspects associated with modern patterns, including the heavy dependence on manufactured chemicals, and on the market inside the occupied lands of 1948 to market a tangible part of the product, which makes it difficult to break away from the occupation, as well as the negative impact of modern patterns on climate change.

It is worth noting that the performance of Palestinian governmental institutions is still below the standard, especially concerning control over the inputs and outputs of food systems, as well as in the field of awareness, guidance and scientific research.

Bayan Arqawi & Muniece Al-Far

Assessing the Impact of Financialisation on Economic Development in the Palestinian Territories

Bank financing is capable of bringing about developmental changes if directed in a way that addresses some of the national challenges we face under occupation. The neoliberal policies of the Palestinian government and the Palestinian Monetary Authority have strengthened the role of banks in the economy and led to an increase in domestic credit. However, this bank financing did not intersect with governmental economic policies that seek to reduce the effects of Israeli economic hegemony on the local economy.

This financing's priorities were not directed towards productive sectors, and the abundance of consumer loans was not accompanied by government policies that urge consumers to buy their local products. Accordingly, neoliberal policies have led citizens to consume; Which in turn enhanced the strength, importance and dominance of the market at the expense of the state's role. And of course, relying on the distribution of resources according to the market mechanism, subject to the terms of the Oslo and Paris economic agreements alone, without any government intervention, reinforces the more advanced and stronger Israeli economic hegemony over the Palestinian economy. The paper discusses the relationship between the financial and productive sectors of the economy through a case study in the Palestinian territories, where it evaluates the impact of one of the interventions imposed by the Monetary Authority on the banks, specifically the seventh item of Instructions No. (05/2008), which stipulates that all banks operating in Palestine are obligated not to have the ratio of foreign investments to total deposits exceed 55% by August 31, 2009, intending to increase the proportion of internal investments and the granted facilities. The change in policy represents an exogenous shock to the banking sector, which enables the implementation of what is known as quasi-experimental design, which we use in the process of verifying the existence of a causal relationship between financialization and economic development.

Abdel Rahman Al-Tamimi

Israeli Policies of Total Control: the Water Sector as a Model

The water sector in Palestine has been taken over by several administrations; from the Ottoman rule until to the Palestinian National Authority. The Israeli occupation period is a living example of settler colonial hegemony, as the classic model of colonialism was not sufficient to control Palestinian water. Therefore, this control was transformed to complete hegemony and annexation to the settler-colonial policies with complicity from the neoliberal vision.

The paper aims to explain the megatrend of Israel's settler-colonial policy and analyse it through sub-trends of the water sector as a model for this policy. The paper will also discuss the role of the neoliberal vision (privatization projects and proposals) in the integration with settler colonialism through the analysis of financing policies (donor countries and the World Bank) for the water sector.

The presentation is based on the holistic approach to reach a comprehensive analysis of the vision of Israeli policies in the settler-colonial framework that leads to the abolition of peoples' resources by attaching them to the settler-colonial project.

The paper presents a perception of the relationship of Israeli policies in the water sector with other sectors in an attempt by the occupying power to transform the Palestinian people from citizens into customers.

Nissaf Brahim

The Palestinian Question and the Arab Street

Paradoxically, Arab totalitarian regimes allowed Arab peoples a margin to express their support for the Palestinian cause. Perhaps peoples believed that tyranny and occupation stemmed from the same political dynasty, and the battle was one. An opinion is voiced to the effect that after the 2011 uprisings in the Arab region, the interest of Arab peoples in the Palestinian cause has declined in favour of paying attention to local issues. How true is this trend?

The presentation will attempt to answer this question in two main parts. The first deals with downgrading the Palestinian question by Arab regimes in light of the waves of normalization after 2011, and the second part will focus on the strong presence of the Palestinian cause at the level of popular movements and alternative media in the Arab region.

Protest without Organization: The Resistance Act as an Incident

The day on which the martyr Muhammad Abu Khdeir was burnt alive was a defining moment, not only because it turned into the beginning of the war that showed the depth of the change and development of the resistance structure in the coastal plain of Gaza, but because the events that took place in 2014 are a long prelude to what will happen in the following year. That is, at the end of the ninth month of 2015, when events continued and intensified so that the resistance act turned into an intense state that quickly acquired the rank of “the uprising” referring to the intensity and new forms of the resistance actions. The uprising did not turn into a massive intifada that included wide groups and layers of the Palestinian society. It did not fail to achieve its political statement rejecting defeat and its political forms; a statement studded with the blood of martyrs, which we can discern from the successive commandments that circled the space of the uprising and its succession of events, and practices that took the form of direct actions from zero distance.

The paper seeks to show the relationship between the form of social and political blocs after the demise of the second Intifada, the role of the new production relations in accelerating the process of social atomization, and what this social atomization produced from the transformation of the act of resistance from an organized form linked to various political organizations to an Individual or atomic form. This form takes a social dimension, but it is social at the level of need for the production of the act, and not on a political level that is linked to thinking about the relationship between the act and its political outcomes. In this regard, there are three elements of analysis: the first is related to the form and nature of the political economy in Palestine after the second Intifada, and in particular the penetration and expansion of the Palestinian bureaucracy, with what it means of a utilitarian economic relationship between the bureaucrat and bureaucracy, and between the ruling elites, their social and political vision and their commodification of political impotence, i.e. producing political impotence as a commodity, especially concerning the funders and the colonizer. Second, the paper discusses the economic relationship associated with the inflation of consumption and its class diversity in an effort to give the growing class polarization tangible physical forms that are linked to the locations, patterns and identities formed in the consumption processes. The third element of the analysis will discuss the dynamics of trust as a social concept that plays an important role in the possibility of the emergence of an anti-colonial political bloc and the role of cooperation, censorship and punishment in the disintegration of the social concept of trust, and thus in creating an additional barrier to the rise of political blocs capable of organized action in the Palestinian context.

