

Research & Innovation Day

Program

July 1, 2024

Session 1: Historical and Cultural Narratives in Palestinian Contexts

1. Omar Abed Rabo, **Islamic Cultural-Religious Life in Jerusalem on the Eve of the First Crusade**

This paper aims to describe the cultural-religious Islamic life in Jerusalem on the eve of the Frankish occupation of the city. Cultural-religious Islamic life refers to the activities of Muslim 'Ulamā' and their contribution to the cultural-religious sphere in Jerusalem, as well as educational centers and their location in the city. These 'Ulamā' include Jerusalemite religious scholars [al-'Ulamā' al-Maqādisa] or those who visited the city and stayed there until the eve of the Frankish occupation of Jerusalem. The study argues that understanding the cultural-religious life and educational infrastructure of Jerusalem before the Frankish occupation provides valuable insights into the broader historical context of Islamic resistance and scholarly contributions during times of political upheaval. The paper will identify and analyze the locations of education and learning centers in Jerusalem, the names and nature of these centers, and the sciences taught within them. Furthermore, the paper will investigate the fate of the 'Ulamā' from Jerusalem and those who visited the city, examining where they went and their roles and contributions in the cities to which they migrated.

2. Samar Kassarfeh : **“What explains Regional Initiatives of the Palestinian Diaspora in Latin America?”**

This study aims to examine the regional initiatives held by the Palestinian diaspora in Latin America. Specifically, it seeks to understand the reasoning behind these initiatives and the transnationalism of diasporas by focusing on their impact from one host country to another, rather than solely on the relationship between the host country and the country of origin. The existing literature predominantly focuses on the interaction between diaspora groups and their countries of origin, with limited attention to the transnational connections between host countries. This study addresses this gap by investigating how diaspora groups navigate their identity and contribute to various host societies within the same region. The study employed qualitative methods, specifically in-person interviews with members of the Palestinian diaspora living in various Latin American countries. Participants were selected to provide a diverse range of perspectives on their experiences and the impact of their initiatives. The study revealed that the primary reasons for organizing regional initiatives among Palestinian communities in Latin America include cultural promotion and preservation, political advocacy and solidarity encouragement, creating socioeconomic networks and enhancing commerce, and accessing a larger audience for their efforts. This study has

broader implications for future research on understanding the complexities of diaspora communities and their ongoing efforts to negotiate their presence across Latin America.

3. زين العابدين العوادة: "دلالية تسريد" الميتم سرد" في خطاب الأنا – الـ "نحن" الكاتبة في رواية "طفولتي حتى الآن" للأديب إبراهيم نصر الله"

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استجلاء دلالية تسريد "الميتم سرد" في خطاب الأنا – الـ "نحن" الذات الكاتبة في رواية "طفولتي حتى الآن" السيرية، وهي إحدى روايات الملهمة الفلسطينية للأديب إبراهيم نصر الله. وبرزت الميتم سرد وهي من نظريات ما بعد الحداثة في التجريب الروائي في الرواية تقنية سردية رئيسة بنى بها الكاتب رؤيته لما وراء السرد المتعدد القصص المتداخل الحكي في صوغ قضية السرد، وذلك عبر التفسير بين خطاب سرد الأنا الذاتي مع حكاية خطاب الـ "نحن" المنتج لهذا الخطاب الفردي الجمعي. بينما تناولت الدراسات السابقة، في الأغلب، علاقة التجربة الذاتية للذات الكاتبة بالمسرد الواقعي الصريح والمتخيل في النصوص الروائية والقصصية، بحثت هذه الدراسة أسلوبية إجراء نظرية الميتم سرد أو سرد الرواية داخل الرواية في النص بمنهج التحليل النقدي للخطاب المركب بلسان واحد في سرد محمولات الذاكرة الفردية للسارد المتشابكة مع سرد محمولات الذاكرة الجمعية الفلسطينية. كما فككت الدراسة العلاقة بين اللغة والخطاب والمجتمع والسلطة الاجتماعية للسرد عبر استنطاق مسرد لغة سردها ومضمراتها ومموزاتها والمنظور السردية في خطابها ودلالية ما ورائياتها، وبنيت المعرفة بخصائص هذا الفن وجمالياته. إذ كشف التحليل عن بنية سردية مركبة تمزج بين الحكاية الصغرى لتجربة الأنا الكاتبة بعد النكبتين والـ "نحن" الحكاية الكبرى لتجربة الشعب الفلسطيني المستمرة تحت الاحتلال وفي المنفى.

