

**Abstract:-**

This study explores the life of the Palestinian political prisoners inside the Israeli prison system. Specifically, it examines the processes of institutionalization of the community of prisoners as a mechanism that countered and resisted the Israeli prison authorities. While the prison authorities tried to dismantle the social and cultural fabric the Palestinian political prisoners, and hence rendering them as docile bodies, the institutionalization of the community aimed at strengthening their abilities to be historically active. This study has examined the processes of institutionalization from several main axes that helped the Palestinian prisoners to transform the prison institutions and their communities. In order to conduct the research, the qualitative research methods, which includes deep open-ended interviews and ethnographic observation and participation, were used.

The axes of the research are:

First Axis: On this level the study explored the historical transformation of the prison from its pre modern structure, which was based upon the idea of spectacle, into the modern institution that operates according to Foucault's Panopticon.

The study shows that the Israeli prison system used a certain mixture of both pre modern and modern techniques of imprisonment. This hybrid mixture is reminiscent of the colonial experiences elsewhere, in which modern and pre modern sociopolitical structures and institution are mixed.

Second Axis: In this axis of analysis, the focus is the social processes in which the Political prisoners reorganized themselves on the basis of affiliation instead of filiations based on blood relations and local structures between the years 1967 and 1975. This reorganization of the social aspect of the community enabled the prisoners to act in a counter manner to the attempts of domination and coercion which characterized the Israeli prison authorities. These transformative processes of affiliation brought the bases upon which the collective national identity and community built itself inside the Israeli prison system.

Third Axis: The aim of this axis is to trace the dynamics of institutionalization that regrouped the different Palestinian political organizations into one institutional structure. This structure enabled the community of prisoners in each prison to act as one body, and to coordinate the whole communities in the different Israeli prisons as one institutional unit. These processes were gradual and at times conflictive and they span some twenty years between 1975 and 1993. In building these institutions the community of prisoners were modeling themselves according to the structure of the PLO, on the one hand, and has been affected by the administrative and legal characteristics of Israeli system, on the other hand.

Axis IV : The regional and local political events of the early 1990s affected the political prisoners community's institutions. Especially, the Second Gulf War and the Madrid Summit, and what came out of it as peace accords, had direct and at times decisive trajectories on this community. In this part of the research, these trajectories are pinned down and explained.

Axis V: This part aims at explicating the theoretical dimensions from the Palestinian political prisoners' case. Mainly, it addresses the issue of the hybridity of the colonial institutions that result from the interactive nature of the relations between the colonizer and the colonized. PLO's institutional structure, the Israeli system, and the specific context of the political prisoners, are the three elements that cohere to reorganize the prisoners' communities into a hybrid institutional whole.