The paper will also address the dynamics of action in its relationship with colonial structures and address the role of fantasy in the production and continuity of the act of resistance; the relationship between this continuity and the incubators of love and trust that appeared through friends and relatives doing joint or successive actions; attempts to suppress the uprising through multiple strategies that evoked arrest and abuse of the resisting body; targeting the homes of the perpetrators as a social price for their acts; and coercion through the creation of a social discourse around security on social media and opening the doors of work permits directed at specific social groups, this aimed at creating a form of Palestinianness and movement control systems. In short, the uprising of individual acts expressed the ability of the resistance actions to appear despite the complex array of obstacles, but its form was symptomatic. The social and political changes have accelerated as a result of containing the strength of the resistance movement in the West Bank after the second Intifada. The acceleration of social atomization through a set of policies, the physical and moral elimination of the resistance movement made it possible for the emergence of a political – class alliance (the neoliberal social movement) based on the commodification of impotence.

Roger Heacock

Revolution in the Revolution: the Absent Intellectuals

Since the second intifada, the role of the universities as institutions, their students, and their professors, has slowly declined. The Palestinian people's quest for liberation has never ceased, or even, for more than short periods, lessened. Wilfully rebellious actions on the electoral front and in the streets continued through 2021. What has changed has been the actors' social makeup. Whereas in the 1987 intifada, faculty and students were central to initiatives, leadership and general participation, they have as a group been an evanescent factor. The slack has not necessarily been taken up by other categories, although lawyers, school teachers, journalists, and of course labourers of different types, employed or unemployed display a greater propensity for activism. Why is this the case, and what would it take to bring academics, as a collective, back into the revolutionary circle? They appear disgruntled, demobilized and virtually paralyzed by a fixation on both the worldwide neoliberal conundrum, which has swept Palestine along in its wake, and the local dilemma expressed by the term "Oslo". Along with Marx in his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach, we argue that the time has come to transform the world rather than brooding over it. The Palestinian intelligentsia, which regrets their earlier enthusiasm for both neoliberalism and Oslo – examples of this acquiescence by the universities abound – need but consider them correctable mistakes rather than inerasable crimes (or sins), thus freeing themselves for a resumption of their collective struggle, and even, to an extent, their leadership role.

Reem Al-Botmeh & Jamil Salem

The Political Economy of Issuing and Repealing Legislation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

The Palestinian legal and political elite has granted a central role to law and legal structures for changing the political, social, and economic reality of Palestinians. The construction of the world of law has become a site of political conflict between different actors and different discourses that are invoked by the concepts of human rights and the rule of law, or are reinforced by the concepts of public order, security and the public interest. A large part of this conflict is a clash and confrontation between aspirations of emancipation on the one hand, and the strengthening of hegemonic economic and political patterns on the other. The international community is investing heavily in the Palestinian legal field, as the state-building process has been linked to a full set of international donors' conditions and reform packages under the name of the rule of law and security. This paper attempts to trace the political and economic formation of Palestinian law through a reading of the various legislations.

Reem Bahdi & David Kattenburg

Coloniality Embedded in a Bottle of Wine: The Kattenburg Case

The Canadian citizen David Kattenburg visited a winery located in an Israeli settlement in the West Bank. After this visit, he lodged an objection to the appropriate Canadian authorities over the misinformation on the label of a wine produced in the settlement he visited. The wine is sold in Canada and bears the label "Produced in Israel". His objection was rejected by the Canadian authorities. Suspicious of political pressure, he went to court. The court found that this feature could mislead the Canadian consumer, and it should be replaced. However, the Canadian government appealed the ruling to a higher court, stating, in effect, that what is produced in the settlements can be considered as a product in Israel despite the declared Canadian policy of the illegality of settlements.

This case shows how colonial action is camouflaged under the cover of the Oslo Accords. It also shows that the Canadian government's policy (like other governments) is not sincere in its support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, not even in its position on the illegality of Israeli settlements. The bottle of wine contains what is extracted from grapes grown in the lands of Palestine, and is sold in Canada, which declares its commitment to international law, but insists on declaring that it was produced in Israel.

Halla Shoaibi

The International Criminal Court: TWAIL-ING its Neo-Colonial Structure

Many states, legal and political activists view the ICC as a window to their liberation projects and their path to access to criminal justice. However, looking at the established Charter of the Court, several questions arise, including, what is the nature of the criminal acts in the Charter and what are the structural concepts on which the Court is based in its work, especially in its interactions with United Nations organizations and its view of the political situation in the countries under consideration. The crimes in the charter are numerous and at first glance may seem comprehensive, but when these crimes are analysed, we find a lack of crimes that were and are historically committed under the neo-colonial system, such as the exploitation of natural resources, collective punishment, and economic sanctions. This presentation will look at the reasons for establishing the court, the selection of crimes, the date of drafting the charter and the negotiations at that time. It will also address structural concepts in the charter, such as the court's relationship with the Security Council and the concept of "the interest of justice."