

An Analysis of Edward Said's Views on the Issue of Palestine in his Works

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Abstract

Objective: In Edward Said's work, the situation of the Palestinians stands out as a highly controversial issue. He has dedicated several books to this topic, primarily focused on acknowledging and articulating the national identity of the Palestinian people to combat erasure and oblivion. This study aims to analyze Edward Said's perspective on the Palestinian crisis as expressed in his writings.

Method: The current study is carried out with a descriptive and analytical method and based on content analysis. The information is collected using a bibliographic and documentary research method, which includes books, professional articles and the Internet.

Findings: Edward Said criticizes international organizations, Western countries, and their media for primarily adhering to the Zionist perspective. He argues that it is essential for the Palestinian voice to be heard while also evaluating the official policies of Zionism, American positions, and the responsibilities of Arab states.

Conclusion: In the Palestinian crisis, Edward Said's perspective is significant. His writings and public statements contributed to changing the international image of Palestinians and recognizing the dignity of their cause. In the final years of his life, Said recognized that the two-state solution, once seen as a viable option, had become increasingly unrealistic.

Keywords: the Palestine Crisis, Zionism, Western Countries, Edward Said.


Article Type: Research

Cite this article: Babazadeh, Mahdenoor, Soltani & Tork Ladani (2024) Analyze Edward Said's Views on the Palestine Crisis in His Works, The Quarterly Journal of Political Studies of Islamic World, Vol.13, NO.50, Summer 2024, 39-54.

DOI: 10.30479/psiw.2024.19370.3270

Received on 26 September, 2023 **Accepted on** 22 April, 2024

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Publisher: Imam Khomeini International University 

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Introduction

Edward Waidie Said was born in 1935 in Jerusalem during the British Mandate. His father, a Palestinian Catholic businessman, had lived in the United States and obtained American citizenship after serving in the First World War. His mother was a Palestinian Protestant. His family were exiled to Egypt in 1947 when he was a teenager, but he only lived there for a short time: his parents sent him to the United States to study. He wrote a doctoral thesis on Joseph Conrad and began teaching comparative literature at Columbia University in New York in 1963. He became a professor of literature there in 1991 and remained there until his death in 2003 (Dahab, 2003: 2). The experience of exile and crossing borders is at the heart of Edward Said's work, which never ceases to reflect on the relationship of domination of the West over the rest of the world.

As Yves Clavaron notes, 'Said's success is undoubtedly less due to having shaken up representations of the Orient than to having problematized the West and its discourses': this is how the Orientalist question was able to emerge (Clavaron, 2013: 85). In other words, on the Palestinian question, the role and position of Edward Said is also considerable: his writings and public positions have contributed to changing the international image of the Palestinians and to recognizing the dignity of their cause. A strong commitment for which he was personally attacked, his positions being considered "anti-Western". However, the question of this study is: what is Edward Said's view of the Palestinian crisis in his works? This article shows that Said's political struggle began in 1967. That is, the Six-Day War will transform Edward Said into one of the great international voices of the Palestinian cause. His frustration with the way the Americans covered the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and his commitment and position on the issue were very rapid and in line with his convictions. In his numerous writings, he denounced the stigmatization of the Palestinians and of the Arab and Muslim world. In general, the importance of this research is that it shows the Palestinian crisis to the readers of this article from Said's point of view. In fact, with Said's knowledge of the West and the experience he gained during his political activities, it is possible to convey them to the readers of this article and claim that any agreement with Israel today is a bad decision.

Literature review

Over the past decades, various topics are studied on the works of Edward Said, significant research content has been published in relation to this phenomenon, but there is no significant content in relation to the subject of the present research. Can be expressed, the critical sources, namely books, articles, reviews, theses and memoirs, used in this research are all related to the exploration of Edward Said' works in various aspects. In these books it is possible to find some different notes from the writer. Here, some of the most important Palestine studies are detailed:

In an article by Cameron S. Brown (entitled *Responding to Edward Said's Palestine Question* (2007)), he believed Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* One of the most well-read critiques of Zionism, Edward Said's *The Question of Palestine* in many ways had a similar impact on the Arab– Israeli debate that his previous major work, *Orientalism*, had on the field of Middle Eastern studies.

