

FROM GAZA TO WARSAW: MAPPING MULTIDIRECTIONAL MEMORY

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Beyond Competitive Memory

What happens when different histories of extreme violence confront each other in the public sphere? Does the remembrance of one event erase others from view? When memories of colonialism, occupation, slavery, and the Holocaust bump up against one another in contemporary multicultural societies, must a competition of victims ensue? Such questions of remembrance, justice, and comparison lie at the heart of any attempt to think through the topic of this special issue: *transcultural negotiations of Holocaust memory*. These questions have also oriented my attempt to construct a theory of multidirectional memory that focuses on exemplary sites of tension involving remembrance of the Nazi genocide of European Jews in order to offer an alternative framework for thinking about and confronting the recent and ongoing “memory wars.”¹

In *Multidirectional Memory* (2009), I make three moves toward a new account of transcultural remembrance. First, I argue against a logic of competitive memory based on the zero-sum game, which has dominated many popular and scholarly approaches to public remembrance. According to this understanding, memories crowd each other out of the public sphere—for example, too much emphasis on the Holocaust is said to marginalize other traumas, or, inversely, adoption of Holocaust rhetoric to speak of those other traumas is said to relativize or even deny the Holocaust’s uniqueness. To be sure, political, economic, and cultural forms of power contour the circulation of memories in the public sphere, but a pre-Foucauldian understanding of power as repressive cannot capture memory’s relative autonomy from such forces. In contrast, I suggest, memory works productively: the result of memory conflict is not less memory, but more—even of subordinated memory traditions. For instance, I would argue that the result of the rise to prominence of Holocaust memory is not

less public attention to the slave trade, but greater attention to it (even if that attention remains insufficient in many ways).

In illustrating this non-zero-sum logic, I make a second move already implied by my example: I argue that collective memories of seemingly distinct histories—such as those of slavery, the Holocaust, and colonialism—are not so easily separable from one another. I have discovered not only that memory of the Holocaust has served as a vehicle through which other histories of suffering have been articulated, but also something even more surprising: the emergence of Holocaust memory itself was from the start inflected by histories that at first glance might seem to have little to do with it. There is an archive of multidirectional memory that stretches from early articulations by Aimé Césaire, Hannah Arendt, W. E. B. Du Bois, and others to more contemporary figures such as Caryl Phillips, Leïla Sebbar, and Michael Haneke.

Finally, besides targeting the problem of zero-sum thinking and bringing together histories that are usually kept separate, my research questions another cornerstone of the memory wars; namely, the taken-for-granted link between collective memory and group identity—the direct line that seems to bind, for example, Jewish memory and Jewish identity and to differentiate them clearly from African American memory and African American identity. As my book reveals, however, memory of the Holocaust is not simply a form of Jewish memory, just as memory of slavery or colonialism is not limited to the victims or descendants of slavery and colonialism.² By making visible an intellectual and artistic countertradition that refuses the dominant zero-sum game, links memories of Nazi genocide, colonialism, and slavery, and reaches out beyond the common sense of identity politics, I demonstrate how the public articulation of collective memory by marginalized and oppositional social groups provides resources for other groups to articulate their own claims for recognition and justice.

In this essay, I want to push this account further by engaging with some of the more difficult and even troubling cases of multidirectionality. If, as I argue, public memory is *structurally multidirectional*—that is, always marked by transcultural borrowing, exchange, and adaptation—that does not mean that the politics of multidirectional memory comes with any guarantees. Indeed, given the ubiquity of Nazi and Holocaust references and analogies in contemporary public spheres on a global scale, it is clear that the articulation of almost any political position may come in multidirectional form. While such analogies and references do not themselves necessarily constitute acts of remembrance, they do function as unavoidable building blocks or *morphemes* of public memory. In response to

the high stakes of proliferating memory discourses, it becomes imperative to develop an ethics of comparison that can distinguish politically productive forms of memory from those that lead to competition, appropriation, or trivialization.³

I take as the occasion for my discussion the barrage of memory conflict that accompanied Israel's December 2008–January 2009 offensive in Gaza, an assault that in three weeks killed 1,400 Palestinians, many of them civilians, and destroyed vast amounts of public infrastructure in a Gaza Strip already weakened by blockade. Thirteen Israelis were also killed during the conflict ten soldiers (four by friendly fire) and three civilians from southern Israeli towns that came under Palestinian rocket fire. The United Nations Human Rights Commission Fact Finding Mission that studied the conflict—headed by respected Jewish South African jurist Richard Goldstone—found that violations of international humanitarian law had been committed by both sides, but the mission's 575-page report made it abundantly clear how asymmetrical those crimes were in their human impact.⁴

My particular focus here will be a controversy that arose when a radical American sociology professor sent an e-mail to his undergraduate students in which he declared that “Gaza is Israel's Warsaw” and forwarded a photo-essay with “parallel images of Nazis and Israelis,” several of which depict the Warsaw Ghetto. Because this controversy is by no means an isolated case, as the simultaneous controversy about Caryl Churchill's *Seven Jewish Children: A Play for Gaza* (2009) indicates, it calls for a critical genealogy of memory discourses.⁵ Such a genealogy reveals that the reference in recent controversies to Holocaust-era Warsaw is not arbitrary. Indeed, as I will demonstrate, the Warsaw Ghetto has proven to be an enduring focus of multidirectional acts of memory that engage with the transnational legacies of colonial and racial violence. I thus begin by situating the recent controversy within a larger discursive field of Warsaw memory before returning to the specific dynamics of the Israeli–Palestinian question.

While that endemic conflict plays a significant role in my analysis, my aim is a more general mapping of the range of forms that public memory can take in politically charged situations. By mapping that discursive field, I arrive at a four-part distinction in which multidirectional memories are located at the intersection of an *axis of comparison* (defined by a continuum stretching from equation to differentiation) and an *axis of political affect* (defined by a continuum stretching from solidarity to competition—two complex, composite affects). Although schematic, such a map can provide orientation for an exploration of political imaginaries in an age of

transcultural memory. More specifically, it leads me to argue that a radically democratic politics of memory needs to include a differentiated empirical history, moral solidarity with victims of diverse injustices, and an ethics of comparison that coordinates the asymmetrical claims of those victims. This conception of the politics of memory suggests in turn that memory discourses expressing a differentiated solidarity offer a greater political potential than those, frequent in the Israeli–Palestinian case, that subsume different histories under a logic of equation or that set victims against each other in an antagonistic logic of competition. As will be clear, my focus is not on indigenous Palestinian discourse, which would require a different set of interpretive tools. Rather, I aim at a sympathetic critique of transnational discourses of solidarity with Palestinians. With the practice of occupation and blockade continuing apace, such solidarity is as urgent as ever, but the forms this solidarity takes still demand reflection.⁶

On the Ruins of Warsaw

The Warsaw Ghetto has always been a resonant symbol in public discourse and a multivalenced knot of memory. Established and then quickly sealed by the Nazis in the fall of 1940, the Warsaw Ghetto held approximately 400,000 Jews in a 1.3-square-mile area.⁷ Three features of the ghetto have shaped its memorial legacy: it was at once a place of almost absolute segregation and constriction, a way station from which hundreds of thousands of Jews were sent to extermination camps (primarily Treblinka), and a staging ground in 1943 for one of the twentieth century's most heroic, if suicidal, resistance struggles. References to Warsaw draw selectively or inclusively on all of those characteristics of the ghetto and have anchored collective memories of many persuasions—liberal, communist, Zionist, and increasingly anti-Zionist, at the very least. Here I focus selectively on only one, albeit long-standing, strand of Warsaw memory—that which puts it into dialogue with problems of race and colonization.

