

Review Article

Resurgent voices on the Israel-Palestine conflict: An appraisal of the alternative pathways towards resolving the conflict

Muhammad Yaseen Gada*

Abstract: This review discusses the changing perceptions and resurgent voices towards the peaceful solution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. The review draws on studies, presented in five recent books, conducted by specialists in the area of (Israel-Palestine) Conflict Resolution and International Studies. The question of whether the two-state solution is still feasible has caused much debate in various academic and public spheres over the last decade or so. The studies, conducted both inside and outside of Israel and Palestine, provide ample support that there have been growing dissenting voices and increasing peaceful resistance against the dominant view of the two-statism that divides territory and segregates the indigenous population with its history of harmony and coexistence. Despite their different views, the authors collectively maintain that in the current milieu of deadlock in the peace process, there is an urgent need to rethink and reformulate the two-state solution that perpetuates the Israeli hegemony and the unleashing of various discriminatory measures against the Palestinian population. Based on some key-common themes pervasive in the works under review, there is ample and growing support to the claim that the one-state solution offers a wider perspective of equal human rights and justice.

Keywords: Conflict resolution; Israel; one-state solution; Palestine; two-state solution.

* Muhammad Yaseen Gada is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Islamic Studies, Aligarh Muslim University, India. Email: myyaseenm2@gmail.com.

Abstrak: Kertas kerja ini membincangkan perubahan persepsi dan suara-suara kebangkitan penyelesaian yang aman terhadap konflik antara Israel dengan Palestine. Perbincangan mengimbas kembali kajian-kajian, yang terdapat dalam lima buah buku yang baharu ditulis oleh pakar dalam bidang Resolusi Konflik dan Kajian Antarabangsa. Persoalannya adakah penyelesaian terhadap kewujudan dua-negara akan terlaksana dan tercapai? Hal ini telah menyelubungi perdebatan antara pelbagai ahli akademik dan orang awam terhadapnya yang telah berlaku beberapa abad yang lalu. Kajian-kajian yang dijalankan di dalam dan di luar Israel dan Palestine telah memberikan sokongan yang cukup untuk memberikan petunjuk bahawa terdapat banyak rintangan dan penolakan terhadap pandangan terhadap pembentukan kedua-dua negara yang bertelagah. Hal tersebut telah memisahkan wilayah-wilayah dan mengasingkan penduduk-pendidik setempat yang mempunyai sejarah yang lama dan banyak cerita tentang penolakan dan pertambahan rintangan terhadap rakyat setempat yang mempunyai sejarah yang lama serta banyak kewujudan bersama antara mereka. Walaupun terdapat banyak perbezaan pandangan, namun penulis-penulis buku tersebut secara bersama menyatakan bahawa persekitaran semasa memberikan kebuntuan dalam proses damai walaupun terdapat kehendak yang mendesak sekali untuk memikirkan dan menstruktur semula penyelesaian terhadap kedua-dua negara tersebut supaya dapat mengabadikan hegemoni Israel dan dapat melepaskan pelbagai langkah-langkah diskriminasi terhadap penduduk-penduduk Palestin. Jadi, berdasarkan beberapa tema biasa yang meluas dalam kertas kerja ini, dapat diutarakan beberapa sokongan yang cukup untuk mendakwa bahawa penyelesaian satu- negeri dapat memberikan perspektif yang lebih luas terhadap hak asasi manusia dan keadilan yang saksama.

Kata Kunci: Resolusi konflik; Israel; penyelesaian satu-negeri; Palestin; penyelesaian dua-negara

One land, two states: Israel and Palestine as parallel states. Edited by Mark LeVine & Mathias Mossberg. California: University of California Press, 2014, pp. xx+273, ISBN: 978-0-520-27913-1.

The battle for justice in Palestine. By Ali Abunimah. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books, 2014, pp. 224, ISBN: 978-1-60846-324-4.

The re-emergence of the single state solution in Palestine/Israel: Countering an Illusion. By Cherine Hussein. London and New York: Routledge, 2015, pp. xiii+200, ISBN: 978-0-415-71332-0.

Women, reconciliation and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: The road not yet taken. By Giulia Daniele. London and New York: Routledge, 2014. Pp 179+xiv. ISBN: 9780415722452.

Jerusalem Unbound: Geography, History and the Future of the Holy City. By Michael Dumper. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv+339. ISBN: 9780231161961.

