Afterword

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AFTERWORD

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This issue of *GLQ* is an important contribution to recent scholarship that brings together queer and postcolonial studies. It is also a particularly timely intervention into the debates about queer issues in the Middle East. These debates so far have been framed by two paradigms: the first understands queer Middle Eastern identities as an expression of a universal gay identity that is progressing toward full expression, with the West as its model; the second understands them as products of local cultures and histories, which sets them apart from Western expressions of gayness. While these paradigms have been used to study queerness in other non-Western societies, they have been particularly crippling when applied to the Middle East, for they inevitably have become enmeshed with the (neo-) orientalist and colonialist discourses that still dominate discussions of Arab and Muslim sexualities and, to a lesser extent, with the anticolonial discourses that resist them.

Focusing on queer issues as they relate to Palestine/Israel, the contributors to this special issue are well aware of the colonialist context within which the discourse about sexuality is deployed. As Gil Hochberg states in her comprehensive introduction, "This issue seeks to situate questions regarding LGBTQ rights, homophobia, and sexual policing, in direct relation to questions concerning the ethnonational and colonial politics that currently define the relationship between Israel and its occupied Palestinian population." The articles gathered here do indeed show that "discussions of queerness (and sexual politics more extensively) are essential for our understanding of national movements, colonial oppression, new technologies of state surveillance, and new modes of racial/ethnic/religious segregation." Collectively, they underscore the fact that queer sexualities, as both discourses and practices, are entangled, in the context of the Palestine-Israel conflict, with colonialism and nationalism in fundamental and complex ways that cannot be ignored. The rest of this afterword elaborates on some of these entanglements.

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Palestinian Queers: Now You See Them, Now You Don't . . .

The visibility of Palestinian queers in Israeli discourse is determined by Israel's colonial project, the core of which is the denial of Palestinian national rights. In Israeli discourse and consciousness, Palestinian queers occupy two extreme locations: either they are hypervisible or they are invisible. In both cases, it is their Palestinianness, not their queerness, that determines if and how they are seen. Two examples illustrate this.

In 2004 the Zionist Organization of America helped the Georgetown Israeli Alliance bring a Palestinian man to speak at the Georgetown campus. Hiding behind a wig, sunglasses, and a fake mustache, "Ali" claimed he was a gay Palestinian and spoke about the difficulties that he faced as a gay man in Palestinian society. But that was only part of his mission. He went on to sing the praises of the Israeli state as a haven for gay rights and to elaborate, as a good native informant, on the cultural differences between the repressive Palestinians and the liberal Israelis regarding homosexuality.[1] Ali's performance should be seen as one more in a long line of staged performances, where "others" are exhibited to propagandize for a colonial, racist agenda. Coming at the height of the Israeli repression of the Al Aqsa Intifada, Ali's cultural performance had one purpose only, which was to discredit the Palestinian people and their culture at a time when they were under assault by the Israeli military machine.

But this hypervisibility turns into invisibility when another Palestinian queer demands to speak. As Hochberg shows in her introduction, during the Tel Aviv demonstration to protest the homophobic killing of two young gay Israelis, Palestinians were denied the right to speak. Both the former Knesset member Issam Makhoul and a representative of Aswat, a lesbian Palestinian organization, were not allowed to address the crowd on their own terms. According to some reports, the organizers felt that "they could not go so far," and as a result, on that day, no Palestinians were visible on the national stage.[2] Those queer Palestinians demanding to speak were not the gay Palestinians the Israeli establishment likes to parade around. They do not present themselves as victims of Palestinian culture but as activists articulating a queer political agenda that is, simultaneously, anticolonial, antiracist, and antihomophobic.

Alisa Solomon charts the altered value of queerness for the state of Israel. "In today's Israeli culture war," she notes, "queerness — or at least the tolerance of queerness — has acquired a new rhetorical value for mainstream Zionism: standing against the imposition of fundamentalist religious law, it has come to stand for democratic liberalism."[3] The positive rhetorical function of queerness for

Zionism, however, goes beyond those internal culture wars (between secular Jews and religious Jews) into the wider culture wars between Israelis and Palestinians, where it functions to consolidate a fractured Zionist consensus.

