Introduction Israelis, Palestinians, Queers: Points of Departure

Gil Z. Hochberg

GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies, Volume 16, Number 4, 2010, pp. 493-516 (Article)

Published by Duke University Press

INTRODUCTION

Israelis, Palestinians, Queers: Points of Departure

Gil Z. Hochberg

No nationalist discourses decry the colonial imposition of heterosexuality.
—Jarrod Hayes, *Queer Nations: Marginal Sexualities in the Maghreb*

Nationalisms do not simply exclude sexual dissidents, the relationship between queers and the nation-state is more ambivalent.
—Jon Binnie, *The Globalization of Sexuality*

It is easier to be a transsexual in Israel than an Arab.
—Dana International, *Inquirer, June 18, 1998*

Tel Aviv, August 1, 2009. An armed individual burst into the Tel Aviv branch of the Israeli GLBT Association (HaAguda), killing two teenagers and wounding several others. The Israeli public outcry was instantaneous: a spontaneous demonstration took place the next day, followed by a large state memorial ceremony later in the week. Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, soon visited the crime scene, promising to fight homophobia. Attending the memorial service, Israel's president, Shimon Peres, condemned the killing and assured the audience that "Israel will never accept such violence and will not rest until the murderer is brought to justice."[1] Other key public figures participating in the memorial event—among them the minister of culture and sports, Tsipi Livni; the minister of education, Gideon Sa'ar; and Tel Aviv's mayor, Ron Huldai—warned against hate crimes and called on religious leaders to denounce homophobic propaganda. If the Israeli LGBTQ community was completely shocked by the murderous event that took place in the heart of Tel Aviv, a city that until then was considered a safe haven for sexual minorities, it was also positively surprised by the immediate

GLQ 16:4
DOI 10.1215/10642684-2010-001

and strong response of all top Israeli officials: "I shiver to the sounds of our president's words. We have been waiting to hear such [encouraging] words and be embraced like this by the president for many years. . . . it is sad that our embrace comes at such a high price," said the journalist, scriptwriter, and film producer Gal Ochovski, who hosted the memorial ceremony in Tel Aviv. The "embrace" of the LGBTQ community by state officials came not only at the price of the innocent lives lost to homophobic violence, however, but also at the price of national conformity.[2] Impressive as the governmental response to the event was, one must not overlook how the tragic deaths of the two young homosexuals, one lesbian and one gay, was immediately hijacked to promote a hyperpatriotic agenda. It solidified the image of Israel as a modern, liberal, progressive, democratic, and all-inclusive state, a "Thou-Shall-Not-Kill Nation," as declared by President Peres, who further announced that "the bullets that earlier this week hit the GLBT community have hit us all. As humans. As Jews. As Israelis." Prime Minister Netanyahu also took the opportunity to praise Israel for being "a country of tolerance," declaring the murder "anti-Israeli," an idea echoed by Livni, who announced that the incident was exceptional and "does not reflect the Israeli society." The horrendous murder was thus swiftly turned into a national tragedy around which the liberal sector of the Israeli Jewish collective united in mourning. Rainbow flags waved alongside Israeli flags as the memorial ceremony that drew more than fifty thousand people ended, appropriately for a state ceremony, with the singing of the national anthem. While a few public speakers noted that homophobia, like other forms of violence, does not develop in isolation but must be understood as the outcome of a broader sociopolitical reality fueled by violence, hate, and fear, the overwhelming majority of speakers chose to isolate the event, presenting it as an exception to the otherwise peaceful, tolerant, and liberal nature of Israeli society.

In the essay that opens this special issue, Rebecca L. Stein discusses another memorial service, this time from Eytan Fox's television series *Florentin*. Her reading focuses on the moment in which the main character, Tomer, comes out to his family, as they are all gathered together around the television watching the footage from the memorial service that took place the day after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin on November 5, 1995. It is a bitter irony, then, that when, a decade later, an actual memorial service to commemorate two innocent queer youths takes place in Tel Aviv (at the very same site where Rabin was assassinated and where the memorial service depicted cinematically in *Florentin* takes place), it acquires an explicitly nationalistic character. Situating the loss of Israeli queer lives at the heart of a national mourning discourse that promotes the myth of an all-inclusive Israeli Jewish national unity ("the bullets that earlier this week hit

the GLBT community have hit us all. As humans. As Jews. As Israelis"), the queer narrative generated at the memorial service does more than simply reinforce the idea that the nation-state provides the most appropriate frame for a gay self-narration. It further naturalizes the subjection of queer affiliations to the standards of Zionist ethnonational exclusivity, as evidenced by the noticeable absence of any Israeli Palestinian public figures or Israeli Palestinian queer activist speakers at the event.

Justifying the decision to reject the request of former Israeli Palestinian Knesset member Issam Makhol to participate at the memorial ceremony after the latter refused to have his speech reviewed in advance, a spokesperson for the Tel Aviv HaAguda commented: "We didn't want [him] to make any connection between our memorial ceremony and the occupation. Our event was dedicated to the memory of two young people whose death was brought about due to sexual preferences, and this has nothing to do with [things like] the occupation."[3] Enforcing this artificial split between various modes of violence and discrimination—one on the basis of sexual differences and the other on the basis of ethnonational differences—the memorial service for the victims of homophobia was thus mobilized to reinforce national amnesia.

In contrast to this compartmentalized understanding of the Israeli Palestinian political reality, this special issue traces the ties that inevitably link the oppression of sexual minorities to the oppression of other social minorities. In analyzing the intricate dynamics defining the relationship between what can be broadly called "queer politics" and "the question of Palestine/Israel," this issue seeks to situate questions over LGBTQ rights, homophobia, and sexual policing in direct relation to questions about the ethnonational and colonial politics that currently define the relationship between Israel and the occupied Palestinian population. The underlying belief that guides and propels this project is that discussions of "queerness" (and sexual politics more extensively) are essential for our understandings of national movements, colonial oppression, new technologies of state surveillance, and new modes of racial/ethnic/religious segregation. This is true as a general rule, and it is certainly the case for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the complex set of ideologies and technologies that help sustain hostility and regulate the separation between Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, occupiers and the occupied. Accordingly, this issue addresses the following questions:

- How do current mechanisms of surveillance and control pervasive in Palestine/Israel (such as checkpoints and security fences) function to

monitor and prevent both "sexual deviance" and transgressions of ethnic or national borders? How, in turn, is their power undermined by subversive acts of embodied national, ethnic, and sexual dissent?

