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Response to Sivan

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Response

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I. The Sivanian Gaze

Emmanuel Sivan's essay assembles two dominant visions. The first is the vision he ascribes to the Other. His historical gloss on pan-Arab nationalism treats the various individuals and Middle Eastern venues — e.g., Egypt/Nasser, Syria/Assad, and Iraq/Hussein — from which pan-Arabism germinated. The second vision is his own; it is a geo-strategic vision dominated by a geopolitical or nation-state cartography. Whereas pan-Arabism, whose ambitions he scorns and whose failures he celebrates, sought to attenuate and denaturalize the national boundaries of the Middle East, Dr. Sivan's ambition is nationalist and his vision is decidedly state-centric. He seeks to naturalize the boundaries that pan-Arab movements have sought to challenge. Moreover, his vision is directly wholly outward. "Arabs" exist in the world around Israel; there is no reflection of the Arabness within, in the space within which he writes.

Before treating the class of imaginaries that is at the center of the world from which Dr. Sivan's writing emerges, I want to address the conceptual and methodological strategies that constitute the vehicles of his analysis. Most central to his argument is the concept of myth. The failures of pan-Arabism have been fatal to various myths, according to Dr. Sivan. His treatment of the withering of the first myth, that of an Arab Piedmont, inspired by the nineteenth-century European models, e.g., Prussia, is his most compelling analysis. As he points out, perhaps a bit hyperbolically, "those ludicrous fragments of Arab political entities"[1] could not be easily aggregated into an effective political and military force. His ultimate reason for the failure of assemblage is the relative privileging of national as opposed to pan-Arab imaginaries within various Arab countries.

The second myth he claims to have fallen victim to events is that of the artificiality of borders, an argument he ascribes to pan-Arabists historically and most recently to Saddam Hussein. Although I am no apologist for Saddam Hussein and his version

of realpolitik, and I rarely find myself harkening to his words, I am in agreement with Hussein about the origin of the system of Middle Eastern sovereignties. British imperialism and the Red Line Agreement of the major oil companies constructed the boundaries of such entities as Kuwait. And Dr. Sivan also agrees with Hussein, but, pointing to the failure of the local Kuwaiti population to collaborate with Hussein, Dr. Sivan suggests that such inaction makes the boundaries nonartificial. His inference is that civil disobedience in response to the invasion is evidence that what was once artificial is now a coherent form of civil society that supports the legitimacy of Kuwaiti sovereignty. Further, he urges, the fact of civil wars along a border invented by the British through the formerly united Yemen is also evidence that what was once artificial is now compellingly legitimate.

Finally — and this is the most interesting part of Dr. Sivan's inquiry — he points to official texts in various Middle Eastern countries; for example, postage stamps that have increasingly manifested national themes. This constitutes further evidence of a strong national commitment, he thinks. If this is correct, then perhaps American nationalism is on the wane now that our stamps show Elvis, Marilyn, and various jazz musicians, among other cultural icons. In short, Dr. Sivan's case for the primacy of a national imaginary is not convincing, but it needn't be. It should suffice to note that the geopolitical map certainly achieves respect from time to time, particularly at times when people's lives are threatened and national recognition is the basis for both a domestic military initiative and international assistance. What I want to suggest is that an appreciation of felt affiliations requires a recognition of Middle Eastern maps other than geopolitical ones. All national boundaries are indeed "artificial"; they arose from human boundary practices. It was not the case that the world was already marked prior to the work of aggregation and separation that produced the system of sovereignties. The closest model to a nonartificial set of markings are what aboriginals call songlines. And although aboriginals cleave strongly to the cosmogeny that produced those lines and derive much of their responsibilities to each other as well as to strangers from what they regard as a natural and spiritual cartography, they allow compassion and respect for alterity to be deployed on other maps as well. Boundaries for them are not

places to assert proprietary interests; they are "places of negotiation."[2]