I begin by offering two Warsaw examples taken from *Multidirectional Memory* that can provide a starting point for the mapping I have called for. In 1949, African American scholar and activist W. E. B. Du Bois visited Warsaw, where he saw the ruins of the ghetto the Nazis had established there and then completely destroyed after suppressing the uprising. Three years later, Du Bois wrote his short article “The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto,” recounting his trip. At a moment when there was as yet no single English word to refer to what we today call the Holocaust, Du Bois reflected on the significance of the Jewish experience during World

War II for the global problem of race.⁸ The result of his visit, he wrote, “and particularly of my view of the Warsaw ghetto” and of Nathan Rapoport’s Warsaw Ghetto Uprising sculpture,

was not so much clearer understanding of the Jewish problem in the world as it was a real and more complete understanding of the Negro problem. In the first place, the problem of slavery, emancipation, and caste in the United States was no longer in my mind a separate and unique thing as I had so long conceived it. It was not even solely a matter of color and physical and racial characteristics, which was particularly a hard thing for me to learn, since for a lifetime the color line had been a real and efficient cause of misery. . . . The race problem in which I was interested cut across lines of color and physique and belief and status and was a matter of cultural patterns, perverted teaching and human hate and prejudice, which reached all sorts of people and caused endless evil to all men.⁹

What is notable in Du Bois’s short piece is both the solidarity he expresses with Jewish history and his very prescient grasp of the relationality of different histories of racial violence. Moving beyond a conception of his own experience as “a separate and unique thing,” Du Bois comes to an understanding of race that is instead multidirectional. He draws on the material traces of the Nazi genocide in order to rethink his understanding of the African American past and present. Du Bois’s interpretation of the larger significance of the Warsaw Ghetto derives in turn from the very experience and memory of racism that he is reconceptualizing in this article. As he continues, “I have seen something of human upheaval in this world: the scream and shots of a race riot in Atlanta; the marching of the Ku Klux Klan; the threat of courts and police; the neglect and destruction of human habitation; but nothing in my wildest imagination was equal to what I saw in Warsaw in 1949.”¹⁰ It is important to emphasize that the asymmetrical understanding arrived at by Du Bois in 1952 revises his own earlier articulation of these issues, including his often-cited 1947 claim in *The World and Africa* that “There was no Nazi atrocity . . . which the Christian civilization of Europe had not long been practicing against colored folk in all parts of the world.”¹¹ In contrast, Du Bois’s post-Warsaw vision brings black and Jewish histories into relation without erasing their differences or fetishizing their uniqueness. Proximate pasts are neither “separate and unique” nor “equal”; rather, a form

of modified “double consciousness” arises capable of conjoining them in an open-ended assemblage.

About a decade after Du Bois published “The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto,” French writer Marguerite Duras also took inspiration from the ghetto to present a vision of solidarity against the backdrop of difference. In “Les deux ghettos” (The two ghettos), a 1961, interview-based article for the New Left newsweekly *France-Observateur*, published in the wake of the 17 October massacre, Duras brought together a survivor of Warsaw and a pair of Algerian workers (figure 1).¹² While the title of the piece seems to suggest an equation between the ghettos that held Jews during World War II and those that hold Algerians at a late stage of colonialism—an impression reinforced by the “parallel images” that accompany the article of an Algerian worker and a Jew bearing a yellow star—the actual answers provided by Duras’s interviewees suggest as many asymmetries as similarities. Like “The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto,” Duras’s text demonstrates a multidirectional sensibility—a tendency to see history as relational and as woven from similar, but not identical, fabrics.

The examples of Du Bois and Duras, which come from two moments when the meanings of Nazi Jewish policies had not yet solidified into the current, widely held understanding of the Holocaust as “a separate and unique thing,” help us begin mapping the field of multidirectional memory. While Duras’s article and many of the other invocations of the Holocaust in the context of the Algerian War look at first like forms of solidarity based on an equation of histories, they frequently join Du Bois in a vision of solidarity constructed through differentiated similitude. These examples provide us with the opportunity to observe a now almost-forgotten understanding of the Shoah in which its specificity was grasped at the same time that its potential links to other histories of racism were also in view. In moving to the present—and the Middle East conflict—it is important to recall both the multidirectional dynamic these acts or stagings of memory illustrate and the distance Holocaust memory has come since the 1950s and early 1960s.

“Gaza is Israel’s Warsaw”

In early 2009, a controversy erupted at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), when a sociology professor found himself threatened with disciplinary action because of an e-mail he sent to his undergraduate class on the Sociology of Globalization. At the tail end of Israel’s bombing of Gaza—and on Martin Luther King Day—Professor William

ALGÉRIE : LES NOUVEAUX CONTACTS

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PIERRE BELLEVILLE
et SERGE MALLET :

LA BATAILLE
DE
LA VILLETTE



M. Fontanet s'étant épuisé en vain à essayer de suivre le bœuf, M. Missoffe, le nouveau secrétaire d'Etat au Commerce Intérieur, a décidé de prendre le taureau par les cornes et d'engager la bataille de la Villette contre les dirigeants du marché de la viande.

Face à la solidarité de tous les intermédiaires, du maquignon au boucher détaillant, le « grand maître des prix » a été jusqu'à parler de « nationalisation ».

En fait, le vrai problème est celui de l'organisation des consommateurs et de la liaison de ces groupes organisés avec les groupements de producteurs. (Page 5.)

UN DOCUMENT :

le 22^e congrès
vu par
Togliatti



Le XXII^e Congrès du Parti Communiste d'Union Soviétique suscite, comme il fallait s'y attendre, des remous importants dans les différents partis communistes du monde entier.

Le Parti français s'en tient à l'interprétation la plus restrictive des textes. La condamnation du passé n'entraîne pour lui aucune conséquence pour l'avenir.

Ce n'est pas le point de vue du Parti Communiste italien qui semble vouloir se placer à l'avant-garde d'un courant de « libéralisation ». Palmiro Togliatti vient, à ce sujet, de faire d'importantes déclarations (voir page 10).

GEORGES
SUFFERT :

Un homme
qui
monte



Qu'y aura-t-il après le gaullisme ? Une autre IV^e ou une VI^e entre les mains d'une nouvelle génération d'hommes encore inconnus du grand public mais qui cherchent inlassablement dans la définition des relations entre syndicalisme et politique à autre chose qu'une planche de salut pour un coup de force éventuel ?

Ces hommes, France Observateur, dans une série de portraits, entreprend de vous les présenter.

Aujourd'hui, Eugène Descamps, secrétaire général de la C.F.T.C., héritier direct de toute une tradition ouvrière et syndicale. (Page 7.)

MARGUERITE DURAS :

LES DEUX GHETTOS



L'ouverture par le Parquet de la Seine d'informations judiciaires portant sur la découverte d'une soixantaine de cadavres de Nord-Africains repêchés ou retrouvés et sur le dépôt d'une quarantaine de plaintes pour disparitions, séquestration ou vol a été annoncée officiellement le 6 novembre.

Telle est la première réponse aux questions que nous avons posées dans nos précédents numéros. Elle n'est pas suffisante (voir page 8).

Marguerite Duras a posé, elle aussi, des questions à deux ouvriers algériens d'abord, à une survivante du ghetto de Varsovie ensuite.

Les questions sont identiques, les réponses sont éloquentes. Le temps des ghettos, que l'on croyait révolu, est-il revenu ? (Voir pages 8, 9 et 10.)

Y A-T-IL TROP D'AUTOMOBILES ?

Figure 1. The 9 November 1961 cover of France-Observateur announcing Marguerite Duras's article "Les deux ghettos." Author's collection.

