



## Palestine Ltd: Neoliberalism and Nationalism in the Occupied Territory (Soas Series on Palestine Studies)

*By Toufic Haddad*

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### **Palestine Ltd: Neoliberalism and Nationalism in the Occupied Territory** (Soas Series on Palestine Studies) By Toufic Haddad

Since the 1993 Oslo Accords, the Occupied Palestinian Territory has been the subject of extensive international peacebuilding and state-building efforts coordinated by Western donor states and international finance institutions. Despite their failure to yield peace or Palestinian statehood, the role of these organizations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is generally overlooked, owing to their depiction as tertiary actors engaged in technical missions. In *Palestine Ltd.*, Toufic Haddad explores how neoliberal frameworks have shaped and informed the common understandings of international, Israeli, and Palestinian interactions throughout the Oslo peace process. Drawing upon more than 20 years of policy literature, field-based interviews, and recently declassified or leaked documents, he details how these frameworks have led to struggles over influencing Palestinian political and economic behavior, and attempts to mould the class character of Palestinian society and its leadership. A dystopian vision of Palestine emerges as the by-product of this complex asymmetrical interaction, where nationalism, neo-colonialism, and 'disaster capitalism' both intersect and diverge. This book is essential for students and scholars interested in Middle East Studies, Arab-Israeli politics, and international development.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

A crisply written, painstakingly researched study that puts Palestine in much-needed global economic context, laying out the harrowing consequences of market fundamentalism and disaster capitalism in particular. Amid growing worldwide rejection of neoliberalism, this terrific and timely book will be a key resource for anyone fighting for justice in the region.

(Naomi Klein, author of *This Changes Everything* and *The Shock Doctrine*)

This is truly an exceptional study of the Oslo process and Western donor intervention therein. Meticulously and rigorously researched, Toufic Haddad's book represents an invaluable contribution to a literature that still requires the kind of critical scrutiny and analysis that Haddad provides. While the book carefully examines and exposes the role of the West in Palestine's debility – a role that was deliberate and considered – none of Oslo's protagonists are spared. *Palestine Ltd* is compelling and should be required reading by anyone seeking to understand what the Oslo process was really about and why it has proved so disastrous for Palestinians. (Sara Roy, Senior Research Scholar, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University)

Evidence is emerging across the spectrum of development, peace, and statebuilding settings of the last 25 years that neoliberalism is not a silver bullet that speeds development, facilitates peace, and creates an efficient state. Instead, it enables predatory geopolitical and geoeconomic behaviour to corrupt these processes. Increasingly, it has become apparent that neoliberalism has had terrible consequences for peace processes, and conflict- or development-affected societies' prospects. It undermines justice and emancipation while claiming to facilitate it, allowing oppressive power relations to flourish and appear legitimate. This is nowhere more evident than in the Occupied Territories, as this brilliant and incisive book by Toufic Haddad outlines. (Oliver Richmond, Professor of International Relations, Peace & Conflict Studies, University of Manchester)

Ever since co-authoring one of the earlier forays into the question of the trade-offs between neoliberalism and national liberation in the Palestinian context, I have closely followed the work of a range of new Palestinian political economists and social scientists who have widened and deepened this field of enquiry, and Toufic Haddad's book is one of the first of these exciting efforts to reach the public domain. Haddad's research makes a strong case for his contention that the advance of neoliberal doctrine and capital interests among Palestinian elites and their international donor backers has resulted in a 'Palestine Ltd.' model incapable of pursuing, and intrinsically opposed to, national liberation. As the scholarly debate unfolds as to exactly which social, economic and political dynamics underlay this process, and under what conditions it may be reversible, Haddad's contribution constitutes a sophisticated platform for further research and efforts on the ground in the coming years to achieve liberation, both social and national. (Raja Khalidi, Former Senior Economist, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD))

### About the Author

Toufic Haddad holds a PhD from SOAS, University of London. He is the co-author of *Between the Lines: Israel, the Palestinians and the US War on Terror* (2007) and previously worked for different UN bodies in Jerusalem.

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