It is also the case that there are alternative maps of the Middle East. The postcolonial, state-centric cartography is what Joseph Conrad called "geography militant" (or, what I have called elsewhere, a "violent cartography").[3] When I saw Dr. Sivan's original title, "Contending Views of the Middle East," I hoped to see what was advertised. What is offered in the essay might be best titled "contentious" views. Nevertheless, there is an opening in Dr. Sivan's concept of "common interests." He suggests that the last "myth" to succumb to events is the myth of pan-Arab "common interests." Here again, he is correct that reasons of state have usually trumped a common Arabist imaginary at the level of state policy. Why should one be surprised? Does this mean that all feelings of commonality are extinguished? To answer such a question, one has to resist the geopolitical imaginary that constructs the outward trajectory of Dr. Sivan's Middle Eastern gaze. There are a variety of Middle Easts that one can disclose if one avoids this dominant cartographic imaginary. But to do so, one must resist a facile connection that Dr. Sivan establishes with the simple use of a hyphen, i.e., his many references to the "nation-state" in the second part of his analysis, where he seeks to establish the "centrality of the nation-state in collective consciousness." The hyphen between the two entities is a myth to which states subscribe. They perform much of their legitimacy by telling stories designed to suggest a historically coherent and unified proto-national culture from which the state emerges. To provide a vision that *contends* with that constitutive of the Sivanian gaze, I want to begin with some remarks on state stories in general and then treat some that bear more specifically on "the Middle East."

II. State Stories

It is commonplace in the more critical genres of social theory to locate much of the basis for a nation-state's coherence in its identity stories. In these approaches, a nation's unity-promoting articulations are treated not simply as ideological representations, oriented toward supporting a particular apparatus of state power. Nor are they treated, at the other end of the sovereignty

code, as manifestations of the people's will. Instead, they are conceived in more critical terms that register interpretive contentions between the legitimations of mainstream national culture and what Homi Bhabha refers to as "those easily obscured, but highly significant recesses of the national culture from which alternative constituencies of peoples and oppositional analytic capacities may emerge."[4] Given the complex sets of forces that have been responsible for both assembling as a "people" those groupings identified as "nations" and the ambiguities and contentiousness associated with the ways that such assemblages claim territories, their primary national stories must carry a lot of weight. Indeed, there is nothing other than commitments to stories for a national people to give themselves a historical trajectory. As Etienne Balibar has noted, "No nation, that is no national state, has an ethnic basis…but they do have to institute in real (and therefore in historical) time their imaginary unity *against* other possible unities."[5]

Certainly, there are other modes of temporality and space that supply evidence of a plurality that contests the imposed unity of national stories. Exemplary of this challenge to national unity stories is an episode recounted by the Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes. Lost while driving with friends in the state of Morelos, Mexico, Fuentes stopped in a village and asked an old peasant the name of the village. "'Well, that depends,' answered the peasant. 'We call the village Santa María in times of peace. We call it Zapata in times of war.'"[6] Fuentes follows with a meditation that reveals the historical depth of forms of resistance to a homogeneous national story and culture. He identifies an aspect of centrifugal otherness that has existed relatively unrecognized within modernity's system of state sovereignties. Claiming that the peasant has existed within a narrative trace that tends to be uncoded in the contemporary institutionalized discourses on space, he notes,

> That old campesino knew what most people in the West have assiduously ignored since the seventeenth century: that there is more than one time in the world, that there is another time existing alongside, above, underneath the linear time calendars of the West. This man who could live in the time of Zapata or the time of Santa María, depending, was a living heir to a complex culture of many strata in creative tension.[7]

By encountering an alterity that is at once inside and wholly outside of the particular narrative within which his social and cultural self-construction has been elaborated, Fuentes is able to step back from the story of modernity that is continually recycled within nation-state-oriented discourses on time and space: "What we call 'modernity' is more often than not this process whereby the rising industrial and mercantile classes of Europe gave unto themselves the role of universal protagonists of history."[8]

Face-to-face with an otherness that these "protagonists" — those who have managed to perform the dominant structures of meaning — have suppressed, Fuentes is able to recover the historical trace of that otherness, and, on reflection, to recognize that the encounter must yield more than mere affirmation for the models of subjectivity, time, and space that affirm the coherence of a national people. Most significant, the encounter produces a disruption of the totalizing conceptions that have governed contemporary state societies — for example, the illusions that they are unproblematically consolidated and that they have quelled recalcitrant subjectivities.

Fuentes's anecdote has no place in the literatures that constitute American political science in general or the study of "international relations" in particular. Unlike those literatures, which tend to recycle the unity story, Fuentes's account is a disruptive one. The repression of such stories in literatures that promote the myths of national unity constitute a strategy of containment, an avoidance of disruptive contention. Indeed, the strength of the system of national sovereignties lies in part in its control over representations, just as the anxieties it seeks to allay arise from suspicions that competitors to official stories, unless contained and marginalized, can produce significant disruption within the mainstream national culture.