Robinson sent his students an e-mail with the subject heading “parallel images of Nazis and Israelis.” In the body of the e-mail, he asserted, among other things, that “Gaza is Israel’s Warsaw,” and he forwarded a photo-essay, taken from the website of political scientist Norman Finkelstein, that juxtaposes images from the Nazi persecution of European Jews during World War II and images of Israeli oppression of Palestinians. Among the Holocaust-era photographs are several taken from the so-called *Stroop Report*, a Nazi-produced document that “celebrates” the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto.¹³ After receiving this e-mail, two Jewish students dropped Robinson’s class. A few weeks later, after an intervention by the Anti-Defamation League and other pro-Israel groups, a university investigation of Robinson began.

There are many ways of approaching this case, which was subsequently dropped by the university but whose implications remain. That the case against Robinson was a deliberate attempt to restrict academic freedom is crucial to state up front, especially because it brings to mind too many other recent American cases in which scholars critical of Israel have been the target of campaigns orchestrated on distinctly nonscholarly grounds.¹⁴ Yet my approach brackets the urgent question of academic freedom as it does the issue of politically engaged pedagogy, an issue that is also one of the ultimate horizons of discussion. Instead, I read the Robinson case through its participation in the tradition of multidirectional Warsaw memory in order to continue mapping the politics of memory.¹⁵

Warsaw has always figured conspicuously in the circulation of Holocaust memory in proximity to Palestine–Israel. In the period just before statehood, as well as in the pre-Eichmann trial years, commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in Israel condensed Zionist ambivalence toward the Holocaust. Zionist ideology celebrated the Warsaw “martyrs” while distancing itself from alleged diasporic passivity. As Idith Zertal demonstrates, the meaning of Warsaw was also integrated into the conflict with Palestinians and other Arabs in the region and instrumentalized as a form of Zionist legitimation.¹⁶ This was true from the earliest days, when Zionist settlers read the uprising as an *imitation* of their own struggles with the indigenous population,¹⁷ up through the consequential period of the beginning of the occupation, when a kibbutz leader “argued that Israel’s 1967 Six-Day war was a continuation of the ghetto uprisings.”¹⁸ Already during the unfolding of the Nazi genocide, Gaza and Warsaw were implicitly associated. In 1943, the left-wing organization Hashomer Hatzair established a kibbutz within a few miles of what would become the border of the Gaza Strip; they named it Yad Mordechai, after Mordechai Anielewicz, the martyred leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising,

and later installed Nathan Rapoport's sculpture of Anielewicz on the kibbutz. That sculpture today stands facing Gaza. (Ironically, Rapoport's Warsaw sculpture of the uprising had deeply affected Du Bois during his visit to Poland in the late 1940s.)

Of course, the centrality of the Holocaust and the Warsaw Ghetto to legitimation of the state has led critics of Israeli policy to appropriate the same tropes and reverse their charge. Thus, for instance, in June 2003, Oona King, a British Labour MP (Member of Parliament), traveled to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories and then wrote an account of her trip for the *Guardian*. In the article by King, who like Robinson is Jewish, but also has an African American father, one sentence in particular ignited controversy. Reflecting on her first day in the Gaza Strip, a day in which an Israeli helicopter attack killed a woman and child and injured dozens of civilians, King wrote, "The original founders of the Jewish state could surely not imagine the irony facing Israel today: in escaping the ashes of the Holocaust, they have incarcerated another people in a hell similar in its nature—though not its extent—to the Warsaw ghetto."¹⁹ Two years after her visit to Gaza, King faced an irony of her own—her support of the U.S.-led war in Iraq contributed to the loss of her seat to RESPECT Party candidate George Galloway, who later regularly deployed a similar Gaza–Warsaw analogy during the January 2009 assault.²⁰

In declaring "Gaza is Israel's Warsaw," William Robinson thus certainly joins a well-established analogical tradition. Robinson's rhetoric mobilizes both verbal and visual means—it deploys a logic of linguistic equation and analogy while supplementing that logic with images. What drives this rhetorical strategy, which has proven so widespread? Perhaps most crucially, Robinson's references to Warsaw and the Holocaust—both verbal and visual—engage in the political struggle Judith Butler describes in *Frames of War* over which lives are perceived as human and thus recognized as "grievable." Butler asks,

[W]hat allows a life to become visible in its precariousness and its need for shelter, and what is it that keeps us from seeing or understanding certain lives in this way? . . . [I]t is only on the condition of certain embedded evaluative structures that a life becomes perceivable at all. . . . [I]t is only by challenging the dominant media that certain kinds of lives may become visible or knowable in their precariousness.²¹

Robinson's invocation of the Holocaust in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict confirms Butler's argument and suggests that a need exists

to counter what Jacques Rancière would call the dominant “distribution of the sensible” (*le partage du sensible*) in order to render Palestinian lives visible and thus grievable.²² Like so many others outraged not only by Israeli aggression but also by the conditions of perception in the centers of global power, Robinson calls upon an established repertoire of images in order to render Palestinian suffering commensurable with the epistemological and affective frames that dominate media narratives. It is surely true, at least in the United States, that a great inequity in the distribution of grievability exists whereby Palestinians are routinely rendered as less than fully valued human lives. But questions about this strategy remain.

The photo-essay and brief accompanying texts taken from Norman Finkelstein’s website (see note 13) obey a logic similar to Robinson’s Gaza–Warsaw analogy and seem to literalize the desire to render Palestinian suffering visible. The essay begins with the title “Deutschland Uber Alles” and the explanatory subheading “THE GRANDCHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS FROM WORLD WAR II ARE DOING TO THE PALESTINIANS EXACTLY WHAT WAS DONE TO THEM BY NAZI GERMANY.” A vertical strip of images follows, with black-and-white photographs depicting Nazis and Jews on the left side of the page and color images of Israelis and Palestinians on the right. The images range from scenes of the construction of fences, walls, and camps, to depictions of prisoners behind barbed wire, confrontations of soldiers and civilians, and gruesome images of corpses. While a similar use of parallel images accompanies Duras’s article “Les deux ghettos,” Duras’s text, as I have suggested, works against equation and symmetry, and even the images of the Algerian worker and presumed Warsaw ghetto inmate are separated by a very thin white border—a form of framing absent from the Finkelstein photo-essay, where the images in each of the six sections abut one another without any gap. The lack of space in the photo-essay between either the vertical or the horizontal axes creates a continuous strip of images and suggests that the histories at stake blur into each other without remainder.

The images in the photo-essay are artfully chosen to display various forms of visual matching (through the arrangement of figures, repeated gestures, etc.). The photo-essay thus works to create identity out of difference and, in doing so, translates the work of comparison into the assertion of equation. This strategy of bringing Palestinians into view via stock images of the Holocaust points to limits in the struggle for recognition since, as Butler points out, the categories opposite to invisibility and ungrievability are notions of visibility and grievability that are often themselves problematic. Even when recognition becomes possible for previously occluded subjects, “the very features that are ‘recognizable’ [may]

prove to rely on a failure of recognition.”²³ In much the way Butler’s analysis anticipates, the Robinson e-mail and Finkelstein photo-essay draw Palestinian suffering into a form of recognition based on the thoroughly familiar features provided by a stereotypical rhetoric and iconography of the Holocaust. They thus suggest the likelihood that the forms of recognition they promote will also entail a failure of recognition—in this case, a failure to recognize the specificities of both the Palestinian plight and that of Holocaust victims.