Queer Demonization of Palestinians: Outing Arafat

While the Israeli narrative has been using its recent liberal record on gay rights to demonize Palestinian society and to portray it as exceptionally homophobic, it has also mobilized homophobia to tarnish Palestinians. Among the rumors that circulated after the death of the Palestinian leader Yaser Arafat was the claim that he died of AIDS. The story was first reported in the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz*, and then it was picked up by neocons and Zionist blogs.[4] According to this rumor, Arafat was a closeted gay man who engaged in homosexual sex in secret and who as a result contracted AIDS. The rumor is effective because it discredits Palestinians in the eyes of different constituencies. It appeals to the homophobia of the conservative circles for whom homosexuality is a sin, as demonstrated in the examples provided by James Kirchick:

> Mark Steyn wrote a mocking post titled "No Fatah, No Fems" (mocking gay personal ads that warn "No Fats, No Fems") on the *National Review* blog. Writing on the *American Thinker*, a popular conservative blog, James Lewis wrote of Arafat's "malevolent narcissism," a common trope used to disparage gay men with AIDS, and declared that "Arafat's attitudes about sex no doubt applied to his politics and warmaking as well."[5]

For liberal circles, the rumor demonizes the Palestinian leader and his people because it invokes orientalist stereotypes of deviant Arab and Muslim sexuality: if Arafat engaged in homosexual sex, it is not gay sex as we know it in the West. Rather, it is *their* oriental homosexual sex: secretive, sinful, and excessive. As for the gay community, Arafat's alleged gayness makes him a monster. As one gay site put it, Arafat was not only a closeted gay man but a gay man who didn't stop the killing and torture of other Palestinian gays by the Palestinian Authority, although it was in his power to do so.[6] But the discrediting of Arafat is further meant to discredit the Palestinian society as a whole. Thus Kirchick notes that "the Palestinians' denial that Arafat may have been gay is indicative of a broader self-delusion on their part to deny uncomfortable realities the most prominent of which is that a sovereign Israel is not going away."[7] In sum, the story of Arafat dying of AIDS has one moral only: the failure of Palestinian society. As Ian Barnard points out,

this kind of "queer demonization" was used to queer-trash "Manuel Noriega and Saddam Hussein (each 'exposed' as a transvestite who has sex with boys or men) soon after the United States attacked their countries."[8] It provided a similar cover for aggression directed against Palestinians.

Queer Demonization of Palestinians: The Demon-Lover

Barnard refers to another kind of queer demonization, which is queer desire for demons. In Eytan Fox's film *The Bubble* (2006), Noam's desire for Ashraf turns out to be a desire for a demon. Ashraf may have seemed to be a lover for most of the film (the gay Arab as the latest version of the "good Arab"), but as Noam's friend Yali suspects, "He doesn't feel real." By the end of the film, Ashraf reveals his true identity as the "sexy suicide bomber."[9] In her essay in this issue, Rebecca Stein offers a productive symptomatic reading of the film, paying "close attention . . . to the absences and silences" of the production and convincingly showing how "Fox's representations of gay Israeli life are intimately enmeshed with the fabric of Israel's military occupation." I would like to follow up on this reading by highlighting some more of those absences and silences in the film, especially regarding the representation of queer Palestinians. These absences and silences, I believe, make the film more of a colonial fantasy about the colonial Other than an anti-occupation film.

In exposing the self-delusion of its twenty-something anti-occupation protagonists, the film, through omissions and displacements, constructs a bigger delusion about Palestinian queerness that is indifferent to the pernicious ways that the Israeli military occupation deploys sexuality to consolidate its stranglehold on the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza. At some point in the film, Ashraf appears naked with other Israeli queers in an anti-occupation poster (versions of that poster are used for the film's publicity). When Jihad, Ashraf's Hamas relative, shows the poster to Ashraf in a gesture of blackmail, Ashraf "volunteers" himself as a suicide bomber. But if we step outside Fox's bubble into the real world, we find that Ashraf is more likely to be blackmailed for his homosexuality by the Israeli secret service. It is widely believed in the Palestinian community in the West Bank and Gaza that the Israel Security Agency (*Shabak)* pressures Palestinian gay men into collaboration. In the testimonies I read gathered by various Palestinian political organizations during the first Intifada, young men "confessed" that the Israeli Secret Service photographed them having sex with women and sometimes with men and were then pressured into collaboration to

