



Narrating the Occupation: Digital Media and Palestinian Resistance

Imed Ben Labidi, Associate Professor at the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

Despite settler colonial violence and the mobilisation of different repressive forces to silence and contain Palestinian online activism, including the taming of several popular digital platforms, Zionist colonial political discourse is no longer entirely in charge of narrating the details of its barbaric occupation of Palestine to the world. Palestinians, this paper argues, have creatively transformed their methods of sumud, or resistance, against military tyranny, oppression and Israeli institutional racism by “TikToking” their own experiences and daily encounters with the horrors of occupation. More than a means of educating a misguided global audience about their plight and everyday struggle living under occupation, their use of digital platforms and the intellectual substance which characterises the content of their hashtags, images and narratives show clear indications of a politically engaged community capable of narrating to the world graphic details of colonial brutality and the irrepressible greed of a settler mentality for land annexation. Thus, this paper ultimately explains how members of an oppressed and colonised community use digital media, whether it is Twitter Facebook or TikTok, to articulate their own subjectivities and defy what political philosopher Hannah Ardent conceptualises as totalitarianism.