# Witnessing Body and States of Terror

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Submitted to

Doctoral School of Political Science, Public Policy and International Relations
Central European University

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Bucharest, Romania

August 2021

Declaration


I hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees in any other institution. The dissertation contains no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.


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Bucharest, 26 August 2021

# Abstract

The dissertation addresses one question, fundamental for political life: how do we practice the ethical work of witnessing violence in states of terror, that is in social worlds that circulate terror in everyday life? To become witnesses to violence is a practice, I argue, a kind of work which requires an embodied attention to terror precisely when terror targets the body not only as fragile object easily destroyed, but also as the matter through which terror circulates. Thus, if terror needs its usable bodies, how do we take the feeling, sensing body back? This is where the labor an embodied attention unfolds, what I call witnessing as a practice to bring us slightly beside the body terrorized and terrorizing.

I offer a genealogical approach to the research of political violence in Israel/Palestine. This instance of militarized violence is dominantly analyzed as an entrenched local conflict and a case of violent dispossession and oppression of one people by another. The dissertation destabilizes these approaches in one sense, by asking how this locale might illuminate two general questions of politics: first, what is a people and how it comes into being as a political body that organizes affective attachments (love for those like us, hatred for the "enemy"). The second question concerns the conceptual approaches that largely organize the literature on "Israel/Palestine" as a local conflict. Instead, I offer a methodological proposition for an embodied attention to violence as it constitutes itself as a political discourse ("state" or "society" or "citizen") through bodily gestures, affective circuits that weave the feelings that attach us to a "place."

The first question returns to the problem regarding the production of a "people" as a reified, total body invoked in the literature on the conflict. Conceptually, this is organized as a question about power in two complex technologies that produce the people: sovereignty and biopolitics. These two technologies are generally regarded as lethal and caring powers, respectively. I complicate this view in order to reflect on obvious paradoxes of living as a Jewish citizen in a militarized society and state. The main paradox I follow in empirical analysis concerns moments in which those nominated and self-nominated as citizens and thus as valuable lives confront the actual lethal conditions on which their protection is premised. How does the citizen relate to one's "home" and "society" when it becomes glaringly clear that they are made possible through violent means that directly and intensely contribute to making social worlds poorer and precarious? Equally relevant for this question concerning the making of the "people" is to historicize the sovereign and biopolitical strategies that make intelligible the valuable life and return that history of the state to its colonial condition of becoming the main relevant political entity.

The second question aims to destabilize some of the choices that the "researcher" might make when studying a conflict as a local instance of violence happening somewhere "there," at a distance for where we happen to be and read about it, considering it as composed observers, analytically - safely. The danger, I argue, is analytical and ethical. In the more familiar manners of referring to a locale of violence, we risk reproducing an attitude that takes the researcher "out of the picture," as the main subject researching his or her object of interest. Twice removed from the locale is the

reader, who must accept the authoritative narrative of the writer. What becomes increasingly objectified is the "thing" to be known, the place, "Israel" and "Palestine." Instead, I offer a narrative that describes how I orient myself through claims of suffering, of feeling terror, and through actual responses to terror. I pay attention both to narrative acts and to affective states that are conducive to choices for the names of the feelings that the actors invoke. This offers, or at least this is the wager, a possibility for the reader to also begin a process of orientation through the scenes narrated. That orientation is not only analytical, but also embodied. In this more expansive manner of understanding attention to a locale of violence, the stake of my approach is to broaden the possibilities for our questions about the forces that make us as subjects responsible, or not, for violence.

The main argument that brings these two questions together appears more clearly as I invoke in my research an approach to an embodied attention to atmospheres of terror, meaning social worlds that circulate terror through mundane gestures and emotions in an environment that self-terrorizes its subjects. An embodied attention asks of this writer and of readers to consider how we find names -and circulate names- for what we feel. This consideration is, I argue, the main technique to emancipate ourselves from oppressive states.

I thank Firas Shaheen for his support in research and for being a fierce witness, for teaching me what labor of love witnessing is.

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# Prologue

**October 2015, Jerusalem: waiting for the next intifada**

Over the last few weeks, we have learned that when the light train stops in between stations, it means that someone has been shot somewhere ahead. The passengers of the light train that crosses from West (Jewish) to East (Palestinian) Jerusalem and all the way to the new Jewish settlements beyond the Green Line, outside Israel's legal territory, get off when asked by the recorded female voice, without commotion and without visible anxiety. The voice is calm, even. I get off too. On one occasion, we had to wait inside the train, right before entering the East Side, which meant that the body, wounded or killed, was in the Old Town, where soldiers implement an informal but systematic shoot to kill policy. Damascus Gate is a lethal place that amasses more bodies than any other. We know they must have sealed the area of the killing temporarily. We have seen the photos in the media; the closeup of the body immobilized.

Later, the dead get their public name, *terrorists*, and the news is announced in the media. "There is no way to make eye contact in this city," I say to someone, and he nods as if to say I am merely stating something obvious. Everybody in this city has their eyes glued to their phones. I cannot know for sure, but I am guessing we all watch the bodies, the close-up photos in the news. First comes the buzz, then the hand goes to the pocket, and out of the pocket comes the terror, framed, counted, immobilized to better fix in place what we see. The attackers, armed with small knives are very young, in one instance twelve and fourteen years old. In one image, the body of the "terrorist" is splayed on the ground; the bodies of standing soldiers encircle it in an orderly

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depiction of the act and its decisive conclusion. The bodies who watch the scene are terrorized - "*this is obvious*," I am told. The newspaper photos convey a local shade of terror, not only because of what is happening, the killing, but because of what is awaited, the next *intifada*.

The wait is confirmed by a Jerusalemite, my informer, who offers an explanation about the circulating terror: "They have won the war," Yehuda says. "They have won the war because now everyone stays at home and people have closed their businesses. My mother no longer visits me in town because she is too scared to take the bus." The Palestinians' will to terrorize the Jewish city is strangely confirmed by the actual bodies. Immobilized and framed, the bodies lie on the pavement surrounded by four soldiers standing over them. Hands firmly on their rifles, which are pointing at the ground, they have the place "secured." The soldiers organize the scene, narrowing our focus inside the boundaries of the neat square shaping the location of their dead target. They look down on the body, and I look down on the whole scene on my screen. I cannot see anyone's face, but the objective of the photo is obvious. What I, the viewer, must remark upon is the arrangement of bodies, the order of the living and the dead.  Between the tall standing soldiers, the man's body on the ground looks trapped. He is probably dead, and there is no sign of an ambulance. It is a war scene. I recognize the place, on the "Palestinian side," a section of the stone wall that gives it that antique look of a fortress serves as a background. I consider the picture too long. It looks unnatural. The man's body is contorted, having fallen in an odd position, on his belly, an arm twisted, his right hand still clutching a knife. I cannot tear my eyes away. The picture is instructional, and I am reading its instructions. The body and its posture signifying: the hand still holds on to the knife, even when dead. The terror is transparent, pedagogical, and now tied to the ground.

"*Jerusalem is even more mad than usual, bear with us*," one of my informants tells me, and I acknowledge the gesture of a polite host rather than the piece of information. He is explaining why I should not expect good manners in this brusque city; even less so now. "*Jerusalemites are far less refined than people in Tel Aviv anyway, and these days they have an excuse at least.*" The latest attacks made people recall the past Intifada, the bombs in buses, the familiar terror. We compare the cities and their *atmospheres*. "*At least fewer soldiers are patrolling the streets in Tel Aviv, or they are less visible*," I respond, admitting my discomfort with the soldiers positioned in the light train on the morning commute. "*They are more relaxed there. They live like Europeans in Tel Aviv*," he says and smiles, gesturing in my direction, a European.

**Learning to feel terror**

In late 2015, Jerusalem and other Israeli cities were waiting for a new Intifada. Jewish mainstream media named several attacks by young Palestinian men and women against IDF soldiers in Israel and in the West Bank as cases possibly amounting to a new period of *unrest*. Named after its signature weapon, small knives used by attackers, this was a "knives Intifada." The attacks gathered sufficient weight to become recognizable for pundits, journalists, politicians as an instance of Palestinian violence after the First Intifada (1988-1993), with its signature mark of stones thrown at armed soldiers and less remembered massive public protests in the streets, and the Second Intifada (2000-2006), remembered mostly for its suicide attackers concealing explosive devices and detonating them in public places, such as cafes, markets, and buses, which harmed civilians. A decade later, in 2015, the Palestinian attackers were armed with knives, and in a few instances managed to wound or kill others, soldiers most frequently, but also some civilians. Some of the attackers were killed on the spot by either soldiers or other armed forces. Politicians were openly calling on civilians to pick up guns when they went out and not to hesitate to kill if they

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happened to have to react to such "terrorist attacks." De facto, the shoot-to-kill policy was in place, stated and enacted by public permission given to anyone to kill.

After the first few such scenes of violence reported in the media, Ophir, a new acquaintance, advised me to install a phone app of a popular media outlet, Ynet, to *stay safe*; for instance, to know when to avoid using public transportation. Ynet had an intense deep red background on the phone screen, announcing the *breaking news* frequently, with a sound that soon started signifying the next body shot. East Jerusalem, the home of a large Palestinian community, and under military occupation since its annexation following the Six Day war (1967), was the site of most attacks, the place of most killings and the area which most Jewish Jerusalemites living on the other side *avoided* for fear of being attacked. This is what Ophir explains to me. She has not travelled on the other side for years. Most Jerusalemites have not. I understand that this is a rule for "normal" people who mind their own business, without complications. I do not ask her how she knows they would recognize her "Jewishness" there. Ophir is my temporary host and genuinely takes care of me with sharp, decisive gestures. I should learn what to do, and when not to do anything, that is to *stay at home*. She takes my phone without hesitation and offers to search for the right app. A few weeks later, I uninstall it.

The "almost" Intifada, or the "knives Intifada, "dominated the autumn of 2015 with the peculiar weight of an atmosphere of expectation, a collective wait. Many of the attackers were legal residents of Israel, a fact that increased the urgency of the situation, as the border checks could not "filter" the danger, usually expected from the other side of the wall, from the "territories" separated from Israel through an infrastructure of passes and border points controlled by the army. As a named fear of a repetition of what was *familiar, what was pending* - the terror of bombs in public places stabilized in the collective memory as the signature of the previous decade. "Intifada" had

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a performative force. It made the present recognizable, familiar to orient yourself through it. It made obvious the distinction between the bodies that knew what to do, and what is logical to look for and feel, and those that did not. I did not. Various Jewish acquaintances offered hints for orientation, advice, with the solicitude of a host. Some offered friendly acts of commiseration for my unfortunate arrival "in these times," for not *enjoying* the city as I would have in better times. "Of course, you look like a tourist," Ophir says, knowing that I do go to East Jerusalem frequently, meaning that I am safe, no one would attack my body, while hers is not safe there. She knows the terror, I do not. While her body knows it as she moves through town, I walk without carrying the terror, my body oblivious to its weight, which others have learned to carry by now. Ophir shares sternly and matter-of-factly, her *knowledge* of where to be and what to feel. Although she is in her early twenties, what she knows is inherited and activated when needed to discern what I, the "European," and *looking out of place,* "like a tourist," cannot.

**Intifada or terror. The principle of separation**

As Edward Said (1992) wrote in 1978, at some point "Palestinian" become another word for terrorism in the parlance of most Western public spheres. As a Palestinian living in exile, teaching and writing in the US academia, this was something that made him feel lonely, he wrote, in an austere but poignant manner to express the fate imposed on a people excluded from public appearance, conversation, and political negotiations regarding their fate. This was the period of peace negotiations at Camp David (1978) between *Israel, the US, and Egypt* and for the sake of a durable peace between Jews and Palestinians. Indeed, the Palestinians had not been included in the "talks" and the diplomatic game deciding their fate. Still, the plan was promising for a population caught in a regime of military administration after the June 1967 war, when Israel had occupied the whole remaining territory of Palestine. Camp David had been a beacon of hope to

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returning Palestinians to civilian life and rule by political principles. The talks concluded with a promise to confer "full autonomy" on the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza in the next five years. It was not followed by any tenable measure.

Ten years later, the first Intifada (1988-1993) started, and the "uprising" in Arabic, brought this undecided condition to public attention. This was a period of intense and passionate civic expression in the Palestinian public spheres, a multitude in fact, and divergent in their plans regarding autonomy and emancipation. (Abdulhadi 1998; Shehadeh 2020) It was also a time of dialogue between Palestinians and Jewish Israeli intellectuals and civic actors. The rich creativity of grass-roots activism, importantly structured by a feminist ethos and activism practicing autonomy (Abdulhadi 1998), the values and ethos of a public life, were obscured by the role that "intifada" gained later; terror that is. Its official end was marked by the much-acclaimed Oslo Peace Process, during the mandate of the Israeli prime-minister Yitzhak Rabin, the Jewish figure representing peace and hope among Israelis, or at least for the large majority then still behind his Labor Party. For the Palestinians, his figure carried other meanings, more ominous. Rabin's long military career and role in the previous wars was glaring to the occupied, for instance his order to the IDF soldiers in 1988 during the Intifada, to "*break the bones*" of protesters with the infamous clubs produced on a mass-scale at the beginning of the uprising for the occasion. Furthermore, not a small reason for suspicion was Rabin's proposal in 1993 to erect a wall between Israel and the West Bank to separate "Gaza" from "Tel Aviv," in other words to control movement of Palestinians.

However unsettling the terms of the new plan were for some critics, Said included, "Oslo" was then a word that preeminently carried a sense of hope for many, for a while. The signature of the Accords in 1993 and 1995 was followed by Rabin's murder (November 1995) by a right-wing

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student who found himself in disagreement with Rabin's plan regarding the future of the state neighboring a Palestinian autonomous entity. The decade that followed was marked by the ascendency to power and the consolidation of the Likud party, which was considered more conservative, further to the right, illiberal (and distasteful) for the left and middle-class intelligentsia, as well as being more transparently hawkish regarding the reality of military rule of the stateless Palestinians under Israel's de facto military control. This was a period of intensification of the process of expansion of Jewish occupation of the land in the West Bank and Gaza, which meant an intensification of dispossession of Palestinians from their lands by legal and infrastructural techniques (segregated roads; the destruction of agricultural lands; the "fragmentation" of access between villages and orchards etc.) that literally made their territory patchy and impeded movement.

In the Israeli society inside the so-called Green Line, the territory obtained in 1948, the illegal settlements were then seen by many with worry and outspoken criticism regarding their long-term logic, detrimental to the "peace process" and corrupting the democratic character and ethical principles of the Jewish population in the democratic state. Rabin was a staunch critic of that expansive logic, being worried about what this might mean once Jews and Palestinians were left living together in the same territory. Though rhetorically veiled, the worry was in fact a politically transparent reason for concern. The military rule imposed on the population in the West Bank and Gaza was difficult to sustain as a democratic Western state. It remains an untenable compromise between the colonial fact of the state's regime of citizenship and the rhetoric (the only democracy in the region) in sharp contrast to a transparent rule by exception "in the territories."

**Against "mingling" of Jews and Palestinians**

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Ophir's warning not to travel to the Eastern side in troubled times is a concrete indication of the contentiousness of the "place" called Jerusalem/Yerushalayim/al-Quds. The Palestinians living there had been ruled by Jordan until 1967. Subsequently, they became residents, but not citizens, under Israeli jurisdiction. Their permanent residency is an insubstantial guarantee of their right to stay, as the Israeli authorities use a plethora of techniques to remove them from their homes in Jerusalem and push them into the West Bank. Officially Israeli territory, Jerusalem is a disputed land, not in the least reflected by the precarious legal condition imposed on the "residents." The limits of the city are shifting, in an ongoing process of setting boundaries through manipulations of the actual positioning of the "Green Line." The light rail that crosses from West to East is both an instrument and a sign of the contentious process of ongoing "place making" in Shlay and Rosen's (2010) conceptual terms. The train crosses the city from the Jewish West Jerusalem and connects it with East Jerusalem, before continuing further, to a more recent area of Jewish settlement in a contentious region in the West Bank, beyond the Green Line. To that extent, the semblance of a separation between inside the Green Line and outside it is tenuous.

Referred to as the "Old Town" sometimes, East Jerusalem is a prominent place of religious worship for the Muslim, Jewish and Christian faiths are located. A walk through the Old Town can be a highly enjoyable tour among objects considered old and "oriental," along with an atmosphere infused with the buoyant energy of the narrow alleys where people buy, sell, eat, and drink. The contentious narratives regarding the genealogy of the "place" and of its rightful owner/worshiper are however brewing right under this commercial layer, and more intensely so once you learn to discern the multitude of uniformed Israeli soldiers and the even more numerous security personnel in civilian clothes. The latter are not even trying to disguise themselves as they stroll in pairs and wear their automated weapons visibly, half-stuffed in their belts or back pockets of jeans, mingling

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among tourists, shop owners, locals going about their day. Their civilian-armed presence marks yet another layer of the military presence that is made visible, and enacted as disciplinary, proximate surveillance.

The second Intifada started here. The Palestinians refer to it as the Al-Aqsa Intifada, after the name of a Muslim place of worship desecrated by Ariel Sharon in 2000. Then the leader of the Israeli rightwing opposition, Sharon had decided to visit one holy Jewish sanctuary in a location sacred for both Jewish and Palestinians, who refer to it as the Temple Mount and the Noble Sanctuary respectively, where the Al-Aqsa Mosque is also located. His visit, preceded by episodes of land dispossession in the West Bank, was considered a violation prefacing further state and settler encroachments on Palestinian places. Jewish moderates also judged this move unwise. It was in any case a consequential choice: years of popular revolt followed, bombs were detonated by suicide, and there were lethal military reprisals. Civilians on both sides were affected yet soon after, Sharon still became prime minister.

The second Intifada is considered to be the official stepping stone for the transformation of the entire security regime in Israel into a more systematic lethal apparatus (Gordon 2008; Azoulay and Ophir 2013; Ophir 2007). This is embodied most tangibly in the construction of the Israeli West Bank "barrier", or "wall of separation" in Israeli mainstream parlance but an "apartheid" wall for others, who discern broader connections with other colonial contexts of rule through the production of confinement and separation. (Stoler 2016; Mbembé 2019; Brown 2010; Gregory 2004) Many agree that after the second Intifada a decidedly *necropolitical* regime (Mbembe 2019) came into being; a rule of a population not in order to govern their lives, but as a torturous regime of suppression. (Ghanim 2008) However, the idea of a wall necessary to separate the Israeli society from the Palestinian one has a long history. It had been imagined by Theodor Herzl back in the

European age of Zionism and during the high period of a discourse on European civilization carried by its "superior races'' outside Europe for the sake of civilizing the inferior races. To that extent, Herzl imagined a future wall as a European civilizational rampart, "an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism." (Gregory 2004, 79) More practical, in the 1950s, Moshe Dayan, Defense Minister and a war hero after the 1948 "war of independence," suggested it once more, this time as a means of consolidating security against the Palestinians turned into refugees in 1948 who were waiting in neighboring countries, in squalid refugee camps for permission to return to their homes. To return to their homes in this decade meant to become an "infiltrator" according to the new laws, and to risk being shot or, at best, imprisoned. The plan for a wall of separation returned in the 1990s, and with a new purpose once more. In Rabin's imagination it was a solution to stop the suicide attackers coming from the West Bank and Gaza. The wall would bring an infrastructure to screen the safe population, those who would be afforded travel passes. Reacting in a public speech after a Palestinian terrorist attack in Tel Aviv which had left dozens of people dead, he announced the necessity of separation and the cessation of "intermingling" between "Jews and Arabs." He also urged Jewish citizens to stop employing the cheap labor of Palestinians without work permits who were, therefore, deprived of social protection. Against that slacking of civil loyalty too, which made the "mingling" of undocumented bodies banal, the wall was a salutary solution for a more efficient state control of entry and exit not only of terrorists, but also of workers.

Although he is still considered the main figure of hope in a lasting peace, it is useful to remember that Rabin, in the same speech, also demanded full rights for the military to torture the "terrorists" and asked the judiciary to remove the *last obstacles* against that necessary work of the army and intelligence forces. Rabin explicitly asked to no longer operate with "kids' gloves" and instead receive liberty to use "any means necessary" to stop the terror, including the right to apply

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collective punishment to the villages, and families of the ones declared terrorists. In that speech, he asked for a permanent state of exception for the army's operations in the occupied territories:

> There are those who believe it is possible to fight HAMAS with kid gloves, taking into account the demands of Israeli law against using physical force. But it is inconceivable that a HAMAS terrorist who participated in a murder would be able to bring a case to the High Court of Justice complaining that he was not given enough hours of proper sleep and win the case, because that is the law. I have nothing against the High Court of Justice. I just want to be able to order the administrative detention of HAMAS leaders in the territories under our control without complicated legal nonsense, and I do not want to have to provide any explanation that intelligence is not always able to provide for legal authorization. I believe we need to find methods so that HAMAS' suicidal murderers will know that not only are they liable to be killed during their activities, but that their homes, the homes of their families, could be damaged. (Rabin 1994)

Two decades later, Israel is one of the two democracies that has legalized torture. Rabin's "policy" of terrorizing the families of those suspected of terrorism is in full swing and has an operational name in IDF tactics: "making felt the presence" of the military in the everyday life of the West Bank population.

The wall was not built during Rabin's lifetime but did come up slowly throughout the next decade, first by erecting small sections around Jewish settlements in the West Bank. Soon, the idea was embraced as state policy by a Likud government with Ariel Sharon at its head. Since the erection of wall, the access of Jewish Israelis in the West Bank has been significantly reduced to either those who serve their conscripted or reserve military service, thus wearing a uniform and the signs of the occupation for the local Palestinians, or as settlers violently expanding the zones of exclusive Jewish habitation illegally according to international law, and oftentimes also in violation of formal Israeli law. For the younger generations of Israelis with no memory of the past of "intermingling" prior to the wall, the West Bank has become an imaginary geography (Said 1979; Ghanim 2008, 71) of constant danger, of sheer terror, of generalized hatred against Jewish Israelis. As Gordon (2008, xvi) narrates his dismayed realization in front of a class of university students,

his story of riding through the West Bank employing Palestinian taxi drivers was met in the 2000s with shock and disbelief at such a possibility of "mingling," reflecting a solid cultural sense of a separation dehistoricized in the public memory: the territories as a place opaque, savagery with no words.

I take the wall and the rail as fleeting images to convey a concomitant will to create distance and connection to the territory that stands contiguous to Israel's sovereign space. In this territory, a disenfranchised, stateless Palestinian population is confined in a regime of rule by exception, present in the imagination of Israeli Jewish citizens as a space beyond the pale, and to that extent out of mind, out of sight. The trope of *savagery* is pregnant, and auspicious for various interpretations. The "territories" make everyone mad, in fact. This is one strong meaning circulating among those critical of the military among the Left. In 2019, a news host in tears appeared in front of the camera reporting a story about IDF soldiers having abused Palestinians in one of the routine patrols in the West Bank. As she tries to hold her tears, without success, she calls them "animals." "They go there for service for two or three years and they *return animals*," she continues. She addresses the Jewish citizens, who surely had not expected this emotional outburst from their evening news host. In fact, it is obvious that she herself had not expected this outburst from herself. While reporting a piece of "news," the anchor is taken aback by the story of the news. As she translates the soldiers' acts of arbitrary violence - of torture in that case - from the perspective of the citizen, the explanation suddenly renders the "territories" into a phantasmatic place: they have become animals because the nature of the military service does this to anyone who would be *there*.

This public outburst is symptomatic. It is a sign of the condition of citizenship created by the very "principle of separation." (Azoulay and Ophir 2013) Among the leftist Israelis, the "territories" is

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a region sealed in the public imagination, a space opaque, unknown, inhabited by angry Palestinians and unpleasant settlers who take their Zionism too far (for the middle class, liberal strata) and soldiers who do their legal and/or civic duty (for the civilian) and who often commit admittedly unpalatable gestures of arbitrary violence, acts of savagery that would never be imaginable "in Israel," and which most of them regard in shock years after.

**Sovereign/Colonial presence makes absence**

This brief historical background has a tactical purpose for my thesis. It structures a field of tensions looking *back*, before the wall, and *forward*, after the erection of the wall. There are two points I want to clarify about this. Firstly, *intifada* became another name for "terror" at some point in the 2000s, and this terror has been localized as coming from the "territories" back to the Israeli democracy and the normal life of the "city." However, the period between the First and the Second Intifada reveals a systematic tactic, which I do not attribute to any one protagonist, but to the very logic that infuses the "principle of separation" (Azoulay and Ophir 2013) which has existed since 1948 and consists of destroying the public appearance of Palestinian voices as political actors, and *visible* political bodies that make demands through their very appearance.

Thus, my second point is about the present terms of Jewish citizenship as necessarily a militarized condition of inhabiting the enclosure of the "democratic" state that is increasingly untenable as democratic in public speech. A closer look at the intensely garrulous public life during the First Intifada (Shehadeh 2020; Abdulhadi 1998; Lavie 2014) together with the serious Jewish critical views that condemned military repression of people protesting in the streets of cities during that period, reveals a danger of rendering publicly questionable the very fact of the military rule that organizes the lives of the people occupied in the "territories." The intense publicity of their

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protests, as bodies that appeared in public spaces, and occupying those public spaces by their outspoken presence (Butler 2011; Butler and Athanasiou 2013), the NGOs, activist groups, and unaffiliated citizens were asking in ways difficult to ignore *who governs them*, and *in the name of what principle of authority*. (Azoulay 2008; Azoulay and Bethlehem 2012) The same question also applies to the Israeli Jewish citizens, who were becoming the actual, minute, embodied instruments for subduing civil protests in the West Bank and Gaza. They were agents of policing protesters (Ben-Ari 1989), armed with clubs when *bones had to be broken*, when movement in the streets had to be slowed down. Protesters were disabled literally and physically, and the will to protest was muffled by the fear of being wounded. In brief, the point was to terrorize people back into their homes. (Shehadeh 2020) This is the dilemma of Israel's untenable compromise of two conditions, as a democracy and as a colonial occupying power.

However, a case must be made for the much more extended timeframe for the systematicity of the project of creating absence – absent bodies, absent collective bodies, in this project of producing sovereign presence in the land of Palestine for much longer than the Intifadas. This thesis does not dwell on that history, and even less on the important history of relations in this land since the 1880s and the first wave of Jewish migration in Ottoman Palestine and, after the first world war, the installation of the British Mandate. However, the facts of this continuity are relevant and essential in order to consider the history of the imaginary geography of terror, and thus I keep them in sight. For instance, I will return to the continuity between the British and Israeli regimes of military administration of Palestinian subjects first inside Israel until 1967 and then in the occupied territories after 1967. (Robinson 2013; Ben-Eliezer 1998)

Considering the techniques of land dispossession and the efforts to remove the Palestinian people in waves of ethnic cleansing (Pappé 2006), this locale reflects a case of a settler colonial power

(Robinson 2013; Wolfe 2006; Shenhav 2013) engaged in a continuous, although not always explicitly stated plan to populate a contested territory with a desired (Jewish) population, despite the stubborn persistence of an undesirable Palestinian population. It is a presence that must be enforced, in other words, and which has been performed various forms of dispossession, ethnic cleansing and militarized control since 1948. However, in 1967 Israel intensified its own dilemma of a colonial democracy once it occupied the West Bank and Gaza in a period of global decolonization (Robinson 2013). The population was forced into a military regime while the rest of the world was struggling in the painful wars for independence and political autonomy of peoples ruled by European colonial states. The tension could only intensify in the next decades and their string of failed promises of autonomy.

The refusal to respond to the most basic question raised during the Intifada by the protesting population, namely who governs them (Azoulay 2008), has brought the concrete wall to reveal not the will to separate (Weizman 2006), but to terrorize, curb the collective mobilization of large masses of bodies appearing in public and relations between citizens and non-citizens. The citizen operates this regime and its manifold torturous logic of implementation. And as the military service has become an increasingly evident function of policing civilians, the very meaning of "war," and thus of the soldier as a combat figure, a hero, and a figure of sacrifice for the preservation of the nation and of the state risk loses its relevance in producing the body of the Jewish nation: a body of sacrifice for a necessary cause of self-preservation. (Weiss 2003; Bilu and Witztum 2000; Ben-Eliezer 1998)

"Terror," once it fully occupied the meaning of Intifada in the 2000s, restored the more familiar meaning of the soldier as a figure that combats *something*, a kind of distinct enmity was restored to military service. That figure of enmity was no longer being uncomfortably (for the state)

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attached to the embodied figure of a citizen asking, in his or her very bodily appearance in the streets, fundamental questions regarding the principles of government pertaining to their lives. The result is that the body of the Palestinian subject is solidly divorced from its appearance as political life that makes demands, as the embodiment of a citizen and as a body governed, even as this government is calculated at the threshold of "disaster" most obvious in Gaza. (Azoulay, Danieli, and Skomra 2005) Instead, the "enemy" more concretely embodies the figure of the terrorist. In this light, what appears with more prominence is the hypothesis that the most important subject in the logic of the occupation is not the unruly, stubborn population of the undesirables, but the very meaning, unstable as it is, of citizenship, and the uneven status of the citizen in his or her role of soldier, who therefore acts as an agent employed in the increasingly transparent mission of a settler project, a terrorizing project of occupation of land and civilian lives. The publicity of that discontent with being a "perpetrator" (Azoulay, Danieli, and Skomra 2005) in virtue of the militarized condition of citizenship, a "cognitive militarism," (Kimmerling 1993) is what seems to be the dangerous realization to be deferred.

## Introduction

"Everyone stays at home these days. They remember the bombs in the buses."

(Personal conversation, Jerusalem, 2051)

This dissertation is an account of an atmosphere of terror. Terror is an ambiguous term, despite its ubiquity governing our global moment. It operates first as a discourse about the valuable subjects that must be protected and the worlds in which they must persist and thrive. But then terror can also operate as a complex of sensorial and affective forces that weave a mix of emotions and their embodied sensations together – hair raised, the sharp punch and then the hole in your stomach rising to the throat, sweat, hot or cold, uncontrollable shaking of limbs, and more, difficult to put into words. *The struggle to put this sensorial and emotional weight into words is the object of this research and its method.* Therefore, I start by defining an *atmosphere* of terror. An atmosphere is not something that one already feels, but a regime conducive for *naming* what one *feels*. (Brennan 2004; Ahmed 2004a; Ross 2014) It is a regime of institutions, legal texts, public statements, and material infrastructures that organize the space in a territorialized order of delimited belonging and permissible exclusions that are inflicted concretely on some bodies (border guards, their dogs, fences, etc.). An atmosphere is also made by other, more elusive practices, such as the slow crystallization of bodily postures and the embodied knowledge, at times unconscious, of how to stand in relation to other bodies (standing above and looking down on the immobilized body) or where you are safe or not (as in East Jerusalem being inaccessible area for pragmatic Jews). This regime contributes to the differential embodiment of subjects so that they become, in a generation or longer, the legible bodies of the life deemed valuable, the "bodies that matter" (Butler 1993), and those that do not even amount to a substantial presence compared to the majority, or for the hegemonic public and its sensibilities. (Rancière 2006)

Thus, I will at times refer to "terror" as a regime that regulates which bodies can feel safe or not. As Jacques Rancière usefully conceptualized the relationship between the senses and the

representations that stabilize meanings, the forces that regulate what we feel depend on and contribute to the regime that organizes the sensible as it structures sensorial, emotional, or affective movements in social worlds. As a regime conducive to certain pervasive emotions, "terror" organizes the knowledge in each of us regarding what our bodies *mean* to others, what to expect, and whether a helping hand or violence keeping us away from a delineated area belonging to some "insiders." These meanings are not always mediated by a clear narrative: a law, a rule, a barbed wire, etc. Bodies create meaning through their movement and relationships to space and to the lives of others. (Ahmed 2004a) In other words, I consider bodies as the products of power techniques *and* as actors that concretely produce meaning through the ways in which they interact with others, human or non-human (what you might call "nature," material infrastructures, etc.). What the pending Intifada had intensified, besides the narration of mounting terror and its corresponding images, was also a regime of minute harassment in various points and at unpredictable times, which included the removal of belts and shoes, body checks, ID checks of Palestinians entering any public space.

An atmosphere produces familiarity through the manners in which others *communicate what they feel.* We instruct each other regarding our common fear of certain strange bodies through narratives (stories, testimonies) and bodily gestures, such as an empathetic blink of an eye at the right moment during another's story, a sigh of recognition or a gesture of disgust vis-à-vis the one out place, gestures that better aligns us to those like us. (Ahmed 2000, 86) What I do take seriously is the apparent paradox that terror might be a familiar state, an atmosphere that eases orientation, even as it refers profusely to jolts, shocks to the senses, and destabilizing fright. What is fundamental is

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its performative force as a shared condition: what is said to threaten the political body is also what produces the endangered said *body* ("society," ethnic group, etc.).

We might consider the relationship between the sensorial, perceptive life and the social spheres of communication about the senses in a manner akin to what Michel Foucault (Foucault et al. 1991) refers to as governmentality: the broad regime of institutions, statements, sites of epistemic authority, and more diffused channels of desire to embody the right kind of body. It is a regime to the extent that it regulates, in surreptitious manners often, how to govern yourself in a place, i.e. the conduct of conduct. To that extent, we can substitute *atmosphere* with an "affective economy" (Ahmed 2004b; Agathangelou 2020) or governmentality through affects (Willse and Goldberg 2007). However, I do keep this term because it better communicates the tactile, sensorial touch of power better than the academic terms and more clearly for what my informants might recognize as they are referring to their own self-understood feelings, which people in a locale *normally* share and, at times, *with no need for words. An atmosphere thus might produce* what "we" know among ourselves, in various linguistic and other embodied ways; the capacity to read various signs in social exchanges and feel the "right" feeling among others like yourself; and the sharing of signs between *familiars* in polities organized by the principal of homogeneity of kinship, of blood filiation and indeed of retains between sons, brothers and their fathers (Derrida 2006, 92). (See **Chapters Three, Four and Five**) I also keep it for an argument regarding the attention required for moving through an atmosphere as we start feeling its weight on us. The atmosphere is not all there is at work in terms of what we *can* feel and name.

In brief, an atmosphere of terror guides the senses, readying them to register something – it instructs you where to look and what to expect to see, hear, touch or be touched by. To expect feeling something conveys a sense of familiarity, entrenched circuits of communication and translation of the *felt* - what we have seen before, felt, or touched, or indeed, how we have been told stories about terror. (Taussig 1984; Didion 1983; Aretxaga 2005) As Michael Taussig (1984) shows, stories about terror can terrorize the storytellers themselves and weave a "culture of terror"- we know intimately just what is kept "at arm's length" in terror stories. Thus, without the sense of familiarity from narratives and stories, terror would not be terror but something else less discernible and more difficult to name and use for orientation. (Shapiro 2013, 106) To that extent, to be a *stranger,* a stranger in a place is a state of being unfamiliar with an atmosphere. As strangers, we have to learn how to discern what others "know" so easily. Some of those intimate to an atmosphere might be willing to teach you how to feel what is there – to learn to see *it* and feel *it* too. However, I believe they would want to teach you only if they already found you familiar enough (therefore, the "naïve European, to be instructed about intifadas/bombs" that I was to quite a few of my informants, willing therefore to *explain* the *situation*, "Matsav," to me). To be in an atmosphere is thus to be in a social world that shares a complex, historically entrenched collection of names for the collective *being*, transmitted in narrative and other manners, in sensorial and affective states. As one informant explained, "We are all a bit mad here, in Jerusalem, since we know these intifadas intimately, so bear with us." At times, I will reflect on such claims of knowing and sharing common emotions. What is most elusive, however, is to discern the passage between what is *felt* and what is *narrated as a feeling*. (Brennan 2004; Ahmed 2004a; Ross 2014) Framing "terror" as an atmosphere allows us to think about the multiplicity of forces that organize our

orientation in a locale. From there, we can become strangers to the familiar, both in what we feel and in the names we give to the feeling.

