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Review essay by Raja Khalidi

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REVIEW ARTICLE



De-Mystifying the Decolonization of Palestine

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ABSTRACT

This essay reviews three contributions to a growing critical literature on Palestine political economy, pushing the analytical envelope that had prevailed for decades, powered by a ‘new wave’ of mainly Palestinian scholars. These seek to situate the struggle in a broader ‘inter-sectional’ framework (analysing the combined impacts of settler colonialism, racialism, capitalism and indigeneity, among other concepts) that identifies with, and explicitly combats for, Palestinian rights and agency. The works reviewed here falls squarely within that legacy.

KEYWORDS : Settler colonialism, neoliberalism, Palestine, Zionism

- Leila H. Farsakh (ed.) *Rethinking Statehood in Palestine. Self-Determination and Decolonization Beyond Partition*, University of California Press, 2021
- Alaa Tartir, Tariq Dana, Timothy Seidel (eds) *Political Economy of Palestine. Critical, Interdisciplinary, and Decolonial Perspectives*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2021
- Ali Kadri *A Theory of Forced Labour Migration. The Proletarianisation of the West Bank Under Occupation (1967–1992)*, Springer, 2020

A ‘Struggle of Ideas’

Since 1948 at least, Palestine has been the subject of a growing scholarly literature covering its history, politics and society. This has been spurred largely by the unique context of a century of struggle for Palestinian national self-determination in the face of an Israeli nation state building project that claims all of the area of British Mandatory Palestine, from the proverbial (Jordan) River to the (Mediterranean) Sea. Palestinian efforts to resolve this struggle by accepting to establish a contiguous and sovereign ‘State of Palestine’ in only a fifth of that territory, in line with global consensus, remain rejected by Israel and ignored by the international community.

Despite over 30 years of a Middle East ‘peace process’ that is no longer operational and certainly has not brought us anywhere closer to peace, studies on Palestine continue to analyze that predicament in its different manifestations, and many seek to propose new ways of resolving a stubborn ‘problem/conflict/cause’

that will not go away. 'Palestine Studies' has become an academic discipline in its own right, spawning several international university and academic centers and degree courses dedicated to deepening and broadening the scholarly debate.

The study of Palestinian socio-economic conditions and challenges is no exception within this ever-expanding domain. As in other disciplines, the methodologies, ideologies and conventional political wisdom influencing the generation of knowledge about Palestinian economy and society have been influenced by an evolving global political awareness on Palestine, and by shifting theoretical debates within the social sciences. Furthermore, distinct differences in the purpose, emphasis and evidence of research on the subject produced by the mainstreams of Palestinian, Israeli and international scholarship can be noticed, more or less in line with their respective political and national viewpoints and positions. Over time this has produced a complex, indeed clamorous, landscape of an evolving 'struggle of ideas' in claiming the high grounds of conceptual and/or empirical prowess.

Israeli socio-economic scholarship on Palestine has mainly emphasized the supposedly positive and 'modernising' developmental impacts of exposure of a small, non-industrialised, post-agrarian economy to one of the strongest, advanced and financialized economies of the region. Palestinian research, emerging with the rise of the modern Palestinian national liberation movement since the 1960s, largely seeks to analyze the impacts of, and confrontation with, what it views as a Zionist, settler-colonial movement that aims to exclude or diminish Palestinian rights. International experts and agencies who have intensively engaged with the issues since the 1994 Israeli-Palestinian Oslo 'peace' accords, often studied the matter from the lens of promoting liberal peace, economic cooperation and technocratic solutions to deep-rooted political problems.

The ideological hegemony of the Washington Consensus provided a legitimate and professional validation for much of this literature and sanctioned the depoliticising of countless reports and studies, which were premised on the power of reform, institution-building and good governance to change things for the better for Palestinians, even while root political causes cannot be addressed. This school continues to predominate conventional wisdom even as the political and intellectual grounds beneath it have been shifting with the three-decade old peace process all but dead and global economic crises redefining orthodoxy. More critical trends pushing the analytical envelope have been powered by a 'new wave' of mainly Palestinian scholars, especially in the past decade.¹ These seek to situate the struggle in a broader 'inter-sectional' framework (analysing the combined impacts of settler colonialism, racialism, capitalism and indigeneity, among other sometime opaque concepts) that identifies with, *and explicitly combats for*, Palestinian rights and agency. The works reviewed here falls squarely within that legacy.

