Popular Resistance in Palestine: A History of Hope and Empowerment

Professor Mazin B. Qumsiyeh

Nuffield Lecture Theatre A, Building 6 (Nuffield Theatre), Room 1077, University of Southampton, Highfield Campus.

6.00 pm, Tuesday 1 March

The Western media paint Palestinian resistance against Israeli occupation as exclusively violent: armed resistance, suicide bombings, and rocket attacks. In reality these methods are the exception to what is a peaceful and creative resistance movement. In this fascinating book, Dr Mazin Qumsiyeh synthesises data from hundreds of original sources to provide the most comprehensive study of civil resistance in Palestine.

About the speaker
Professor Mazin Qumsiyeh teaches and does research at Bethlehem and Birzeit Universities in occupied Palestine. He serves as chairman of the board of the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement Between People and coordinator of the Popular Committee Against the Wall and Israeli Settlements in Beit Sahour. Professor Qumsiyeh authored "Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human rights and the Israeli/Palestinian Struggle" (Pluto Press, 2004) and the newly published book “Popular Resistance in Palestine: A history of Hope and Empowerment” (Pluto 2011). He is one of those few Palestinian Americans who chose to return to his homeland in 2008 to continue non-violent resistance at grass roots level. In America, he served on the faculties of Yale and Duke Universities, and the University of Tennessee.

For information contact Dr S. M. Sharkh (suleiman@soton.ac.uk)
Mazin Qumsiyeh’s new book on the long history of Palestinian popular struggle, Popular Resistance in Palestine: a History of Hope and Empowerment is great for drawing out such parallels. Qumsiyeh traces this vibrant history even further than the British Mandate, back to the days of Ottoman rule and uprisings against both the Turkish empire and the Egyptian occupation of the 1830s (36). Popular resistance today. Qumsiyeh brings the historical narrative right up to date with a chapter each on the second intifada and the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement. The second intifada of 2000-2005 is thought to be characterized by armed resistance and violent attacks on Israeli civilians in contrast to the first intifada (which was almost entirely unarmed). Popular resistance in Palestine is a movement of direct action intended to accomplish what other similar movements have done before: 1. Pressuring opponents to understand the injustice that they engage in. 2. Weakening the grip of opponents on power. 3. Strengthening the community, including forms of empowerment and steadfastness (sumud in Arabic). 4. Bolstering the ability to withstand injustice and do something about it (a positive, can-do attitude is challenging with any other technique). 5. Building self-sufficiency and improving standards of living. 6. Achieving justice, including the right...