This dissertation labors in that passage between the feeling and the name. **Its aim is to interrogate how that passage functions as a medium of terror, in which what we feel and the names we give for feelings circulate and embody a social life. At the same time, that passage can also be the medium for witnessing violence and the *protracted labor* of producing terror as a durable atmosphere.** Reflecting on the witnessing of violence as an alternative to living in a state of socialized terror leads me to define witnessing as the *capacity to respond to any manifestation of violence as actors* in the straightforward sense of someone who acts and responds to violence as an implicated actor. However, to feel involved in any social fact is not a straightforward feeling, and here it is important to emphasize how an affective atmosphere in a locale might disrupt our capacity to trace how various common names for feelings regulate our responses. Entrenched names can indeed corporealize danger in some bodies (Ahmed 2000) and deprive those that must live in bodies perceived as dangerous, and thus endangered, from recognition as agents with inalienable rights. (Coates 2015) In other words, the capacity to witness requires the *work* of becoming aware of our inevitable implication in whatever becomes thick as an atmosphere, reproduced through our gestures, narratives and affective states. As we become aware that we contribute to the thickness of some atmospheres, the work of witnessing begins.

**The question of this dissertation concerns the possibilities of being witnesses to violence in instances where** violence is so pervasive, it becomes a familiar, mundane condition in which a group of people live their everyday lives. As stated, the paradox is that we might feel both familiar

with and beside ourselves living with the familiarity of "terror" *named* publicly. So, I ask: *How can we enact a space for the freedom to be witnesses to violence in a social context hailed as a "public sphere" that circulates terror as an affective regime informing the concreteness of the citizen's senses, and as the most tenable space of appearance to others, giving us stages on which to form narratives about our socially meaningful lives?* Still, a second, necessary question concerns the possibilities to witness violence even as we might feel ss if we were outside of a delineated locale and its heavy atmosphere. How do we enact witnessing when the locale of terror is represented as distant, through geographic maps and other technologies of visual mediation? The stake of this question is methodological and ethical. It serves to convey the work of "terror" in this locale as a name for violence with performative effect. A stark example is the production of an imagined geography of violence - "there" and not "here," wherever we happen to be. Thus, the point is to estrange this writer and any reader from the temptation to consider the violence in this locale *from a distance* that would create the effect that we are not always already involved in it. It demands from our techniques of research, in writing and in reading, to avoid reifying violence or "war" there, as if we would not always be implicated in the forces that localize violence always somewhere else than where we study them (Lutz 2001; Shapiro 2011; MacLeish 2013; Sylvester 2014) or watch images of violence, consuming them as aesthetic productions about the "truth of war." (Nguyen 2016, Chap. 8)

## Witnessing and the *experience* of violence

This is an inquiry into the possibilities of *practicing* a response to violence in the form of a judgment formed in a situation. (Arendt 2003) Hannah Arendt named it a specific "human faculty"

and called it *mysterious* because she found it elusive. A judgment is not based on previous norms and traditions but enacted as a response to whatever happens *now and thus forming its "principles by virtue of the judging activity itself"* (Arendt 2003, 27). Her interest in judgment was a response to the question of personal responsibility in states of pervasive violence organized by criminal norms and laws.

What made this faculty elusive was precisely the possibility of judging when everything around oneself might suddenly break, during "occurrences that spell the breakdown of all customary standards and hence are unprecedented in the sense that they are not foreseen in the general rules, not even as exceptions from such rules" (Arendt 2003, 26). The main difference between her context and this one is that an atmosphere is intergenerationally *familiar* - a durable accumulation or thickening of a domain of names for what one should feel (terror) and consequent practices (killing with impunity) over time. It is obviously criminal at times, such as Rabin's plea for being allowed to torture "without kids' gloves." Nevertheless, it is has become a common practice implemented by citizens. Keeping this in mind, she considered judgment to be mysterious, meaning unpredictable, because of what we might call a pervasive atmosphere that poses obstacles to forming a principle in the very act of responding to whatever happens - an ethical exercise for one's personal choice that goes against the grain. Therefore, acts of judgment cannot be separated from social life and actual "cultures of terror" in which we might be so intimately bound to have access only to a restricted, poor choice for names for what we *feel*.

In this sense, the **first argument is that we can understand witnessing and responding to violence as the same thing. In other words, witnessing is a kind of action.** As Arendt observed,

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to act means to start something new, or at least, to set forth a new beginning by whatever gesture we make. Second, staying with Arendt, one cannot act alone. In fact, action is what happens as human beings relate to others and, essential for her argument and mine, as human beings enact a bodily, physical appearance to one another by relating. (Butler 2011; Athanasiou 2016, 262) So I add that witnessing as an action can only be enacted as long as we practice judgment about the conditions of being in relationships with others, and on what sustains or harms relationships. This point is crucial if we consider that in a relational ontology relationships precede who we are. They are occasions for coming into being.

A quick foray into the etymology of the word "response" might help to stabilize why action is possible only in relation to others: *respondere* in Latin means to make a promise or a pledge. In Greek, it means to make an offering, like in rituals. A response, therefore, connects the present with the future, the individual with the world (and, in the Greek sense, with the divine as well). In both instances, it informs us about a memorable foundation for our gesture – in the present moment, the continuity of the past is disrupted for the sake of an envisioned future, with regards to which we bind ourselves to others. To act is thus to renounce the temptation of solipsism and instead to accept the demands of a complex social world in which personal gestures become meaningful and even imperative.

If we stay with Arendt, what complicates the matter of witnessing as a kind of judgment is that she also hesitated between two notions on personal choices in states of systematic violence. The first notion concerns *thinking* for oneself, which requires isolation from others for a while. When one starts thinking, a kind of *paralysis* (176) of the entire socialization of the thinker happens. Nothing

remains solid any longer once you *stop and think* (105). When we think, this stops us from doing what was familiar and makes us strangers to the habitual. But a second notion comes in for Arendt when it comes to reflecting on responses to systematic violence. This is judgment. The "moral issue" at the core of judgment is forceful and conveys an end to any continuum or familiarity. When it is activated, the capacity to judge cannot tell you what to do. What it does is tell you what you *cannot* do, even when this might mean losing your life. Judgment thus has something fundamental to do with a social context and the relations in which we are embedded.

Without attempting to fix too neatly the relationship between thinking and judging (for that, see Benhabib 1988; Kristeva 2001), we may take what is more readily operational from Arendt's understanding of action. Witnessing is a response, a gesture that breaks with a certain continuum, and it requires a space enacted as multiple lives relate to one another and must face something other than their individual existence or self-preservation. If we do form a judgment in a situation, we do so in ways that exceed our contained sense of self and must consider the domain enacted by relationality for the very possibility to orient ourselves in a situation. As we relate or inter-act, what is at stake, Arendt notes, is no longer the individual but the "world," as the possibility of a web of relations and thus as a future foreclosed to no one. It is only when we keep our eyes focused on the "world" as "futurity" that we are in fact taking action (Diprose 2008). To that extent, as we become mindful of the task to preserve relations, practicing attention on the space between actors would inform us that any principle of rigid hierarchy, ultimately the order of sovereignty as the monopoly of logos, authority, violence, is contradictory to the possibility of human action. In politics, the practice of attention to the "world" and not on the self seems to be essential for Arendt, as it is for this dissertation.

With Arendt, Judith Butler (1997) stresses that relating must in fact happen between equals. That space, formed between lives, should not create durable rules that hierarchize their positions, and in that sense, Butler's formula is radical: "agency begins where sovereignty wanes" (Butler 1997, 15). It confirms Arendt's observation that plurality might be considered a "weakness" (because nothing can be predicted), but that it is in fact the only "medium" in which we become real, meaning capable of discerning not only others but our own perspectives, the lace we occupy and from where the "world" appears in a certain partial and unique manner (Arendt 1958, 234). As Donna Haraway (D. J. Haraway 1988) puts it, objectivity ultimately means "knowing where we are and where we are not" (582). To that extent, we are objective not when we can see everything (the claim of sovereign omniscience) but as we come to discern from a "particular and specific embodiment" what makes a demand for our attention (ibidem), and therefore, an ethical claim for response. Thus, I take it as a starting point that sovereignty as the ultimate principle of hierarchy is contrary to action and clashing with actual practices of witnessing.

However, beyond Arendt, Butler and others complicate the question on what is in fact necessary for a public space where the *appearance of the body* make possible relating beyond entrenched senses of the familiar others and conducive to *effective* equality. (Butler and Athanasiou 2013; Athanasiou 2016; Agathangelou 2020; Sabsay 2016) The mere presence of the body is not necessarily a guarantee for political appearance to others. (Rancière 2006) As Rancière argues, politics might best be defined as the negotiation, or indeed the *struggle,* to expand the senses of what can be heard or seen (Rancière 2008, 3). I position my interrogation within this conversation, asking what is needed to act, to relate that is, and do so effectively in response to violence. As

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feminists have argued, violence or "war" might have its own plans with us (Parashar 2013; Sylvester 2013) and one way to refer to its logic is the destruction of relationality and of the capacity to witness violence (Feldman 2015; 2004) In this sense, the body is both the matter of subjection and the inevitable medium of action and renewal, without which witnessing cannot be enacted.

As Butler writes, to have a body is not necessarily an occasion to appear as politically relevant. In fact, it is imperative to reflect on how and why some names for emotions do objectify certain bodies as dangerous through the circuits of movement imposed on bodies in space (Ahmed 2004a, 11). This point is more complicated than saying that equality is impeded by unjust measures and names. If up to a point we can argue that we can become subjects *only in a context of subjection* (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, 15), the matter of the emergence of anything genuinely new seems to be burdened by stubborn histories of the body as the medium in which power becomes a coherent set of technologies. (Feldman 1991) As Didier Fassin and Estelle D'Halluin (Fassin and D'Halluin 2005, 597) write, the body "is an instrument used both to display and to demonstrate power, which is evident when we consider the order of social reproduction." I take this to mean that the body has always been, in various historical negotiations, the pretext to establish who becomes relevant for protection. And to that extent, everything is to be undone about the "body," and most urgently the intimate feeling that the body is a neutral container for our feelings and our sensorial capacities for social life.

Thus, what complicates the question concerning the obstacles for some bodies to evoke their relevance, as a political *appearance that cannot be ignored without consequences* is that the body

in Western modernity is a shifting object that produces a tenuous sense of value only when it becomes a usable object, produced by technologies of power that negotiate the lives qualified for politics and the lives disqualified. Thus, it is poignant to consider Fassin and D'Halluin's choice of considering projects of "corporeality" that enable the production of bureaucratic procedures to establish truth (606). Therefore, the struggle should not be about the visibility of the body but about the terms that dictate what is a valuable life. Fassin and D'Halluin show concretely how important it is to trace the genealogy of power and its necessary body in order to become operational and calculate means to ends. The lives excluded seem to go through exacting procedures that inscribe their bodies. Power does leave "marks" on the body (Fassin and D'Halluin 2005; Asad 1996; DuBois 1991) and these marks are useful for modern power both to exclude and to read, attest, communicate the meaning of those marks. There is a disturbing channel of communication, for instance, between torturing states and the states that require proof of torture to recognize the tortured as truly a victim. With the multiplication of epistemic authorities concerning the "truth" of the body in Western modernity, this fleshy matter is the crucial occasion to negotiate inner life, social (outer) life, and the communication between them, translated by psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, medical doctors etc. (Foucault, Brion, and Harcourt 2014). We cannot struggle to emancipate concrete lives that demand to appear as politically relevant without deconstructing the function of the body in Western politics.

I consider as highly relevant Talal Asad's (2005) argument that power becomes coherent via technologies that negotiate a legitimate order of violence through technologies and aesthetic choices that must make violence appear virtuous. The dominant tradition of Western politics, since the Aristotelian understanding of what a human being is, has been concerned with negotiating this

status in *the medium of the body*. (Agamben 2015) Citizenship is the *historically* negotiated quality of the one who is not some-body considered not worthy, not capable, or detrimental to the good-life. It is thus a negative qualification, which is the result of a prior relegation of some lives to necessary violence.

As Arendt had argued, in the Greek city, the citizen was part of a minority of the city dwellers. Being male and owning slaves concretely and viscerally substantiated the right to be part of that minority. (Agamben 2015) As some relevant genealogies of citizenship (DuBois 1991; Agamben 2015; Asad 1983; 1996) show, the quality of being emancipated was produced through the prior naming of those who were forbidden from entering the sphere of equality - women, slaves, and foreigners. More strongly and accurately, the quality of those emancipated was *carved* on the bodies of those excluded. As Page duBois and Talal Asad show in their respective genealogies of torture, being a citizen was, in the Greek and Roman polities, a definite way not only to produce truth by making the body of the slave speak (Asad 1983; Foucault 1979) and speak more truthfully than the deceitful logos of the citizen who knows how to manipulate words (DuBois 1991), but the very threshold that gave the citizen the guarantee of not having his body tortured (DuBois 1991). Citizenship was and remains a tenuous guarantee that we are not going to be subjected to instruments of pain. (DuBois 1991)

It is urgent to reflect on this last point if we consider further that our bodies might carry a memory of their differential value for politics across generations. Although we still have very timid attempts in the social sciences when contemplating this kind of transmission of memory, through embodiment (de Souza Sutter 2019), fiction, as always, has worked this subject seriously already.

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It can be viscerally contemplated in Toni Morrison's (Morrison 1987; 2008) novels and their lucid tracing of the work of slavery on the body made black for the other body to become white. (See also (Coates 2015))

Considering the previous statement regarding the *tense* passage between "feelings" and "names for feelings," the **second argument is that witnessing is an embodied condition of responding to violence.** Judgment is stabilized in the narrative expression of historical subjects, but it is not only narrative in its formation. The process of *reaching* that narrative form involves other ways in which we are always also sensorial beings-in-the-world (Csordas 1990; 1994; 2008) - embodied lives that participate in the world through the senses. This argument, as we will see later, is phenomenological, and runs parallel to the argument that our bodies are *made* in historical technologies of power. (D. Haraway and Harvey 1995; Foucault 1979) I do take both points seriously *and together*. To ignore the former in favor of the latter, privileged in post-structural scholarship on the body in politics, would miss important questions about the ways in which any hegemonic "distribution of the sensible" is occasionally disrupted by other forms of aligning the senses with words, which can be emancipatory at times. (Rancière 2008; Shapiro 2013) The latter argument is however essential for historicizing the sensorial possibilities that weave social worlds together and then become reproduced through affective forces. (Buck-Morss 1992; Stoler 2016) Thus, witnessing depends on the historical terms in which we can sense our embodied, sensorial existence, and on the capacity to imagine our social existence weaved through our relationships with other embodied beings. In the constraints of this present argument, I will limit this observation to embodied human beings, although this limitation is impractical in the long run. (D. J. Haraway 2003; Kimmerer 2013)

I continue my argument inside the atmosphere of terror, and in the time of that collective waiting for the intifada-as-terror. For what follows, I need you to pay attention to that tense passage between the body as a medium of any experience and the languages about pain that socialize the suffering body. Next, I narrate an encounter with a personal attempt to name a feeling, emerging from an interview with an IDF veteran. This story further substantiates the second argument on embodied witnessing. It briefly points to the tactical attention to the body as an essential *actor* for witnessing and, more specifically, once we consider the body's performative expression, as the matter *for* our attention and *of* our attention. (Csordas 1990) In brief, your embodied attention is essential for orientation through the effort of my informant to name a pervasive, public feeling.

*The traces of violence – reading terror on the body*

During my "unfortunate" stay in Jerusalem at the dime of the "knives Intifada," I had trouble orienting myself through the passage from emotions to their public names, especially as feelings narrated by my informants, Israeli citizens who had finished at least their mandatory military service of two or three years. Consider Yehuda, my interviewee, who explained to me why the Palestinians, a people dispossessed of their civil and political rights and targets of a shoot-to-kill policy, had *won* the "war." It was a complete reversal from what was shown in a terrorizing frame in the mainstream media and in the images of bodies on the ground: the Jewish body, in fact, was immobilized, no longer daring to move, "staying at home," and deprived of business and affectionate relations. The suffering explained to me was that of Yehuda and of his mother; her fear leading to his loss of an affective presence.

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Was this "diagnosis" mere cynicism? I believe it is more complicated than that and leads us to the heart of the dilemmas in thanatopolitical citizenship, summarized by Foucault (Foucault 2003) in the paradoxical injunction, "die for your country so you may live a long life." Yehuda had served his mandatory years of service inside a tank during the Second Lebanon War and in the aftermath of the Second Intifada. "A tank is a war machine. You cannot imagine the feeling you get inside one as an eighteen-year-old." After the three years of mandatory service, he had decided to never touch a weapon again. In a regime of citizenship that requires he serves in the reserve at least one month annually until his forties, this meant something, including the willingness to go through some hardship. There are formal (bureaucratic) and informal (social) costs to this refusal. However, he was not a pacifist; his choice to refuse service was more complicated, and the main reason we were talking that day about his activism. He had lost hope in "peace" and described himself as "aloof" and outside society. "Society has lost its grace." He was a disenchanted citizen, and this was his way to define alienation utter aloneness since he had become a civilian. Therefore, he was spending his time with other former "combat soldiers," jogging with them, and having the occasional laugh in these meetings that provided some release from the "aloofness" and other, more stubborn forms of suffering from military service.

Yehuda was a volunteer for an activist group of IDF veterans I was researching, called Resisim, translated as either "fragments" or "shrapnel." Its meaning is suggestive of the imaginary of the wounded mind and body of the soldier. It suggests fragmentation as a state of psychic disorientation and the loss of the solid self for those who have suffered intense forms of violence, considered traumatic at the time of the event, and occasionally diagnosed as post-traumatic stress

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disorder (PTSD) once they return home. But "Resisim" had other meanings as well, beyond the clinical vocabulary and imaginary of the mental disorder. For instance, the group was offering a public stage for veterans to speak in front of an audience about emotions that they could not share at home or with friends. Yehuda had not gone on stage, but he wanted to show me why Resisim was necessary "for the society," and there has just been a "historical moment" in Israel to make his point. "Everybody was watching it," enthralled by it. This was the public testimony in the Knesset of a former combat soldier, Ido Gal Razon. Razon, in his own words, was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and accused the state of a double abandonment: first in battlefield and then when he needed rehabilitation. The following is a section of his testimony:

> I'd like to present facts different from your report. I was a Golani fighter. 51 battalion. I was injured during operation "Clear as Wine." You probably know of the operation. We received two citations. They attacked a house, a suicide bomber, four RPG teams, six terrorists under the window, throwing grenades at us...Now the whole building crumbles in front of you. Your friends get dismembered. You get hit, you yourself get injured. Your body is broken, but you get out by some miracle. So, I get a grip and evacuate my team to the tank under fire. After all this you don't file an injury report? Who was supposed to take me to the shell shock unit? And this is after combat. You used me for battle, for fighting alone. You abandoned me, you didn't go out during "Greenhouse Effect." I killed for you with these hands. You say, "Terrorists with blood on their hands." I killed more than 40 people for you with these hands. I murdered. So, what are you doing here today? It's been 9 years, and I haven't received even 1% disability status. I pee at night from post-trauma. He comes to me and says, "Why did you kill me?" "Why did you kill me?" Can you function the day after something like this? Can you eat? Can you succeed at all in life? (And I always wanted to contribute) Our whole family contributed to the army. The "Razon Wagon" which got the tanks out of Suez Canal! Razon is from my family, my grandfather's brother. He was called "Mr. Rescue." You are here thanks to us. Because the data you present is a lie, all rubbish. You know it. And the whole system has failed. Even the shell shock unit rejected me, they said *your situation is too bad*.[1]

"This is how PTSD looks like," Yehuda explained guiding my attention to Razon's body. "This is how bad it can get, for some." To emphasize his point, Yehuda told me to look at his gestures, his posture, to pay attention to the words he repeated after Razon, stressing them, "I killed for you! Is

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this a life? Could you live like this?" Razon's testimony was at least proof of a man besides himself with anger, shouting at the Knesset members. Seated on the other side, behind a long table, they listened calmly, with straight faces and no visible emotions. It was a state hearing, one we are familiar with in most Western countries where soldiers of national armies describe their post-traumatic symptoms, their unbearable life conditions, and often the pervasive sense of having been abandoned by the institutions that should take care of wounded soldiers, mentally or psychically. Razon was surrounded by allies - a man right next to him touching at times his shoulder to calm him down, his mother in a far corner nodding as he described his abject state of living with trauma. He told how he had driven his family and friends to exhaustion after years of suffering. He enumerated visceral details of his "PTSD." He was suffering from nightmares that ruined his nights, of incontinence ("I piss my bed from trauma"), vomiting bouts after some of the worst emotional states, and long, humiliating encounters with state bureaucracy that refused to help him "because his situation was too bad," as he quoted the uncaring response of the state.

Yehuda continued his explanation of this scene: it was a *historical* moment, present in everyone's consciousness, because Razon was destroying the foundational myth of the state stabilized by the sacrificing figure of the combat soldier. To mark his personal distance from it, Yehuda referred to the trope of sacrifice as the "macho myth." Following the so-called "Independence War" in 1948, this myth centered on the figure of sacrificing and sacrificed "sons," their body named as the "platter" on which the state stands. (Bilu and Witztum 2000, 4) This central trope of the 1950s depicts the logic of the human offer, by oneself or by self-abnegating parents, to the cause of keeping the state and nation alive. (Bilu and Witztum 2000; Helman 1999; Lomsky-Feder 2004;

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Weiss 2003) Razon "pissing his bed," his mother crying because she had no idea what to do with a son alive and disabled disrupted that sacrifice and did so publicly.

However, there was obviously more that this testimony was revealing. Visibly trembling with fury, he was there to "present facts" previously unreported about an IDF operation in which he had participated, falsely described to the Israeli public. In the operation, "Clear as Wine," in 2007 in Gaza (two years after the official "disengagement" of Israel from Gaza), this soldier had killed forty people, he shouts, more people than the report had made public. I registered Yehuda's explanation *about* Razon's obvious "PTSD." However, all I could see in that first viewing was an angry man beside himself with rage, with the jerky moves of someone clearly unsettled by strong emotions, the sheer, embodied anger manifested in threatening movements, the overwhelming violence of the tone, and the sharp gestures of his limbs. It showed a man distressed. Razon's public address, when considered in his own terms, seemed to be fully ignored. He had described how he was asked to give an account in the middle of the night to spectral actors, voices without bodies. He had asked the others in the Knesset: who could live like this? No one could or should, he implied.

*Embodied witnessing – how to pay attention in/to terror?*

By asking about the possibilities to act as witnesses to violence *where and when it happens,* I trace how something becomes a concrete feeling and how that feeling imposes on us the force of an obvious name for the feeling. *How, after all, do we come to name what we feel?* And *what is the*

*role of the body as sensorial matter inside a thick atmosphere organized by the affective force of strong names, such as "terror" or "post-trauma"?*

The material I rely on for analysis in this dissertation concerns various acts of narration on how *violence feels.* I take these narrative acts not as already given products but as the result of various forces in the process of connecting the senses to names for what one feels. The emphasis is thus on the work of naming feelings, emotions, and sensations, and therefore, my analytical attention goes to those forces that enable the process of connecting the body, as a sensorial-feeling matter, with the social life of names for emotions. I consider these acts as the *negotiated* conclusion of broader processes, which are not only narrative but sensorial and affective. Affects and emotions becoming feelings publicly named are organized in the corporeal domain which informs us of having a *sensation* in *this* body that we call our own. (D. J. Haraway 1988). This attachment pertains to the liberal subject in the tradition of the early modern contractual thought on sovereignty and continues into the project of modern corporeality of pastoral biopolitics and its ethical regime of care, attachment, and loyalty to the valuable "life" protected by the modern state. (Foucault 2003; 1988)

Both soldiers presented above, Yehuda, my interviewee, and Razon embody that figure of a valued citizen, which is also a figure of sacrifice in the modern nation states. This complicates the straightforward relationship between being nominated as valued life and having a good life. Razon realizes this, and he is deeply injured by this realization. His feelings of injury and anger are important for thinking about the subject of power and the complicated relationship between sovereignty (violence) and biopower (care). He is not only a subject of the state - sovereign and

thanatopolitical in Foucault's terms ("you sent me to fight and look at me now") and biopolitical ("take care of me") - he also embodies the state ("I killed for you with these hands").

*Let us move a bit through this scene and tease out some of the bodies of violence folded in Razon's nightmares and jerky gestures before I get to a more analytical argument regarding witnessing and the place of the body in the response to violence.*

Having the murder of uncounted Palestinians revealed through the cracks of a testimony that officially demands restoration to the perpetrator's psychic and bodily wellbeing should make us pause and think about the implications of being an audience to this public testimony. We should consider this testimony not because it is unprecedented - what he reveals has been described before - but for other relevant reasons. First, he reinstalls the logic of secret missions in "the territories" into the public sphere, what Ariella Azoulay (Azoulay 2011, 266) has revealed to operate tactically as an "order of battle" undisclosed to the public unless soldiers die. The death of Palestinians in "disappearance" techniques, which are familiar in various Western counterinsurgent military operations, nuances the logic of the IDF's secrecy. It reveals a colonial logic of violence: the mute, secret administration of things and peoples (Khalili 2020; Asad 2015), and of peoples as things (Mbembe 2016) The undesirables simply vanish from the face of the Earth. Those killed in their proximity become "collateral" loss. Overall, these bodies are "disappeared" under the seal of "terror." Their absence should be unremarked "at home," in Israel and "abroad." Thus, we are seeing more than we should in this scene. It transpires accidentally, as an excess of another body and its pain (PTSD). What is remarkable is not the announcement of arbitrary killing (it is known) but the display of the logic that regulates the public reality of IDF "missions" and "operations."

Thus, this is an occasion to rearticulate our situated relation to violence as historical subjects of witnessing *suffering* - as pain speaks through one body but about multiple bodies that are still made invisible as we write, read, *now*. Someone is "disappeared" now, as I lift my cup trying to clarify a thought, as you read another line. So, my argument is that Razon's testimony is crucial precisely because it reveals what we have to discern again and again what is made spectral now, as we are hailed as a public.

All this requires attention to the strange temporality of living and dying revealed through this testimony and, as uncanny as it might seem, to believe in "ghosts," or at least in the presence of disembodied lives capable nevertheless of haunting by asking pertinent questions that visibly disturb the citizen, calling him and us to attention. The voices do not let Razon sleep and ask the quintessential question of the governed: who governs us, and in the name of what principle "we had to die?" (Foucault 2003) I believe we can take this question seriously only it if we acknowledge the *presence of the dispossessed* that animates this question through the sovereign body of absolute violence. In other words, in trauma and PTSD we are offered unexpected intimacy between the dispossessed and the citizen-sovereign, and this requires analytical attention to the body, not only as invested by technologies of power, but also as a challenge for the regulation of affects. I consider this an occasion of violence *concealed in the public* (Pachirat 2011), and in the passion of public speech and ask: How do we become witnesses to violence when the bodies that have suffered the most intense forms of state violence - sovereign violence without accountability - can appear in the Israeli public sphere only through their mediation in the voice of the perpetrator, as literally voices in the head of a man who cannot sleep because of their *relentless* questioning? How do we discern the locations of suffering when we confront the fact that the sovereign body and psyche of

the perpetrator are the fundamental archive that organizes the legible and the spectral, the visible and invisible rules in the dominant regime of corporeality (individual bodies and their respective suffering) and its corresponding "language of pain" (Das 2007a, 67) such as PTSD?

More analytically stated, Razon's "testimony" is a privileged moment to see sovereignty as an essential logic of violence in biopower, involving the valued biopolitical body employed in deeply harmful uses. What happens to the citizen when she or he confronts that ambiguous condition? Further, it helps us confront the production of spectral lives, which had been denied visibility in life and death (Mbembe 2019) through the logic of colonial occupation and counterinsurgent warfare. Razon's testimony reveals a dimension to the secrecy of violence in this locale that must be conceptualized in relation to a regime that organizes the visible and the invisible forms of violence, mediated through the regime of legible corporeality and militarized secrecy. As a subject of PTSD, we will see later, Razon's hearing of voices will be diagnosed as merely "flashbacks" or "intrusive images" in the clinical framework of PTSD. For my argument, I consider "PTSD" to be a dominant name for a complex set of sensorial and emotional states of people who have experienced violence and are acknowledged as such. More broadly, it coheres as a language of pain that easily connects experts (psychologists and others) and popular culture. As a dominant category, it names the effects of violence on the human body, it makes violence comprehensible and relatable. As others have comprehensively discussed it, PTSD largely appropriates the domain of claims of having had an "experience" of violence. (Fassin and Rechtman 2009; Howell 2011; 2012; MacLeish 2013) Today, PTSD is an inescapable name for the sensorial and psychological states of people exposed to violence. Thus, the range of emotions invoked by this clinical object

and popular name largely determines the possibilities of sharing an experience in narrative form to others.(Fassin 2008; Fassin and D'Halluin 2005)

## Genealogy - the body of historicism, the body of witnessing

As we come to feel anything sensorial and affective, we do so through our bodies. Yet the body is already social, composed of long-term investments into certain forms of corporeality (Haraway and Harvey) and into practices that enable a corporeal life to become socialized as the medium of feeling for oneself and others. The modern regime of corporeality, individualized in the logic of self-ownership and totalized as social body (Foucault) goes in parallel to the projects of commodity and territorialized states (Haraway). It is regulated both by feeling and anesthesia. (Buck-Morss 1992; Benjamin and Arendt 1986; Feldman 1991; Festa 2016) It is the product of the regulation of what can be felt. To that extent, numbness does not necessarily lack feeling but rather conveys an inability to see through an atmosphere for oneself. Our bodies and senses have a history that runs through us, as "us," and informs us of our value and where we are safe or not. Therefore, our ability to discern **how** and **what** we sense informs our possibilities to respond to violence and thus to become witnesses to violence. In this sense, we can become more knowledgeable of how our bodies came to be in their present condition of feeling and relationality.  The body as an investment of power and as a "strategy of accumulation" (D. Haraway and Harvey 1995) organizes our attachments. As we name the "strategies" that form value, this body can be undone to various degrees.

The work of undoing any "accumulation" is, as Foucault has taught us, genealogical. In Chapter One I return to his argument and apply a genealogical tracing of corporealization that makes the citizen's body a terrorized body, par excellence. (Foucault 2003; Derrida 1995) My argument is that the body is a historical object of durable affective investment and is also often contested. It is not merely an object on which power does something but the very medium through which other political bodies, e.g., state and society, come alive. As Foucault wrote, genealogy works against a regime of hegemonic memory that dehistoricizes who we are, especially as embodied lives in constellations of relationships that are either desirable or abhorred. Like Foucault, Jacques Derrida argues that the operational logic of sovereignty is to erase memory and it *must do so continuously.* This continuous violence works to prevent from surging a dangerous memory regarding its foundations without legitimacy, made in violence and terror. That memory concerns also the making of our bodies of citizenship, made by/in terror and protected for as long as we keep that terror within us, in our bodies, long after we have forgotten the foundational act of violence. This is how I define sovereignty: an archival order (Derrida) and a regime of memory in need of constantly enacting its presence by terrorizing all the bodies involved in mediating its presence. With Derrida, I build an argument that considers the *body itself as an archive.* The violence necessary to preserve the hegemonic order is required in both directions: towards a so-called "outside" of the defined enmity but also towards the "inside" of the sovereign subject, the "citizen." I also consider that any process reproducing a hegemonic body must find tenable forms of mediating violence, accepted registers of necessary or virtuous violence. (Asad 2015) Violence thus becomes a means for desirable objectives. To that extent, it circulates in public spheres as something else than violence.

Let me make this last point tangible, *almost* as we enter the time of the pending intifada again. My main interest during the months of the pending "Intifada" was in tracing what might be at stake in the intensity of a trope that asked from Jewish citizens to start speaking about their personal experience of violence. The trope addressed in particular the citizens who serve as combat soldiers. The request came from various sites: psychological-clinical sites that treat post-traumatic stress disorder, NGOs close to the state, and NGOs considered enemies of the state. This demand to start speaking, finally, also implied that until that moment sharing personal experiences had been impossible. The background to this invitation was thus the existence of a *secret* that everyone shares without speaking about it. *I know it, and you know it, but we cannot talk about it.* Slightly differently*: some might know more than others. They are the ones who should be listened to. Because society does not know really the full truth about war, only the soldier does.* As I just mentioned, in Israel every citizen, man and women, do become soldiers, with few exceptions. The call to express personal experiences and intimate suffering seemed paradoxical but still enticing. In its most intense form, and where I followed it initially, it was addressed to the combat soldier saying, more or less: *you must speak out about what you hold inside before it will destroy you.*

This is the obvious register of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) - the dominant imaginary and epistemic field that makes violence intelligible for both popular culture and medical domains. Its imaginary is the wound (psychological but also physical), and its urgency is given by the problem it names. This is a future that is barred for the victim, who is trapped in states of pathological *repetition* of the past, precisely because the past (the event of violence) cannot be worked out as a fully owned experience, for instance, by narrating it to another. The moment of danger seemed to me to shine through this problematization of violence in sites of governmentalized concern with

the "wounds of war." Could naming the experience of military service as a source of inherent *injury* loosen the thanatopolitical logic of citizenship as protection predicated on military service, which was the inheritance of David Ben-Gurion's strategy of forming the Jewish nation after its founding? (See Chapter One) That strategy had named the reason for service then: citizens must be constantly *terrorized* for the general mobilization for war, because the "next war" will always come and sooner rather than later. (Ben-Eliezer 1998) What the mobilized-for-war citizen embodied was a collective, bellicose waiting. That specter of Ben-Gurion was still hanging over Jerusalem half a century later. This was the inheritance of 1948, of the "war of independence." It is an archive that conceals its deeper logic of violence against both those dispossessed since 1948 and against the so-called citizen. (Azoulay 2008)

*Witnessing and the body of governmentality*

The largest part of the material that informs this dissertation is ethnographic, both others' and mine. Future chapters are occasions to reflect on some of these notes and, in particular, on the conversations with psychologists and combat soldiers who were willing to explain *what is injurious about service and how do they imagine a normal life* after service. My question was straightforward enough, and resonating as politically neutral enough, to receive ample explanation. At times, I would receive permission to observe how some of my respondents tried, beyond words, to connect names to what they felt. These were attempts to expand their sense of being understood and in order to return to a social world from which they felt deeply alienated. Alienation is one pervasive consequence of trauma once the latter is not resolved early enough and becomes a post-traumatic condition. (Van der Kolk 2015; Levine 1997) It is something I take as a dominant name

for feelings that some of my respondents tried to finesse to make them work for their life situation within their subjectification as "wounded" or marked by their "experience" as "combat soldiers."

Alienation then might possibly be a way to become less familiar with an atmosphere of terror. But this was a hypothesis. The analysis of the material, on the other hand, produced a much more complicated landscape of attempts at making sense of people's personal negotiations to deal with the ambiguous double meaning of citizenship as deadly *and* the only imaginable guarantee of their sense of value. Although I will pay attention to how feelings are named and circulated, I also consider the effort to work through that passage. This is then also an occasion for the reader to intervene, with an embodied attention to others' attempts to connect feelings with names, bodies with language, and experience to social life. This is where I need your attention to orient through the issues that I am trying to make almost tangible. This means making them less distant than they would appear if we consider Israel/Palestine as a place "there," distant from the place and time of our writing, reading, and judging. My hope is to avoid reifying exactly what the atmosphere of this locale inflicts - the imagination of a geography of savage violence and civility as separated domains (Said 1992; 1984) and geographical spaces, where language, narration, and text would be at a distance from violence, placing violence always somewhere else other than where "we" are. It is only if we undo that distancing effect that judgment can be enacted, as an action, wherever we happen to be now.