In short, the continuous process of affiliation, necessary to reproduce a coherent national imaginary, produces symbolic relays between nationhood and personhood. And primary among these relays is the myth that the nation arises naturally from the character of its people. The maintenance of such myths requires significant control over discourse in general and over the dominant story of national origin in particular, for many identity claims, expressed within national societies, do not aid

and abet the coherence project of the state; often, they "are claims against the modern governmentality altogether," as Cindy Patton notes in her reading of the tension between official and social discourses.[9]

The contestation of the "modern governmentality" requires an ancient beginning. In Genesis 17:8, it is reported that Jehovah said, "And I will give unto thee, to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." This divine land grant, the biblical promise by Jehovah to Abraham, has had a variety of consequences for Jewish-Other relations throughout history, but most significant for present purposes, it resulted in a paradox in the midst of the primary identity story of the Jewish people. This paradox is at the center of an Old Testament reading by Edmund Leach, an elaborate exercise of Lévi-Strauss's method of structural interpretation.[10] Leach's treatment of the implications of the story of the Jews for their national destiny, which springs from Jehovah's alleged promise, focuses on "a patterning of arguments about endogamy and exogamy."[11] He begins with a contradiction that has plagued Jewish history "from the earliest times right down to the present day":

> On the one hand the practice of sectarian endogamy is essential to maintain the purity of the faith, on the other hand exogamous marriages may be politically expedient if peaceful relations are to be maintained with hostile neighbors.[12]

This tension is revealed in the biblical texts, which "consistently affirm the righteousness of endogamy and the sinfulness of exogamy,"[13] but nevertheless have those in the main genealogical line, from Judah onward, taking foreign wives. Because of the political pressure on the texts to conform to "the doctrine of the unique legitimacy of the royal house of Judah and the unitary ascendancy of Solomon and Jerusalem,"[14] the marriages are treated as within-tribe, legitimate ones. For example, although both Tamar and Ruth are not Israelites, and although their couplings with members of the Israelite lineage (Judah and Boaz, respectively) are the seductions of women treated in the text as harlots (the former explicitly and the latter implicitly), the descendants are treated as pure-blooded.

What emerges from Leach's reading is a treatise on land and politics. The Old Testament is cast as a story that has been arranged both to legitimate Jewish title to the "land of Canaan" and to affirm the historical coherence of the Jewish people. By paying close attention to the paradoxes brought about by the contradictions between the rules of endogamy and exogamy, Leach shows the way the text has turned the arbitrary into the coherent and unitary. What constitutes Jewish identity through the centuries is commitment to a continuous genealogical and spatial story.

This, of course, does not distinguish the Jewish collective identity from many others; collective identities are almost always a combination of narrative depth and spatial extension. A "people" maintains and reproduces its unity and coherence by continually performing its identity, by telling and retelling a story that legitimates its model of who is inside and who is outside. But ironically, the drive toward exclusivity draws a people ever closer to its Other(s), to those who serve to help the "people" recognize itself as a separate whole.

Indeed, the contemporary Israeli is haunted by the Arab Other. For this reason, to the trope of mythology to which Dr. Sivan has recourse, I want to juxtapose what Jacques Derrida calls "hauntology."[15] Jewishness is haunted by Arabness because the "Arab," who is abjected outside as a threat to the Jewish people and to the state of Israel, is always already inside, haunting the story some want to tell to perform the ethnic exclusivity of the people and state. The aporias that Leach disclosed in the Old Testament, which begin with the mythic land grant from Jehovah to Abraham, reassert themselves in the legal history that the book enacts as well.

In various ways, the story of "the Jewish people" is more a story of cultural amalgamation than one of ethnic and cultural exclusivity. While the biblical story is more or less a story of "how one man, through the generations, gradually becomes a whole nation,"[16] it is clear that such patriarchal stories are legends belied by the findings of ethnohistory.[17] In the light of the latter, it has been shown that the ancient Israelites coalesced in various ways—economically, legally, and linguistically, in addition to intermarriage — with Canaanite tribes. Most basically,

under the influence of Canaanite practices, they changed from nomadic herders to fixed dwelling-agriculturalists.[18]

Canaanites and other resident-aliens in the Israelite territory remained ambivalently understood neighbors; they were objects of both moral solicitude, in the form of injunctions of tolerance and special protections, and cultural dangers.[19] Some of Deuteronomy (as well as Exodus, Judges, and the Book of the Covenant) is devoted to the need to protect the alien from oppression,[20] while some of Deuteronomy is also devoted to demands from priestly authorities to "liberate Israel from Canaanite customs" and "to protect the Israelite community against Canaanite influence."[21] Interestingly, however, the legal structures invoked to protect the purity of the Israelitic culture were markedly Canaanite in origin.

