

الثورة الزهرية

PINK THAWRA

**PINKWASHING,
INTERSECTIONALITY, &
PALESTINIAN LIBERATION**

*"From the river to the sea: Why true liberation includes Queer Palestinians."
- Queers in Palestine*

Presenters: Jannah & Katya Bachrouche
Pink Thawra Co-founders



An introduction to Pink Thawra:

Who we are, about Pink Thawra, & learning the vocabulary



Who are we?



Jannah (she/her) | Co-Founder



Katya (she/her) | Co-Founder



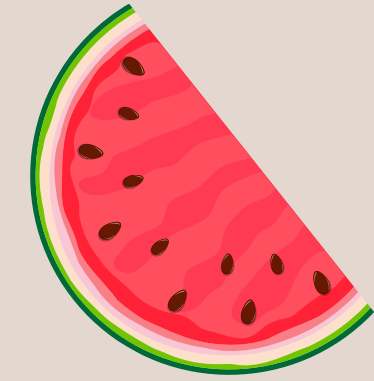
Who is Pink Thawra?

We are a Lebanese-led, Queer + Ally community and consulting organization supporting the LGBTQIA+ Palestinian/broader SWANA community in the fight for Palestinian Liberation. We work alongside organizations, leaders, and movements challenging Zionism, Pinkwashing, and building infrastructure for collective Liberation.

We seek to:

- Educate people on Pinkwashing and intersectionality
- Center the Palestinian + broader SWANA LGBTQIA+ experiences
- Support LGBTQIA+ Arabs in defining liberation on our own terms



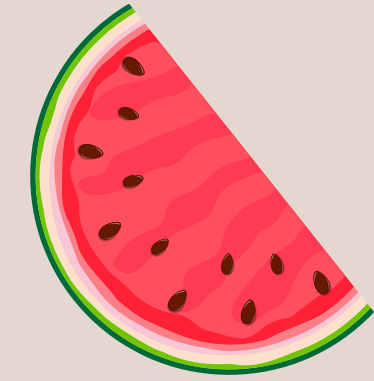


What does this look like?

Community & Education

- We center Palestinian and other SWANA Queer voices by designing experiences that build power and combat erasure
- **Curated spaces:** In-person and virtual events, story and experience shares, and workshops.
 - Creating Arab-only spaces where LGBTQIA+ Arabs can exist without explaining or justifying their identity and culture
 - Supporting Arab families to show up for their LGBTQIA+ family members
- **Shifting the narrative:** Public conversations to challenge pinkwashing and reclaim our narratives







What does this look like?

Strategic Consulting & Advisory

- We coach leaders, founders, and business owners to move beyond performative branding toward accountable, justice-rooted liberation
- Ethical infrastructure: Designing workplace strategies and policies that are rooted in justice for all marginalized identities
- Leadership accountability: Aligning leadership values and practices to ensure businesses show up for all marginalized communities without harm or contradiction




Glossary / vocab


-  **LGBTQIA+** : (L)esbian, (G)ay, (B)isexual, (T)rans, (Q)ueer (I)ntersex, (A)sexual
‘+’ means this acronym is not a complete list. There are many other identities, such as Pansexual, Nonbinary, Two-Spirit, and more. Language around identity is always evolving and shaped by different cultures and communities
-  **Pinkwashing:** Pinkwashing is a propaganda strategy in which a state (Israel and the US being two examples), corporation, or institution promotes itself as “friendly,” “inclusive,” and/or “allies” to LGBTQIA+ people in order to distract from, mask, or legitimize other forms of oppression and violence it is carrying out



Glossary / vocab

 **Intersectionality:** Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw to name how Black women's experiences weren't just rooted in race, but also in sexism

Intersectionality looks at how different forms of oppression (like racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, etc.) overlap in real people's lives, creating experiences of harm that can't be understood by looking at each form of oppression separately

 **Homonationalism:** Coined by Jasbir Puar where states and movements use LGBTQIA+ inclusion to build a nationalist image of being modern and "tolerant". They then turn that inclusion into a weapon against racialized, migrant, and especially Muslim and Arab "Others" - rewarding certain "good gays" who fit the nation while abandoning or targeting everyone else



A brief history of homosexuality law in Palestine:

The West Bank & Gaza timelines



The West Bank timeline

British mandate period

The British criminal code applied a classic colonial anti-sodomy provision in Palestine; this is the origin of the “order of nature” language people still confuse with West Bank law today.

1936-1948

Occupation overlays the system

Israeli military rule does **not** reinsert a sodomy article into West Bank criminal law. But occupation created a dual legal system and expanded coercive control, so repression operated through military, security, and social mechanisms rather than a named “homosexuality” offense.

1967-onward

1950-1951

Jordan annexes West Bank

Jordan extends its legal system and adopts a new penal code that **does not** criminalize consensual same-sex acts between adults, replacing the British clause in the West Bank. This did **not** create equality protections. It meant homosexuality was no longer explicitly criminalized in the code.

Palestinian Authority era

The Oslo Accords create the Palestinian Authority (PA), which assumes limited self-rule in parts of the West Bank. The PA does **not pass** a new comprehensive penal code that criminalizes homosexuality, **nor** does it pass a law explicitly protecting sexual orientation or gender identity.

1994-2000s

Media distortion & Pinkwashing

As Israeli state marketing increasingly uses “gay rights” to pinkwash occupation, Western and Israeli media repeatedly claim that “homosexuality is illegal for Palestinians.” This often erases the fact that the only explicit sodomy text still operating is a British colonial clause kept in Gaza, while the West Bank has had no such clause since 1951.

2010s

2019-TODAY

The legal gaps

The PA police in the West Bank announce a ban on activities of Al-Qaws, a Palestinian queer and feminist organization, claiming such activities are “harmful to the higher values and ideals of Palestinian society. This public ban has since been walked back. **Today**, same-sex activity between consenting adults is legal.

