



The Academic Question of Palestine

Call for Papers - Middle East Critique

Guest Editors:

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This thematic issue critically examines recent forms of intensified repression and censorship against scholarship, scholars and students working on the question of Palestine across Global North contexts that include, but not limited to, Europe, North America, and Oceania. We understand this intensification as the result of historical processes which have transformed the academic and scholarly landscape in the new millennium: the consolidation of critical scholarship aimed at revealing the settler colonial nature of the Zionist occupation and the similarities with other settler colonial and imperial enterprises of the last centuries; the emergence of new scholarly and political discourses challenging Israel's regime of dispossession in Palestine; the development of academic solidarities with Palestinian scholars often happening through prominent scholarly faculty, students and/or affiliated organisations' endorsement of resolutions pertaining to the academic call for boycott brought forth by Palestinian academia, namely the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement in 2005; Palestinian ongoing and growing resistance against Israeli settler colonialism catalysed with the 2021 Unity Intifada where youth and women played a huge role in mobilising the uprising and combatting Israeli hasbara in both digital and battlefield spheres; the emergence of new political solidarities between scholars and advocates for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and liberation, and prominent anti-racist movements like Black Lives Matter and the NODAPL movements that are engaged in the protection of indigenous rights against new forms of colonial and capitalist dispossession from the US imperial core to the rest of the world; the recent publication of a series of reports by the most prominent Palestinian, Israeli, and international human rights NGOs accusing the Zionist regime of the crime against humanity and apartheid.

These processes have unleashed the development of new techniques of suppression, leading to the cancellation of events and speakers; attacks against individual scholars and students; public smearing campaigns; the suspension, sacking or denial of tenure against scholars (often Palestinian) working on the question of Palestine. New techniques include the concerted legal and complaint attacks orchestrated by pro-Zionist groups in collaboration with university students and faculty; the mobilization of the definition of antisemitism issued in 2016 by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance that has been adopted through political pressure in different academic contexts across multiple continents; the production of smearing dossiers and the weaponization of digital and electronic surveillance to target scholars and students.

This thematic issue invites articles (between 3.500 and 5.000 words footnotes and bibliography included) that deal with a variety of topics that include but are not limited to:

- 1) The historical processes of intensified academic censorship and repression on the question of Palestine. This might include reflections on the historical transformations and the new challenges faced by scholars of/from Palestine;
- 2) Analysis of specific cases and experiences of repression and censorship that can highlight the broader concerns of this thematic issue.
- 3) An examination of the forms of solidarity and resistance mobilisations instigated by the scholars, students/affiliate institutions that have been attacked in the Zionist led repression and censorship campaigns;
- 4) A comparative angle on how the challenges and forms of resistance developed in the context of Palestine resonate with broader concerns for academic freedom, freedom of speech and struggles for justice elsewhere.

In terms of style, we welcome both academic and non-academic styles and we invite contributors to go beyond a descriptive angle. We conceive this thematic issue as a laboratory of reflection and collective thinking about how to interrogate and resist repression and censorship in the contemporary academic-political moment.