One could refer to the irony of using Canaanite legalities, assimilated into the Israelite codes, to distance the Israelite cult from Canaanisms, but the more appropriate conceptual trope is deconstructive. Put simply, the norms with which the ancient Israelites sought to expel otherness from its cultural midst relied precisely on the culture of that otherness.[22] During the cultural encounter, the more or less tent-dwelling, herding, tribal society of the Israelites mingled with a city-dwelling, monarchical group of Canaanites, and city practices ultimately dominated the resulting legal infrastructure of Israelite codes; Deuteronomy is primarily a reflection of municipal law.[23] References, for example, to the authority of "the Elders at the gate" had supplanted the authority of clan patriarchs. "We can only conclude," Johannes Pedersen noted, "that the Laws of Deuteronomy and the Book of the Covenant are almost thoroughly Canaanite."[24]

Nevertheless, a parallel priestly tradition shadowed the process of acculturation, reacting against Canaanite influence and exerting continual pressure to separate as much as possible the Israelitic cult from Canaanism. The ancient Israelites had not only developed a significant Canaanite psyche[25] but had also taken over many of the Canaanite spiritual practices, ranging from the conceptual—ideas of "man" and nature—to the ritual—the infusion of sexual and drinking rites into worship practices.[26]

It was precisely the Israelitic practicing of Canaanite rituals that animated the prophetic tradition. Jeremiah in particular had harsh words about the sexual, drinking cults of the Baal worshipers, those whom, he claimed, have "assembled themselves by troops in harlots' houses."[27] But most significant, the prophetic tradition reflects the struggle of elements within the Israelitic cult to protect not simply particular modes of spirituality but rather the ethnic and political boundaries of the people.

On the one hand, there was the crisis created by exogenous powers: "The prophets could not have emerged," Max Weber argued, "except for the world politics of the great powers,"[28] namely the threat of conquest by Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. On the other hand, the foreign threat was heightened, according to the prophets, by the anger of Yahweh in reaction to the assimilative practices of the Israelites. Then, as now (in contemporary state societies), there was an entanglement between the map of external danger and domestic interethnic antagonisms. Domestically, the prophets' laments were, in Weber's terms, "gratuitous."[29] Unlike Egyptian and Hellenic prophets, who were, in effect, house oracles, the Hebrew prophets were independent alarmists. Their preachments of doom reflected not only a heightened and anachronistic mode of piety but also spatial history.

For the prophets "the desert times remained…the truly pious epoch."[30] They lamented the demise of a desert existence, for in the encounter between attacking desert clans and city-dwelling residents, the resulting assimilation produced a cultural hybridity that favored the city life and monarchical structures of the Canaanites. Under the influence of city life, many Israelites absorbed Canaanite spiritual practices. The Canaanite remained an alien within the Israelite governance in both pre- and post-monarchical Israel, but the Israelites became significantly Canaanized.

In addition, language provides no stable basis for separating Jew and Arab. While ethnohistorical work on ancient Israel shows that it is problematic to speak of Jews as *a* people, the issue becomes more complex when the trajectory of that "people" is followed through the Diaspora. For example, while the installation of Hebrew as a national language of Israel functions as a symbol of common cultural heritage, Hebrew has not been a

historical mechanism of cultural distinction for a "Jewish peo-
ple" as a whole. During the process of acculturation in ancient
Israel, the Israelites' vernacular language became Aramaic. The
linguistic evidence pertaining to ancient Israel/Palestine sug-
gests that "Jews, like almost all other national and tribal groups
in the Levant and Mesopotamia, generally came to adopt Ara-
maic as their normal means of communication."[31] Hebrew
remained an important symbol of Jewish distinctiveness — by
the third century B.C.E., it was used on coins, and the curatorial
class associated with the temple and Torah used it to distinguish
themselves from the rest of the population—but throughout the
Diaspora, a temple-based, curatorial tradition was not strong. [32]