The Gaza timeline

British mandate period

The British Criminal Code Ordinance of 1936 applies in Palestine and criminalizes male same-sex acts through classic colonial “against the order of nature” language. This is the origin of the clause still cited in Gaza today.

1936-1948

Israeli occupation keeps the inherited code

Israel occupies Gaza in 1967, but the inherited British-era criminal provision is **not** repealed. So the legal text survives another change, even as occupation reshapes everyday life through military rule and control.

1967-1994

Continued use of colonial law in Gaza

From 2007 onward, Gaza’s governing institutions have **not** replaced the inherited British criminal code article on same-sex acts. The result is that a colonial-era provision still structures formal legality, while repression also operates through family, security, and social pressures.

2007-today

Egypt administers Gaza

After the end of the British Mandate, Gaza comes under Egyptian administration. But Egypt does **not replace** the British anti-sodomy clause in Gaza, so the colonial provision survives the Mandate’s end.

1948-1967

Palestinian Authority era

After Oslo, the Palestinian Authority (PA) assumes limited self-rule in Gaza, but it does **not** pass a new penal code replacing the inherited British provision. The colonial clause therefore remains in force in Gaza.

1994-2007

Genocide intensifies the distortion

During the Gaza genocide, Israeli and Western Pinkwashing rhetoric repeatedly weaponized queer rights discourse to portray Gaza as *uniquely barbaric*, while erasing both the colonial origin of the law and the existence of Queer Palestinians themselves.

2019-TODAY

LGBTQIA+ voices in Palestine

They exist. Listen to their
experiences.



LGBTQIA+ voices in Palestine

As a queer Palestinian, **I find myself torn between two forms of exile:**



The exile of occupation, which robs me of my home, my land, and my sky, and turns my daily existence into a struggle for survival.

I say: **I refuse to be exiled twice.** I refuse to be erased from the map because I am Palestinian, and I refuse to have my face erased because I am queer.

I am here, **on this land, and in this body.** I carry my identity whole, without fragmentation. My resistance begins with holding on to my right to exist, to love, to live free—as a complete human being, not a half that pleases the occupation nor a half that pleases society.

And the exile of society, which tries to drive me out of my own body, out of my right to love, to be who I am—without fear and without disguise.



LGBTQIA+ voices in Palestine



ward.gaza.queer

...

في اليوم الدولي لمكافحة الهوموفوبيا، فخورة/فخور
بالهوية الكويرية الفلسطينية التي تثبت وجودها في
جبهات متعددة لتنتزع حقها في الوجود، الحب، والأمان.

On the International Day Against
Homophobia, I am proud of the Palestinian
queer identity, which fights on multiple fronts
to reclaim its right to existence, love, and
safety.



2/3

أن تكون كويرياً وفلسطينياً يعني أنك تحمل عبء الجرح
الوطني وعبء الرفض المجتمعي، لكنه يعني أيضاً أنك
تمتلك شجاعة استثنائية لتعريف نفسك وصياغة حريتك
في أكثر الظروف تعقيداً.

To be queer and Palestinian means bearing
both the weight of the Palestinian wound and
the burden of societal rejection. Yet, it also
means possessing the extraordinary
courage to define yourself and craft your
freedom in the most complex circumstances.



3/3

إلى كل الكويريين والكويريات في فلسطين، وفي
الشتات: وجودكم مقاوِمة، وحبكم مقاوِمة، وقصصكم
تستحق أن تُروى وتُحترم. 🌈 ✨

To all queers in Palestine and the diaspora:
your existence is resistance, your love is
resistance, and your stories deserve to be
told and respected. 🌈 ✨



LGBTQIA+ voices in Palestine

A Liberatory Demand
from Queers In Palestine

We refuse the instrumentalization of our queerness, our bodies, and the violence we face as queer people to demonize and dehumanize our communities, especially in service of imperial and genocidal acts.



كويزز في
فلسطين
Queers In Palestine

A Liberatory Demand
from Queers In Palestine

We refuse that Palestinian sexuality and Palestinian attitudes towards diverse sexualities become parameters for assigning humanity to any colonized society. We deserve life because we are human, with the multitude of our imperfections, and not because of our proximity to colonial modes of liberal humanity.



كويزز في
فلسطين
Queers In Palestine

A Liberatory Demand
from Queers In Palestine

We are fighting interconnected systems of oppression, including patriarchy and capitalism, and our dreams of autonomy, community, and liberation are inherently tied to our desire for self-determination.



كويزز في
فلسطين
Queers In Palestine



LGBTQIA+ voices in Palestine

“So as a queer person in displacement, if I endure, will I get back the space that was stolen from me? Will I get back my home that was my safe space? Will I get back the room where I used to close the door and be myself without fear? Today, I wander inside the crowded tent searching for a safe space, but I can't find one.”

- @ward.gaza.queer

“I do not pity, but solidarity. Solidarity built on real action. I want us to be recognized as queer Palestinians who are living through the genocide people are enduring, who dream of the freedom our people dream of, and who deserve the life our people deserve. **We are not outsiders.**”

- @ward.gaza.queer



How Pinkwashing shows up:

Pillars of Pinkwashing, & real-life
examples



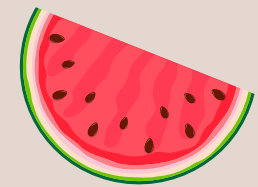
4 basic pillars of Pinkwashing

From Sa'ed Atshan

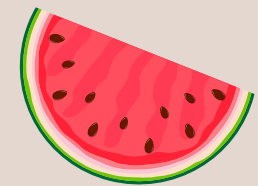
- 1** Highlighting LGBTQ+ “rights” in Israel while hiding and ignoring Israeli homophobia
- 2** Highlighting Palestinian homophobia while erasing moments of Queer Palestinian joy and positive experiences
- 3** Comparing Israeli and Palestinian attitudes toward Queerness to paint Israel as “civilized” and Palestinians as “barbaric”
- 4** Branding Israel as a “safe haven” for LGBTQIA+ people to attract tourism, investment, and political support



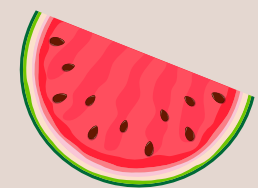
Vilification



The narrative that Palestinians and other Arabs, and Muslims, are somehow *uniquely and more extremely* homophobic and violent is a narrative that has been built over decades



This myth erases the reality: homophobia exists everywhere, including in Israel and the West






Colonial powers have always portrayed colonized people as "backward" on gender and sexuality to justify violence against them



How Pinkwashing shows up


Used to justify genocide


 ישראל   @Israel

The first ever pride flag raised in Gaza 🏳️‍🌈

Yoav Atzmoni who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community wanted to send a message of hope to the people of Gaza living under Hamas brutality.