- How does the Israeli state mobilize the discourse of gay rights to promote its own national interests, as in the case of its inclusion of openly self-identified homosexuals in the Israeli army? How does this policy of inclusion help the state not only expand its military forces but also nationalize and militarize its gay citizens, assuming their patriotism as a form of normalization?
- How does queer politics relate, inform, facilitate, challenge, or advance the current uneven and colonial relationships between Israelis and Palestinians? Is there, in this regard, a reason to believe that there may be something unique about queer politics that makes it particularly suitable for challenging the status quo?
- What is the role of identity politics in bringing together or tearing apart national collectives to create alternative political centers? What is the impact, if any, of the interactions between Israeli Jewish and Palestinian queer activists in facilitating this process?
- What modes of political practice and strategy prove most effective for queer activists operating in Israel and Palestine? To what degree, for example, is visibility or the notion of coming out, which has functioned as a central emancipatory political tool throughout the history of Western queer liberation movements, useful in this context? How different might the criteria for political effectiveness be, in this regard, for activists operating in different social sectors of Palestine/Israel?
- To what degree of success do local Israeli and Palestinian queer activism and artistic production provide alternative cultural and political frameworks through which to understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, while challenging the pervasive myth of "the clash of civilizations" that dominates hegemonic presentations of the conflict?
- How is local queer political and artistic activity helpful in foregrounding the conflict in sexuality, revealing in turn that sexual politics is not secondary to the political issues at stake but rather integrated into the national political scene, itself seen as politics par excellence?

Read as a whole, this special issue tackles these questions to demonstrate how the discourses of gay rights and sexual tolerance, on the one hand, and the role of state-regulated sexual behaviors, identifications, and bonds, on the other, come to

crisscross and complicate the more common and openly discussed concerns associated with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: national security, militarism, border control, colonial oppression, military occupation, terrorism, religious conviction, and ethnonational self-determination. As demonstrated by the following essays, sexual politics and, more specifically, issues concerning queerness (queer bodies, queer politics, queer desires), while appearing secondary, marginal, or simply "irrelevant" in this context, do in fact play a central role in both facilitating and transgressing the current hostile and oppressive relationship between Israelis and Palestinians.

If the first goal of this special issue, then, is to highlight the importance of revisiting and complicating some of the more common representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through critical lenses developed in queer and feminist studies, and placing emphasis on sexuality as a politicized category, the second goal is to expand the growing scholarship that analyzes the interface between sexuality and nationalism by focusing on one of today's most heated global political debates, which nevertheless gains very little, if any, attention within global queer studies. This issue accordingly pays close attention to modes of cultural translation as it probes the possibilities and limitations of "borrowing" critical terminology and social mappings developed primarily in the United States (such as the term *queer* itself) to analyze the politics of sexuality in the Israeli-Palestinian context.

Queer Politics

The term *queer politics* is used in this issue to refer to both a body of politics that centers on the experience, rights, bodies, languages, cultures, exclusions, and inclusions of LGBTQ and other sexual minorities and a body of politics dedicated to the queering of the political as such. *Queer*, in other words, stands as both an adjective—marking bodies, issues, desires, and so forth as queer—and as a verb, questioning normative articulations of the political and the very processes by which we determine the scope of what counts as political.

While the term *queer* derives from a particular U.S. cultural context and is in that sense "foreign" to Palestine/Israel, it is used here for two main reasons.[4] The primary reason is that, at the moment, there seems to be no comparable "local" term in circulation. In Israel, *queer* has long been adopted along with the Hebrew term *ge'e* (meaning "proud," which sounds much like the English *gay*), with the first used more frequently by radical political activists, who make a point of distinguishing themselves from more mainstream Israeli gay and lesbian orga-

nizations. Among Palestinians, *queer* is not as commonly used, but Palestinian political activists have more recently begun to mobilize it, in the absence of an Arabic term that emphasizes the political and performative aspect of gendered and sexualized identities. Older medieval Islamic terms such as *sahq* and *sihaqa* (denoting the sexual act of "lesbianism" as rubbing), and *Luti* or *Luwatat* (associating gay homosexuality with sodomy and the sinful behavior of Lot) are rejected by activists for their negative, scrutinizing clinical or theological implications.[5] Other currently available Arabic terms, such as *shudhudh* (*shaz* in the singular) or *mithliyyun/mithliyyat* are also rejected by many activists, as the first carries a strongly negative judgmental connotation of "deviant" or "pervert" (which for many Arabic speakers is still much harder to digest than the "foreign" term *queer* even if it is similarly associated with notions of perversity and deviance), while the latter, which simply refers to "sameness" and by implication to same-sex attraction, seems to miss the political dimension embedded in the category of sexuality.[6]

Finally, I choose the term *queer* because as much as I worry about the Western-centered focus of queer globalization, I am equally disturbed by the glorification of so-called authentic localized sexual economies, imagined to exist beyond, before, or after the colonial impositions of the West. Above all, it is imperative for us to recognize that within the various discourses on globalization, anticolonial nationalism, and the so-called cultural wars between Western and non-Western cultures, queers (as well as their politics) become saturated with excessive symbolic meaning, representing much more than concerns about sexual identities or acts. Mobilized along the frontier of anticolonial and anti-imperialist cultural wars, these figures and their politics come to represent betrayal, assimilation, and the ultimate cultural symbol of the West, with its claims to modernity, progress, and civilization. Informed by a growing and diverse body of literature dedicated to revisiting some of the earlier and more rigid perceptions of cultural exchange between the (colonial) West and the (colonized) East—elaborated, for example, in critical reformulations of Edward Said's *Orientalism*—and the numerous studies dedicated to the multidirectional nature of the cultural transactions that are often concealed under the more visible and obvious dominance of Euro-American globalism, queer studies has in recent years dedicated many efforts to "liberating" queerness from its static position as a marker of Western, imperial epistemic violence.[7] Some critics have attempted to undermine Western-centered queer globalization by creating alternative local sites and vocabularies of exploration.[8] Others have further questioned the rigid presentations of certain sites ("the West") and localities as sexually liberated and queer-friendly versus other sites ("the East") as repressive and homophobic.[9] Still others have suggested that simply removing

the West from the center of queer globalization and doing away with the image of the East as inherently homophobic is insufficient for providing a theoretical and political agenda to diffuse the geopolitical and cultural maps across which "queer" travels throughout global economies.[10] Along these lines, and drawing on the term *queer diffusions* coined by Larry Knopp and Michel Brown, Natalie Oswin proposes that we overcome "two overriding and interrelated separations [that] persist: those of the West from the non-West and the global from the local."[11] In paying attention to the ongoing circulation of the terms West/East and local/global, Oswin helps us see how these discursive borders are naturalized as dividing lines, even in critical attempts dedicated to undermining them. Instead of subscribing to these given cultural frames, Oswin suggests that we should draw attention to the fact that "there is something other than the local and the global, the western and the non-western."[12] I would like to suggest that this "something" is culture itself—an entity that is hard to pin down precisely because it is mobile, translatable, and in a constant state of becoming. Culture, then, cannot be fixed and neatly mapped onto preexisting geopolitical, linguistic, and ethnonational maps. Rather, it is articulated as a movement between sites, languages, traditions, and localities. Even within the uneven dynamics of colonial domination, cultural translation is never simple or one-directional. With such an understanding of culture, we find ourselves shifting attention away from fixed localities and notions of "authenticity" to notions of translation, mimicry, impurity, and transformation, which are more productive (and more explicitly queer) ways to trace the impact of queer politics at its various "local" manifestations.

