

Tracing the Discourse of Defiance: Remembering Edward W. Said through the Resistance of the Palestinian Intifada.¹

By Matthew Abraham

“In human history there is always something beyond the realm of dominating systems, no matter how deeply they saturate society, and this is obviously what makes change possible...”

—Edward W. Said (1935-2003)²

“...the Palestinian actuality is today, was yesterday, and most likely tomorrow will be built upon an act of resistance to this new foreign colonialism. But it is more likely that there will remain the inverse resistance which has characterized Zionism and Israel since the beginning: the refusal to admit, and the consequent denial of, the existence of Palestinian Arabs who are not there simply as an inconvenient nuisance, but with a population with an indissoluble bond with the land.”³

In the summer of 2000, Ari Shavit of Israel’s leading daily newspaper, *Ha’aretz*, spent three days in New York interviewing Edward W. Said. In this interview, which was—in Said’s words—“eminently fair” and accurately reproduced in print throughout Israel—he traced the events surrounding the 1947-49 expulsions of nearly eight-hundred thousand Arab inhabitants in an area known simply as “Palestine,” culminating in the birth of Israel.⁴ He also stressed the necessity of acknowledging what so many are pained to admit: the existence of nearly three million people, currently living under military occupation, who share among themselves the “Palestinian” identity, an identity— that while continuously contested—represents a suffering and tragic dispossession that stands at the very heart of the present Middle East conflict.

In this interview with Shavit, that could have never appeared in an American paper, Said made a prediction: until the Palestinians are recognized by the Israelis as equals, and embraced as such, no workable solution will emerge to the thirty-five year death struggle. As he stated, in

¹ This paper is dedicated to the memory of Professor Edward W. Said and Rachel Corrie of Olympia, Washington.

² *The World, the Text and the Critic*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 1983, p. 246-7.

³ Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*. Vintage Books: New York, 1992, p. 8. Subsequent citations of this work refer to this edition.

⁴ The events of 1947-49 have been extensively researched by Israel’s controversial “New Historians,” Tom Segev and Benny Morris. See Morris’s *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1989); *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2003) and Segev’s *The Seventh Million* (Henry Holt: New York, 2000).

another interview, “Human beings are very stubborn. It takes a slow seeping into the consciousness that the other side is not going to go away. Thinking that the Palestinians are going to simply give up if they are brought to their knees is foolish because they’re not [going to give up].”⁵

The continued cycles of violence and occupation, the effects of which occasionally find their way into the American taxpayer’s consciousness through television images, often have a numbing effect; solutions to the underlying causes of such images seem wholly unrealizable. In Said’s mind, an Israeli/Palestinian bi-national state remained as the one last prospect for peaceful co-existence. Upon hearing this response, Shavit proclaimed, “You sound very Jewish.” Said replied, “Of course, I’m the last Jewish intellectual. You don’t know anyone else. All your other Jewish intellectuals are now suburban squires. From Amos Oz to all these people here in America. So I’m the last one. The only true follower of Adorno. Let me put it this way: I’m a Jewish-Palestinian.”⁶

In reflecting upon Edward Said’s life in the last few months, I’ve continually returned to these last two, somewhat enigmatic, statements: “The only true follower of Adorno...I’m a Jewish-Palestinian.” Along with Erich Auerbach, Adorno was Said’s prototypical exile: someone who was never part of anything for very long, perhaps most at home on a plane, always in and out of activities and places. Said’s restlessness and discomfort with either a programmatic politics or an unreflective group allegiance fit quite nicely with the exilic image of Auerbach composing his *Mimesis* without the proper textual resources in a besieged Istanbul, or of Adorno, fleeing Nazi-Germany for the safety of America to establish the New School for Social Research.

Said seemed to always reject the comforts and easy solidarity of the group, seeking instead the complexities and shades of grey that emerge in solitude and through fits of

⁵ Interview with Edward Said in “Reflections on Exile.” *Book Notes*. Brian Lamb. CNN. July 2001.