To give one of the most disturbing examples, in the section of the photo-essay on “check points,” an image of an Israeli-established checkpoint at Huwara, near Nablus, is juxtaposed with a photograph from the ramp at Auschwitz-Birkenau.²⁴ The latter image is not, of course, a checkpoint at all, but a selection at which prisoners are about to be assigned to two groups—one that will remain in the camp and one that will be sent immediately to death in the gas chambers.²⁵ We also need to recall the provenance of such images: almost without exception, photographs of the unfolding of the Holocaust are perpetrator images taken by the Nazis themselves, whereas journalists, international activists, and Palestinians themselves have produced a substantial visual archive of the Israeli occupation.²⁶ Superficial visual similarity—and even more substantial similarities involving the regulation of space and dominated subjects—should not lead to the overlooking of such indicative distinctions. Both a checkpoint and a selection are “evils”—to adopt the language of radical Israeli philosopher Adi Ophir—because they distribute unnecessary, “superfluous” damage and suffering through a socially instituted order. Such distributions are open to comparison, as Ophir demonstrates in his massive study *The Order of Evils*. But when careful comparison gives way to equation between the technologies of genocide and those of occupation, significant moral and political errors occur.²⁷

The stakes of such error become especially clear when we examine at Robinson’s text more closely. Despite the understandable desire to introduce Palestinians into a U.S. public sphere that persistently denies and denigrates their suffering, Robinson’s rhetoric leaves the frameworks of the dominant political order intact and even mimics its reifying tendencies by eliding different forms of domination. Although Robinson’s e-mail might be seen as subscribing to Du Bois’s precept that no suffering should be considered “separate and unique,” it forgoes the important corollary specifying that different legacies of suffering are not therefore “equal”—which is not a moral judgment but a historical one with ethical and political consequences. The deep logic of equation that runs through Robinson’s e-mail is apparent when he writes, “Gaza is Israel’s

Warsaw—a vast concentration camp that confined and blockaded Palestinians, subjecting them to the slow death of malnutrition, disease and despair, nearly two years before their subjection to the quick death of Israeli bombs” (e-mail, 19 January 2009).²⁸ At issue here is not the description of Palestinian suffering, which is well within the bounds of reasonable discourse, but rather the elision of the Warsaw Ghetto with a “concentration camp,” a confusion of forms of incarceration that is typical of both heated political rhetoric and our own theoretical moment when the camp has been termed the “nomos” of modernity—but the confusion is no less damaging for that.²⁹ Part of the problem lies in the uncertain referentiality of the *concentration camp* itself, a site of political detention that is sometimes confused with *extermination camps*—places, like Treblinka, only established for the purpose of genocidal killing. The Warsaw Ghetto was neither a concentration camp nor an extermination camp, but rather, as I’ve mentioned, a way station for people slated to die in extermination camps.³⁰

I offer these brief attempts at distinction not out of pedantry, but because they matter morally and politically. Several opportunities are lost in discourses that equate the Warsaw Ghetto with Gaza and the Israeli occupation. Besides obfuscating the fate of certain victims of the Holocaust—a moral wrong and an illustration of how easily forgetting accompanies apparent acts of memory—the reference to Warsaw obscures the conditions of Palestinian life and death in significant ways. Whereas the Holocaust framework taps into a ready channel of public discourse, its evocation discourages thinking through the novel forms of domination being developed in the occupation and blockade—forms that are distinct from industrialized genocide. The situation in Gaza is the result of forms of Israeli control not even feasible during the Nazi genocide, as well as overlapping and clashing modes of sovereignty that encompass intra-Palestinian conflicts, local powers Israel and Egypt, and the global structures of empire underwritten by the United States.³¹ Finally, the discourse of equation in Gaza–Warsaw analogies also imports a dangerous model of victimization into Palestinian politics. For, as a genocidal way-station, the Warsaw Ghetto ultimately offered no exit except the suicidal struggle that the resistance fighters waged in 1943. The situation in Gaza is dire but still allows forms of politics beyond suicide. As historian Mark LeVine writes, “If Gaza is today’s Warsaw, then Palestinians have no hope.”³²

While the logic of equation in Robinson’s rhetoric is clear, also important is its competitive tonality. The equation at work in the text and images is not intended to create solidarity between two communities of suffering. Rather, the Gaza–Warsaw equation enacts an appropriative

transfer of affect from past to present: the legitimate solidarity it seeks to create with oppressed Palestinians emerges at the expense of those whose lives supply the analogous affective charge—past victims who, the analogy insinuates, are either now victimizers or have had their victim status canceled by the later actions of others acting in their name.³³ It is true that Palestinians have often, perversely, been victimized in the name of “honoring” the memory of the Holocaust, but Robinson’s analogy maintains that perverse logic of moral property, citing the state of Israel as a kind of possessive individual when it speaks of “Israel’s Warsaw.” In the photo-essay in particular, which emphasizes the “familial” link between Holocaust victims and Israeli perpetrators, equation simultaneously becomes a form of competitive aggression and represents a clear case of mimetic desire for an other’s history of suffering.

Recognizing the conjunction of *equation* and *competition* enables us to situate Robinson’s rhetoric on our map of multidirectional memory. It also puts him in surprising company. The same conjunction characterizes the Israeli right-wing “second Holocaust” discourse, which sees any move toward peace as setting the scene for another, more horrific genocide.³⁴ Even more precisely, Robinson’s discourse recalls those Jewish Gaza settlers who, during Israel’s “disengagement” from the territory in 2005, sent their children out, in poses imitating the iconic Warsaw Ghetto boy, to confront Israeli soldiers. For them, too, Gaza was Israel’s Warsaw and the suffering of the Holocaust was appropriated for contemporary political ends.³⁵ Such a mapping of equation and competition also prompts us to plot an inverse, but analogous, position that Robinson no doubt intends to contest: that particular mixture of extreme *differentiation* and *competition* that emerges in some sacralized and instrumentalized assertions of the Holocaust’s uniqueness. Here the affective transfer runs in the opposite direction: the potential affect of empathy is drained from all non-Holocaust victims and claimed as the unique property of a particular group whose suffering originated in the past.

Solidarity: From Equation to Differentiation

The two axes of our map—comparison and affect—are at least semiautonomous; hence, equation cannot be limited to the competitive affect produced in Robinson’s analogy or the settlers’ provocation. To the contrary, the combination of *equation* and *solidarity* is a frequent permutation in the map that I am sketching. While the mix of equation and competition concatenates desire and envy into a resistance politics rife with the potential

for *ressentiment*, the combination of equation and solidarity produces a form of liberal universalism with multicultural accents. Such a combination can be found, for instance, in André Schwarz-Bart's novels of Jewish and black diasporas, where a litany of shared suffering produces a strong form of empathetic identification. His novel *A Woman Named Solitude* (1973) actually articulates that identification by juxtaposing the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto with those of a Caribbean slave revolt.³⁶ Even in the highly charged Israeli–Palestinian context, such forms are frequent—and sometimes build on the very same materials deployed by Robinson.

Two of the images that appear in the Finkelstein photo-essay reappear to different effect, for instance, in the Israeli-British artist Alan Schechner's *The Legacy of Abused Children: from Poland to Palestine*, a 2003 digitally altered photograph and DVD projection. The Finkelstein photo-essay concludes by juxtaposing the frequently reproduced photograph of a boy in the Warsaw Ghetto with his hands up—perhaps the most famous image from the Holocaust—with two photographs of Palestinian boys confronted by Israeli soldiers.³⁷ In Schechner's work, these photographs are no longer simply juxtaposed, but set into motion. In the DVD projection, the camera zooms in on the Warsaw photograph to reveal that the boy, whose hands are empty in the *Stroop Report* image, is holding a photograph. As the camera moves closer, it becomes clear that this is a photograph of a Palestinian boy, who has apparently wet his pants in fear, being carried away by soldiers. As the camera zooms in on this image, it becomes clear that the Palestinian boy is himself now holding a photograph: none other than the photo of the Warsaw boy (figures 2a–d).

In folding the two images into each other, Schechner could easily be described as using a strategy of equation. In his own account of the piece, he confirms this reading but also adds nuance to this discourse by suggesting that it is not an equation of events that interests him, but rather the psychological condition of victimhood. As he writes,

Whilst I have no interest in comparing the two events (The Holocaust and the Intifada) to see which was the most horrific . . . I am interested in exploring the very real links between them. . . . In this project I am using the theory that abused children, unless treated, often become abusers themselves. By applying this to the current situation in Israel/Palestine where both Israelis and Palestinians are victims who replicate and repeat the abuse they have suffered[,] the possibility for constructing solutions to this terrible conflict become[s] more real.³⁸



Figures 2a–d. Alan Schechner, *The Legacy of Abused Children: From Poland to Palestine* (2003). Still images from a looped projection. Courtesy of Alan Schechner.