The task of mapping such queer geopolitics onto Palestine/Israel is, however, far from easy. Borders, divisions, and separations (cultural, geographic, linguistic, ethnic, religious, and national) are perhaps nowhere guarded, fixed, and naturalized with as much passion and rigidity as they are in today's Palestine/Israel. To bring queer politics to bear on the question of Palestine/Israel, then, is to begin by questioning the validity of borders: the legislative, military, and cultural borders separating Israelis and Palestinians, Jews and Arabs, Hebrew and Arabic, Israel and the "occupied territories," as well as those discursive borders separating national politics and sexual politics, or the so-called Western character of Israel (often ascribed to its Judeo-Christian values), and the so-called Eastern nature of the Palestinian society (most often associated with the cultural heritage of Islam). This special issue does so not by denying or minimizing the impact of Western cultural dominance, or by overlooking the epistemological violence in the very compulsion to translate political realities into Western (and in the case of Israel, occupying) vocabularies. Rather, it seeks to complicate the very notions of

cultural authenticity and cultural locality by emphasizing the particular cultural exchanges that take place between, across, and through the multiple interactions between Israelis and Israeli culture, as an occupying force, and Palestinians and Palestinian culture, as the oppressed segment of society, which still, *as such*, play an active role in this cultural exchange. To discuss queer (politics) in the context of Palestine/Israel, then, is not to deny the particularity of these cultural locations or their power structures. More accurately, it is an attempt to situate these particularities in a cultural framework that effectively diffuses the authority of static narratives about cultural authenticity so as to better capture the *actual* ongoing and multidirectional mobility of cultural vocabularies and "influences" across which queer travels.

The Question of Palestine/Israel

The second part of this special issue's title, "The Question of Palestine/Israel," resonates with Said's infamous 1979 meditation, "The Question of Palestine."[13] For Said, the question of Palestine is above all a question of historical injustice that carries detrimental consequences for the Palestinian people as well as for Israeli Jews. If the Jewish Zionist settlers saw in their aspiration to establish a Jewish state in Palestine a solution to the persistent "Jewish question," they failed to account for the tragic effects this "solution" would have on the Palestinian people, who since 1948 have become refugees and occupied people in their own land. Rather than solve the Jewish question, then, the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state re-created the question (which was from the outset a question about inclusion and exclusion within the modern nation space), in the form of the question of Palestine. As the title suggests, there is no question of Palestine that is separate from the question of Israel. For it is not just that the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state in 1948 resulted in the destruction of historical Palestine and the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem, but also that the current existence of Israel as a Jewish state is framed and enclosed by Palestine: the lost historical Palestine of the past and the future prospect of a rebuilt Palestine that fuels contemporary political aspirations. Bringing Israel and Palestine together under "the question," this special issue seeks to highlight this entangled reality and accordingly promote a politics of coexistence beyond and across current ethnonational and religious borders. It is for this reason, too, that I use the term *Palestine/Israel* when referring to the geographic, historical, and cultural space more commonly known as Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. If the use of the slashed name might be problematic, precisely because Palestine does not mark an exist-

ing viable national entity, it is nevertheless important, for it keeps the two names, Israel and Palestine, in motion and in relation to each other, refusing to adhere to the partitioned logic of the present political reality.

"The Conflict"

The history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the general facts of the troubling political and ethical questions it raises are all well known. It is not the goal of this issue to provide the reader with a comprehensive historical background or a political analysis of the conflict.[14] I shall therefore restrict these introductory comments about the conflict to a brief survey of how "the conflict" is most commonly represented and circulated discursively.

There are several, often conflicting ways in which the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is typically addressed. Most commonly discussed in terms of a national conflict between Israeli Jewish Zionists and Palestinians, both of whom are said to make claims of exclusive ownership to the same land, the conflict has also been analyzed in terms borrowed from the study of settler colonial regimes and anti-colonial liberation struggles. Such understandings emphasize the status of Palestinians as the native inhabitants of the land, pointing at the historical violence imposed on this population, whose individuals have been made into refugees in their own homeland by the Jewish colonial settlers and the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state in 1948. Still others ascribe theological weight to the conflict, locating it in relation to a long history of rivalry between Jews and Muslims dating back to the biblical sibling rivalry between Ishmael and Isaac. Finally, the conflict is often portrayed as an outcome of the clash between radically opposed cultural values or "civilizations": West versus East, modernity versus tradition, liberalism versus patriarchy, secularism versus religious fundamentalism, tolerance versus fanaticism, "Judeo-Christian values" versus "Islamic mentality." While these cultural frameworks are overtly simplistic and inherently flawed, they nevertheless continue to dominate mainstream representations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, associating Jewish Israel (often described as "the only democracy in the Middle East") with progress, liberalism, reason, and modernity while depicting the Palestinian people as fanatical nationalists (and more recently, at least since the victory of Hamas in Gaza, as fanatic Islamists) allied with terrorism.[15] Articulating alternative conceptual models, the contributors to this volume attend to the political forces at work in the making of (both Israeli or Palestinian/Arab) "culture" and their common staging on two opposed cultural frames. In other words, rather than accept that clashing civilizations (modernity versus tradition, the West versus

the East, liberalism versus fundamentalism, etc.) are the source of the ongoing conflict, this issue focuses on how such "differences" are themselves created (and preserved) as a discursive effect of a tainted political imagination that seeks to present the conflict as both "natural" (if not unavoidable) and irresolvable.