Basak Ertur, Müge Gürsoy Sökmen in *Waiting for the Barbarians: A Tribute to Edward W. Said* (2008), bringing together some of the figures most closely associated with Edward Said and his scholarship, *Waiting for the Barbarians* looks at Said to the public intellectual and literary critic, and his political and intellectual legacy: the future through the lens of his work.

In an article entitled *Edward Said's Thoughts and Palestinian Nationalism* (2011), Li Yi after studying Said's thoughts in the context of Palestinian nationalism, this paper will tap deeply into Said's sense of national crisis as well as the content of the struggle to arouse the people together and to inspire greater understanding and peace loving people to support the Palestinian cause of liberation.

Exiles in the City: Hannah Arendt and Edward W. Said in Counterpoint, (2012) by William V. Spanos, explores the affiliative relationship between Arendt's and Said's thought, not simply their mutual emphasis on the importance of the exilic consciousness in an age characterized by the decline of the nation-state and the rise of globalization, but also on the oppositional politics that a displaced consciousness enables.

In “*Edward Said, Post colonialism and Palestine's Contested Spaces*” (2017), Tahrir Hamdi will argue that these contested spaces (Palestine-Israel conflict) necessarily become sites of Palestinian cultural production, struggle and summed.

Conceptual Framework

The Works of Said

Edward Said defends «a demanding conception of the social role of the intellectual». In fact, the Six Day War in 1967 and the Arab defeat against Israel marked the beginning of its engagement. Among his first writings, which remained famous, his book *Orientalism: The Orient seen by the West*, published in 1978, is a concrete testimony to his political involvement and more particularly to his interest in the issues of domination and representations. It particularly questions the modes of cultural and political domination (specific to imperialism, marked by colonial heritage) and means of protest. *Orientalism* quickly had a considerable influence both in the East and in the West, where it laid the

groundwork for postcolonial studies by articulating political science, history, philosophy and literary criticism useful for questioning the notions of representation and domination. The work questions in an innovative way, through the analysis of literary representations, the representations constructed of the East by the West (Faysal & Rahman, 2013: 240) & (Marandi & Pirnajmuddin, 2010: 181-182).

Later, Edward Said published *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), in which he returned to the literary text and the novel to define it as the result of a “creative interaction” between the author, his story and his sensibility: he thereby nuances the theses developed in *Orientalism* and offers a complex analysis of the intellectual function in the balance of power established between East and West (Albaqawi, 2023: 65-66).

These reflections are already in process in *Beginnings: Intention and Method* (1998) and were continued *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (2004), where the issue of exile once again holds a prominent place. Moreover, his autobiography, *Out of Place* (1999), also stems from a recollection and thought of the return that echoes the whole critical work of Edward Said, centered on the notions of exile and borders – both cultural and political.

Meanwhile, it is Palestine that occupies the work of Edward Said: in 1979 appeared *The Question of Palestine*, which plays a key role in raising awareness of the American public on the Palestinian issue. He proposes an analysis of society from the end of the nineteenth century, when colonial ideology obscured Palestinian society and the Zionist movement grew, perceived by the Arabs as an integral part of the European colonial enterprise. Also, the 1995 publication of *The Politics of Dispossession: The Struggle for Palestinian Self-Determination* brings together a collection of short essays and articles exploring Palestine and the struggle of the Palestinians from 1968 to 1994, the date of publication of the book.

Postcolonial Theory

If there is one author that the term «post-colonialism» evokes spontaneously, he is Edward Said. He certainly did not invent the label, but when his work began to be designated as such, he did not challenge it and postcolonial studies like Said's work itself certainly derived from this labeling of the respective benefits in terms of audience, dissemination and structuring. Edward Said's *Orientalism* is often referred to as the starting point of postcolonial theory, which aims to study the theoretical and cultural structure of the «colonial library». It participates in the idea that the human and social sciences educated by the West in the nineteenth century participated in a construction of representations of the other to deconstruct to understand the cultural, economic and political dynamics of the contemporary world (Faysal & Rahman, 2013: 236-238).