His intention was to raise the first pride flag in Gaza as a call for peace and freedom.

 @leekern13



“Go be gay in Gaza”

“Someone who is a part of the LGBTQ+ community should also want to understand Hamas would want you dead because of that, the IDF would not.”

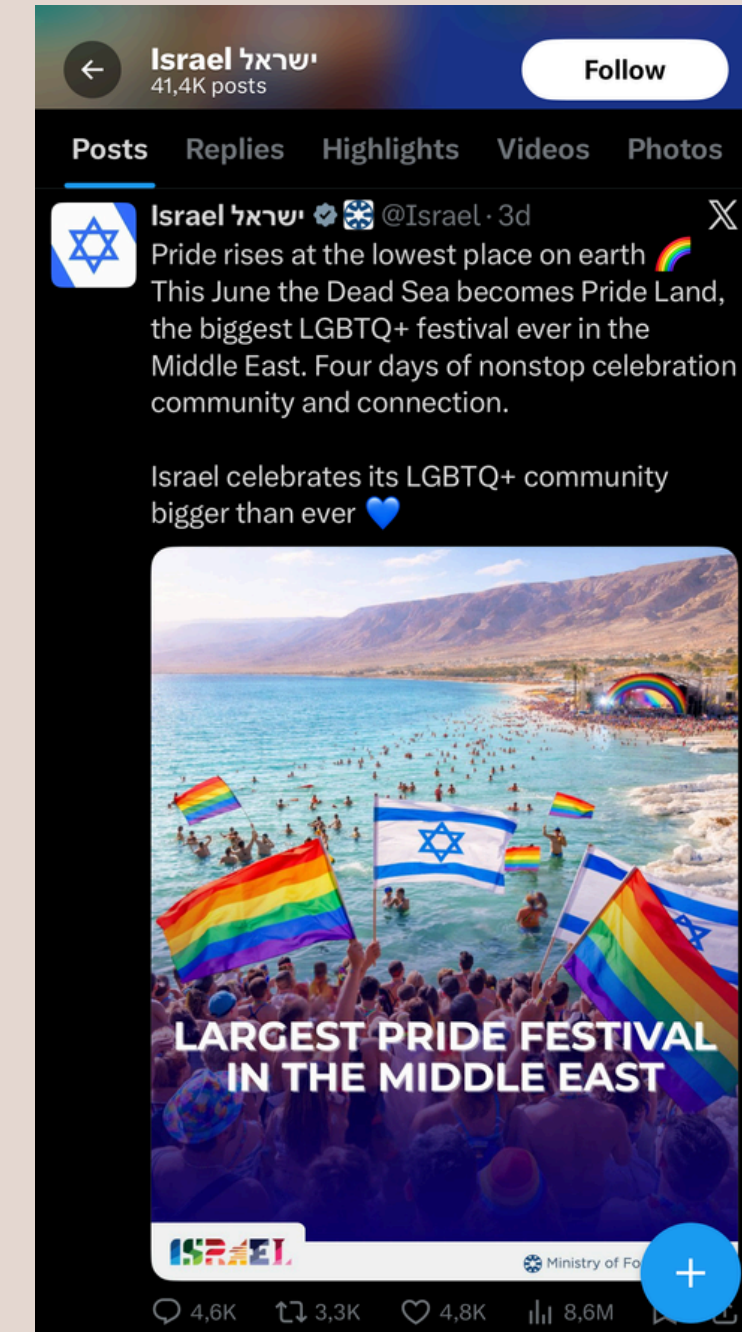
“You support Hamas, they would throw you off a roof”

“[The Middle East is] a region where women are stoned, gays are hanged, Christians are persecuted. Israel stands out. It’s different.”



How Pinkwashing shows up

“PRIDE”



How Pinkwashing shows up

“PRIDE”



NEW YORK POST
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US News Metro Long Island Politics World News