avoid public exposure.[10] While homophobia in Palestinian society certainly facilitates the perception of gays as threats to national security, Israeli recruiting practices, which always prey on the most vulnerable groups in Palestinian society, give much credence to these fears. One Palestinian gay man described this intertwining of homosexuality and collaboration, which turned him into a suspect by his own community: "We were seen as a dangerous 'fifth column' in the Palestinian struggle against Israel. . . . For their part, knowing that gays are despised in the PA [Palestinian Authority], the Israeli police and military apparatus target Palestinian gays for blackmail, thus turning many into their own informants. All this in turn feeds the hatred and mistrust of gays in the PA and the perception that we are all 'collaborators.'"[11]

Several other Palestinian gay men interviewed by Michael Kagan and Anat Ben-Dor offer similar accounts. It is clear from their testimonies that for those who arrested, interrogated, and tortured them, gayness itself is inseparable from collaboration. One automatically implies the other. Any understanding of Palestinian homophobia, then, cannot limit itself to references to Islam and culture, as *The Bubble* implies, but has to take the context of military occupation as a constitutive element of this homophobia. The violence Ashraf fears when Noam and Lulu visit him in his Nablus home disguised as French reporters ("Do you want them to kill me?") is not simply the violence of Palestinian homophobia, as the movie suggests, but also the violence of a society under siege, traumatized by "targeted assassinations," suspected collaborators, networks of informants, and fears of infiltrations.

Ashraf's visibility in *The Bubble* goes hand in hand with the invisibility in the film of Palestinian men from the West Bank and Gaza who survive on the streets of Tel Aviv as sex workers. These "sweet boys" not only foreground the exploitative nature of the queer encounters between Israeli and Palestinian men, they also expose the myth of Israeli hospitality to gay Palestinians on which *The Bubble* is premised. The Israeli men who buy the service of these Palestinian men may have the luxury of thinking these interactions are "not about politics," as one Israeli client puts it, but the Palestinian men do not have that privilege.[12] These men live in Israel illegally and dangerously and are subjected to police harassment, imprisonment, and deportation. As Kagan and Ben-Dor show in their report, Israel systematically denies asylum to gay Palestinians, who are always viewed as a "security and demographic threat."[13] Because of their nationality, Palestinian gay men "have been subject to more rapid deportation with fewer procedural safeguards than other migrants in Israel."[14] *The Bubble* would have been a different film if Noam were buying sex from Ashraf on the streets of Tel Aviv. But the pres-

ence of those queer Palestinians has to be suppressed along with any Palestinian queer activists who are Israeli citizens. They are as invisible here as they were during the rally mentioned earlier. Their presence would disrupt the Jew-Arab dichotomy on which the movie is built, where gay liberation belongs with the first term and is absent from the second.

The Bubble's representation of Israeli and Palestinian violence completes Ashraf's queer demonization. While Israeli violence is shown to be incidental and pragmatic, Palestinian violence, in contrast, is underscored as premeditated and primal. With this representation, the film undermines whatever anti-occupation stance it may have intended by its failure to represent Israeli violence against Palestinians in terms other than those of the hegemonic national discourse. The film may dispel the fantasy that gayness can be apolitical and "the idealistic and complacent hope that gayness inevitably represents some kind of oppositional position."[15] However, it still holds to another fantasy that the violence that punctures the idealistic bubble still comes with the queer Palestinian, not from Israel but from elsewhere.

Queering the Checkpoint

The border between the here and the elsewhere is the checkpoint. Three of the four essays that make up this issue foreground the Israeli military checkpoint as an important location for queer encounters, constructions, and resistance. Noam and Ashraf's attraction occurs at a checkpoint the moment Ashraf is forced to expose his body for military inspection; Sharif Waked's video *Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints* (2003) is constructed around this checkpoint violence inflicted on Palestinian male bodies, and Jason Ritchie suggests that "the metaphor of the checkpoint" is better than "the closet" in terms of capturing the experiences of queer Palestinians. In the roundtable discussion with Palestinian activists, the checkpoint is mentioned again, this time as a major impediment to queer activism.