There is no doubt that the very wide dissemination of Said's work has been favored by a triple set of factors: his position as a teacher at the prestigious American University of Columbia; the scope of a work combining literary studies, theoretical works and political positions; finally, a fluid and vigorous writing, carefully avoiding any academic jargon. In terms of content, with

Orientalism, which still remains his best known, most quoted and most commented work, Said signed a book that could be attacked on many aspects in terms of scholarship and demonstration, but whose main thesis – “The Orient” exists only as a discursive reality created by Western Orientalism and testifies to the way in which the relations of power are played out and read in the representation – had unheard-of repercussions on the way of apprehending not only the colonial history, but also literary texts in general (Alghamdi, 2020: 20-22).

Research Methodology

Content analysis is perhaps the most widely used method in the field of political communication. Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. This method is a tool for identifying the occurrence of concepts in an exhibition. It is nothing but quantification of text or its meaning. An exposition can be an article, book, lecture, interview, conversation, Web page or any other reading material (Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2017: 28) & (Benoit, 2010: 268-269). In this research, the methodological choices of the research were determined by the corpus of study. So, the main research method is content analysis. Documentary analysis and contextualization complete the methodological approach. These techniques, with the privileged theoretical framework, made it possible to support the results and conclusions of the research. The current study is carried out with a descriptive and analytical method and based on content analysis. Therefore, the works and articles, conferences, interviews, conversations of Edward Said and other documents are the population of this research.

Results

The methodology of this research is based on the content analysis method. If the Palestine crisis is researched in the works of Edward Said and other documents, the most abundant codes in this field include Genealogical, the effects of war on Edward Said's personal life (exile, works, etc.), his vision on Palestinian Issues (The two-state solution Plan, Oslo Accords and The third way plan). Therefore, in this part, the results of the search are divided into three sections.

Genealogical paradigm

The narration of Said resembles the story of a return to the homeland. The search for original links is proved by the ceaseless search for roots that the text evokes. Moreover, the first impression that captures him when he arrived in Palestine associates the Palestinian territory with the place of origin:

Tentatively at first, boldly later, I found myself repeating inwardly that I did have a right to be here, that I was a native, and that nearly everything of my early life could be traced to the city of my birth (Said, 1995: 177).

The expressions "I was a native", "the city of my birth" refer to the theme of birth, filiation. Finally, Said's work expresses the renewal of the genealogical

paradigm. Community representation was based on family hegemony. The following words juxtapose the idea of family with the image of the Palestinians:

Yet I also feel that, as a family, the four of us need the connection. Need the assurances that Palestine and Palestinians have really survived, and this we now have (Said, 1995: 178).

In Return to Palestine, Said experiences intimately his attachment to the Palestinian people. However, this affection is quickly transformed into a quest for a bond, a bond that connects a "we" (of kinship, a fraternal "we") dissociated from the "others". This is what Said's text evokes several times:

This is another point to be mentioned. Everywhere I went I didn't feel like an outsider-which in many ways I was- but rather like a partner, one of the "we", in the problems and hopes encountered by people in daily life (Said, 1995: 187).

The experience of uprooting responds to the need to renew communal ties ("a real society that binds us all together"), to the need to seek continuities in the tracing of descent and lineage. But such a genealogical inscription of the self and the group draws the contours of a "we" closed and folded around the sharing of the same place (the soil, the homeland, the birth, etc.). From then on, the story fits into the fantasy of the "genealogical phusis". In this passage, Said feels part of "one of us". But this "we" only includes and designates Palestinian society, and the logic of the clan becomes a bulwark against Israel. Similarly in this other extract:

Speaking to him and his wife, I suddenly felt the whole fragmented picture of the Shafis and Raji and so many others that I met during that fateful trip to Gaza the idea of an actual society that bound us all together somehow did survive the ravages of our history, its tragic mistakes, misfortunes, and the destructive courses of Israel's policies" (Ibn Warraq, 2008).