WORLD NEWS

Israel set to host Middle East's largest pride festival

By Ronny Reyes
Published April 20, 2026, 9:19 p.m. ET

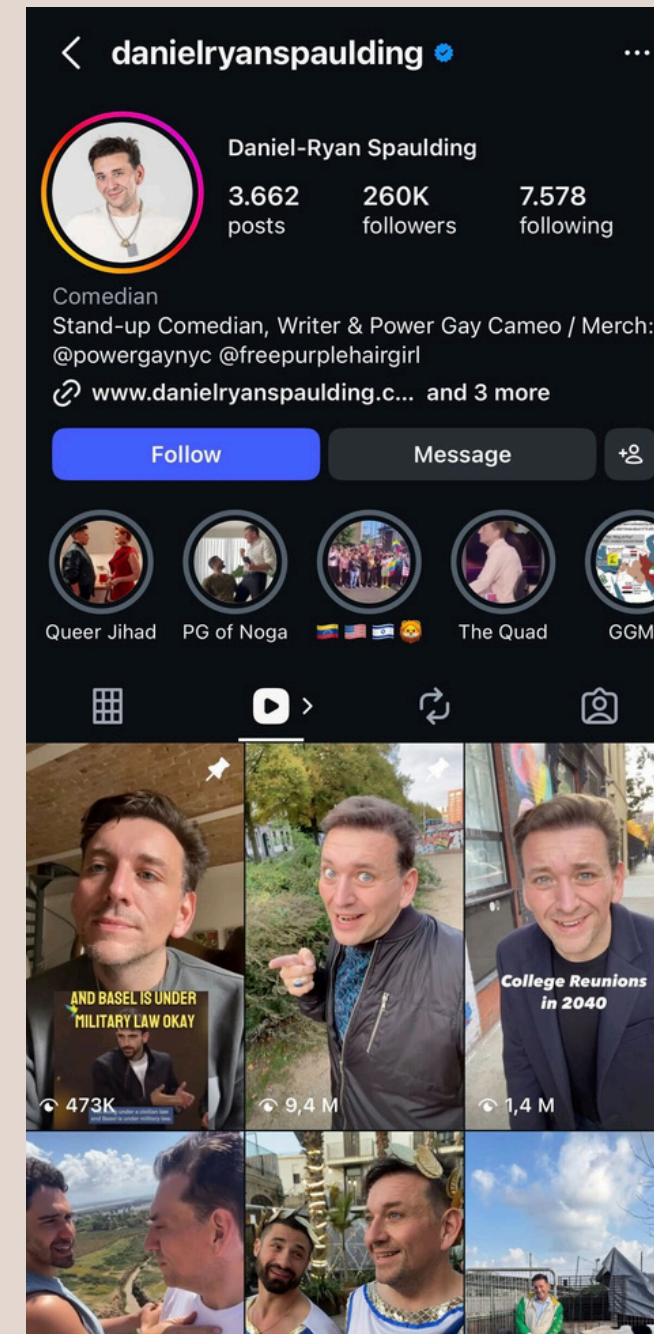
AD 2/2

Israel will host the Middle East's largest-ever **LGBTQ** festival in the summer, with organizers planning to build a veritable "Pride City" at the Dead Sea.

The new Pride Land festival will transform a section of the Judean Desert into a party destination with 15 hotels and beach complexes, plus parties and performances running around the clock, **the Jerusalem Post reported.**

The ultimate goal of the festival is to create a multigenerational "Pride City" to unite locals and tourists. The festival is also set to highlight the Dead Sea as a key getaway for LGBTQ visitors, organizers said.

The promotion for the festival comes at a rough time for tourism in Israel, which has suffered due to its ongoing conflict with Iran and its terror proxy, Hezbollah, in neighboring Lebanon.



danielryanspaulding

Daniel-Ryan Spaulding
3,662 posts 260K followers 7,578 following

Comedian
Stand-up Comedian, Writer & Power Gay Cameo / Merch:
@powergaynyc @freepurplehairgirl
www.danielryanspaulding.c... and 3 more

Follow Message

Queer Jihad PG of Noga The Quad GGME

AND BASEL IS UNDER MILITARY LAW OKAY (473K)
College Reunions in 2040 (1.4M)



Gay Palestinian Ahmad Abu Marhia beheaded in West Bank

So, be very careful with what you're preaching because gays

Add comment...



How Pinkwashing shows up

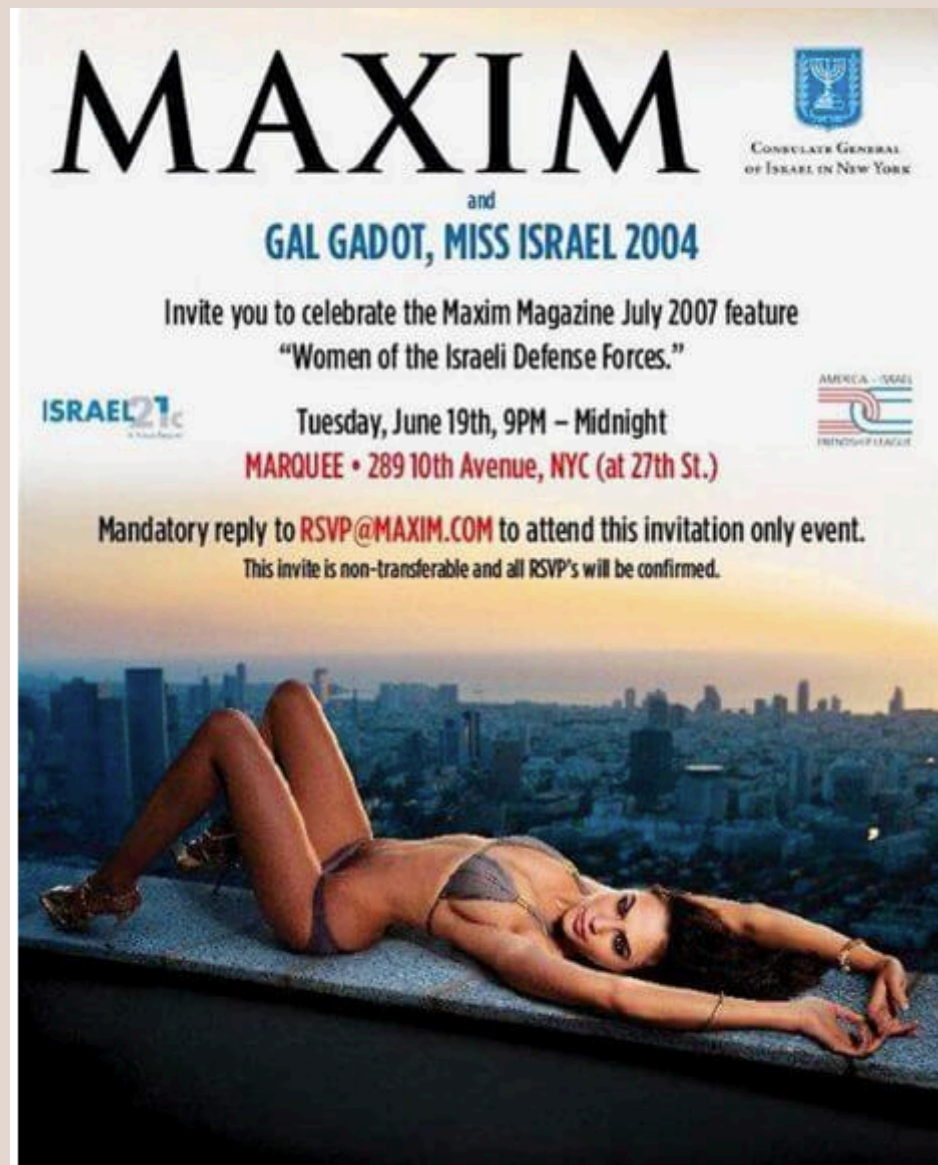
“PRIDE”