⁶ Edward Said, *Power, Politics, and Culture: Interviews with Edward W. Said*. Gauri Viswanathan (ed.) Pantheon Books: New York, 2001, p. 458.

dissatisfaction with the status quo. As a Palestinian, working in the very finest Jewish critical-intellectual tradition, Said could, indeed, claim the “Jewish Palestinian” appellation for himself. As a Jewish Palestinian, Said wrestled with the clear dialectic between repression and resistance that animates interactions between the Israeli government and the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza: dialectic between the powerful and the powerless; between the occupiers and the occupied; and between those who inflict humiliation and those whom are continually humiliated. Said continually wondered what actuated someone such as the late Israel Shahak, the great Israeli defender of Palestinian civil rights, and continues to actuate solitary Jewish thinkers, like Noam Chomsky and Norman Finkelstein, to speak out on behalf of the besieged Palestinian population, in the face of overwhelming odds.

All of the silence and polite evasion about the Palestinians of the Occupied Territories, passes under the shameful guise of “professionalism,” “pragmatism,” “realism,” and “responsible journalism”—of course, each of these are the results of doctrinal constraints, and the “requisite commitments” within a properly functioning propaganda system that enforces the necessary illusions of state.⁷

In many ways, Said’s persistent efforts to resist and expose the bad-faith hand-wringing and polite evasion that predominates in elite intellectual circles, seemingly whenever the Palestinian issue is mentioned, continues a tradition of resistance writing and activism reminiscent of the Palestinian writer, Ghassan Kanfani, assassinated by Mossad in a car bomb

⁷ On October 3rd, 2000, just four days after the second Palestinian intifada began; the Clinton administration approved the sale to Israel of Blackhawk helicopters and spare parts for Apache Longbow helicopters. As Noam Chomsky writes in his introduction to Roane Carey’s *The New Intifada: Resisting Israel’s Apartheid* (Verso: London, 2001), on October 3rd, 2000 “[t]he defense correspondent of Israel’s most prestigious newspaper reported the signing of an agreement with the Clinton administration for ‘the largest purchase of military helicopters by the Israeli Air Force in a decade,’ along with spare parts for Apache attack helicopters for which an agreement had been signed in mid-September” (6). What is crucially important about the sale is that the press right at that time was reporting Israel’s use of U.S. helicopters to attack civilian targets, killing or wounding dozens of people, and that the Pentagon informed (foreign) journalists that the new shipments had no conditions on use. In October of 2000, Chomsky joined a delegation of journalists and other political activists in Boston, attempting to get mainstream newspapers—such as the *Boston Globe*—to report the unprecedented helicopter sale to Israel for civilian population control. These efforts, regrettably, were to no avail.

explosion in July of 1972 in Beirut. Kanafani was a “commando who never fired a gun” whose “weapon was a ballpoint pen and his arena newspaper pages. And he hurt the enemy more than a column of commandos.”⁸

At the conclusion of Kanafani’s most famous novella, *Men in the Sun*, a set of questions that fully resonate with the twentieth-century Palestinian predicament, confronts the reader: “Why didn’t you knock on the sides of the tank? Why didn’t you bang the sides of the tank? Why? Why? Why?”⁹ Abel Khaizuran, no longer able to maintain his composure, returned to his lorry after disposing of the bodies of Qais, Marwan, and Assad—three Palestinian men, attempting in the early 1960s to cross from Iraq into Kuwait, who had paid Khaizuran to take them across the Iraq-Kuwait border. These men, according to Barbara Harlow, “[left] behind not only the dispossession of refugee life but also a broken and disrupted family tradition.”¹⁰

Ultimately, due to the heat of the afternoon sun, the three men suffocated to death inside of an empty water tank attached to Khaizuran’s lorry because of a delay at the border crossing. The reader is left to wonder, “Did the men not scream out, to save their lives, because they feared being discovered by the guards at the border crossing, or did they cry out and bang on the side of the tank, with no one to hear them?” Isn’t this the Palestinian predicament? No one can hear the cries of the Palestinians because of an inability or unwillingness to listen.

In the context of discussing Kanfani’s *Men in the Sun*, Said writes: “The Palestinian must *make* the present since the present is not an imaginative luxury but a literal, existential necessity.”¹¹ In his “Homelessness and Worldliness,” Bruce Robbins reminds us that “[t]he reality of the Palestinians is not what they have lost, but the state of loss itself.”¹² Said describes

⁸ From Kanafani’s obituary, printed in the *Daily Star*, Beirut’s English-language newspaper. Obituary information cited in Barbara Harlow’s “The Palestinian Intellectual and the Liberation of the Academy,” in Michael Sprinker’s (ed.) *Edward Said: A Critical Reader*. Blackwell: Oxford, 1992, n.p.