In her introduction Hochberg suggests that the power of the checkpoint may perhaps be "undermined by subversive acts of embodied national, ethnic, and sexual dissent." In her reading of Waked's video, she proposes that "the film's engagement with (homosexual) desire and desirability is most instrumental in ascribing political agency to the occupied Palestinian body: empowered with the ability to tease, seduce, and taunt, this body is no longer a mere image of martyrdom, terror, captivity or victimhood. It is a body that is brought back to life—desired and desiring."

In my less optimistic reading of the video, the first part, the fashion show,

operates as a fantasy of the other—a fantasy exposed through the stark reality of the unsexy naked bodies of the video's second half. It is significant that *Chic Point* ends with these images, giving them the final say, so to speak. It allows the sexy suicide bomber fantasized about in Fox's film to dominate the first half, but then uses the archival footage of the second half to expose it as a fantasy enabled by the colonial violence inflicted on the bodies of Palestinian men. The fact that the archival stills emphasize the viewpoint of soldiers looking at the Palestinian bodies refocuses our attention on who has the power to look, gaze, and desire. Referring to works like *M. Butterfly* and *The Crying Game*, Barnard reminds us that "dominant subjects are more willing and able to know and play out their own fantasies of the Other . . . than the Other is; in so doing they can also hope to annihilate the presence of the Other altogether by incorporating this phantasmatic Other into their own performances."[16] Waked's video can be seen as exposing and resisting this cannibalistic fantasizing about the other.

But this is not to say that the "other" is incapable of fantasy. In her novel *The End of Spring*, the Palestinian writer Sahar Khalifeh includes a queer encounter between a Palestinian man and an Israeli soldier. The encounter takes place at a checkpoint in the context of the Al Aqsa Intifada. In the scene, Ahmad is trying to smuggle his wounded brother out of Nablus. The pickup truck they are riding in is stopped at a checkpoint, which gets attacked by Palestinian fighters. A young Israeli soldier falls on the ground. Crying, he looks up at Ahmad:

> He had tears in his eyes and all over his face and chin. Ahmad saw him there on the ground, balled up like a wounded dog, his soft face like a girl's. There was a flash, one flash like a camera, a quick glimpse, a picture enlarged under rays of light, not colors, just lights, and lightning and thunder and shrapnel and the Khamsin wind. The older soldier threw him onto the younger one and the two were joined together. Ahmad could feel the young soldier's body tremble "[stiffen]." What a tragedy, or rather, what a comedy! Moments ago he had been on top of his brother, and now here he was on top of this guy. Ahmad badly wanted to strangle him, to take out all his anger on him, but the guy was trembling and shaking [gasping] like a girl [like girls]. Ahmad's heart was torn and his tears flowed ice-cold. He buried his face in the other's back and pressed hard on him, and so the soldier [other] calmed down and surrendered, waiting for either death or mercy, one or the other. The two found themselves in an awkward [strange, queer] position, one embracing the other feverishly and trembling, both bawling uncontrollably, like girls.[17]

At first, it seems that the feminized Israeli soldier surrenders to the Palestinian man on top, thus reenacting a normative masculinist fantasy of power in which the oppressed dominates his oppressor. But that moment is transformed into a queer moment when Ahmad too sheds his normative masculinity and cries "like girls." United by their vulnerability and fear, the two enemies become intimate. It is a fleeting moment, interrupted by a kick from the older soldier's boot and an order to move. In the next scene Ahmad and his cousin Issa are crucified on front of the tank, their bodies used as human shields. At the end of the novel, Ahmad will be shot dead while driving his ambulance into a group of Israeli soldiers who just bulldozed his family's house.

I would like to read this queer moment, which comes out of nowhere and goes nowhere, as another example of Khalifeh's "impossible fictions," which offer fleeting glimpses of an alternative reality.[18] Yet imagining an alternative reality is not the same as transgressing the brutal reality of the occupation. Like Khalifeh, I would caution against an exaggerated optimism regarding the power of transgression. Yes, queer desire may have the potential to be subversive, but does it really transcend the colonial context in which it is enmeshed?