Session 2: Innovative Approaches in Education and Pedagogy

4. غريس نصري حزبون و راتب السعود: "درجة توافر الميزة التنافسية في الجامعات الفلسطينية في ضوء مبادئ تدويل التعليم العالي وعلاقتها ببعض المتغيرات"

هدفت الدراسة تعرف درجة توافر الميزة التنافسية في الجامعات الفلسطينية في ضوء مبادئ تدويل التعليم العالي. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي المسحي. وتكون مجتمع الدراسة من جميع القيادات الأكاديمية في الجامعات الفلسطينية، والبالغ عددهم (658) قيادياً، وتم اختيار العينة بالطريقة العنقودية العشوائية وقد بلغ عدد أفرادها (247) قيادياً. أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن درجة الميزة التنافسية في الجامعات الفلسطينية في ضوء مبادئ تدويل التعليم العالي جاءت متوسطة، وأنه لا توجد فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى الدلالة ($\alpha = 0.05$) في تقديرات أفراد عينة الدراسة لدرجة توافر الميزة التنافسية في الجامعات الفلسطينية في ضوء مبادئ تدويل التعليم العالي تعزى لمتغيرات نوع الجامعة، والمركز الوظيفي، والرتبة الأكاديمية. وفي ضوء النتائج التي أفضت إليها الدراسة، أوصى الباحثان بضرورة تبني الجامعات الفلسطينية إستراتيجيات واضحة لتدويل أنشطتها التعليمية والبحثية والخدمية بما يعزز من قدرتها التنافسية وتصنيفها العالمي.

5. Rabiha Elyan and Najah Harb, "Strengthening the kindergarten teacher's manual based on the NCTM standards: proposed amendments."

The purpose of this study is to strengthen the kindergarten teacher's manual based on the Standards of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics by proposing developmental amendments to it. The study addresses the growing interest in mathematics learning in early childhood education. Teaching mathematics is dependent not only on the teachers' competencies and characteristics but also on the quality of the curricular resources they use, including manuals. In the Palestinian education system, the kindergarten teacher's manual is the sole official written curriculum resource available for kindergarten education. To achieve this goal, the study employed two methods: quantitative content analysis of the Kindergarten Teacher's Manual based on the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards and qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews with early childhood professionals. The findings revealed that mathematics is poorly represented in the manual. Key issues identified include the omission of several NCTM Standards expectations and a lack of logical progression in mathematical skills appropriate for children's developmental stages. Themes and subthemes from the qualitative data highlighted the need for significant amendments, including re-arranging the manual to reflect a logical sequence of mathematical skills, adding necessary mathematics content, and redefining the structure of activities. The study proposes specific amendments to the manual that will enhance its effectiveness. These include re-organizing the content to ensure a logical progression of mathematical concepts, incorporating comprehensive mathematics standards, and restructuring activities to better support developmental learning. The intended amendments aim to empower kindergarten teachers in the Palestinian education system, making them more confident and proficient in teaching mathematics. By implementing these changes, the revised manual will contribute to a stronger early childhood mathematics curriculum, ultimately improving educational outcomes for young learners.

6. Fadel Jobran-Alsawayfa, Home and abroad: Exploring my lived experiences through poetry and narrative

This paper provides a reflexive account of the challenges encountered in exploring new possibilities for methodological responsibility. It aims to demonstrate how nonconventional creative methods enable researcher reflexivity and participant agency while upholding ethical standards, cultural sensitivity, and scientific rigor. Current research methodologies often lack the capacity for deep researcher reflexivity and active participant engagement, particularly in politically and culturally complex contexts. This paper addresses this gap by highlighting the use of creative methods in selected occurrences that have shaped my academic life history as a Palestinian. The first part explores my doctoral journey as a migrant in the different cultural and political context of England, focusing on the creation of the War on Language project and my participation in the Breaking the Occupation of the Mind: Arts & Culture in Palestine event. The second part examines my everyday realities of restriction, oppression, and humiliation as an academic based in contemporary Palestine. Throughout these experiences, I emphasize the importance of ethical considerations, cultural sensitivity, and maintaining validity and reliability in my research methods. The reflexive account reveals that

nonconventional creative methods can significantly contribute to more responsible and responsive research practices.

