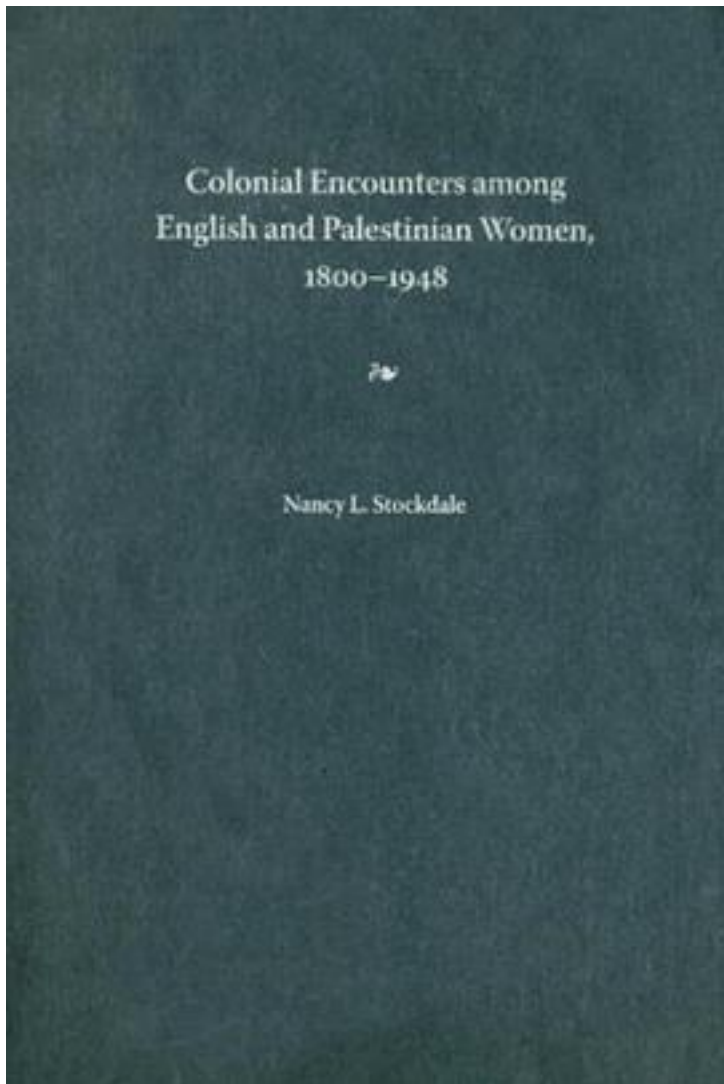


Colonial Encounters Among English and Palestinian Women, 1800-1948



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The setting of Palestine as the "Land of the Bible" made it a geographical space that English people felt they already knew. Using the "knowledge" they brought with them, coupled with the knowledge they collected, they asserted English superiority over Palestinians and their society. Nancy Stockdale shows us that fundamental to this process were English women, who played an active role in the imperial attempt to disseminate English culture and authority in this contested space. British women travelers and missionaries worked to significantly alter Palestinian women's lives, while painting a portrait of Palestine as a backward, ignorant place in need of English moral and political leadership. The Palestinian women who embraced British culture found themselves trapped between their indigenous culture and the culture of the imperial power, never fully accepted into either. This resulted in feelings of disappointment and betrayal, and contributed to the ultimate failure of the English imperial project in Palestine. By illuminating the manner in which Palestinian women viewed English women--often as exotic as their own image in the minds of the English--Stockdale demonstrates the reflexive nature of the colonial encounter, deflecting and reorienting the imperial gaze.

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