I treat this material not only through the prism of representations of violence but as an occasion to consider how the actors, who do come to communicate the feeling of violence, attempt to relate their bodies to the environment in which violence is a social, affective life that organizes the

sensations of terror and the meanings of a safe body, deserving of care. Instead of looking at representations of suffering that already name the problem (for instance, intrusive images from the past), I consider narrative acts as gestures that embody the sensing subjects and their attempts to live livable lives in "traumatic" states. The distinction between these two strategies is important, and hopefully will become clearer still after considering the ethnographic material for this account of terror as social life more closely. For now, I want to emphasize that this distinction is just as important for the writer of this dissertation as it is for its readers. If witnessing is a kind of action that enacts a response to violence and its possibilities of enactment depend on how we imagine our relations to what is (wrongly) defined as a "local" conflict *there* (Middle East, Israel/Palestine etc.), meaning *not here* (in your city, in your reading room, and inside the web of relations that weave a world inhabited from your position), then this dissertation asks you to pay attention to how violence becomes the matter of a feeling, the labor involved in naming it, explaining it to others, and the response that comes from your embodied perspective.

How might the reader respond to the scenes narrated above? And why would I extend the task of witnessing to someone who comes to these lines post-factum, after the events of 2015, after the official declaration that there was no intifada after all but only a milder unrest? As I consider the feeling of terror in the subjects that mediate it by summoning their senses, their experience necessarily invokes terms that we share to preserve sociality. These terms include vulnerability, fear, invoking visible, visceral, or invisible wounds (trauma and more broadly psychological suffering), hope and loss of hope in the future pertaining to a certain kind of life, love, friendship, trust and so on. We share these terms not because they mean the same thing to everyone but because they refer to the inevitable matter that we all share, the body, which we all "inhabit" as

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our way of being in the world in relations. There are ways that are more oppressive and more expansive of inhabiting a social world together and much depends on our practice of discernment of what we can feel and in whose body. (Das 2007a) Witnessing, in other words, requires imagining the world from another's perspective. I do not equate this with striving to feel the same as the other, his or her pain (Ahmed 2004a) but to consider the conditions that make a life take a certain perspective on the relationship between the body and the world, which can enact desired or, indeed, terrorized social worlds.

In this light, what constitutes the passage between what we can feel and what we can share with others is not a passage between an already distinct and contained individual body and social life but historical (contingent) processes of corporealization. (Haraway and Harvey) These processes create the senses of individual bodies and, most starkly, the senses of possessing or owning a contained body that we can control. (D. J. Haraway 1988; Mignolo 2009; Wynter 2003; Quijano and Ennis 2000; Kimmerer 2013) They performatively produce the preeminence of totalized bodies (Neocleous 2001), which can be understood as delimited collective bodies (a city, a nation, an ethnic group, etc.). In brief, this passage is constituted by processes that attach us to some kinds of bodies and take us away from others. (Ahmed 2000) This domain of corporealization as regulating the senses is what I refer to as an aesthetic regime of the body. (Feldman 2004; Shapiro 2013; Buck-Morss 1992) My understanding of aesthetics follows Terry Eagleton's (Eagleton 1988) and Buck-Morss's genealogies of the term as that which pertains to the socialized and orientated senses, or *aisthesis*. This fleshy matter, at times abstract ("*society* must be defended"), is the terrain for projects of governmentality that regiment the senses in varying oppressive orders

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that colonize the senses. It our attention to what and who is visible and valuable (Rancière 2006) and who does or does not belong in a certain place. (Ahmed 2000)

At the same time, corporeality is the terrain for enacting alternative forms of relating to the body in social life. It is the inevitable condition for relationality. This alternative interrogation on corporeality is taken up in wildly heterogenous attempts at imagining an alternative to how we sense our way in the world and how we might rethink the "body" in politics. I engage with some of this work to the extent that it criticizes projects of governmentality that corporealize the useful body and point to alternative modes of considering our affective regulation. (Foucault 1988; Stoler 2016; 2002; Festa 2016) The critique of corporealization projects from this scholarship historicizes the seemingly solid and the apparently visible. It shows the contingency of what becomes a tenable position of the subject, constituted along trajectories of investment and disinvestment, biopolitical and necropolitical. This attaches some to their (valuable) bodies while others are reified as "objects among objects." (Fanon 1967) As Haraway puts it, corporeality is a "strategy of accumulation," and its success is largely due to its parallel trajectory to other enclosures that totalize a valuable subject. This strategy aims to convey value, and this effort is often fragile and full of anxieties about not being valuable enough. I consider citizenship as a good example in this locale and take it analytically as a strategy of corporeality that infuses some subject with the meaning of their value – an anxious sense of value that seeks confirmation through violence. To that extent, as we learn to historicize the making of the body, this strategy can be unmade as we discern the terms of corporealization and of the attachment to the body in each locale, and as we learn to give other names to what we feel.

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The objective in this account of social life, which circulates meanings and practices of terror, is to restore attention not only to the words used and the representations of terror (images in the media of dead bodies, of shackled Palestinians taken from the "crime" scene in the police van, etc.) but to the body as an occasion to produce claims of experiencing violence, which then constitute scenes of address. (Butler) Such scenes require discernment, a kind of judgment mobilized for each individual situation. It is an interaction that we necessarily have to negotiate with issues that seem to be distant and amenable to localization in assigned positions: another's body, a place distant from us and our civility, our "home." These include "wars" that focus public attention to the intimate, proximate knowledge, in the flesh of the soldier. (Harari 2008; MacLeish 2013; Wool 2015; Sylvester 2014)

That passage between a feeling and its name is not enacted only through linguistic expression but also through other participatory forms for embodied beings in the social world. Being an embodied being does not stop at the apparent outer limits of one's skin. I want to stress that the body is already placed into a social life before birth (Butler) but also that whatever we bind to as our embodied place where we feel *anything* requires a sense of relationality. To that extent, paying attention to how historical subjects refer to their bodily experiences of violence, what and who they feel related to speaks volumes to the kinds of worlds in which their expression is made possible.

*Naming the feeling - on judgment in the situation at hand*

In using this term, an *atmosphere* of terror, I take inspiration from two works by Teresa Brennan (Brennan 2004) and Sara Ahmed (Ahmed 2004b; 2000; 2004a) that do take affects seriously as an

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intersubjective, inter-corporeal domain of communication. Each offers a conceptual ground for how we might research social life and pay attention to the emotions that produce more or less livable social worlds. Teresa Brennan's book is an argument that considers the *transmission of affect* between bodies. Like others more recently, Brennan makes a distinction between affects and emotions in order to reflect on the work of emotions in a more thorough analysis that does not consider the emotions as disembodied (strictly cognitive products) and in order to avoid the individualistic view on emotions, wherein they belong to the contained individual. The study of emotions has ignored exactly the body and questions of sensorial affectation for a long time. (Ross 2014) I take Brennan's conceptual thoughts on the relationship between affects and emotions without parsing the vast literature on affect and emotions.(Lutz and White 1986; Ross 2014; Wetherell 2012; Åhäll and Gregory 2013; Gregg and Seigworth 2010)

Thus, an affect is different from an emotion to the extent that it operates as a physiological state or sense of affectation. It is a visceral sensation (Massumi 2015; Ross 2014) that corporealizes the sense of being in the world via the rigidly confined identity of a subject in the form of the self or ego. An affect is what we might feel as visceral, and to that extent feels obvious and obviously ours. However, the conceptual power of affect is precisely to guide our attention to its circulation in social contexts and to its performative force as it aligns some bodies with others or distances them from undesirable bodies. (Ahmed 2000) For Brennan, beyond the visceral sensation "in the gut," an affect works as a kind of judgment we give to what we feel from the perspective of the contained individual's phantasy, as though we were in fact separate from the world of relations in which our actions are in fact always embedded and enabled. The phantasy is that of self-mastery,

self-control, or what Buck-Morss (1992) names the "autotelic" hubris of male, disembodied modernity that strives to become autonomous from the body, nature, and the feminine.

To that extent, even if it feels intensely ours, an affect produces a disembodying existence, impoverishing the possibilities of a sensorial and emotional orientation in the world. For Brennan, it makes us ignorant of the world of relationships that make the subject possible precisely when it becomes dispossessed of the rigid notion of self-control and the illusion of independence from the conditions that enable our existences (Butler 2005) An affect is a kind of judgment taken up too easily, circulating in an "atmosphere" (social context permeated by some dominant affects) and to an extent, occupies the subject, i.e. we are possessed by affects.[2] Differently than an affective possession, an emotion brings about "a reflection that identifies sensations with words." (141) It is a practice consciously taken up. As such, it can free us to see our position anew in a local play of forces and affective circuits ("terror" that must be combated by a shoot-to-kill approach). From a wider perspective, in that practice we can discern the mutual implications and the presence of others, whose address we cannot ignore without consequences. (Das 2007b; Dauphinée 2007; Dauphinee 2007) Becoming aware of the consequences from our responses, or lack thereof, might be another way to understand the condition of emancipation from affective regimes that limit the possibilities of relating in actual social worlds.

For Brennan, freedom from affect is possible to the extent that our connection between sensation and words is not ruled by the utilitarian approach of liberal self-interest: how A serves B, or the instrumental approach (how this serves to enhance the phantasy of total autonomy). In brief, what Brennan calls "living attention" is the learned practice of relating sensations to words - not from

the perspective of the Cartesian subject but from the position of the human and non-human *world* and various dependencies that we cannot choose. From that position, the possessive subject's (the individual of liberalism) interest might not be served at first glance. We might lose something we are interested in, a kind of attachment, for instance, but this is irrelevant in the logic of a living attention, which is what Brennan essentially calls love. Love is not a way to define the result of attention but rather the intensity of attention to what we feel. In this sense, it is an operational term that refers to a state of concern and/or interest rather than a way to confirm old names (making sure we feel what others feel or what we should feel). To that extent, loves or living attention, is the opposite of a narcistic attachment that seeks contentment, or rather, what might be serving our present position as contained subjects. Against that sense of solipsistic self-attachment, attention is a practice of refining our connections to the social in both directions - how we are constituted as social subjects and how we contribute to that reification of the social. This includes how we contribute to hegemonic trajectories of historicism or, alternatively, to its interruption. To that extent, it is akin to Arendt's effort to love the world as it is - an effort could only be reached through the work of understanding the events of history and reconciling with the present as it is. (Young-Bruehl 2004, xvii) That kind of love is not an affect which would tell us whom to love, meaning the similar, the "brother," or the one like me, but a judgment exercised in each situation to which we give our attention.

Attention to the world as we come to embody it from our locations is a practice of sustained effort. Based on the terms raised in the first pages with Arendt, attention is a practice almost miraculous to the extent that it requires setting a distance from the prejudices, norms, and laws that would normally assign names to what we (should) feel in order to preserve our belonging to a familiar

social world (maintaining citizenship as an exclusive right, for instance). It is a considerable effort

because these norms do not merely tell us what to do, but they produce in us a visceral reaction.

In brief, attention to what one feels and the progressive refining of words to define it might, in fact,

herald the end of a certain social life. She argues that attention is embodied in the sense that, no

matter which kind of affects circulate, we can discern them as they become somatic feelings and

as we learn to name them paying attention to the body. Attention requires work - an ethos of

practice that must contend with failures and learn, socially, if we want to have better names for

what we feel:

> At present we only have a rudimentary language for connecting sensations, affects, and words, for connecting bodily processes and the conceptual understanding of them. The development of that language requires an attention to the pathways of sensation in the body, an attention that is more concentrated and sustained than the attention received by the body hitherto. This is the precondition of beginning to formulate bodily knowledge more accurately and to pass it on by the verbal means that increases the rapidity of human understanding. Extending knowledge in this way is the reverse of gathering it by objectification, or studying bodily processes disconnected from living attention. (153)

To give a *proper* name to what we feel is arduous work because you must find your path through

heavy atmospheres by "feeling your way." (Ahmed 2004a, 1) The proper name you find is not

generalizable; it creates a negotiated distance from present states of oppressive subjection,

including the roles of perpetrators of violence. It is also the source of profound satisfaction,

Brennan argues, and I agree. My interest is to consider the formation of the subject of power in the

passage between body and language; emotion and name; and individual corporealization and social

bodies. In this sense, I do not take Brennan's conceptualization of the work that we can undertake

to move from affect to emotions as a return to the figure of the individual and, therefore, as a

modality for reinstating the ideal, rational subject to rule over passions. On the contrary, I take her

work as a salutary contribution to the feminist questions of embodiment because theorizing on the circulation of affects between bodies (and other objects) can also return language and discourse, from their disembodied treatment in most post-structural scholarship, back to concrete modalities, including the attention to the bodily dimensions and of the possibilities of language itself. As Judith Butler (Butler 2015, 21) reminds us,

> no operation of language can fully separate itself from the operation of the body. Language itself cannot proceed without positing the body, and when it tries to proceed as if the body were not essential to its own operation, figures of the body reappear in spectral and partial form within the very language that seeks to perform their denial.

As we will see later, post-trauma operates predominantly as a regime of a discursive therapeutical intervention aiming to order its subjects back to "normality." It does not fully succeed in containing all that must be ordered, or erased, such as intrusive, excessive, and/or spectral presences, which are not illegible for the public, as Razon's publicized nightmares show. Indeed, suffering *intrusive* images or sounds from the past is one symptom of PTSD in clinical questionnaires. Thus, I am interested in, first, moments when a presence is excessive and, second, in bodies and voices that speak through our common languages of pain, such as PTSD. I understand these as occasions to reconsider the role of embodiment when we think about agency and sociality through language and discourse.

In Brennan's work, the circulation and transmission of affect between bodies requires a critique of emotions. In this, emotions are understood as belonging to the individual as a historical construct – a corporealized life in a delimited, exclusive form:

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We are not self-contained in terms of our energies. There is no secure distinction between the "individual" and the "environment." But transmission does not mean that a person's particular emotional experience is irrelevant. We may influence the registration of the transmitted affect in a variety of ways; affects are not received or registered in a vacuum. If I feel anxiety when I enter the room, then that will influence what I perceive or receive by way of an "impression" (a word that means what it says). On the other hand, if I am not aware that there are affects in the air, I may hold myself solely responsible for them and, in this case, ferret around for an explanation in my recent personal history. Thus, the content one person gives to the affect of anger or depression or anxiety may be very different from the content given to the same affect by another. (6)

Brennan's work interrogates the social in an intercorporeal domain and, more broadly, in a domain between human bodies and material life. (Navaro-Yashin 2012) Her work criticizes the subject/object framework and returns the body to the forefront of our research on the subject. We can do this as we consider the relationship between the world, as it is embodied in the subject that forms a judgment on a sensation in a body, and the social life. Brennan's point is that we must learn to practice "living attention" to what we feel as the practice of freeing ourselves from the affect. In my terms, attention creates a space to negotiate a relationship with the familiar atmosphere of named feelings.

In other research, emotions are sometimes conceptualized as "feelings" to mark the more discerning, cognitive work that one puts into creating a relation to what is felt viscerally, i.e., what affects us. (Ross 2014; Clough 2007) Affect theory has gained attention as social sciences pay more attention to neuroscience and the research on the autonomic nervous system, as it regulates the functioning of the body at preconscious (precognitive) levels. In this profuse scholarship that delineates the domains of affect and emotion respectively, Sara Ahmed offers a pragmatic approach that refuses to make "analytical distinctions between bodily sensation, emotion and thought as if they could be 'experienced' as distinct realms of human 'experience'." (Ahmed

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2004a, 6) Although I disagree with this apprehension in the face of such distinctions and follow Brennan's ethical call to try to make distinctions, I also take Ahmed's solution seriously to avoid reifying once more the 'body' (ahistorical) or emotions. Her solution is to think instead about the formation of the actual senses in the body and, thus, of social belonging through the circulation of affects. "The contact with an object generates feeling," (6) Ahmed writes, and therefore, she conceptualizes that point of encounter as an "impression." The aim is to avoid the trap of interpreting previously named primary emotions (e.g., a nation seeking "revenge" or feeling "fear", etc.) and instead to nuance what might be messier, plural, and working under such names. (Ross 2014)

At the same time, we must avoid the risk of dehistoricizing biology and the body while leaving space for multiple interpretations of visceral experience. (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987, 8) More to the point, we must trace how some claims are enabled and others repressed in various domains of epistemic authority and truth/knowledge. (Foucault 2000) My solution, in order to navigate between the two, is to offer, in writing, an interpretation of what I pay attention to. This is namely the efforts of actual historical actors to share with others what they feel or, alternatively, the efforts of governmentality's agents to stabilize usable names such as PTSD for feelings that must be named, and to avoid social disorders prefaced by the name (PTSD). In this sense, "trauma" is a productive setting to analyze how and why the experience of violence becomes a problem that requires therapeutical and bureaucratic assistance. It also allows for an exploration of which subjects are selected for care. It shows the multiple negotiations that stabilize meanings. Trauma, further, is an opportunity to consider the possibilities we have available presently to feel in one's body, or imagine the feeling in other bodies, of how violence affects the body and mind.

Ahmed's sociological method is thus highly usable. It offers a theory of how affects circulate as "affective economies" and argues that "feelings do not reside in subjects or objects but are produced as effects of circulation...of objects." (8) This view moves away from psychologizing emotions and instead historicizes them by showing the circuits of movement; it is the "sociality of emotions" that becomes the question of research. Corporeality is important here, for instance, in the sense that some objects circulating in social spaces might "become sticky, or saturated with affect, as sites of personal and social tension." (11) Ahmed's analytical work directly informs my methodology, since she also asks how names for feelings can be performative of the very emotions they privilege; it "works through attribution of causality." (13) In her words: "I am tracking how words for feeling, and objects of feeling, circulate and generate effects: how they move, stick, and slide. We move, stick and slide with them." (14) It is here that Brennan's call to think about the names for emotions comes to inform my methodology in the sense that we might have a say in how we "move, stick, and slide" as we learn the history of some names for feelings and their performative effects, which have embodied successful subjectivities that at times fail to work (the self-sacrificing citizen in the instance of Razons' testimony).

## Methodology. Corporeal politics, or on attention versus disembodied subjects

The main context I consider in this dissertation is situated around narrative acts that describe the social life of a group of IDF veterans, both men and women. The respondents are activists or supporters of Resisim's public activities. I refer to Resisim by its Hebrew name but occasionally also as "Shrapnel," the English translation of the group's name, which is in response to

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explanations by the respondents for how they feel, or what they feel their bodies *hold* onto, years after service. Thus, I pay attention to the choice of the word "shrapnel," for instance, as in terms of the effort to name what one feels. As one activist explained, memories feel at times "like shrapnel." They are lodged deep in the body and work in there their effects, largely outside one's control. As shrapnel sometimes does, it comes to the surface of the skin and can be removed then. The body knows how to expel what is foreign, but it does it in its own time. So Resisim/Shrapnel informs us already, as name for a social activity, about the body of the Jewish citizen. As a widely shared name, publicly worked through, accepted by various actors, it is performative. First, it legitimizes the wider image of the wound in the post-traumatic discourse. However, it also conveys a risky moment in which the citizen connects his or her injured condition to his or her condition of citizenship. It is, in short, an evocative name for feelings and the space for interpretation.

My analytical and methodological attention to the body, as announced, is twofold: first, the body is treated as an object of investment, where an accumulation occurs that legitimizes certain discourses on power located in various reified sites (bureaucratic, statist, humanitarian, medical, etc.); second, the body is understood as phenomenological and as a mode through which we orient ourselves in the world and weave relations that become a social world. Regarding the first point, I approach the citizen-soldier's self-expression in narrative and public form, and in particular, the post-traumatic "experience" that must be named in order to be healed, which I argue is a directive that is systematic in this locale. The name for the effects of violence, as durable, post-traumatic suffering, is performative of the social body that must bring healing to those wounded (such as Razon) and thus consolidate its own health and "resilience." As for the second point, I pay attention

to how my interviewees - veterans in various activist positions - refer to the dominant terms set by the tone of post-trauma/PTSD and how they reflect on their both physical and social suffering.

With regards to both the interest in governmentality of affect and the phenomenological attention to feeling embodied, my dissertation connects to anthropologies of trauma and embodiment that analyze claims of having a visceral *experience of "proximate violence* and medicalized in restrictive understandings of individual sufferers' traumatized bodies. My attention to the corporeality of violent experiences does not stop at representations of suffering and, in particular, of traumatic lives, although I do acknowledge the importance of that literature. (Edkins 2003; Fierke 2010; Hutchison 2016) It is equally driven by a method of paying attention to the body that is expressing an experience as a social gesture when bodily expression is sought as alternative to a narrative translation of pain. (Das 2007a; Zigon 2012) To that extent, I conduct an anthropological search for a body that receives attention as a participant in social life and not merely its product. (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987; Csordas 1994)

This brings us back to the space between the *feeling* and the *name* for the feeling and between the body and the dominant languages of pain that circulate in social spheres. Csordas writes that, whereas the body is the "biological, material entity," "embodiment can be understood as an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience and the mode of presence and engagement in the world". (135) Csordas emphasizes that he pays phenomenological attention to the "lived body". He considers the body not only the target of power and its object of investment (in a largely post-structural view on the constructed body) but starts from a different premise altogether: "Embodiment as a paradigm or methodological orientation requires that the body be

understood as the existential ground of culture (…) embodied experience is the starting point for analyzing human participation in a cultural world". (135) His largest inspiration is Maurice Merleau-Ponty's work. The concept of being-in-the-world is an attempt to consider how a social object ("perceptual objects") becomes constituted in the act of paying attention. Csordas points out that for Merleau-Ponty "perception began in the body and, through reflective thinking, ends in objects. On the level of perception there is not yet a subject-object distinction – we are simply in the world." (137)

More broadly, I take Csordas' phenomenological method as a contribution to the anthropology of the body that is working to remove entrenched ontological premises that rule epistemic tools. Such tools impoverish the understanding of "feeling" and affective social worlds, such as the subject/object, the mind distinct from body, and language a strictly cognitive and disembodied exercise. (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987) Csordas makes a distinction, useful but not always workable, between the "semiotic/textual standpoint of the body as representation" and the "phenomenological/embodiment standpoint of the body as being-in-the-world". (136) However, he admits that often the two cannot be fully disentangled when we research the claimed experiences, and with Jackson (1993), he concludes that we need to "make a place for a complementary appreciation of embodiment and being in the world alongside textuality and representation". (137) I agree, and the case of having a traumatic experience of war is a perfect illustration of how a broad discourse, which made the experience of war as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) intelligible in the last century, is consequential for how we refer to the visceral suffering in proximity to violence and war. (Fassin and Rechtman 2009) As MacLeish (MacLeish 2016) argues,

because bodily experience… is always already 'out in public' (…) the embodied experience of war and military life - war's tools and materials - represents a crucial intersection of the phenomenology of experience with systems of disciplined violence production and the public culture representations and discourses that make war legible.

I would add that no phenomenology can be fully disentangled from the representations that structure a culture, a culture of the sensorial body in this case. However, it is still rewarding to consider instances in the lives of embodied subjects with phenomenological attention to the body perceiving and acting in society.

As Csordas points out, stopping at representations ignores a large and significant aspect of social life. One of his definitions of attention from Merleau-Ponty shows how he hopes to undo the subject-object framework that reifies the social world as outside the viewer/researcher: "To pay attention…is the active constitution of a new object which makes explicit and articulate what was until then presented as no more than an indeterminate horizon". Thus, Csordas argues, "the experience of our bodies and those of others must lie somewhere along that horizon." (138) Further,

> To attend to a bodily sensation is not to attend to the body as an isolated object, but to attend to the body's situation in the world. The sensation engages something in the world because the body is 'always already in the world'. Attention to a bodily sensation can thus become a mode of attending to the intersubjective milieu that gave rise to that sensation. Thus, *one is paying attention with one's body*. (139, my emphasis)

From Csordas I take the critical point that much depends on the practices of giving attention "to the body" and "with the body," as the body is always and already in the world. His point on "somatic attention" is relevant for my larger argument, not only as a methodological insight

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regarding the researcher, but for a theoretical point I want to substantiate along each of the following chapters. This is namely that sovereign and biopolitical strategies of corporeality practiced on the body in fact weave strategies of investment in a *disembodied* subject. This is because, as these technologies invest to produce effects of individualized and totalized corporealization of their subjects, what is deferred is an intersubjective, intercorporeal relationality, or an intersubjective ontology, that would seriously present the body as a product of the possible relations in a social world. For my argument, disembodiment is an effect of technologies of power and responds, as methodological point, to Csordas's methodological argument about embodiment as a relation we establish to the world. To that extent, the bodies materialized in sovereign and biopolitical technologies are bodies of solipsistic presence and the inheritance of the metaphysics of exclusive presence of Greek, Aristotelian politics. (Derrida) To emphasize, sovereign and biopolitical bodies, and the subjective life of those bodies, exclude the practices of witnessing suffering in other bodies than one's own. (Scarry 1987; Das 2007a) If this argument holds, then taking intercorporeality as the domain of subjectivity (Butler) is in fact crucial for any emancipatory politics.

Butler (Butler 2011, no page) writes:

> No one body establishes the space of appearance, but this action, this performative exercise happens only 'between' bodies, in a space that constitutes the gap between my own body and another's. In this way, my body does not act alone, when it acts politically. Indeed, the action emerged from the 'between'.

To the extent that the subject is considered in this in-between space, we (the name for the concrete moment of attention on corporeality) are in fact always *dispossessed* "by our very sociality". Butler

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argues, and I subscribe to this point, that we can become contemporary subjects only to the extent that we are dispossessed of a body inherited by the modernity of the last two centuries that has been "coterminous," Haraway writes, with projects of commodification and territorialization in increasingly lethal "enclosures." The condition of being in this body with the accumulation from modernity and the liberal order of ownership, which operates in the hierarchy between the subject and object premised on the hierarchy between the mind and body, succeeds only in so far as the subject lives a disembodied life. In this sense, the struggle against a disembodied life is not more subjectivity but an embodied objectivity. To be objective we must engage, as Haraway writes, with a practice that informs us about our "particular and specific embodiment" (581) from where we see the "world". It is simply to reflect on ourselves as implicated actors and partial observers and, from our location, as responsible for what we name and the accompanying effects. This is what it means to have a "situated perspective" (D. J. Haraway 1988). Only as we come to know "where we are and where we are not" (Haraway) can we come to discern violence as a force that ultimately destroys relationality and, therefore, the capacity to witness violence. (Feldman 2004) This happens in relation to others and the world, not in any one body as though it were separate and autonomous from the "world," objectified at a distance from the subject.

As argued, when we pay attention to the body as a subject in moments of an obvious disruption to the dominant sensorial regime, such as the voices in the "head" of a post-traumatic soldier, we can also see our relationship to our socialized bodies anew. As Ranciere (Rancière 2008, 11) writes, politics is enacted when we can dwell in a moment of disruption of the hegemonic sensorial regime that regulates the "proper" uses of the body.

Aesthetic experience has a political effect to the extent that the loss of destination that it presupposes disturbs the way in which bodies fit their functions and destinations. What it produces is no rhetoric persuasion about what has to be done. Nor is it the framing of a collective body. It is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world where they live and the way in which they are 'equipped' for fitting it. It is a multiplicity of folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience that change the cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible. As such, it allows for new modes of political construction of common objects and new possibilities of collective enunciation. Now this political effect operates under the condition of an original disjunction, of an original effect, which is the suspension of any straight cause-effect relationship. *The aesthetic effect first is an effect of des-identification. The aesthetic community is a community of des-identified persons. As such, it is political since a political subjectivization goes through a process of des-identification.*

Analytical attention to the body, both in its production by technologies of power and as a sensorial actor in the world, can illuminate the intentional processes of subjectivization in their contingency as tenuous projects of making selves aligned with narratives of larger, totalized bodies. As we reflect on our implication in violence, we can see more of how reification of totalized bodies operates to destroy the imagination of other modes of relating that also grant more space for feeling involved. (Heller 1979) In the feminist conversations that have multiplied the "levels of analysis" in international relations, Christine Sylvester (Sylvester 2013, 670) has made a timely appeal to consider the sensorial life of the subject of power and violence and specifically to bring attention back to the erasures of the body as an inevitable medium in which we relate.

In my view, war is best understood as a range of body-based experiences, close and remote, with collective violence (Sylvester 2011, 2013). 'What war knows' is the accumulation of multiple, disparate and perhaps contradictory agent, victim and spectator involvements with the planning, execution, endorsement, opposition and pain of violence associated with shooting wars.

## Outline of the chapters

Chapter One offers a genealogy of sovereignty that returns to Foucault's much more ambiguous, and productive, reflection on the place of sovereign power in a biopolitical logic of investment that requires techniques to attribute and stabilize value and attachment (and self-attachment) in some bodies. This chapter also employs Foucault's tactic of genealogy. As Foucault stressed, and in a manner akin to Benjamin's thoughts on the tactics of the dispossessed against the continuum of historicism, I analyze a present technique of rule through terror, "marking presence" in the parlance of the IDF operational order. I trace it to past moments in the history of the State of Israel as a tenuous project that strived to create a viable people. Sovereignty's political body is a terrorized body, Foucault argues. I trace the logic of making of a terrorized citizen-body to the 1950s negotiations regarding the needed and desirable body of Jewish citizenship in the particularly tense negotiation between various problems of governmentality (a Palestinian population in the new territory, an ethnically heterogeneous population interpellated as Jewish, the growing specter of racialization inside the Jewish body, the growing dilemmas of the colonial state, and so forth).

This production of the "Jewish" and the "terrorized" population, thus mobilized always for the "next war" (Ben-Eliezer) is the signature of the years that followed the so called "war of independence" of 1948. The history of that war and the following decades is an instance of a settler colonial attempt at producing an exclusive presence (Wolfe 2006; Robinson 2013; Pappé 2006) in the territory of a population sanctioned as "Jewish" but which in fact was a population that had to be made Jewish in David Ben-Gurion's, the first prim-minister's, ambitious project. (Ben-Eliezer 1998; Lavie 2014) After setting the argument in this first chapter, namely that sovereignty is a form of marking an exclusive presence that requires the effort of producing various forms of

absence, both physical and in memory (the racialization of the Jewish citizen as well as the erasure of the Naqba), the next chapters can be read as follows.

Chapters Two and Five are exercises in giving attention to the body and through the body. There, I present scenes in which actors negotiate, through narration and other performative, embodied practices, their relationship to the violence of militarized citizenship and its function as a terrorizing force. Chapter Two opens with a scene of an embodied performance of life under military occupation. It is a stage performance in a Palestinian theater in Jerusalem - a one-man performance that shares with its spectators, co-participants in the scene as I will argue, an occasion for witnessing violence. My argument is structured as I move through the scene and as I register its effects on the spectator. What I argue is that it can offer a discerning moment for seeing how the subject relegated to necropolitical conditions enacts, in an embodied manner, an attitude towards his or her own body as target of necropower. In that realization, on stage and together with the spectators, what is enacted is a momentary space that allows discernment of what exactly is at stake in sovereign violence as rule exercised through corporeal tactics of "occupation" of the senses. By confronting this not through language nor the visceral body alone but through articulating a relationship between language and the body, the performance makes us stop and think about the various means through which we might relegate the subject of necropower, such as that of the visceral abject victim, whose body illustrates the wound, while others speak for that mute body.

Chapter Five returns to the post-traumatic return home of the soldier as it is formed in the public work of Resisim. It considers the narrative work for veterans to insist there is a burning necessity

to provide a public space for their personal stories. The narrative on personal suffering unfolds, therefore, against the backdrop of a statement on secrecy and the personal alienation caused by that secrecy. Aside from paying attention to the narrative explanation of why veterans should be helped to share their war and military experience, I also pay attention to the embodied gestures of some of this activist group's members as they speak and perform other gestures, e.g., in stage performances, and artistic and personal reflections on their possibilities to express alternative experiences and judgements by using the body for arguing publicly.

Chapters Three and Four focus on the body as it is imagined and handled in the post-traumatic discourse. The argument is straightforward: the sovereign/biopolitical archive's objective is to attach useful words to what its citizens feel. Here, I follow instances when agents of governmentality publicly declare that there is a grave problem around the subjects', who have experience trauma, silence after the violent events become known. Chapter Three looks at the work to stabilize the meaning of trauma and post-traumatic conditions of two main psychological sites in Israel. They both problematize violence as a force that affects some bodies with durable consequences for the entire (Jewish) society. In this locale, but also in other national contexts of military service, the sensorial regime of post-trauma appears as the fragmented memory of the soldier that can be articulated to others through the mediation of weaponry – shrapnel, bits of metal stubbornly implanted in the body, impossible to recuperate from the inner tissues of the body, surfacing in their own time, and guided for the right trajectory from depth to surface. The body serves here both as a material object for psychological expertise to organize the visible effects of violence but also as a metaphor that conveys distinct and related domains: the inside and the outside; the body and the mind; wholeness as integrity and fragmentation to mean social alienation,

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psychological suffering, and the failure of the subject to perform in "normally." This moment when the hidden reemerges, and when the pain installed in the depth of the subject, bodily and psychologically, reappears after the violent event structures the post-traumatic framework and the legitimacy of clinical work.

However, the body is performing well beyond the confines of individual experiences and trauma. I consider that excess to be an instance for re-examining that passage between feelings and names and for discovering possible new meanings for pain and maybe new "languages of pain." (Das 2007a) To name something a traumatic experience is a privileged space for various agents of governmentality to intervene. It is also an opening to explore by embodied gestures how we share pain. Nothing is immediately emancipatory in the frustrating effort of my informants to give more personal names to what is defined as PTSD; all is muddied by living in an atmosphere of terror and self-terror longer than their personal histories. This is where genealogy is invoked not only as a closer reading of the archives, but as a manner to think of the body itself as an archiving localization and fixing of usable meanings. The promised return to a normal life after suffering terrible nightmares, and to the "homeostasis" (Feldman 2004, 185) that citizens at home are said to enjoy intensifies the shared sense that home is where violence is not happening. But it is precisely this "home" that is performed though the diagnosis of PTSD as a failed return of those afflicted with nightmares and other symptoms. To that extent, healing in the post-traumatic apparatus can function as a kind of violent practice, one where the archive keeps the right memory by producing the necessary forgetting and occlusion of thought (Chapters Three and Four). However, outside the statist archive, the body of the veteran speaks in ways that might be returned to more dangerous memories of the institution of political order, such as that which made the

colonial subject by simultaneously producing the body of the colonized. (Smith 2021; Fanon 2001; Azoulay 2008) Trauma in the body can speak of that eloquently. (See Chapter Four and Five)

To restate my questions, I bring one last and very discerning modality to interrogate the body of Western politics, which returns it to the colonial history that made it valuable through exclusive rights. (See Chapter One) Thus, Stoler (2016, 12) writes about "colonial aphasia" as a kind of anesthesia, or paralysis, whose conditions of possibility and regimented expression have something essential to do with the durable logic of violence in the colony. She writes:

> Aphasia is a condition in which the occlusion of knowledge is at once a dismembering of words from the objects to which they refer, a difficulty retrieving both the semantic and lexical components of vocabularies, a loss of access that may verge on active dissociation, a difficulty comprehending what is seen and spoken.