"Queer Politics Meets the Question of Palestine," or "It's a Gay Thing to Do"

One might be surprised to discover that while queer politics and the question of Palestine/Israel meet uneasily, they nevertheless meet quite frequently. Consider, for example, the case of QUIT! (Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism), a group of LGBTQ activists established in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2002.[16] The group's mission as posted on their Web page states: "*As queers*, we are part of an international movement for human rights that encompasses the movement for Palestinian liberation, and all other liberation movements. We are also part of the growing international movement seeking active ways to express our solidarity with the people of Palestine."[17] While this and other similar examples present the resistance to Israel's occupation of Palestine as an integral component of queer politics and a queer fight for social justice, other articulations of the relationship or "bond" between queer politics and the question of Palestine/Israel offer a radically different understanding of what amounts to a specifically queer or gay political commitment. In a brief article posted on shewired.com just days after the first massive Israeli attack on the Gaza Strip in December 2008, the matter is stated quite bluntly: "Supporting Israel—It's the Gay Thing to Do." Thus writes Libby Post, who explains that while she felt bad about the loss of innocent Palestinian lives because of Israel's air strike, she nevertheless considers it her duty as a gay person "to support a country that supports its LGBT citizens." "History will bear me out," she concludes, that "from a LGBT perspective, supporting Israel is the right thing to do."[18] A similar argument is promoted by the journalist James Kirchick in his dismissal of QUIT!: "There may be queers for Palestine, but Palestine certainly isn't for queers, either in the livable or empathetic sense. . . . Indeed, if one wanted to construe a 'gay' position on the Arab-Israeli conflict . . . the inescapable stance is nothing less than partiality for Israel. Israel, after all, is the only state in the Middle East that legally enshrines the rights of gay people."[19]

As these few examples reveal (and there are numerous others), one way that queer politics has been situated in direct relation with the question of Palestine/Israel is through the question, what is the right queer/gay thing to do? It is a gay thing to support Israel we learn from the more conservative voices; supporting

Palestinians is something we as queers ought to do, we hear from the more progressive end. The essays collected in this special issue do not prescribe what is the gay or queer thing to do. While two of the essays are dedicated to the question of queer activism, neither of them sets up a didactic political agenda. Focusing on Israeli and Palestinian activism, rather than that of American, Canadian, or other international groups, these essays, along with the other two, interrogate the different, even contradictory ways, in which local queer political activism comes to intersect with anticolonial and national politics, and with the fight against the Israeli occupation in particular. In so doing, they seek to offer more-nuanced accounts in place of the polemical and often ill-informed rhetoric of some international observers who, in their zeal to "do the gay thing," often fail to see the full spectrum of intricacies involved.

Visiting the Local Queer Scene(s)

In her essay Amalia Ziv argues that the radical Israeli queer activist group Black Laundry (*kvisa shchora*) "inaugurated the queer moment in Israel," which was until then dominated by a strictly gay and lesbian identity politics. Her essay demonstrates how the emergence of *queer* in Israel cannot be accounted for simply in terms of universal gay evolutionary narratives and vocabularies, but it should rather be understood (also) as a political reaction to the Israeli Occupation and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in general While Ziv's essay focuses on anti-occupation Israeli queer activism, Jason Ritchie's contribution focuses on Palestinian LGBTQ activists. Based on ethnographic interviews with both Israeli and Palestinian queer activists, Ritchie's essay examines the possibilities and limitations of a "politics of visibility," suggesting that the emphasis on visibility and coming out, which are central to Israeli LGBTQ activism, might not be as effective for Palestinian LGBTQ strategies or for promoting a cross-national collaborative Israeli and Palestinian queer agenda. Thus he suggests that it might be useful to replace the dominant metaphor of Western gay liberation movements adopted by Israeli activists, namely, "the closet," with a more-localized and politicized metaphor, that of "the checkpoint." Such a change in political terminology, Ritchie argues, is important if Israeli and Palestinian queer activists are to generate an emancipatory cross-national narrative that interrogates the meanings naturalized by nationhood.

While Ziv's and Ritchie's essays focus most explicitly on the work of local Israeli and Palestinian queer activists, the other two essays in the issue, Stein's and my own, shift attention to questions concerning cultural representations. In

her essay on the cinematic work of Fox, one of Israel's most celebrated film directors, Stein examines how *Florentin*, a television serial, and *The Bubble*, a feature film, negotiate the interplay among queerness, the Israeli state, and the Israeli military occupation. Produced nearly a decade apart, *Florentine* and *The Bubble* diverge considerably in their engagement with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a difference Stein reads in relation to two important historical moments: the peak of the Oslo peace negotiations in the mid-1990s and the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000. By reading Fox's works symptomatically, Stein demonstrates how they can be understood as indexes of the changing Israeli political landscape of the last decade—both the vacillating landscape of gay rights and visibility and the changing landscape of the Israeli occupation.

My own essay is dedicated to a seven-minute video performance *Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints* (2003), directed by the Palestinian artist Sharif Waked. My reading focuses on the subversive manner in which Waked's work represents the (male) body of the Palestinian as well as the encounter between this body and the gaze of the (male) Israeli soldier. I argue that Waked's ironic reworking of one of the most controversial practices that takes place at the Israeli checkpoints (in which Palestinians are ordered to take off their clothes as they are searched for hidden explosives) into a colorful and campy "fashion show" is productively scandalous. A fantastical reworking of hegemonic heteronormative and masculinist modes of narrating the nation, *Chic Point* relies heavily on mobilizing queer desire to call attention to the central role of homoeroticism—its enactment, repression, displacement, and redirection—in both sustaining and potentially transgressing the kind of violence "played out" in stripping rituals at Israeli checkpoints.

These essays are supplemented by a roundtable discussion I conducted with several Palestinian LGBTQ activists, a review of Elle Flanders's documentary film *Zero Degrees of Separation* (2007) by Hoda El Shakry, a review of Netalie Braun's film *Gevald* (2008) by Thea Gold, and an afterword by Amal Amireh that reflects on the project and points out possibilities for furthering the conversation. Finally, all books reviewed in the "Books in Brief" section fit the specific concerns of this special issue.

Queering the Conflict, or Between Sex and Politics

Over the last two decades many critics have drawn attention to the politics of sexuality, addressing (among other issues) the governmental enforcement of sexual norms, the heterosexualization of our social matrix, the relationship between

gender and sexual regulations, and the in/ability to transgress socially inscribed bodily formations and sexualized subjections. Several scholars have further highlighted the centrality of these matters for our understanding of national movements, colonial oppression, and new modes of racial/ethnic/religious segregation. Yet when it comes to Palestine/Israel, or to "the conflict," it appears that little, if any, discussion of sexual politics has so far taken place, even as we witness a significant growth in writings about gender and "women's rights" within this context.[20] Sexuality (queer sexuality, in particular) doesn't commonly enter the discussion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; when it does, it is generally relegated to an external position and seen as an apolitical matter, irrelevant if not explicitly disruptive to the political discussion. There is therefore a need to develop a political lexicon and political practice that effectively situates sexuality within the political even when we are dealing with the most heated political situations such as those found in Palestine/Israel. The idea that some political situations are simply too serious to afford the inclusion of queer politics or a politics that insists on the centrality of sexuality as a political category has long dominated our conception of the political sphere. Such thinking installs "the nation" as the center of all political gravity. To insist on queering the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, then, is to engage in undermining this normalized and naturalized political hierarchy. It is to reject the heterosexist portrayal of sexual politics as a "superfluous" (queer) preoccupation with sex.