⁹ Ghassan Kanafani. *Men in the Sun and Other Palestinian Stories*, Hilary Kirkpatrick (trans.) Lynne Rainer Publishers: Boulder, 1999, p. 74.

¹⁰ Barbara Harlow, *After Lives: Legacies of Revolutionary Writing*. Verso: New York, 1996, p. 51.

¹¹ *The Question of Palestine*, p. 152.

¹² Bruce Robbins, “Homelessness and Worldliness.” *Diacritics* (Fall 1983), p. 70.

this experience as cubistic, bringing with it “a burden of interpretation and a multiplication of selves that are virtually unparalleled in modern political or cultural history—a fact made more impressively onerous in that it is all filtered through negation and qualification.”¹³

In attempting to capture this “state of loss itself” and these “multiplication of selves” through his actual and scholarly position, it’s no accident that words such as “dignity,” “defiance,” “resistance,” “orthodoxy,” “authority” and “dogma” appear repeatedly in Said’s literary and political writings. Said, of course, embraced the first three terms—dignity, defiance, and resistance—as emancipatory, expansive, and necessary prerequisites to the fulfillment of human freedom; each of them informed the politics of the Palestinian uprising. The latter three terms—orthodoxy, authority, and dogma—often justify the very worst kinds of state worship and unleash a return to repressive religiosity which channels collective passions into the perversions of nationalism.

As a critic Said seemed to be continually balancing the demands of orthodoxy, authority, and dogma against his humanistic commitment to preserving the conditions of possibility for human expressions of resistance, dignity, and defiance in the face of injustice. He balanced these through the actual and metaphysical condition of exile. Said’s criticism of the Palestinian Authority led to the banning of his book, *After Oslo*, on the West Bank. He called the Oslo Accords and the Declaration of Principles what they were: documents intended to transform the Occupied Territories into Bantustans. I use this word “Bantustans” in an attempt to draw parallels between what Israel’s leadership was actually offering the Palestinians—something tantamount to what the white minority offered the black majority in South Africa in the 1980s—a national territory governed by black chiefs, such as Butalezzi, who were controlled by white elites. At that time (September 1993), Said held a fiercely unpopular minority position in the context of the continual paeans sung to Clinton and Rabin and the redemption of Arafat in the Western press. In

¹³ *The Question of Palestine*, p. 122.

embracing “criticism before solidarity” as a credo, Said enacted a form of oppositional criticism that exists between culture and system.

Through both his daunting scholarly production and inspiring political activism, Edward W. Said enacted a rhetoric of resistance, situated within and often constrained by the harsh political realities of the American and international public spheres. This extraordinary enactment, as an intellectual performance, of Palestinian resistance to the ritual humiliations of life under occupation—torture, deprivation, detention, and dispossession—experienced by nearly three million Palestinians, gave his academic and public careers a distinctiveness unlikely to be matched among future generations of critical intellectuals.¹⁴

By a rhetoric of resistance, I mean the lived strategies and exertions of will that create the existential condition of “no surrender,” enabling a beleaguered people to retain a sense of identity in the face of the 1948 *al-nakba* (catastrophe), no matter how under siege, contributing to the formation of a collective memory.

In his essay “Intifada and Independence,” Said recounts how Mahmoud Darwish—the Palestinian people’s national poet—insisted that Said, who had been asked to translate the 1988 Palestinian Declaration of Statehood from Arabic into English, at the 19th session of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers, tell Yasir Arafat that the phrase “collective memory” (which was to be included in the document) possesses a very precise, technical definition that must be acknowledged and is not simply a poetic phrase devoid of political implication: “Tell him, [Arafat], it has a serious and even scientific meaning,”¹⁵ said Darwish. Said—in struggling

¹⁴ In his *Intellectuals in Power: A Genealogy of Critical Humanism* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1986), Paul Bovey writes: “Those interested in that role and function of the critical intellectual today should ask the question when they read Said: how can such a redoubtable humanist function as an oppositional critic? And we should not look for the answer in some discussion of ideology or history of ideas. **We should look instead at what is central to all of Said’s work, the function of the will in critical intelligence, which appears not only in his writing but which he attempts to embody in his discursive and nondiscursive practice**” (emphasis mine) p. xiv.