Session 3: Real world problems and potential solutions in technology and health

7. Michel Hanania, Sireen Radwan, Issa Sbaih, Amna Attoun, Fouad Al-Rimawi, “Pharmacological Properties and amount of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine of *Ephedra alata* and *Ephedra fragilis* in Palestine.”

This study aims to analyze the chemical composition and biological activities of two species of the genus *Ephedra*, *E. fragilis* and *E. alata*, which belong to the ephedraceae family known for its traditional medicinal uses. The genus *Ephedra* includes about 67 species, many of which are utilized in traditional medicines. Understanding the chemical properties and potential health benefits of these species can contribute to their medicinal applications and inform future research. The stems and fruits of *E. fragilis* and the stems of *E. alata* were extracted using ethanol (95% and 70%) and water. The extracts were then analyzed for total phenolic content (TPC), total flavonoid content (TFC), and antioxidant activity (AA). Additionally, the antimicrobial activity against *E. coli*, *S. aureus*, and *B. subtilis* was tested. A newly developed HPLC method was used to analyze the content of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in the stems. The results support the use of the bioactive properties of *E. fragilis* and *E. alata* in traditional medicine and potential applications in modern pharmaceuticals. The 70% ethanol extract yielded the highest percentage of stem extract (21.3% for *E. alata* and 17.7% for *E. fragilis*), while fruits of *E. fragilis* yielded 35%. The 70% ethanol extract of *E. alata* had the highest TPC, TFC, and AA (42.53 mg Gallic acid/g DE, 87.51 mg Rutin/g DE, and 70.19 mg FeSO₄/g DE, respectively). The 95% ethanol extract of *E. fragilis* showed the highest TPC, TFC, and AA (32.81 mg Gallic acid/g DE, 75.44 mg Rutin/g DE, and 61.68 mg FeSO₄/g DE, respectively). Fruits of *E. fragilis* had lower TPC, TFC, and AA compared to the stems of both species (14.47 mg Gallic acid/g DE, 16.96 mg Rutin/g DE, 38.57 mg FeSO₄/g DE). Stems of *E. alata* exhibited weak antimicrobial activity against *E. coli* and *S. aureus*, but strong activity against *B. subtilis*. Stems of *E. fragilis* showed weak activity against *E. coli*, medium activity against *S. aureus* and *B. subtilis*, while fruits of *E. fragilis* showed no antimicrobial activity. The HPLC analysis revealed stem content of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine as 0.0697% and 0.00411% for *E. fragilis*, and 0.00453% and 0.175% for *E. alata*, respectively.

8. Vida Bannoura: “The importance of using sensory integration approach for infancy and early childhood through parents’ and therapists’ perspectives in the Palestinian community”

This study aims to assess the level of awareness and significance among parents regarding the importance of employing the sensory integrative approach in the development and well-being of infants and young children. In addition, the study will explore therapists’ perspectives on using the sensory integration approach with this age

group. While the sensory integrative approach is widely recognized in addressing learning challenges in children with various disabilities, there is a lack of research focusing on parents' awareness and understanding of its significance. This study aims to fill this gap by examining both parental and therapist perspectives. A qualitative research design will be employed. Two specifically designed questionnaires with open-ended questions will be used to collect data: one for interviewing parents whose children receive the sensory integrative approach and another for therapists to assess their perspectives. The sample will consist of approximately 15 mothers whose children are receiving sensory integration therapy, along with occupational therapists who implement this approach with the same age group. The study expects to reveal varying levels of awareness among parents about the importance of sensory integration. It will also gather therapists' insights into the effectiveness and challenges of implementing this approach. Key themes anticipated include the role of parental involvement in the therapy process and the perceived benefits and obstacles of sensory integration therapy. The study will provide recommendations on improving parental education and involvement in sensory integration therapy. It will suggest strategies for therapists to better engage parents and enhance the implementation of sensory integration techniques at home. These findings aim to support more effective therapy outcomes for children with sensory integration issues.

