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have opted out of the entire “sacrificial economy” which binds most Israeli Jewish citizens to the state and its governing ideologies (p. 97). These younger generations of objectors who refuse from the start (or close to it) to participate in the moral economy of Zionism have numerous struggles to confront, not least of which is the loss of many life opportunities that results from refusing to serve in the military.

Weiss ends the book by exploring how the army attempts to adjudicate claims by Israelis to refuse military service based on pacifism, and the role of “political” sentiments in voiding such claims; more specifically, in convincing the “Conscience Committee” of the military that avowed pacifist inclinations in fact merely mask a political—and therefore illegitimate—rationale for refusing to participate in the inherent violence of military service in the context of unending occupation. To this day, the military demands a physical-cum-psychological performance of “fragility” that does not question the psychology of violence and domination that characterizes the military’s identity. Whereas “I can’t stand violence but I’m not judging you, go kill whoever you want” (p. 127) is apparently a legitimate feeling, “I’m against violence and I think no one else should be violent either” is most definitely not, precisely because it passes moral judgment on the rest of society and demands a change.

This change is, tragically, still quite far off, and Weiss’s fascinating and engaging book helps us understand not just why this is so, but where the focal point of future struggles within Israeli society will likely be in the excruciatingly slow process of awakening the national consciousness to the true costs the occupation has on Israel’s foundational and present-day identities.

Mark LeVine is professor of Middle Eastern history at the University of California, Irvine, and Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Lund University. He is coeditor of *One Land, Two States: Israel and Palestine as Parallel States* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014) and author of *Impossible Peace: Israel/Palestine since 1989* (London: Zed Books, 2009), among others.

Producing Spoilers: Peacemaking and the Production of Enmity in a Secular Age, by Joyce Dalsheim. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. 256 pages. \$24.95 hardcover, \$16.99 e-book.

REVIEWED BY ANNA BERNARD

Joyce Dalsheim’s provocative book joins a body of work by scholars (Gil Anidjar, Jonathan Boyarin, Judith Butler, and John Collins, among others) who have sought to articulate what Palestine and Israel might tell us about larger contemporary formations of globalization, colonialism, secularism, and religiosity, and the changing fortunes of the nation-state. Like these scholars, Dalsheim encourages her readers to “make the familiar strange” (p. xvi) by thinking beyond the fixed ethnic, religious, and political categories that characterize much popular and academic thinking

about the region. Her book, however, is perhaps more iconoclastic than most. Dalsheim argues that the U.S.-led peace process is flawed not because it favors Israeli interests, as many other commentators have observed, but because it marginalizes religious “extremists”—namely, Hamas and religious Israeli settlers—by constructing them as what Dalsheim calls “spoilers,” meaning that they are routinely blamed for the failure of negotiations. Dalsheim criticizes both liberal peacemaking and left-wing activism and scholarship for relying on a secular notion of the nation-state that designates religiously motivated Palestinians and Israelis as “enemies” not only of the peace process, but also of each other. This constricted vision, she argues, overlooks already existing modes of negotiation and exchange, beyond territorial nationalism and the demand for national sovereignty, which could lead to viable forms of political resolution.

Dalsheim is a cultural anthropologist whose first book, *Unsettling Gaza: Secular Liberalism, Radical Religion, and the Israeli Settlement Project* (Oxford University Press, 2011), was an ethnographic study of religious settler communities in Gaza, based on fieldwork conducted immediately before the Israeli withdrawal from the territory in 2005. Rather than introducing entirely new material, *Producing Spoilers* develops the earlier book’s insights about the adverse theoretical and political consequences of disregarding and demonizing the worldview of these communities. It is methodologically unconventional, even eclectic: Dalsheim states at the outset that it is an anthropologist’s account of the dynamics of peacemaking, and as such it addresses “a range of local knowledges, sensibilities, and practices found among people in Israel/Palestine . . . that some might find inappropriate, unappealing, or just irrelevant” (p. xviii). Alongside interviews with subjects including a “crazy” rabbi, a “collaborating” sheikh, Palestinian and Israeli residents of Hebron, and the Palestinian politician and academic Sari Nusseibeh, Dalsheim brings together postcolonial theory, modern and contemporary critics of the nation-state, and ideas of storytelling and narrative (where she invokes a very diverse group of sources, among them Louis Althusser, Hayden White, Ursula LeGuin, and Salman Rushdie). The book as a whole reads like something of a thought experiment: what might happen if international academics, activists, and politicians took religious narratives of the conflict seriously, rather than seeing them as “anachronistic” or “crazy” (p. 99)? What alternative forms of resolution might become possible if we listened to “stories that point to different moral orders” (p. 173)?