¹⁵ Edward Said, “Intifada and Independence” in Joel Benin’s and Lockhart’s (eds.) *Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising Against Israeli Occupation*. Boston: South End Press, 1989, p. 6.

to understand the Palestinian condition—sought to understand the form just such a Palestinian collective memory might take:

How does one rise beyond the limiting circumstances, beyond negativity, into a positive affirmation of what we [as Palestinians] are and want? But this is not just a matter of will, it is also a matter of finding the right modality, the right mixtures of forces to harness, the right rhetoric and concepts by which to mobilize our people and our friends, the right goal to affirm, the right past to drop away from, the right future to fight for.¹⁶

Expressions of Palestinian dignity and solidarity present a living, breathing reality that cannot be simply effaced through a convenient re-description of facts. To avoid this living, breathing reality—while overlooking the Western intelligentsia's role in trying to efface it through word and deed—is to miss the main reason for the necessity of a road map for peace. Indeed, to believe that the road map to peace was necessitated by American and Israeli cooperation and goodwill is to be purblind to the realities of Palestinian life under occupation. As the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza have the right to resist the Israeli occupation under international law, and as the Israeli government with its U.S. patron continues to block an international consensus on a diplomatic settlement in the region, the politics of the intifada are a reminder of how the force of an oppressed people will and can keep superpowers in check. Said reminds us that

[i]t's quite clear that the Palestinians' sheer physical presence has always been the main problem. Whether it's trying to get rid of them or pretending that they weren't there or that they're really not the original inhabitants or something else, all of this is what I call gratuitous epistemological willfulness to pretend that the Palestinians are a negligible quantity. The problem is increasing. It hasn't decreased.¹⁷

We must remember that the first and second Intifadas were uprisings initiated by young Palestinians, the children of the stones, between the ages of 12 and 20. The young often refuse the platitudes about “time and patience” that the old are far too often willing to accept as conventional wisdom. As Said claimed in his *Al-Ahram* essay, “Punishment by Detail”:

¹⁶ *The Question of Palestine*, p. 174.

¹⁷ Edward Said, *Culture and Resistance: Conversations with Edward W. Said*. South End Press: Cambridge, 2003 p. 53.

Hope has been eliminated from the Palestinian vocabulary so that only raw defiance remains, and still Sharon and his sadistic minions prattle on about eliminating terrorism by an ever-encroaching occupation that has continued now for over 35 years.¹⁸

Said's unswerving commitment in advocating the cause of Palestinian self-determination, in conjunction with an engaged form of cultural criticism, defied the constrictive boundaries of mere literary study. This brand of intellectual independence challenged traditional notions of "a career in literature" and the conventional pieties that often tame fierce political stands.

While many often toe some imaginary ideological line in the service of an academic *realpolitik*, demonstrating a greater allegiance to the professional guild structure than to an interrogation of the wider social conflicts that condition our world, Edward Said sought to realize the full dimensions of "intellectual responsibility" in the spirit of Voltaire, Benda, Zola, and Chomsky.

Although the phrase, "speaking truth to power," long ago became an overused cliché, describing seemingly each and every academic position that entailed even the minutest expenditure of political capital, it is well-suited for understanding Edward Said's critical interventions on behalf of one of the most explosive and controversial international issues of the last thirty-five years: Palestinian self-determination. Said's persistence and indefatigable energy in representing the humanity and resilience of his own people, within an American public sphere that often views Palestinians as less than human, affirms the very highest of intellectual ideals in that he is, in the very truest sense, speaking truth to power.

By making the connection between intellectual resistance and the resistance politics of the Palestinian Intifada, Said drew upon the rhetoric of a nationalist struggle (Third-world struggles) in the formulation of a strategy of intellectual defense. The Intifada, for example, has

¹⁸Edward W. Said, "Punishment by Detail." *Al-Ahram Weekly* 598 (August 8-14 2002). Online at <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2002/598/op2.htm> last accessed 25/05/2005.

become a byword for liberation and struggle in the development of a critical outlook that refuses the logic of occupation and military might, enabling the type of risk-taking exemplified by those few willing to cry “J’accuse” when grave injustices, such as human rights abuses, present themselves. Rachel Corrie’s courageous and dignified act of resistance on March 16th of this year in Rafah (Gaza) stands as the most graphic and compelling example.