9. Anas Samara, “User Modeling for Adaptive Human Computer Interaction”

The study presents a User-Model that dynamically adapts according to the user's affective-cognitive states, leading to a more personalized and efficient user experience. The primary challenge in designing Adaptive Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) is to equip computers with the ability to analyze and understand users' affective-cognitive states from various interaction modalities in real-time. This requires a flexible, customizable, and accurate User-Model to enhance user experience through an adaptive and intelligent system, which outperforms conventional non-adaptive systems in terms of task completion, support, and error handling. Existing non-adaptive HCI systems lack the capability to dynamically interpret and respond to the user's affective-cognitive states, leading to a suboptimal user experience. There is a need for a comprehensive framework that allows continuous real-time adaptation based on user states to improve interaction outcomes. To address this gap, a conceptual framework for Adaptive HCI is proposed. This framework describes an abstraction of a system that continuously interprets and infers users' affective-cognitive states during their interaction with the computer. The core idea is to generate a User-Model that can guide appropriate adaptation styles. The proposed User-Model should accurately reflect the user's real-time states, inferred from various input modalities while interacting with computer systems.

10. Fatima Al Madany-Hammad and Ibtisam Dweikat: Palestinian Midwives' Attitudes, Perception and Challenges about Home Birth Readiness, Under Political Crisis in the West Bank.

This study aims to evaluate the preparedness, attitudes, perceptions, and challenges faced by Palestinian midwives regarding home birth readiness during political crises in the West Bank. The study seeks to understand how these midwives negotiate their roles and responsibilities in a conflict-ridden environment. There is a significant gap in the literature regarding the impact of political instability on midwifery practices, specifically related to home births. This study addresses this gap by focusing on the unique context of the West Bank, providing insights into the professional experiences of midwives in this region. A qualitative research design was employed, using semi-structured interviews to gather in-depth data from participants. Thematic analysis was conducted to interpret the data, guided by Braun and Clarke's six-step framework. The study sample consisted of experienced midwives and healthcare providers who have worked in childbirth units and post-natal wards in the middle and southern West Bank. Participants were selected using a purposive sampling technique until data saturation was achieved. The findings revealed that midwives face significant challenges in facilitating home births during political crises. Key issues include inadequate support systems, logistical barriers, and emotional stress. Despite these challenges, midwives demonstrated a strong commitment to providing care, highlighting the need for better training and resources.

Session 4: Psychological and Social Well-being in Adverse Conditions

11. Nahida Al-arja: "Patience and its relationship to stress tolerance in relation to demographic factors of the medical system in Bethlehem Governorate during the COVID-19 pandemic"

This study aims to identify the relationship between patience and stress tolerance among medical staff in the Bethlehem Governorate during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to examine the impact of various demographic variables on these factors. A random sample of 160 medical staff members in the Bethlehem area completed the Patience Scale and Coping Processes Scale questionnaire. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between patience and stress tolerance. Statistically significant differences in levels of patience were found in favor of males and single workers. Additionally, no significant differences were observed based on the specific duties of healthcare workers or their experience working with COVID-19 patients. However, there were notable differences in stress tolerance, favoring those who did not work directly with COVID-19 patients. Furthermore, the study found significant differences in stress tolerance levels favoring workers at the National Center regarding their ability to bear pressure. A negative correlation with statistical significance was identified between stress tolerance and age, indicating that stress changes from episodic to chronic with age, which affects appraisal and coping processes. The findings highlight that at the onset of the pandemic, the medical system in Palestine was unprepared to handle

COVID-19 and lacked adequate precautions to prevent the disease. Despite this, doctors and nurses facing psychological pressure were able to stand on the front lines and combat the coronavirus outbreak. This study underscores the critical role of patience in enhancing stress tolerance among medical staff and highlights the need for targeted support and interventions to improve coping mechanisms, particularly for those directly working with COVID-19 patients.

12. هشام ملحم اللحام: "أثر الصورة المرئية على الحالة النفسية لطلاب الإعلام (حرب غزة كحالة دراسة)"

