

Under the palm trees: Social and environmental considerations around the expansion of Medjool dates in the Southern Jordan Valley

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Livia Perosino

The article analyses the agricultural transformation of the Jordan Valley (JV). The specific socio-technical imaginary that has driven this transformation has led to the systematic overexploitation of water resources. The integration of treated wastewater was a technical fix that avoided questioning the wider economic and agricultural model. However, treated wastewater further contributed to the degradation of the environment and livelihoods of local populations. I argue that the expansion of Medjool palm trees falls within this logic. The Medjool supply chain is presented as a way to conciliate pure economic growth, social, and environmental concerns. Yet I show that the expansion is simultaneously the symptom and the cause of the growing dispossession of vulnerable farmers. Moreover, claims around the positive environmental impact of the Medjool palm trees appear groundless. National and international dynamics of capital accumulation and the connection to profitable supply chains, such as the newest agricultural technologies of the 4th industrial revolution, are the main driver behind the expansion of Medjool palm trees.

More Information

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s41130-025-00236-1> (open access)

About the Author

Livia Perosino is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Bristol within the GloNeW Project. She recently completed her PhD, that analysed Jordan's agriculture from a political ecology and political economy perspective. She is a research associate at Sciences Po Bordeaux, and teaches a course entitled "Water, agriculture and the environment" at Sciences Po Grenoble within the Master's in Middle Eastern Studies.