The New Wave?

The earliest forms of Zionist political economy, which examined Palestinian Arab society and economy inside Israel after 1948 from a narrow and blatant orientalist

¹Raja Khalidi, (Summer 2016), "Bringing It All Back Home—From Beirut to Washington to Palestine Twenty-First Century Palestinian Development Studies", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. XLV, No. 4.

angle, were marginalized after the Middle East peace process by more liberal narratives that acknowledged Palestinian discrimination and deprivation and accepted a two-state solution.² Meanwhile, Palestinian scholarship on the economy especially has shifted over time from its original (post-1948) anti-Zionist, anti-colonial roots, to much of it being swept along by neo-liberal influences during the post Oslo period. Only recently has yet another generation of scholarship reassessed the historical record, with a dedication to revealing the truths that they believe have been occluded by the weight of ideological hegemony of the academy. Engaged international and Israeli scholars have joined in this effort. The three volumes reviewed here are the latest additions on one side of this continuing polemic, which is often as much within each of those two broad scholarly trends (neoliberal and heterodox/structural), as between them.

Needless to say, the competing narratives on Palestine from the different corners of the debate, are all empirically grounded, often in the same sets of data interpreted differently, indeed to the extent that it is remarkable that so much of the same evidence can lead to such divergent accounts of Palestinian realities. As the intellectual and political stakes attached to the debate rise and the conflict sharpens, so does the theoretical and conceptual framing of the issues become more sophisticated and challenging for the non-academic observer or reader. Each new treatment on either side of the debate entails the deployment of new methodological tools, e.g. a cutting-edge World Bank econometric model or Index, or on the other side, intersectional (and sometimes dense) theory weaved into research on society and economy. While each of these volumes covers different disciplinary and temporal ground, and two are edited volumes while the third is a stand-alone work of a sole author, they each provide in different aspects good examples of the promise, and perils, of the risks of the intellectual equivalent of Mao Tse Tung's encouraging 'a thousand flowers to bloom'.

In this essay, I cannot hope to fairly cover or refer to all the contributions that account for almost a thousand pages of some 20 separate articles and a full monograph. As a development (political) economist, I examine the scholarly accuracy of such analyses, which span legal, political, anthropological and international relations analytical approaches, from my particular angle. I occupy a useful vantage point as co-author of a core reference study of Palestinian neoliberalism,³ and having contributed chapters in two not dissimilar, edited volumes over the past decade.⁴ Hence having examined together each of these latest works (which are mainly accessible and clear in their treatments), I reflect on this new literature with some perspective, scientific dispassion and intersectionality of my own. In doing so, I fall back on my own greater appreciation of the empirical against the epistemic, and my own

²I wrote my earliest treatment of this in Raja Khalidi (1988), *The Arab Economy in Israel*, Croom Helm, and much more literature has been added to that in the past decades.

³Raja Khalidi and Sobhi Samour (Winter 2011), "Neoliberalism as Liberation: The Statehood Program and the Remaking of the Palestinian National Movement", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. XL, No. 2.

⁴My articles in: Mandy Turner and Omar Shweiki, eds, (2014), *Decolonizing Palestinian Political Economy: De-development and Beyond*, Palgrave Macmillan; and Mandy Turner, ed, (2019). *From the River to the Sea: Palestine and Israel in the Shadow of "Peace"*, Lexington Books.

self-questioning about the impact and purpose of the reams of economic and related research on Palestine that I have absorbed, witnessed, and generated, over the decades.