The forces that make the colonial body of the citizen-soldier mark sovereign presence by producing absence – not only of the lives defined as the enemy but of the corporealized "citizen" life. This disembodied life excludes the possibilities of giving attention to the politics of the body in violence. Colonial aphasia is not merely numbness or the lack of feeling; it can operate as an intensification of certain useful feelings. (Festa 2016) However, it is at times an untenable name for what is felt and feels unbearable or, as Yehuda put it, alienating. In moments when the sovereign subject asks, "is this a life?" we might start paying attention to what makes the "life" of the citizen (sovereign, colonial, and therefore not that different from ours), and thus, what could unmake it for the sake of alternative social worlds. The question on witnessing can thus be formulated as follows: Can we operationalize a political relationship to an agential body, cognizant of the forces that make it feel, and so capable of discerning how we come to feel our outer

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boundaries and inner life, at the intersection between subjective experience, historical indebtedness

to images of the desirable body, and the affective forces that regulate feeling?

# Chapter 1 - Sovereign presence

**2015/2004, Second Intifada: "Making our presence felt."**

In 2004, a group of IDF soldiers from the prestigious Nahal Brigade returned from their mandatory service in the occupied city of Hebron in the West Bank with a rebellious plan. First they organized a photography exhibition of their time in Hebron. It proved surprisingly successful with the general public. Next, they formed an NGO, Breaking the Silence (BTS), organized by and for IDF soldiers and veterans to describe morally troubling experiences during their military service. Since then, they became a vilified organization by the mainstream political elite. Death threats regularly pour in; they are called "traitors." The name describes the activist vocation transparently: it is hard to speak of what is happening in the occupied territories. A regime of thick silence and ignorance shrouds the existences there; it needs a *breaking* intervention - an interruption of a harmful process. The silence that preserves it is broad, enforced secrecy enhances it, and society is enmeshed in it to the extent that it refuses to look and listen – the reality of military operations in "the territories" requires to break the silence "at home."

The photography exhibition was called "Bringing Hebron to Tel Aviv." BTS was born out of that event, from that return *home* (Tel Aviv) from the "territories" (Hebron), and from citizens who were uneasy about their military obligations and wanted to bear testimony. The image of a return from the opaque side of the "territories" might have communicated across time, as a spectral return of a ghost not fully expelled, to what Rabin announced in 1995 - an infrastructure to "keep Gaza out of Tel Aviv."

BTS explained at the exhibition that only direct testimony of those who had been deployed in Hebron could reveal what is difficult to discern from inside Israel: Hebron is one hour away from Jerusalem, *but it feels like a different world*:

> We got out of the army recently. Hebron was the hardest and most confusing place that we served in. Up until now we have all dealt with the shocking things we saw there…. In coping daily with the madness of Hebron, we couldn't remain the same people beneath our uniforms. We saw our buddies and ourselves slowly changing. Caught between a rock and a hard place…The school in Jebl Ju'ar has been an army post for years. We asked ourselves why an army platoon prevents children from going to school. We found no answers. We decided to speak out. We decided to tell. Hebron isn't in outer space. It's one hour from Jerusalem. But Hebron is light years away from Tel Aviv. Now all you have to do is to come. And see. And hear. And understand what's happening there. (February 2004)

*Coping with the madness, daily*. Savagery beyond the imagination of anyone in Israel is what is happening *there*, with arbitrary violence on both sides and systematically perpetrated by the soldiers. The regime of controlling Palestinian lives in the West Bank, it says, would be found intolerable to the sensibility of any Israeli citizen and glaringly contrary to democratic norms "at home." BTS wanted to make the facts of the occupation and the stark contrast between two ways of life for Jews and Palestinians in the territories visible.

There are two routes in the occupied territories that BTS members organize for group "tours": one in the city of Hebron and the other in the Hebron Hills, led in Hebrew for the Israelis and in English for the others. After weeks on a waiting list, I manage to book a seat for a "tour" in the Hebron Hills. On a weekend morning in Tel Aviv, we are waiting in a small group for the bus. The gathering is mixed, comprised of curious tourists, told that this is a "thing to do," researchers, and officials from various international organizations. I sit next to an Italian woman who is an intern at a UN agency in Tel Aviv working with refugees' asylum in Israel. One of the leading BTS members sits next to the driver and speaks through the microphone. Nadav, our guide, had served

in Hebron. He describes the following scene to us to explain why he keeps breaking the silence, even though he receives death threats for doing it.

His team was often deployed in operations during nighttime in Palestinian villages to search for terrorists. No one knew who made the lists of those wanted, what were the criteria, and why it had to happen at night, as this was more dangerous for the soldiers. They would enter the village, break into a house, and force people into a room while they started the search. Search for what? For everything: clues about terrorists, weapons, etc. Given the circumstances, he tried to act decently. Out of respect for the customs of the occupied, female soldiers are usually brought along to do the bodychecks of the women in the house. As he had his orders, he removed bed sheets from the drawers and porcelain and tablecloths from the shelves to look for anything useful. At the end of the search, he made sure to fold the bed sheets back and place everything back on the shelves. He tried to fix the mess of a few men on high alert roaming at large through the house as best as he could. Then, his team moved to the next house in line. Once more, children cried, the adults would get angry or scared. Immobilizing people is frustrating, humiliating, and difficult to implement. The search in the drawers and on the shelves and under the beds unfolded once more. The soldiers slowly became exhausted and hungry. Folding sheets back into their drawers became sloppier. In the early hours of the morning, after repeating the procedure in the third house, they left everything in the middle of the room for the inhabitants to sort out after they were gone.

*What is the purpose of the night searches?* - Nadav asks aloud. No one knew and already then there was much frustration with these orders. They never found weapons in the homes, he explains. He realized that there was no actual search for terrorists in that order; it was instead a terror tactic, one that needed regular incursions *and at nighttime*. In each house after the one being raided, the household members wait for what they can already see happening from their own windows in the

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house next door. They can hear the invasion of their neighbors: the sudden breaking of the door, crashed objects, angry or terrified voices, crying and shouting. The IDF has a name for this specific intervention: to "make our presence felt," Nadav explained.

Since he returned, his mission had been to make others aware of Hebron's unimaginable reality. Nadav offered more context for his effort to make the "territories" visible at home. His family is liberal, he grew up with *Ha'aretz*, a liberal daily newspaper, on the table every morning. He is what you might call a "leftist." He reflected aloud on this sociological and genealogical point: on the incongruity between his values and the reality he helped create as a soldier. This is what the exhibition wanted to say emphatically - that there is an immense distance between Hebron and Jerusalem or Tel-Aviv, despite their geographical proximity. But of course, no one goes to Hebron but the soldiers *for years now*.

**Genealogy (a guide for the reader as genealogist)**

I started this chapter with a genealogical trace of the effort to make sovereign presence felt. Tracing this effort genealogically is not an attempt at writing the full "history" of its consolidation through "state" and "military" violence that would prove the facts of dispossession. That history has been told already, and Edward Said's (1984) skeptical view on history doing justice to the oppressed, once the facts are revealed and the truth remains decades after, despite the volume of facts, despite the efforts at *breaking the silence*. Furthermore, the multitude of information on what is actually happening in the territories is all well-known, as military and settler-organized violence is public.

This is not to devalue the efforts of the activists at BTS, however, but to expand the field of vision on what is needed as a response to violence. What we need is not only more data and facts but,

first, we need to understand the logic of the will to have the sovereign presence *marked* in the life of a people as a constant reminder. Second, we need to expand the meaning of **presence** beyond the domain mobilized by the sovereign exception and its technologies that corporealize both citizens and enemies. My tactic is genealogical and borrows an argument from Foucault and Benjamin regarding the genealogy of the present forms of terror. They both point to the possibility to form new relations as we reveal the tenuousness of the teleological project of historicism. Historicism narrates a chosen story of the origin of the state and curates images of the past. (Azoulay 2011) States are to a large extent performances produced through acts of narration and they require the effort at preserving their existence in narrative forms. (Bhabha 1990) To that extent, historicism already knows the future it strives for because it is already inscribed in its story of origin.

More analytically stated, in the historicist project, the present is an anxiously ordered arrangement or "distribution of the sensible." (Rancière 2006) It is an attempt to prevent collective attention being paid to struggles regarding the meanings of the "foundation," which are dangerous if openly confronted. For the genealogist, the present is always a dangerous moment if we pay attention to that anxiety of preserving the continuum dictated by the chosen story of the past. Therefore, I understand the effort to make (sovereign) presence felt as a sign of the anxious self-making of sovereign power. Anxiety here does not point to any actor in particular, but to the very logic of state-formation, as we will see soon.

This chapter offers an account of the *will* to mark sovereign presence in the life of two peoples: First, and more obviously, the Palestinians, who are taken *beyond the pale* in the imagined geography of savagery that the "territories" evoke in the cultural and affective sphere of the Jewish "home," to the point that "society" cannot even imagine how "shocking" the treatment is that is

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applied to the occupied people. The "madness" remains in the territories and "at home" when the soldier dares to occasionally reveal the criminal acts, because "breaking the silence" is a challenging act, with emotional, social, and political costs. But there are a second *people* that must be marked with the presence of the sovereign, I want to argue, and this is the "Jewish" subject of citizenship. This citizen too must learn what the sovereign presence looks like and feels like with each new generation.

To show the importance of marking presence in *both* these subjects, the first section continues the genealogical tracing of this labor that forms the sovereign body (territory, state, and/or nation). This is an effort to mark sovereign presence through the repetition of violent acts there, where in fact what is deferred is the realization of the absence of the state or at least of its incomplete, partial, and insufficient existence as a totalized whole. Marking "presence" is an effort to delay the public terms that might articulate this insufficiency or incompleteness that stirs and drives the technologies of marking presence as a *felt* state. Thus, what is mobilized beyond the sheer violence of contact, and what we must consider is a complex material and affective regulation of bodies and their relationships or absence thereof.

Next, I continue the genealogical tracing by taking us a decade prior to BTS's return "home" with shocking facts regarding the Occupation. For this, I need your attention through the next genealogical episodes to discern the effort, the labor, and the anxiety of making the "state" whole as it differentially embodies subjects. My interpretation runs alongside yours, reader, and might very well stir other memories in you, hopefully dangerous memories of the present, "memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger." (Benjamin 2007, 255) Genealogy is mobilized not only by revisiting archives, but also by relating differently to the body as an actor and bearer of memory and knowledge.

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Earlier, I mentioned the moment in 1994 when Yitzhak Rabin demanded full power through the state of exception to fight against Hamas and other Palestinian groups defined as terrorist organizations. Then, Rabin demanded to have the army and its intelligence relieved of the cumbersome oversight of the High Court of Justice, the body most relevant for the democratic aspect of the state. In his public statement, the picture was simple - terror must be fought by any means. This fight was impeded by the plurality of actors involved, in Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. In the middle of the diplomatic negotiations (the "Oslo Peace Process"), the Palestinian Authority had become the mediating actor between Israel and the Palestinians in the occupied territories or, as Rabin referred to this area, in biblical language, "Judea and Samaria."[7]

In his speech, Rabin is pained and angry, reflecting the collective shock after the sudden killing of civilians. His speech reflects the general atmosphere ("pain," "outrage") and reinforces it. He first articulates what is at stake for the public – a war in the middle of the process of searching for peace, a war against the enemies of peace. His words about the enemies of peace are as follow:

> Certainly today they are the main, and almost sole, initiators of the terrorism being conducted against us, whose purpose is to kill Israelis because they are Israelis; however, most of all, this is a war against the very existence of the State of Israel, and certainly against a peace which will more firmly establish Israel's existence. We have acted in the past, and are acting now, against Hamas. We have demands of the Palestinian Authority in Gaza, which should carry out activity against Hamas in a better way than it is doing today, but I cannot tell you whether the terrorist who carried out the suicide attack on the bus in the heart of Tel Aviv today came from Gaza, or from Judea and Samaria. I would not be surprised if he came from Judea and Samaria where we are responsible. A closure was placed today on the residents of the territories in order to prevent them from reaching sovereign Israel. But, a closure if I am not mistaken (and I am sure I am not mistaken), in the reality of an intermingling of tens of thousands of Israelis and Arabs, without a clear line of demarcation, and without separation as a political element of an arrangement, will

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not prevent Hamas, will not prevent the Islamic Jihad, from having the ability to carry out attacks like this.[8]

In this speech, he asks for the right to torture "terrorists" and to destroy the houses of their relatives to intimidate potential suicide attackers. But consider this too - the terrorists were threatening a peace process "which will more firmly establish Israel's existence."

A decade later, the vocation of the IDF to fight "terrorism" beyond the borders of the state was implementing the logic of so-called "asymmetric warfare." Despite formal autonomy conferred to the West Bank, the IDF has the freedom to enter at any time if it is chasing people defined as terrorists by its own intelligence. To do so, it has borrowed a term from international maritime law, namely "hot pursuit," which practically gives it full discretionary power. However, the state of military occupation had shaped itself in yet other practices from the previous decade, which will be briefly described below through the eyes of a soldier and an anthropologist of violence. The objective of the next genealogical episode is to focus on some entrenched tensions of Israeli citizenship.

*1988: First Intifada. Beyond the pale, the citizen learns to maintain presence*

From 1988 to 1993, the first Palestinian Intifada spread like a flare across cities, villages, and refugee camps. A close look at its grass-roots organizations reveals a complex and creative use of various spaces for the public activity of various Palestinian actors, and between Palestinians and Jews. Mass protests had been the initial main mark of the Intifada, the *uprising,* bringing men, women, and children into the streets. Progressively, armed violence made most moderates retreat in their homes. At the time, Rabin was a general. He had become infamous in some circles for his

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order to soldiers to "break their bones," the protesters' bones.[9] A state order commissioned a large number of clubs for the occasion, and they were swiftly produced in factories in Tel Aviv.

Eyal Ben-Ari is an Israeli anthropologist of comparative military affairs, but in 1988, he was an IDF officer deployed in the Hebron area as a reserve soldier. A year later, troubled by what he had witnessed in service, as he declares, he wrote an article in a prestigious journal, *Cultural Anthropology*, to express his unease with the experience in Hebron and then back home. As a witness to the first year of Hebron's occupation during the Intifada, he makes a small reference to the clubs distributed to the soldiers on this exceptional occasion, only to let us know that his unit never used these new military prosthetics. It is a small detail but revealing of what he is obviously still trying to understand, by his own admission, as he writes a year after his experience: the transformation of the IDF into a policing force for minute surveillance of civilians, armed with clubs for occasions of disciplinary intervention.

The article's title explains his dilemma to some extent: "Masks and Soldiering: The Israeli Army and the Palestinian Uprising." After his return from this annual "military stint," Ben-Ari discovered that he could not find anyone at home with whom to discuss what he had experienced in Hebron and had been out of the ordinary for an experienced soldier who had never avoided the duty of annual reserve service. In brief, his unease was to realize that his unit had been transformed into a policing unit overnight, mandated with the minute paraphernalia of managing populations, Jewish and Palestinian officially. The clubs, which the soldier in him despised, had become necessary for a particular kind of violence that does not kill but deters in a visible manner, pedagogically one might say. The club could disable, slow down, make limbs unusable for a while,

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and immobilize unruly protesters but did not kill them in large numbers. Ben-Ari's article is a slowly unfolding personal search for the reasons why, after the end of their service, everyone in his unit returned home with no words for what had happened to them and through them, and in particular, how the logic of their service had affected the civilians.

> Having come back deeply troubled by what I saw and felt in Hebron I think that I expected the party to provide an opportunity for us to discuss, to raise questions, or at the very least to hint at what this particular period of duty (our first during the intifada, the uprising) had "done" or meant to us as soldiers, as human beings. (372)

His question gives the appearance of an academic production with a solid enough position for the researcher to ask about causes and consequences of violence in any conflict. Indeed, he provides an analytical question:

> The uprising raises the following question: how do people perform - within the context of their army service, and for its duration - acts that are totally different from, in direct contradiction to, the way in which they behave while civilians? On one level this question is a psychological or social-psychological one. Here one may well ask as to the mechanisms or techniques by which people who see themselves as members of a "normal" democratic society, cope with their participation in policing activities within another society that is governed by different rules and expectations: the ways, to put this by way of example, in which reservists contend with their participation in such activities as daytime and night-time arrests, dispersal of demonstrations, or forcing "local inhabitants" (always Palestinian Arabs) to clear away roadblocks. (373)

"Masks and soldiering" is an argument about soldiers having to put on a mask (a role) while they are on military duty, and another one, of the civilian, when they are back to their remaining 11 months of the year doing their mundane jobs, taking care of their families and having drinks with friends, where they systematically avoid talking about their other life and role. More deeply,

however, his article illuminates an urgent question that troubles his civilian life after return: why can he not find anyone with whom to talk about what they all have witnessed and done.

*The ambiguities of making presence felt. On walls and democracies*

How can we understand the logic of "making presence felt" in light of such reflection from the subjects who have mediated the state's logic of terror in the scenes above and who then reflect critically on their actual mission, on the injurious nature of what they were ordered to do:  to *make the presence of the IDF and, thus, the State of Israel, concrete, felt, and unforgettable* in a territory formally lacking any sovereign authority? Is this the ultimate expression of sovereignty - a pure decision not accountable to anyone, that unfolds in the dead of night in a territory out of the public's eye, and thus with no recourse to a limit to its arbitrary fiat? Or is it rather a transparent sign of the failure to control - the anxious labor done to make your presence felt because otherwise people might forget who is in charge? (Brown 2010)

By now, a hefty and necessary historical scholarship has returned Israel to the historical place of the Western state, *liberal and colonial*. The scholarship details Israel's historical efforts since 1948 as a not so extraordinary compromise between the claim of its democratic character and its status as an occupier, settler-colonial agent. (Robinson 2013; Gordon 2010; 2008; Azoulay and Ophir 2012; Wolfe 2006; Said 1992; Stoler 2016; Gregory 2004) This compromise, of being both democratic and structurally hierarchical - colonial with regard to another people, required the unfolding of techniques through which the violence exercised against an undesirable but stubborn population, persisting despite a systematic logic of ethnic cleansing, became the legitimate domain of all state institutions: the judiciary, the military, bureaucracy, and, quite literally, the hands of

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each citizen through the policy of national conscription. As a sovereign state, Israel is particularly marked by a dilemma regarding its undecided borders and therefore the sphere of its presence as a *state*. Next, I will offer a brief background to better locate the productive function of the trope regarding the vast distance between the savagery of the "territories" and the democratic "home." This trope is significant because it can colonize even radical critiques of the state, such as BTS. However, its productive character is multivalent and will return in future chapters.

(1) As a state founded in 1948, Israel claims to belong to the society of democratic states of rule of law and equal rights.

(2) The state also began an official project in 1948, which unfolded through the dispossession of another people. For this late settler-colonial project, the main objective was to form a viable Jewish population for the newly founded state, as stated by Israel's first prime minister, Ben-Gurion. For that, it became imperative to displace the majority of the population in the land at that time. As Patrick Wolfe (Wolfe 2006, 389) conceptualizes this imperative of displacing undesirable populations in settler-colonial contexts, which Israel has implemented since 1948, as a project for the "elimination of the native." This project failed until now, leaving the political elite with a large population that it denies the right to be governed (Azoulay and Ophir 2013; Gordon 2008) but is strictly controlled by military means. Within this colonial logic, further deep biopolitical and racial conflicts are brewing, however. The tension between "Jewish" and "Arabs," or Palestinians, as two sides in an entrenched "conflict" has largely overshadowed an original and still ongoing dilemma of the state. Thus, after 1948 the state has engaged in attempts to multiply the Jewish national population through a large immigration project of Jews from Africa and the Middle East. The latter posed a problem from the very beginning regarding their assimilation into the desired body (Weiss 2003) of one homogeneous Jewish nation. The state, at least in Ben-Gurion's time,

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foresaw and warned against a two-race Jewishness that would maintain the Askhenazi in the superior socio-economic and cultural positions. That project has never succeeded but, to the contrary, remains the basis for a racialized society. The more recent opening of archives reveals both the project of assimilating the Arab Jews who arrived after 1948 and, at times, the shocking violence against them. (Lavie 2014; 1996) This has yet to reach enough of a peak, however, for a public debate and for confronting the durable forces that work through the social body of Jewish citizens.

(3) After the 1967 War and the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, Israel had to incorporate a large population of Palestinians ruled by Jordan since 1948. As they were "added" to the 1948 Palestinians who managed to remain in their land, the state had to face the stark appearance of its colonial character during a decade marked by decolonizing movements all over the world. Thus, in 1967, the military regime and associated curfews were ended for the 1948 Palestinians. Some of them enjoy a limited sense of citizenship in the framework of a liberal set of individual rights but not political rights. For practical purposes, I limit this discussion to mentioning that they are second-class citizens in a state that actively limits their rights to collective participation in the public, political, and cultural spheres. In 1967, after the war that annexed new territories, the Palestinians under occupation were brought under a regime of exceptional rule: partly ruled by a collection of British, Ottoman, and Jordanian legal texts and practices and partly organized in incremental form by the military administration that oversaw all aspects of life in the occupied territories. The military regime continues to organize daily life in this area, de jure and de facto.

(4) After 1967, the presence of Jewish settlers has intensified despite its illegal expansion. It is supported, both officially and unofficially, by state policies that have eased the territory's

infrastructural organization for Jewish living and made it, concomitantly, fragmented and physically dangerous for the Palestinian inhabitants. Paradoxically, this expansion has made the difference between settlers and their politics and the attitude of Israelis, who consider themselves citizens of a democratic state and often find the choices of the settler Jews unpalatable, more apparent. Hebron is an illuminating location for the tensions of the Israeli citizenship project. The city is in Palestinian territory, but a small Jewish religious minority has been settled there and, over the decades, has required military "protection." The Israeli citizens in military service are deployed to protect this minority. As BTS points out, this amounts to the systematic violation of Palestinian rights and sheer physical violence without limits. (Puar 2017, chap. 4) As it became evident after the First Intifada, and more publicly stated since BTS formation at the end of the Second Intifada, soldiers operate as a police force, bound by no rule of law or system of accountability. However, this logic of military control must be historicized. There are essential continuities between the regime of military occupation and the regime of exception that the British Mandate exercised in Palestine in the years before its withdrawal; it is a regime that Israel has implemented, with some variations, against the 1948 Palestinians until 1967 and in the West Bank and Gaza ever since. (Robinson 2013)

Thus, the appearance of two separate worlds enacts a productive "imaginary geography" of savagery or backwardness (Said 1979, 50), one in which its arguably most dangerous internal critic, Breaking the Silence, nevertheless becomes complicit, even if inadvertently, and even as it makes cases of state secrecy public. At the same time, this ambiguity of the actual boundaries of Israel has its costs, one of them being the quality of Jewish citizenship for those who accept the occupation. In this sense, Israel negotiates a fragile compromise between a modern Western

democracy and a colonial, occupying power. on the body of both those undesirable and of the "citizen."

In the remaining pages, I want to articulate Israel's dilemma between being a sovereign democracy and a colonial power of occupation. This dilemma is not an untenable tension but rather is productive for making another apparent dilemma between the sovereign and the biopolitical state of Jewish citizenship operational. Here, I reconnect with an argument made in the Introduction, namely that citizenship is an anxiously lived quality of safety and embodied sense of value. What is at stake for preserving the sense of one's value unfolds as a state of self-terror, materially and affectively mobilized, circulated, and transmitted from generation to generation. This last point will become clearer when we return in a future section to a moment in Ben-Gurion's project of nation-building as a project of mobilizing the entire society for war. In this sense, my argument is that sovereignty is best understood as a technology to create the sense of an exclusive presence that amounts to the right to decide who and what is present as a body – intelligible, embodied with a sense of value.

*Sovereign protection, sovereign exception*

Next, I discuss sovereignty in two apparently distinct but in fact enmeshed logics: on the one hand, sovereignty as the discourse of protection of a people and its autonomy and, on the other hand, sovereignty as a power of colonial exception. The militarized citizenship of Israelis who implement the IDF's "presence" in another people's life illustrates that enmeshed state of the two meanings of sovereignty. In a dominant understanding, stabilized by the hegemony of the historicist project of the nation-state, sovereignty means the regime of protection of a people inside

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a territory. However, the sense of being valuable qua citizen is historically dependent on trajectories that made preeminent the figure of the state as political entity through practices that excluded other lives from that sense of autonomy. The colonial/imperial history of the Western modern state is the essential trajectory that organized the hierarchy that has the state as an autonomous agency. The principle of hierarchy that stabilized in the last centuries the international order among equals is not only the criterion that excludes in fact a majority from the right to sovereign self-government. It depends on practices that maintain the right to exclude peoples from the sphere of equality between sovereigns. (Blaney and Inayatullah 2000) This is how I will refer throughout this chapter to the logic of coloniality. The rule through a regime of exceptional power, and fundamentally as a logic of administration of peoples, was the principal technology that rendered the hierarchy of the international order tenable and legitimate. This is in brief the argument in the remaining sections of this chapter.

In the regime of exception, sovereignty is not fundamentally concerned with the citizen's body but with the power or force to determine the threshold that produces the sovereign enclosure by practices of exclusion on bodies considered disposable. (Agamben 1998; A. Mbembé 2016; J.-A. Mbembé 2003) The domain of exclusion is often produced in concrete, material locations but not always. What is constant, however, is its productive function: the excluded must remain in relation to the inside to preserve the coherence of the sovereign order. (Agamben) we might say they are necessary prisoners of that logic that maintains the enclosure as long as its boundary is performed through acts of violence that do not merely violate a legal regime, but operate ignorant of the internal legal regime. This is exactly what Rabin had asked from the state and what his government in fact obtained after the First Intifada. To that extent, what is happening in Hebron, what the citizen *could never imagine happening in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv*, a place that feels  apart from this

world, is intensely productive for the sovereign logic of war-making and its necessary corollary - militarized citizenship. However, what we must pay attention to goes beyond revealing the "crimes" of soldiers ordered to implement illegal acts. The project of making a viable, homogenous Jewish nation since 1948, and in the service of the state, as Ben-Gurion wished for, must be revised and unmade. The inheritance of the state's dream of a nation presents itself now as the current condition of citizenship that (1) forces citizens to become perpetrators of violence (Azoulay 2015) (Azoulay) and (2) values life in a thanatopolitical condition of protection, carried by pervasive injunctions such as the tropes of the self-sacrificing macho hero." (Löwenheim 2015)

Furthermore, I offer a brief analysis of the modern stakes of state sovereignty formed in the colonial "encounter" with the non-European peoples. Thinking of sovereignty not as a quality of a state but as the power to refuse the status of autonomy to some entities will help us to better understand the productive logic of the trope that makes the citizen's feeling of "madness" when he steps *out of his known world* and into the "territories." In conversation with scholarship that traces the sovereign quality of states to the colonial relation, where the decision on emancipation can be decisively enforced, I want to restore the anxious labor of *marking presence* illustrated in the story above in the *dynamic* process that negotiates the *senses of being valuable* (enough) through establishing a tenable hierarchy between the citizen and the non-citizen. *State* sovereignty is thus a historical strategy for stabilizing a durable hierarchy between some (Western) polities, defined as full, emancipated, and self-ruled states, and the rest of the world's peoples and their polities, which are placed in a negotiated regime of "degrees of sovereignty." (Stoler 2016, 177) We can then restate that sovereignty is a function of power that secures a hierarchy rather than as a quality of states. Thus, there are different kinds of sovereignty - imperial sovereignties, for instance, and the sovereignty of the military administration in the colony, which might rebel

against rule-of-law principles seen as obstacles for the proper ruling of the empire's subjects, as Cromer complained regularly in his plan of rule of British colonies. (Arendt 1973, 131)

As the post-colonial literature on statehood notes, in the colony, the regime of rule has always been one of exception ultimately. Achille Mbembe (2019, 76) writes that "what comes into being in the colony and under apartheid is a peculiar formation of terror...The most original feature of this terror formation is its concatenation of biopower, the state of exception, and the state of siege." Arendt had observed the function of "administrative massacres" (1973, XVII) as systematic *means of rule* in the colony. If we conceptualize sovereignty not as a system of institutions but as the name for a strategy of preserving the hierarchy between valuable bodies and bodies amenable to "administrative," that is inevitable and *even "merciful"* massacres of inferior races (Lindqvist 1996, 160), then we can reconsider the effort of establishing a presence as the signal of deep anxiety regarding the sense of being valuable "at home." This is more apparent if we look back at some of the rulings by exception in the colony that stirred anxiety in European states, since there was a risk of them being translated "at home." (Arendt 1973, XVIII; Robinson 2013, 34) More broadly, this illuminates Foucault's (1976) arguably unsolved question regarding the place of the sovereign power in the biopolitical age of government. Sovereign power is not an old remnant of the power of the king, but it is the rationality of power necessary for a biopolitical rule to govern the population, one that can form the operational, calculable meaning of *valuable* people as it organizes the tolerable forms of physical and social death for those deemed dangerous to the chosen population. The citizen is the negotiated and therefore tremulous sense of value that the sovereign needs to secure for itself. It is in this light that we can return to the double address that Ido Gal Razon made public in the Knesset:

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(1) <u>I killed for you</u>: therefore, the embodiment of the sovereign who can murder without consequences. "I murdered 40 people with theses hands."

(2) *Take care of me*: therefore, *am I valuable enough for "life," **can you confirm this as you take care of me from now on**? **You must take care of me!***

The next section makes a case for rethinking the promise of protection at the heart of sovereignty as a regime of regulating memory. The vocation of the sovereign project to enact an exclusive presence which materializes as "state" and "citizens" through the organization of an affective regime. I want to focus on one affect circulating, terror, and trace it there where the dominant tradition of political theory and state-building worked for centuries to make it difficult to discern. Terror, Foucault argues reading Hobbes and the theory of contract, is what *makes* the citizen. That terror is a continuous state of feeling-being, without which the sovereign project fails. In future chapters we will see even closer how terror inhabits the body and materializes it as the "citizen," in other words, as a technology of archiving memory. (See Chapter Four)

**The body of power**

In Foucault's genealogy of Western (European) power, the body is the fundamental matter for sovereign power. It is concretely a stage on which sovereignty can materialize, for instance, in scenes of torture. Torture is also taking the body as the medium on which it forms usable technologies to produce judicial truth. Truth itself is not what is essential, per se, but the procedures that form it and become progressively more complex in modernity. (Asad 1983)As procedures of government multiply and weave their rationalities (the recourse to medical expertise in judicial procedures, for instance), the uses of the body also expand and make it difficult to separate

sovereignty ("kill or let live," in Foucault's terms) from biopower ("make live or let die"). In fact, Foucault's series of lectures in 1976, *Society Must be Defended*, poses the collaboration between sovereign and biopolitical technologies as both a question and a danger. The question addressed the apparent paradox wherein the sovereign exacts pain and is manifested as a feared administration of death while biopolitical technologies are invested in the numerous measures to enhance the existence of a productive population. The danger for their collaboration, intimate at times, is that biopower, while it works in various points to expand the life of the population, also employs the sovereign prerogative to put to death the life considered worthless or dangerous for its chosen population in expansive new forms. Biopower, in short, is a power capable of killing millions, without any definite limits to its logic of expansion.

Foucault's hypothesis regarding the collaboration between sovereignty and biopolitics was tentative - sovereignty is both a biopolitical state's jealous preservation of the power to kill and a limit to the biopolitical state's vocation to expand infinitely. The dilemma seemed urgent as Foucault closed that year with a reflection on Nazi Germany, which had been a state that became both genocidal against enemies and suicidal with regards to its own population. He ends on a grim note: it might be that all democracies contain that potential in themselves. The emphasis of that year's lecture and hypothesis, however, was to think about power genealogically. The objective was to illuminate a state of strife under the appearance of normality (hegemony) of the modern state. For that, his tactical focus was a reflection on memory or rather, a question about retrieving dangerous memories of the state's violent foundation.

*Genealogy versus sovereignty: "What did Hobbes want?"*

For Foucualt, genealogy is an instrument to make history present – to reveal its stakes in each moment of a claim of authority. His objective in the 1975-1975 series of lectures was to destabilize

a dominant epistemic regime on the subject and its corporeality (mind and body). New ways of feeling, and relating might be possible if we loosen our attachment to the subject of power.

> What Hobbes is trying, then, is not to refute but to eliminate and render impossible—his strategic opposite number—is a certain way of making historical knowledge work within the political struggle. To be more specific, Leviathan's strategic opposite number is, I think, the political use that was being made in political struggles of a certain historical knowledge pertaining to wars, invasions, pillage, dispossessions, confiscations, robbery, exaction, and the effects of all that, the effects of all these acts of war, all these feats of battle, and the *real struggles that go on in the laws and institutions that apparently regulate power*. (...) Although it seems to be proclaiming that war is everywhere from start to finish, Hobbes' discourse is in fact saying quite the opposite. It is saying, war or no war, defeat or no defeat, Conquest or covenant, it all comes down to the same thing: "It's what you wanted, it is you, the subjects, who constituted the sovereignty that represents you." (2003, 98; my emphasis)

Foucault historicizes sovereignty away from the tame view of its legitimacy confirmed, post-factum, by the contract, which is the order by the exclusive authority of the "king" or state to protect Western citizenship. Thus, he addresses this protection, paradoxically predicated on the willingness for self-sacrifice, or the thanatopolitical logic of life for the citizen. As a subject of the sovereign, one's life was both protected and given to death according to the sovereign states' needs and their jealous wars for preeminence in early modernity. By "Hobbes" we are to understand a dominant tradition of political thought. This tradition is ultimately organized not merely as monopoly on violence but more broadly as the control of a people's memory regarding how the regime of law began and its confusion with justice. This ahistoricism as absence of memory is the precondition for hegemony.

Recalling the moment of a state's origin or foundation as a bloody massacre of one side by another would destabilize all the relations, hierarchies, and exclusion that are possible through its present unnameability. Sovereignty's work is to keep that lethal origin from being named. Everything that is now understood as authority, "*the laws and institutions that apparently regulate power*," are permeated by a violence that boils under the surface, repressed again and again: "the political use

that was being made in political struggles of a certain historical knowledge pertaining to wars, invasions, pillage, dispossessions, confiscations, robbery, exaction, and the effects of all that," is made murky, difficult to discern, and impossible to name among ourselves, the citizens.

The second important genealogical point is that sovereignty cannot assemble any sense of its own existence without the bodily matter of its subjects. Foucault's genealogy in 1975-1976 restores attention to the double body of sovereignty: the citizen's and the enemy's body. Sovereignty cannot function without a body to appear *present to itself* and for calculating the right actions to take. However, the corporeality of the body, subject to sovereignty, enforces a disembodied existence for its agents. To live a disembodied life is to have little means to register one's own body as a medium of power. The disembodied life is also the form the state takes concretely, such as the soldier, citizen, and so on. It is in this sense that sovereignty *as a regime of useful memories aims to in fact erase memory*: the memory of how the body came to be protected by the enclosure and in a state of constant terror.

Consider Foucault's *tactic* for considering the meanings of what law, right, and justice are against how they are understood in the Western discourse of rights guaranteed by the sovereign:

> the general project was, basically, to invert the general direction of the analysis that has, I think, been the entire discourse of right ever since the Middle Ages. I have been trying to do the opposite, or in other words to stress the fact of domination in all its brutality and its secrecy, and then to show not only that right is an instrument of that domination—that is self-evident—but also how, to what extent, and in what form right (and when I say right, I am not thinking just of the law, but of all the apparatuses, institutions, and rules that apply it) serves as a vehicle for and implements *relations that are not relations of sovereignty, but relations of domination.* And by domination I do not mean the brute fact of the domination of the one over the many, or of one group over another, but the multiple forms of domination that can be exercised in society; so, not the king in his central position, but subjects in their reciprocal relations; not sovereignty in its one edifice, but the multiple subjugations that take place and function within the social body. (26)

Through analyzing power as the field for multiple relations of domination, sovereignty appears closer to the modern technology of subjectification as the government of conduct, indirectly that is. Thus, sovereignty is a necessary inflection onto the logic of the more "modern" technology of biopower. In fact, the *appearance* of sovereignty as a regime of law is essential for biopower to function as a regime of rights – a *national* biopower that informs us affectively that we are cared for and even loved as valuable bodies.