   Significantly, the ancient Israelites did not consider a shared
language an important way of distinguishing themselves from
their neighbors, even though they often thought of themselves
as a distinct nation. The speaking of Hebrew was not, in sum, an
essential element of ancient Jewish identity; it was then, as later
during the Diaspora, more of a "social marker used to distin-
guish the protectors of the Torah from other classes."[33] More-
over, even that which was protected, the language of the Torah,
has not been based on a wholly separate or purely Hebrew lan-
guage. The Old Testament has evolved on the basis of what
Hebrew shares with other Semitic languages. Throughout the
history of the Old Testament, emendations have resulted from
philological work in which the meanings of Hebrew words and
phrases have been changed by examining the terms and expres-
sions in cognate Semitic languages (as well as others): Aramaic,
classical Syriac, Akkadian, Ugaritic, and classical Arabic.[34]

   Ironically, Arabs were not only already there in the supposed
"land without people" of the Zionist imaginary but have been
always already there in the supposed language of Jewish dis-
tinction, Hebrew. For example, one resolution of a disputed pas-
sage in the Book of Judges, which had long been considered
difficult and ambiguous, was achieved with attention to a rele-
vant Arabic verb.[35]

   This historical imbrication between Jew and Arab has signifi-
cance for an alternative — "contending" — vision of the Middle
East. First, I want to suggest a general one in which "common
interest" can be supported by a story other than the exclusive

nationalist one favored in the cartographic imaginary constructing Dr. Sivan's account.

Ammiel Alcalay has recently made a concerted effort to disrupt the dominant identity story of the state of Israel.[36] He has explored the historical depth of the Arab-Jewish cultural imbrication, the persistence of Levantine culture, which militates against the official Israeli policy of a Jewish state and an end to the Diaspora, and the desire to locate the Arab outside the boundaries of the Israeli polity. Alcalay treats both the well-known divisions in Israeli society between European and "Oriental" Jews and, more important, the affinity of the "Oriental" Jew to Arab culture. The reconstruction of ancient Hebrew as a modern national language in Israel has constituted a meaning system aimed at, among other things, expunging the Levantine — shared Arab-Jewish — cultural system that had developed since the period of Islamic domination of Spain and the Middle East, a period during which Jewish culture developed within an Islamic context.

Alcalay shows how Hebrew, along with other systems of representation, has imposed an order of truth of identity congenial to a project of national unification, Jewish exclusiveness, and Euro-Jewish (Ashkenazi) dominance. It is a project of national coherence that requires the Arab as an absolute other. But this symbolic boundary drawing, which has accompanied policies of actual spatial partition and has been supported by complicit discourses within official, popular, and academic venues, must confront strong evidence of Arabness within. The Oriental Jew retains strong connections with Arab culture. It is not unusual, for example, for an Israeli Jew from Iraq to recognize herself or himself better in Palestinian poetry than in the contemporary Hebrew novel.[37]

The dominant cultural unity story of the state of Israel represses such recalcitrant elements of unfinished national assimilation, but the ethnohistorical evidence indicates that there was never a unity except by dint of a unifying mythology that repressed and smoothed over elements of difference. The repression of hybridity, which constituted the ancient Israelite as a historical character, remains an element in the stories through which official Israeli discourse strives to reconstitute the Israeli Jew as a unique and unalloyed national character.

It is clear nevertheless that the problem of Arab otherness is accompanied by a problem of Jewish otherness in the state of Israel: there is more than one Jewish character. One of the dominant characters emerges from what might best be termed the frontier story of nation-building in contemporary Israel. Controversial but still significant in contemporary Israel is what is popularly known as the "Tower and Stockade" story.[38] Constructed in part to counter the traditional story of the passivity of the exilic Jew, it "serves as a culturally compelling 'foundation myth,'" valorizing heroic acts of settlement in defiance of "the antagonistic policy of the British mandate and armed attacks of Arab gangs."[39]

Although there is significant resistance to the story as a narrative of Israeli identity, it serves to energize the continuing settlement process into disputed territories, a process reflecting the extent to which "Israel" has been a continuously frontier society. Moreover, it allocates a privileged social and political identity to original settlers, who are primarily European in background, while deprivileging more recent immigrants: Holocaust survivors and other recent political refugees from both the former Soviet Union and Arab countries. Given the dominant, Euro-oriented story of Israel's nation-building, the more recent influx of immigrants is read as a cultural threat, augmenting the number of perpetual strangers in the land. "Oriental" Jews, for example, take on the alien status of the domestic Arabs.