That an intellectual would look toward these nationalist struggles, inspired by their representation and enactment of the universal values of the Enlightenment (such as freedom and human dignity), suggests a certain desperation, a loss of faith in the intellectual mission itself—a surrender of professional decorum and its prescribed paths for career advancement. As Said states in his *Representations of the Intellectual*, intellectual commitments are often tamed because “[y]ou do not want to appear too political; you are afraid of seeming controversial; you want the approval of a boss or authority figure; you want to keep a reputation for being balanced, objective, moderate; your hope is to be asked back, to consult, to be on a board of a prestigious committee, and so to remain in the responsible mainstream; someday you hope to get an honorary degree, a big prize, perhaps even an ambassadorship.”¹⁹

A commitment to objectivity, detachment and dispassionate analysis often quells the instincts that might compel one to take a stand on either side of the Palestinian Question. In his essay, “The Burden of Interpretation and the Question of Palestine,” Said reminds us that the question—“Where do you stand on the question of Palestine?”—is “shamelessly provocative” and cannot be answered from some Archimedean viewpoint above the political and epistemological fray.²⁰ To even begin to attempt to answer this question is to enter into a multiplicity of discourses that are interactively heterogeneous and heterogeneously interactive that inevitably pits Jewish against Palestinian suffering. Rather than turning to impossible

¹⁹Edward Said, *Representations of the Intellectual*. Vintage Books: New York, 1999, p. 100.

²⁰See Edward Said’s “The Burden of Interpretation and the Question of Palestine.” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, (September 1986), p. 28-29.

comparisons, assessing alternative narrative constructions may be the key to working through the discursive complexities versus acting out the dynamics of the actual conflict.

In such pivotal texts as *After the Last Sky*, Said establishes a narrative “density” for a people whose narrative has continually been under erasure and attack.²¹ Said’s scholarship and political activism seemed to always place the plight of the Palestinian people and their quest for self-determination in front of an evasive and complicit American audience. As Noam Chomsky has repeatedly pointed out, the “Israel-Palestine” conflict is really the Israel/United States-Palestinian conflict: an acknowledgement of the crucial role played by the American paymasters.

As much as the issue of Palestinian self-determination seemed to be at the forefront of all his critical efforts, Said could not sit by passively, allowing an unreflective Palestinian nationalism, in contradistinction to a repressive Zionist ideology, to emerge. He deftly measured the fundamental transformations of the Palestinian social and political consciousness, as it has evolved during the last thirty-five years of Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Through such heroic efforts, Edward Said threatened, what Abdirahman Hussein calls, the triadic interaction between the discourses of a) American neo-imperialism; b) Zionism and; c)

²¹ In a chapter entitled “The Politics of Historical Interpretation” in *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1990) Hayden White writes:

In fact, its [Zionist interpretations of the Holocaust] truth, as a historical interpretation, consists precisely [in] its effectiveness in justifying a wide range of current Israeli political policies that, from the standpoint of those who articulate them, are crucial to the security and indeed the very existence of the Jewish people. Whether one supports these policies or condemns them, they are undeniably a product, at least in part, of a conception of Jewish history that is conceived to be meaningless to Jews insofar as this history was dominated by agencies, processes, and groups who encouraged or permitted policies that led to the “final solution” of “the Jewish Question.” The totalitarian, not to say fascist, aspects of Israeli treatment of the Palestinians on the West Bank may be attributable primarily to a Zionist ideology that is detestable to anti-Zionists, Jews, and non-Jews alike. But who is to say that this ideology is a product of a distorted conception of history in general and of the history of the Jews in the Diaspora specifically? It is, in fact, fully comprehensible as a morally responsible response to the meaninglessness of a certain history, that spectacle of “moral anarchy” that Schiller perceived in world history and specified as a “sublime object.” The Israeli political response to this spectacle is fully consonant with the aspiration to human freedom and dignity that Schiller took to be the necessary consequence of sustained reflection on it. So far as I can see, the effort of the Palestinian people to mount a politically effective response to Israeli policies entails the production of a similarly effective ideology, complete with an interpretation of their history capable of endowing it with a meaning that it has hitherto lacked (a project to which Edward Said wishes to contribute) (80).