Let us return to our locale of sovereign presence that must be established repeatedly, with each new generation of citizen-soldiers, and bear in mind this last observation regarding the citizen as sovereign. This is the subject's self-terrorizing state. More concretely, we might consider how in this schema of laws and rights the club in the IDF soldier's hand brings into being, through repetition, the very presence denoted as sovereign. Consider Foucault's *tactic* for studying power:

> by looking, as it were, at its external face, at the point where it relates directly and immediately to what we might, very provisionally, call its object, its target, its field of application, or, in other words, the places where it implants itself and produces its real effects. So the question is not: Why do some people want to be dominant? What do they want? What is their overall strategy? The question is this: What happens at the moment of, at the level of the procedure of subjugation, or in the continuous and uninterrupted processes that subjugate bodies, direct gestures, and regulate forms of behavior? In other words, rather than asking ourselves what the sovereign looks like from on high, we should be trying to discover how multiple bodies, forces, energies, matters, desires, thoughts, and so on are gradually, progressively, actually and materially constituted as subjects, or as the subject. To grasp the material agency of subjugation insofar as it constitutes subjects would, if you like, be to do precisely the opposite of what Hobbes was trying to do in *Leviathan.* (27)

Foucault's analytical strategy is difficult because there is no generalizable answer when asking "what happens" at the moment of the "material subjugation," when we become corporeal subjects that clasp a club, both the terrorizing and terrorized subjects. In other words, asking why the perpetrator takes up or refuses to use the club already misses a far more important prior moment where embodying the perpetrator position was made possible. This moment comes from the

constellation of forces, affects, institutions, and memory that corporealizes by disembodying the subject of violence.

Still, this analytical strategy is useful to derive a more generalizable conclusion regarding the logic of the disembodied living, qua citizen, and the production of the historical orders of violence, which destroy the possibility of registering the violence inside the enclosure, territorial and bodily. Foucault's tactic helps us understand how the soldier, as the materialization of sovereign presence, becomes corporeal and a historical actor that implements the occupation. I recall a double passage, or mediation, that this disembodied subjectification performs. First, the citizen becomes the body that enforces another's subjection to the military curfew and general state of living in terror. Second, he or she returns *home and is* disturbed by the realization that lawless violence, in a place that *feels "out of this world," exists next to* a democratic order of things "at home" that would never tolerate such abuse. This state of being troubled can be approached analytically, I suggest, as a modality of seeing the militarized regime of citizenship at work in the locale of this dissertation (i.e., mandatory service for all citizens and reserve service for all adult men) as a moment where the double life of the state violence is enacted, both exceptional and lawful. What holds both conditions together is that very feeling of being disturbed on the individual level, as we can discern in Ben Ari's frustration at not having anyone to talk to about his realization that he had mediated sovereign, absolute violence. Analytically, the feeling of unease, amplified by his distress at not finding a language to express it, illuminates that effect of disembodiment on the citizen who cannot discern how his body mediates terror as project that forms the state again and again, with each new generation deployed in the "territories."

*Terrorized states and colonial warfare*

I believe that this performative effect, which gives the impression that terror belongs naturally to "the territories," goes deeply against the political ethos of BTS' activist work. However, we must confront the fact that their desire to speak about violence operates inside durable tropes that can colonize their resistance and return it to an Orientalizing geography that organizes civility and savagery as distinct domains with their respective, affective load. However, I want to focus more closely on the function of terror for making the citizen. Genealogy as a tactic returns us to the function of the human body as the medium for the circulation of desires, affects, and actual gestures of sovereign violence or resistance that come together as subjects. Consider Derrida's (1992, 34) similar restatement of the ultimate danger that the *state fears:*

> What the state fears (the state being law in its greatest force) is not so much crime or brigandage, even on the grand scale of the Mafia or heavy drug traffic, as long as they transgress the law with an eye toward particular benefits, however important they may be. The sovereign is afraid of fundamental, founding violence, that is, violence able to justify, to legitimate (…) or to transform the relations of law (…), and so to present itself as having a right to law.

More to the point, the sovereign fears the right to a *new* law that can act as a new foundation for the regime that regulates bodies and their relationships. We can now see more clearly how the body and the territorialized occupation of space run in parallel as we focus on the second point of Foucault's return to Hobbes' tactic for legitimizing violence. The unextinguished danger of savage violence (everyone against everyone) within the political order will be deferred by the discourse of sovereignty to either the past or to an imagined geography of the unknown, such as imagined "savage" places, like the "Americas" as the new world lacking proper institutions and populated by savages. The third and essential point of the contract as a tactic is that sovereignty will not function merely as a claim to protect a people. Its ultimate success, its legitimacy, is secured once it is legitimized by the people as their own violence *and, to that extent, as virtuous violence.*

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As the citizen becomes a perpetrator of violence, even as he must kill and then be haunted by it, what preserves the "thanatopolitical" logic (*die for your state so you may live*) inscribed in this unspoken contract is the *shared* knowledge that "it is what you wanted, it is you, the subjects, who constituted the sovereignty that represents you." (98) We, the citizens, are the sovereign in its murderous function. If we follow this "injunction" of the sovereign to kill, the state suddenly appears as an artificial man, indeed, merely mediating the relationship between the self and self. Its logic of authorizing violence, far from being of a king, distant from his people, informs the citizen that "it is you" who kills, and it is also you, as the sovereign, that demands your own necessary death and as the soldier for your own defense. Responsibility for killing is, for an instant, crystalline ("it is you") only to vanish once more as the citizens become the totalized body of the state. What this logic enables is the superposition of law and right, destroying any possibility to think about justice outside of the sovereign relations of citizens.

The value of considering citizenship through these lenses points to the immense power *and* fragility of the sovereign constitution. On the one hand, continuing to live *immediately* means that the subject is consenting to the rule of sovereign subjection - there is no other possibility of imagining "life." The contract, it says, is preserved by the very fact that the body wishes to stay alive. Thus, the contract does not simply erase the memory of a past brutalization that made the "people," but it also obstructs the ability to imagine another future. We stay alive, it says, for one reason only, which is inscribed in the contract. On the other hand, it points to the inherent weakness of the sovereign as a process, which is never quite finished, and must be reconfirmed with every new instance of violence in the embodied gesture of its subjects. "*It is what you wanted*" is never a guarantee of stability but an occasion of tremulous uncertainty. It demands reconfirmation. All

the stakes of violence are in that reconfirmation, as the club is indeed used by the citizen. The contract is always being renewed or refused through each gesture we make or refuse to make.

*The enclosure and the memory of the origin*

The use of genealogy is to reveal the effort to produce hegemony as a complex of forces that erase alternative ways to imagine the relationships between the governed. As a tactic, we start at the concrete points of "the material agency of subjugation," e.g., as the club is taken or refused or as a gesture becomes a sensation and then a feeling. Attention to material subjugation goes to technologies that become flesh and agency in that moment of corporealization as agents of violence. Its efficacy is to show historical technologies of power as they materialize something and make it *seem* and *feel* normal, natural, and therefore dehistoricized, deactivating the need to ask how this came about in the first place. The body of the soldier is the material agency of the governed and his or her subjugation as the perpetrator (Azoulay 2015; 2008); the body of the dispossessed must be marked with the memory of the club, of the night raids, and so on.

From this point it follows that the level at which we must focus on analytically is on the *processes that embody* the colonizer and the colonized in the same movement, before the delineation is made between perpetrator/victim and the colonizer/colonized. I take this insight from Fanon's observation that the colonizer and the colonized are intimate, one the double of the other. (Tuhiwai Smith 2012, 27) This is why decolonization is necessarily a violent undoing for Fanon. It would deconstruct not only the fate of the dispossessed as oppressed but also the figure of the colonizer and his or her "psychotic disorders" (more on this in Chapter 2) that have been directly caused by the dehumanizing logic of war in which they were made into perpetrators. (Fanon 2001, 184) To that extent, we can see how the *material subjugation* is the foundation for a necessary regulation of the senses and feelings and collective affective states (Stoler 2016, 278; Festa 2016) that

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preserve the distinctiveness of the colonizer's identity from the colonized, with his or her loyalties assuredly to the homeland.

Thus, what requires closer genealogical attention is to see how the sense of belonging inside the pale becomes an affective investment of the "citizen." We have contemplated in the Introduction the dangerous moment for the state when the citizen realizes, with an injured sense of anger, that his protection is predicated on unbearable suffering. The thanatopolitical contract was, for a brief instant, rejected in the simple uttering of a question from the citizen to the state (the Knesset): "is this a life?" What follows offers a brief orientation through the foundation of the state and the formation of the thanatopolitical citizenship.

## The unsettled presence of the settler-citizen-soldier

Let us return to the scene narrated in the Introduction and try to understand the effort revealed in the intense labor of establishing sovereign presence in the lives of the occupied population. What we have to locate more precisely is the evident tension between two opposite objectives. On the one hand, there is an apparently unbearable intimacy between the Israelis and Palestinians, with the Israelis literally knowing even the bedsheets of the enemy population and *suffering* from this knowledge. On the other, there is the stated will, which has been inherited from government to government, to produce a lasting separation, illustrated by the mute force of the wall.

Here I place the tension between this intimacy and distance in the larger tensions of sovereignty as a modern settler project to establish a tenable presence for itself. I do so by briefly returning to the 1948 dilemma of the new state that did not yet have a nation and declared it publicly as a problem and as an objective of biopolitical and bellicose governmentality. This project of making

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a nation came together as a military project wherein the citizen is mobilized constantly, ready to become a soldier in an instant. The first prime-minister, Ben-Gurion, articulated that military mobilization, or readiness, was an essential element of "security." It was a means to produce a coherent people, in the eyes of the political elite, out of the new population arriving in the territory after 1948. However, the obstacle was their memories of being uprooted from their countries of origin (here, Middle Eastern and African) and their affective and linguistic loyalties to the "Arab" world. (Lavie 2014; 1996) This memory is still dangerous for the project of a homogeneous "Jewish" nation, and it parallels the other dangerous memory of the massacres and displacement of Palestinians that occurred to make space for the new project of biopolitically constituting a nation for the state.

*The state and the missing peoples*

Regarding Israel's formation as a state since 1948, Ariella Azoulay (2014, 340) refers to the logic of thanatopolitical investment in citizenship, Israeli *as* Jewish, against the "Arab" other, as the "disaster" of citizenship. It is a disaster because it restricts the imagination of how the citizen might relate to her own life as governed by the militarized condition of state protection. This disaster is enacted, from generation to generation, through singing, narration, and celebrating the condition of necessary suffering, most intensely through the trope of the "sacrifice of sons" or of oneself as a soldier. (M. Weiss 2003; Bilu and Witztum 2000) This is the "myth of the macho hero" who never complains that Yehuda watched crumbling, with satisfaction, in the instance of the "post-traumatic" soldier in the Knesset. The myth is central in the dominant regime of both the male body and of permissible feelings for others. Danny Kaplan (2006, chap. 7) shows how the socialization of male soldiers is organized as an intensely affective, erotic order of attachment – to one's unit and one's "buddies" or comrades. The intensity of feeling is however rigidly and cruelly

regulated; the soldier is allowed to feel love and the freedom to express love for his comrades only after the other has died. To prepare the youth for service, the culture encourages a profuse discourse on military love, which is passionate precisely because it is inscribed in the trajectory of an expected, and glorified in advance, death "in battle". One's "buddy" is always seen as already dead, even when they are (still) alive (122). This love is permissible only because it is mediated in the thanatopolitical order by a "culture of commemoration" that has ritualized the preparation for death at any time.

However, this body, understood as sacrificeable and *loved in public* because of its sacrifice, contains further projects that must be disentangled as we historicize the making of the citizen in the order of sovereign power. One essential project after 1948 was the formation of a nation for the new state: a homogenous nation that could serve the expansive ambition of the elites' modernizing project. As a self-nominated *Western* actor pursuing the European mission to civilize the uncivilized, the "Arab," "poor," local population (Alatout 2020; Sa'di 1997; Gordon 2008, chap. Introduction), Zionism appropriated the ethos of the new Jewish state in an extended project of development that targeted also the newly arrived Jews from neighboring countries. We can sense the tremulousness of this nation-building project from Ben-Gurion's statement in 1952 in the Knesset, four years after the "war" and the expulsion of 800,000 Palestinians, who by then had become refugees in neighboring countries.

> I have been a Zionist all my life and I do not deny the existence of Israel, heaven forbid…but…even the English nation was not always that nation…composed of different tribes…fighting one another. And only after a development of hundreds of years did they become one nation….We do not have hundreds of years, and without the instrument of the army…we will not soon be a nation…We must guide the progress of history, accelerate it,

direct it. …This requires a framework of duty…a framework of national discipline. (quoted in Ben Eliezer 1995, 264)

The problem of demographics was central in Ben-Gurion's concern for the young state, despite the forceful displacement of most Palestinians. The Jewish population, composed of those who had been in the territory since the Ottoman rule and then the Mandate for Palestine, grew with the addition of the population coming from Europe after the Shoah, but it was yet still too small for the land envisioned for the ambitious agricultural and industrial development  projects imagined since the Mandate.

The solution to the demographic problem was to encourage the Jews living in and speaking the languages of Middle Eastern and North African countries to immigrate in mass. The incoming, non-European Jewish groups were seen through a racialized and Orientalist lens. They became the targets of a strategy of integration with both caring means (Uri Ben-Eliezer 1995, 272) and horrifyingly cruel tactics in the natality project (M. Weiss 2001). In between the nation, which was still being formed, and the state, which existed but required consolidation and "security" in an ambiguous international context, the army became the tool of choice to form a homogeneous nation. The new citizens had to be made aware of the necessity to be willing to sacrifice oneself for durable security (Uri Ben-Eliezer 1995, 273). "Security," as Ben-Eliezer shows, was the name for a complex project of governmentality, which included encouraging natality, building technological infrastructure and agricultural projects, and education. As all these directions of state intervention came together, their unification  was largely produced by the mobilization of the newly formed military body. This is the objective of a "nation-in-arms" in Ben-Eliezer's terms.

*The army's vocation to make a nation*

The straightforward narrative of Israel's origin through the war of national liberation from the British tells of a not yet professional army during the 1947-1948 paramilitary struggle, but one that soon became a unique model of conscription, including both men and women, and to which the annual reserve service for men was soon added. This conscription was seen as part of the state's total mobilization, which was necessary owing to the general enmity of Israel's surrounding neighbors. In Ben-Gurion's words, the "next war" will always come. In the meantime, Israel was in an interval of "false peace." (Ben Eliezer 1995, 275) In a false peace, it is wisest to wait and not to be relaxed:

> Security is not possible without immigration ... security means settlements . . . the conquest of the sea and air. Security is economic independence, it means fostering research and scientific ability . . . voluntarism of the population for difficult and dangerous missions. (Ben-Gurion quoted in Ben-Eliezer 1995, 276)

The initial vocation of the army had been to socialize all the incoming Jewish populations and homogenize them; military units were mobilized to perform various social services in the camps set up for new arrivals, offering education, classes in hygiene, and Hebrew language classes. (Ben-Eliezer 1995, 272) Nahal, a special unit, had been formed with the intention to merge military and civilian tasks together in that broad understanding of "security." More generally, as Robinson (2013, 8) argues, the primary vocation of the military, in Ben-Gurion's party at least, was "the continuation of the Zionist struggle to conquer Arab land, (whereas) the army thought it was a joke and refused to allocate it any resources." However, Nahal's daily work was to care for those who were just starting a new life in the country. The soldiers managed the laundry of the families living

in the temporary camps, as Ben-Eliezer shows, while the female soldiers were educating the children.

Despite Ben-Gurion's ambition to remove the hierarchy already prefigured in the 1950 between the Ashkenazi and the non-European Jews, quite the opposite process unfolded in the next decades. A durable difference between the two racialized groups has been the historical distribution of Ashkenazi Jews in the commanding positions in the IDF and the Mizrahi in the "humbler" positions of subordinates. This distribution has been perversely naturalized through the IDF's procedure for selecting the commanders of IDF units, a prestigious position with long-term social benefits. The process relies, to a large extent, on the previous education of its draftees, specifically on the quality of their public and private tuition. In a classic Israeli sociological tradition, the marriage of citizenship with military service is discussed as the contract of "the republican citizenship," – which provides protection in exchange for (degrees of) self-sacrifice. (Helman 1999d; 1999b; Uri Ben-Eliezer 2012, 29) Its background in the dominant Jewish culture is the historical trope of the "price of war" or the "costs of war" since 1948 as the profusely nationalist culture begins to narrate the Jewish dead soldiers' ultimate sacrifice.

The trope of the "cost of war" does not distinguish between the military and society, but rather it articulates a dominant narrative of their constitution through each other. It indeed makes it difficult to discern the democratically fundamental value of separation between military and civilian affairs. (Kimmerling 1993) The matter of the army's constitution for the nation and of the nation for the army is beyond the limits of this chapter, but I want to point out here two large effects from this story of "republicanism." The first was already discussed: it glosses over the deeply racial project

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that underpins the nation, and which has still the group racialized as Ashkenazi in the leading socio-economic, political, and cultural positions. The other effect is one of a diffuse but intense militarization of the domain referred to as public.

As many sociologists have argued, following Kimmerling's concept of "cognitive militarism" (205) as characterizing the Israeli Jewish public agenda, which largely disregards any political matter in favor of the indisputable priority of defending the nation, there is in fact no possibility for discussing some questions in the public sphere because of the undisputed preeminence of "war" as self-defense. Kimmerling (2001, 214)has strongly described this as a complete colonization of politics, where "making peace is a military matter". (the invention and decline, 214) As we saw, Azoulay has argued that the military culture that structures the present understanding of citizenship since 1948 dismisses any position that would try to uncouple the citizenship question from the required proof of loyalty to the narrative of self-defense. "Wars," "missions," and other military incursions into the Palestinian population are discussed only to the extent that they preserve the sphere of citizenship in the domain of the Jewish preeminence of the right to mobilize the necessary means for securing the preservation of the enclosure. However, the IDF was, from the beginning and continues to be, a project in-formation, highly unstable along the racialized lines that organize its hierarchy.

*On sacrificing heroes*

For decades, the dominance of the Ashkenazi Jews in the military has sustained a dominant culture of the "hero" combat soldier who knows war proximately and to whom society pays respect when alive and, even more effusively, in death. On the other hand, the Mizrahi occupied "non-combat" ("jobnik") positions, away from the "front," and therefore they cannot claim to sacrifice much.

However, in the first decades, when the class and racial hierarchy was functioning without publicly relevant antagonists, the Mizrahi soldiers also showed significant reluctance to being drafted and to the danger of the battlefield, oftentimes invoking their importance as breadwinners for their large and poor families. (Y. Levy 2010; G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008; Y. Levy and Mizrahi 2008) This is an important point to historicize the social consequences of the trope of "sacrifice" and its social benefits that continue the social reproduction of the Ashkenazi as dominant class. It helps us consider that the public rhetoric of the proud and happy sacrifice of one's "child" for the defense of the nation is largely paralleling the tenable promise that such a "sacrifice" is a valuable mode of becoming legible in the socio-economic field, and therefore a promise of benefits later, both material and symbolic. This point largely explains, for instance, why in recent years the Ashkenazi youth are reluctant to take positions in combat units, while Mizrahi youth are increasingly willing to do so. Those who are already understood as valuable no longer need to appear ready to sacrifice their lives.

In the first years of the state formation, the lower-class Mizrahi citizens' priorities were drastically different from their Ashkenazi peers in the military; staying alive to sustain large families was much more important than becoming a hero. Military service was seen as a significant burden to the more pressing needs to sustain families in dire socio-economic situations - a consideration that also provoked sustained efforts to avoid service. While the Ashkenazi dominance in the military lasted, it made the hope of a Mizrahi rising in the military ranks and becoming an officer, and thus later capitalizing on this in his social life, improbable. Until the last decade or two, the position of the citizen in the IDF, whether in a prestigious unit close to combat or of a low jobnik status, was highly relevant for being able to be successful socially, professionally, and/or romantically after

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service. (Löwenheim 2015; Y. Levy 2010) Therefore, the preservation of the willingness to sacrifice one's life or the life of one's children - depends very much on the low chances of the blue-collar, Mizrahi soldiers and their families to find other credible means of socio-economic advancement. To that extent, it is crucial to emphasize that the military is the main medium for the social mobility of the classes marginal during the first four decades of the state, and, in particular, during the so-called leftist, labor political period.

From this background, we can better understand how a rather complete reversal from the previous class distribution in the IDF has come about, concomitant with a transformation of society's attitudes toward the trope of the soldier's death and vulnerability to injury. The youth coming from high-class, Ashkenazi families, are reluctant to serve in the IDF as their social positions are no longer closely connected to the persona of the hero or, alternatively, they are interested in high-tech intelligence, with positions away from close physical encounters with the "enemy." The latter tendency is stimulated both by the global neoliberal ethos of the technically skilled IT/AI specialist and by the IDF's intense effort at presenting itself as one of the more technologically advanced military forces. What is also at work is the intensification of the individualist terms for the sense of self. This source of durable class and ethnic tension inside the Jewish nation explains to a large extent why in the last decades a significant accumulation of political movements, organized by soldiers and, distinctly, by Ashkenazi parents whose children are soldiers, criticize the military's policies of disposing of young people's lives through the logic of sacrifice both in service and in the rhetoric of memorializing the hero. (Helman 1999a)

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As various sociologists have shown, these critical movements are dominated by the Ashkenazi citizens. Recently, the Mizrahi citizens have become most invested in taking command positions of the army, which means their parents now occupy a prime location in the dominant media when they present their pride for having lost their sons in battle and choose not to "cry" about it. In other words, they choose pride in having paid the cost of citizenship over mourning. This changing demography in the IDF commanding positions is important for understanding who, in fact, started criticizing the army's policies, ethical violations in conduct, and so forth. (E. Weiss 2014) To that extent, it is relevant to note that the NAHAL brigade soldiers, who formed Breaking the Silence after their disturbing experiences in service, were members of elite units that were and are still largely dominated by Ashkenazi-descendants who already have weaved a solid enough tradition of civic protest against the IDF, which is not yet available to the other citizens.

NAHAL has functioned since the beginning of the state as a prestigious space for socializing the citizen in the army in accordance with Ben-Gurion's project to make good, loyal citizens through the loyalties developed during their military service. As we saw, it started as a mechanism of biopolitical-pastoral support for the newcomers. As a brigade collecting *elite* soldiers from the Jewish youth, it has done a great service to the productive indistinction between the army as a fighting actor and the army as a more ambiguous security agent for biopolitics, covering projects from infrastructural development and agriculture to supporting the impoverished and most vulnerable communities in Israel. Ben-Gurion's dream was to create a homogeneous population, and NAHAL and other actors were central because of their *pioneering* spirit, which recalled the mobilization that had made possible the state in the first place, but they were also the model for undisputed self-sacrifice. Making a rather sudden jump five decades later, in the mid-2000s,

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NAHAL's members, who had formed BTS had been deployed in and around Hebron, in a West Bank already delimited by the logic of the "barrier."

*1948, or on the origins of the citizen's sovereign presence. Or how to hold your body in place*

At this point, I want to highlight another relevant historical episode in the first decade of the state that started with the violence of war and ethnic cleansing and continued with the imposition of the military draft as a technology to fabricate the citizen. It throws light on Ben-Gurion's warning that the only peace available for the Jewish people is a "false peace" that should be weaponized and experienced as a state of constantly waiting for the next war. This is the dominant legacy that still haunts the state and the citizen's life. As security was constructed to be synonymous with the whole domain of biopolitical government (Uri Ben-Eliezer 1995; M. Weiss 2003), criticizing "security" thus is equated with criticizing "life," or at least the conditions that make it imaginable in the public speech dominated by "cognitive militarism" and the intimate sense that, should one refuse service, the citizen would lose essential social relations. (Helman 1999d; 1999c)

This episode is unearthed by Azoulay (2011), a genealogist whose work with others, both Jewish and Palestinian, is to return to the original moment of the sovereign power and its embodiment as the citizen. Azoulay reflects on 1948 as a tenuous historical moment that is narrated on one side as a war and, on the other side, a violent displacement and ethnic cleansing. In one striking series of photographs that had captured the encounters between the soldiers and the civilian population of a village, Azoulay considers the posture of a soldier facing a young woman who advances towards him, while her elderly parents stand behind her, watchful of the encounter. The young man looks hesitant. He is clutching a rifle pointed downwards, but he looks clumsy with it. His standing posture is visibly hesitating, suggesting maybe an awareness of the evident imbalance of

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force – an armed man in front of two fearful parents protected by the daring posture of the young woman, unarmed but defiant. The woman stands tall, apparently oblivious of his rifle. Her hands point away from her body and towards him as if to interrogate the reason for his presence there. Her posture completely reverses the roles and undermines the authority of the soldier to ask her questions or check her papers. Her legs stand grounded. She radiates the surety of someone who knows where she is, in the familiar landscape of her village, and rather suggesting that she is there to question his identity, *who he is*, standing there so unsure, ungrounded. *Who are you?* This is the question that each one has for the other, but one is asked in the tone of sovereign violence that is aiming to discipline the bodies it encounters, both the perpetrators and victims. Whereas the other body is constructed by its very posture that indicates its familiarity in a place. As such, this body, the woman who refuses to be intimidated by the soldier, seems to ask: *On what ground* are you here? or maybe: *what grounds you in this place? Do you know it as we do, with its seasons for planting seeds and for harvesting? Is it love or hatred that grounds you in that posture, clutching that weapon?*

The exercise that Azoulay invites us to try is to look carefully at a picture already stabilized by the state archive with a clear purpose to erase alternative memories of its violence. However, we can, if we want, enter its atmosphere, guided by her own words about the bodies that stand there, and reconsider it as a moment of bodily negotiation with the "balance of power" and a highly undecided moment at that point. Azoulay's interpretation of this encounter is important for my argument that history is contained in the body and corporealized as the felt sensation of one's body and its relations. What we see in this photo, Azoulay suggests, is how the Jewish man learns, bodily, haptically we might say, in the repetition of his posture day after day, village after village, *how to*

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*become the occupier*. He will soon lose his initial hesitancy, the shyness visible in this photograph of the newly arrived, his doubts, maybe, about his right to impose a new order through the violence he must enact every day, until it one day becomes second nature and the original violence becomes erased from his conscious memory.

On the other side, as Azoulay observes, the Palestinians are coerced through the interrogatory presence of a man bearing a rifle and his newly invented uniform, to learn how to become the dispossessed, the occupied, and the one who must explain why she is there, *present* bodily. Through the repetitive acts of having their IDs checked by young men with rifles, they teach the oppressed that they do indeed have to prove their legitimate right to be in a place, and they can stand there only after being checked, now that they have received permission. Still, what remains with me long after having last seen this photograph is the defiant posture of the woman. I no longer remember the features of her face, but something of her daring posture remains unforgettable, suggesting a claim of the body beyond the individual's face. It is not simply a standing position in front of a hesitant soldier, the contingency of one's momentary courage. It indicates a political choice of a different kind of presence that is enacted in the relationship between bodies that can only be registered through specifically paying attention to the corporeal posture of the body as a choice regarding one's relation to the world and to the other encountered then.

This investment of power in its chosen subjects operates through the disciplining of the body along generations, as shown by Azoulay's genealogy of the State of Israel shows. The violence of the 1948 war is an episode in a porject that constitutes the yet unfinished body of the state, weaving together postures, "missions," and checkpoints with bodies, affects, and infrastructures into a

durable archive that should structure the hegemonic relationships between the bodies of the colonizer and the colonized. This work is located in the temporality of a discourse that has its own internal coherence, a temporality longer than the life of any generation, but which integrates each new generation into it through the act of taking up the posture of the occupier to become a citizen.

*Ben-Gurion's inheritance of waiting*

Ben-Eliezer (1995) narrates an episode in Israel's first decade of total mobilization, preceding the second "war" in its history, which was the one with Egypt in the mid-1950. Ben-Gurion's success in legitimizing his view of security as a wider concept that encompassed war, agricultural affairs, birth rates, infrastructural modernization, and the ethnic melting of the incomers into one homogenized people resulted in a national preoccupation with being ready to fight. Annual episodes of "mass maneuvers" that received distinct objectives every year were essential in maintaining public attention on this readiness.. In the absence of an enemy, the soldiers in training were simply divided into two distinct enemy sides, engaged in fighting mock battles that were narrated daily to the people in the main newspapers.

> The mass maneuvers blurred the distinction between two types of time: peace and war. The press provided daily reports on the exercises: "A surprise attack by the 'Reds' on the 'Blacks' in the air force maneuvers," one paper wrote. A few days later "paratroops from the country of the 'Yellows' "were reported to" have landed on the soil of the 'Blacks.'" And three days after- ward readers learned that "efforts by the 'Greens' to breach the lines of the 'Blues' were thwarted." The entire population was involved, as befitted a nation-in-arms. While the maneuvers were in progress, a number of incidents occurred on the Egyptian border, blurring the line between training exercises and real attacks. The uncertainty was heightened when Israel denied, at first, that its soldiers had entered the demilitarized zone, ascribing everything to the Egyptians' over-vivid imagination. The press wrote that travelers in the Galilee (where the maneuvers were being held) were caught up in a war atmosphere. The country's president, escorted by the chief of staff, toured the area of what were labeled battles. The day after his visit the IDF raided the Jordanian village of Qibiyeh, this time "for real," killing some fifty inhabitants and blowing up about forty houses. (277)

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The next section focuses more closely on the sovereign production of absence in order to reconsider this relationship between sovereign political bodies and abject bodies as the necessary violent confirmation of exclusive rights, the right of sovereignty as the solipsistic power to decide whom we are related to and who can be excluded from relations:

> And that is indeed the most profound definition of absolute sovereignty, of the absolute of sovereignty, of that absoluteness that absolves it, unbinds it from all duty of reciprocity. The sovereign does not respond, he is the one who does not have to, who always has the right not to, respond [*répondre*], in particular not to be responsible for [*répondre de*] his acts. (Derrida 2009, 57)

By keeping the hypothesis that sovereignty is not primarily a quality of the state but an intensive and repetitive performative "work," that establishes its presence through a decisive moment and is embodied through the power of violence without consequences, we can then reconsider the uses of sovereign presence. What is enacted is a pedagogical occasion to teach the subjects, both the soldier perpetrating violence and the citizen who suffers from the psychological consequences of his actions (loneliness for Ben-Ari, nightmares for the PTSD soldier) their place in the sanctioned relations between "citizens" and those excluded.

Sovereignty is a performative work of normalizing a vertical ruling order, a hierarchy wherein some subjects' bodies are protected and safe from pain while others are unprotected and freely given to pain. (DuBois 1991) In this hypothesis, citizenship operates as a technology that organizes the conditions in which bodies occupy a place; they may stand tall on top or get immobilized below, illustrating the necessary lesson for everyone involved. It does not reify the sovereign as a condition of the state necessarily, or ultimately, but as a hegemon - from which anything of relevance can be issued and directed: law, life, death, or language. What is at stake, in other words, is to remove the possibility to imagine and articulate any other social life and way for bodies to

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relate to each other inside the enclosure. We might ask then: *how could the thanatopolitical citizen organize his or her existence outside of logic of the enclosure? In what other social and political worlds could she criticize the necessary sacrifice for the only life the citizen, us all, ever knew?*

## Governmentality – the rule of exception

Considering the previous question regarding the destruction of possibilities to imagine alternative forms of relating, I want to briefly consider sovereignty as the result of a negotiation in the colonial logic of violence. This is a logic fundamentally concerned with preserving a hierarchical order between autonomous and disenfranchised subjects. More to the point, sovereignty operates as a legitimate technology that renders the disenfranchisement of some peoples not only permissible but imperative.

As we shift perspective onto biopower as a logic of governmentality that organizes things and, at times, *people as things* (Mbembé 2019, 80), I will reflect here on how, in the colony as a place ruled by European administrators, biopower is inherently a power of exception, for which law might very well become an obstacle at times. This is precisely how law functioned in the imperial age - as a bureaucratic administrative rule necessary to govern peoples accustomed to millennia under only despotic rule. (Said 1979, chap. 1) In the colony, law-making was employed as a discretionary measure: the order of the colonial official, or "law" invented on the spot by the official bureaucrat for the objective of the moment. Arendt (1973, 134) has reflected on the specific form imperial governance takes, mediated by a bureaucracy completely divorced from, and rebelling against, practices of transparency, written rules, and the accountable chains of command

that come from its European traditions. She showed the imperial agents' contempt (Lord Cromer in India and Egypt and Cecil Rhodes in South Africa) for all formal obstacles to rule unbridled locally, such as the oversight of public opinion at home, written rules for the administration of the colony, or parliamentary oversight, which were felt to be an "unbearable burden and threat to domination."

*Colonial exception*

"All the manifestations of war and hostility that a European legal imaginary relegated to the margins find a place to reemerge in the colonies." (Achille Mbembe, Necropolitics)

Mbembe's (2019) concept of necropower is the reversal of the thanatopolitical principle - value confirmed through sacrifice- that instead organizes death as the confirmation of the absence of value. He returns to Fanon's analysis of the colony as a project administering a people as a mass or "heap" of bodies "thrown on top of each other," who do not matter whether alive or dead (80). The colony is a lethal world. This state, in an utter refusal of relations, ultimately culminates in the principle of absolute enmity - the will to unlink oneself from the other. (Mbembé 2016) It is a rule without the obstacles that traditionally constitute the sphere of protecting subjects (institutions, laws) from the agents of the power/state, in other words, *at a distance from sheer violence*. Absolute enmity, which amounts to what Foucault defined as the antipolitical logic of modern racism (the race that constitutes a polluting danger for the superior race), goes against any term conducive to "reciprocal recognitions" – its objective is to destroy the possibilities for relating.

"Biopower," when considered from the perspective of a European state's colony, takes a starker appearance as a power of governmentality that employs the body as a means for its objectives and

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preeminently, as a manner of establishing a tenable sense of a valuable life deemed political. Foucault had made this point, reflecting on the colonial implications for the European state. Laura Ann Stoler (Stoler 2002, 144) confirms and magnifies this point: "racism was not a colonial reflex, fashioned to deal with the distant Other, but part of the making of Europeans themselves….and constitutive of the bourgeois order." As Marti Koskenniemi (2017) shows, the international law, as a system regulated by and for sovereign agents, has been consolidated through the hierarchical rapport with those parts of the world deemed permanently ineligible to receive equal rights as sanctioned by the qualities of state sovereignty - popular self-determination and international recognition as negotiating entities.