هدفت الدراسة إلى استكشاف أثر الصور المرئية على الحالة النفسية لطلاب الإعلام، مع التركيز على حالة دراسية خاصة تتعلق بالحرب في غزة. تكمن أهمية الدراسة في تحليل الآثار النفسية للصور المرئية على لطلاب الإعلام نظرا لتفاعلهم المباشر مع وسائل الإعلام والصور التي تعرض لهم، مما يمكن أن يسهم في تطوير استراتيجيات أكثر فعالية للتواصل البصري والتأثير على الجمهور في المستقبل. وظفت الدراسة المنهج الكمي وتم جمع بيانات الدراسة من عينة مكونة من (85) طالب وطالبة من طلبة الإعلام في جامعات جنوب الضفة الغربية، من خلال استبانة تضمنت على تحقيق أهداف الدراسة وقياس فروضها. وأشارت النتائج إلى أن صور الأشلاء والضحايا أثناء حرب غزة لها تأثير كبير على العديد من المظاهر النفسية والاجتماعية والمعرفية للمشاهدين. تشير الدرجات العالية المعطاة لبعض العبارات إلى أن هذه الصور تعتبر أداة فعالة في نقل الخبر وزيادة التعاطف مع القضية الفلسطينية، لكنها في الوقت نفسه تسبب تأثيرات سلبية مثل زيادة التوتر وقلة النوم وفقدان الشهية وقلة التركيز والعزلة الاجتماعية. كما يظهر البحث أن الصورة والفيديو هما أدوات جذب رئيسيتان في نقل الأخبار عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، وأن هذه الصور قد تؤدي إلى تحولات في هيكل ووظائف الدماغ لدى المشاهدين، مما يسبب تأثيرات سلبية على مستوى الصحة النفسية. كما أشارت نتائج الورقة البحثية من وجهة نظر العينة المدروسة أن ما نسبته 64.8% تعتقد أن نشر صور الأشلاء والضحايا تعد مخالفات أخلاقية وهي درجة متوسطة بالرغم من أن موثيق الشرف الإعلامي تنص على عدم انتهاك خصوصية الأفراد وتصويرهم في حالة ضعف أو دون إذن.

13. جورج منولي: "مستويات الثقافة الرياضية لدى الطلاب الجامعيين: طلبة جامعة بيت لحم كحالة دراسة"

هدفت هذه الدراسة الى فهم طلاب جامعة بيت لحم للثقافة الرياضية، بما في ذلك مستواهم واتجاهاتهم وممارساتهم المتعلقة بالثقافة والأنشطة الرياضية. الهدف هو دراسة أهمية تنمية الثقافة الرياضية لدى طلاب الجامعة لمساعدتهم على مواجهة تحديات الحياة الجامعية وتعزيز صحتهم النفسية وتقليل التوتر وتحسين الصحة البدنية. استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث شمل مجتمع الدراسة جميع طلبة جامعة بيت لحم للعام الدراسي 2023/2022، والبالغ عددهم 2,896 طالبا. تم اختيار عينة عشوائية طبقية مكونة من 297 طالبا، أي ما يقارب 10% من مجتمع الدراسة. لقياس مدى فهم الطلاب للثقافة الرياضية، تم بناء استبانة للتفضيلات لقياس الثقافة الرياضة مكون من 25 فقرة، تغطي المعرفة والاتجاهات والسلوكيات المتعلقة بالرياضة. أظهرت النتائج وجود مستوى مرتفع من الثقافة الرياضية لدى طلبة جامعة بيت لحم، بمتوسط إجمالي 0.71 وانحراف معياري 0.11. وهذا يشير إلى أن غالبية الطلاب يدركون ويقدرون أهمية الرياضة في حياتهم. بالإضافة إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في مستوى الثقافة الرياضية تبعا

لمكان السكن والسنة الدراسية. ومع ذلك، لوحظ وجود اختلاف كبير في مستويات الثقافة الرياضية بين الذكور والإناث وكانت لصالح الذكور، مما يشير إلى أنه قد تكون هناك حاجة لتشجيع مشاركة الإناث في الألعاب الرياضية أكثر. تؤكد هذه النتائج على أهمية تعزيز الثقافة الرياضية لدعم رفاهية طلاب الجامعة. يمكن أن تساعد معالجة الفجوة بين الجنسين في المشاركة الرياضية في ضمان استفادة جميع الطلاب على قدم المساواة من البرامج ومواد الرياضية، مما يعزز تجربتهم الجامعية بشكل عام.

Session 5: Literature, Tourism, and Ideological Debates

14. زياد بني شمسه و نادية بني شمسه: "أزمة الخطاب الأدبي الصهيوني ونظريات الاستعمار ما بعده: جدلية النص والأيدولوجيا في رواية " قصة عن الحب والظلام" لعاموس عوز نموذجاً"