While offering, like the Finkelstein photo-essay, a *genealogical explanation* for the current conflict—that is, one based on a sense that today’s horrors are built on yesterday’s victimization and passed on from generation to generation—Schechner reverses the affective charge from antagonistic competitiveness to empathy. That is, the Finkelstein photo-essay turns past victims into the ancestors of today’s perpetrators and tends to blur the distinction between those past victims and today’s perpetrators: “The grandchildren of Holocaust survivors . . . are doing to the Palestinians *exactly* what was done to *them*” (emphasis added). Notice not just the blatantly ahistorical “exactly,” but also the ambiguous pronoun “them,” which erases the distinction between the generations. Schechner, in contrast, might be seen to transfer the Holocaust suffering of the past onto *both* the Israelis and the Palestinians, who are portrayed in his comments equally as victims. If that were the case, then the work would seem to imply that solidarity *requires* a logic of equation, a requirement that stands in tension with the work’s obvious desire to reach across differences. While preferable to competitive discourses, this vision would also risk downplaying historical heterogeneity, with uncertain effects for political mobilization and moral vision. In Iris Marion Young’s terms, its promotion of “symmetrical reciprocity” would

project a too simplistic vision of the world that reproduces the failure of recognition it sets out to oppose.³⁹

However, if one reading of *The Legacy of Abused Children* places it securely in the equation–solidarity quadrant of the map of memory, a rereading of the work also suggests another possibility. Through its self-consciously manipulated form, *Legacy* undermines deterministic genealogical explanations that present an endless cycle of reciprocal violence and reproduce notions of two victim peoples. The digitally manipulated photographs ironize realist accounts of causality. Hence, even as the endless loop of the video suggests the circular nature of violence, it also subverts all claims to the morally justified originary position of victim that frequently justifies violence—and certainly does so in the Israeli case, where Holocaust memory has been mobilized for just this purpose.⁴⁰ The particular nature of the photographic manipulation is also crucial: in placing a photograph in each boy's hand, Schechner transforms an image of absolute innocence and abject powerlessness into one of solidarity, defiance, and constrained agency.⁴¹ If Robinson's is an appropriative logic, this rereading of *The Legacy* suggests that analogy need not function in this way. In deconstructing the claims to origin that underlie much of the rhetoric of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict (in terms of land claims and suffering), it offers the possibility that analogy can become part of a depropriative, transformative work of memory in which the juxtaposition of different histories reorganizes understanding of both.

In creating the possibility of a differentiated solidarity of the sort illuminated by Du Bois, Schechner's work begins to imagine the outlines of a new conception of justice—one in which transcultural comparison does not simply produce commensurability out of difference, but reconfigures the elements it brings together. Cultural memory and discourses on the past do not themselves constitute institutionalized agencies capable of redressing injustices. However, they can create arenas where injustices are recognized and new frameworks are imagined that are necessary, if not sufficient, for their redress.

Political philosopher Nancy Fraser aligns the production of such new frameworks of justice with a two-step process: first, she argues, we need to recognize how many conflicts arise from situations of *abnormal justice*—situations similar to what Lyotard calls the “differend,” where no common language for articulating wrongs exists; but, second, and contrary to Lyotard, we need to attempt to move beyond abnormality to a conception of *reflexive justice*, which, writes Fraser, involves in turn a dual commitment, “entertaining urgent claims on behalf of the

disadvantaged, while also parsing the metadisagreements that are interlaced with them.”⁴²

Those who wield the Gaza–Warsaw analogy exemplify the first commitment to hear the urgent claims of the dispossessed, but too often they lack the flexibility of the second commitment to a reflexive parsing of metadisagreements about what Fraser calls the “who,” “what,” and “how” of justice. Rather, Robinson and many others on both sides of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict who invoke the Holocaust attempt to reestablish a *known* frame in order to stake a claim in resolving the dispute or obtaining justice. The Nazi genocide is conventionally thought to exceed all “normal” conceptions of justice and to estrange familiar categories such as “guilt,” “punishment,” and even “the human.” Yet, invocations of the genocide in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict tend to reference the Holocaust as the bearer of shared norms of human rights and clear-cut moral distinctions.⁴³ In scenarios of equation, not only is the past anachronistically rewritten from the vantage point of a very different present (a rewriting that characterizes many acts of memory), but, as a result, the present loses its potential as a locus of novelty. While the discourse activates a universalizing framework of recognition through which underrecognized subjects become visible as victims, this framework serves not so much to acknowledge difference as to translate difference back into a reduced vision of sameness. That is, regardless of the complexities of the Nazi genocide as a historical phenomenon, the images of the genocide that circulate in the present reduce it—as well as the contemporary cases to which it is analogized—to a stereotypical scenario of good and evil, innocence and absolute power.

A discourse based on clear-cut visions of victims and perpetrators or of innocence and guilt evacuates the political sphere of complexity and reduces it to a morality tale. Even in the case of genocide, a seemingly exceptional situation of polarized innocence and guilt, the most thoughtful responses have been forced to reflect on uncomfortable questions of complicity and ambivalence in the *gray zones* created by extremist political movements.⁴⁴ As Susannah Radstone has argued in relation to the photo of the Warsaw Ghetto boy, we need strategies of rereading the image that “wor[k] against the grain of identifications with ‘pure’ victimhood . . . by undercutting the sense of an absolute distinction between ‘good’ and ‘evil’ and by proffering, or even foregrounding potential identifications with perpetration as well as with victimhood.”⁴⁵ While there most certainly are victims to be acknowledged and perpetrators to be held responsible, a

discourse that turns on absolutes of innocence and guilt can only anchor an absolutist, perhaps even apocalyptic, politics.

Ultimately, the goal of a radical democratic politics of multidirectional memory today is not only to move beyond discourses of equation or hierarchy, but also to displace the reductive, absolutist understanding of the Holocaust as a code for “good and evil” from the center of global memory politics. This time- and place-specific task demands a vision of reflexive justice: critical intervention today is necessarily different from what it was, say, in Du Bois’s time, when Holocaust memory was not yet as central to moral discourses. Today, even critical invocations of the Holocaust under the sign of equation keep in place Israel’s most potent legitimating symbol: a narrative genealogy of ultimate victimization coupled with absolute innocence. The displacement called for today does not entail a removal of Holocaust memory from the public sphere, but rather a decentering of its abstract, reified form. Resources for such a decentering can be found in the archive of multidirectional memory. Decentering, in turn, does not mean relativization of the historical facts of the Nazi genocide. The persistence of Holocaust denial suggests that, in certain arenas, memory of the Holocaust can still play a progressive role.⁴⁶ But working through the implications and particularities of genocides needs to be separated from a discursive sacralization of the Holocaust that legitimates a politics of absolutism. Such a sacralization has become so powerful and simultaneously so empty of meaning that it seems to exert a magnetic force even on those who seek to oppose the politics it legitimates.

But it need not be so. In addition to earlier figures such as Du Bois and Duras, and contemporary artists such as Schechner, we can also take inspiration from the most prominent spokesperson from the Palestinian diaspora, the late and sorely missed Edward Said. Said repeatedly refused “morally to equate mass extermination with mass dispossession.”⁴⁷ He also frequently referred to Palestinians as “the victims of the victims.”⁴⁸ Although this formulation sounds at first like a pure example of equation and symmetry, I do not think he was suggesting that victimization leads inevitably to further identical forms of victimization. Rather, Said meant that Israelis and Palestinians have been brought together by the contingencies of history, by logics only partly in their control. They occupy a shared, yet divided place—both a geographic territory and a geography of memory. This place is not, today, a site of symmetry and peace—it is a site of asymmetry and violence, and Gaza is a resonant symbol of that condition. Transforming that condition

will take more than the work of multidirectional memory, but without changing the way we think about the past it will be difficult to imagine an alternative future.

