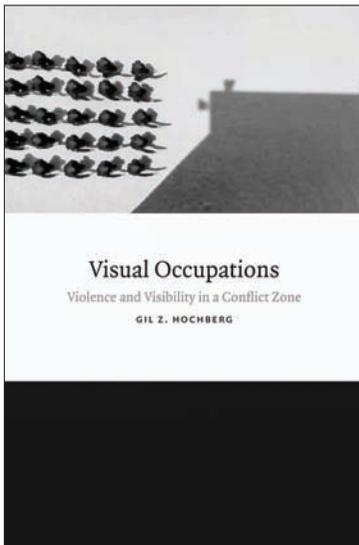


(based on two op-eds!, pp. 78–79) only if one assumes that analytical categories are binary constructs and cannot be utilized jointly. For this reviewer, Musa Kazim al-Husayni’s arguments against the idea of Jewish nationality (p. 71) echo liberal scholars like Ronald Dworkin who reject the idea that Jews—as a religious group that belongs to different nationalities—form a nation who shares a unified interest whose ultimate expression is a right to self-determination. The list of natural and inalienable rights “for all citizens” that Musa Kazim, who was a mayor of Jerusalem under the Mandate and later president of the Arab Executive Committee, demands from the British (p. 71) does not support the earlier assertion in the book that the Palestinian concept of citizenship “had little to do with individual claims to rights from the state” (p. 61).

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***Visual Occupations: Violence and Visibility in a Conflict Zone***, by Gil Z. Hochberg. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015. 224 pages. \$89.95 cloth, \$24.95 paper. E-book available.

REVIEWED BY OMRI GRINBERG

*Visual Occupations: Violence and Visibility in a Conflict Zone* argues that the visual field, and all elements that comprise it—technologies of seeing, gazes, in/visibility, and visual representations—are central to the power dynamic in the colonial encounter between Zionism and Palestinians.\* The book’s author, Gil Hochberg, cleverly elucidates the Israeli Zionist refusal to *see* Palestinians and recognize their political agency through deconstructing the formative Zionist phrase, “a land without a people for a people without a land” (p. 3). The remarkable prose of *Visual Occupations* also characterized

Hochberg’s first book, *In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination* (Princeton University Press, 2007); both books make important contributions to the critical study of the contemporary history of Israel/Palestine by employing poststructural sensibilities to destabilize logocentric imaginaries (and their actuations), and join other recent publications that emphasize the relatedness of violence in Israel/Palestine to colonial histories of the Middle East.

Published as part of Duke University Press’s Perverse Modernities series, *Visual Occupations* is a wholly interdisciplinary effort. The texts serving as the analytical corpus of the book are not assessed

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\* An expanded version of this review appeared in Hebrew as “Violence between the Ocular and the Tactile: Occupation Studies and Their Ghosts” in the journal *Teoria Vebikoret* [Theory and Criticism] 48 (Summer 2017): pp. 191–203.

as a synecdoche of visual power relations in Israel/Palestine, but rather as politically critical interventions in and of themselves, enabling new or different ways of seeing (p. 6). These visual dynamics are constituted and undermined through various mediums and genres: Hebrew literature, Israeli cinema, Palestinian films, photography, and cross-disciplinary art installations.

*Visual Occupations'* thematic-historical structure is dictated by three organizing principles that shape the visual field of Israel's settler colonialism, which subjects Palestinians to Israel's ubiquitous gaze. In each part, Hochberg presents one organizing principle of visual power and resistance to it. The first is *concealment*, of both the remnants of Israeli colonialism and of colonial apparatuses of the present, and of Palestinians' (mainly citizens of Israel) use of invisibility as a tactic/strategy. The second principle is *surveillance*, which determines Palestinians' lives in the occupied territories, while also enabling forms of exchange and resistance through visual rights that cannot be fully governed. The third principle is *witnessing*: how testimonies together form an alternative archive of seeing and of the failure to see a point to both violence itself and, equally important, to the ethical failure of looking away. Seeing also takes place through representations of Palestinians by Palestinians, who refuse to replicate the pervasive images of Palestinian suffering.

Each of Hochberg's principles is based on close readings of different sets of texts representing particular arenas of Israel's colonial encounter with Palestinians: concealment is about the Nakba and the lives of Palestinian citizens of Israel since; surveillance is about Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories, specifically checkpoints; and witnessing is about what can be testified to in cases of extreme violence, through an analysis of representations from two interrelated violent settings—the occupation and Israel's war on Lebanon. Hochberg's definition of witnessing is all encompassing, referring to testimonies as both documents that are part of the "crisis of witnessing" caused by the "demand imposed on Palestinians from both human rights NGOs and the global media to provide visual proof and eyewitness accounts of their suffering and hardship" (p. 30), and as the set of cultural texts she analyzes.