The Israel-Palestine conflict is a unique and long standing conflict. It has not only attracted and perplexed global scholarship and leadership but has also led to the devastation of significant resources – manpower and natural. Owing to its seemingly unending and overarching nature, academics, analysts, and politicians have encouraged the idea of an undisputed two-state concept, which gained its prominence in the 1990s. Since then, the idea of a two-state solution has continued to both dominate and frustrate the search for peace in Israel and Palestine but nothing has been achieved at the practical level. The conflict is continuing without signs of it ending.

In the contemporary era of globalisation and multiculturalism, the present stalemate of the Israel-Palestine conflict questions the feasibility and practicability of the proposed two-state solution. It has further widened the socio-economic and political disparity between Israel and Palestine as it has ghettoised the Palestinians. This has led many Israeli and Palestinian intellectuals to rethink the two-state solution and the policies of Israel, Fatah, and the PLO (Morris, 2009, p. 1). These intellectuals openly talk of the desirability, or at least inevitability, of alternative pathways ranging from a parallel state to a binational state to a one-state solution. They presumptuously view two-statism as an unlikely feat and an unrealistic solution to the conflict.

Equally important is a growing resurgence of voices from many activist groups and intellectuals who express their concerns on the perpetuated occupation and oppression of the Palestinians by the Israeli government. Rashid Khalidi, a Palestinian American historian, in his book *The Iron Cage* (2006), views that a realisation has developed among some observers against the two-state solution. They say it has become a distant dream (Khalidi, 2006). Similarly, Tony Judt, distinguished professor of modern European history at New York University, says that “the time has come to think the unthinkable. The two-state solution—

the core of the Oslo process and the present “road map”—is probably already doomed”. He adds, we are living “in an age where there is no place for state in which one community—Jews—is set above others” (Judt, 2003). Echoing Judt’s tone, Gary Sussman of Tel Aviv University, argued that the proposed separation between the two peoples is steadily being eroded due to the Israeli exclusivist actions to the extent that it is not possible to retreat from the trend (Sussman, 2004). Similarly, others have demonstrated that the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an idea that has lost its applicability. Therefore, “what we require”, Virginia Tilley says, “is a rethinking of the present in terms of coexistence and porous borders” (Tilley, 2003, pp. 13–16). Further emphasising the bridging of gaps instead of widening them, Tilley in her *The One-State Solution: A Breakthrough for Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Deadlock* (2005) writes, “the land needs and deserves a more noble mission: real democracy, through a bridging of peoples and their histories. It has been done elsewhere against staggering odds [i.e. South Africa], and it can be done here” (Tilley, 2005, p. 234).

The above evinces the dissident voices against the two-state division plan which, in fact, lurked the Zionist¹ expansionist agenda. There is a serious need to rethink and provide alternative pathways that uphold equal citizenship, justice and human rights among all the inhabitants of Israel and Palestine, and to resolve the conflict without dividing the territory or people.

Within this background, the present review highlights and reflects the resurgent voices of many intellectuals, academics, and civil society groups to revisit and rethink the two-state solution and to debate and discuss the feasibility of alternative pathways especially the one-state solution toward resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. The five books under review contain similar themes, while discussing different aspects of the conflict.

Brief overview of the books

Mark LeVine, the author of *Heavy Metal Islam*, and Mathias Mossberg, Sweden’s ambassador to Morocco from 1994 to 1996, bring together a number of academics to offer a wide range of issues and challenges, and to offer a fresh paradigm for the Israel-Palestine conflict in *One Land, Two States*. The book proposes a novel idea of the Parallel State Project (PSP), which “analyses the possibility and feasibility of establishing two

parallel states” on the same land (p. ix); where each state would exercise sovereignty in a way not previously explored throughout the conflict. In this way, it stimulates new thinking towards resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict. Ali Abunimah is a Palestinian American journalist and co-creator of the *Electronic Intifada* website. In his book *The Battle for Justice in Palestine*, he champions the one-state solution. Cherine Hussein in her book *The Re-Emergence of the Single State Solution in Palestine/Israel* simultaneously explores and examines, through different methodologies, the (re) emergence of a single state solution/movement/resistance. She concludes that it is the only viable solution to the conflict. Cherine Hussein is an Egyptian Research Fellow at the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL), and the Deputy Director of the CBRL’s Kenyon Institute.