Finally, if we construct a Middle East that consists of the mythologies of Israeli nationalism and the aspirations of geopolitical rivals such as Gamal Abdel Nasser and Saddam Hussein, we cannot detect the more compassionate and contending Middle Eastern voices that abhor the nationalist proclamations and militance on various sides of geopolitical boundaries. There is insufficient space here to review the cacophony of alternatives (e.g., I would like to devote time to the writings of the Palestinian Christian Jabar Ibrahim Jabar, among others), but I will close with two examples.

First I want to call attention to a film by the Israeli director Rafi Bukai. In contrast to triumphalist sentiments in Israel emerging from the 1967 war, Bukai's *Avanti Populi* offers a "contending vision." Unlike the more nationalistic films, it makes use of Israeli Palestinians as actors (playing the role of Egyptians

during the 1967 Six-Day War), and it sidesteps the Israeli-Arab dichotomy, foregrounding instead those with peace-seeking versus warmongering positions. Most significant, it dissolves the estrangement between Israeli and Egyptian soldiers, particularly in a moment when an Egyptian soldier adopts a Jewish persona and recites a Shylock speech from *The Merchant of Venice*.[40]

Second, I want to call attention to the writings of Arab women who have offered contending constructions of nationhood in the Middle East. As Miriam Cooke has noted,

> Women's literary constructions of the nation in the 1980s in Lebanon emerged in response to a sense that not only had those nationalist/ideological projects failed, but that they were responsible for the carnage of the civil war. Such constructions challenge the generally accepted use of "nationalism" to denote advocacy of the principle that a state should conform to the wishes and beliefs of the majority, however that majority may be defined. This kind of nationalism may be called "statist" because of its insistence on the overlap between an imagined community, the nation, and a public entity, the state.[41]

Among the challenges to which Cooke refers is Huda Barakat's novel *The Laughing Stone*, in which Barakat examines "the ways in which nationalism drives men to reject their blood kin so as to create new families out of a military matrix."[42] One could also point to the brilliant novel *Beirut Blues* by Hanan al-Shaykh, in which it becomes evident that many Lebanese have ambivalent, diasporic rather than nationalist mentalities. And, more significant, it maps the destructiveness of state-oriented violent cartographies on the lives of peoples divided by such geopolitics. Poignantly, after being given a ride in a tank during the Lebanese war, her character describes the world-view of those who ride in it — which is not unlike the monocularity of the geopolitical gaze:

> Now I understand why when they are in a tank soldiers feel they can crush cars and trees in their path like brambles, because they're disconnected from everything, their own souls and bodies included, and what's left is this instrument of steel rolling majestically forward. I feel as if I've entered another world. No

destruction. No streets, no people, no long years of war; they're gone, as if I have been in a submarine the whole time. There is no window where we are, and the feeble light comes from a bulb, or filters through from the small windows in the driver's area.[43]

Finally, this analysis of "contending visions" cannot ignore the fighting going on (as I write) between "Jews" and "Arabs" as a result of contention over sacred places in the city of Jerusalem. I want to note that while it may be the case that the myth of an effective, militant pan-Arabism was dealt an almost fatal blow during the 1967 war, as Dr. Sivan notes, another near fatality has been a flourishing, multicultural Jerusalem.

As Alcalay notes, "[A]s the Arab character of the city is continually being eroded, strangling its links to the Levant, Jerusalem encloses the space of yet another incoherence. A complete microcosm of the Levantine and Arab Jewry[,]…it remains effectively cut off from significant access to the texture, substance and wider sphere of determinants that [compose] the world it forms a part of."[44] The cityscape has changed from terraced olive groves and ruti trees to "massive residential and institutional structures," fortresslike dwellings and places "overshadowing rural enclaves with the remaining 'natives.' "[45]

After the reunification of the city in 1967, Jerusalem was isolated from its old and habitual world. "The percentage of people knowing only victory or defeat — those born into either side of the occupation — has steadily muffled even the possibility of hearing voices that could articulate the knowledge of a different experience."[46] Let me offer a brief fragment from one recently unmuffled voice, that of an Algerian woman, whose words have resonance for domains of contention well beyond the Middle East that emerges in Dr. Sivan's essay. Assia Djebar speaks of the emerging voices of women who "revolt in Arabic," with liberatory effects for Arab women, who have been incarcerated within the social, religious, and geopolitical militance of the men who create the Radical Islam with which Dr. Sivan is preoccupied. Now, she says,