Rethinking Statehood

In her coherent and original treatment of the thorny interplay between the Palestinian people's quest for national self-determination and the possible nation-state formulas for its achievement, Leila Farsakh has assembled an impressive set of studies by solid scholars in their fields. *Rethinking Statehood* dispassionately examines in its two main parts: the historic record and transformation in the contours of the past half century or more of the Palestinian national movement's struggle; and, the legal and political models available, if not feasible, for achieving national, and other socio-economic and rights-based, manifestations of self-determination. This review entails a skillful critique of the pitfalls of the national self-determination parameters of a Palestinian struggle with Zionism over a century that has never been solely about statehood or sovereignty.

As presented in the first part of the book, the inevitable consequences of the PLO dedication to the 'two-state' solution for almost 50 years now, in the absence of a reciprocal and equitable Israeli commitment, reveal scant Palestinian achievements (political, economic or social) amidst the steady advance of an aggressive settler colonial movement underpinned by its own national identity issues within 'Zionism'. The book goes on to examine which alternatives to the status quo might emerge, if not by design or choice, then as a logical outcome of the foreseeable geo-demographic, social and political-ideological configuration of forces. This conundrum is unpacked in Farsakh's contributions to the volume, which consider a) the failure of the two-state partition formula since its endorsement by the United Nations 75 years ago, b) the more idealistic and supposedly infeasible, binational or unitary democratic state long advocated by some Palestinians and Israelis alike, and c) the deepening of the current apartheid-like, 'one-state reality'. Leila Farsakh's contribution goes beyond that of editing the volume as a whole, as her articles in both Parts provide the framework on which the other contributions elaborate and draw out the implications of the deadlock between the two forces on the ground wrestling for survival or supremacy.

The first set of analyses examine several of the concrete manifestations of the political focus on statehood since the PLO endorsed the two-state partition principle in 1974, but more particularly since the Oslo Accords of the 1990s. These are presented as 'costs' over the long run, as they entailed above all distorted paths of economic and social formation engendered by the inherent restrictions, and contradiction, of building a hitherto unknown form of a 'state under occupation'. This is well demonstrated in the articles of Adam Hanieh ('the Political Economy of State Formation') and Hanan Toukan ('The State, the Land and the Hill Museum'), addressing the impact of neoliberal ideology and policies on capital and class formation and on cultural institutional development, respectively. Other articles by Tareq Baconi, Hania Asali and Yusef Munayer probe other no less uneven forms of segregated spatial development of Palestinian communities within the domains of Israeli control, respectively, in the besieged Gaza Strip ('Humanitarian Crisis and Lost Statehood') and in annexed and isolated East Jerusalem ('The Forgotten Palestinians'), as well as

in a central arena for the mobilization of the Palestinian diaspora in the USA ('Defending Palestinian Rights in the Trump Era and Beyond').

These critiques of the outcomes of a peace process that never designed or implemented in a manner that could possibly achieve Palestinian national rights are framed by Farsakh's introductory essay to the book and to its second part (Decolonizing Beyond Partition), which clearly outlines the historical tradition and imperative of translating the right of national self-determination within the Westphalian nation state system. She charts the transformation, indeed acrobatics, of the Palestinian national movement in grappling with the concept of Partition as the only internationally endorsed, apparently logical, legal model for national self-determination for two national movements in one land. She offers a well documented narrative of the historic shift away from the PLO's early goals of a secular democratic state in all of Palestine to an endorsement of partition. The analysis naturally leads the reader to question the political sense of pursuing such a concept in the face of the brutal realities on the ground and the distorted, partial and uneven development witnessed in different forms by all Palestinian communities, as drawn out in the aforementioned first set of articles.

The second part of the book is where, for the first time, a candid and scholarly analysis from a Palestinian rights vantage point grapples with detailing what the concept of 'decolonization' might mean in practice in the Palestinian-Israeli context. In trying to discern what such a future might look like, this book has performed a valuable exercise in bringing down to earth an increasingly (and sometimes exceedingly) popular term deployed in the range of disciplines being gathered under the rubric of 'Palestine Studies'. For the different statehood models examined (two-, unitary-, binational-, apartheid-statehoods), the book explains what they would have to satisfy in terms of guaranteeing collective and individual rights and offering a radically different, post-colonial, future for Palestinians (and also for Israelis). Indeed it is to Farsakh's credit that in the current polarized and confrontational context of the Palestinian people's century long quest for justice, she has broached raised a question most Palestinians deny as relevant, or at best are not willing to address seriously: namely what rights, and what future for Israeli Jews in a beyond-partition, beyond-colonial Palestinian future?

