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17

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International Center Rm 201

Palestinian Cinema Gets Divorced: The Queer Decolonial Turn Away from Masculine Nationalism

Lover's quarrels. Broken engagements. Divorce. Illicit affairs. Inter-faith romances. Miscegenation. Children out of wedlock. Speculative queerness. LGBTQ identity. These are some of the recurring themes which have emerged in Palestinian narrative filmmaking since 2008. Linking these themes together is an overarching anxiety over the social, sexual, and cultural reproduction of the Palestinian nation, as well as which kind of politics are suitable or desirable in the manifestation of Palestinian liberation. But something else links films with these themes together, and that is an ambivalent reception among Palestinian spectators and contestation over these film's categorization as Palestinian. Those contestations over categorization raise a series of related questions: what makes a film legible as a Palestinian film? What makes a film un/worthy of belonging within the category of Palestinian cinema? And what larger implications exist for Palestinian liberation politics through efforts to police the borders of the category of Palestinian cinema? The emergent themes outlined in this talk speak to a queer, decolonial, and feminist turn away from masculine nationalist tropes within contemporary Palestinian cinema. In turn, contestation over the categorization of these films speaks to concerns over what kind of liberation politics can or should be allegorically represented through Palestinian narrative film. Efforts to police the borders of the category of Palestinian cinema are therefore also efforts to control the representation of liberation politics within the Palestinian liberation struggle.



Dr. Umayyah Cable's work has been published in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, and *The Journal of Palestine Studies*. Their current book project focuses on the uses of cinema in mobilizing Palestine solidarity politics in the US, and is currently under peer review at Duke University Press.



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