Other popular misconceptions stand in the way of effectively queering the question of Palestine/Israel. Among these hurdles are the dismissal of "queer perspectives" or homosexuality itself as an exclusively "white thing," and the dismissal of Palestine and Palestinian (or Arab more generally) culture as intrinsically homophobic. The following two sections examine these problems and outline some of the ways local LGBTQ activists have so far addressed them.

"It's a White Thing"

Commenting on Frantz Fanon's dismissal of homosexuality as a component of a revolutionary anticolonial identity, José Muñoz notes that within the context of anticolonial discourse, this exclusion is not uncommon: "It is basically understood as an 'it's a white thing' dismissal of queerness."[21] Many others have since commented on the high price paid by queers of color because of such simplified perceptions.[22] If such dismissals seem laughable when used by Robert Mugabe or more recently by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to deny the existence of homosexuals in their countries or describe homosexuality as an "imported western disease," it becomes more daunting when we realize that it similarly informs the claims

made by Fanon, one of the most influential anticolonial thinkers of the twentieth century, for whom sexual perversion in general and homosexuality in particular represent a white pathology.[23] There "is no overt presence of homosexuality in Martinique," Fanon declares, and while he admits having met "several Martinicans who became homosexuals," he explains this in terms of financial necessity, insisting that this behavior does not reflect innate "neurotic homosexuality," which is an exclusively white phenomena.[24] Fanon in fact equates homosexuality with (white) racism, as he identifies the same pathologies as constitutive of both racism and homosexuality: "Fault, guilt, refusal of guilt, paranoia, one is back in homosexual territory."[25]

Writing five decades later, Joseph Massad knows better than to simply identify homosexuality as a white pathology or to equate it with white racism, but he nevertheless continues Fanon's line of thought, in arguing that there are, in effect, no Arab homosexuals. Both Fanon and Massad consider homosexuality to be a Western cultural product imposed on the colonized society. For Fanon, the logic framing this Manichaean understanding of culture is inherent in colonialism; for Massad, it reflects ongoing Western imperial dominance, particularly that of the United States. Furthermore, for both, homosexuality is located at the heart of these cultural wars. In the case of Fanon, homosexuality itself is equated with the white/Western imposition of pathology and racial violence. In Massad's case, international gay rights movements (along with the "white Western women's movement") are singled out as prime representatives of the Western cultural episteme violently imposed on the Arab world.[26]

Like Fanon, Massad acknowledges the existence of Arab men who engage in sexual activity with other men, but he denies the existence of Arabs who identify as homosexuals. According to Massad, Arab sexuality is organized along a radically different logic than the Western identitarian model. Sexuality for Arabs (always already only men) has historically been about acts and practices and not, until the invasive influence of Western ideologies, about identity.[27] Massad's view of "authentic" Arab sexuality is limited to his understanding of *male sexuality*, however, for in his account, Arab women are situated outside these authentic cultural formations and outside sexuality altogether.[28] Arab (male) sexuality is organized around sexual roles and discussed in terms of passivity and activity defined in relation to penetration. Massad argues that the gay-liberation model not only alters the authentic discursive parameters of Arab sexuality by creating a discourse about gay identity but also limits the freedom of Arab men who have been historically engaged in sexual acts with other men: "The so-called passive homosexual whom the Gay International wants to defend against social denigration will

find himself in a double bind: first, his sexual desires will be unfulfilled because he will no longer have access to his previously available sexual object choice (i.e., exclusively active partners, as in the interim they will have become heterosexual); and second, he will fall victim to legal and police persecution."[29] Thus Massad depicts a reality in which Arab men, who have historically enjoyed freedom of mobility and multiple sexual object choices, become subjected to state policing, as sexuality in its modern "Western" formulation turns into a matter of identity and as such a matter of public control. In short, Western gay movements' interventions in the Arab world are the cause of homophobia within the Arab world. How and why the West has been so successful in imposing its notions of sexuality on the Arab world is a question Massad fails to answer, the Arab world apparently a passive victim in these imposed cultural transactions driven completely from the "outside" via capitalism and cultural globalism and serving U.S. and other Western needs. As for the existence of Arab LGBTQ activists, Massad has only patronizing things to say: "While there is a small number of upper class and upper middle class westernized Arabs who are seduced by gayness and the American example of it, they are not representative of, nor can speak for, the majority of men and women who engage in same-sex practices and do not identify themselves in accordance with these practices."[30] This small group of "seduced" individuals (note the connotation of fallen sexual behavior), who are but an insignificant "minority of Arab same-sex practitioners who adopt [Western] epistemology," are further and most explicitly undermined by Massad as sellouts.[31]

Within the Israeli-Palestinian context, this association of homosexuality with national/cultural betrayal, however, is not only a matter of metaphorical speech. The dismissal of homosexuality "as a white thing," which itself presumes the whiteness of the Jew/Israeli, often translates accusations of cultural betrayal into explicit political accusations of spying for Israel or collaborating with the Israeli occupation, accusations that result in devastating consequences for Palestinian LGBTQ, including social isolation, physical threats, and in extreme cases even death. As noted by Kathleen Peratis, "Because [gay Palestinians] are so vulnerable to blackmail, it is assumed by the families and neighbors of gay Palestinian men — sometimes correctly — that they have been blackmailed into becoming informers, either for Israeli intelligence or for opposition Palestinian factions. So when they meet a violent end, the motivation of the killers is not entirely clear."[32] In other words, it is not clear if the violence is directed toward them as gays or as informers, the very distinction blurring as "gays" and "informers" too often become synonymous. Palestinians who self-identify as queer (or gay or homosexual) are often seen as Arabs who have given up their Arabness in favor of

queerness and who by the same token become less Palestinian and more Western or Israeli (if not altogether devoutly Zionist). Homosexuality here becomes falsely identified with a threatening Israelization of the Palestinian sociocultural setting, while Israeliness itself is often too hastily associated with "white." This places Palestinian LGBTQ in an uncomfortable position, as noted by the founder of the Palestinian LGBTQ organization Al-Qaws (Arabic for "rainbow"), Haneen Maikey: "[We are] urged to choose between being Palestinian and being queer [even though] as LGBTQ Palestinians, our sexual/gender identities and our national/cultural identities are inextricably linked—both in how we understand and identify ourselves and in the struggles we face as individuals and as a community."[33]