تتناول هذه الدراسة قراءة الخطاب الأدبي الصهيوني اليساري للكاتب "عاموس عوز" وتحليله، والبحث عن أزمته في ظل جدليات النص والأيدولوجيا المتعلقة بالحالة الإسرائيلية والفلسطينية في ظل الصراع المستمر بينهما، والذي يتمركز حول الهوية والمكان والتاريخ والتراث، بهدف فهم مضامين هذا الخطاب التي ترتبط بسياقات استعمارية وما بعد الاستعمار للكشف عن المحمولات النصية اللغوية، والبحث عن العلاقة المشتركة بين النص والمجتمع وصناعة الأحداث وبناء الشخصيات والتاريخ وإدارة الصراع والهيمنة الحضارية. وتكمن أهمية هذه الدراسة بتوظيف الدراسات والمقاربات الاستعمارية وما بعدها، والتي تطرح "مجموعة من الإشكاليات الجوهرية التي تتعلق بالاستغراب من جهة، وتعرض لعلاقة الأنا والآخر، أو علاقة الشرق بالغرب، أو علاقة الهامش بالمركز، أو علاقة المستعمر بالشعوب المستعمرة الضعيفة من جهة أخرى" (حمداوي، 2018، ص. 58)، في تحليل هذه السردية السيربية الروائية (قصة عن الحب والظلام) وتناولها علاقات متشابهة وإشكاليات جوهرية تتصل بعلاقة (الأنا والآخر)، وجدلية (المركز والهامش)، وعلاقة (المستعمر بالمستعمر)، و(التابع والمتبوع)، في ظل مقاربات الحداثة وما بعدها كالمقاربات الثقافية والاجتماعية والسياسية والتاريخية التي تحدد هذه العلاقات وتشابكها. انقسمت الدراسة إلى فصلين، تناول الفصل الأول: منطلقات قراءة نص "عوز" في ظل نظريات الاستعمار. والثاني تمركز حول: الخطاب وجدلية النص والأيدولوجيا. وكان من نتائج الدراسة بعد تحليل الأحداث والشخصيات والسرديات الكشف عن مخاطر (الإزاحة والإحلال) التي تتمثل في إزاحة روايات الآخر الفلسطيني العربي ووجوده صاحب الأرض والمكان والتاريخ، وإزاحة الروايات المتعارضة، وتهميشها وإضعاف مركزيتها، وإحلال المرويات الثقافية والتاريخية للذات اليهودية الصهيونية لتحتل (المركز أمام المهمش) و(الحضاري أمام المتخلف).

15. Ihab Jaber and Zaidoun Darwish: "Empowering Communities through Solidarity: The Role of Homestay Tourism in Fostering Sustainable Solidarity Tourism in Palestine."

This study aims to understand the relationship between homestay tourism in Palestine and the promotion of solidarity for the Palestinian conflict. The study will fill the gap in literature by examining how certain practices in the context of homestay tourism contribute to solidarity between tourists and the local people in the socio-political and cultural context of Palestine. This study will explore how the Alternative Tourism Agencies have used homestay tourism in increasing solidarity for the Palestinian conflict. A mixed-methods approach combining surveys and semi-structured interviews will be employed to gather data on the perceptions, experiences, and impacts of

homestay tourism from both tourists and local hosts. Based on the expected results, it can be stated that homestay tourism is a significant tool for the economic, social, and cultural contributions to hosts' communities, as well as for keeping and strengthening the international solidarity for the Palestinian conflict.

16. Jamil Khader, Neoliberal Contradictions, Necrocapitalist Nightmares: Questions of Human Agency and Free Will in Ahmad Sa'dāwī's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*

This paper argues that the major fantastic conceit, the Whatsitname (the shisma), in Ahmad Sa'dāwī's novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, functions as an allegory for the repressed totality of necrocapitalist (ir)rationality that subverts human agency in the postcolonial global South, by disavowing the neoliberal ideologemes and postmodern premises that privilege individual choice and free will. Most critical interventions on the novel interpret the Whatsitname mainly as an allegory for the monstrosity of the American invasion and sectarian violence, highlighting how the novel's neoliberal premises and postmodern techniques blur the boundaries between the occupiers and the occupied, and terrorists and victims. However, the novel evinces a more ambiguous position toward these neoliberal ideologemes and postmodern discourses as well as the "aesthetic of utopia," precisely because it resituates this ideological crisis in the context of the emergence of necrocapitalist rationality. The paper thus shows that, on the surface, Sa'dāwī's novel *seemingly* privileges postmodern and neoliberal ideologemes such as individual choice that blame the death and violence in Iraq on people's actions and choices. At the deeper level, the novel paradoxically attributes the human condition and the consequences of human actions to invisible structural forms of power and larger-than-life supernatural powers—namely, the Whatsitname as an allegory for necrocapitalism—that ultimately undermine human agency and freedom. I will examine the ways in which this tension is articulated at the sexual level in the novel. The novel ultimately reflects Iraqi subjects' deeper ontological anxieties about the circulation of their bodies in the necrocapitalist market.

