

lot of electronic records, including insufficient staff, outdated equipment, and the inability to preserve them. Artificial intelligence may be used in automated archival appraisal, however valuable historical documents and historical context must be considered.

A gripping book, *The Declassification Engine: What History Reveals About America's Top Secrets* will appeal to anyone with a curiosity in American politics, government and archives as well as the declassification of any kind. However, the author can be subject to criticism on

two specific aspects: First, the book is generally intriguing but gives the impression of being a mere accumulation of information. Likewise, it is evident that some sections include a significant amount of repetition. Furthermore, Connelly is highly concerned about the preservation of freedom of information. Nevertheless, there is one aspect that he struggles to acknowledge: certain material may be exceedingly sensitive to the extent that it does not serve the public's interest for it to be released. Hence, classification is occasionally essential and it is unjust to completely denigrate it.

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## Political Economy of Palestine: Critical, Interdisciplinary, and Decolonial Perspectives

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*Edited by Alaa Tartir, Tariq Dana, and Timothy Seidel*  
Palgrave Macmillan, 2021, 335 pages, \$124.56, ISBN: 9783030686420

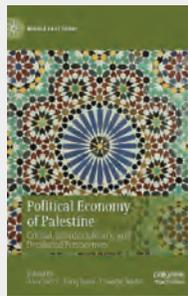
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Since the Oslo Agreement of 1993, most scholarly investigations have grouped the West Bank and Gaza together. However, the Palestinian division in 2007 altered academic focus resulting in increased attention on state-building and economic matters in the West Bank (p. 7). Research on Gaza has been restricted due to the impact of the Israeli blockade, while studies predominantly center on Ramallah, neglecting crucial regions like East Jerusalem and Area C. Additionally, Palestinians within Israel and those in refugee camps or exile are viewed as distinct research subjects due to their differing historical encounters with Israeli colonialism.

The historical origins of the ongoing fragmentation of the Palestinian economy can



be traced back to the colonial processes preceding the Nakba (p. 8). Zionist colonization and British colonial governance favored the Jewish settler community, causing significant structural changes that marginalized Palestinians and facilitated their displacement, exploitation, and marginalization. A comprehensive understanding of Palestine's economy necessitates analyzing its position within the colonial hierarchy shaped by Israeli Zionist capitalism.

The book *Political Economy of Palestine: Critical, Interdisciplinary, and Decolonial Perspectives* presents a comprehensive exploration of the political economy in Palestine. Within the decolonization perspective, the authors delve into the discourses, explaining how coloniza-

tion operates in the economic realm and urging readers to consider the Palestinian economic issue within the broader paradigm of decolonization.

Decolonization involves disengaging from the prevailing structure of knowledge to undergo a fundamental reconstruction of understanding (p. 88). A decolonial approach to political economy acknowledges that indigenous peoples continue to be under colonial domination driven by the logic of elimination (p. 90). Within the context of settler colonialism, decoloniality focuses on the obliteration of history and the historical processes of erasure. Essentially, decoloniality encompasses analytical methods and sociopolitical actions that oppose the foundational aspects of Western civilization: coloniality and modernity. This renders decoloniality both a political endeavor and an epistemic undertaking (p. 89).

The paradigm adopted by the authors encompasses critical, interdisciplinary, and decolonial perspectives, especially in assessing the Palestinian Authority's (PA) economic responsibility for the Gaza Strip. The state-building process for the Palestinian Authority began with the Oslo Accord of 1993, prompting both international state and non-state donors to provide funding and support for the establishment of the PA and its governing institutions (p. 249). Readers are encouraged to critically assess the Palestinian Authority's embrace of the neo-liberal agenda, shaped by external forces resulting in racial capitalism. The critical examination is accompanied by an interdisciplinary approach, unpacking the intertwining relationships of colonialism, exploitation, nationalism, and patriarchy within the dynamics of capitalism. All these approaches fall within the boundaries of the decolonization process, challenging the logic of elimination and drawing attention to the history of erasure.

The book is structured into 14 chapters segmented into three parts. The introduction elaborates on the meaning of economic domination and pacification in the context of the Palestinian political economy. The framework involves two aspects of colonization: physical violence (economic domination) and symbolic violence (economic pacification). Human dispossession and land confiscation constitute physical violence, while the Oslo Peace process is considered economic pacification, stabilizing and normalizing physical violence. Both forms of violence operate simultaneously on specific issues, such as replacing Arab countries' banks, massive land confiscation in strategic areas, controlling borders, establishing restricted industrial zones, and limiting communication, transport, electricity, and daily needs. These policies are discussed in part one on "Contextualizing Palestinian Political Economy."

The subsequent chapter explores how the overlapping features between domination and pacification influence the political economy of integration, fragmentation, and inequality. This section focuses on problematizing West Bank-Israel integration through Palestinian interaction with Israeli border and permit regimes. Israel devised a strategy to make the Palestinian-Israeli economic relationship dependent, aiming to fragment, pauperize, and distort the Palestinian economy to intensify its colonial domination. For example, Israel treats West Bank-Israel trade as a captive market for Israeli goods, diminishing Palestinian products. During the 1970s and 1980s, Israeli goods made up more than 90 percent of all imports, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories became the second-largest market for Israeli exports, following the U.S. (p. 30).