Abunimah primarily defends the Palestinian right to self-determination. He views the growing international support especially of the BDS (boycott, divestment and sanctions) movement, academic circles and other civil society groups, as a welcome sign towards changing perceptions on the conflict. Like Abunimah, Hussein also explores BDS’s growing popularity as a non-violent resistance movement which, according to her, poses an external threat against the Israeli position. Similarly, Giulia Daniele’s *Women, Reconciliation and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The road not yet taken* attempts to “explore the most prominent instances of women’s political activism in the occupied Palestinian territories and in Israel” (p. 1). She has done this in order to facilitate the process of recognition and reconciliation with the “Other”. It also draws the attention to alternative forms of political activism that are usually ignored and limited by exclusionary socio-political and academic systems (p. 6). She is a Research Fellow in Political Science at the Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies (DIRPOLIS Institute).

Michael Dumper, a Professor of Middle East Politics at the University of Exeter, demonstrates, in his book *Jerusalem Unbound: Geography, History and the Future of the Holy City*, that Jerusalem is a “many-bordered city”. He explains that irrespective of the physical barriers (which he calls “hard borders”), Jerusalem’s rich and complex political and religious importance has shown that physical borders are flexible. The scattered religious sites in Israel and Palestine have enabled people of both sides to cross over the hard barriers, inasmuch as the porous borders. The soft borders, as he calls it, have enabled

the Palestinians to retain and recognise their identity and control over certain important institutions and landscapes.

Resentment against the two-state solution

The writers, in the books under review, explicitly reveal the limitations of the proposed two-state solution. They give alternative and innovative pathways to the peaceful settlement of the long disputed Israel-Palestine conflict.

Mathias Mossberg claims that the two-state solution is unrealistic (p. xi) and “dead” (p. 2). He recognises that Israel remains in *de facto* control of the entirety of the land from the river to the sea, running the lives of the people who live there under discrimination. This Israeli hegemony, he says, has brought the peace process to a grinding halt (p. 3).

Ali Abunimah writes about “the ideological collapse of the two-state solution”, for it satisfies Israel’s insistence on a Jewish state and thus has “historically not led to harmony but to more conflict, violence, and outright ethnic cleansing” (p. 37). Michael Dumper says that the recent discussion of alternative solutions to the Israel-Palestine conflict is due to the growing view that the two-state solution envisioned in the Oslo Accords has failed (p. 214). This failure, he argues, is due to the chauvinistic and exclusivist attitude of the Israeli settlers. This has led to the realisation that Israeli actions themselves are undermining the two-state model, which has left Palestinians with little choice but to embrace other alternative solutions based on equal human rights and justice (p. 215).

Cherine Hussein, on the other hand, critically explores the two-state dominant rhetoric in reference to the Oslo Accords. She considers the two-state solution “doomed” and “unworkable” (p. 94) for it “has been assimilated into the Zionists’ strategy to maximise their control over Palestinian land” (p. 68). She asserts that the two-state solution has failed as it provided, in the guise of the peace process, the territorial expansion of Zionism on Palestinian soil. She sternly opposes the separation of the territory or the people. She often cites the views of the famous Palestinian American intellectual, Edward Said who rejected the “essentialist, static, binary identities, and histories that underpin much of the common sense understandings and depictions of the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict, while concealing the fluidity of the overlapping interconnectedness of people, histories, and spaces of coexistence that exist and have historically existed upon the land” (p. 77).

Daniele attributes the current stalemate of the peace process to various political, physical, and psychological barriers which have been put in place by the Israeli Jewish status quo. Implicitly, she also doubts the two-state solution has any contemporary relevance for she is deeply concerned with the women political participation on both sides of the conflict in resistance to the status quo (pp. 88, 156). Her argument that reconciliation and recognition are the necessary steps towards the settlement of any dispute symbolises her disinterest of the separation and division between the inhabitants of Israel and Palestine. From the views presented, it manifests that the two-state solution is lacking acceptance and accommodation, at least, among many of the intellectual elites who view the two-state solution as moving from bad to worse since its beginning.