In a context that is often seen as a cultural war between West and East, modernity and tradition, the intrusive Westernized Israeli culture and the local native Palestine society, it is easy to see how queer politics comes to represent the threat of a growing Israeli imposition. Writing about the central status of queer as a marker of imposed Westernization in a different context, Neville Hoad notes that within the postcolonial moment, homosexuality often becomes an "unstable placeholder for a set of desires, anxieties, claims, and counterclaims concerning modernity and cultural authenticity."[34] The association of homosexuality with destructive Western influences, he convincingly argues, does not stem from "simple homophobia, if homophobia can ever be simple."[35] Rather, it must be understood as the counterreaction of postcolonized societies to years of epistemological violence imposed by the West, through the use of sexuality to affirm white racial superiority and Western cultural advantage. If white imperialists have in the past associated homosexuality with the primitiveness and promiscuousness of the non-Western savage, Hoad argues, in the counteractive anti-imperial discourse, homosexuality comes to represent a white pathology imported from the West and imposed on a local tradition originally free of homosexuality.

Contextualizing the debates over the whiteness of queer within the broader history of Western imperialism helps us better understand the symbolic weight attached to homosexuality as a figure that creates or solidifies the imaginary cultural borders between us and them, West and East, external influences and authentic traditions. This kind of cultural partitioning is of course prominent in Palestine/Israel, where all aspects of the everyday are dictated by the political divisions between Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, occupiers and occupied. Faced with these imagined cultural borders, many queer Palestinians find themselves having to choose between "two equally unsatisfactory options. One is to conform with local cultural norms and live outwardly 'heterosexual' lives. The

other is to risk persecution by adopting an identity that many Palestinians associate with the west."[36] To insist, then, that there are no Arab homosexuals, or to suggest that those Arabs who identify as homosexual betray their authentic Arab culture, is to do little more than reinforce the already prevailing pressure placed on Arab LGBTQ people to choose between their gender/sexual affiliations and their cultural/national ones. Working to defy these false categorizations, local LGBTQ Palestinian activists reject the simple equation of queerness or homosexuality with the West, while creating their own specific articulations of queerness by drawing critically on political traditions ranging from modern liberalism with its emphasis on identity, diversity, and equality to the anti-identitarian politics associated with various queer, anticolonial, and radical feminist movements.

The struggle to overcome the uncritical association of queer or homosexuality with "white" (or Israeli or Zionist) in order to create a local Palestinian queer agenda is further complicated as Palestinian LGBTQ people find themselves constantly battling the prevailing and uncritical Western association of Palestinian culture (and Arab culture more broadly) with innate homophobia. The manipulative use of such misperceptions by the Israeli state, which often mobilizes them "as a means of laundering [Israel's own] tainted image in the western world," does not makes things any easier.[37]

Locating Homophobia

In May 2004, during a large protest in London against the Israeli occupation, several queer protesters belonging to two British queer political organizations—OutRage! and the Queer Youth Alliance—were attacked verbally and physically.[38] While the exact circumstances leading to the attacks remain unclear, it is safe to assume that the signs carried by the activists had something to do with it. Reading "Israel: stop persecuting Palestine. Palestine: stop persecuting queers," the signs might not have been the only reason for the attacks, but it is reasonable to assume that they were a provocation of sorts. Working by analogy, this message distributes equal political responsibility to Israel and Palestine, as if both, like two badly behaved kids, must each stop their share of bad behavior to reach a resolution. This "balanced" portrait is oblivious to the extreme inequality that underlines the relationship between Israel as an occupying force and the Palestinians as an occupied population. But it is not the only discursive violence embedded in the signs. The message also suggests that while Israel oppresses Palestinians, Palestinians alone oppress queers, an idea that indirectly reinforces the pervasive view of Israel as "an oasis of liberal tolerance" located amid an Arab "reactionary religious backwater."[39] Staged as a specifically queer gesture of alliance with

the Palestinian cause, the activist intervention conveys, even if unintentionally, a queer condemnation of Palestinian homophobia that further sets apart "queer" and "Palestine."[40] But what makes this message particularly unproductive, insofar as queer politics is concerned, is that it positions the two oppressions (that of Palestinians by Israel and that of queers by the Palestinian authority) side by side as two independent modes of oppression without alluding to the possibility that there might be some kind of a relationship between them or that perhaps "one form of oppression" enables or, at least, partly conditions or sustains the "possibility for the other."[41] There is no doubt that LGBTQ and other sexual minorities do enjoy better legal protection in Israel than they do under the authority of Palestinian factions in the occupied Palestinian territories, and certain social norms and mores concerning gender and sexuality within the greater Palestinian population make it particularly difficult for Palestinian LGBTQ to live their lives openly and securely. Yet we must further ask not only where queers are better off (or "who is better for the queers") but also what are some of the political conditions responsible for producing and maintaining these apparent discrepancies? To relegate the matter to some presumed innate "cultural differences" only solidifies the idea that some cultures are homophobic by nature while others are inherently progressive, as Kirchick does: "Palestinian oppression of homosexuality isn't merely a matter of state policy, it's one firmly rooted in Palestinian society, where hatred of gays surpasses even that of Jews."[42] This idea demands examination, however, since the very creation of such "cultural distinctions" promotes a politics of cultural hierarchies, a maneuver that is itself a well-known colonial discursive practice.

A more productive way to approach the question of gay rights in the context of Palestine/Israel is to examine the various possible connections between the politics of occupation and the politics of homophobia; between the oppression of Palestinians by Israel and the oppression of queers within the Palestinian occupied territories; between Israel's seemingly progressive treatment of sexual minorities and its ongoing persecution of Palestinians. As demonstrated in the essays collected in this issue, these connections are never simple or one-dimensional. Palestinians often use the occupation as an excuse for not joining the fight against homophobia; Israel, on the other hand, often flaunts its gay rights record in an effort to advance its public image and divert attention from its ongoing occupation of Palestine.[43] Attempting to bring queer politics to bear on the question of Palestine/Israel, this special issue strives to maneuver between the ideological obstacles set up, on the one hand, by the hijacking of the discourse on gay rights by uncritical supporters of the Zionist cause and, on the other, by the dismissal of queer politics as either secondary in importance to the fight against the Israeli

occupation or, worse, as a Western imperial (Zionist) imposition foreign to Arab culture altogether.