My skepticism about the power of subversion extends to the experience of the queer political group Black Laundry. Amalia Ziv's essay in this issue is valuable for documenting the history of this group and for drawing attention to its major contribution, which is the insistence on connecting queer and anti-occupation activism, thus breaking with the mainstream Israeli gay movement, which believes anticolonial activism is irrelevant to queer issues. Yet the history of Black Laundry as recounted in Ziv's article also shows the limitations of this kind of activism. For one, the group's desire to construct a world "in which sexuality supplants nationality as a primary axis of identity and belonging" is not likely to be shared by many Palestinian queers who do not wish to have their nationality supplanted by sexuality, but would like to own both forms of identity. As the Palestinian lesbian activist Rauda Morcus puts it: "Our power as women and as lesbians and as Palestinians is in not choosing one identity over the other but in insisting that there is a way to create a space for all. I am all of these identities—I am a lesbian and I am woman and I am a Palestinian and these three cannot be separated."[19]

The slogans Black Laundry used to draw connections between different kinds of oppressions are also problematic and point to some of the limitations of analogy for progressive politics. In one of the handouts that Ziv cites, Black Laundry states: "The oppression of minorities inside Israeli is a product of the same racism, the same chauvinism, and the same militarism that sustains the oppression and the occupation of the Palestinian people. . . . In a militaristic soci-

ety there is no room for the other and the underprivileged: lesbians, gay men, transsexuals, labor immigrants, women, Mizrachim, Arabs, Palestinians, the poor, the disabled, and others." This analogizing of Palestinian oppression with other kinds of oppressions not only constitutes Palestinians as heterosexual but is also reductive in other ways. For, as Janet Jakobsen argues, an analogy can reduce "the relationship between various 'oppressions' to their similarities, and the complexities of their interrelations are lost."[20] Analyzing the analogy that compares the oppression of gays and lesbians to that of African Americans, Jakobsen concludes that "the analogy fails to recognize differences, such as the historical effects of racialization grounded not merely in discrimination but in the history of slavery."[21] Similarly, Black Laundry's analogy risks erasing the specificity of Palestinian history, including that of Al Nakba and its catastrophic aftermath. According to Ziv, Black Laundry's hybrid slogans such as "Free condoms, Free Palestine," "undermine[s] the prevailing view of nationality and sexuality as separate spheres and discrete dimensions of identity, and contest[s] the hierarchical ordering that regards national identity as the more primary and important category of affiliation of the two." But for progressive politics, this is an incomplete project. For what is the purpose of arguing that sexual politics and national politics cannot be divorced from each other if not to expose the complex relation between them? A progressive politics would show not only how different oppressions are alike but also how they are different and the roots of this difference. In this context, I find Dana International's statement that "it is easier to be a transsexual in Israel than an Arab" more subversive than Black Laundry's hybrid slogans. Deployed in 1998 to the global audience of the Eurovision song contest as the queer national symbol of the liberal Israeli state, the transsexual Dana International underscores what Black Laundry's slogans erase: the irreducible difference between two forms of oppressions. She reminds us that the state of Israel could institutionalize gay rights for Israelis (the first half of Black Laundry's hybrid slogan) and still continue to brutally suppress the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza and to discriminate against them as a minority within the state. Not only that but, as Dana International's success demonstrates, gay liberation can become another tool to consolidate occupation and racism.

Does the Palestinian Queer Exist? And Can She Speak?

One of the most important contributions of this special issue is providing a forum for three queer Palestinian activists to speak about the complexity of their identities and politics. While they make clear that they do not speak for all Palestinian

LGBTQs (members of the organizations from the West Bank and Gaza are absent) and that they do not necessarily agree among themselves on strategies or details (the women's rights approach of Aswat is different from the queer activism of Al-Qaws), they do succeed in laying out the major challenges facing their work and the strategies they employ to address these challenges.

One challenge is forging a queer agenda in the context of occupation and racism. Haneen Maikey finds that rejecting "the idea of political hierarchies" is particularly important. As a political choice dictated by the lived realities of Palestinian queers, Al-Qaws's approach is the best alternative to the "prioritizing model" of struggle that has dominated the Palestinian national movement for decades and which had crippled the progressive forces within this movement.[22] Despite its youth, Al-Qaws, in my opinion, has already much to teach the more-established Palestinian women's movement and leftist groups.