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As a critical response to these patriotic debates, Said defined himself in September 2000 as an «Arab by choice» (arabi bi-l-ikhtiyar). His essay entitled Writing is an act of memory and forgetfulness, first published in the cultural supplement of the Lebanese daily An-Nahar, highlights the narrative genesis of his Arab-Palestinian identity, and at the same time plays the role of preface to the Arabic edition of his memoirs. Said explains that the painful process of post-colonial identification is a strategy of substituting self-analysis of assignments imposed from the outside (Said (b), 2000). He emphasizes that the issue is more to deliberately enact new meanings than to seek an authentic origin. The Arab-Palestinian identity chosen by Said can rightly, as Khoury analyzed a posteriori,

be interpreted as a political demonstration of solidarity aimed at universalizing Palestinian demands in terms of human rights. According to Elias Khoury (2003: 15), Said did not choose Palestine because it is his homeland, but because it is a victim country. He did not choose the Arabs because they are his people, but because they are a people faced with injustice by colonial powers and repression by dictatorships (Yi, 2011: 111-112).

While, on the one hand, the existence of the Palestinians by birth has been categorically denied in Israel as in the West, and on the other hand, it has been regularly instrumentalized by Arab politicians to strengthen their own authority, «Palestinian» Laic claimed by Said is not based on any Arab national ideology or ethno-religious affiliation.

Effects of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict on Said

With the beginning of the crisis in Occupied Territories, Edward Said places his texts inseparably in the epistemic field and on the political scene. On the other hand, the war had influence on the life and thoughts of this author.

the conflict and the beginning of exile

In 1948, Zionist leaders decided to seize Palestinian land by force. There were massacres, rapes, pillaging, and abuses of all kinds. Among the victims, the young Edward Said, whose bourgeois family went into exile in Egypt while many of his cousins and friends were confined to camps, or forced to live under the law of Israel, second-class citizens. As they were gone, their property and land belonged by right to the conquerors. The Palestinian people were victims, driven from their ancestral land.

Some, like the Said, had reached neighboring countries; with money and international connections, they would form a global diaspora. Others remained: they would form the mass of Arab Israelis, half-citizens of a democracy reserved for Jews. Others were in the West Bank and Gaza, territories soon occupied by the Israeli army. Finally, some expelled but unable to go into exile, found themselves in neighboring Arab countries, where they were confined to camps, and hostages in the hands of autocrats too happy to use this misfortune as a propaganda weapon. That was the situation (Dahab, 2003: 2-3).

The impact on his work of being a Palestinian and having always felt like an outsider because he had been educated as a colonial subject, becomes clear when one carefully reads his striking autobiography, *Out of Place* this book is a key element for readers to understand the interests that Said has developed throughout his life.

The experience of being a Shami (originally from the Arab East) in Egypt, being an Arab boy in colonial British schools, being a non-Muslim in a predominantly Muslim society, to be a young Palestinian Arab in American schools and universities, as well as the impact of the 1948 nakba (as attenuated as this impact was for him as for many other Palestinians of the same social class), all these things have contributed to the extreme sensitivity and passion that characterize Said's work (Said, 2000: 150-151).

In general, with the beginning of the Arab-Israeli war (in 1948) inscribed in the Palestinian memory the feeling of perdition and exile: it is the nakbah, the «catastrophe», which throws on the paths of the diaspora nearly 800 000 men and women (Khaled, 2023). So the question of exile is the first in Edward Said's intellectual career. He makes it the cornerstone of his political, methodological, conceptual reflection, as he shows through his lectures on the role and status of the intellectual he gave for the BBC in 1993. For exile is, as he points out, a «metaphorical condition». Metaphoric of the displaced national and cultural communities, so characteristic of the twentieth century, but still, and more deeply, metaphorical of the situation and the attitude that the intellectual must adopt in front of the world. For exile is also independence in solitude, and therefore condition of possibility of a true freedom with regard to community powers and fences (Said, 1993). This is why Said returns the very concept of exile: he emphasizes its double and ambiguous character, both torn and irreducible, sad and joyful. The exiled intellectual is one who «manages to live this destiny not as a deprivation or a misfortune, but as a kind of freedom granted at his own pace, at the sole discretion of the chosen interests and the hoped-for objectives» (Said, 1996: 78).

Effects of the Conflict on Said

The occupation of Palestine affected Said. He was deeply affected by the 1967 Arab defeat and the Israeli occupation of what remained of Palestine. This event had the effect of politicizing him and members of more than one generation of Arabs and Arab-Americans, both in the United States and in the Arab world. It inspired him to write on a much broader range of subjects, including, for the first time, overtly political ones (Yi, 2011: 110).