Session 6: Political Resistance and Media Dynamics

17. احمد سعد: الطباعة والمقاومة: الحياة السياسية للطباعة في القدس 1972-1993

تهدف هذه الدراسة تتبع مسار الحراك الطباعي وممارسة الطباعة في مدينة القدس في الحقبة الممتدة ما بين عام 1972-1990 وتبين أن الحراك الثقافي الطباعي في مدينة القدس بما يشمله من صحف ومجلات ونشرات وكتب، نمت وتطور في ظل الحركة الوطنية الفلسطينية وبرعايتها، ومثل دور المثقف العضوي في تصعيد الحالة الجماهيرية في الأرض المحتلة، كون تلك المطبوعات قد أسهمت في رفق الحراك الجماهيري، والحالة النضالية الفلسطينية بالتأطير الثقافي والسياسي اللازم لاستمرار النضال، ومواجهة مشاريع التصفية والقيادة البديلة. تحاول الدراسة استكشاف ملامح الحراك الطباعي، وسماته، وانماطه، وروافعه، وتوجهاته، والوقوف على دور الحراك الطباعي في النهوض بالهوية الوطنية الفلسطينية وتعزيزها، ودور الحراك الطباعي بالتوازي مع الحراك الجماهيري في النضال الوطني الفلسطيني. وتحاول الدراسة التعرف على الرابط ما بين الحراك الطباعي في الأرض المحتلة، وخصوصا في مدينة القدس، مع الحركة الوطنية الفلسطينية في الشتات. تستنتج الدراسة ان تلك المطبوعات قد لعبت دورين مركزيين وهما أولا، دور القوة الناعمة في الصمود والنضال والمواجهة والتأطير

السياسي والثقافي؛ وثانيا، بلورت تلك المطبوعات المجتمع الشبكي في عصر ما قبل الشبكات؛ فقد شبكت الصحف والمجلات وكتابها ومحريها ما بين الشتات والأرض المحتلة، وما بين القدس والضفة الغربية والأراضي الفلسطينية المستعمرة عام 1948

18. Fr. Peter Du Brul: “A Study of the Trilogy of St. John: Gospel, Letters, Apocalypse”

This study assumes, in line with present scholarship, that the three works attributed to St. John in the New Testament—comprising the Gospel, the Letters, and the Apocalypse—are actually the product of the Johannine community. The study argues that these three works form a coherent trilogy, reflecting the community’s founding (the Gospel), its internal and external struggles and schism (Letters), and its resolutions of the schism (Apocalypse). It highlights the unique contributions of the Johannine works to the New Testament, by comparing the theme of truth in these works with the Johannine narrative and relating it to modernist literature (e.g., Joyce’s *Ulysses*) and cinema (e.g., Kurosawa’s *Rashomon*). Through a close reading of the texts and by employing philosophical and poetic methods, the study demonstrates that the trilogy expands the community's capacity for reading, faith, and distinguishing between image, symbol, and reality. This enhanced capacity is ultimately focused on the truth in conversation and prayer or request. The study contributes to the ongoing development of Christian and human communities as they navigate the crises associated with the aging of the planet.

19. Ibrahim Hroub: “Understanding media empowerment: Citizen journalism in Palestine.”

This study addresses the nature of citizen journalism in Palestine, with the chief aim of identifying its role in promoting professionalism, ethics, and objectivity, and empowering digital media, information accessibility, and democratization of media production. To this end, this study uses data from different universities across Palestine obtained through surveys that address digital media empowerment and non-professional users in the new media landscape. The study sample used was selected using the stratified sampling method. Upon completion of a pilot test, a total of 300 questionnaires were distributed among undergraduates of 10 universities across Palestine based on their willingness to participate and availability. Our results suggest that official media outlets can benefit from citizen journalism by providing accurate and valid sources of information to citizen journalists to increase engagement among their audiences as a result of enhanced perceptions of independency and credibility. However, our findings also reveal that citizen journalism does not make a significant difference in undermining gatekeeping practices over new media content in Palestine. Moreover, the results show that there is no relationship or correlation between the idea of adopting citizen journalism as a complementary method to traditional journalism and the credibility and reliability of news stories presented by citizen journalists.