Another challenge facing Palestinian queer organizations is that of building a safe community where LGBTQ Palestinians can grow personally and politically. Again, homophobia and patriarchy are only part of the story—almost the easy part, as Samira Saraya explains: "For a Palestinian lesbian citizen of Israel, it will likely take a lot of maneuvering for her to successfully attend one of Aswat's meetings; for a lesbian living in the West Bank this 'mission' is almost impossible, and for the one in Gaza, it is not even remotely conceivable." But despite this fragmentation, both Aswat and Al-Qaws include members who live in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. In and of itself that is an important political achievement that insists on Palestinianness as a primary category of identification. The community Aswat and Al-Qaws create by being "out"—in the political sense Rima talks about in this issue—is crucial for loosening the grip that the trope "homosexuality as collaboration" has on Palestinian society. One Palestinian queer activist told me that the main reason for his decision to return to the West Bank and not continue his graduate studies abroad was Al-Qaws's decision to work in Ramallah. Although this is an individual story, I do believe it reflects the difference local queer Palestinian activism is already making and has the potential to make.

It is particularly frustrating, then, that these queer activists have to contend with accusations that they are embracing an "inauthentic" identity that is foreign to Arab and Muslim culture. Not that such accusations are anything new. Palestinian (and Arab) feminists and leftists had always to justify themselves against charges launched at them by Islamists and conservative nationalists that their ideologies, lifestyles, and political agendas are marks of contamination by either an imperialist West or a communist East. The newness of these queer organizations, the small number of members, and their NGO status in some cases

have been used against them to discredit their rootedness, relevance, and loyalties.[23] They have been seen as tools of what Joseph Massad calls the "Gay International" that seeks to impose a heterosexual-homosexual regime on the Middle East as the continuation of the colonial, orientalist project in the area. Both Hochberg and Ritchie in this issue cogently point out some of the problems with this argument.

I contend that at the root of these problems is a misapplication of models drawn from Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* and Edward Said's *Orientalism*. As David Halperin reminds us, when Foucault wrote about the invention of the "homosexual," he was "speaking about discursive and institutional practices, not about what people really did in bed or what they thought about it. He is not attempting to describe popular attitudes or private emotions, much less is he presuming to convey what actually went on in the minds of different historical subjects when they had sex."[24] The accusations that Arab gays are inauthentic and that the "homosexual" is an "invention" of the West tend to collapse the differences between Arab and Western discourses, practices, ideas, and emotions. Yes, there is a Western discourse that invents the Arab homosexual as a victim of her culture, but that does not mean that all those who identify as gay, lesbian, or queer are "inventions." The desire to defend against orientalism as the dominant paradigm by which the West represents the East has encouraged the privileging of *Orientalism* as the main paradigm by which we seek to understand what is happening in the Arab world. It is important to remember that Said never claimed his book had anything to say about the lived realities of Arabs or Palestinians. Again, like Foucault, he was dealing with discourses and representations, specifically, Western ones. What I am calling the *Orientalism* paradigm privileges the power of the West's discourse to a degree that obscures resistances to this discourse, other competing discourses, and material realities. The inability of Massad to see anticolonial queer Arab activists outside this *Orientalism* paradigm is a case in point. For Palestinian queers, the Gay International is much less relevant (if at all) than the realities of occupation, racism, and homophobia with which they have to contend daily.

Said was well aware of the misuses of *Orientalism* in the context of the Arab world.[25] Perhaps he had these misuses in mind when he wrote: "All cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and unmonolithic. This, I believe, is as true of the contemporary United States as it is of the modern Arab world."[26] I would suggest keeping these words in mind when we debate issues of identity, "authenticity," and culture in relation to queer issues in the Arab world.

Notes

I would like to thank Rauda Morcus and Haneen Maikey for their cooperation and generosity with their time. My thanks also to a member of Al-Qaws, who wishes to remain anonymous, for answering the many questions I had while writing this essay. I am grateful to Gil Hochberg for her patience and persistence.