Orientalism.²² To these three discourses, I would add the discourse of the Christian Right and speak of a quaternary, or four-way, dynamic interaction between these co-extensive ideologies.²³

In writing against this overwhelming quaternary structure of neo-imperialist, Zionist, Orientalist and fundamentalist Christian discourses Said found himself facing a seemingly impossible task: he was, in effect, resisting the discourses of the military-industrial complex (*Orientalism*), the war on terror (*Covering Islam*), Israeli expansionism (*The Question of Palestine*) and religious enthusiasm as found in Christian evangelism (*Culture and Imperialism*). Within this quaternary structure, Palestinians are reduced to Iraqis, Saudis, and Afghanis—all are reduced to one seething mass of Arab fanaticism that must be contained and controlled. Said's relentless acts of intellectual resistance against this seemingly metaphysical-but-let's-never-forget-only-political behemoth merits our close attention.²⁴

In his preface to Noam Chomsky's *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel, and the Palestinians*, perhaps the most ambitious book ever attempted on the Israel-Palestine conflict, Said writes—in words that we can just as easily use to describe him as Chomsky—that

[t]here is something profoundly unsettling about an intellectual such as Chomsky [Said] who has neither an office to protect nor territory to consolidate and guard. There is no

²² Said defines Orientalism as “the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, teaching it, settling it, ruling it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient,” (*Orientalism*. Vintage: New York, 1979, p. 3).

²³ In *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives* (Columbia University Press: New York, 1998), Said writes: “When you hear the prattling of Jerry Falwell or any of his born-again crew, all of them staunch supporters of Israel, you are aghast at the utter madness of what they believe, particularly when you hear about their special treatment during visits to Israel—expert tour guides to show them around; leading Israeli government officials to address them. According to the scenario proposed by these fundamentalist Christians, Russia and Israel—Gog and Magog—will have an apocalyptic final battle, which Russia will win, until Jesus intervenes (but not soon enough to prevent the death of all Jews; Arabs don't seem to figure in it at all). In the meantime, the true Christians will be suspended over Israel, above the battle, in Raptures, and after the fighting is over Jesus will restore them to Jerusalem, from which they will rule the world” (152-3). In addition, we must make note of Said's reference to Tom Delay who “came by his ideas concerning Israel by virtue of what he described as his convictions as a ‘Christian Zionist,’ a phrase synonymous not only with support for everything Israel does, but also for the Jewish state's theological right to go on doing what it does regardless whether or not a few million ‘terrorist’ Palestinians get hurt in the process” (*Al-Ahram*, Aug. 21-27, 2003). See Abdirahman A. Hussein's *Edward Said: Criticism and Society*. (Verso: London, 2002, p. 224-295).

²⁴ In *Orientalism*, Said writes: “The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from another, but to connect them, despite the contrast between the overpowering materiality of the former and the apparent otherworldly refinements of the latter,” p. 331-2.

dodging the inescapable reality that such representations by intellectuals will neither make them friends in high places nor win them honors. It is a lonely condition, yes, but it is always a better one than a gregarious tolerance for the way things are.²⁵

Creating facts on the ground—to enforce a false, self-justifying, and comforting reality—will no longer suffice as either an intellectual or rhetorical performance: if we are to count ourselves among those living within a universe that holds out even the slightest concern with fulfilling ethical imperatives, the story of Palestinian dispossession must be heard. Edward W. Said’s critical corpus created the conditions of possibility for that story’s telling; indeed, Said sought—often demanded—the world’s “permission to narrate” the Palestinian viewpoint. Because of his scholarly and political resistance, no one can simply forget the Palestinians. Indeed, that rhetoric of resistance continues because the spirit of dignity and defiance Said exemplified—throughout his life as a literary critic, political activist, and public intellectual—lives on.

²⁵ Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel, and the Palestinians*. South End Press: Cambridge, 1983, p. vii.

â€œTracing the Discourse of Defiance: Remembering Edward W. Said through the Resistance of the Palestinian Intifadaâ€ Nebula World 2.2 (2005): 22-32. â€œThe Rhetoric of Academic Controversy after 9/11: Edward Said in the American Imagination.â€ Journal of Advanced Composition 24.1 (2004): 113-142. â€œWhat is Complexity Science? He insists on truth about Israel's role as occupier and its treatment of the Palestinians. He pleads for new avenues of communication between progressive elements in Israel and Palestine. And he is equally forceful in his condemnation of Arab failures and the need for real leadership in the Arab world.Â In his final book, completed just before his death, Edward W. Said offers impassioned pleas for the beleaguered Palestinian cause from one of its most eloquent spokesmen. These essays, which originally appeared in Cairoâ€™s Al-Ahram Weekly, Londonâ€™s Al-Hayat, and the London Review of Books, take us from the Oslo Accords through the U.S. led invasion of Iraq, and present information and perspectives too rarely visible in America.Said is unyielding in his call for truth and justice.