While the authors do not claim to have all the answers themselves, they certainly have posed the right questions and laid out for the reader the necessary information to reach their own conclusions. The articles in this Part open the discussion with Nadim Khoury's 'Transitional Justice in Palestine', examining what justice needs to be assured for whom in Palestine, and what 'transitional justice' schemes/experiences might be relevant in a post-colonial Palestinian-Israeli statehood relation. The other contributions tackle in sequence 'Alternatives to Partition' (Farsakh), 'Palestinian Nationality and Israeli Nationality' (Susan Akram), 'Constitutional Frameworks for a One-State Option' (Mazen Masri), 'Between Two States and One: Palestinian Citizens of Israel' (Maha Nassar) and 'Indigeneity as Resistance' (Ilan Pappé). As may be gleaned from those angles of the prism of the book, the specifics of 'decolonization', its challenges and feasibility are thoroughly taken apart and reintegrated together as a persuasive vision of a post-colonial future for Palestinians and Israelis.

I cannot here focus on any of the above except that they all provide a rigorous treatment, refreshingly not colored by ideology or polemic, for envisaging and

believing that there could feasibly (legally, politically and socially) be a future that is not simply a dismal continuation of the status quo, or an even worse scenario given recent trends. I find Farsakh's attempt to 'rearticulate the state-nation' nexus to be especially notable for two of its features.

Firstly, she has demonstrated in detail something I have been considering myself,⁵ namely that national self-determination in a sovereign independent state is not *per se* the formula for guaranteeing the much neglected social, economic and human rights of the Palestinian people, not to mention those of the Jewish Israelis. Farsakh and I seem to agree that there is no justification for further postponing pressing struggles for social and economic equality regardless of national, cultural, ethnic, religious, sexual or other identities, in the name of an unachieved nationalism. The latter, let's admit, is an obsolete nineteenth century ideology, which when resurrected in the twenty first century in some countries is taking on a fascist or totalitarian form and narrative.

Regardless of the precise legal definition of Palestine (aka PLO or PNA) as a state, occupied today but entitled to sovereign independence, the regime in place has achieved much of the nuts and bolts of national identity, self-expression and institutional frameworks. For all its warts, the State of Palestine is concretely and, I believe, irreversibly a non-sovereign and concrete achievement of national self-determination. Whatever the future might hold in terms of change of the ruling political regime in Palestine, it will be important to not throw out the baby with the bathwater. Which means, if I may venture, that we can afford to be less focused on the frustration of not having achieved independent, sovereign statehood and more concerned about equal collective and individual rights of Palestinians. Simply stated, maybe we should not worry too much about which state rules us, but rather what rights we need to fight for, from whoever rules us, and with the whom to ally in that.

This leads me to what I found to be one of the newest points in Farsakh's exploration of the Palestinian future, facing the key issue of exactly which Jews (or Israelis?) Palestinian are thinking of being included in this decolonized virtual reality, and what rights might they enjoy? While much of the radicalized Palestinian youth in Palestine and globally maintain strict criteria about which Israelis may be partners in a decolonized Palestine and who it is useful or acceptable to speak with, this stance does not help break the deadlock. Indeed it may make any future other than the status quo, totally utopian. Farsakh is blunt, and I conclude my review of this book with her window into the future:

No alternative to partition can materialize before each side recognizes the rights of the 'other' in Palestine. In this regard, the Palestinian national movement needs to address what can be defined as the Jewish question, namely Jews' attachment to Palestine and the Jewish claim to a home in Palestine. This does not mean that Palestinians should accept Zionism or give up on dismantling Israel's colonial structure. They need, though, to explain how to decolonize Israel without negating the Jewish Israeli culture it has created over the past seventy years: to accommodate the political rights of the Jews to live and prosper in Palestine, to continue to speak Hebrew, and to have political autonomy. The challenge for the Palestinians remains

⁵In: Raja Khalidi (2018) "Nation and Class: Generations of Palestinian Liberation", *Rethinking Marxism*, 30:3, 368-392.

how to create a new polity that includes the Jews rather than seeks to reconvert them into Arabs.