1. See Alex Tehranian, "Gay Man Criticizes Palestinian Society," *Hoya*, October 22, 2004, available at www.glapn.org/sodomylaws/world/palestine/psnews007.htm.
2. Nisreen and Dayna, "Palestinian Gays under the Hijab," *Aswat* www.aswatgroup.org/english/activities.php?article=422 (accessed March 31, 2010).
3. Alison Solomon, "Viva la Diva Citizenship: Post-Zionism and Gay Rights," in *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, ed. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 153.
4. See Uri Avnery, "Who Murdered Arafat," Rense.com, September 11, 2005, www.rense.com/general67/whod.htm; Aaron Klein, "Secret Report: Arafat May Have Died of AIDS," World Net Daily, September 8, 2005, www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=46221; and "Was Arafat a Homosexual Who Died of Aids," Betar-Tagar UK, September 8, 2005, www.betar.co.uk/articles/betar1100400106.php.
5. James Kirchick, "Was Arafat Gay? An Old Rumor Gains New Force," Out.com, out.com/detail.asp?id=22719 (accessed March 31, 2010).
6. Kirchick, "Was Arafat Gay?"
7. Kirchick, "Was Arafat Gay?"
8. Ian Barnard, "The United States in South Africa: (Post)Colonial Queer Theory?" in *Postcolonial and Queer Theories: Intersections and Essays*, ed. John C. Hawley (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2001), 137.
9. For sexualizing representations of Palestinian suicide bombers, see my essay "Palestinian Women's Disappearing Act: The Suicide Bomber through Western Feminist Eyes," *MIT: International Journal of Middle East Studies* 5 (2005), web.mit.edu/cis/www/mitejmes.
10. I was given access to these documents during my field research in the West Bank in 1998. While I realize that these "confessions" were extracted under pressure and recognize their formulaic nature, I believe they are valuable in showing the powerful hold the trope of homosexuality as collaboration has in the Palestinian national discourse. For more on these "confessions," see my article, "Between Complicity and Subversion: Body Politics in Palestinian National Narrative," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 102 (2003): 747–68. For more on Israel's use of sexual blackmail to recruit informants, see Charity Crouse, "Out and Down and Living in Israel," Indymedia, June 16, 2003, de.indymedia.org/2003/06/54773.shtml.

11. Michael Kagan and Anat Ben-Dor, *Nowhere to Run: Palestinian Asylum-Seekers in Israel* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Buchman Faculty of Law, 2008), 10, available online at www.law.tau.ac.il/Heb/Uploads/dbsAttachedFiles/NowheretoRun.pdf.
12. Crouse, "Out and Down."
13. Kagan and Ben-Dor, *Nowhere to Run*, 5.
14. Kagan and Ben-Dor, *Nowhere to Run*, 7.
15. Barnard, "United States in South Africa," 134.
16. Barnard, "United States in South Africa," 131.
17. Sahar Khalifeh, *The End of Spring*, trans. Paula Haydar (Northampton, MA: Interlink, 2008), 138. The square brackets contain my translation of the Arabic original, which better captures the queerness of the moment (Sahar Khalifeh, *Rabee' Haar [Hot Spring]* [Beirut: Dar al Adab, 2004], 186).
18. For a discussion of other such moments, see Amireh, "Between Complicity and Subversion."
19. Rauda Morcus, e-mail message to author, December 28, 2009.
20. Janet R. Jakobsen, "Queers Are Like Jews, Aren't They? Analogy and Alliance Politics," in *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, ed. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 67.
21. Jakobsen calls for a form of analogy that "recognize[s] the complexity of relation named by it," what she calls a "relational reading" or a "twining" (71). For another critique of analogies as the basis for political alliance, see Jasbir Puar's discussion in *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 117–21.
22. As a consequence of this prioritizing paradigm, leftist and women's groups, in my opinion, could not forge a connection between what they called a "social agenda" and "a national agenda." Issues relating to sexuality, for instance, were meant to be dealt with after (national) liberation.
23. See, for example, Ernesto Pagano's interview with Joseph Massad, "The West and the Orientalism of Sexuality," Reset DOC: Dialogues on Civilization, December 14, 2009, www.resetdoc.org/EN/Massad-interview-gay.php. See also, at the same URL, Ghassan Makarem's reply, "We Are Not Agents of the West," and Massad's counter-reply to Makarem: "I Criticize Gay Internationalists, Not Gays."
24. David M. Halperin, "Forgetting Foucault: Acts, Identities, and the History of Sexuality," *Representations* 63 (1998): 97.
25. See Sabry Hafez, "Edward Said's Intellectual Legacy in the Arab World," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 33, no. 3 (2004): 81–83.
26. Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994), xxix.