Due to the absence of a 'real' Palestinian representative, the Palestinian economy is driven

by Israel-controlled authority under the PA established in 1993, which is elaborated in the third section of the book. The agreement to govern economic and fiscal relations in Palestine, known as the Paris Protocol, was signed in 1994, marking the starting point of a multifarious network between the Palestinian Authority and external entities (the Israelis, the international donor community, and self-interested regional Arab states), creating hegemony in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. This approach aims to align the colonizer and the native.

In the current economic landscape of Gaza, the Occupied Palestinian Territory suffers from loss of agricultural land, amounting to 35 percent over the past 10-12 years due to Israel's land confiscation, the deterioration in water quality, soil pollution, and insufficient fuel supply, amongst other problems (p. 148). This necessitates an examination through the lens of settler colonialism, emphasizing a focus on the land itself rather than the surplus value (p. 198) derived from it, as discussed in the third part. Since 1967, Israel has officially embraced a settler colonialist identity, emphasizing the ideological imperative of reshaping the demographic-spatial equation to fulfill the overarching Zionist goal of maximizing land while minimizing the Palestinian population. This perspective is particularly relevant in Gaza, given its majority refugee population, leading to limited resources and imposing significant constraints on their reproduction and access to land. The exacerbated challenges posed by this situation, compounded by Israel's neo-liberal mechanisms, aim to assimilate indigenous communities and shape their future, acting as a pacifying strategy that fosters division among resistant communities. The contrast between the prospects of indigenous communities, characterized by non-futures, and the envisioned fu-

ture of subdued neo-liberal subjects was tangible. This dichotomy is manifested through the PA's influence on Gaza and Hamas, with state-like institutions perpetuating violent methods against Palestinian protestors, leading to divisions within the broader national resistance movement.

This book significantly contributes to understanding economic issues from a global perspective, dissecting them into separated factions. As monitored by the editors, these comprehensive studies assist the public in comprehending not only the nature of economic matters but also the historical processes that led to their manifestation. Achieving such depth and insight requires prolonged periods of rigorous analysis, emphasizing the importance of delving extensively into the subject matter to attain a comprehensive understanding.

However, research endeavors alone cannot fully assemble the pieces of the global puzzle. This book still requires further refinement by adopting opposing arguments about the Palestinian economic issue. The opposing view presented in this book is a singular fact where Israeli scientists justify the inferior status of the Palestinian economy by emphasizing the backwardness of Arab cultural and social traditions. Israelis employ this judgment to legitimize and advance policies of economic domination.

To enhance the substantiveness of the discussion, the reviewer recommends furnishing data pertinent to the Paris Protocol to the PA to facilitate an impartial analysis and juxtapose it with the opposing viewpoint. It is noteworthy that a wealth of data complements each article. However, presenting diverse data representing the contrary perspective would contribute to a more compre-

hensive and nuanced understanding for the reader. This book is recommended for reading by economics scholars and all academics

who are eager to gain a comprehensive understanding of Palestine and explore the roots of the colonization paradigm.

## Water and Conflict in the Middle East

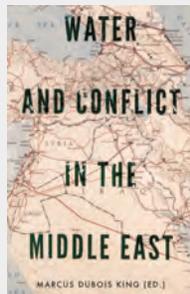
*Edited by* Marcus DuBois King

Oxford University Press, 2020, 268 pages, \$28.19, ISBN: 9780197552636

*Reviewed by* Hasan İlkbahar, Düzce University

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) can be considered as one of the most water-stressed regions in the world. However, existing literature regarding the hydrogeopolitics of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) mainly deals with the transboundary waters such as Nile, Jordan, and Euphrates-Tigris and holds states as the main actors. However, groundwater resources, transboundary aquifers, and non-state actors constitute the new developments in the hydrogeopolitics literature. In this context, *Water and Conflict in the Middle East*, edited by Marcus DuBois King, contributes to the literature while discussing the newly emerging areas in the hydrogeopolitics of the MENA.

Beginning with a short introduction, in the first chapter, King underlines the basic features and content of the book. Criticizing the common approach regarding the water and conflict nexus, that water stress and shortages do not lead to conflict, King emphasizes that such arguments are challenged in the book since there is, in fact, evidence that water shortages and stress may precipitate conflict between actors. Besides, the authors agree that competition over scarce water resources and poor water governance are the main reasons for the region's water stress. However, fundamental



reasons that lead to the water question in the Middle East, such as civil wars, the emergence of failed states, and the rise of non-state actors, specifically in Syria and Iraq, such as ISIS, are underlined in the book.

Chapter 2, by Hussein A. Amery, deals with the potential water conflict zones in the Middle East through a Neo-Malthusian perspective. The author generally outlines the Euphrates-Tigris and Nile hydrogeopolitics within which the Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP) and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) are constructed. Food and water weaponization in armed conflicts such as Syria and Yemen are also examined. However, discussing the Atatürk and Ilisu Dams and their impacts on Turkish-Syrian and Turkish-Iraqi relations, Amery disregards how the Ilisu Dam negatively influenced Turkish-Iranian relations. On the other hand, regarding the GERD dispute, the author neglects several points, such as Omar al-Bashir's support to the GERD, the role of other Nile riparians, and Egypt's domestic troubles.

Chapter 3, written by Paul A. Williams, is mainly related to the impact of the GAP on the emergence of Türkiye's hydro-hegemony