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NOTES

Questions from Stef Craps prompted me to write this essay, which I began during a productive stay as a fellow at the Flemish Academic Centre for Science and the Arts (Vlaams Academisch Centrum [VLAC]) in Brussels. Earlier versions were presented at Columbia University, UCLA, the University of Illinois, the University of Missouri, and the “Trans-cultural Memory” conference in London. I’m grateful to the audiences of those lectures for their questions and comments, to Susannah Radstone for her engaged response in London, and to those who invited me to speak: Richard Crownshaw, Zsuzsa Gille, Marianne Hirsch, Andreas Huyssen, Eleanor Kaufman, and Brad Prager. I also received very helpful feedback from Matti Bunzl, Lauren M. E. Goodlad, Neil Levi, and Yasemin Yildiz. Special thanks to Alan Schechner for his images and his permission to reprint them. Responsibility for the arguments articulated here is solely my own.

1. Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).
2. See also Alison Landsberg’s important study of “prosthetic memory,” which suggests that in the wake of modernity and the development of the mass media, memory is no longer linked to “organic” communities but becomes available for creative adaptation and sharing across identity categories (*Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* [New York: Columbia University Press, 2004]).
3. Addressing this problem means reflecting on how acts of public memory encode different imaginaries of political subjectivity and justice. Building on work by Judith Butler, Nancy Fraser, and Iris Marion Young, I suggest that at stake in articulations of multidirectional memory are conceptions of solidarity and justice that turn on matters of framing, commensurability, and affect—that is, on questions of political representation and jurisdiction as well as the epistemological grounds and emotional tonalities of recognition. See Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (New York: Verso, 2009); Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World*, New Directions in Critical Theory series (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and Iris Marion Young, *Intersecting Voices: Dilemmas of Gender, Political Philosophy, and Public Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).
4. United Nations Human Rights Council, *Human Rights in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories: Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict* (New York: United Nations Human Rights Council, 15 September 2009).
5. In the face of a proliferation of such claims, a recent report by the European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism goes so far as to suggest that such analogies

- may fall under the category of hate speech and thus become subject to criminal prosecution. Although in this essay, I am critical of certain articulations of remembrance, I do not believe that criminalization is a productive response to troublesome analogies and abuses of memory. See Paul Ignaski and Abe Sweiry, *Understanding and Addressing the 'Nazi Card': Intervening against Antisemitic Discourse* (European Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, 2009). See also the useful critical discussion of the report in Brendan O'Neill, "Playing the Nazi Card Is Vile and Pathetic, but Hardly Illegal," *Australian*, 19 August 2009, accessed 19 August 2009, available at www.theaustralian.news.com.
6. The conflict around the blockade of Gaza has escalated because of the preventive measures Israel has taken against international activists attempting to break the blockade—measures that, in the infamous case of the Mavi Marmara, turned deadly. For a collection of documents and analyses responding to the 31 May 2010 attack on the flotilla, see Moustafa Bayoumi, ed., *Midnight on the Mavi Marmara: The Attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla and How It Changed the Course of the Israel/Palestine Conflict* (New York: OR Books, 2010), accessed 1 October 2010, available at www.orbooks.com/our-books/midnight/.
 7. For an encyclopedic account of the ghetto, see Barbar Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009). By way of comparison, the Gaza Strip has a population of 1.5 million as of July 2009 and an area of 139 square miles (360 km²). Its population is growing at three times the world rate, and the median age for residents is 17.4 years, with 44.4% of the population age 14 or younger (Central Intelligence Agency [CIA], *The World Factbook*, accessed 20 August 2009, available at www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/).
 8. Scholars are rapidly and definitively changing our understanding of the early years of Holocaust memory. This is one of the stakes of *Multidirectional Memory*, but for a full account of the U.S. context, see Hasia Diner, *We Remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust, 1945–1962* (New York: NYU Press, 2009).
 9. W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto," *Jewish Life*, May 1952, 14–15, quotation on 15.
 10. *Ibid.*, 14.
 11. W. E. Burghardt Du Bois, *The World and Africa: An Inquiry into the Part which Africa Has Played in World History* (New York: Viking, 1947), 23. This passage is often used as evidence for the argument that the Nazi genocide simply repeated colonial violence on a new set of European victims, but Du Bois came to a more nuanced view in "The Negro and the Warsaw Ghetto."
 12. Marguerite Duras, "Les deux ghettos," *France-Observateur*, 9 November 1961, 8–10.
 13. Robinson sent his e-mail on 19 January 2009, the day after the Israeli bombing campaign ended, although at a time when the situation in the Gaza Strip was obviously dire. For more on the Gaza bombing and the situation on the ground, see the report by Amnesty International, *Israel/Gaza: Operation "Cast Lead": 22 Days of Death and Destruction* (London: Amnesty International, 2009), and the report by the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict [The Goldstone Report], *Human Rights in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories* (New York: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], 15 September 2009), accessed 15 October 2009, available at www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/specialsession/9/factfindingmission.htm.

A range of documents pertaining to the Robinson case can be found on the website created by his supporters in the Committee to Defend Academic Freedom at UCSB, <http://sb4af.wordpress.com>. Although the photo-essay is not signed by Finkelstein, it can be found on his official website under the heading “DEUTSCHLAND UBER ALLES: THE GRANDCHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS FROM WORLD WAR II ARE DOING TO THE PALESTINIANS EXACTLY WHAT WAS DONE TO THEM BY NAZI GERMANY . . .” (www.normanfinkelstein.com/deutschland-uber-alles/). The photo-essay was still viewable as of 1 October 2011, and I direct readers to it. Despite the lack of explicit authorship, I will refer to it as the Finkelstein photo-essay in order to mark its apparent source for Robinson.

14. For an excellent account of threats to academic freedom for U.S.-based academics critical of Israeli policy, see David Theo Goldberg and Saree Makdisi, “The Trial of Israel’s Campus Critics,” *Tikkun*, September–October 2009. On the implications of the Robinson case for questions of academic freedom in the digital age, see Robert O’Neil, “Academic Freedom in Cyberspace,” *Academe Online*, September–October 2009, accessed 15 September 2009, www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/academe/2009/SO/Feat/onei.htm.
15. One of the case’s first lessons is the difficulty of establishing a context of evaluation for public memory. The Du Bois and Duras examples provide an important ideological context—and potential counterpoint—for Robinson’s e-mail, insofar as they constitute radical, activist invocations of Warsaw in the context of racially inflected decolonization struggles. Yet, their works initially circulated in the relatively restrained publics of left-wing print publication. The dynamics of the Robinson case, in contrast, are intrinsically multidirectional, as the case shifts from a local, if virtual, scene of pedagogy to a national and international cause/scandal driven by both local and nonlocal actors and networks, beginning with pro-Israel pressure groups and continuing with Robinson’s organized, Web-based defenders. As the model of multidirectional memory would predict, such dynamics are clearly not part of a zero-sum game, because conflicting interpretations of the past and present rebound off each other and provide the occasion for further articulations of all political persuasions. The viral nature of contemporary Web-based polemic clearly plays a significant role in the spread of multidirectional forms of memory today, especially when those forms intersect with the particularly heated controversies of the Israeli–Palestinian struggle. Robinson’s own discourse, as well as the one that arose around him, testify to the transnational dimensions of the Middle East conflict, which is at once intensely localized as a battle over the distribution of land and rights and delocalized as a global contest over recognition, representation, and political legitimacy. For another analysis of the significance of the Holocaust references that circulated in the wake of the Gaza conflict—written from a very different intellectual and political perspective—see David M. Seymour, “From Auschwitz to Jerusalem to Gaza: Ethics for the Want of Law,” *Journal of Global Ethics* 6, no. 2 (2010): 205–15.
16. Idith Zertal, *Israel’s Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*, trans. Chaya Galai, Cambridge Middle East Studies series (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For more on the place of the Holocaust in the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, see also the nuanced accounts focusing on the respective sides of the conflict in Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); and Gilbert Achcar, *The Arabs and the Holocaust: The Arab–Israeli War of Narratives*, trans. G. M. Goshgarian (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010).
17. Zertal, *Israel’s Holocaust*, 25.
18. Arye Naor, “Lessons of the Holocaust Versus Territories for Peace, 1967–2001,” *Israel Studies* 8, no. 1 (2003): 130–52, quotation on 130. More recently and bizarrely, according to a 2002 *Ha’aretz* report, an Israeli officer claimed that with its occupation of Palestinian

