

to balkanization of the region with consequences similar to the breakup of Yugoslavia (p. 169). This vision represents a real fear, but it looms as an undertheorized threat. Presumably, Klein means an intensely violent escalation of the conflict with attempts at ethnic cleansing that would ultimately be stopped by outside intervention. Yet the precise dynamics of such a deterioration are underspecified, and he has little to say about the forms of Palestinian agency that might contribute to or prevent such a catastrophic course of events. All he suggests is that these difficulties may “fertilise the ground for a future heroic liberation struggle,” though he predicts that based on the trajectory of post-colonial Arab states, post-colonial Palestine would likely remain presidential-authoritarian, with leaders who justify their power on the grounds of preventing the indirect return of Israeli colonialism (p. 173). These two visions appear as less desirable alternatives to the possibility that renewed nonviolent popular politics could both liberate and democratize Palestine.

El Kurd treats trends among the younger generation of Palestinian activists more generously. While she agrees with Klein that young people engaging in collective action and civil disobedience are unconnected to existing institutions, making their protests fleeting and depriving their demands of staying power, she thinks the disconnect means there is room for the development of new organizations and creative strategies of dissent (p. 146). El Kurd writes favorably of initiatives to revive the Palestine Liberation Organization, which encompasses institutions she deems capable of holding the PA leadership accountable. Like Klein, she sees the greatest promise among Palestinians living in areas outside PA control, as well as in the renewed activism among Palestinian citizens of Israel, and the reconnection between them and Palestinians living under occupation.

Nevertheless, as discussed above, the preferences of international patrons impose powerful constraints and incentives on certain segments of Palestinian society and leadership. Neither the current U.S. administration nor likely the next is disposed to support mass mobilization or radical leadership change. It may be possible to shift the focus of Palestinian strategy back to the Palestinian arena, but even if mass mobilization were to occur, there is great uncertainty as to whether it would be channeled into the strategic framework required to drive a successful liberation project. Of all the authors whose books are under review, Klein is the only one to directly address questions of national strategy, and he does not do so in a systematic manner. Future research might link scholarship on mobilization, leadership, and movement organization to develop more systematic ways of thinking about the formation of Palestinian strategy.

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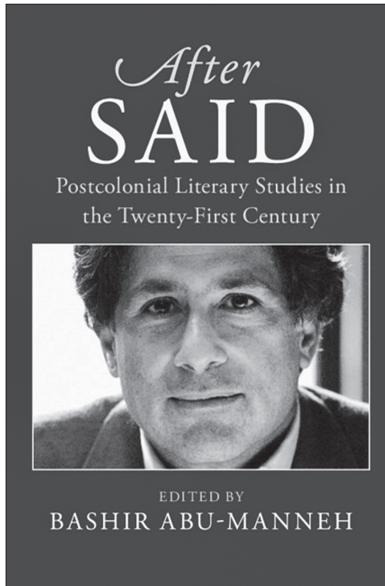
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***After Said: Postcolonial Literary Studies in the Twenty-First Century***, edited by Bashir Abu-Manneh. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 232 pages. \$82.99 cloth, \$27.99 paper, \$22.00 e-book.

#### REVIEWED BY OMAR ZAHZAH

Theoretical paradigms are both instruments of ontological clarification and objects of hermeneutic scrutiny. The latter function keeps the former provisionally intact while ultimately preventing the total calcification of outmoded epistemologies within intellectual formations. This becomes especially

crucial when the epochal character of a body of knowledge shifts from being in the nature of “innovation” to that of “canonization,” or “tradition.” All schools of thought, including the most foundational, must be subjected to healthy skepticism even as they retain some degree of relevance to the present moment.



*After Said*, an essay collection edited by Bashir Abu-Manneh, is executed in such a forward-looking fashion. Reconsidering the legacy of the late Palestinian exilic intellectual Edward Said—whose body of work, particularly *Orientalism* (1978), inaugurated the academic field of postcolonial studies—the text attempts to answer three interrelated questions: What were some of the initial concerns crucial to Said’s lifework and thought? What are some of the broader conventions of postcolonial studies historically and presently? And what should we make of the current state of postcolonial studies in the academy today?

Twelve critical essays (including an introduction by Abu-Manneh) are dedicated to exploring these issues. And while not always consonant with one another, the essays do an impressive job of imparting some key features of Said’s intellectual and political commitments. Several critics

revisit the well-known account of how Said’s critical and political awakening can be attributed to the aftermath of 1967, with the Arab states resolutely defeated and Israel expanding its settler-colonial project to include military occupation (Abu-Manneh, p. 1; Joe Cleary, p. 129). Also, several pieces draw a sensitive portrait of the coterminous, even *messy*, relationship between Said’s criticism and political activism.