Political Economy of Palestine

The volume co-edited by Alaa Tartir, Tareq Dana and Timothy Seidel seeks to provide 'critical, interdisciplinary and decolonial perspectives' of the recent economic history of Palestine (spanning in most articles the post-Oslo period). Given what is admittedly a broad rubric, it is not surprising that the book is constituted by thirteen distinct treatments of what each author construes as political economy, produced by yet another ripple of the 'new wave' of scholars who are critical *and* interdisciplinary *and* decolonial in their approaches. This assembly certainly allows for critical probes into almost all possible angles of what collectively constitutes political economy from the book's perspective, and each contribution also stands alone in line with the author's specialization.

But such a wide angled lens covering so many elements risks blurring important distinctions about what is, and what maybe is not so much, political economy. No doubt all the contributions here do carry political economy in their titles, and what is certainly an impressive array of authors have delivered rigorous treatments of their subjects. As the book is essentially intended to be an examination of the Palestinian economy, but not necessarily only by economists, hence 'political economy' is a perfectly acceptable entry point. While I will not be able to mention the names and specific titles of the different co-authors, given the space available, I feel there are some general points in the editors' introductory chapter that deserve priority coverage.

I do appreciate the editors' closing their introduction by highlighting my (2016) review of a previous set of the 'new generation', in which I encouraged their 'renewed sense of realism, resistance and conceptual rigour and innovation'. Yet, I am concerned that perhaps the editors have overplayed that sense in their attempt to arrive at a comprehensive, deconstructed understanding of the Palestinian political economy, and to shift the consensus from one (neoliberal) ideological hegemony to another (decolonial, etc.). I believe that what is needed is greater focus and selectivity of topics included, more economics and less politics (while of course being the last to suggest divorcing them), more empirical and less epistemological research, in moving forward the study of Palestinian political economy and in revealing new understandings of what is happening in real time. While appreciating the individual contributions to this comprehensive collection, I daresay that I am left at moments dazed by this much 'interdisciplinarity', by a degree of strident language that in some passages resonates as intentionally critical, and by the sometimes exceedingly strict criteria suggested, and *demand*, for committed 'decoloniality' in Palestine studies. Let me elaborate briefly on some of these reservations.

The main purpose of the volume as a whole, is well elaborated in the editors' joint introduction, namely to reveal 'critical elements of both the material and discursive expressions of power, underscoring that an approach to economics that does not consider the political—a de politicized economics—has time and again proven inadequate to understanding the situation in occupied Palestine'. Hence the collective resort by the authors in the book to the 'key task of political economy:

to historicize and (re)politicize economics.' For this book, today's Palestinian political economy and institutions are 'in part the product of the longer histories, systems and processes of racial capitalism and settler colonialism that Palestinian elites have colluded with, but that—given configurations of power in occupied Palestine—Israel, the US, Europe, regional Arab states and global business are also responsible'.

Again, I would be the last to disagree with that broad brush analysis that informs much of the thinking in the book, but there is a risk of being overwhelmed by the polemics and theory generated by this collective effort to push the new wave of Palestinian social sciences forward under the banner of critical political economy. In the process, we could end up instead with a research tsunami on many important things but not so much on the economy (in my old-school understanding of the term). We wouldn't want to lose sight of what research is needed to accumulate knowledge on the economy and people's lives, beyond an increasingly overburdened analytical framework critical of 'neoliberal/settler-colonial' forces.

Before their overview of the different contributions, the editors posit a persuasive link between their work with a legacy of socio-economic research on Palestine going back half a century, in the first wave of 'structural analysis' that linked the Palestinian development predicament to the colonial confrontation, as well as work over the past decade. They go on to explain some of the core themes of the book's different contributions, '*committed* to liberation and decolonization':

- relationships between race, capitalism and colonialism, that foreground processes of accumulation by exploitation and dispossession;
- processes of integration that attempt to pull Palestine-Israel into a single economic entity;
- de-development;
- spaces of informality...and capitalist state building in a settler colonial context;
- expressions and experiences of violence in Palestinian political economy;
- struggle and resistance.