By understanding the regime of exception as the systematic exclusion of colonized peoples from the right to self-determination (Anghie 2007, chap. 3) and taken beyond the pale of "civilization," or forced into the process of being assisted to cross the threshold, we can organize the kinds of questions we can ask about the vocation of sovereignty as a *principle of order* differently. We can ask what might be at stake in the *absolute forms of violence* over peoples who are not included in the citizen body of the agent who perpetrates it. Stoler (2016, chap. 5) offers the concept of "degrees of sovereignty" to account for the function of sovereignty as a principle of a hierarchical global rule, an order that organizes the rules of membership among the equals and the conditions of subjection for those denied membership. Stoler conceptualizes the principle of governing the colony as a function of the hierarchy, which is structured by the unassailable difference between those subjects who are sovereign and those who are not. The difference, in other words, must remain precisely  because in the real life of the colony, loyalties are very often far more

dangerously distributed than in the sheer distinction between the colonizer and the colonized. She writes:

> "Degrees of sovereignty" describes a principle of governance that convenes a contested political relation. It resituates focus on an embattled space and a longer temporal stretch, in which gradations of rights, deferred entitlements, and incremental withholding or granting of access to political and economic resources shape the very conditions that imperial formations produce and productively sustain. With this conceptual formulation, temporary exclusions, partial inclusions, and legal exemptions are not occasional and ad hoc strategies of rule but the racialized modus operandi of imperial states. Oscillation between coercion and persuasion—and the always "preserved possibility" of violence—underwrite these strategic practices by design. (177)

In Stoler's argument above, the empire is fundamentally a technology rather than a "place" or right, and it is one that is concerned with the preservation of the power to create exceptions, "announced and unscheduled exceptions and exemptions." (194) Although the international order is somehow stabilized in Western and non-Western states and by this technology, Stoler's attention to life in the colony is specific and reveals many lines of destabilizing loyalties, such as affective ties that make it difficult to stabilize the distinction between the bodies, European and not. It is in this sense that colonial rule is an affective state of government, she writes, infused with an intense regime of affective conduct and not merely a "rational" rule. (See Lynn Festa for an even more fine-grained attention to the rule by sentiment in the imperial age.)

*War as administration*

The promised passage towards the autonomy of non-Europeans is an era of recurrent genocidal interventions in the colony. The relegation of entire peoples *to the margins* of the civilized world is not an illegal act but mediated through the deployment of law as administrative measure, contingently negotiated for the requirements of the situation at hand, which are always ones of

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pacifying resistance to oppression. This is the domain of the exception and of the uses of law as instrument to further that inclusion through exclusion. (Agamben 1998, 11) The law in the colony becomes an instrument of war, deemed *necessary* for the administration of the colony. Laleh Khalili (2020) confirms this when she observes that a genealogy of present-day "asymmetric warfare" (5) reveals that war is an essential *means of administration* and, second, clear evidence of the colonizer's inability to detect politics where it is in fact intensely present in the gestures and form of life of the colonized:

> even as the theoreticians and practitioners of counterinsurgency speak of Clausewitz's truism that war is the continuation of politics, in practice, counterinsurgency refuses politics, or at least transforms political conflicts and contestations, revolts and insurgencies, into technical problems to be solved. This inability to recognize the politics that defines and structures revolt means that counterinsurgency simply becomes another way to better fight a war.

For instance, the British deployment of DORA (Defense of the Realm Act) in India, Ireland, and Palestine in the 1920s (see also Robinson 2013, 34) operated with a disciplinary logic but with genocidal effects. It only began to cause concern once it started becoming a measure considered for use at home and for the domestic pacification of the unruly classes in Europe. This dangerous prospect is in fact revealing of a tenuous political condition for the citizen, which the colony makes at times dangerously glaring. Stoler and others do go beyond Foucault's earlier observation on the inevitable return of colonial violence back onto the administration of the European peoples in order to conduct a necessary analysis of the subject's bourgeois and liberal self-constitution in relation to the concrete ruling practices in the colony along the negotiated, anxious lines of "whiteness." (Rutazibwa 2020; Tilley 2019)

The importance of thinking about the violence mediated through legal acts, such as DORA, is to be able to trace the continuation of the colonial knowledge on how to administer "unruly" populations that the British Empire left behind after it officially ended its rule. Israel, as a new state that declared its independence in 1948 and had to accept the remaining Palestinian population in its new territory, ruled this unwanted population under a regime of military exception until 1967. After 1967, that regime was transferred to the newly acquired population in the West Bank and Gaza. At that point, it was necessary to disentangle the two populations being ruled: the Palestinians in the 1948 territory and the newly acquired population. Shira Robinson reminds us that DORA was a technology - used in various places of the British Empire - to rule the unruly, from the slaughter in India in 1919 to Ireland and Palestine in the 1930s. All instances were against protests concerning the limits of civil rights. In Palestine, DORA was implemented when an elite among Palestinians came together to express their protest against the increasing unequal treatment of the Mandate, Jews, and Palestinians. As Robinson (34) states:

> In the late 1930s, Britain adapted DORA's provisions in order to quell the Arab Revolt in Palestine. From among the numerous provisions included in its (Defense) 1937 Order in Council, or executive decree, the High Commissioner made particularly extensive use of its powers of administrative ("preventative") detention and house arrest, collective punishment such as curfews and home demolitions, banishment within and outside the country, random searches and seizures, censorship and prohibition on public assemblies, and the "closure" of designated roads and areas to anyone who did not have a permit.

Months after Israel's declaration of independence, Ben-Gurion, the then Minister of Defense and Prime-Minister, formed a military government in the areas where the British regime of exception previously had governed the Palestinians. The paramilitary groups, who terrorized both the Palestinians and the British officials in Palestine, became prominent figures, in charge of this new office. The first two measures he issued were, as Robinson shows, one that "allowed local

governors to declare any area of the country closed to the public without a permit" and another that "empowered them to impose a curfew in any area for any length of time. That same month the cabinet also issued an emergency regulation that authorized the agriculture minister to allocate all lands depopulated of their Arab inhabitants—now labeled "absentee"—to Jewish settlers." (35) Six decades later, the same exact measures were still implemented by the Israeli authorities, as an officially inherited part of the Mandate's administrative regime for its subjects that the state would not acknowledge as a governable population, only a suspicious body that produced terrorists.

*Sovereignty as imperial formation*

As Stoler (2016, 205) makes a case for an "affective genealogy of security," she argues that "a ready distinction between sentiment and political rationality occludes the work that sensibilities have been called on to do in shaping the governing principles and practices of imperial formations." Israel, as a project with a declared mission to spread European civilization in the 20th century, is located in the broader imperial formation that operates through the state and, at times, more broadly and more ambiguously, as the international order that distributes "degrees" of autonomy and political value. The state was formed in 1948 through the violence against hundreds of thousands of civilians (around 800,000) that terrorized them out of their lands, and it was also enabled by an international, imperial order that had sanctioned the territorialization of a new state for the Jewish people for decades. This was premised largely on the Orientalist cultural background that had, for Europeans and US actors, made the Palestinians indistinguishable from a few scattered Arabs without tenable collective claims. Ben-Gurion's efforts in the past two decades had been indeed to clarify to the US and the Europeans that the activity undertaken by Zionism

was akin to the US' colonization of the continent in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In 1915, he had this to say in New York:

> The history of American settlement shows how herculean were the tasks of the colonists who came to find the new Homeland in the New World... how many and how fierce the fights they fought with wild nature and wilder redskins, the sacrifices made before they unlocked the continent for mass influx and colonization. (in Aruri H 1980, 201)

Nasser Aruri notes the difference between the extractive type of colonialism from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 17<sup>th</sup> century kind, which needed, in essence, depopulated land. The last two genealogical episodes that i described from the first decade of the Zionist project illustrate poignant moments in the intense work that was invested as corporeal and affective education of some subjects about to become *Jewish*. This education, which in the first decade operated as a broad set of techniques that structured what is in fact "security" through disciplinary techniques, inevitably had to operate in the next decades as a project of memory. Azoulay's genealogy (Azoulay 2011; 2008) of the state formation shows this distinctly in her broader archival discovery of the hundreds of civilian pacts between Jewish and Palestinian villages in the period of 1947-1948. Some pacts were non-aggression agreements, as both sides were willing to avoid mutual destruction in the atmosphere of rising tensions between paramilitary Zionist groups and the armed resistance of Palestinians. However, there were also pacts making assurances for repair in case the other community would suffer at the hands of reckless members in one's own community. This is a memory of mutual care because both sides simply wanted to have a future, and their coexistence seemed to require concrete practices for co-habitation.[14]

In the last decade, this new memory, unearthed through discovery of archives opened by the state for public access, has made new civic actors, such as Zochrot, who have publicized the numerous

testimonies of both the Palestinian survivors of the ethnic cleansing and of the Palmachnik soldiers who perpetrated them. They also perform public readings of the texts explicating the civil alliances between the two communities.[15] This memory, forgotten and returned to public life, first concerns the erasure of what the Palestinians call the "disaster" of 1948: the sheer disappearance of a people to make space for the biopolitical project of making the Jewish people. It also concerns the citizen's inability to recall that original moment of his or her making through slaughter. The sovereign project of memory defers form public attention the foundational moment by producing the necessity of repeating that moment with each new "war" and "mission." As Patrick Wolfe (2006, 388) has argued, to understand settler colonial power and its project to establish its presence, we must understand that it is necessarily ruled by "the logic of elimination" of the undesirable population. Wolfe nuances the matter of the impending disaster (ethnic cleansing) by stating that a settler regime is not necessarily genocidal. However, the logic of slaughter is a measure always suspended because "invasion is a structure not an event." (ibidem) Its preservation is reenacted through repetition and performances that keep the citizen mobilized and which, in the frenzy of mobilization, might unfold at any moment as mass slaughter. This is, I believe, the lesson to take from Ben-Eliezer's unearthing of that forgotten episode in the 1950s and thus Ben-Gurion's legacy of mobilizing the nation for security. The indistinction between war and "mobilization," between a conflict staged and the slaughter in the frenzy of mobilization is not accidental; it is coterminous with the logic of inclusion through exclusion.

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## Chapter 2 – On witnessing torturous presence

"For the purposes of this Convention, the term "torture" means any act by which severe pain or

suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as

obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions."

(Article 1 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment)

"For politics to take place, the body must appear."

(Judith Butler, Bodies in alliance)

"Peculiar to this model of separation is not only that it can be tailored to the demands of occupation (or abandonment, if need be). It can also, when required, transform itself into an instrument of strangulation. Occupation is in every respect a form of bare struggle, a kind of combat between bodies in a dark tunnel."

(Mbembe, The society of enmity)

## An evening at the El-Hakawati Theater

With the fears of a new "intifada" among the Jewish Israelis, the presence of soldiers in the city in the autumn of 2015 offered a sense of security to the many Jewish Israelis, who feared they might

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be caught in a suicide attack while going about their daily lives. For Palestinians, their presence signified a concrete danger to the integrity of one's body or that of loved ones, but it also was a constant source of irritation because of the incessant checks. Racial profiling is, as a rule, unproblematically exercised against people who look "Arabic." Suspects were often stopped, forced to have their bodies checked by security personnel in all public places, including grocery stores. Some places, such as the Central Bus Station and supermarkets, were often blocked by the temporary arrests of men in long queues, who had to go through the painstaking process of having to remove their belts, shoes, and shirts in public as they entered or exited the station or shops. The rest of us would walk straight through, unencumbered, barely looked at, or at least not intrusively shown that we were being observed, and ignorant of the possibility that we might be incessantly measured from head to toe.

One evening, during the peak of the attacks and summary killings of the attackers, I was travelling to East Jerusalem to attend a play at Firas' invitation. A Palestinian in his early thirties, born in Jerusalem, he was nevertheless a mere resident of the city, not a citizen. He and his entire family lived precariously, as they could be evicted and pushed on the other side of the wall for a plethora of potential misdemeanors of which they might be accused. I had met Firas through common friends studying at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, a group of Jewish and Palestinian musicians, who worked together for their shared love of old Arabic and Byzantine music, which they played either in very melancholic traditional ways or in hip, reworked electronic versions in nightclubs. That evening he had free tickets for a play at the Al-Hakawati Theater where he worked as a sound technician. I was already late on my way to meet him at the Damascus Gate tram stop when, before entering the "Old City," the train suddenly stopped in between stations. The doors remained shut. A man in front of me had his laptop open on his knees and was watching something

intently, absorbed, maybe a movie judging by his hands resting on his lap. He did not raise his eyes from the screen the whole time that we waited there, which was a good quarter of an hour. The rest did not look disturbed by the imposed stop at the end of the day. We were deep enough into the "intifada" atmosphere to know something was going on, that we must wait because something is happening ahead of us on the light rail, and that some area had been sealed from public access. I remember a rushing sense of anxiety from knowing that I left home late, that Firas was waiting, and from half-knowing, guessing, why we were not moving - what this sudden stop meant for all of us in that train.

At some point, the tram started moving again, only to announce at the Damascus Gate that it would stop there indefinitely. Although we were meant to still travel for a short taxi drive to the theater, it had become impossible, as the traffic was fully blocked. We started running. Firas led the way, indicating with a nod that "that street is full of police now." His nod was towards Salah ad-Din, where book lovers know of a famous bookshop, and where we were sitting sometimes during the day. A year later, Firas was to write to me that soldiers had occupied it and brutalized the shopkeepers and customers.

When we arrived, the other spectators were still looking for their seats.  Everyone had been delayed by the blocked traffic, most probably.


*"Head fracture"*

The theater is small, and everybody seems to know everyone else. There are no props on stage besides a cradle. A man comes forth holding a baby (a doll), simulating the gestures of a father cradling his child lovingly, as she gurgles. He is at home, dressed only in white undervest and

sweatpants. A recording of a real baby's gurgling satisfaction at being held amplifies the silent tenderness of his gesture, of embracing a tiny body we cannot see. Gently, he places her in the cradle. We understand her sleep is tended to with care from an adult who knows how to nurture a baby, what nurturing requires. Now, his whole body becomes our central focal point, its movements joyous, electrified in the gesture that turns on an imaginary record player and onto which he gently places an invisible vinyl record. An orchestra thunders the first joyous, expansive notes of an aria from *The Barber of Seville*, the famous "Largo al factotum," where Figaro the barber joyously sings of his happiness to work, the pleasure of being useful to everyone in the city; men, women, children all want the most talented barber. The man starts gathering air to intervene with his voice at the moment when Figaro starts singing his joy. There is little else more effective in instilling an immediate, irrepressible enthusiasm than the few minutes where this happy man sings his joy: *Figaro here, Figaro there, everyone wants the best barber in town…what a pleasure to wake up in the morning for this kind of life*. As the orchestra joyously thunders, he starts singing, beginning with a resonant, enthusiastic LA-LA-LA-LA-LAAA, LA-LA-LA-LA-LAAAAA that his body exhales, arms open wide, chest undefended, in attunement with the orchestra. His joy becomes a palpable atmosphere of contagious enthusiasm even for an opera skeptic. He is visibly moved by the music. The first notes open what seems to be a comic play where we are all invited to commune in his joy, the resonant Lalaaaaaa is contagious from the stage to the audience.

Just as we settle our seats for an apparently humorous moment, loud, violent, unbearable sounds interrupt his song: first, a scandal in the street with people fighting violently, clashing, then the terrible sound of something breaking hard, a shriek, and then sudden, deadly silence. The play suddenly changed its tone and theme and became a scene of an invasion. He is startled, stops, and inquiringly looks over an (invisible) window. He then returns, calms down, and starts the music

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again with some effort at gathering his wits. Immediately though, a loud siren starts a monotonous, unnerving alarm, as if a chemical attack had been unleashed or some other catastrophe occurred. I want to cover my ears. The baby screams. He soothes her and then attempts again to sing after shaking off the shock. The first harmonious notes of the instruments rise once more, interrupted by a violent pounding against a door, executed with a strong fist, as I discern it. Then there is noise coming from a large group of people invading the neighboring flat, breaking furniture, and smashing, I am guessing, porcelain against the floor. He stops, he is agitated, scared, and his body trembles while he tries to soothe the baby, who cries uncontrollably, maddeningly. With a wobbly balance, he makes a hesitant gesture to turn on the music again. This time, there is a thud of heavy boots against the floor, many seemingly, moving fast, and they are followed right away by the siren's alarm once more - a wail that evokes a sharp terror in the pit of the stomach.

*La (Arabic) = No (English); Lo (Hebrew)*

Throughout this ordeal, the scene remained empty, a black background against which all the fighting is done, with invisible objects and bodies that we can only imagine because the noises evoke danger to our bodies, because we hear the screams of people, the sounds of clashing - some sharp (porcelain), some dull (boots, fists, bodies against the floor), and the invasive notes of the siren that wraps you entirely in a sense of urgency, terror. Its wail seems to come from all directions and it folds our bodies in instinctual terror. The spectator cannot do much besides trying to make sense of the noises and try to predict the immediate direction of danger. We create images not only as curious, creative beings searching for meaning, but also as a manifestation of survival, acting instinctively before reflexive thought kicks in, and in response to sources of danger as really *any*

body (human, animal, microbial) does.  This is not to survive, as if we could fully choose what to do when that shriek starts, but a part of our survival mechanisms.

Somewhere between reflex and meaning-making, we start giving shape to danger, such as the one carried by bodies that hit the ground so heavily, as their boots get louder and closer. Maybe it is the survival instinct in me that estimates how close they are by the volume of the noise - *will it be this door or the next one that they will knock down soon?* The comedic moment was dissipated by the many interruptions, the melody pierced by the shrieks and crashing noises. Still, something in me tries to reconstruct the continuity of Figaro's song. I reconnect with the harmony of the song despite the many ugly, deadly interruptions, because of this man's stubbornness to return to it, again and again. It makes it even harder to keep watching this futility - the broken song that has no chance in *this part of town*. In the end, we see him give up any attempt to sing. Suddenly a deep silence occupies the stage and the rows of spectators' seats. There are no sounds any longer, but he does not gesture towards his disc to turn on the accompanying music. Exhausted, maybe. Waiting for another round of events, maybe. Breathing in slowly to recompose himself enough for his baby, maybe. We are seated in our best clothes in front of this man, whose shoulders are hunched, his head in his chest, done with trying - tired and shaky. He is standing in front of us without his music, without his life's joy. The play ends with him standing there at the center of the stage, facing us, hunched, and in silence.

*"They came to clean up the blood."*

The silence that ends the performance "Head Fracture" is followed by long rounds of applause, energetic, attuned in the rhythm of their clapping. Life returns with furious enthusiasm. The room is lit, and the black background of the stage appears less ominous. The man bows. People come out in the foyer, huddled together, and talking in all directions. The atmosphere is joyous as people

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recognize each other and talk with their friends. Each spectator seems to be familiar with everyone else, as if a large family gathered for an intimate celebration. After everyone finished greeting left and right, which takes a long time, we return to the tram. As we exit the narrow street back into the open space of the Damascus Gate area, a police cordon is visible close to the stop. Men dressed in some kind of uniform, but not the familiar military gear, are doing something there. One of them stands further away, with legs apart and crossed arms, overseeing the station area with his back toward his comrades. We are at a safe distance. I stop, and I look at him, approximating that from this distance and in the dark, he can only see my silhouette without a face, as I can only see this much of him. I want him to know that I see him there. It is no act of courage. I estimate that whatever it is the others are doing in their circle demands his standing posture right there where he stands. He must stand there, creating with his body the outer edges of what the others manufacture behind him, watching over whatever their work is – sealing it. From such a distance I feel safe. Firas waits and then says, "Let's go, they have come to clean up the blood." There is no anger in his voice, nor defeat, but something else. I am still trying to understand what his voice carried in that moment.

Years after watching the scenes of this broken song in that theater, I listen to it once more in numerous recorded versions from orchestras all over the world. I watch it on my screen, version after version, set against variously crafted backgrounds, richly adorned for indeed a joyous scene. I follow the gestures of each Figaro, played by actors dressed up for the occasion, buoyant, making large gestures with their arms to embrace the morning sights, embodying the barber's joy in his hometown. Version after version of stagecraft and performance, I look for something that I expect to be similar in all of them, the gestures of a man's triumph at walking early in the morning through his familiar places, the first to greet the day, inflated by that morning enthusiasm that promises a

good day ahead: loyal customers, chatter with friends passing by, a good lunch at the usual taberna. I realize that Figaro's happy "La-a," that seemingly universal sonority, communicating enthusiasm as the vowel goes higher and higher, also means "No" in Arabic.

This sudden association makes the whole play appear differently in my memory, although I cannot be sure its authors meant it so: the resonance of the song and of the man's failed but stubborn attempts to have it out in the world; Firas' careful recording, over months, of that intricate layering of harmony and terrorizing sounds; a happy baby in her father's arms; and a joyful singer in tune with the promise of morning, all before the then fast, hellish succession of the noise of destruction. That "laa" is not just maddeningly interrupted by the noise of violence; *it punctuates the continuum of violence just as much*. Yet if we stay with this hypothesis for a while, what appears to be at stake is our capacity to discern violence as indeed a *manufactured* continuum. The man played by the actor responds to that continuum in a kind of "bare struggle" in a dark tunnel indeed, as Mbembe writes in the introductory epigraph. This goes beyond the few moments of relief where some passionate affair with life might surge, like while enjoying music. It equally so goes beyond the apparently "contingent," episodic installments of localized terror embodied in its particular agents in this or that case, or "mission" or "war." Therefore, along with discerning this continuum of violence that would wish to imprint its presence on the body of its subjects, how do we learn to discern the possibilities of other ways to live a social life as persistence in a form of life in this body so heavily targeted by disciplinary and lethal tactics? (Das 2014, 379; Agamben 2015, 208)

**Sovereign presence. On the affect of noise**

The task of this chapter is to consider, from the side of the dispossessed, the logic of terror as the will to invest in its target subjects a continuous *sense* of its presence. It is a presence that persists

in a human life as mundane, a continuous sense of an *occupation* in every gesture one makes (nurturing, listening to music, at work, or anything else). This presence is composed of a continuum of forces, actors (human and infrastructure), and the affective states they circulate through gestures, rules, norms that mark the quotidian with violent interruptions: the unpredictable moods of the soldiers at the checkpoints or in a "patrolling mission," the collective frustration and impatience when forced to cross a border between your home and workplace every day, the times of being rushed and the times of waiting indefinitely, without an explanation or accountable agents, and so on. In brief, all that makes the occupation *feel* present as it is enacted and materialized in the signs and objects that affect the living.

The definition of torture at the beginning of this chapter should be read together with (1) Yitzhak Rabin's words in 1994, announcing a regime of exception in which the relatives of those suspected of terrorism must be collectively punished, and (2) the reflection about the operational tactic of terror of the IDF, informally called "making our presence felt". The argument of this chapter unfolds in parallel with a presentation of aspects from the dispossessed's daily life that amount to a torturous existence, systematically organized as such by the occupying regime. However, I am interested in more than merely pointing out this apparent fact. I want to pay attention to the life of the dispossessed in this regime intent upon destroying the possibilities of a rich social life - how one goes on, not despite the terror, but by forging out of it a response wherein one might become a witness to that terror's mission. The performance of "Head Fracture" at the El-Hakawati Theater in Jerusalem is such an instance of a witnessing response to terror occupying life. Indeed even Firas' everyday practice of teaching young students music, despite his occasional exasperation and inevitable exhaustion with a state that seems to be permeating every aspect of one's life, can be seen as a response of a witness to the project of the occupation regime to impoverish social life.

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At times, he would say "things will never change." However, one can say this in states of lassitude as well as in states of active efforts to compose with the forces at play, even in an "impossible situation." Firas's response was to teach others music and how to love music. He still does it.

*Terror and the body*

To sense torturous presence is to concretely have one's senses engaged, preoccupied, and mobilized by the task of registering what happens to oneself or others. Its logic, therefore, is one of being fully occupied, distracted from other practices that might organize one's life, a fuller life. Occupying sovereign presence is exhaustive - it tires you down, and you cannot ignore it. The sensorial and affective regime of this presence, whose objective is to terrorize, should not be considered as merely an attempt to instill blunt fear. More often than just fear, it creates feelings of exhaustion (after long hours waiting at a checkpoint to travel to work or back home), the anxiety of not being able to plan for the day, and the frustration with the arbitrary decisions of the soldiers who administer the military-bureaucratic and legal lives of the civilians. We have learned much about this entanglement of emotions and affects that literally occupies a given space of enclosure, for instance, a chocked-up checkpoint, from those Palestinian scholars forced into becoming ethnographers of their own life-threatening travel from home to their university and back. (Hammami 2015) The full circle of this travel is never guaranteed. The opacity of rules that regulate checkpoints is thick and impossible to predict (Kotef and Amir 2011; Weizman 2006) It is deliberately acting through unaccountable agents. All this and much more is composing the force of the occupation that touches you at first through the noise and the direct techniques of bodily immobilization or frustration, but which amounts to a regime of social and political immobilization.

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I continue with a rather simple question, which I think in actuality does not have a definitive answer: why did the performance of suffering and psychological pain in the El-Hakawati Theater employ the strategy of having the body *show* the pain rather than translate it into words, text, with maybe a fuller background regarding the positionality of the sufferer impersonated by the artist? Where was this happening? Was this the First Intifada, or the Second, or the day before at the Damascus Gate, when the latest body had been immobilized? The performance was literally happening against the backdrop of real and immediately lethal violence outside the theater. Every one of us, spectators and actor, knew that some of those bodies in the chairs were in concrete danger from both the military and civilian armed forces' racial profiling. Something was happening in that room in between all our bodies on the background of that atmosphere.

The question must remain without a final answer in an artistic act. More to the point, in this performance, we can only create meanings as we engage in the personal act of giving attention and discernment to what we witness and which inevitably involves us in the logic of violence. Where I want to guide your attention to first is on the actors made present in this performance. Precisely because in choosing to have the *body show* a man's torturous day, rather than using a narrative story explaining what was happening *to the body*, we are invited to pay attention to a conversation between two actors on stage. The first one is the more obvious one - the actor impersonating a Palestinian adult male in his middle age, a father and a musician. The other actor is more diffuse but all pervasive - it is the noise itself. As we have seen in the previous chapter, noise is the intended effect from a specific IDF logic to reiterate its presence in a territory that is legally and politically disputed. After the previous chapter, we have reached a stable enough plateau from where we can argue that the noise is not only a weapon but also a sign of the sovereign's serious

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anxiety regarding the substance of its claim to authority in the occupied territories. So: **noise = IDF.**

The artist, I want to argue, shows rather than explains how the noise feels because he is engaged in a struggle already; he is occupied. There is no time for a narrative address oriented in our direction at that time. He is very concretely busy with the noise. We, on the other hand, or on the other side, are the witnesses of that occupation as it builds up its effects, as the noise permeates his house, his time, his relation to his daughter, and his source of passion - his music. As witnesses, as those shown the occupation, we are therefore the third in this scene: I am watching it, you are too. It is a scene of implication, or better said, of responsibility to what is shown. (Das 2007a, 39) What I want to emphasize first is what seems to most openly structure the relationship between these three parties - the singer, the IDF unit represented by noise, and the spectators in the theater. The apparent victim makes no gesture for help, and there is no accusation. He is too busy being occupied with keeping his music going. He might in fact be unaware that there is even a third party, unsettled beside the noise and him wrestling together.

*Two bodies of suffering*

I want to consider two alternative answers to the question regarding the centrality of the body, not speaking about, but showing suffering. Neither answer is exhaustive, as this is indeed a performance after all. This openness should be welcomed as an invitation for others to create alternative interpretations. However, for the moment, the first alternative answer is a familiar objection to the uses of the body in pain, in images that fetishize pain for public consumption by consumers who are sensorially distanced from the pain through the anesthetizing force of media technology. (Feldman 2015; 2004; Sontag 2004) This answer speaks to the "visceral" register

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(Allen 2009; Nguyen 2015) that the oppressed seemed to be forced into, when there is no longer a political space of appearance available to them. (Butler 2016, 14)

The second answer is the main argument I want to advance in this chapter, and this is that the performance is an embodied occasion in which we are privileged to see, for a brief moment, a double operation. On the one hand, there is the logic of necropower, attempting to occupy a body, its senses of being-in-the-world (Csordas 1993) Here I return to Csordas's (1993, 135) methodological point, namely that the body is a mode of orientation through the world; that the analysis of the body must take into account its possibilities to sense; and that these possibilities organize the sphere of agency of the body: "embodiment can be understood as an indeterminate methodological field defined by perceptual experience and the mode of presence and engagement in the world." In light of this methodological perspective, I argue that necropower is a technology that attempts to occupy the possibilities to sense its targets' worlds and to make their worlds feel unlivable. Necropower works to appropriate the sensorial and affective space of existence with its pervasive violence. On the other hand, we are becoming discerning viewers of an act of witnessing that the actor performs through his own body, using his own body to form, from that level, a perspective on what the occupation aims to do to him and to others like him. In his body, he presents gestures he might have made in the past, or seen others making, and as he imagines others might do in the occasions of lethal threat. He uses his body to look at the very project of abject corporeality of necropower and does so with intense lucidity. He makes us lucid of what is concretely the target of necropower.

In his gestures, he embodies the logic of occupation (as a target) but he also engages in an act of imagination. His gestures imagine responses to the invasive presence of "noise." The performance is thus an exercise that opens a more expansive possibility of thinking and judging a situation. I

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want to draw attention to the obvious but not straightforward fact that, as an actor, he is using his body as an instrument of sorts but also as a medium in which he lives - embodied, traversed by various somatic sensations, emotions, and so on. He "uses" his body, I believe, not in order to suggest that a strong will can elude suffering because it cannot at times. Instead, it shows that the Cartesian phantasy of the separation and hierarchy between mind and body is untenable. (Derrida 2009, 159) This is precisely because of what he reveals in the performance: the complex relation between mind, body and, if you will, spirit, or whatever name you might choose for what is dispirited in him at the end of the play, shown by his hunched shoulders, drawn to the ground, somewhat shorter than he is, dwarfed by the exhaustion. Maybe you also know a version of that exhaustion that tires more than the body.

In her seminal book, addressed to actors, musicians, and anyone who might want to become aware of a broader sense of choice in how we stand, sit, breath, and make really any gesture, Betsy Polatin (2013), a somatic trainer and expert in the Alexander Technique for improving body posture, refers to the "use of the body." (3) It is a key notion for her, as it is how she suggests improving our detrimental manners for using parts of our bodies, manners that have become habitual, meaning not reflected upon. She writes:

> The key to choice lies in self-knowledge of your habits and an awareness of how you "use" yourself, or how you do what you do… Try turning the page of this book, or answer your cell phone… Do you lean your ear toward the phone, raise your shoulder while you're talking. Are you breathing fully? Do you know if this is your habitual response? Do you know you can choose to use yourself another way to answer the phone or turn a page? The key lies in choice based on awareness of your body, mind, and self in relationship to your environment. Now, what do you think you might look like to a person across the room? Does that person see the same use of your body, mind and self that you sense? How are we using our bodies really? How are we using ourselves? (3)

Beyond improving wellbeing, Polatin's technique can be read to mean a radical invitation to restore attention to the body as a social and political life precisely because use-of-the-body requires

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serious reflection on why we feel certain emotions (it turns out they have much to do with how we hold our bodies) but also how others feel and reflect in relation to our bodily gestures. Further, if we take her invitation seriously to think about the embodied condition of our feelings and actions as related to the *environment*, then the "body" is not merely an object that the subject might use. Rather, it is the very medium in which we become aware of ourselves in-relations. We really become present as we start imagining our gestures in another's eyes, from across the room, and this last observation can be a powerful, ethical opening to reflect on what is at stake in the kind of presence enacted by the IDF logic of terror, which we "saw" in Chapter 1. When Nadav and other servicepeople are asked to enter the houses of the Palestinian villagers at night and "make [their] presence felt," the meaning of this technology of terror is straightforward - only "they" will be feeling *it, as bodies concretely marked by the work of terror*. This is an apposite illustration of the solipsism of the sovereign, who is most in control (in the phantasy of absolute power) when he or she can control (or suppress) feelings, emotions, sensations; the aphasic numbness of the sovereign. (Stoler 2008, chap. 4; Derrida 2009, 103)

When we take this last point on the presence of terror back to our reflection here, namely on the performance in the El-Hakawati Theater, we can reflect, in a more nuanced manner, on the actor's labor to embody the gesture a human being might make in response to a strong noise and other signs of potentially serious danger for the body: fright, startle, stress, and anxiety. At the same time, we are shown that these responses happen in an environment and through the relations forcefully made possible in that environment. We might indeed see that the IDF is in fact organizing an atmosphere in which some emotions must remain dominant, and some bodily postures are more frequent (cowering, shivering, shaking, covering one's ears, etc.). At the same time, we are also witnesses to another environment that the character, impersonated by the actor,

reveals through his day, a day like any other, in which gestures of nurturance for oneself (playing a record) and others (the baby) are natural elements. These elements are woven together by other emotions of another atmosphere. His morning is infectiously joyous; there is clear hope regarding the day ahead; stubborn optimism in his passionate love for opera, obvious care for his family, etc. The presence of terror is thus trying to occupy another environment, and its bodies, their relations, and the gestures and emotions that weave those relations. The atmosphere is the target of the IDF unit and its terror, not only the Palestinian body.

Thus, the actor's gestures, as he impersonates his character, are acts of imagination which necessarily engage his personal experience and the attention he must have paid to others' bodies. It is also most probably the result of the collaboration between the playwright, stage director, choreographers, and so on. He *knows* how fear, being startled, exhaustion, and joy feel because of the serious work he did of paying attention to himself and to others. Thinking, for a moment, about the process of preparing for the performance through rehearsals, it is safe to say that the actor, screenwriter, director, and so on, are a group of people engaged in the work of constructing the gestures of the body performing the experience. Furthermore, I believe the performance is a sign that the actor himself had to engage in the process of paying attention to the body taken in the operations of lethal governmentality. As a rehearsed performance, what he shows is the result of a sustained effort of imagining what a body means, how it is affected, and its possible responses to violence. In that distance from his objectified body (we know that the actor is Palestinian himself), slightly besides that body of necropower targeted by the IDF unit, he becomes a witness, with his studied attention, to what noise can do and how noise influences a lived environment and its atmosphere. His attention, embodied and enacted on stage through gestures of how something feels, is a kind of response to necropower. By watching his body targeted by violence and by

showing us what violence aims to do to this body, we are shown how an atmosphere of terror thickens and how someone lives a personal life in that atmosphere.

To the extent that we pay attention to the actor's labor of attention to the terror targeting his body and his effort to disentangle his life from the abject corporealization forced upon him, we also become witnesses to violence. We discern what body necropower needs and aims to produce. In other words, the second answer to my question - why showing not telling is in the performance. We see two modalities at work. The first is the embodying of the condition of living under military rule, and, second, we "see" the conditions of this life as embodied subjects *contemporary* to this regime of governing the terrorized body.

The rest of this chapter is organized into two parts. First, I briefly nuance the first possible answer to the body-in-pain by engaging with Lori Allen's concept of what this use of the body seems to invoke: a *politics of immediation*; the wound demands repair, with no political mediation in that demand, that is. I restore this view on the visceral body of necropower, a body without a voice, to the question of sovereignty and its necessary body – without which it cannot form its presence and rationality for "action." What stabilizes sovereignty as a power over the body is the success of its regime of memory, I have argued. Here, I supplement this with the argument that sovereignty forms as a power with the preeminent right to name things or, better said, to regulate in what bodies language (logos) expresses a political demand. (Agamben 2015, 4) For that argument, I turn to genealogies of torture as modern technology to connect bodies with political emancipation. (DuBois 1991; Asad 1983) I then reflect on the dilemmas of re-presenting a scene of torture during the First Intifada along with Anton Shammas (Shammas 2017) I am interested in how pain in the tortured body is translated as proof of torture. In the last section, I return to substantiate more fully the second answer I gave to the meaning of the body performing the experience of pain as an

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occasion for witnessing. This involves both the actor's practice of witnessing and ours in the shared space of embodied attention.

## Immediate pain, immediate response

As many observers have noted, after the Second Intifada, the milder period of *just* "breaking bones" (First Intifada) had been replaced by a regime of sheer "disappearances" of undesirable bodies as well as the practice of permanently disabling, *maiming* (Puar 2017, chap. 4), which was perpetrated without accountability from soldiers-snipers, who would simply blow off arms and legs, marking that body permanently with their exceptional sovereignty. As the "territories" have been *contained* by the wall, this happens without publicity. Lori Allen observes that this new regime of security has created conditions in Gaza and the West Bank wherein Palestinians are deprived of access to the street - a place where their bodies might enact publicity through their coming together as a corporeal appearance. (Butler 2011) Reja Shehadeh (2020) describes the mounting logic of IDF terror against the civilians protesting during the First Intifada, forcing them to leave the streets, depriving them of spaces for collective demands.