Though Hochberg states the book does not set out to be historically comprehensive (p. 4), the omission of the First Intifada from *Visual Occupations* is indicative of both the book's (perhaps only) fault, and a symptomatic failure of critical Israeli studies of the occupation: an avoidance of looking directly at violence *itself*—not representations of it or how violence is organized discursively or governmentality, but rather contending ethnographically with violence as contact and experience. Hochberg's unprecedentedly thorough reading of critical studies of the occupation by predominantly Jewish-Israeli (dissident) scholars serves as the basis of her theorization, and is also telling in terms of the past and future of this subfield, even if I problematically essentialize it here.

While Hochberg does not claim that violence constitutes a secondary effect of the power relations of the visual field, she does displace the effectiveness of violence as a determinative physical experience, for both agent and structure. *Visual Occupations* theoretically prioritizes the dominant role of split visual fields created by Israel's separation policies, while the *experiences of* contact and violence that lead to/from separation, and that persist despite separation, are historiographically overlooked. Hochberg paradoxically replicates existing problematic tendencies of critical Israeli scholars who mimic the Israeli refusal and failure to see Palestinians and Israel's violence wrought upon them, hence complying with certain

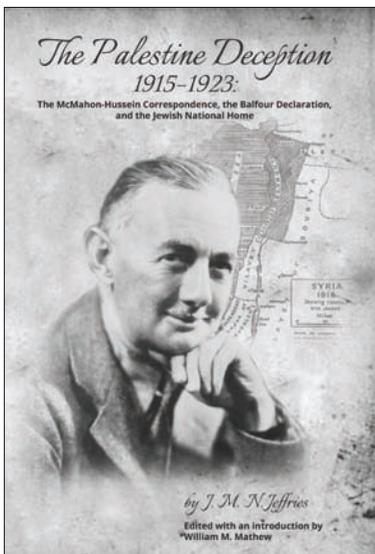
elements of the very same colonial epistemic these scholars critically resist. While some of these scholars have attempted to avoid such interpellations, *Visual Occupations* exemplifies the predominance of their analytical disconnection between schematics of violence and the formidable influence of the pains of violence on the very same schematics.

Given the ever-radicalizing reality of separation in which these epistemic stances have taken hold, *Visual Occupations'* contribution to scholarly knowledge rests then on more than its innovative study of the visual in colonialism and resistance to it, or its inspiring analyses of visual fields in Israel/Palestine. As Hochberg notes about traumatized Israeli soldiers' refusal/inability to witness others' pain, "failure to abide by ethical spectatorship standards . . . serves as the starting point for an exchange, limited and antagonistic as it may [be]" (p. 110). Hochberg's tour de force comprises a cautionary message to scholars of Israel/Palestine to urgently assess—reflexively, carefully, and persistently—their own relations of distance/closeness to violence in the field.

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***The Palestine Deception, 1915–1923: The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence, the Balfour Declaration, and the Jewish National Home***, by J. M. N. Jeffries. Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2014. 175 pages. \$14.95 paper, \$9.99 e-book.

REVIEWED BY MICHAEL R. FISCHBACH

The book under review is at once *about* history and, as editor and honorary research fellow at the University of East Anglia William M. Mathew notes in the introduction, a *part of* history. It constitutes a collection of articles published in early 1923 by journalist J. M. N. Jeffries in the British newspaper *Daily Mail*. These stemmed from his several-months-long residence in Palestine on assignment for the widely circulated newspaper. In these articles, Jeffries sarcastically excoriated the British government for what he felt were its deceptive, illegal, and profligate policies in

Palestine in the early years of British rule in the country. Not only was Jeffries's oeuvre part of the early opposition to those policies on the part of British citizens and politicians, it also provided the British public (and the world) with the first-ever public disclosures of documents such as the then secret McMahon-Hussein Correspondence. Jeffries and his articles, then, became part of the historical record of the tragic saga of British rule in Palestine even at that early date.

Jeffries clearly was anti-Zionist and sympathetic to Palestine's Arabs, and in fact went on to become a member of the pro-Arab Palestine Information Center in Britain in the late 1930s. Not