These multiple angles for revisiting Palestinian economics certainly provide a wide space for synthesizing the separate topics of the book, while also not limiting the examination to an 'economistic' analysis and allowing for a 360-degree evaluation. Fair enough. But this brings us back to the three defining features for all the contributions, namely 'critical, interdisciplinary and decolonial'. In particular, I wonder if the editors' elaboration of the meaning of those terms sets a high bar, for an exclusive group of like-minded thinkers, which is as much about commitment, activism and struggle (politics and ideology), as it is about accuracy, reflection and dispassionate observation (economics and science). For example:

Critical is what (reviewers *italics* added) '*challenges* prevailing neoliberal logics and structures that reproduce racial capitalism', '*opposes* Eurocentrism, both methodological individualism and methodological nationalism', '*addresses* the mutual constitution of *states, markets and classes*...the construction of forms of knowledge and *hegemony*...and practices and cultures of *domination and resistance*'. Being **interdisciplinary** adds to the list of features of this new approach, which has taken up 'political economy as a critical interdisciplinary method (which) has become of great *epistemological, theoretical, empirical, and analytical*

significance to unpacking the intertwining relationship of *colonialism, exploitation, nationalism, and patriarchy* within the dynamics and trajectories of *capitalism*. As for a **decoloniality** this requires a '*commitment to historical interpretations that challenge the logic of elimination...*' and '*scholarship and liberatory movements that demonstrate an epistemic and political commitment to decolonization, and encourages organizing strategies that forge anti-colonial connections and solidarities...*'

Admittedly a tall list, which indeed implies that this book reads also as if intended as a Palestinian political economy manifesto, a public intellectuals' clarion call to action. However, this actually is not the final result in my reading, as the coherence of the co-editors' framing is perhaps too rigorous a menu to expect from a large number of disparate scholars and disciplines. Hence, the sense of there being too many messages, themes, and disciplines for any one reader to coherently absorb. And for a non-specialist, first time reader on Palestinian political economy, I expect the assertive ideological or political positions in the book might make it more accessible to the already informed, like myself, than for the novice to the subject. Rather, this volume offers a diverse collection of some very interesting and solid, some less plausible and other maybe contestable treatments of important socio-economic issues and themes of the Palestinian reality. The editors and authors are to be credited for being bold and rigorous, and in doing so demonstrating the best of intentions and scholarly integrity.

Proletarianization in Palestine

Ali Kadri, a prolific Marxist scholar has delivered a full-blown analysis of Arab and Palestinian political economy, focusing on the proletarianisation of the Palestinian working class, as the empirical basis for elaborating his own 'theory of forced labour migration'. If the preceding volumes are notable for accessibility, clarity, variety and heterodoxy, Kadri's no less lengthy tome, which is by definition theoretical, is highly technically specialized, dense, singularly focused (if meandering) and orthodox in its Marxism. So, a comparison is not in order as this is a very different project, purpose and piece of research, compared to the two edited volumes discussed. Unless a reader is well steeped and ready to engage in complex political economy analysis including sophisticated econometric analysis re-engineered to deploy Marxian surplus value of labour theory, this book (for all its high powered, if mainly indigestible, theoretical to and fro) will not find a wide or easily receptive audience.

The concept of the 'proletarianization' of the Palestinian working class, which stems from a Marxian analysis of class formation and conflict, has actually been studied since at least the 1960s in the context of studies of the Palestinian Arab economy in Israel. Israeli anthropologists like Henry Rosenfeld and Palestinian social scientists like Elia Zureik, Najwa Makhoul and Amal Samed, have analysed the different features of Palestinian labour in Israel (mobile, low-skilled, working poor, sectorally concentrated, dispensable...), considering that a class formation process was creating a Palestinian proletariat in Israel. Kadri has extended and deepened this hypothesis in the context of mobile Palestinian labour from the West Bank working in Israel between 1967 and 1992, i.e. the pre-Oslo years of the Israeli occupation.