What seems to have struck Edward Said most strongly, as it has struck all those who, living in North America and Europe, were familiar with the cruel reality of what the Palestinian people were experiencing, was how only a small part of this reality (and the reality of the Arab and Muslim world in general) filtered into the West, particularly into the United States. Much of Edward Said's evident passion stemmed from an awareness of the enormous gap between Palestinian reality and the distorted representations of reality that prevailed and still prevail in Western public discourse.

As for Palestine, one of Said's most important contributions is probably this: to all those who have heard him speak in the dozens of conferences he gives annually across the states-United and Europe, as well as tens of thousands of others who have read it in all kinds of languages, he made us realize that there was another reality of Palestine than that provided by the distorted images of the media and most other representations available in the West. The impact that Said's writings and speeches on Palestine had in the West seems to have been great and to continue even beyond his death. The price that Edward Said personally paid for doing this, and for doing it so well, was much higher than one can imagine. It has gone beyond crude threats of violence, beyond continued public smears from narrow-minded and malicious detractors. These defamations continued even after Said's death. They affected his family, his privacy, and his relationships with

colleagues and friends. However, he has been remarkably successful in overcoming these pressures (Yi, 2011: 106-107).

However, Edward Said was driven by a singular sense of justice. The right of peoples to self-determination, reaffirmed since 1945 in international law, remains one of the constants that the committed intellectual must defend. But the intellectual cannot stop there. He must broaden his field of reflection. It is therefore always as a Palestinian, and as a critical intellectual, that Said speaks. This dual belonging, national and universal, leads him to refuse any community commitment:

To this terribly important task of representing the collective suffering of your own people, testifying to its travails, reasserting its enduring presence, reinforcing its memory, there must be added something else, which only an intellectual, I believe, has the obligation to fulfill...For the intellectual the task, I believe, is explicitly to universalize the crisis, to give greater human scope to what a particular race or nation suffered, to associate that experience with the sufferings of others. (Said, 1994: 60)

Edward Said therefore defines himself as a witness: the witness is the one who speaks of the suffering. But he refers this suffering to other sufferings, this exile to other exiles. The intellectual acts as a conduit between the local and the global. He assumes this double belonging. He perpetuates the memory of his people, but he does not lock them up. On the contrary, he makes it communicate. The singularity of Edward Said's thought therefore lies in this constant desire to connect those who have been torn apart, to undo essentialism, in order to find possible ways of dialogue. It is, in a sense, a logic of mixing and crossing which, on the methodological level, defends a nomadic theory, and which, on the strictly political level, affirms the necessity of moving from one point to another and of universalize the experience of a particular suffering (Bhati & Singh, 2021: 40-41).

Beyond the difficulty of having to endure the slander and defamation of his detractors, some of whom went as far as denial of his identity (such as the laughable proclamation that he was not really Palestinian), Said had to constantly confront the need to find a balance between what was a university matter and what was a political matter. He also had to defend the work he was doing in the political field against the snobbery of certain academics who disdained any involvement in the real world, and particularly in the political world. Finally, he always had to ensure that what was done in the academic sphere as in the political sphere was done with all the necessary rigor. It could be objected that Said's work, in both fields, academic and political, forms a whole, and that no distinction should be made between the two types of work. Certainly Said was passionate, and all his work is that of a committed man, but we must believe that, even if they were deeply intertwined, we can

establish clear distinctions between these two spheres, and that Said would have accepted it (Scott, 1998).

Unrealism of the two-state solution

Faced with the Israelis who, in the course of the wars, continue to push the borders to enlarge their territory and distance the non-Jewish inhabitants, Said opposes a liminal thought: the border must be a threshold, open to the encounter and the desire of the other, rather than a bar. Said had long advocated the solution of two separate states, but for Said the establishment of new settlements, the development of circumvention road infrastructure and the construction of concrete borders made this solution increasingly improbable. Hence the idea of a common entity including the two states, Palestinian and Israeli, forming a secular and democratic state (Anastasi, 2022).