The Palestinians, trapped in a regime of "suffocation" in the occupied territories, make growing use of a common strategy in states of intense and protracted violence. They mobilize images of the body in pain, visceral suffering, and the wounded, what Allen names after Susan Sontag as a "species of rhetoric" that seem to immediately impose the need for a response from those who watch it. (162) It is a strategy of the "sufferer" without political instruments of mediation. Allen writes, "immediation is the necessarily covert denial of mediation that occurs in the formal properties of institutions and social interactions that aspire to give access to an authentic experience and truth." (162) Further, this strategy of immediation links subjectivity to suffering in

ways difficult to contest with other modalities of subjectivity: "suffering - as an experience, a reference point, a form of subjectivity, a base of symbolic, visual, and discursive representation - has come to permeate Palestinian political discourse and social relations, and the political and social effects of that saturation" (163). This identification of subjectivity with visible pain is regulated by a local regime of Palestinian NGOs, invested in the global register, and the ideology, of universal human rights. When this register of obvious rights for all humans meets the sheer violence and unaccountability of the military, what becomes almost irresistible is to *prove* to the world that the Palestinians are human beings treated in outright violation of what is most sacred to the world.

Allen's is a necessary argument concerning a global regime of governmentality that organizes the hierarchy between the emancipated subjects who speak about violence and those relegated to a condition where they have their bodies spoken for them in various registers of expert legibility: law, trauma, etc. (Fassin and D'Halluin 2005) Her argument contributes effectively to the history of liberalism as a global hierarchical order of voices that speak and bodies spoken for. It additionally shows how the ideology of human rights localizes the sphere of publicity with Western audiences asked to respond to subjects of pain who must show their wounds for the full (Western) subjects to react as full subjects of (liberal) politics. (Allen 2013, 37) However, I want to contend with Allen's point, although I do see the urgency of her case against this dead-end of politics, with its sheer depoliticizing logic that continues liberalism's logic of conferring a meaningful voice (speech) only to some (Western, male, propertied, and so on). However, what we risk losing from sight if we stop at this important point is, first, the fact that politics happens nevertheless *between* bodies and in ways that often exceed the primary depoliticizing logic perpetrated on the oppressed, even when they might be interpellated as visceral bodies. Second,

we might lose other manners of considering publicity and solidarity outside of what the hegemonic discourse centers. (Fraser 1990) So my conversation with Allen's important argument on the uses of the body to show pain aims to bring us closer to a question about the attention to the body's expressions of pain and what this might demand from us as witnesses to violence in an enlarged understanding of a public space. The question is how to practice attention as operational discernment when causing a visceral reaction occupies the largest part of "public" attention, and better said, interpellates us as "public."

With this last point, my intention is not to issue a generalizable, moral imperative but to exercise an operational practice of giving attention to actual responses to terror as we start discerning how a locale of terror is produced through forces that are indeed global and implicating us at any moment in time. The performance described in the beginning offers this opening for a broader view on our implication in violence in a stark manner precisely because the body is the matter of our attention as it is targeted by violence that could and does happen everywhere. That body is not strictly "there" nor "here." It is in fact an occasion to expand the meanings of implication as we consider intercorporeality a practice of the sustained attention to the body as it lives in the world, susceptible to atmospheres and contributing to their coherence or dissipation. In this sense, corporeality as visceral pain is not only a sign that makes something suffering visible. It can also be a manner of weaving together a kind of action that is a *reflected* response to the work of violence and its will to terrorize. To form a reflected response, we must engage with the body-in-pain (Scarry 1987) from a different perspective than that which makes it seem exceptional or distant. A truer perspective engages our embodied attention to consider terror to be not only the plight of the dispossessed but also the numbness of the "citizen". I continue reflecting on this last point, namely that terror makes, first and foremost, the citizen's body.

*The citizen and the slave. On speech and the body*

Agamben has offered one consequential way to restate Foucault's genealogy of sovereignty in one point that concerns us here regarding the presence of sovereign power in an age of so-called biopolitical rationalities. Concerned exclusively with the investment in desirable forms of life, whatever is not desirable (productive), might be left to die, but no longer appears in the spectacle of public pain that needs a visceral body to show the sovereign's power. Biopolitics shies away from outright killing, in brief. To this Agamben responded that, in various historical forms, the principle of sovereignty has remained somehow stable. This principle is namely the effort to define what kind of life is proper, qualified for politics, and therefore safe from the violent treatment reserved for the lives who suffer violence without consequences (legal naming of a crime, ritual handling as worthy sacrifice, as the soldier hero, for instance, etc.). To that extent, what is in fact political, he continues, is not the life of the citizen but the life, or the body, on which the decision to kill without consequences can be enacted. These are the lives whose disappearances leave no *consequential (public)* trace. This makes the sovereign presence a spectral decision that takes lives beyond the pale. In this sense, his project has given much analytical and theoretical room to think about the sites of structural violence inherited as traditions of various democratic polities. He has also radically influenced the discussions that return attention to the colonial violence of Western states, space where people colonized might realize that, in the eyes of the colonizer, they are "objects among objects." (Mbembé 2016)

Returning to the most influential moments of the ambiguous negotiation about the meanings of the human in Aristotle's philosophy, Agamben (2015, 5) emphasizes that the very definition of a free man is derived from the prior statement regarding who is not free. The enunciation of freedom is a negative procedure, and therefore the preservation of politics will depend on maintaining that

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negative in place and, more to the point, in the body of the human being who is enslaved. Furthermore, Agamben reflects on an emphatic point in Aristotle: the slave is a human being, and his or her inferiority is given by one fact alone. Unlike the master, the slave cannot use logos, speech, and reason in an autonomous manner - actions that might begin something new. He or she can only receive these as commands in order to fulfill a task known in advance ("go there," "do that").

We are returned to the archontic principle previously discussed. The free person, a male, is not only the one who uses logos as action in itself. He is also a free man who is *in a relationship* with nature and his own body (fed, groomed, cared for in the oikos and by the domestics, the slaves) through the mediation of this non-political, slave body (who is closer to nature, and maybe a part of nature in fact). In other words, what the political space, an artifice par excellence, could not tolerate is an unmediated relationship to nature. The body is a constant reminder of this through its sheer fragility, its needs, and its dependence on others. (Butler 2016, 4) To the extent that a community's political space, the alliance of men-citizens-brothers, will want to preserve its autonomy from the non-human, the beast, or the gods (Derrida 2009, 155), it will have to make a constant effort to substantiate the relationship between politics and nature, or the body. The slave fulfills an essential function in this relationship between two parts that should not be conflated or lose their boundaries. As a body, and visceral in its cognizance of the natural world, the slave is deficient, said to be unable to make proper use of words, but he or she is intensely corporeal. His or her body is closer to nature and, to that extent, mute but sensitive and immediately perceptive. Agamben's preoccupation with sovereign power, I believe, has to do with this principle that confers, in each historical age, the authority over the threshold between the body as a natural life and the qualities that localize the political and what is in fact properly human,

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meaning at some distance from nature, the body. The stake of sovereignty changes historically in forms, but concerns nevertheless the sphere to decide the distinction between human and nature as distance from, and as legibility of, the domain of political *artifice* (logos is not just a sound, what the animal or the slave also can make, or their bodies rather), not any ahistorical stabilization of either the *homo sacer* or of the citizen.

*Treacherous logos, truthful torture*

Page duBois (1991) observes that the distinction between citizen and the enslaved was never a tenable one. Any citizen could become a slave in the Greek and later Roman world, especially as consequence of never-ending wars and the practice of enslaving the defeated. The boundary was tenuous also because of the fluctuations in the city's contingent struggles to stabilize the dominance of its hegemonic authority. The quality of citizenship reflected the deepest source of anxiety for any citizen: the fear that one day they might become bodies used by other masters. DuBois's genealogy of torture and citizenship in their Greek and Roman foundational negotiations shows that citizenship was an unstable institution, anxiously securing the citizen's body through a negative mechanism. Thus, citizenship was a *mechanism to defer* the most intense and feared kinds of corporeal techniques of judicial procedures. Central in the judicia procedure to reach truth was the body that be tortured. Through a close reading of the texts that expound on torture across centuries, duBois first points to the essential role of the slave in Greek city politics: his or her body, precisely because closer to nature than to logos, could not lie.

The judicial procedure regularly tortured slaves to uncover the truth regarding the relationships between free citizens. (5) The latter only had to submit their slaves to torture in order to let the truth come out. As one recurrent position argues, the body of the slave literally can be made to speak the truth, while the citizen, his master, has been shown to lie in court, and therefore is not

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trustworthy for deciding the verdict. (DuBois 1991, chap. 5) Only by allowing one's slave to be tortured and his or her truth to be brought in the courtroom as incontestable testimony, the master fully allows himself to be transparently seen. Through this reasoning, not allowing the justice system to torture one's slave would be already a confirmation that the citizen has something to hide. Here a complete reversal of the hierarchy occurs between the reliable bearers of truth (the slave, in his or her body) and the unreliable subject (the master, who in his speech can manipulate, lie, and deceive in using logos, able to manipulate through his words). From this, we see more of the body's centrality as the space to establish a stable terrain on which an entire community strives to stabilize crucial meanings regarding the safety and integrity of the citizen- a task that persistently eludes any ultimate solution.

Page duBois' reading of the Greek obsession with torture reveals, in her interpretation, a highly unstable, anxiety-provoking sense of what it means to be a citizen (63). Because numerous events of war could at any time occur, a citizen could turn into a slave or the political system could turn into one of the exception and thus be ready to torture the citizens' bodies just as it had tortured the slaves' bodies. Citizenship, we can say through this reading, is always the precarious guarantee of not being tortured, given over to a pain that might overcome the powers of self-control. It is the right to preclude too piercing a gaze into someone's inner life, where truth rests hidden. This is not to argue that the depths of the subject are not historically variable, and surely our modern, psychoanalytically inflected terms of the psyche are not the same as those of the inner life in the Greek world. Rather, it is meant to further explore a question regarding the attempts to use the body as a medium, a mediation, for societies to find truth there, where pain makes it appear for a moment in an intensity that produces the right (useful) speech for the court, the state, and the epistemic regime in place. (Asad 1983) The intimate relationship between torture and truth

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discussed by duBois and Asad is not anachronistic now that torture has become illegal in international law. For one, it is not so because most democracies do practice it by renaming it euphemistically and invoking the necessity of violent means to find truth faster than through legal means, as Rabin wished for. But beyond this point on it being practiced despite legal prohibitions, torture can also be considered phenomenologically for further insights on the anxious effort of the sovereign to make its presence felt.

Next, I want to briefly consider a question raised by the phenomenology of violence and of torture in particular. Elaine Scarry (Scarry 1987, 39) argued that the will of the torturer, or the torturous regime, is not to produce truth but to destroy the capacity for language in their victim because language is taken as medium for social expression and a life-in-the-world, capable of feeling as a member of a social world. This observation is important to engage with precisely because its major consequence is that, when torture has marked a subject with its overpowering violence, the subject's capacity to witness has also been destroyed; the world from the perspective of that life has been annihilated. I believe the actor's performance in "Head fracture" offers a response to terror precisely by thickening a social world with his gestures as a witness against the will of the militarized violence to destroy the human capacity to witness violence.

*Torture makes the citizen*

Talal Asad's genealogy historicize citizenship further, as a colonial category to differentiate the European subject of self-rule from the non-European. (Stoler 2016; Shilliam 2016; Anghie 2007, chap. 3) Torture is today the name of a grave crime – that of inflicting pain beyond a certain *threshold* of what we deem *normal*, tolerable pain. This is its very definition held as international norm on legality and decency. This definition cryptically carries a whole history of negotiations over the threshold. Asad returns to colonial contexts in which the threshold was

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negotiated between tolerable and intolerable pain. Tolerable pain, he argues, is the pain necessary for other, higher objectives, such as civilizing the natives engaged in disturbing barbarian practices, deemed so by the colonial administrator carrying European sensibilities. To that extent, tolerable violence is more than tolerated - it is virtuous, and thus no longer violence but instrument. This also echoes a point I made before regarding the uses of violence as an administrative measure in the colony. It only appeared as outrageous when its specter threatened to arrive in Europe to be used on the body of the citizen.

This other thread of inheritance, from the colony to our present humanitarian wars, once more illuminates that the appearance of bodies in the public space must contend with a question regarding the histories that corporealize us as subjects of power and threads of desire that attach some subjects to bodies - individual, social, and totalized. (Stoler 2002; Festa 2016) Asad also argues, with Foucault that torture is foundational technology for Western modernity. At the end of the feudal period, in the judicial procedure, for instance, it proved useful as a means to produce truth via a plethora of authorized agents engaged in that production. Essential here is the emphasis on the production of truth as the premise for coalescing an increasingly coherent field of governmentality.

You might argue that this genealogy concerns torture as a judicial instrument and the 20th century refers to torture as the ultimate crime against the body - what most states practice in "dark rooms" (Coetzee 1992; Ophir 2007) However, what connects these two "ages" is the body of truth as the torturer's object of interest. For instance, in the last decades both the US and Israel have engaged in the legal infliction of pain on their "enemies" in the "war on terror" defined, through the insistent laborious efforts of legal scholarship, *below the threshold* of "severe pain," sometimes defined as "enhanced interrogation techniques."[16]

Scarry writes that what is central in the effort to translate pain is the trust in language to express what the body experiences. "The record of pain into speech" (9) is what drives actors, such as Amnesty International, to describe acts of torture. They rely on the linguistic effort to edify and *move* those safe bodies on what the pained bodies know. A moving text makes you do something: description acts on us. Scarry argues that this effort to express physical pain, however it happens, is particularly difficult, if not impossible, as "there is no language for pain." (13) Pain in another's body is elusive that it can happen, its throbbing intensity happens in full invisibility.

Scarry asks how pain can happen invisibly next to us to the extent that the torturer himself or herself does not know it and might describe it, as it often happens, as "information gathering." (12) While information gathering is not the purpose of torture, it is the case that its direct perpetrators often believe it is. Often, Scarry argues, describing the act of torture invokes the image of the instrument; the victims of intense pain often use analogies to explain pain through the mediation of weapons (knife, hammer, stick, etc.). From all this, Scarry points to the "perceptual confusion sponsored by the language of agency [placed in the weapon ultimately] is the *conflation of pain with power.*" (18, my emphasis) This conflation is what the logic of torture relies upon: "In torture, it is in part the obsessive display of agency that permits one person's body to be translated into another person's voice, that allows real human pain to be converted into a regime's fiction of power" (18).

We now return to the argument advanced by Agamben: sovereign power is the historically organized principle that would aim to establish a separation in the human being between the body and logos. In Scarry's argument, that separation serves a desire to produce confusion. In the act of torture, the only language that remains in the "dark room" is that of the torturer, and that language is ultimately not human, but the agency of the weapon itself. *Politics is fully evacuated both from*

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*the life-world of the victim (reduced to mere "groans" and loss of faith in the world as human world, Scarry's argument) and from the torturer, equally deprived of language.* At this point, we might reconnect to a point made by Arendt and Fanon in their respective reflections on violence: the objective of violence is to destroy relations. It is to that extent that violence is mute for Arendt (Arendt 1958, 179) However, muteness, and I want to emphasize this point, does not mean an utter absence of words. There can be profuse use of words in the act of torture and in narration about the act of torture that merely confuse us regarding the pain that happens "next to us," as Scarry highlights. Muteness of a peculiar kind pertains to pervasive violence, when words no longer mean anything that could give us the sense of being members of a social world. They are no longer effective in grounding our bodies, senses, and emotions in the sociality that is the "place" that always receives them and mirrors them back to us.

*Showing the wound of torture*

"Why are writers in South Africa drawn to the torture room? The dark, forbidden chamber is the origin of novelistic fantasy per se; in creating an obscenity, in enveloping it in mystery, the state unwittingly creates the preconditions for the novel to set about its work of representation. Yet there is something tawdry about following the state in this way, making its vile mysteries the occasion of fantasy. For the writer the deeper problem is not to allow himself to be impaled on the dilemma proposed by the state, namely, either to ignore its obscenities or else to produce representations of them. The true challenge is: how not to play the game by the rules of the state, how to establish one's own authority, how to imagine torture and death on one's own terms." (J.M. Coetzee, Into the dark chamber, 364)

The main question of this section is this: can we refer to torture in ways that do not reproduce the gesture of the torturer? J.M. Coetzee's question is additionally illuminating in this colonial context because the register of emotions, and emotionality that the body-in-pain provokes, is itself burdened by a colonial tradition of feeling or, better said, as Lynn Festa (2016) has shown, a regime that orders *who* feels - the European, emancipated - and who is the *object* of that feeling - the non-European body. (Ahmed 2004, 192)

Anton Shammas (2017) grapples with an apparent dilemma in the torture of Palestinians by Israeli state officials. There is a profuse presence of acts in the records of the Israeli state that testify to the numerous cases of torture since the First Intifada, in the form of hundreds of reports, testimonies, and judicial affidavits. Why are they collected? Some reasons might seem obvious (the semblance of a state that respects human rights and identifies the exception to the rule of not torturing bodies), but ultimately, they are not. First, regarding the obvious but deceiving reason, as Shammas notes, despite the numerous cases reported, and some duly collected by lawyers and brought to Israeli court rooms, cases almost never conclude with naming the perpetrator as guilty of any crime. Why does the State "listen" to testimonies of torture perpetrated by its agents when it does not intend to do anything with those testimonies? This might appear to be the puzzle, but the more important question is to consider what collecting the story of torture *does* from the perspective of the victim and of the perpetrator. Shammas shows that the procedure of testifying constitutes, in itself, an act of inflicting pain. Let us consider how, as we follow his reading and listening to what is said in a judicial affidavit, in the English translation,

> "of a testimony given by one Muhammad Subhi Ibrahim Ahmad Jit, from Shati camp in the Gaza strip, to the Israeli Attorney Tamar Peleg on 14 April 1990, during the first Intifada, and published a year later in B'Tselem's The Interrogation of Palestinians During the Intifada: Ill-Treatment, "Moderate Physical Pressure" or Torture (1991)." (118)

A powerful mechanism for producing suffering is the fact that the legal system that registers the complaints operates in Hebrew. The Arabic testimonies, therefore, are often translated directly into Hebrew or mediated through English. Both languages belong to the colonial ruling systems that have systematically pursued a cultural reading of the "Arab" as untrustworthy and of Arabic as an inferior, "unreliable" language. (118) Hebrew is the language that has replaced Arabic after 1948 in the lands of Palestine. The first Palestinian generation, the ones who could not be expelled, and were partially integrated into the new state, were forced to learn the new history of the "War of

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Independence" and of the new national body through the new language of the occupier. Hebrew is not merely the language of the occupier but, for those incorporated into the new state after the war, has been the very medium of the occupation. However, the "problems" of the Arabic language are deeper, we might say with Shammas, since Arabic is a language that creates suspicion in the colonizer as a rule. Whatever is said in Arabic is prone to suspicion.

Still, Shammas persists in his attention to the language of an affidavit, however sparse, and is willing to listen to the silence as well as to the words extracted from the victim of one instance of torture perpetrated during the First Intifada. Although Shammas offers a moving and brilliant state of presence to what the testimony says through sparse words and the silences felt, I will not reproduce it here. Instead, I will take up his interpretation of the purpose of the affidavit as a practice of the state in order to return, and object, to Adi Ophir's (2007) genealogical argument that sovereignty is limited by shame, the sign of shame being the very fact that torture is illegal and done in hiding. Thus, he argues, the more recent necropolitical regime has lost its shame (stabilized in the judiciary institutions and the conventions that forbid "cruel" violence), and can now do away with bodies, "disappearing them" without any mediation. Shammas writes:

> The testimony I deliberately chose is twenty-five years old for a reason; the passing of time—since nothing, in essence, has changed since the early nineties in Israel/Palestine— seems to have given it some validity that only time can give, as if torture has become a long tradition in which repetition establishes a pattern. But despite that dubious "tradition," the Israeli legal system, which openly condones certain methods of torture, has almost never admitted any such affidavits and has, probably with one exception, never indicted any perpetrator of torture. (118)

And further, regarding the sparseness of the victim's description of suffering:

> the victim prefers composure and poise to credibility, not only because his code of honor dictates that, but maybe because he knows that his testimony won't change a thing; that anything he does is already precalculated by the all-encompassing occupation's system of power, already a part of that system, as dissent is always contained and defused by the system that regulates, controls, and manipulates it. (121)

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Shammas reflects Coetzee's unease with attempts at interpreting torture as he asks himself whether his interpretation, however cunning, and indeed moving, is not ultimately serving to make his own pain, as witness, less raw, tolerable. Beautiful words might confer some ease, at least for a while, in the very uttering of a lucid line that illuminates a situation, against what otherwise is unbearable.

He further argues that the affidavit, as a textual product, is not simply registering pain, but it is an object producing pain:

> The violence of the text, often matter-of-factly, counts both as an interrogational violence as well as violence for the sake of violence, or torture for its own sake, meant as a "warm up act," to prepare the victim for the "Question." And when the Question is posed, when it is introduced into the ever-shrinking space of the victim's cell, into the ever-shrinking space of the victim's body, a "satisfactory" answer, a confession, must be produced. Otherwise, the violence goes on, as the Question is intersemiotically translated into inflicted pain. (121)

In other words, to translate Shammas's story in Scarry's terms, the "Question" is the weapon and, more to the point, it is the only genuine moment in which sovereignty *feels* itself, when inflicting pain becomes the only agency left in the room. This is a point with tremendous consequences for the thought on agency. If the "question" is the only agency left, it is because of an already very long tradition where the subject is the one who initiates something visibly, and that subject, being fantasized by liberalism as autonomous from any dependency, then runs the risk of placing the ultimate proof of agency only with the torturer. (Mahmood 2001, 203; Asad 2000) This terrifying risk should make the task of expanding the meanings of agency urgent, precisely where language, in its forceful appropriation of all meaning, would want to confine the body to muteness.

Above, we contemplated the argument that torture destroys the torturer just as much as its apparent victim. It was reflective of Fanon's observation regarding the condition of the colonizer in colonial warfare, and a point we will turn to with closer attention in the next chapter. Here, I want to emphasize that the agency, delineated in torture, is not that of the torturer. It is a disembodied

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agency, operating for as long as the torturer himself or herself applies the blows but cannot connect her own senses to the gesture that picks up the weapon of choice for producing pain. This is the most terrifying occasion in which the distance between the senses and the names for the embodied senses is an unsurpassable abyss, ultimately with no subject.

## Embodiment as witnessing

I return to the question asked at the beginning: why did the performance of pain choose to refrain from words, a narration of the experience, the setting of a fuller context, a background for the noise of the boots and broken objects, and for the body registering it viscerally? At this point, I recall the two arguments that I advanced in the Introduction: first, that witnessing is a kind of action; and second, witnessing unfolds *between* actors. It is not merely located in anyone's body as it is colonized in the logic of the liberal subject and its hubris of ownership of the body. Witnessing is a practice that we can enact only when we think of the body as intercorporeal life because pain is always already a social phenomenon. This is not because its signs (moaning, grimaces, and other gestures or simply the evocative power of a strong noise that informs us of danger to our bodily integrity, etc.) are everywhere to be read and translated in the same manner. Rather, it is because *we* are its interpreters, and we are immersed, through the sheer fact that we have sensory bodies, in a social world that poses to us demands of enacting the power of imagination regarding another's body. It is not the failure in alleviating the pain of another that is the ultimate disaster of an ethical life but the refusal to engage in the act of imagination regarding another's embodied life - asking what a certain gesture in another body might mean or what its needs might be. In other words, the ethical disaster is to refuse the address that another body makes, averting one's eyes.

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As I write this expression - *averting your eyes*, I want to make a different claim than that that invokes physical proximity as more authoritative or of a higher order of exigency when it comes to suffering. The stake of thinking about embodied witnessing here is to account for how we practice paying attention to the possibilities of attending to pain beyond language, because the body occasions many efforts for expression beyond the descriptive act. Therefore, we can be participants in the ethical work of responding to an address if we imagine that the body is already somewhere in a struggle between forces and enmeshed in conditions that determine the possibilities for any expression. The practice of attention should inhabit this very passage of language through modalities of inhabiting the world as a body, as being always already in the world (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 235) and therefore becoming the occasion to make further gestures in that laborious, socialized process through which we refine. in cultural contexts, the forms of address that weave our real social worlds. This domain of relations is the only domain that might escape the superposition between agency and the act of inflicting pain through the body of the sovereign.

I started by recalling Butler's argument regarding the "body," necessary for politics in its very appearance. As we saw above, the domain of claims regarding the *lived experience* of the body in violence is the preeminent landscape for the colonization of the body in the last century. When it comes to explaining how some bodies appear and show the mark of their wounding by oppressive, violent, and militarized agents, there are various, incongruous logics at work in making the body prominent. These logics depoliticize the body precisely as they make it prominent, intensely visible, such as humanitarianism does. (Fassin and D'Halluin 2005) This objection requires therefore to specify *what* in the appearance of a body can in fact constitute a space for politics?

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*The body as the location of witnessing*

This returns us to the suggestion I advanced in the beginning regarding the stake of producing an aesthetic regime that presents the immobilized "terrorist" bodies for the sake of militarized citizenship. The bodies killed, splayed on the ground, and looked upon from above, are presented at crucial moments to stabilize the events of violence, the flare, the particularly "noisy" period to which the Israeli State and military *respond*. The immobilization of the body stabilizes the meaning of the *necessary* violence – a necessity that is materialized through that very body shown immobilized but still dangerous. The circularity of lethality is maddening indeed. What is in fact implemented is a system of terror that takes the bodies of the occupied population into a longer process that marks the government of that population as undesirable. Still, this population persists and weaves a social world.

It is this persistence that I want to reflect on, some of it instantiated in the story above, or at least in my interpretation of the effort to keep singing and doing what one loves as a form of marking, or interrupting, the designed continuum of terror. This is not a naïve romanticization of being able to sing while the bombs are dropping or the boots are hitting the ground, and of course singing or doing what one loves needs supporting conditions. My argument is not about persisting in doing what one loves but about persisting as an embodied life that witnesses the violence on one's body, what violence intends with its overarching presence, and nevertheless *considers it from the distance of a witnessing body that performs the gestures of pain and the gestures that search for a meaningful continuum amid the interruptions of intended, destructive, and distracting noise*. The actor's performance does just that; it embodies a location for witnessing that intent of violence to fully occupy the body and the senses. And to the extent that this holds, the actor is in fact enacting a moment of reflection of his situation. His attention goes to his body targeted by necropower. It

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is a reflective gesture that opens the scene to a broader occasion for the others in the spectators'

seats to put a similar distance between themselves and their bodies as they are governmentalized

in the logic of making-terror-present. Thus, we can reflect on this performance as an aesthetic one,

not only because it presents an artistic idea, but because it intervenes in the order of the archive

and its assignation of the purposes for bodies. (Derrida 1994, chap. 1)The performance disorders

that principle. Without prescribing what to feel or even what to do, it opens a space to contemplate

our own position in this scene.

Consider Ranciere's (2008, 11) nuance on the political effectiveness of an aesthetic experience

when and where it manages to disrupt the correct assignation of bodies in places:

> Aesthetic experience has a political effect to the extent that the loss of destination that it presupposes disturbs the way in which bodies fit their functions and destinations. What it produces is no rhetoric persuasion about what has to be done. Nor is it the framing of a collective body. It is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world where they live and the way in which they are 'equipped' for fitting it.

I suggest considering the scenes of the body's presentation as visceral, or viscerally affected not

an object used to show violence.  Rather, it becomes a site of agency *in relation to other sensing*

*bodies*. This second view can help us replace the paradigm of action circumscribed by the duality,

or hierarchy, of subject-object in which agency is dominantly conceptualized as a subject *doing*

something, a doing that is always imagined as an act of absolute liberation from oppression and

out into the horizon of a pure autonomy. (Mahmood 2001; Asad 2000) In this dominant view, the

one *being acted upon*, the body, is merely passive and at best an instrument. In this logic of

disembodied agency and the liberal model of autonomy, the subject acts because he or she is

empowered, emancipated, and in active resistance to a system of oppression already dismissed to

the extent that one acts.

The performance at the El-Hakawati Theater, in the middle of the "knives intifada," is a kind of communication, but what it asks of us is not merely to listen or watch another's pain. Instead, we are invited to participate in an embodied scene, in a moment of witnessing the relationship between the *body as the target* of power and communication as the life of the body-in-the-world, sensorially affected and affecting. (Csordas 2008) What it essentially *succeeds in avoiding* is to repeat the act of torturous violence through its narration. This is not an easy recourse to blunt recourse to a visceral image of the body, out of despair for not having other means of participating as social and political actors. Rather, it is a more refined mediation that goes one threshold beyond the narrative explanation into a scene that can only succeed, or fail, in producing an *acknowledgment* on our side. (Das, Cavell, Asad) Consider Veena Das' (2007b, 6) reflection of Stanley Cavell's work, which is true for approach to researching violence too: "Cavell's account of voice is not that of speech or utterance but as that which might animate words, give them life, so to say." Das' work exercises the same ethics of attention to "that" which animates words, precisely because she is aware that violence is capable of destroy language as mode of being-together. So, she means to say that there are still other ways to be and be-together:

> If I cannot claim to know the pain of the other (…) what is it to relate to such pain? The absence of any standing languages of pain is perhaps symptomatic of the fact that I cannot separate my pain from my expression for it – another way of saying this is that my expression of pain compels you in unique ways – you are not free to believe or disbelieve me – our future is at stake. I want to reenter this scene of devastation to ask how one might inhabit such a world, one which has been made strange through the desolating experience of violence and loss. (39)

What is the acknowledgement of another's pain in this case? Das' ethnography of inter-ethnic genocidal violence is about giving attention to embodied gestures when language no longer works as shared medium, as language has already been fatally touched by violence. In such cases, attention for her is the act of imagination - "reentering a scene," as she writes. The beginning of

knowledge is not to ask what violence does but how people still "inhabit" a world. This knowledge then has something essential to do with the power of imagining another's life and what might be happening behind language, beneath words, or lingering next to them, in how someone keeps living through other gestures. Acknowledgment of another's pain is, then, the refusal to appropriate another's experience in attempts at translating pain.

Indeed, the actor's own suffering performance is an impersonation, a labor of giving his body over to the performance act itself to allow for the expression of what it might feel like to be under siege. As an actor, his task is not to show a certain emotion as it is familiar to himself. Instead, he must express the emotion from the perspective of the life that his role embodies, *not solely from his own experience*. The actor does an embodied work of imagining pain in another body. (Peter A. Levine and Polatin n.d.; Polatin 2013, 1) This is his difficult task, a labor of imagination that is obviously in need of the body, not only as an instrument (this is already crucial), but as a participant in the act of attending to the pain in us all. In that room, on that day, a first circle of attending to pain, to its address, was woven. But the gesture creates further ripples, the stake of the body targeted by terror happens now still, in this moment of writing, in your moment of reading.

So, what I would like to advance is an argument for why it might be best to consider the embodied participants in that room (actor, spectators, and the supporting crew), all those who might join in in the future, and you, the reader, as interlocutors of a common conversation in this intercorporeal space occasioned by the actor's performance. What we all have in between us, relaying the threads of a *possibly* common world, from our various physical and temporal locations, is the hypothesis that there are things that the body experiences, and we have the capacity to be *involved* in some of them. However, as Butler (2003, 114) writes, if the body "speaks," it does it in ways that we must

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attend to with a different sensibility than the one enacted in the effort at clarifying a scene with the hope of getting to the bottom of it.

What I argue is that ultimately no single, individual body is the most relevant aspect of interest in the performance, even if it shows the pain of someone. Interest is literally that which is in between us: inter-est. To that extent, we must ask about feeling as a body in a different logic than the work of communication and attention to suffering, and arrive in a state of feeling as embodied actors that must be present in order to acknowledge, and not verify or attest,  through the experience of *someone or many*. Of course, what the actor expresses speaks *about* someone's experience, his or another's that he might want to embody, and to that end he delivers a performance that might succeed or fail. It is felicitous or infelicitous, we might say in a logic of the performative (Felman 2003, chap. 3), only to the extent that it produces a possibility for others to feel "involved" in it. (Heller 1979, 1) They may not identify with it but they are included in that address, implicated. This is the space of responsibility in this domain of the inter-est. As Agnes Heller suggests, in a fundamental manner *to feel* is just this, *to be involved*. The felicity of the actor's act might be registered as *we* find ourselves paying attention in various embodied states of attention (be it as spectators directly there, or in your imagination, through my narrative).

Staying with Das' terms, if *voice* is that which animates whatever might come to be language and communication through the mouth and body of anyone, then we can surmise that voice is not the function of the individual and, even less so, his or her possession or skill. *Voice* as an animating force might best be considered as shared and enacted, always in a social world and maybe the very foundation of a social world, to the extent that a practice of interest, inter-esse, is possible between embodied subjects. Voice is not already language precisely because, staying with Das/Cavell and/or maybe a psychoanalytical view, the superposition between voice and language would be

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oppressive. Should it succeed, it would become the "dark room" of the torture, where the only language possible is that of the weapon, after it has destroyed both the tortured and the torturer. We might consider this distance between voice and language also in light of Agamben's proposition for how resistance to sovereign power can be enacted by refusing any historical definition of what the human being is. In other words, the open horizon of voice can be enacted by refusing any threshold that defines *what* in a human voice is in fact language and therefore understood as valuable for politics. Furthermore, we can make a strong case that this refusal is the terrain of practice. Resisting the logic of separation in a human being between body and logos cannot be decided once and for all. Instead, it must be returned to - day after day and in each gesture we make. What is most important is that it is a gesture that we cannot do on our own or, more precisely, from the ontological imagination of the subject *on his own*.

**On living slightly beside the body of terror**

Let us return to the ambiguity of the performance we have attended to at the start of this chapter and consider some rather straightforward facts: the actor was performing in a Palestinian, very small, theater; the atmosphere at the end of the play did give me the sense that everyone knows each other in the foyer; the theater was located in the "Old Town," inhabited by Palestinians who have struggled to remain in the city, through great efforts and despite the harsh conditions that followed the military occupation of Jerusalem during the 1967 War and the ongoing, systematic efforts to remove this stubborn population from the city.[17] It is safe to assume that the actor is Palestinian (he is, and rather famous), and that either he himself has experienced something similar to what he presents to his audience, or that, through the stories of his family, friends, and acquaintances, he has learned what a military "mission" sounds like in a building of flats (boots

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pounding, thudding, objects broken with dull or sharp noises, voices breaking), feels like (floors and walls vibrating, trembling), smells like (pepper and other debilitating gasses), and so on. Furthermore, the audience received the play with an uproar, confirmed by an intense shower of applause and a warm atmosphere in the foyer at the end of it. Therefore, we are safe to assume that the largest part of the audience is also Palestinian or in solidarity with this narrative of what an IDF "mission" really *does* in maintaining the presence of Israel's tenuous sovereignty at the forefront of its subjected population.

If the body is brought forth to express pain in the absence of words, what is nevertheless also quite clear is that the play itself, composed of all its elements (screenplay, sound, actual performance, etc.), works as a mediation of an embodied experience. However, it is a mediation that eschews the straightforward ambition of a narrative at clarifying exactly what happened and in which succession of events. It communicates something. It does not try to convince anyone, I believe, not in that context of a Palestinian neighborhood and the shared atmosphere of terror floating in East Jerusalem then. But what does it communicate, if its aim is not to convince or describe something that only its sufferer knows, intimately, as an *inner* experience, or as an address to someone more powerful "to do something" for him?