- lands in mind, the Israeli army had “analyze[d] and internalize[d] the lessons of earlier battles—even, however shocking it may sound, even how the German army fought in the Warsaw ghetto” (quoted by Amir Oren, in *Ha’aretz*, 25 January 2002).
19. Oona King, “Israel Can Halt This Now,” *Guardian*, 11 June 2003. King’s fellow MP Jenny Tonge deployed a somewhat more roundabout rhetoric that eschewed direct comparison of the occupation to the Holocaust but still brought them into contact (see Jenny Tonge, “Time to Get Tough,” *Guardian*, 23 June 2003). For a response to Tonge, see Barbara Grant, “Time to Get Real,” *Guardian*, 30 June 2003. For a critique of King from an Israeli critic of the occupation, see Amira Hass, “Making Stupid Comparisons,” *Ha’aretz*, 9 July 2003.
 20. George Galloway, Talksport Radio, 2 January 2009. As reproduced on YouTube, “Gaza is the Warsaw Ghetto—George Galloway—2 Jan 09,” accessed 1 September 2009, available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrK90LvqBRk. Galloway asserts a “direct comparison” between Warsaw and what he calls the “Gaza Ghetto.” His discourse in this report is one I would situate in the equation–solidarity quadrant of my map. The video, posted by “oalandestin,” contains a montage of images similar to what I’m calling the Finkelstein photo-essay but uses dissolves instead of spatial juxtaposition. Sigrid Rausing also quotes Galloway as speaking at a demonstration the next day in Trafalgar Square and asserting, “Today, the Palestinian people in Gaza are the new Warsaw Ghetto, and those who are murdering them are the equivalent of those who murdered the Jews in Warsaw in 1943” (“The Code for Conspiracy,” *New Statesman*, 27 April 2009, 19). Rausing’s essay is written against such equations, but her conclusion that Palestinian anti-Semitism constitutes the biggest obstacle to peace is tendentious.
 21. Butler, *Frames of War*, 51.
 22. See Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004).
 23. Butler, *Frames of War*, 141.
 24. No captions identify the photographs in the Finkelstein photo-essay. However, until recently, the image of the Huwara checkpoint could be found on the website of the International Committee of the Red Cross and bears the copyright of the Associated Press/N. Ishtayeh (accessed 21 July 2009, www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/palestine-report-131207). When I checked this website again on 21 February 2011, the image was no longer visible, but the copyright attribution remained. On www.remember.org (accessed 21 July 2009), the image of the selection at Auschwitz-Birkenau is identified as being held by the Dachau Museum.
 25. The same juxtaposition of images is visible in a Holocaust museum in the Palestinian town of Ni’lin in the West Bank. A report on the museum on German television portrays the museum as set up to establish parallels between the Holocaust and the Nakba (the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948) and occupation. One text in the museum reads, “The Holocaust unique victims kills the innocent Palestinians [sic]” (*Tagesschau*, 5 September 2009, accessed 6 September 2009, available at www.tagesschau.de/ausland/pvholocaust-museum100.html). As indicated earlier, I do not believe such an example can be assessed with the same tools as I use to assess Robinson and Finkelstein. Thus, for example, such an example may be seen in context as a powerful rejection of Holocaust denial, even if it also remains a form of relativization.
 26. On how to approach perpetrator images, see Marianne Hirsch, “Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art: Gender as an Idiom of Memorialization,” in *Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Omer Bartov, Atina Grossman, and Molly Noble

(New York: New Press, 2002). See also the useful collection *Visualizing the Holocaust: Documents, Aesthetics, Memory*, ed. David Bathrick, Brad Prager, and Michael D. Richardson, Screen Cultures: German Film and the Visual series (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2008).

27. Adi Ophir, *The Order of Evils: Toward an Ontology of Morals*, trans. Rela Mazali and Havi Carel (New York: Zone Books, 2005). It may be that other comparisons are more productive, however, such as that of the occupation with South African apartheid. For an account of how Israeli forms of separation and segregation outstrip the South African original, see Saree Makdisi, "The Architecture of Erasure," *Critical Inquiry* 36, no. 3 (2010): 519–59. See also on the occupation more broadly, Adi Ophir, Michal Givoni, and Sari Hanfi, eds., *The Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (New York: Zone Books, 2009).
28. In a talk given a few months after the controversy broke—whose text is posted on the Committee to Defend Academic Freedom at the UCSB website—Robinson clarifies that "the differences are numerous" between Nazi and Israeli policies and suggests that "drawing analogies between historical and contemporary events or processes is not intended to suggest they are identical." Rather, he continues, "[S]uch comparisons are a pedagogical tool meant to uncover patterns of human conduct—or better put, human misconduct." While Robinson's e-mail may ultimately serve this purpose—and may lead to more fine-grained comparisons—the original e-mail and photo-essay seem to me to obey a different logic: that of equation. In the talk, Robinson also identifies Israeli actions as "Nazi-like" and reiterates that "there is a definite parallel between the Warsaw Ghetto and Gaza" ("Prof. Robinson Delivers Speech Addressing His Case" [23 May 2009], accessed 3 June 2009, available at sb4af.wordpress.com).
29. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Meridian: Crossing Aesthetics series (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). In his short, but powerful, essay "What is a Camp?" Agamben makes the point succinctly:

[I]f the essence of the camp consists in the materialization of the state of exception and in the consequent creation of a space for naked life as such, we will then have to admit to be facing a camp virtually every time that such a structure is created, regardless of the nature of the crimes committed in it and regardless of the denomination and specific topography it might have. . . . The camp . . . is the new biopolitical *nomos* of the planet. ("What is a Camp?" *Means without End: Notes on Politics*, trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino, Theory Out Of Bounds series [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000], 41–42, quotation on 45)

30. It is precisely this most significant aspect of the Warsaw Ghetto that must be forgotten in order to produce the Gaza–Warsaw equation. Another example of such an equation is found in a commentary by Pat Lancaster, editor of the British magazine *The Middle East*:

[C]all me pernicious if you will but a small area with people forced to live in cramped, unsanitary conditions, surrounded by an impassable, fortified wall, their movements restricted by armed troops, reduced to smuggling through underground channels, their houses bombed and burned—ring any bells with you? I could be describing Gaza in January 2009, just as easily as Warsaw more than 65 years ago.

While Lancaster is correct that such parallels exist, they only become possible to render as equations when Warsaw's end in extermination is left out—even though Lancaster himself recounts this process, as well (“Comment,” *Middle East*, February 2009, 5). A more nuanced juxtaposition, written before the December–January offensive, can be found in Harriet Malinowitz’s “I Will Tell Everything,” *Women’s Review of Books* 25, no. 4 (2008): 14–16. Malinowitz is reviewing Mary Berg’s Warsaw Ghetto diary and Itbisam Barakat’s memoir of the 1967 war and Israeli occupation.