Opponent of the Oslo Accords

When the disastrous Oslo Accords were signed in 1993 on the lawn of the White House in Washington, some expressed scathing criticism and deep concern about their arrangements and the major concessions that the Palestinians were forced to make. The Palestinian signatories – led by the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Yasser Arafat and their supporters, have revived the question: What is the alternative? Perhaps they thought that this question would be the subsidiary question that would close the debate and hide the fact that the agreements were the continuation of the colonial nature of the relationship between the Israeli oppressors and the Palestinian oppressed (Yi, 2011: 109-110). Edward Said, a fierce opponent of the deal, rose to the challenge in October 1993 and wrote a prophetic article in the London Review of Books entitled *Oslo: The Day After*. Based on what he called “common sense”, he predicted the tragic situation that deteriorated after 1993; no more, no less (Eid, 2020).

In an interview given in 1999, following the publication of *Out of Place*, Said claimed that he was part of a minority who wrote against the PLO and the Oslo Accords. He firmly maintains in the interview that he has not changed, however. He has continued to feel affiliated with the same cause since 1967. In writing against the Oslo Accords, he confides, he was acting on behalf of the millions of Palestinian refugees dispossessed and left behind in these peace accords.

In his eloquent style, he wrote: “In order to move towards Palestinian self-determination that only makes sense if its goal is freedom, sovereignty and equality, rather than perpetual enslavement to Israel, we need honest recognition of our situation” (Hindle, 1996: 32).

In his book, *The End of the Peace Process*, he summed up the answer to these questions: “There is no worse negotiation than endless concessions that only prolong the Israeli occupation. Israel is certainly happy to be able to take credit for making peace and at the same time to continue the occupation with the consent of the Palestinians” (Said, 2001: 25).

In general, in doing so, Said was going against the grain (Oslo Accords), because all political actors support the two-state solution: the United States, the European Union, both the Israeli right and left, both the PLO as Hamas and.... Said's

suggestion may not be in line with the "international consensus", but it takes into account the reality on the ground. Indeed, Israel-Palestine has a total population of approximately 11 million people. Roughly speaking, 50% of the population is Jewish-Israeli and 50% Palestinian. Given the small size of the country, these populations are highly intertwined, so that it is "obvious that there is only one state which exercises its power over the entire country. All borders are guarded by the Israeli army, all administration is under Israeli control, all civil and military legislation is Israeli, all residence and travel authorizations are issued by Israelis (News and Press Release, 2021& Chamie, 2014). The Palestinian Authority itself depends on the central government in Tel Aviv, which authorizes it or not to exercise its "power" in certain areas of the country [...]. There is therefore already a single state in all of historic Palestine. What we call the "occupied territories" is in reality a region of this state, where military law reigns over the majority of the population (non-Jews). This unique State is not a common State, "because it defines itself as the State of the Jews and not the State of all its citizens. It maintains inequality and legal discrimination not only on the areas it designates as "occupied territories" but on all non-Jews living in the country. This situation cannot be resolved by partition. To get out of this, the realistic solution is to transform the current single State into a State common to all its citizens, free and equal before the law (Said, 2000: 145-147).

Many decades and many Palestinian concessions later, everything Said predicted has unfortunately come true. The PLO is grappling with a dark reality that it did much to create by agreeing to sign the Oslo Accords.

Defeat of the third way plan

A long time ago, Edward Said wrote, "The question, I believe, is not how to devise means for persisting in trying to separate them but to see whether it is possible for them to live together as fairly and peacefully as possible" (Said, 1999).

Edward Said presented the claim of a «mainly and exclusively» Arab Palestine, as a nationalist construction and a radical simplification «of a land full of history». It is not feeding the Zionist myth to say this, but rather to recognize the rich multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of this Palestine perpetually threatened by Zionist hegemony (Dahab, 2003: 3-4).