Alternative resurgent voices

Problems of the Palestinians, such as “right to return”, “border issues”, “sovereignty over Jerusalem”, “equal opportunity in employment and education”, and “equal distribution of economy” to name a few, are some of the critical issues that Israel has been ignoring. Due to Israel’s violation of the peace process, many intellectuals are critical of the two-state solution. It is estimated that over 700,000 Palestinians were forced to leave their land and homes at gun-point, through psychological intimidation, or simply as civilians fleeing from the battle-field and seeking refuge elsewhere until all was calm before they could return. They, however, were denied this right and thus became permanent refugees in what is known as the “Nakba”, which is Arabic for catastrophe, known as the Palestinian refugees of 1948. They have been denied the legitimacy of their right to return to their homes and land, or to be compensated is embodied in U.N. Resolution 194 of December 1948, and all other relevant U.N. resolutions.² Similarly, discrimination against Palestinians in employment and education is common. Unemployment is higher among the Arab population. In August 2004, Human Rights Watch reported:

The Israeli government continues to allocate less money per head for Palestinian Arab children than it does for Jewish

children. Arab schools are still overcrowded, understaffed, and sometimes unavailable. On average, they offer far fewer facilities and educational opportunities than those offered to other Israeli children. The greatest inequalities are found in kindergartens for three- and four-year olds and in special education (Coursen-Neff, 2004, p. 102).

To address discrimination against the Palestinians, Mathias Mossberg et al. envisioned the Parallel State Project (PSP), an outcome of many debates and deliberation between academics and experts of the conflict. Mossberg is critical of both the two-state and the one-state solutions for these are neither acceptable to Israelis for their political, cultural, and demographic reasons nor to Palestinians for their hope for a sovereign state of Palestine. Central to PSP, he asserts, is the notion of “parallel sovereignty”. Mossberg demonstrates that sovereignty was never seen in history as indivisible, contrary to the general perception; and the idea of “indivisible sovereignty” is a product of modern states due to political conflict and transformation (p. 11). Hence, according to him, the parallel state structures see sovereignty as divided and shared between the two states over the same land. It challenges the conventional wisdom and the notions of traditional exclusivist claims over the land. It proposes two parallel states over the same land with sovereignty not over the territory but over its respective citizens who would have choices regardless citizenship and place they would like to adopt. In this way, Mossberg asserts, PSP could be seen as an inverted EU model (p. 14). Mossberg recognises that Jerusalem has a crucial role to play in the success of the PSP. For both sides do not wish to lose the sovereignty of the city. Thus, it can be argued that being a religious and political symbol for the Muslims and Jews, it is difficult to envision such a shared authority on Jerusalem, especially over the al-Aqsa compound, unless Israel, which has an upper hand running the politics in East Jerusalem, abandons its perpetual discriminatory agenda.

Michael Dumper concedes the two important stumbling blocks to the peace process: “the security concerns of Israel and the question of the holy sites in the Old City” (p. 222). He addresses the Israeli security concerns without compromising the Palestinian sovereignty in his proposed “open city” plan for Jerusalem city. Differing slightly from Mossberg’s criticism of the one-state or binational model, Dumper appreciates various components of the one-state model but is pessimistic

about any sort of significant result. He argues that a binational state illustrates predominantly independent shared territories primarily based on close cooperation and coordination between the two sides. This model is suitable, he adds, because there are already some agreements in place between Israel and Palestine such as single economic zone, customs union, and water sharing (p. 217). Hence, his “open city” concept is:

A response to Israeli fears that Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem would lead to its division and consequently the lack of access to Jewish holy sites and property there. The open city concept also promoted the vision of an inclusive city incorporating different nationalities and religions. The basic operational element is that an open city will permit the free movement of persons and goods within a zone through which the national borders between Israel and Palestine also runs, and this zone will be, to all intents and purpose, invisible [and]...Despite this, there would be an internal border running through the open city zone, and full sovereignty will be exercised by Palestine and Israel in those sections of the open city zone on their sides of that internal border (p. 223).

Dumper emphasises the security concerns of both Israel and the open city model. He observes, “the open city zone will involve high cross-border cooperation in many areas” (p. 224). Could it not be asked that on the one hand Dumper rejects the one-state solution on the pretext of non-cooperation and non-recognition of mutual rights between the Israeli and Palestinian people, and on the other hand, his open city plan required coordination and cooperation between the same people.

Ali Abunimah rejects the sincerity and validity of the Oslo peace process because it “created an incentive for Israel to accelerate its colonization of the West Bank, including Jerusalem” (p. 228), arguing that Israel has no “right” to exist as a “Jewish state”. He champions the campaign of a one-state solution based on the democratic values of human rights, peace, and justice as envisioned in his endorsement of the 2007 One-State Declaration:

The historic land of Palestine belongs to all who live in it and to those who were expelled or exiled from it since 1948, regardless of religion, ethnicity, national origin or current citizenship status.

