

Acknowledgments

FIRST, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, I am forever grateful to the people of Palestine for modeling collective warmth and resilience each and every day. Their tenacity is the primary source of my inspiration to keep moving forward. Although survey data reveals that my society of origin overwhelmingly holds unfavorable views on LGBTQ issues, rendering it impossible for me to live with equality as an openly gay man were I to return to Palestine permanently, my love for my ancestral land and compassion for its people only deepens. That society has shaped me into the person I am today. My LGBTQ rights activism is naturally an extension of the struggle for Palestinian human rights, to which I am also deeply committed. I truly believe that my people, with increased political freedom and exposure to more knowledge on queer struggles, would largely embrace their queer and trans family members, neighbors, and other LGBTQ individuals and communities.

This book project developed from a paper I gave at Brown University in 2013. Their Middle East Studies program hosted the “Knowledge Production, Ethics, Solidarity” Engaged Scholarship Workshop that year. This workshop connected me with scholars from other universities who were thinking through the relationship between the academy, activism, and the contemporary Middle East. I then accepted a fellowship for the following two years at Brown’s Watson Institute for International Studies. This enabled me to host a conference there in 2015 on LGBTQ movements across the Middle East/North Africa region. These experiences planted the seeds for my more public

and extensive writing on these issues. In particular, I am profoundly thankful to Beshara Doumani and Richard Locke for their mentorship during my time at Brown.

I have since presented parts of this book's material on the LGBTQ Palestinian movement at academic conferences, including at annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, the American Studies Association, the Middle East Studies Association, and the Peace and Justice Studies Association, as well as at various universities. These lectures have taken place at institutions including Amherst College, Bates College, Boston College, Boston University, Brown University, Columbia University, Davidson College, Earlham College, Emerson College, George Washington University, Gettysburg College, Guilford College, Harvard University, Haverford College, Humboldt University, Institute for Cultural Inquiry (Berlin), Kenyon College, Lehigh University, Loyola University, Macalester College, Marymount Manhattan College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, New York University, Northeastern University, Occidental College, Princeton University, Providence College, Rutgers University, Sarah Lawrence College, Swarthmore College, Temple University, Tufts University, University of California Los Angeles, University of Chicago, University of Delaware, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign, University of Michigan, University of Pennsylvania, University of Puget Sound, University of Tennessee Knoxville, Vanderbilt University, Villanova University, and Yale University. The comments and questions posed by the students, staff, and faculty at these talks have been tremendously eye-opening and have enriched my arguments.

Over the past two years, a delightful group of interlocutors have generously read parts or all of this manuscript: Rebecca Alpert, Samer Anabtawi, Huda Asfour, Phillip Ayoub, Tareq Baconi, Soha Bayoumi, Kent Brintnall, Sarah Eltantawi, Katherine Franke, Farha Ghannam, Aeyal Gross, Sherine Hamdy, Yaqub Hilal, Rhoda Kanaaneh, Nancy Khalek, Tim McCarthy, Mino Moallem, Darnell Moore, Saffo Papantonopoulou, Ahmed Ragab, Jonathan Rosa, Omar Sarwar, Sarah Schulman, Jake Silver, Eve Spangler, and Patty White. The fact that these brilliant minds shared their respective insights and feedback on my work means the world to me. I have also benefited from the careful editorial assistance of Matthew Berkman and Eliana Yankelev. I cannot thank them enough.

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been an incredible privilege, and I have felt included in our field more than ever before as a result, instilling hope in me that we can continue building bridges between Palestine Studies and Queer Studies.

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The remarkable support of Lee Smithey, my colleague here at Swarthmore College, has been a gift, providing me with a role model whose intellectual passion for Peace and Conflict Studies is infectious. A group of my students at Swarthmore volunteered to read this manuscript, and their queries and perspectives as super bright undergraduates were very helpful. They include Hanan Ahmed, Mohammed Bappe, Marissa Cohen, Isabel Cristo, Vinita Davey, Omri Gal, Zackary Lash, Cindy Lopez, Nora Shao, Therese Ton, Lily Tyson, Nate Urban, and Lila Weitzner. Their reflections made my ideas more clear and my writing more accessible.

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QUEER PALESTINE AND
THE EMPIRE OF CRITIQUE

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