A new, fresh discursive field is imperceptibly traced for other Arab women. A point of take-off. A combat zone. A restoration of body. Bodies of new women in spite of new barriers, which in the

internal, interior language at once retracted and proclaimed, public and no longer secret find roots before rushing forth.… A loud voice that gives body. Body and new forms restoring a darker, deeper texture to hear louder voices.[47]

Notes

1. Emmanuel Sivan, "Contending Arab Visions" in *Macalester International* 4 (Spring 1997): 59.

2. For a discussion of songlines, see Bruce Chatwin, *The Songlines* (New York: Viking, 1987). The treatment of boundaries as places of negotiation for aboriginals is mentioned in Paul Carter, *The Road to Cotany Bay* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

3. See Joseph Conrad, "Geography and Some Explorers," in his *Last Essays* (New York: Doubleday, Page, 1926), 6; and Michael J. Shapiro, *Violent Cartographies: Mapping Cultures of War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

4. Homi K. Bhabha, Introduction to *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), 3.

5. Etienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism," in Etienne Balibar and Emmanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, trans. Chris Turner (New York: Verso, 1991), 49.

6. Carlos Fuentes, "Writing in Time" in *Democracy* 2 (1982): 61.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., 64.

9. Cindy Patton, "Tremble, Hetero Swine!" in *Fear of a Queer Planet*, ed. Michael Warner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 163.

10. Edmund Leach, "The Legitimacy of Solomon," in *Structuralism: A Reader*, ed. Michael Lane (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), 248–92.

11. Ibid., 248.

12. Ibid., 257.

13. Ibid., 258.

14. Ibid., 266.

15. See Jaques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994).

16. Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press 1926), 12.

17. I am using the concept of ethnohistory to refer simply to "*the use of…ethnological methods and materials*" to investigate historical cultural encounters. In addition, I am juxtaposing ethnohistory, which treats the changes in cultures and the process of acculturation, to mythological histories that impose fixed cultural identities rather than registering the ambiguous boundaries between various peoples as they co-invent cultural forms and practices. See James L.

Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America* (New York: Oxford University Press 1981), 5.

18. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, vol. 1, 21.

19. For a general description of the relationships, see Christiana van Houten, *The Alien in Israelite Law* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991).

20. Ibid., 67.

21. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, vol. 1, 26.

22. The explicative literature on deconstruction is vast. Perhaps the best place for a thorough rehearsal of the critical dimensions, with a strong application, is in Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

23. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, vol. 1, 35.

24. Ibid., 28.

25. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, vol. 4, 466.

26. Ibid., 471.

27. Jeremiah 5:7.

28. Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, trans. Hans Gerth (New York: The Free Press 1952), 268.

29. Ibid., 278.

30. Ibid., 285.

31. Seth Schwartz, "Language, Power, and Identity in Ancient Palestine" in *Past & Present*, no. 148 (August 1995): 19.

32. Ibid., 4.

33. Ibid., 45.

34. James Barr, *Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1987), 36.

35. Ibid., 15.

36. Ammiel Alcalay, *After Jews and Arabs: Remaking Levantine Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

37. Ibid., 25.

38. Tamar Katriel and Aliza Shenhar, "Tower and Stockade: Dialogic Narration in Israeli Settlement Ethos" in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 76 (1990): 359–80.

39. Ibid., 361.

40. My reading of the film follows the analysis of Nurith Gertz, "A World without Boundaries: Israeli National Identity in the Eighties as Expressed in Cinema and Literature" in *Discourse Social/Social Discourse* 4 (1992): 155–70.

41. Miriam Cooke, "Reimagining Lebanon" in *South Atlantic Quarterly* 94, no. 4 (Fall 1995): 1078.

42. Ibid., 1082.

43. Hanan al-Shaykh, *Beirut Blues*, trans. Catherine Cobham (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 67.

44. Ammiel Alcalay, "The Geography of Time" in *Michigan Quarterly Review* 31, no. 4 (Fall 1992): 505.

45. Ibid., 507.

46. Ibid., 506.

47. Assia Djebar, Introduction to Nawal al-Saadawi's "Ferdaous: A Voice from Hell," in *Opening the Gates: A Century of Arab Feminist Writing*, ed. Margot Badran and Miriam Cooke (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 387–88.