Any system of government must be founded on the principle of equality in civil, political, social and cultural rights for all citizens. Power must be exercised with rigorous impartiality on behalf of all people in the diversity of their identities (p. 233).

Subsequently, Abunimah is optimistic of what he observes from the political transition to democracy in South Africa and Northern Ireland after their unending and unflinching resistance against the long and powerful apartheid and colonising regimes. He believes that in the current political deadlock of the two-state solution, it is time “to shift our discourse and practice toward democratic and decolonizing alternatives” (p. 47), which he sees in the one-state solution where the Israeli Jews are considered legitimate residents provided they shun their colonial character. Abunimah is highly optimistic from the recent political changes in and out of Israel and Palestine about the growing concerns of human rights violations by Israel against innocent Palestinians.

Recalling the political activism of women toward reconciliation initiatives in Northern Ireland and South Africa, Daniele suggests two political actions—civil disobedience and non-violent resistance—as examples of alternative women’s struggle. On the importance of these actions, Daniele underlines that nonviolence and civil disobedience would offer an alternative to the hopeless, a moral challenge to the occupier, and it would lead to transform the passive global support for the Palestinian cause into concrete actions (p. 143). “This political proposal”, writes Daniele “is intended to develop alternative kinds of inter-communal relationships that are able to move away from the ethno-nationalist paradigm” (p. 126). Women activism so far has been less effective with regard to the Israel-Palestine conflict; however, its contribution at some time cannot be ignored as it further helps to garner local and international women’s support for peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Cherine Hussein, drawing heavily from ‘Ali Abunimah and others, inquires into the nature of the single state alternative as a movement of resistance, and investigates its potential to become a counter hegemonic force against the processes of Zionism. In doing so, according to Hussein, it strives to achieve both to reunite the Palestinian national collective and to bring about a single state solution to the conflict built

upon a vision of coexistence, democracy, and the sharing of the land among all of its inhabitants (pp. 1–2).

Building the theoretical framework of her thesis, she attempts to re-employ and resurrect the philosophy of the famous twentieth-century Italian politician Antonio Gramsci's obscured and silenced revolutionary project of counter-hegemony by "mobilising the Gramscian images and interpretations within the writings of Edward Said". The political and practical implications of Gramsci's ideas were far-reaching because he warned of the limited possibilities of direct revolutionary struggle for control of the means of production. This "war of attack" could only succeed with a prior "war of position" in the form of struggle over ideas and beliefs, to create a new hegemony. This view of a "counter hegemonic" struggle – advancing alternatives to dominant ideas of what is normal and legitimate – has had broad acceptance in social and political movements (Heywood, 1994, p. 101). It is in this context she argues, "to decolonize the potential of the politics of resistance on the ground in Critical IR [International Relations] today" and "to illustrate and analyse the counter hegemonic potential of the present single state movement in Palestine/Israel" (p. 20). Exploring the Gramscian influence on Said, she demonstrates that Said's engagement with the central role of the intellectual in instigating social change stems from the writings of Gramsci (p. 27). From Said's use of the Gramscian project, one would clearly find that he wanted to reinvigorate in the minds of the people the power of intellectual efforts and activism in order to mount a struggle against continuous oppression and aggression. This is why, by deploying Said's rereading of Gramsci, Hussein aims "to trace the (re-)emerging collective of one-state organic intellectuals, and their (ongoing) attempts to trigger an "intellectual-moral reformation" within their own communities" (p. 20) against the conception of the world upholding the Israel-Palestine Oslo Accords. Hussein, like Abunimah, passionately endeavours to promote the one-state solution and focuses more on equality and human rights among Jews and Muslims.

The new solutions and models present a ray of hope, and should be considered for further debate and deliberation. They evoke fresh and innovative thinking. Some models and plans are more intricate, or rather a more refined two-state plus model (as Dumper defines it), such as "PSP" and "open city". However, these models still divide the identity of the inhabitants on the basis of ethnicity and religion as both models

crave for respective, though invisible, domains of control over certain areas, while others present a wider perspective. I strongly believe in an integrated one-state solution based on equal human rights and justice without any ethnic and religious discrimination as envisioned by ‘Ali Abunimah and Cherine Hussein.