In Closing

To write about queer politics in the context of Palestine/Israel is to be in an uncomfortable position. It is to reside in a discursive and political field fraught with contradictions and dominated by passionate controversies and disputes. While this special issue originates in a firm belief that it is possible, indeed necessary, to revisit the question of Palestine/Israel with a queer intellectual and political agenda that is equally anti-imperialist and antihomophobic, pursuing this aim has meant at times a fair degree of discomfort and difficulty.

Editorially committed to bringing together voices speaking from different localities and working across different disciplines, I was nevertheless unsuccessful in including voices from within the occupied Palestinian territories. While this issue was in development, Israel launched its twenty-two-day military offensive on the Gaza Strip, causing the loss of 1,387 Palestinian lives.[44] For me, as for the rest of the contributors, thinking clearly became impossible, resulting in a serious production delay. Sadly, it also meant that the sole contributor from within the occupied Palestinian territories withdrew his essay. The issue as it stands, then, focuses on the work of political activists, academics, and artists (both Palestinian and Israeli Jewish) all of whom operate primarily although not exclusively within Israel. I hope that future work will be able to include voices from the occupied Palestinian territories.

It was apparent from the onset that the personal and political stakes involved in the issues addressed in these essays were extremely high. Editorial disagreements often led to passionate e-mail exchanges. As editor, I tried to be receptive to and inclusive of different views and "political sensitivities." It is my hope that readers will encounter in these pages a diverse and polyphonic picture, true to the multidimensional political reality on the ground.

Notes

Many scholars and activists have made this special issue possible. My gratitude is extended to the contributors and roundtable participants of this issue for their commitment and bravery. I also thank the anonymous readers of the essays for their informative reviews and Samar Habib, Paul Amar, Jack (Judith) Halberstam, and Elizabeth Freeman for their continual help and support.

1. All quotations from the memorial service are taken from Atila Shomplavi, "The Killer's Shots Hurt Us All," in the online edition of the Israeli evening paper *Yediot Acharonot* (in Hebrew), August 8, 2009, www.ynet.co.il/articles/1,7340,L-3758894,00.html. All translations from sources not in English throughout the introduction are mine unless otherwise indicated.
2. For an extended account that traces the nationalization of the discourse of gay rights and the assimilation of the gay rights movement in Israel, see Alisa Solomon's fine essay "Viva la Diva: 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), 149–65.
3. Itsik Dror, interview, *Ha-ir*, August 14, 2009. *Ha-ir* is a popular weekly newspaper published in Tel Aviv.
4. For the historical background behind the emergence of "queer" in U.S. academic and gay rights activist circles, see Michael Warner's introduction to *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory*, ed. Michael Warner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), vii–xxxi.
5. On the medieval origins of the Arabic terms for lesbianism (*sahq*, *sihaq*, and *sihaqa*), see Sahar Amer, "Medieval Arab Lesbians and Lesbian-Like Women," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 18 (2009): 215–36.
6. See Hala Kamal, "Translating Women and Gender: The Experience of Translating the Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures into Arabic," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 36 (2008): 254–68. While most Arabic-speaking queers reject the term *shaz*, some do embrace the term and see its reclamation as an important act of political self-empowerment, similar to that performed by reclaiming the derogatory term *queer*. For more on this point, see the roundtable discussion in this issue. Kamal notes that while Joseph Massad's *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) refers to the Arab versions and translations of gays, lesbians, and transvestites, "it does not tackle 'queer' as term or identity nor does [it] address the forms of existence (or absence) of its cultural equivalent in the Arab World or the Arabic language" (267n5). This avoidance on Massad's part, I believe, is significant, as it reflects his failure to confront the political challenges presented by the term *queer* in its rejection of naturalized (sexual) identity categorizations, a political potential perhaps stored also in the reclaiming of the Arabic term *Shaz* (irregular, deviant, pervert, abnormal).
7. For critical reformulations of Said's project, see James Clifford, "On Orientalism," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988); Gyan Prakash, "Writing Post-Orientalist Histories of the Third World: Perspectives from Indian Historiography," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32 (1990): 383–408; Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (London: Verso, 1993); Homi K.

Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994); Fred Dallmayr, *Beyond Orientalism: Essays on Cross-Cultural Encounters* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996). For accounts attuned to the multidirectional character of cultural influence, see Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity At Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996); David Harvey, *The New Imperialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

8. See, for example, Paola Bacchetta, "When the (Hindu) Nation Exiles Its Queers," *Social Text*, no. 61 (1999): 141–66; Peter A. Jackson, *Lady Boys, Tom Boys, Rent Boys: Male and Female Homosexualities in Contemporary Thailand* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth, 1999); Emilio Bejel, *Gay Cuban Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Ruth Vanita, *Queering India: Same-Sex Love and Eroticism in Indian Culture and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Martin F. Manalansan, *Global Divas: Filipino Gay Men in the Diaspora* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003); Lisa Rofel, *Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
9. See, for example, Louisa Schein, *Minority Rules: The Miao and the Feminine in China's Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
10. See, for example, Hema Chari, "Colonial Fantasies and Postcolonial Identities: Elaboration of Postcolonial Masculinity and Homoerotic Desire," in *Post-Colonial, Queer: Theoretical Intersections*, ed. John C. Hawley (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 277–304; and Samir Dayal, "By Way of an Afterword," in Hawley, *Post-Colonial, Queer*, 305–327.
11. Larry Knopp and Michael Brown, "Queer Diffusions," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 21 (2003): 409–24; Natalie Oswin, "Decentering Queer Globalization: Diffusion and the 'Global Gay,'" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 24 (2006): 784.
12. Oswin, "Decentering Queer Globalization," 785.
13. Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (London: Routledge, 1979).
14. See Ilan Pappe, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947–1951* (New York: Tauris, 1992); Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881–2001* (New York: Vintage, 1999); Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, *The Israel-Arab Reader: A Documentary History of the Middle East Conflict* (New York: Penguin, 2008).
15. The framework of "cultural wars" became particularly prevalent after September 11.
16. Other groups of queer activists in support of Palestine include Queers Against Israeli Apartheid, a queer, Toronto Palestine solidarity collective, and the American col-

lective Feygelech (Queer Jews) for a Free Palestine. Queer activist groups that fight the Israeli occupation of Palestine and operate from within Israel and Palestine are discussed at length in several of the essays included in this special issue.