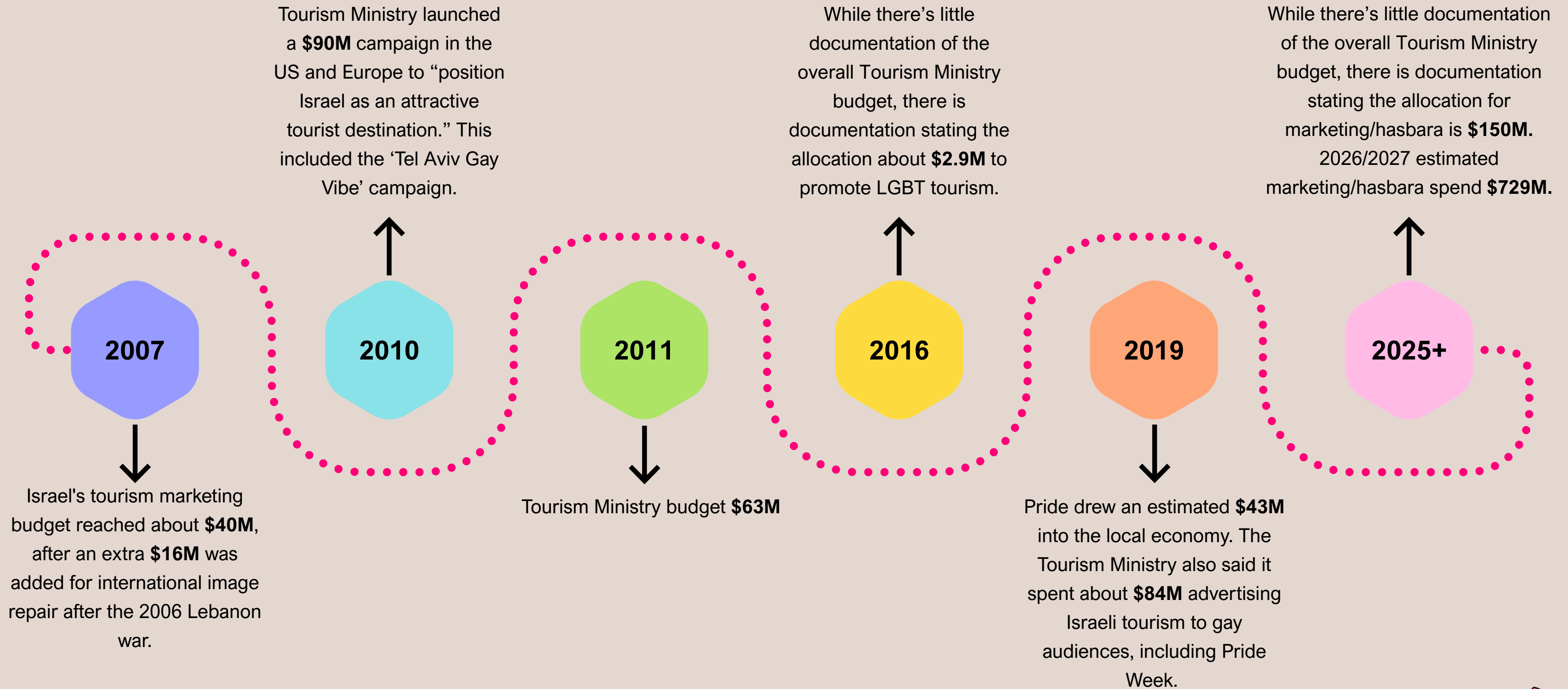


How Pinkwashing shows up

Brand Israel

Started “officially” in 2005, the Brand Israel campaign is a joint project of Israel's Foreign Ministry, Tourism Ministry and Strategic Affairs Ministry; the goal being to shift Israel’s global image from “conflict and occupation” to “innovation, culture, lifestyle,” emphasizing high-tech, Mediterranean leisure, and shared Western values





Why should we care *now* about LGBTQIA+ Palestinians?

How LGBTQIA+ Liberation is relevant to Palestinian Liberation



If being queer means **dreaming of a more just existence, a world liberated from oppressive structures**, then any struggle for emancipation, any quest for dignity and reparative justice – that of the Palestinian people as much as of any people crushed by colonial violence – is and **must be a queer struggle.**

Lamiae Bouqentar, *This Queer Arab Family*



3 Schools of Thought

From Sa'ed Atshan

1

Simultaneous, no-hierarchy liberation

This position insists that anti-Zionism and anti-homophobia must be fought together, drawing on Audre Lorde's "there is no hierarchy of oppressions." Queer liberation and Palestinian liberation are co-constitutive, not sequential

2

National-first / single-axis approach

Here, the Palestinian national struggle is prioritized, and homophobia or patriarchy are treated as secondary or "internal" issues to be addressed after (or separately from) ending occupation and apartheid

3

Global queer-solidarity / anti-pinkwashing approach

This approach centers exposing Israeli pinkwashing and building transnational queer solidarity, often in the global North: boycotts of Israeli cultural events, protests at Pride, and critiques of "Gay Tel Aviv" branding