Kadri's world-view informs his understanding of local class formation processes as inextricably linked to the militarist-imperialist imperative of capitalism. His key contention is that:

...the creation of the Palestinian proletariat in the West Bank is the historical choice of imperialism. Immiserating and proletarianizing Palestine foments more regional wars, augmenting the rate of global accumulation through militarism. In assessing this migratory condition and in proving my postulate, the research will deploy standard and received methods of analysis as well as heterodox ones.

The bulk of the work entails a complex, highly abstract discussion of a range of leading Marxian scholars' theories about value (though surprisingly little of Marx's own possibly relevant writing, including about 'oriental modes of production'), weaving in and out of the different chapters. Kadri deploys both neoclassical and heterodox economic modeling of the relationships between Palestinian migratory labour, wages, and agricultural subsistence income. This is part of his attempt to 'empirically and theoretically explore the reasons and implications of the evolution of the Palestinian migratory condition from a case on the margin to a phenomenon' and to identify the determinants of migrant labour from the West Bank, which he argues 'cannot be explained by overlooking the primacy of the Israeli settler-colonial practices.' He thus reveals (no great surprise here) 'colonialism as the cause of migration', and that infusing economic 'insecurity in Palestine serves as part of the broader imperialist offensive'. The latter is where Kadri explores the political economy of migration from a Marxian perspective, which perceives a link between Palestinian proletarianization and Israel's economy dependent on imperialism: 'Israeli occupation warps the path of its own capital accumulation to fit into the demands of imperialism', so as to 'foment the conditions for accumulation *via* militarism'.

That, in a nutshell is the scope and ideological frame of Kadri's book, which ultimately reinterprets in Marxist theoretical and technical terms what we already know about Palestinian economic structural deformation and rural impoverishment, the inimical effects of labour dependency on Israel, and Israel's links to the global capitalist economy, not to mention its brutal militarist practices and posture. Whether this contention, along with the economic modeling deployed to demonstrate parts of those relations, amounts to a 'theory of forced labour migration' in the Marxian criteria for such a claim, is beyond my ability to judge. While the adverse connection Kadri suggests between subsistence agricultural incomes and the domestic-Israeli wage rate differential may withstand critical technical review, how that translates into forced labour migration within the Israel settler-colonial role in the imperialist system of accumulation by war is less amenable to empirical or even analytical substantiation. It remains, at best, a theoretical construct which the author has put extensive thought in imagining, especially in the first chapters of the book.

Nevertheless, Kadri's review in Chapters 6 and 7 of the structural transformation of the West Bank economy in the first 25 years of Israeli occupation is accurate and empirically well-informed, if over-burdened by sometimes irrelevant or out-of-context theoretical elaboration. The analysis then moves on to engage an 'historical materialist method' to assert that the immiseration of the Palestinian rural population and their transformation into a proletariat is 'tied to changes in the Israeli economy and its growing demands, or to broader US-led imperialist objectives'. The control of remittances is 'part and parcel of the relationship of imperialist rents', and

'the form of value which reproduces the migrant community belongs to the workings of the law of value. Creating cheap labour also belongs to the law of value.' The chapter then goes on (since, as Kadri thinks and writes, 'everything is connected to everything!') to an historical account of British colonial and Israeli occupation. However, the empirical, statistical or other evidence to back up the grand theory (for example on Israeli's position in the global, imperialist, military-industrial complex) is not to be found in Kadri's work, as his concern is more with conceptualizing his theory than demonstrating it.

This essay has candidly addressed the work of a large number of colleagues, some friends and other scholars with a broad-brush approach, given the Journal editors' request to review these works together as concisely as possible. I have tried to contextualize their work, from a personal vantage point as somebody who is a peer within that community, but also one who has been around doing 'Palestine development studies' as long as any still standing. Hence I hope that this reading will encourage more 'pioneering research' in Palestine studies. This should always seeks better focus and clear relevance, greater public accessibility and impact in the real world, which much of the work reviewed here is explicitly dedicated to changing for the better.