Producing Spoilers is at its most thought-provoking in moments such as these, when it articulates the challenge that (for example) the Hebron settlers’ understanding of time as cyclical rather than linear poses to secular liberal thought (chapter 4), or when it points out the unlikely parallels between figures as disparate as Nusseibeh and the “crazy” rabbi, who for very different reasons are both willing to relinquish political sovereignty over the land of Palestine and Israel (p. 153). Sometimes these parallels are pushed uncomfortably far. It seems a stretch to describe the Jewish settlers in Hebron as “subaltern” on the basis of their exclusion from the “hegemonic secular,” when they benefit disproportionately from a state-sponsored settler-colonial order, as Dalsheim acknowledges on a number of occasions (pp. 55, 64–65, 78, 96, and 100). I take Dalsheim’s point that the automatic designation of the settlers’ stance as “evil” (p. 75) may prevent their views from being heard, but she risks trivializing the Left’s rejection of settler colonialism as a legitimate form of politics when she suggests that this opposition is partly motivated by “our sense of offense” (p. 55). It also seems a stretch to suggest that support for the Palestinian-led boycott and divestment

campaign repeats pre-1948 support for the founding of the Jewish state, on the grounds that both seek to fulfill the demands of an oppressed people (p. 45). I am reminded, by contrast, of Edward Said's insistence that we must distinguish between the political genealogies of Zionism and Palestinian nationalism, rather than seeing all nationalisms as politically equivalent.* Finally, given the centrality of the idea of "narrative" to the discussion, it would have been helpful to engage further not only with narrative theory, but also with previous work on the idea of "national narrative" in discussions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in which, as Nancy Partner has noted, narrative is regularly assumed to "be primary and causative, a mold, not a mirror of reality,"† as Dalsheim also suggests (pp. 7, 30, 77, 97). These points aside, *Producing Spoilers* is a compelling book, which boldly argues that "recognizing humanity in all its complexity must surely include recognizing the humanity"—and the political imaginaries—"even of the [apparently] despicable anachronistic others who live in the past" (p. 99).

Anna Bernard, a lecturer in English and comparative literature at King's College London, works on literary and cultural representations of Palestine and Israel in international contexts.

***Violence and Understanding in Gaza: The British Broadsheets' Coverage of the War*, by Dávid Kaposi.**

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. 240 pages. \$90.00
hardcover and e-book.

REVIEWED BY BEN WHITE

Israel's assault on the Gaza Strip last year reignited the debate over questions of bias and narrative in the media's coverage of Palestine/Israel. Now a new book seeks to shed light on one particular aspect of the discussion: how British broadsheet newspapers covered the 2008–9 Gaza war (codenamed Operation Cast Lead). The author, Dávid Kaposi, teaches psychology at the University of East London, and has not previously published on Palestine/Israel. He has, however, authored papers on Hannah Arendt and post-Holocaust Jewish identity, and in the acknowledgments recognizes "the financial and moral

help" of the Israel-based Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism.

The book, according to Kaposi's introduction, "attempts to examine various ways of understanding violence" through the "case study" of "an analysis of the British broadsheets' coverage of a war" (p. 1). Kaposi adds a further ambitious aim: "to provide insight into dominant

* Edward Said, "Permission to Narrate," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 13, no. 3 (1984): p. 31.

† Nancy Partner, "The Linguistic Turn along Post-Postmodern Borders: Israeli/Palestinian Narrative Conflict," *New Literary History* 39, no. 4 (2008): p. 826.