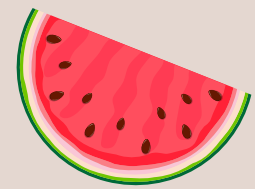


Dehumanization and colonialism

- Palestinian occupation, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, homophobia, transphobia, etc., all rely upon the systematic and systemic dehumanization of targeted groups
- The LGBTQIA+ community and Palestinians are both vilified as harmful predators. Queer and Trans people are portrayed as a threat to children, and to civilized society; Palestinians are portrayed as violent and uncivilized, and an existential threat to Jewish safety
- Homophobia/transphobia are not indigenous; they are a colonial import imposed to control colonized populations, fracture resistance, and enforce racial/sexual hierarchies
- Colonialism needs rigid gender to reproduce empire. Homophobia enforces racial patriarchy: colonizers at top, colonized men emasculated, women controlled, queer/trans bodies punished

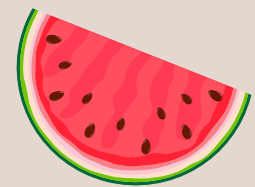


Palestinian LGBTQIA+ organizations in Palestine



أصوات Aswat

- Founded in the early 2000s (began as an online forum around 2000–2001, then as a project of the feminist group Kayan in Haifa)
- A queer-feminist collective centering Palestinian lesbian, bi, queer and trans women, creating Arabic-language resources, support groups, and political education that link gender/sexual freedom with Palestinian liberation

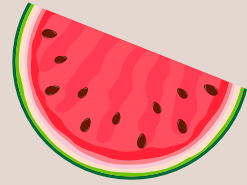


القوس alQaws

- Started as a Palestinian LGBTQ project in Jerusalem in 2001; became an independent organization known as alQaws in 2007
- A grassroots, queer-feminist, anti-colonial organization working across historic Palestine on community organizing, cultural change, and resistance to Israeli pinkwashing, while building local support systems for queer and trans Palestinians



Palestinian LGBTQIA+ organizations in Palestine

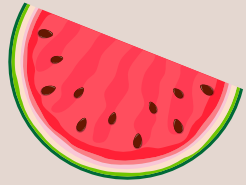


Queers In Palestine

- A newer Palestinian Queer collective that became publicly visible in the 2020s, publishing texts such as “A Liberatory Demand from Queers in Palestine.”
- An anti-colonial, anti-capitalist formation that connects queer and trans struggle directly to Palestinian liberation, rejecting pinkwashing and insisting on self-determined, non-colonial queer politics rooted in Palestine



An example of allyship amongst Palestinians



Summer 2019

- On July 26, 2019, a Palestinian teen from the northern Galilee village of Tamra was stabbed by his two brothers because of his gender and sexual identity, near the Queer youth shelter Beit Dror in Tel Aviv
- As a result, for the first time, 37 Palestinian civil society organizations, the majority of whom are not Queer, released a statement calling for an end to violence against the Queer Palestinians and against their society's complicity in the violence against queer people
- As a result of what they called collective power, alQaws, Aswat, and 6 other civil society organizations organized a demonstration in Haifa, attended by more than 200 people



Why should we care now about LGBTQIA+ Palestinians?



Khaled Jarrar's rainbow mural "Through the Spectrum" painted on the Israeli separation wall near the Qalandiya checkpoint in the West Bank. (image courtesy Khaled Jarrar)



Some of the "Queers Passed Through Here" graffiti in Ramallah, West Bank (via Queer Graffiti)



Hypocrisy of Pinkwashing:

LGBTQIA+ realities in Israel & the US



Hypocrisy of Pinkwashing

Israel's partial and fragile legal framework

Israel presents a patchwork of LGBTQ protections as proof of progress, but many rights remain limited, conditional, or structurally fragile in practice

- 1. Court wins have been partial, not comprehensive:** Same-sex couples won key court victories on adoption and surrogacy, especially the **2021 High Court ruling that ended the surrogacy ban for same-sex couples and single men**, implemented in 2022, but access still depends heavily on private agencies, clinics, and financial barriers
- 2. No protections for housing discrimination:** Leaving LGBTQIA+ people vulnerable to landlords who can legally refuse them based on identity
- 3. Legal gender recognition remains medicalized and invasive:** Since **2014**, gender recognition also requires a lengthy medical-psychiatric committee process
- 4. Same-sex marriages performed abroad are registered, but there is still no civil marriage in Israel:** Since a **2006** High Court decision, foreign same-sex marriages can be registered for civil purposes, but all marriages conducted inside Israel remain under religious authorities, none of which perform same-sex marriages
- 5. These protections are politically fragile and subject to rollback:** Israeli government, which includes **self-proclaimed homophobes**, is actively working to reverse protections, pushing bills to ban teaching about sexual orientation or gender identity to children **under 14, and even normalize conversion therapy**; the Education Ministry cut about **85% of the budget for an LGBTQ tolerance program** in schools in 2024



Anti LGBTQIA+ legislation in the US

United States legislatures have weaponized 600+ anti-LGBTQIA+ bills since 2023, turning everyday spaces into legal traps for trans people and queer youth

1. State legislatures introduced **510 anti-LGBTQ+ bills** in 2023, **533** in 2024, and **604** in 2025. By late 2025, about By late 2025, about **67 anti-LGBTQ+ laws** had been enacted across **22 states**
2. By early 2026, **27 states** had laws **banning gender-affirming care** for Trans youth, affecting about **362,900** Trans youth ages **13-17**, or roughly **half** of Trans youth in the US
3. As of **May 2025**, **28 states banned** trans youth from sports aligned with their gender identity, **19** restricted bathroom access in K-12 schools, **19 restricted discussion** of sexual orientation or gender identity in school curricula, and **8 required** school officials to **disclose** a student's Trans identity to parents
4. At the federal level, Executive Order 14168, signed **January 20, 2025**, directed agencies to recognize sex as a **male-female binary** and revise federal policy accordingly
5. **No federal protection** against housing discrimination for LGBTQIA+ people, and religious exemption laws persist, allowing businesses, schools, and landlords to refuse service based on faith-based objections to Queer identities



Rise in Israeli anti LGBTQIA+ incidents

According to the latest publicly available Aguda report, 2023 was the “most homophobic year in the country's history, with hundreds of cases of violence, assaults, and threats against LGBT+ individuals solely because of their identity”

