

Decolonizing Palestine

Hamas between the Anticolonial and the Postcolonial

SOMDEEP SEN

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In *Decolonizing Palestine*, Somdeep Sen rejects the notion that liberation from colonialization exists as a singular moment in history when the colonizer is ousted by the colonized. Instead, he considers the case of the Palestinian struggle for liberation from its settler colonial condition as a complex psychological and empirical mix of the colonial and the postcolonial. Specifically, he examines the two seemingly contradictory, yet coexistent anticolonial and postcolonial modes of politics adopted by Hamas following the organization's unexpected victory in the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council election.

Despite the expectations of experts, Hamas has persisted as both an armed resistance to Israeli settler colonial rule and as a governing body. Based on ethnographic material collected between 2013 and 2016 in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Israel, and Egypt, *Decolonizing Palestine* argues that the puzzle Hamas presents is not rooted in predicting the timing or process of its abandonment of either role. The challenge instead lies in explaining how and why it maintains both, and what this implies for the study of liberation movements and postcolonial studies more generally.

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“Combining valuable on-the-ground detail with deep analytical insight, *Decolonizing Palestine* is a welcome contribution to discussions of the ongoing Palestinian struggle for liberation from colonial domination.”—John Collins, St. Lawrence University, author of *Global Palestine*

“Based on original ethnographic material, *Decolonizing Palestine* makes a path-breaking contribution to postcolonial studies as well as studies of Palestinian politics, arguing that the moment of anticolonial liberation is not a rupture, but rather, the anticolonial and the postcolonial coexist in an ongoing struggle for recognition, justice and sovereignty.”—Nicola Pratt, University of Warwick, author of *Embodying Geopolitics*

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