

# GLOBAL PALESTINE

**By John Collins**

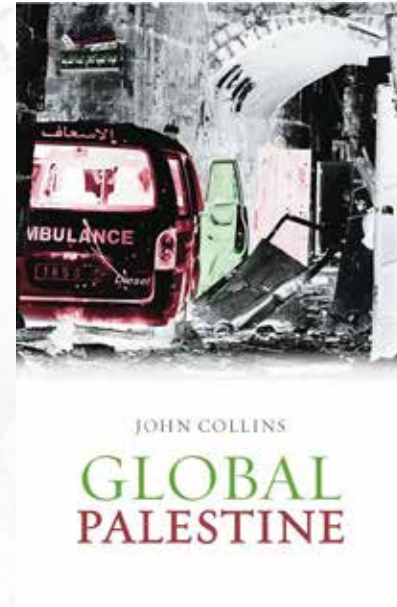
Hurst & Co., London, 2011, 208 pages, \$25

*Reviewed by Mahmoud Muna – The bookseller of Jerusalem, The Educational Bookshop*

The last decade has seen an increasing interest in both Palestine and the ways in which settler colonialism is understood and critically analyzed. In *Global Palestine*, Collins offers a refreshing perspective. He argues that Palestine – unlike how it has traditionally been placed – is not a passive actor shaped by transnational processes such as militarization, racialization, and capitalistic exploitation, among others, but that it is also a shaper of these processes. Nevertheless, it serves as an indicator of broader, interlinked global power relations that are at play. Making a distinct point of discarding prior literature that falls into Orientalistic or patronizing, top-down views of subaltern populations, Collins identifies and criticizes this outdated mode of historiography, steering Palestine to the center of global analysis.

A phenomenal piece of literature, *Global Palestine* is designed to uproot the reader's preexisting beliefs. He presents an alternative assessment of the relationships between global power structures within a settler colonial framework on the one hand, and critically examines the ways in which we have been educated – and frequently misled – into perceiving these structures on the other.

The author begins by discussing the dangers of falling into the trap of Israeli exceptionalist claims. Exceptionalism is identified as one of the driving forces preventing the expansion of comparative case studies involving Palestine. If the circumstances surrounding the Israeli occupation are exceptional, then comparisons with other colonial and settler-colonial projects can be discredited by skeptics and believers in this project and deemed illegitimate. This view is a key tool weaponized by settler-colonial regimes in order to invalidate valuable research and excuse violence, with colonial expansion and domination forging on all-the-while. As the author makes clear, the analyzing of Palestine from a settler-colonial lens in an effort to combat Zionism and Israeli exceptionalism has been one of several turning points in recent years, facilitating a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of Palestine's global relevance.



One of the author's primary assertions, to keep in mind throughout the book, is that the global importance of Palestine appears to continue – increasing at an inverse proportion to the amount of territory controlled by Palestinians – and that this phenomenon is no coincidence. Placing settler colonialism at the nucleus of the discussion, the author strategically breaks the book into chapters that can be read in a linear fashion or assessed and enjoyed individually in order to embrace the presented concept. They are titled: Approaching Global Palestine, Colonization, Securitization, Acceleration, Occupation, and Decolonization. With each chapter serving its own unique purpose, the author delves deeply into the ways in which the measures of settler-colonial state building are intrinsically linked to Palestine in a world that struggles to decolonize and recover from the results of the global politics of settler colonialism.

Drawing a large portion of his theoretical premise from the works of celebrated minds such as Edward Said, Karl Marx, Frantz Fanon, Michel Foucault and others, the accumulation of knowledge and philosophical input make this read challenging, yet irresistible.

Not a light read, *Global Palestine* is a brilliant piece of academic literature and deserves the proper time to be digested and reflected upon. A thought-provoking and necessary text, *Global Palestine* sits at the frontier of groundbreaking approaches by which the Israeli settler colonial regime should be discussed and addressed.