1. Aguda's 2022 report tracked **3,309 anti-LGBTQ incidents - one reported every 10 hours** nationwide - marking an **11% increase from 2021** alone. Incidents against Trans people accounted for **53% of total incidents**
2. Aguda's 2023 report found a **93% increase** in violent incidents compared with 2022, rising from **134 to 259 cases**. It also reported a **127% increase** in physical violence, from **52 cases in 2022 to 118 in 2023**
3. Pew's 2023 survey found that **36% of Israelis supported** same-sex marriage, while **56% opposed it**. Support was **41% among Jewish** respondents and **8% among Muslim** respondents, highlighting deep societal divides that fuel ongoing bias
4. In August 2023, **anti-LGBTQIA+ pamphlets** were distributed among Haifa residents (in a mixed religion/secular area), advocating for the **re-criminalization of LGBTQIA+ people**. It cited the fact that 67 countries outlaw homosexuality, with 11 countries punishable by death. They claimed **LGBTQIA+ people were to blame** for the rise of Nazism, and called for outlawing LGBTQIA+ education in schools



Hypocrisy of Pinkwashing

Elevated distress, s**cide rates in the US

US policy is directly linked to the increase in incidents, including violence, mental distress, and self-harm within the LGBTQIA+ community

1. The Trevor Project's 2023 and 2024 national surveys found that **41% and 39%**, respectively, of LGBTQ youth ages **13-24** seriously considered attempting s**cide in the past year. In the 2023 survey, **56% of LGBTQ youth** who wanted mental health care were unable to get it; in the 2024 survey, that figure was **50%**
2. GLAAD alert 2025 reported **930+ anti-LGBTQ incidents** between May 2024 and April 2025; **52% targeted Trans/gender-nonconforming people** (up 14% from prior year), 84 injuries, 10 deaths across 49 states
3. The **CDC's** 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) found **41%** of LGBTQ high school students seriously considered s**cide in the past year - nearly triple the **15% rate** among heterosexual peers - and **65%** experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness
4. A JAMA Network Open study published in 2025 showed **65% of LGBTQ adults** needed mental health support in the past year (versus **30% of non-LGBTQ adults**), with nearly **half** reporting moderate-to-serious psychological distress - **rates highest among Trans and Bisexual** individuals
5. CDC 2023 data found that **30% of LGBTQ students** faced bullying due to their identity, and Trevor Project data found that youth in affirming school environments reported lower rates of s**cide attempts

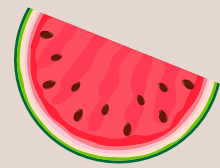


Intersectionality

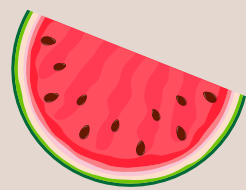
Why you should care, and how to incorporate intersectionality into the workplace, your products, and your personal lives.



Why should you care about intersectionality?



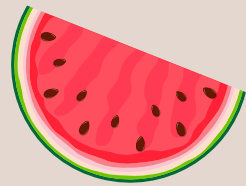
Real solidarity means embracing all of these identities and fighting for a Free Palestine that is free for everyone. Liberation cannot be selective; it must dismantle every form of oppression. Our Liberations are bound to one another



Our solidarity extends beyond Palestine. We understand well that the same systems that enable genocide, ethnic cleansing, and apartheid in Palestine are also at work in Congo, Sudan, and beyond

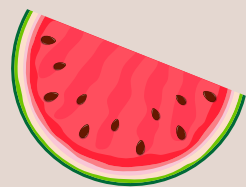


Start with curiosity



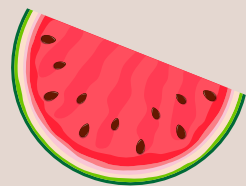
How does intersectionality show up in your work?

- Your hiring practices
- Your policies
- Your decision-making processes
- Your product design
- Your product language



This isn't just about Palestine and the LGBTQIA+ community

This is about understanding how imperialism, colonization, ableism, anti-Black racism, racism broadly, classism, misogyny, transmisogyny, xenophobia, etc. shape how society functions and, therefore, how your organization functions

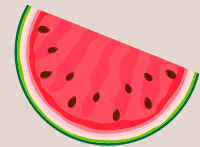


When 'ethical' is just branding

- Many organizations within broader tech and Tech For Palestine present their projects as "ethical alternatives"
- Ethical compared to what? And for whom?
- Without being honest about what you actually need to be ethical about, you end up with selective, performative politics, and then you're just like any other tech company slapping "mission-driven" on the website

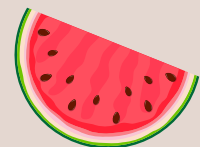


Policies & power



Policies

- Did you design your employee policies for your actual context and values, or copy them from another company?
- What do your product policies and community guidelines actually protect, and who do they leave vulnerable?
- How are you protecting data integrity and user privacy?

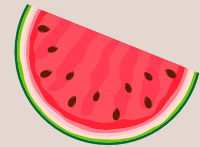


Power

- Who holds decision-making power in your organization?
- Does your leadership reflect the communities you're building for? Different races, backgrounds, geographies, abilities, etc.?
- When people raise concerns about harm, are you listening? Or dismissing them as too sensitive?

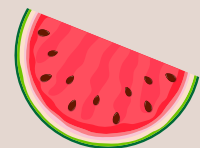


Product & language



Product Design

- Which communities does your product serve? Who is it built for? Who is being left out? Is it accessible and safe for marginalized communities?
- Whose realities are you designing around? What about disabled people, people who don't speak English, people who can't safely provide government identification?
- What tech stack are you using? Is it anti-colonial and BDS-compliant?
- How are you collecting, using, and protecting people's data? Who is benefiting from it?

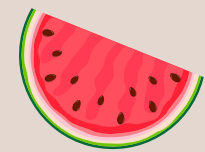


Language

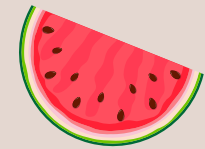
- What terms are you using in your product and marketing?
- Are you using language rooted in colonial violence? (master/slave, blacklist/whitelist)
- Who are you assuming is your default user?