17. Available online at QUIT! Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism, www.quitpalestine.org/about/index.htm (accessed March 19, 2010).
18. Libby Post, "Supporting Israel—It's the Gay Thing to Do," January 12, 2009, www.shewired.com/Article.cfm?ID=21339.
19. James Kirchick, "Queers for Palestine?" *Advocate*, January 28, 2009, www.advocate.com/exclusive_detail_ektid71844.asp. For a similar argument, see Paul Varnell, "Israel, Palestine, and Gays," Independent Gay Forum, August 28, 2002, www.indegayforum.org/news/show/27154.html. See also the recently published LGBT booklet entitled "LGBT Rights under the Palestinian Authority: Know the Facts," by StandWithUs, an international gay coalition in support of Israel. The booklet informs us that "while the Palestinian government officials and families destroy the lives of gay Palestinians, Israel is a sanctuary to the LGBT Community" (www.standwithus.com/pdfs/flyers/LGBT_booklet.pdf [accessed July 8, 2010]).
20. See Joost R. Hiltermann, "The Women's Movement during the Uprising," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 20, no. 3 (1991): 48–57; Julie M. Peteet, *Gender in Crisis: Women and the Palestinian Resistance Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Elise G. Young, *Keepers of the History: Women and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press, 1992); Annelies Moors, *Women, Property, and Islam: Palestinian Experiences, 1920–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Rabab Abdulhadi, "The Palestinian Women's Autonomous Movement: Emergence, Dynamics, and Challenges," *Gender and Society* 12 (1998): 649–73; Suha Sabbagh, ed., *Palestinian Women of Gaza and the West Bank* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002); Ellen Fleischmann, *The Nation and Its "New" Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement, 1920–1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).
21. José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 9.
22. David Eng, "Out Here and Over There: Queerness and Diaspora in Asian Studies," *Social Text*, nos. 52–53 (1997): 31–52; José Quiroga, *Tropics of Desire: Interventions from Queer Latino America* (New York: New York University Press, 2000); Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé and Martin F. Manalansan IV, eds., *Queer Globalizations: Citizenship and the Afterlife of Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2002); Anjali Arondekar, "Border/Line Sex: Queer Postcolonialities or How Race Matters Outside the U.S.," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 7 (2005): 236–50; M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Neville Wallace Hoad, *African Intimacies: Race, Homosexuality, and Global-*

ization (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Josephine Ho, "Is Global Governance Bad for East Asian Queers?" *GLQ* 14 (2008): 457–79; Zanele Muholi, "Mapping Our Histories: A Visual History of Black Lesbians in Post-Apartheid South Africa," www.zanelemuholi.com/ZM%20moh_final_230609.pdf (accessed March 19, 2010).

23. For Mugabe's words, see "Mugabe Attack on Gays Outrageous," *City Press* (Johannesburg), August 6, 1996; for Ahmadinejad's comments, see "Iran President in NY Campus Row," BBC News, September 25, 2007, news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7010962.stm.
24. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove, 1967), 180.
25. Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 183. Elaborating on these comments by Fanon, Lee Edelman points out that homosexuality in Fanon's analysis takes the place of homophobia in a homophobic act of displacement: "Homophobia allows a certain figural logic to the pseudo algebraic 'proof' that asserts: where it is 'given' that white racism equals castration and 'given' that homosexuality equals castration, then it is proper to conclude that white racism equals (or expresses though displacement) homosexuality, and by the same token . . . homosexuality equals white racism." See Lee Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 55.
26. Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 161.
27. In a recent interview with Ernesto Pagano, Massad reiterates the same idea by claiming that the difference between "Western" homosexuality and the desire for same-sex sex within the Arab world is that "one is an identity that seeks social community and political rights, while the other is one of many forms of sexual intimacy that seeks corporeal pleasure." See "The West and the Orientalism of Sexuality," Reset DOC: Dialogues on Civilizations, December 14, 2009, www.resetdoc.org/EN/Massad-interview-gay.php.
28. Both Massad and Fanon focus on male homosexuals to the complete exclusion of women. This is particularly disturbing, as it is hard to imagine that the impact of Western sexual configurations on colonial societies has had the same effect across all social sectors and across the historical gender divisions within the traditional ("precolonized") societies. Unless we are to be convinced that gender differentiations did not exist in the Arab world before the colonial period, it would be hard to accept the idea that the alleged imposition of the Western hetero/homo binary on Arab society has resulted in *equally* negative effects on both Arab men who participate in male-male sexual contacts and Arab women who have sex with other women. If the first are said to have lost a great deal of freedom ("they are forced to limit their sexual aim and object of choice"), the question remains whether the same can be said about women whose social ease of mobility and freedom of making various sexual "object choices" was never so great to begin with.

29. Joseph Massad, "Re-Orienting Desire: The Gay International and the Arab World," *Public Culture* 14 (2002): 384.
30. Massad, "The West and the Orientalism of Sexuality."
31. Massad, "Re-Orienting Desire," 374, 372.
32. Kathleen Peratis, "For Gay Palestinians, Tel Aviv Is Mecca," *Jewish Daily Forward*, February 24, 2006, www.forward.com/articles/1125/.
33. Haneen Maikey, "Rainbow over Palestine," *Guardian*, March 10, 2008, www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/mar/10/rainbowoverpalestine.
34. Neville Wallace Hoad, "Between the White Man's Burden and the White Man's Disease: Tracking Lesbian and Gay Human Rights in Southern Africa," *GLQ* 5 (1999): 561.
35. Hoad, "Between the White Man's Burden and the White Man's Disease," 567.
36. Maikey, "Rainbow over Palestine."
37. Morten Berthelsen, in conversation with Haneen Maikey, "Stop Using Palestinian Gays to Whitewash Israel's Image," *Ha'aretz*, October 1, 2009, www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1118197.html.
38. The press release posted by Outrage! describes the attacks as taking place "by an angry, shouting mob of Islamic fundamentalists, Anglican priests, members of the Socialist Workers Party, the Stop The War Coalition, officials from the demonstration organizers, and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign" (OutRage! press release, May 15, 2004, www.outraged.org.uk/).
39. James Kirchick, "Queers for Palestine?" *Advocate*, January 28, 2009, www.advocate.com/News/Daily_News/2009/01/28/Queers_for_Palestine_/.
40. Justifying the use of the signs, Peter Tatchell, a spokesperson at OutRage! argued that no provocation was meant by the organization and that the message conveyed by the signs was simple, clear, and just. All it says, he argued, is "freedom for Palestine must be freedom for all Palestinians—straight and gay" (www.petertatchell.net/international/palestine.htm [accessed July 8, 2010]).
41. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages*, 17.
42. James Kirchick, "Queers for Palestine?"
43. Examples of this state policy are numerous and are reflected not only in rhetorical gestures but also in how the Israeli foreign ministry has financially subsidized many Israeli LGBT events as long as they have a nationalist agenda and international visibility. See www.ipride-tlv.org/.
44. Press release published by B'Tselem, the Israeli information center for human rights in the occupied territories, December 27, 2009, at www.btselem.org/English/Press_Releases/20091227.asp.