There are, however, strong criticisms levelled against the one-state solution, both by Palestinians and Israelis. Jewish Zionism of the Israeli government—local and diaspora—have succeeded in transforming their rhetoric of a future Jewish state as the only secure state for the Jews, into a dominant common narrative in the international arena. They are adamant to change, one would say, the current status quo. They argue under the guise of security threats from some violent Muslim groups such as Hamas. Israel is afraid to move away from a two-state model, because it believes it would lose its hegemonic control over the Palestinians. The fact has been acknowledged by a number of Israeli scholars and analysts. According to a leading Israeli demographer, Sergio DellaPergola, “Israel cannot remain a majority Jewish, democratic state, by indefinitely controlling the Palestinian territories”. Therefore, he believes that the future of Israel lies in a two-state solution (DellaPergola, 2013). Judt, himself a diaspora Jew, argued that in half a decade or so Israel will neither be Jewish nor democratic because of the fear of the constant increase in the Arab population in “Greater Israel,” extending from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates (Judt, 2003). DellaPergola stressed that as of February 2013, Israel’s Jewish population constitute approximately 75.3% of the total population, and the Israeli Arabs constitute around 20.7% of the population. However, he pointed out that the demographic share of Israeli Arabs will steadily increase over time because their birth rate is the highest in the world, and that the death rate is inversely higher among Jews than among Arabs (DellaPergola, 2013; Morris, 2009, p. 8).

According to another report released by Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics in April 2012, “Jews now constitute a minority of the people living between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, accounting for 5.9 million of the total 12 million people living under Israeli rule”(INSP). Hence, Israel views its rights are best accomplished within the current illegal hegemonic and chauvinistic occupation of the land. Therefore, many Israelis are highly critical to these alternative pathways and models based on unity or integration.

In pursuit of peace: Coexistence and cooperation

No political initiative forecasts any peace without mutual recognition and cooperation between the conflicting parties. One of the overarching and prerequisite elements underlying the alternative peaceful pathways is the coordination and recognition between various institutions and groups of Israel and Palestine. Mossberg et al. view many joint ventures as fundamental to the PSP. This joint venture is needed in transportation, health, water, security, human rights, economy, education, etc., for they observe that the internal dynamics of fundamental disparities in material, economic, moral, and political arena could lead to an emergence of a Palestinian underclass that would become hostile to Israeli institutions. Therefore, the alternative narrative seeks Israel to make a significant shift relative to the Palestinians. Equally important, as Mossberg highlights, is the certain common religious and moral values, the ethical framework of justice and common good between Islam and Judaism that could help foster the creation of a public culture that in turn would “open the door to genuine understanding and equality”.

Dumper moves one step ahead when he says that some agreements are already in place between Israel and Palestine such as single economic zone, customs union, and water sharing (p. 217). He asserts that the future stability and prosperity of the city is not possible unless and until Israelis and Palestinians recognise mutual rights and are accommodative to each other in the same city. Unilateral and exclusive politics always intimidate, in one way or the other, its own existence and recognition. Without legitimate or mutually accepted terms between the occupier and the occupied, no peace will prevail in both the domains. Abunimah observes that Netanyahu’s remark that Palestine must accept Israel’s “right to exist as a Jewish state” is an implicit recognition that without the active consent of the Palestinians no Jewish state has any legitimacy (p. 234). In other words, without mutual recognition and acceptance there would be a deficit of trust and peace. Conspicuously, it again draws our attention that resorting to any discriminatory or hegemonic agenda leads to a deficit of peace in a land that has enjoyed harmony and peaceful coexistence throughout its history (p. 77).

The history of animosity between Israel and Palestine is by and large due to the multiple ethno-national narrative identities developed in and by the respective actors of the conflict. To deconstruct such hostile

narratives and to move forward for peaceful initiative, it is necessary, for Daniele to establish counter-narratives, which would encourage awareness of historical and territorial commonalities between Israeli Jews and Palestinians (pp. 120–121). “This political proposal”, writes Daniele (from a feminist perspective) “is intended to develop alternative kinds of inter-communal relationships that are able to move away from the ethno-nationalist paradigm” (p. 126).