The work & the stakes

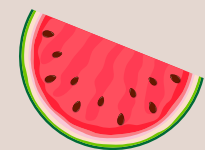


You won't know everything. None of us do



But if you hold power and privilege to build projects claiming to work toward real change in the tech space, it's your responsibility to learn how intersectionality shows up in your work every single day

Not as a one-time training or a checkbox, but as an ongoing practice of decolonizing, questioning, listening, and restructuring



Without this work, you're not building an alternative. You're just repackaging the same oppressive systems with better branding



**This work is uncomfortable, and
it's necessary.**



Resources & voices

Palestinian Authors

- **Sa'ed Atshan - Queer Palestine and the Empire of Critique**
 - A novel of the ethnography and movement history of Palestinian Queer organizing; Pinkwashing, solidarity, “empire of critique”
- **Tareq Baconi - Fire in Every Direction**
 - Memoir novel of political and queer formation under Zionism and in diaspora
- **Zaina Arafat - You Exist Too Much**
 - Novel of a Queer Palestinian-American woman navigating desire, family, and diaspora
- **Ziyad Saadi - Three Parties**
 - Queer Palestinian novel set over a single day with colonial violence in the background
- **Joseph Massad - Desiring Arabs**
 - Key novel and text on how Western “Gay International” discourses reshape Arab and Palestinian sexualities
- **Mejdulene Bernard Shomali - Between Banat: Queer Arab Critique and Transnational Arab Archives**
 - Queer feminist readings of Arab and Palestinian cultural archives
- **Collective texts by Palestinian organizations**
 - **alQaws - “Beyond Propaganda: Pinkwashing as Colonial Violence,” “Though Small, Palestine’s Queer Movement Has Big Vision.”**
 - **Aswat - early manifestos such as “We are Palestinian, we are women, we are gay.”**
 - **Queers in Palestine - “A Liberatory Demand from Queers in Palestine”** and related statements



Resources & voices

Palestinian Authors

- **Izat El Amoor - “Journal of Homosexuality” article**
 - Palestinian scholar analyzing how Israeli state pinkwashing and homonationalism operate as tools of settler-colonial control, and how queer Palestinian lives are instrumentalized or erased in that process
- **Izat El Amoor - “Queering Genocide” article**
 - Examines how genocide and mass violence are framed through sexuality and Queerness, critiquing uses of LGBTQIA+ rights discourse to justify or sanitize violence against Palestinians
- **Izat El Amoor - “The Palestinian Family as a Site of Decolonial Queering”**
 - Shows how the Palestinian family can become a site of resistance that disrupts both colonial heteropatriarchy and Western liberal queer norms, rather than simply reproducing them. He argues that “decolonial queering” means rooting Queer and Trans life in specifically Palestinian histories, kinship, and struggle, instead of measuring it against Western models of family or identity



Resources & voices

Other Arab / SWANA authors (not identifying as Palestinian)

- **Samar Habib** - scholarship on same-sex desire and female homosexuality in Arab-Islamic texts; often cited in decolonial queer reading lists
- Regional feminist/queer writers in Kohl and similar venues - essays in “**Pinkwashing: Israel’s International Strategy and Internal Agenda**” and other dossiers on gender, sexuality, and colonialism in the region.

By non-Palestinian, non-Arab authors

- **Sarah Schulman - Israel/Palestine and the Queer International**
 - Memoir + analysis of pinkwashing and Queer solidarity
- **Jasbir K. Puar - Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times and “Pinkwashing, Homonationalism, and Israel–Palestine”**
 - Theory of homonationalism and Pinkwashing
- **Joy Ellison - Recycled Rhetoric: Brand Israel “Pinkwashing” in Historical Context**
 - Historical analysis of Brand Israel



Non-academic resources & voices

Palestinian Queer and Trans Life Writing

- **Zaina Arafat - You Exist Too Much (2020)**
 - Novel about a Queer Palestinian-American woman navigating desire, mental health, and family expectations across the US and SWANA
- **Ziyad Saadi - Three Parties (2025)**
 - Queer Palestinian novel unfolding over a single day, weaving cruising, class, and intimacy with the background of occupation and diaspora
- **Tareq Baconi - Fire in Every Direction (2025)**
 - Memoir by a Palestinian writer reflecting on sexuality, politics, and exile, linking Queer coming-of-age to the structures of Zionism and siege

Arab (non-Palestinian) Queer and Trans Writing

- **Saleem Haddad - Guapa (2016)**
 - Novel following a gay man in an unnamed Arab city over 24 hours, moving through underground queer spaces, revolution, and family dynamics. Frequently recommended in Arab queer reading lists
- **Joumana Haddad - I K**led Scheherazade (2010)**
 - Hybrid memoir/essay novel by a Lebanese feminist writer addressing sexuality, atheism, and Arab womanhood; often used in Arab queer/feminist syllabi even though it is not exclusively about LGBTQ identity
- **Other recommended Arab Queer titles:**
 - Works highlighted in “Queer Has Always Been Here – A Reading List” and Queer Muslim Network recommendations, which include additional Arab and SWANA queer memoirs and novels



Arab (non-Palestinian) Queer and Trans Writing

- **Saqi Books - The Queer Arab Glossary (2024)**
 - Collective project offering a multilingual glossary of Queer and Trans terms used across Arabic dialects, with short essays and reflections by Queer Arabs. It's designed as both a political and linguistic tool, documenting how Arabs actually talk about gender and sexuality and reclaiming language from pathologizing or colonial framings
- **ed. Elias Jahshan - This Arab is Queer: An Anthology by LGBTQ+ Arab Writers (2022)**
 - Collection of autobiographical essays by Queer and trans Arab writers from across the region and diaspora, covering family, faith, migration, racism, and activism. It centers first-person storytelling and explicitly positions Arab Queerness as existing long before and beyond Western LGBTQIA+ narratives