Edward Said presented the demand for a "primarily and exclusively" Arab Palestine, as a nationalist construction and a radical simplification "of a land loaded with much history". It is not feeding the Zionist myth to say this, but rather recognizing the rich multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious nature of this Palestine perpetually threatened by Zionist hegemony. In a realistic but principled position, Said admits that the claims of the two protagonists of a land «promised by God» to the Jews and an Arab land belonging to the Palestinians must «be reduced in importance and emptied of their exclusivism». This can be done while preserving Jewish culture and Palestinian culture, and those of all other lesser groups in between (Tawfiq& Nisreen, 2017: 1497)

According to Said, the most important social characteristic for a single state in Palestine would be the practice of citizenship in a modern sense. In other words,

by sharing rights and responsibilities under a law that treats all individuals on an equal footing, citizenship then prevails over ethnic and religious chauvinism. When the same privileges, resources, and opportunities are available to all, nationalist ideologies and dogmas of exclusion will disappear by themselves. In order to promote the development by citizens of a new culture, Said suggested drafting a constitution and a bill of rights that recognize the right to self-determination of both peoples as in the right to freely adopt a common life under the law (Zreik: 2021).

In general, Edward Said publishes in newspapers around the world on the possibility of a "third way" for a peace process between Israel and Palestine, which we find notably developed in an article published in 1998 in *Le Monde Diplomatique* (Said, 1998). In the last years of his life, Said realized that the two-state solution that he and others of his generation had pioneered decades earlier was becoming increasingly unrealistic as more and more of it disappeared. In other words, for Said the establishment of new colonies, the development of bypass road infrastructure and the construction of concrete borders by the Zionist state have made this solution increasingly improbable. So, Said understood how the Israelis constitute a particularly difficult adversary for the Palestinians. Largest of what remained of Palestine under miles of concrete and under the steamrollers of Israeli bulldozers that relentlessly built settler homes, bypass roads and walls in occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

All this was always explicitly intended to make impossible the solution of two viable states. He saw that these actions of the Israelis had begun to push the Palestinians in a direction that most of them probably would not have chosen voluntarily: living together with the Israelis in a single bi-national state.

The events unfolding in Palestine/Israel seemed inexorably to drive away the possibility of having two states coexisting in peace. They are under the control of Israel and international powers, live in increasingly appalling conditions, in an archipelago of ghettos, Bantustans and prisoner camps, on a tiny territory rising, in the early 2000s, maybe 10% of the whole country. Outside the borders controlled by Israel, existed and exists a population of Palestinians about as large as that which lives inside under Israeli domination: these are refugees and descendants of refugees, most of them without rights (Pesmazoglou, 2023).

Conclusion

In studying the Palestinian crisis from Edward Said's point of view, it is clear that he had the commitments and the position on this issue. According to the results of this research, Said is the Palestinian thinker who was able to free the Palestinian cause from its confinement in sterile political deliberations and open it to the vast horizons of free and committed thought. After the Six-Day War, Edward Said's texts are inseparable from the epistemic field and the political scene. In other words, until the end of his life, his commitment to Palestine shaped his work in the Western (especially American) media, Palestine is known through him, and he knows himself through Palestine more than any politician, however experienced. Having deeply understood the value of belonging to one's homeland,

Edward Said was willing to live in the United States of America. This distance from the land, as an existential experience, was so necessary for Edward Said to grasp the abysmal meaning of colonization and, ipso facto, the meaning of the loss of the earth. The pitfall of Edward Said's texts lies in the absolute imperative to preserve Jewish specificity on the one hand and Palestinian identity on the other. A member of the Palestinian National Council since the late 1970s, he resigned in opposition to the methods of the PLO leadership. Hostile to the Oslo Accords, he was nevertheless in favor of dialogue with progressive Israeli forces and firmly opposed to any form of Holocaust denial. From the beginning of his direct involvement in the question of Palestine, and for thirty-five years, Said worked to change the terms of Palestinian political discourse, based on his convictions about what was appropriate for Palestinians, his knowledge of the world, and the breadth of his humanist perspective. The conflict in Palestine is as much a «war of images and ideas» as a question of politics, as Said clearly understood. For a couple decades, Said was the most influential spokesperson for the Palestinians in the United States—a lonely and courageous position at a time when using the word “Palestine” was considered a political provocation. The U.S. public’s complacency is one of the greatest aids to Israeli influence over U.S. policy—and it was here that Said’s eloquence struck its greatest triumph, with even the American Israel Public Affairs Committee warning its supporters that “challenging him will only make you look bad.

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