It implies that unless we mutually recognise and accept each other, no substantial outcome from the present deadlock of the peace process would prevail. However, at this point, it is important on the part of Israel to take the initiative. Unless Israel recognises the long pending issues such as the right of the Palestinian refugees to return, and as long as it does not shun its Zionist ideology that claims that Jews have the exclusive right to existence in Palestine, the situation will remain grim. Here, I would like to reiterate my point that the Israeli government is adamant, and shows reluctance, toward any flexibility, which could lead to conflict resolution. Pini Meidan-Shani, who served as the foreign policy adviser to Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Ehud Barak, in an interview said:

I will insist on there being no right of return to Israel. I’m not talking about symbolic stuff and I’m not talking about compensation.... I will not let anyone buy immigration into Israel, because this is against the concept of my idea of two homelands for the two people.... And there should be no giving in to Palestinians in the diaspora who say they want to come back to Israel. Forget it! There is no deal. Let them go to their new homeland in Palestine, not to Israel. When you have two states for two people, you cannot expect me to change the characteristic of my state in order to create your own state (Malley, 2015, p. 127).

Conclusion

As discussed and debated in light of the reviewed works, the proposed two-state solution has lost its credibility, if not validity, for it further exacerbated the conditions of the Palestinians. Tzipi Hotovely, Israel’s new deputy foreign minister, said, “This land is ours. All of it is ours” (INFM, 2015). The perpetual expansionist agendas of Israel, which are against the international agreements, have put a big question mark on the sincerity and feasibility of the two-state model. It is argued that

separating and dividing people and land are antithetical to the values of globalisation and multiculturalism. Thus, many internationally recognised intellectuals, scholars, activists, and civil society groups in Israel and Palestine think it indispensable to proffer and deliberate upon the alternative solutions and plans to settle the long disputed conflict that has ghettoised and treated the Palestinians as second class citizens. The resurgent voices championing the one-state solution are reverberating in various academic circles, print and electronic media, and other circles. The proposed innovative solutions seek mutual recognition and cooperation as the prerequisite to any future peaceful solution. The scholars whose works we have presented deserve wide readership; the works are rich in information (especially Dumper and Abunimah), unique in their methodology and style (Mossberg et al., Hussein and Daniele), and ground-breaking for the works demonstrate innovative solutions to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

That said, however, these works are not without limitations and drawbacks. Despite its theoretical appeal, PSP (LeVine et al.), in practice, would consecrate Zionist realities on the ground, but with “smoke and mirrors”, appear to give Palestinians sovereignty. This notion avoids, if not rejects, the entire problem of Zionist ideology and the Zionist movement, which obviously needs to be critiqued. Similarly, though Abunimah is quite optimistic for the future of a one-state solution for the Palestinians, one should not take things for granted. The Jewish diaspora support for the Zionist state is overwhelmingly coupled with Israel’s strong control over Palestine territory. They go to any extent to maintain and secure the Jewish cause, which continuously stands as a threat to what Abunimah calls the Palestinian “global campaign”. Even so, with America’s unshakable financial support, Israel has become self-sufficient, equipped with highly sophisticated and advanced technology and nuclear arms. Moreover, Abunimah has not addressed the spiritual and religious aspirations that the Jews possess toward Jerusalem, which plays a key role for their continued longing for the Jewish state. Cherine’s counter-hegemony and Daniele’s women activism and resistance also overlooks the strength and power of the Israeli government for their voices would matter little in comparison to the international pressure to Israel to resolve the conflict. Dumper’s plan also has limitations. For example, it would turn the holy city into an armed camp, most likely encouraging third-party intervention, and force Israel to cede its sovereignty over the city which she does not want to happen at any cost.

Therefore, keeping in view the limitations of the works presented, as the nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict is complex and multidimensional, it is suggested that much vigorous research needs to be done to reach a reconciliation, that would be acceptable to both parties. Nonetheless, we suggest that without compromise and mutual acceptance, nothing could be achieved at the practical level.

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Endnotes

1. The Zionist project supports the Jewish settlement movement. The term “Zionism” was coined in 1890 by Nathan Birnbaum. Theodor Herzl is considered the founder of the Zionist movement founded in 1896. Broadly speaking, Zionism is an ideology that underpins a nationalist and political movement of Jews that supports the establishment of a Jewish state on the land of Palestine, and it involves a policy of excluding Palestinians from Palestine leading to the eventual annexation of both the West Bank and Gaza to the State of Israel.

2. Resolution 194 states: “[T]he Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and... compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under the principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible”. Resolution 194 has been reaffirmed by the UN more than 110 times since its introduction in 1948, with universal consensus except for Israel and the United States. This resolution was further clarified by UN General Assembly Resolution 3236, subsection 2, which “reaffirms also the inalienable right of Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return” (AbuZayyad, 1994; Factsheet, 2012; O’Malley, 2015, p. 24).

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