



In Spite of Partition: Jews, Arabs, and the Limits of Separatist Imagination (Translation/Transnation)

Gil Z. Hochberg

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Partition--the idea of separating Jews and Arabs along ethnic or national lines--is a legacy at least as old as the Zionist-Palestinian conflict. Challenging the widespread "separatist imagination" behind partition, Gil Hochberg demonstrates the ways in which works of contemporary Jewish and Arab literature reject simple notions of separatism and instead display complex configurations of identity that emphasize the presence of alterity within the self--the Jew within the Arab, and the Arab within the Jew. *In Spite of Partition* examines Hebrew, Arabic, and French works that are largely unknown to English readers to reveal how, far from being independent, the signifiers "Jew" and "Arab" are inseparable.

In a series of original close readings, Hochberg analyzes fascinating examples of such inseparability. In the Palestinian writer Anton Shammas's Hebrew novel *Arabesques*, the Israeli and Palestinian protagonists are a "schizophrenic pair" who "have not yet decided who is the ventriloquist of whom." And in the Moroccan Jewish writer Albert Swissa's Hebrew novel *Aqud*, the Moroccan-Israeli main character's identity is uneasily located between the "Moroccan Muslim boy he could have been" and the "Jewish Israeli boy he has become." Other examples draw attention to the intricate linguistic proximity of Hebrew and Arabic, the historical link between the traumatic memories of the Jewish Holocaust and the Palestinian Nakbah, and the libidinal ties that bind Jews and Arabs despite, or even because of, their current animosity.

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