Perhaps, such accounts suggest, one of Said’s most powerful legacies is not an example of fidelity to an anti-colonial struggle alongside aesthetic humanism so much as a performance of their *mutual imbrication* and an attempt to illuminate it. This is why Abu-Manneh can write in his introduction of Said’s “political humanism” (p. 5), a form of humanism that grappled with culture’s complicity in imperial and colonial subjugation, or why Dougal McNeill, in his essay “Postcolonial and Transnational Modernism,” can brilliantly describe Said’s political outlook as “much more an aesthetic sensibility than the result of a detailed political strategy” (p. 151). McNeill further observes that Said “persistently *culturized* colonialism and imperialism” (p. 151, emphasis in original), and the collection’s steady attention to the relationship between Said’s political and critical commitments also makes it possible to formulate the obverse of this statement: Said looked for and registered, occasionally inchoately, the colonial and imperial imprints upon culture itself, a tendency that resulted in an idiosyncratic and at times even obscure formalist ethics that privileged modernism over realism and remained skeptical of the pretenses underlying whole or finite literary genres in place of scattered and fragmentary artistic experimentation (Abu-Manneh, p. 13).

To that end, one of the core strengths of this collection is its ability to offer informed critiques of Said’s methodologies drawn directly from the oversights particular to his critical-ethical orientation.

Also noteworthy in this regard is Lauren M. E. Goodlad's contribution, which paraphrases well the argument concerning the ramifications of Said overlooking the more immediately materialist components of imperialism: to do so, Goodlad argues, is to afford imperial logic an "almost metaphysical" character and homogenize imperialism and colonialism (p. 89). And in "Orientalism Today," Saree Makdisi notes that the distinction between "imaginative" and "positive" geographies that Said makes in *Orientalism* is in fact never completely resolved by the text's conclusion (p. 179). Where do "imaginative" geographies end, and "positive" ones begin—if at all? In the end, Makdisi suggests this ambiguity could be the very result of Said's main argument, which is, in the final analysis, an attempt to intervene in the phenomenon whereby foreign encounters are inflected by a common symbolic and linguistic archive (p. 182).

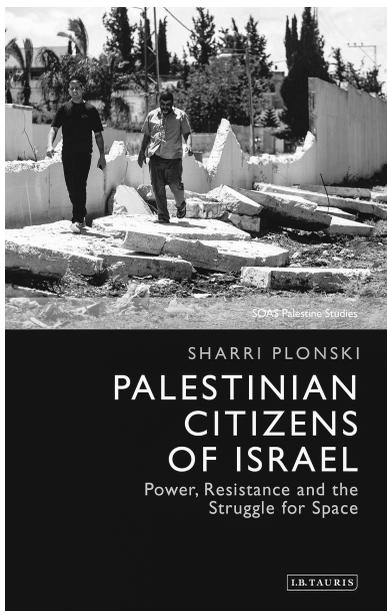
However, the collection's critique at times veers too much toward exceptionalism. Abu-Manneh is correct in observing that the contradictory nature of Said's twinned debts of gratitude to Eric Auerbach and Michel Foucault in *Orientalism* "have been widely discussed" (p. 4). But generally disavowing the genealogical webs within which Said's work takes shape evacuates the analyses of some potentially useful background, such as how Said's work was made possible not just by Auerbach and Foucault, but also by Raymond Williams (to whom the collection is co-dedicated, alongside Said), who revolutionized literary criticism by situating culture as its own site of sociomaterial production. At times, the essays also grow repetitive in their critiques of Said's evasion of Marxian frameworks.

Nevertheless, *After Said* is an important and timely intervention into postcolonial studies and academic convention. As such, it is well worth reading.

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***Palestinian Citizens of Israel: Power, Resistance and the Struggle for Space***, by Sharri Plonski. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017. 384 pages. \$84.00 cloth, \$59.40 e-book.

REVIEWED BY NAYROUZ ABU HATOUM

At first glance, the book *Palestinian Citizens of Israel* appears to be an exploration of the multiple strategies Palestinians exercise in making claims to their own spaces, politics, and cultures while subjected to colonial conditions. However, Sharri Plonski's book is more than just an exploration. In fact, it contextualizes and historicizes the resistance of Palestinian citizens of Israel (PCIs) to the state's continuous practices of displacement, as well as their persistence in holding on to their spaces in the face of dispossession. The book contours the practices and policies that the Israeli state—driven by Zionist