31. My position is close to that of Judith Butler’s, who, in rejecting the equation of Zionism and Nazism, goes on to say that “there are principles of social justice that can be derived from the Nazi genocide that can and must inform our contemporary struggles even though the contexts are different and the forms of subjugating power clearly distinct” (“Is Judaism Zionism? Religious Sources for the Critique of Violence,” lecture given at the conference “Rethinking Secularism,” 22 October 2009, Cooper Union, New York City, available at *The Immanent Frame*, 2 November 2009, accessed 15 November 2009, available at <http://blogs.ssrc.org/tif/2009/11/02/rethinking-secularism-audio/>).
32. In this excellent opinion piece, which differentiates between Gaza and Warsaw without relativizing either situation, historian LeVine does not mention Robinson; but it is clear from its date that his article references the Robinson affair (“Crisis in Gaza: Gaza is No Warsaw Ghetto,” *Aljazeera*, 2 February 2009, accessed 2 September 2009, available at <http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/crisisingaza/2009/02/20092191518941246.html>).
33. See the related point by Judith Butler in an essay on Primo Levi and his critique of Israeli policy and the instrumentalization of the Holocaust:

The discursive means by which the Holocaust is reinvoled is precisely a way of calling upon the pain of its repetition, and mobilizing that repetition for other means. The question is whether it is mobilized for political purposes with the consequence of displacing the pain (and closing the historical gap between present and past) and losing the referent itself. (“Primo Levi for the Present,” in *Re-Figuring Hayden White*, ed. Frank Ankersmit, Ewa Domanska, and Hans Kellner, Cultural Memory in the Present series [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009], 282–303, quotation on 297)

34. Arye Naor, “Lessons of the Holocaust Versus Territories for Peace, 1967–2001,” *Israel Studies* 8, no. 1 (2003): 130–52.
35. On this appropriation, see the column by Ayelet Waldman at www.salon.com and Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt, “‘We Will Get through This Together’: Journalism, Trauma and the Israeli Disengagement from the Gaza Strip,” *Media, Culture & Society* 30, no. 4 (2008): 495–513. Speaking of coverage of the “disengagement” by various Israeli newspapers, Tenenboim-Weinblatt writes,

While the exodus myth received high prominence in *Yedioth Ahro-noth*, visual references to the Holocaust were largely subdued. For example, when a group of settlers consciously imitated the unforgettable picture of the small boy being deported from the Warsaw Ghetto (holding up his hands in a gesture of surrender), the picture was pushed away to page 14, alongside a disparaging text. Similarly, *Ma’ariv* placed the picture on page 13, while *Ha’aretz* ignored the picture altogether. (507)

36. For more on the Schwarz-Bart case, see Rothberg, "Anachronistic Aesthetics: André Schwarz-Bart and Caryl Phillips on the Ruins of Memory," in *Multidirectional Memory* (see note 1), 135–74.
37. On the Warsaw Ghetto boy, see Richard Raskin, *A Child at Gunpoint: A Case Study in the Life of Photo* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2004); Frédéric Rousseau, *L'enfant juif de Varsovie: Histoire d'une photographie* (Paris: Seuil, 2009); and Marianne Hirsch, "Nazi Photographs in Post-Holocaust Art" and "Projected Memory: Holocaust Photographs in Personal and Public Fantasy," in *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, ed. Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999), 3–23.
38. Cited from Alan Schechner's website, www.dottycommies.com (accessed 28 August 2009). This same piece has also been incorporated into a collaborative performance called DIALOG, created with the Palestinian artist Rana Bishara. On DIALOG, see Alesandro Imperato, "The Dialogics of Chocolate: A Silent DIALOG on Israeli-Palestinian Politics," in *Global and Local Art Histories*, ed. Celina Jeffries and Gregory Minissale (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars, 2007), 283–97. On *Legacy*, see Richard Raskin, *A Child at Gunpoint*, and Adrian Parr, "Deterritorialising the Holocaust," in *Deleuze and the Contemporary World*, ed. Ian Buchanan and Adrian Parr, Deleuze Connections series (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 125–45. Lutz Koepnick includes a brief but excellent discussion of Schechner in "Photographs and Memories," *South Central Review* 21, no. 1 (2004): 94–129. Koepnick discusses a different work—the well-known and controversial *It's the Real Thing (Self Portrait at Buchenwald)*, which, although it also uses digital manipulation and references Holocaust memory, is otherwise quite different from *Legacy*. Koepnick writes, "What Schechner's self-portrait seeks to exhibit is the failure of the photographic image not only to record reality reliably and to authenticate memory, but also to address the shocks and ruptures associated with traumatic experience" (96). *Legacy*, in contrast, seeks to refunction photography so that it can once again confront traumatic experience, although not in a mode that privileges authenticity.
39. See Young, *Intersecting Voices*, 38–59.
40. In setting the two images into motion, Schechner's work might be understood to participate in what Ariella Azoulay calls the "civil contract of photography." In a passage that resonates with this artwork, Azoulay writes,

The photograph bears the seal of the photographic event, and reconstructing this event requires more than just identifying what is shown in the photograph. One needs to stop looking at the photograph and instead start watching it. The verb "to watch" is usually used for regarding phenomena or moving pictures. It entails dimensions of time and movement that need to be reinscribed in the interpretation of the still photographic image. When and where the subject of the photograph is a person who has suffered some form of injury, a viewing of the photograph that reconstructs the photographic situation and allows a reading of the injury inflicted on others becomes a civic skill, not an exercise in aesthetic appreciation. This skill is activated the moment one grasps that citizenship is not merely a status, a good, or a piece of private property possessed by the citizen, but rather a tool of a struggle or an obligation to others to struggle against injuries inflicted on those others, citizen and noncitizen alike—others who are governed along with the spectator." (*The Civil Contract of Photography* [New York: Zone Books, 2008], 14)

41. As Richard Raskin writes, "Schechner presents the two children as calling out to the viewer that each of them protests against the suffering inflicted on the other" (*Child at Gunpoint*, 167).
42. Fraser, *Scales of Justice*, 73.
43. This point is made convincingly in the context of debates about Belgian colonialism in Sarah De Mul's essay in this special issue.
44. Primo Levi inaugurated thinking about the "gray zone" in an essay of that name from his last collection *The Drowned and the Saved* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 36–69.
45. Susannah Radstone, "Social Bonds and Psychical Order: Testimonies," *Cultural Values* 5, no. 1 (2001): 59–78, quotation on 65. Radstone also makes productive use of Levi's conception of the "gray zone."
46. Joseph Massad has provocatively argued that Holocaust deniers in the Arab world are "objectively" Zionists, because their irrational insistence on negating an incontrovertible historical fact implicitly and inadvertently pays tribute to the logic by which the fact of the Holocaust justifies the establishment of a Jewish state on Palestinian land ("Semites and Anti-Semites, That Is the Question," *Al-Ahram Weekly On-Line*, no. 720 [2004], accessed 24 June 2009, available at <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2004/720/op63.htm>).
47. Edward Said, "Bases for Coexistence," in *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After* (New York: Vintage, 2001), 205–9, quotation on 208. On Said, Jewishness, and Holocaust memory, see Gil Z. Hochberg "Edward Said: 'The Last Jewish Intellectual': On Identity, Alterity, and the Politics of Memory," *Social Text* 24, no. 2 (2006): 47–65. For a skeptical view of Said's notion that bases of coexistence exist between Israelis and Palestinians because of their shared histories of diaspora—as well as a much darker view of the possibilities of Holocaust memory in this context than the one I articulate in this essay—see A. Dirk Moses, "Genocide and the Terror of History," *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 90–108, esp. 103–4.
48. David Barsamian and Edward Said, *Culture and Resistance: Conversation with Edward Said* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003), 147.