Instead of a communication as content relate from here to there, I suggest it might be more useful to think about the performance as a space for a conversation between all those present to occur, a conversation helped by the gestures of the acting body but surely confirmed by the presence of the audience, registered in each reaction of those seated, and as vulnerable bodies in the same context of possibilities of suffering what the subject *played* by the actor suffers. They had, after all, entered the scene where they had paid a ticket, having gone through the streets of an East Jerusalem crazed by police and military presence, with traffic stalled and disruptions everywhere. A conversation

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here is obviously not happening at the verbal level of exchanging "experiences." I am directly engaging here with Lori Allen's important point on the politics of immediation, and more broadly with a too blunt conceptualization of the homo sacer as captured by sovereign power.

What was enacted there was a space of publicity, not as an occasion to *show pain*, but as an occasion to *share and share-in* a practice of attention: witnessing as the intercorporeal occasion to consider a certain event from the situated perspectives of each and all those in that room, and also all those who might be added to this scene, as any future reader of these lines becomes. You and I are not really outside of that scene or, better said, if we are outside, it is because we have decided to take ourselves out of that scene and define ourselves instead as researchers who study the "thing," the violence, from a fictive outside. The logic of violence, as the work to destroy the imagination of relations as already occasions of implication, is perpetuated in that fictive "outside." To the extent that we feel implicated, as Heller argues, we are in that room, and we still have to pay attention to the concurrence of atmospheres woven through corporeal gestures: the gesture that hits the floor with the sole of military boots but also the gesture that lifts a hand to embody Figaro's joy at the break of day and in his beloved city streets, where everyone greets him.

In this chapter I wanted to show how necropower operates as an affective regime in that it attempts to erode emotional and affective bonds, to exhaust its targets and impoverish social life. In this light, the performance of "Head Fracture" enacts for its audience not a showing but a mirroring of their own daily experiences. In that mirroring, the act of witnessing is indeed not that of speaking for another and of "translating" pain, but the work enacted in the everyday gestures of weaving a social world, despite the necropolitical regime that attempts to precisely destroy this sense of endurance. That social world is not merely solidified by the gestures of persistence in the face of pervasive violence, or what some refer to with the term *Sumud* or "steadfastness." This social

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world is also a practice in paying attention to how corporeality is targeted and how it can be reappropriated through giving attention to another's performance, through the repetition of a gesture mirrored by another. That gesture, once the actor embodies it with the intention of artistic performance, becomes a narrative no longer concerned with the project of translation or explanation. Thus, it escapes the very logic of temporality that circumscribes any act of translation as translation always comes after the fact, placing violence always behind us, in the past. The task in trying to relate to the tortured body without repeating the gesture of torture is to let the body "speak," in the sense of keeping the very knowledge of its occurrence to still speak there where historicism would want us to believe that *now*, when we speak, violence is not happening. As we have seen with Shammas, speaking can be a form of torture - a medium of shared numbness and the terrain occupied by the various technologies to colonize the body, forced to speak. On such occasions, what cannot be appropriated is the conversation weaved between human beings, precisely because relationality, as Arendt points out, is the only space of resistance to violence.

# Chapter 3 - A meaningful experience

*"If we don't help soldiers speak about their experiences, they remain locked in their self-made prison." (Personal conversation with a clinical psychologist, Jerusalem, November 2015)*

*"My son has a body impairment, nothing very serious, but enough so that the army will not consider him fit for a combat unit. This is how we live here, happy that our children's bodies are not whole." (Personal conversation, Jerusalem, October 2015)*

*Speaking of the citizen's suffering*

Chapter Two focused on the body as witness to terror and to terror's logic of colonizing the affective atmosphere of Palestinian subjects under occupation. In this chapter, I want to consider the politics of the body in pain when the body targeted by power is that of the citizen. Therefore, we are following here the valuable biopolitical body and its inclusion in technologies of power that declare the will to invest themselves in the care for the "good life," which here is problematized as mental health in particular. How does a biopolitical regime organize the good life promised to its citizens when it is also dependent on preserving a discourse on the constant error that must keep the citizen mobilized?

The material I consider comes from the public work of two expert sites in Israel in the last two decades: the Israel Trauma and Resiliency Center (NATAL) and the Israel Center for the Treatment of Psychotrauma (ICTP). NATAL and ICTP address the soldiers and civilians affected by terrorism and war, "society" and invoke their professional, clinical knowledge in discerning the

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signs of post-traumatic stress disorder on the body and in the mind of those afflicted, even as the victims themselves might ignore its signs. Both have been central in producing the present terms of civilian and military trauma in Israel and have done so during the more recent tensions in the last decades regarding the meaning of military service in Israel, from the 1990s and at its apex in the mid-2000s, with the Second Intifada and the Second Lebanon War. The first tension concerns the emergence of a new political question for the Israeli state as to how to respond to large-scale, Palestinian civilian protests in a territory that politically and diplomatically was the matter of negotiations, and therefore not legally under Israeli jurisdiction. Furthermore, the clashes between IDF soldiers and civilians were televised during the First Intifada and pluralized the Jewish Israeli public life with the untenable fact of occupying another people. The second tension revolves around the shifting public attitude regarding the exposure of Jewish citizens, as soldiers of the IDF, in wars whose legitimacy is increasingly contested since at least the First Lebanon War (1982-1985) The IDF incursion in Lebanon could hardly be inscribed in the discourse of Israel's wars of defense, therefore of virtuous wars, as millions of Palestinians and Lebanese had suffered the ravages of the invasion.

After this war, since the 1990s the IDF has been engaged in counterinsurgency operations against various targets defined as terrorists in the West Bank and Gaza. The exposed lives of soldiers in such "orders of battle," meaning secret unless soldiers die (Azoulay 2011) has become the topic of intense activism organized by Israelis who identify themselves as concerned parents whose children have been drafted and who are, at times, vocal in arguing that no military objective is important enough to have the lives of their children endangered. However, this activism is still largely organized by the middle and upper classes, who identify themselves as Ashkenazi. (Y. Levy 2010; G. Levy and Sasson-Levy 2008) Simultaneously, in the 1990s public opinion was

changing regarding the increasingly obvious logic of sustained, banal policing and surveillance of Palestinian civilians. This became the source of public contestation, one consequence being the increase in cases of conscientious objection to military service "in the territories." In this fraught public attitude towards service, military trauma will play a key role in the governmentalized effort to preserve a distinct status for the soldier at a time when the logic of war and combat in a battlefield are replaced by militarized policing of a population in a disputed territory.

I present some of the dilemmas, negotiations, and tentative solutions that these two psychological sites of assistance have proposed as key points of public, political, and psychological concern. This chapter's story does not offer an exhaustive explanation of these actors' choices, but an opening to think tactically about the possibilities of witnessing violence from the position of the citizen as a subject interpellated by a discourse about the mental health of citizens in a constant state of terror. This is the discourse of trauma and of the post-traumatic state in chronic conditions of violence. The imaginary of post-trauma advances powerful tropes that organize the embodied senses and psychic balance of a human life, individual and social. It organizes a temporality structured from the event of violence (in the past) to the present moment (of expert intervention and healing). This temporality depoliticizes violence and operates as ahistorical trajectory of a society seeking and finding "homeostasis" (Feldman 2004, 185), as if violence were always somewhere beside it, at a distance form where "we" stand and talk to each other. This is what the injunction to narrate the "experience of violence" performs, that very imagination of a distance form violence as savagery. As an epistemic object with its authoritative definition of where and when violence should be a matter of concern for "society," post-trauma depoliticizes violence. As a sum of criteria for pathological states of suffering "violence," it advances a powerful, inescapable set of terms said

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to reflect the stable sense of social performance and successful attachment to a meaningful social world.

If citizenship is an attachment to a seriously "injurious interpellation" (Butler and Athanasiou 2013, 15), and even more so in a militarized society (Azoulay 2015), what might constitute a puzzling moment in the very act of the thanatopolitical interpellation would be to contemplate the *governmentalized* naming of the injurious logic of militarized citizenship as a grave societal "problem" for the society and the state. This chapter offers an account for the paradox of a *public* argument that refers profusely to the harming logic of military service, for *anyone* – and having this argument nevertheless contribute to the coherence and reproduction of a harming narrative of embodiment as thanatopolitical citizens. Precisely because military service is harmful to anyone, this discourse calls forth narrative acts from selected subjects expected to suffer most from experiencing violence. In accordance with the psychoanalytic distinction between a conscious and un unconscious domain of the psychic life, suffering might be inaccessible for the traumatized subjects. Thus, the psychologist addresses a tenacious inability to narrate traumatic experiences. The function of the professionals is to guide the nominated subjects of trauma to form meaningful and healing stories for their patients to orient themselves differently, better, saner in their future choices. This is, in brief, the therapeutical and remedial premise of narrative acts called for, and formed in, the apparatus of governmentalized post-trauma. I continue with a first analysis of NATAL's public work around trauma. I do so by analyzing its annual magazine, *About feelings*, issued on Memorial Day in two consecutive years following the Second Lebanon War (2006) and ethnographic research by anthropologists of the field of trauma in Israel. This period is important for my argument because most of the ethnographic data I present in the next two chapters concerns interviews with soldiers who had been active in service during this period or soon after.

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**Everyone's trauma (NATAL)**

*The "invisible wound" of violence – finally acknowledged*

In 1998, NATAL started operating from Tel Aviv as an NGO for mental health support for trauma patients. Its practitioners - clinicians, psychologists, and trained volunteers - engaged in an urgent mission that NATAL proposed to the Israeli state and society: to respond to the need of the entire population for support to cope with the relentless, ongoing, and never-ending events of "wars and terrorism" in Israel. From this imperative call to widen the net of support to vulnerable civilians, it formed a network of personnel trained to aid trauma victims of the "Israeli-Palestinian conflict." To that effect, NATAL tried to implement a new diagnostic category of "national trauma." In light of this new *civilian* trauma field, NATAL also expressed an appeal to the Israeli State to sponsor financially campaigns for "building resilience," to develop institutionally a support framework for precarious communities at the borders with Gaza and Lebanon, and to acknowledge officially and symbolically the most vulnerable Israelis, living in the poorer and ethnically racialized border cities. As NATAL insists, they face the trauma of missiles, "terrorist attacks," and the recurrent wars on a daily basis, but they are largely unseen by those more shielded, in the larger and more affluent cities.

In 2002, four years after its foundation in the optimistic years of the Oslo Peace Process, NATAL initiated the formation of the Israel Trauma Coalition (ICT), a network of trauma agencies. This was two years in the Second Intifada and its specific techniques of terror. The Jewish cities were threatened by suicide attacks with explosive devices, while the Palestinians were the targets of intense military violence, much deadlier than in the First Intifada. As Shehadeh (Shehadeh 2020) reports in his personal diary of the Second Intifada, which he witnessed in Ramallah, the city was under siege, the population barricaded and the atmosphere soaked in the constant terror of having

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their homes invaded by IDF units engaged in counterinsurgent warfare with armed Palestinians. The street protests of civilians in the previous uprising were a painful memory of better times. In Israel in the 2000s, starting with the Second Intifada and continuing with the Second Lebanon War, the dominant mark of collective suffering was the danger of random death. For one, this danger was viscerally imprinted in the gut every time the anti-missile siren announced an impending attack. And second, random death could arrive in a café or a bus targeted by suicide attackers.

*Society's "national trauma"*

As its name indicates, "national trauma" borrows from the clinical domain of PTSD and extends it to a new subject - the entire society or nation. With it, NATAL invested itself in the project of bringing psychological support to everyone who is affected by the "ongoing violence" and the recurrent "skirmishes" between the state and the "terrorists," the Qassam missiles from Gaza that make life precarious for whole cities at the borders, and a generalized state of uncertainty, which impedes the natural flow of civilian lives. This is the dire fate of the entire society, NATAL argues. The continuity between civilian trauma and the trauma of combat soldiers, whose experience of violence is traditionally seen as distinct from the rest of society, shows a dilemma that NATAL does not fully address. On the one hand, everyone knows terror; on the other hand, soldiers are most susceptible to suffering trauma.

A further dilemma concerns the very "nation" they address. Although in line with its stated vocation as an apolitical organization it offers professional services to clients in four languages (Hebrew, Arabic, French, and English), the services it provides have been offered, by their own admission, almost exclusively to Jewish communities, because of the segregation of Palestinian communities in Israel. (Friedman-Peleg and Bilu 2011, 422) However, the effort to organize a

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national platform to *all* victims of terror, in both Jewish and Palestinian communities, has been plagued by more intricate political issues, such as reaching these communities with psychologists trusted by the Palestinian population.

The effort to establish a new use for PTSD criteria, which could be applied to the entire population, has been a protracted endeavor which eventually failed to become sanctioned as clinical diagnostic. (Peleg-Friedman) Despite the intense work of NATAL's psychologists, these efforts have been failing to legitimize a new medical category of diagnosis. This effort has been most intense between 2000 and 2005, during the Second Intifada. (Plotkin-Amrami and Brunner 2015) It faded into a more metaphorical reference afterwards, although it is still intensely used in NATAL's public stances. (4) Employing both a clinical and metaphorical meaning of trauma, this actor attempted to stabilize two broad narratives: that society has a structural problem in facing the pain of those who suffer and, second, that trauma is indeed the plight of the entire nation.

The first narrative unfolds the slow, delayed trajectory through which, since 1948, the medical field in Israel has reached the stage of *belatedly* paying attention to soldier's trauma. (Plotkin-Amrami and Brunner 2015) This is a broadly embraced narrative of a usable past regarding the continuing problem of the reaction to combat stress and the *failure* of the IDF to properly respond with psychological services to the needs of its soldiers. (Plotkin-Amrami and Brunner 2015) NATAL attempts to position itself as a central actor in the process of diagnosis, therapeutical care, and building the resilience of the active or reserve soldiers. In this sense, it is useful to note that NATAL's head psychologist transitioned to the NGO sector after a career as soldier, including service in the 1973 War, and later as an IDF psychologist. The discourse of resilience, a quality instilled in all soldiers, is expressly articulated as a crucial approach for helping them function better in case of future participation in the reserve service. (Friedman-Peleg 2017, 97)

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Plotkin-Amrami and Brunner remark, however, that NATAL, among other actors that started using and expanding the meanings of trauma and PTSD since the end of the 1990s, operated in fact with a radically different framework of trauma, with little in common to the "combat stress reaction" of the military bureaucracy. The new framework, introduced in the 1990s, was informed by the clinical work of the American Psychological Association (APA). It is useful to reflect that this was a useful choice of a genealogy of "trauma" for the main agents of psychological services in Israel, such as NATAL, claimed since the 1990s. The more important trope that this hub of professionals and volunteers backs by narrating a longer history of trauma, unrecognized and therefore untreated, refers to the inability of the "Israeli society" *since the inception of the state*, to face vulnerability and the intense pain of survivors of disasters. The foundational disaster that is brought center stage in this accusation of being unable to tolerate pain is that of the European genocidal camps of the Second World War.

Thus, the trope refers to a failure to respond to pain. The consequence, this trope's circulation implies, is that a large number of citizens live their lives carrying a burden, and invisible wound, concealed by each of them and from one another. The *invisible wound* is the theme of various informative brochures that educate the public on the necessity of learning how to discern hidden suffering and the topic of regular national campaigns for collecting funds. The core message of this formulation is that despite the appearance of normality *on the surface*, trauma operates in one's *inner* life with intensely destructive social consequences. Next to this pedagogical mission assumed by NATAL, the force of this trope can be seen in yet another public and unique position assumed by NATAL. It presents itself both as a staunch criticizer of the state (for ignoring the pain of its citizens) and as an agency deeply integrated in the ethos of military sacrifice, which is seen as inevitable. The agency provides necessary support for those who sacrifice from a sense of

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indebtedness, although it primarily emphasizes the state as an actor with a moral responsibility. I suggest considering briefly first the accusation against the state and against society's inability to see the pain of suffering citizens before we turn to how the dangerous potential of the critique is returned to the vocation of building resilience in the Jewish subjects. The latter step returns the critique to support for hegemonic order of sacrifice and, after the end of service, of repair.

For the first few years after the foundation of the State of Israel, the National Day had been also the day for honoring the "fallen," the soldiers killed during service. Soon, the National Day was moved to right after the Memorial Day at the insistence of bereaved parents, who wanted a separation between mourning and the joyful celebrations of the next day. NATAL issues every year on National Day its magazine, *About Feelings*, in which various members of the organization and select guests write about trauma, resilience, and connected themes. More to the point, every annual issue sets the terms about the past year's trauma: what it meant, who suffered, and how a path to healing is enacted at NATAL. It is in this context that the narrative of "hidden" or "invisible wounds" is discussed at length and from various interpretations of those responsible for society's numbness. Primarily, this trope narrates the single most important explanation for why the Israeli society has been unable, until recently, to confront the trauma of its soldiers and citizens. The original wound had been made invisible through society's inability to face the pain of the European genocide survivors. The refusal to listen to the testimonies of those who had survived the concentration camps was, the narrative relates, strategic for the elites that organized the image of the "new Jew," the Sabra (indigenous) who labored and fought to forge a state for the Jewish people, free from the weakness and corruption of European Jews.

NATAL's narrative stresses that the Jewish actors who organized, and at times embodied, the figure of the Sabra Jew, who was masculine, strong, sturdy, and given to manual labor rather than

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intellectual indulgence and did not feeling pain nor show an excess of emotions, operationalized

this myth as a pain silencer. Those who suffered from the atrocious knowledge of violence, both

the survivors of the Shoah and the soldiers who had suffered from the trauma of the 1948 war,

realized that their experience was not tolerated by those who had been shielded from the horror,

and they had learned to keep silent about their pain. Indeed, only with the Eichmann Trial in 1961,

the public could finally bring itself to hear what until then had been considered shameful,

unbearable to face, and the so-called weakness of those who did not rise in armed resistance against

fascism in Europe. Consider the stated vocation of the organization in 2008, ten years after its

foundation, and a short while after the Second Lebanon War, which was a period of intense work

for its personnel:

> NATAL was founded in 1998, to express a social statement and take action, on behalf of Israeli society and within it. We wanted to legitimatize emotions that had long been concealed and repressed because we believed it was no longer possible to abet denial and the lack of recognition for the pain, bereavement, and loss of so many people. We were confident that Israel's *national resilience* would only benefit from our work. (About feelings, May 2008, 2, my emphasis)

60 years since the foundation of the state, and two years since the Second Lebanon War and the

Intifada, this editorial note announces the organization's contribution to the state's objective:

"national resilience." The magazine continues with a conversation between two of NATAL's

psychologists, and there we can see a straightforward explanation of what national trauma is and

how it operates in direct continuity with the clinical category of individual trauma:

> The interviewer (Avi Bleich): At NATAL, we deal with traumas that are violent in nature and national in context. Based on your experience and self-observation, can you make a connection between your personal trauma and national trauma?
>
> The responder (Itamar Barnea, NATAL's chief psychologist): In my family heritage, this connection can be found in my grandparents, who went to their deaths in the Holocaust with a feeling of relief and satisfaction because they had been able to save their children in time. In my trauma, the personal and the national are entwined and undergo parallel processes. Throughout our history as a people and a society, we have experienced on-

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going, repetitive trauma, including external threats, loss, and pain as well as internal destruction. Yet, growth, development, and creativity occur from within these experiences, catalyzed by very strong powers of self-healing and vitality. This combination of opposites is also found within each one of us individually, and so the processes occurring in individuals and a society living with on-going trauma are parallel." (7)

The appeal is an optimistic one, it speaks of vitality and growth but also of what is traumatic in parallel between individuals and society. Both Barnea and Bleich are key characters in NATAL's clinical work, and they cement their clinical authority to assist trauma patients by invoking their experiences in the IDF. They were both soldiers during the 1973 War, and one of them was a POW. However, what is also significant to remark, precisely because NATAL's promulgated story states that it is doing justice to the soldiers who were ignored by the IDF for decades, is that Bleich had served previously as the director of the Mental Health Services in the IDF, while Barnea had been the head of the department of Psychology and Psychiatry in the Israeli Air Force and director of the Casualties Department in the IDF. In other words, the IDF is not so far outside of NATAL's operations. Quite differently, we can see NATAL continues projects initiated by the IDF.

The interview is followed by a reflection from another of NATAL's professionals, who has made a reputation by working for years with the population in one of the southern cities, Sderot, considered the most heavily affected by the "conflict" and by the missiles from Gaza. He calls on the entire society, and especially from those in the protected cities away from the border, to acknowledge both the immense suffering and the resilience of the people in Sderot, who do not receive any of the deserved recognition for their suffering from the rest of the country. The article that follows offers a more systematic explanation of the original sin of the Israeli society when it comes to its inability to face the pain of its people. Consider Udi Lebel's article. A lecturer in political psychology and political science, therefore an educator besides his clinical work, narrates by way of a detailed sensorial report, a day in Sderot during a Qassam missiles attack from Gaza:

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"the locals, exhausted and terrorized, are also angry at the shallow, merely rhetorical support of the national government, while the mundane condition of living with the alarm of the siren announcing the rockets is never full registered in the big cities, and by the rest of the population". Sderot suffers alone and unseen but angry and willing to protest. However, Lebel reminds his audience,

> In the beginning, it was different. We were asked to lock our personal traumas away behind closed doors. The "New Jew" was experienced in national resilience, lacked personal fear, and knew how to cope. Regarding human reactions, like those expressed by the refugees from Kishinev whose families had been butchered before their eyes, Ben-Gurion wrote, 'We are neither a people nor ordinary persons, but merely a flock, a flock of sheep to the slaughter, a submissive, lowly camp of strange creatures who, of all peoples and nations, know only to the cry, to beg and arouse pity'. Yet in the same breath he added, 'If only the next generation would know nothing of its fathers' weakness and timidity'. (10)

Lebel's intervention in the public memory of Israelis' loss and bereavement practices formulates a strong critique of the culture that has stabilized the categories of the *state* - to be protected no matter what, and of the *soldier* - as a body that is used for national defense and for public forms of memorialization of the "hero," and the soldier can be grieved as the loss of individual sons and daughters only privately. Indeed, he asks maybe the most unsettling question for the thanatopolitical contract: *who would we be, as "Jews," if we confronted the fact that the state, in its historical formation, is in fact the most dangerous for Jewish life?* This can be read indeed as a dangerous critique of the state - a cruel project for the erasure of the Jewish people's history in favor of a new state's, the State of Israel's, history. This substitution, as a project of state-making, had stabilized the logic of a necessary war and the sacrifice of soldiers at least until 1973, when the wounded, the dead, and the traumatized POWs could no longer be hidden from the public. Nevertheless, the dominant discourse still demands that bereaved parents express gladness for having offered their sons to the war effort, quoting from "behavioral guides (that) were produced, including examples taken from bereaved families. One father wrote, 'Overcoming pity, conscious

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control of emotions, coming to terms with loss…discipline and faith in the ideal' are the desired values. A bereaved mother made it clear, 'this is not the time to lament and eulogize…we now not whose turn will come tomorrow…the tears are silent in their hiding places'." (11)

Ben-Gurion's legacy, Lebel argues, retains the focus of an entire society on the only figure of real importance - the combat soldier. Now he is *allowed to suffer trauma.* Against this restricted view of who suffers, NATAL is both a difficult actor and a necessary one for the state in order to make it visible that trauma is "the lot of the entire society," and more support for Sderot, for instance, would not only help those who are suffering in silence presently but reinvigorate the "discourse that imbues Israeli-ness with national, communal and social meaning". In other words, Jewish history and Israeli history would be reunited finally, if only the state would be determined to show decidedly that it sees the suffering of its citizens. Lebel's position in this genealogy of suppressed public feeling is coherent with NATAL's vocation of becoming an agent that treats national trauma, because everyone is terrorized. However, his genealogy blaming Ben-Gurion and the first generation of Jewish citizens for being unable to bear the pain of the Shoah survivors hides the other foundational moment of the Jewish state. As we saw in Chapter One, Ben-Gurion's concept of "security" explicitly announced that the real mobilization of the whole society would be accomplished once everyone was prepared to be afraid for the "next war," and therefore to be ready to respond when the war would necessarily arrive. In other words, everyone has to be constantly terrorized; this is the meaning of security as permanent mobilization.

*"You, Me and the Next War"*

In the previous year's edition (2007), About Feelings featured reflections on the brief Second Lebanon War (July 2006-August 2006) which had just ended. I consider one opinion which reflects the continuity of the trope of constant mobilization of the society for the "next war" as this was

first enunciated by Ben-Gurion. (See Chapter One) Muli Lahad is the president of the Community Stress Prevention Center, one of the mushrooming community organizations, operating as resilience agents that offer support to the civilian population considered most vulnerable to the attacks from Hezbollah. Titled "You, Me, and the Next War," his intervention articulates the theme of society's resilience as a call for society to realize that local communities must learn how to "cope" with the inevitability of a protracted conflict as another war will always follow. His intervention starts with a clarification: the Lebanon War in 2006 had not been a real surprise for Northern Israelis. They had in fact seen in the flesh Hezbollah agents for years already and they were prepared for the war *long before the state*.

Many citizens had been shocked to realize the inability of the state to protect its people, Lahad continues his argument. He was not surprised. Indeed, most worrying for him was the population's enduring trust in the capacity of the state to protect them "if there is another war," despite its recent failure. As one must confront the reality that the state might not be able to protect you, resilience then means, he writes, to learn from past events and what worked locally to give "you" strength and to apply it consciously to the next conflict. It means accepting that the war with Hezbollah will possibly never end, as "Hezbollah is not a terrorist organization that is external to Lebanon but rather a part of the Lebanese people," and therefore citizens must invest in better measures for evacuation and shelters against missiles:

> Planning is important on the level of the home and family. A building or neighborhood bomb shelter can be kept in usable condition even without municipal maintenance. The people who are likely to use a shelter must make sure that it is in good, usable condition. It would help if every house committee appointed one person to check what each neighbor can contribute to make the shelter a nicer place. (4)

The point I want to emphasize, without arguing that Lebel and Muhad necessarily share the same meaning of steadfastness and resilience, is that even an idea as dangerous as that of accusing the

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state of being lethal or careless with its citizens is not necessarily a critique of the conditions that organize militarized citizenship and militarization beyond the institutional framework provided by the state, via the IDF, for instance. Quite to the contrary, it might in fact aggravate normalizing the idea of an inevitable state of war in which the citizens are called to become creative in their own arrangements to sustain expected new wars repeatedly. Lahad, more to the point, simply repeats Ben-Gurion's logic of the nation's constant mobilization, five decades later.

*Military trauma*

In 2005 the Second Intifada officially ended. It had meant heavy deployment of IDF soldiers in the "territories" and, in NATAL's view, a heavy toll paid in the number of traumatized soldiers - traumatized both by the violence they had suffered and the acts they had perpetrated. (Friedman-Peleg and Bilu 2011, 423) These soldiers, released from service, would need urgent support for their readjustment as civilians, precisely because they might not be aware of the long-term effects of their service. Friedman-Peleg and Bilu discuss NATAL's effort to consolidate its public role as an apolitical NGO while they in fact sought further institutionalization via collaboration with the IDF. In 2005, as the public debate concerning the immense violence of the IDF in West Bank and Gaza was ongoing, NATAL formulated a program for the returned soldiers, the "Graduates of the Friction with the Palestinian Population," and popularized some of the problems that the former soldiers, and in particular combat soldier, might discover once returned to their civilian lives:

> One can learn from a variety of sources about the traumatic potentialities of military service in the Territories. The service entails a palpable risk of loss and death but also of exercising force and, at times, violence toward civilians. *Such experiences may leave post-traumatic residues in the veterans in the form of sleep disturbances and nightmares, nervousness and edginess, and feelings of guilt and shame*. The claim that the military friction with the [Palestinian] civilian population has adverse effects on the norms of conduct in the Israeli society cannot be disregarded. These implications merit a thoughtful discussion – for the sake of the mental health of young people after military service and the resiliency of Israeli society. (Bleich, 2005, pp. 4–5)

The combat soldiers were expected to have suffered the most, and NATAL significantly invested in reaching many of those who had participated in war, in order to both collect information about their wellbeing after release and to educate them about potential symptoms they might experience, as they might be unaware they could be responses to their combat experience. Friedman-Peleg (2017, 78) recounts the following statement from one of NATAL's key members in an internal meeting in preparation of phone call interviews, with some designated as "graduates" from the latest war:

> [It's necessary to reach out to] every Intifada graduate, without necessarily defining the level of distress, so we can give him a platform on which to share his angers, his quandaries … Our working assumption is that everyone who was there had something done to him. No one remained naïve … It is a psycho-educational project for society … It's an educational process of the population. (Steering Committee, 28 September 2005, Field Notes)

Friedman-Peleg's ethnography offers a substantial story of NATAL's strategy to legitimize a framework in which, had it succeeded, any soldier would have been considered traumatized simply by virtue of having participated in the violence. However, the designation of soldiers as traumatized subjects, carrying wounds that most probably will manifest in their lives at some point, is an essential modality of fixing the meaning of the trauma running in society. The soldier is, in NATAL's understanding, preeminently a post-traumatic victim, which manifests in his or her social roles after their service: their loss of "naivety" will play out, with consequences, once they are in society. These are fundamentally social failures and point to the worrisome inability to fulfill "basic" roles, such as functioning students, reliable job holders, and/or emotionally stable spouses and parents. The project of assistance is indeed a "psycho-educational project for society."

I suggest this interpretation is more compelling than that offered by some of the very discerning Israeli historians of NATAL who discuss the will of this NGO to medicalize the entire population of the IDF, because the context of uttering the loss of innocence or naivety of the young soldiers

matters. Again, the mid-2000s pose a serious transformation in the logic of militarizing the "territories." This is not only in response to the more emphatic rhetorical reference to the entire Palestinian population as "terrorists," and thus an enemy population, in the wake of the second Intifada, but also because this is the first period in which the territories and Israel's sovereign space are separated by the "barrier of separation" or "apartheid wall," depending on the differing perspectives.

The soldiers deployed in Palestinian cities, such as the highly contentious Hebron, have become, since the wall's erection, the only ones who can claim to be direct witnesses to the experiences of the "territories." For the rest of the civilian population "at home," the short distance between Tel Aviv, for instance, and Hebron becomes an unsurpassable distance between democracy and an opaque space with little to no public visibility, a land of either "terrorists" or unpalatable Jewish settlers. The soldiers return home, and as future civilians, become the mediators between these two realms that look and feel like two different planets, as we saw in Chapter One. We might see how these two imagined spaces are defined as utterly distinct, which is precisely through the prism of the framework for the soldier perpetrator. Very often, even when the soldier explicitly acknowledges his or her fault in having perpetrated abuses against civilians during service, the theme that organizes the testimony is one of disbelief at what else one could do "there," so drastically in discordance with one's moral values, and with what is indeed sanctioned as humane and civilized "at home." This indeed powerful critique of violence nevertheless risks reproducing the virtuous semblance of a democratic and "civilized" Israel "at home," where such violence would never be permitted. "Trauma" translates their experience as both fraught, unnarratable, and deeply destabilizing the subject. It requires, therefore, guided translation before it will reach the rest of the "society." The translation, when mediated by the expert site, is a kind of passage from

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the "territories" to "home." Thus, what is consolidated is the distinction between two sides, war and peace, civility and barbarity.

## The Israel Center for the Treatment of Psychotrauma

Born in Holland, Danny Brom is one of the pioneers of the PTSD framework in Israel. In 1985 he founded the Dutch Institute for Psychotrauma in Utrecht. However, in 1988 he emigrated to Israel with his family with young children, briefly mentioning a difficult atmosphere in Holland for the small minority of orthodox Jews. When he arrived in Israel, six months after the beginning of the First Intifada, he started working in an ambulatory mental health clinic in Jerusalem, where he narrates his presence as deeply out of place, registered by others as being "the trauma freak," met with suspicion by everyone else, and being told that in Israel there were no trauma cases. This is an excerpt from an interview he gave in 2004 to a Dutch Radio, where he described the beginning of his work in Israel, in a climate deeply skeptical of the clinical diagnostic criteria of PTSD:

The first thing I heard actually from people is, they said, well, we know you're a trauma freak, but you know what, we don't see trauma here. It was an amazing thing that I experienced here, people said, no, we don't see trauma here. To which I said, oh, interesting. Is it OK to do some research? So we started to ask every person that came into that clinic what did you go through in the last two years? We kept it very safe. And then we saw that 1 out of 3 people had had a severe trauma in the past two years only *and we don't even talk about the Israeli Wars and the Holocaust* and things like that. And half of them had severe psychological symptoms connected with the trauma. So although it's true that the people didn't see it, it's there, and it's something that is so much there in Israel that people can't see it. (my emphasis)

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As he narrates the beginnings of his clinical work in Israel, he defied the general indifference to, or denial of, trauma, and he started looking for those who had suffered a traumatic experience, whose signs could be detected if one paid attention, and whose needs were ignored. The new category of PTSD had been introduced in the APA Manual of Diagnostics for mental disorders in 1980. Although there had been some individual psychologists who referred to PTSD before his immigration to Israel, the field was not yet institutionalized through the prism of post-trauma. The clinical category indeed awaited crystallization through experts that would claim authority over the specific psychic suffering in a place so deeply marked by terrorism and war in the 1990s, as we have seen in section one. The refusal to see trauma, although there was *so much of it* in Israel, Brom explains, had something to do with the inner work of trauma itself: it was in fact a trait of overwhelmed nervous systems living in "survival mode," in which it is impossible to do much besides surviving and difficult *to take a step back, to pause, and to reflect on one's state*:

> EB: Were people basically in denial then?
>
> Brom: Yeah, you can call it denial. It's just shying away from it. You know, when you are in, let's say, survival mode, all the time you have to be alert and look around you, you don't have the possibility to really look at your weaker sides or the pain that is within and the way Israeli society has dealt with it is just go on and don't look back. (…) This survival mode is very effective, but it also excludes a lot of processing of what happened. So as long as you remain in survival mode, you also avoid looking at the past. And that is part of the problem I see in this whole region. There is almost an addiction to stress and survival mode, almost in order not to process what has happened to almost everyone in this region. (Under foreign skies, 2005)

Soon afterwards, in collaboration with a US psychologist, Brom founded the Israel Center for the Treatment of Pyschotrauma (ICTP). At this point, however, his personal narrative of the whole landscape of trauma work in Israel suddenly takes a new trajectory. Affiliated to the Herzog Hospital in Jerusalem, ICTP started in 1989 a novel kind of work, as we have seen, by bringing the PTSD clinical framework to Israel. However, ICTP presents itself as embedded into Herzog Hospital's century-old history. Founded in the late 1890s, the then named Ezrat Nashim Hospital,

was reputed as the first psychiatric hospital in the Middle East, an initiative of Jewish organizations to provide hospital beds for the "wandering" mad people in Jerusalem. Initially, and for a long time after, the hospital specialized in religious mental disorders and housed patients from the ultra-orthodox population in the North of Jerusalem. Its history is often narrated as a private, Jewish initiative, made necessary owing to the serious demand, meaning, numerous unattended cases, and the absence of proper concern from the authorities at the time (the Ottoman rule and then the British Mandate).

Besides operating as a site of clinical work for patients with post-traumatic conditions and offering a crisis walk-in center for anyone who had felt overwhelmed in any of the numerous crises affecting society (accidents, terror attacks, etc.), ICTP soon started working to educate the population on a national level on the symptoms of trauma and practitioners in various institutions who meet traumatized people in large numbers, such as personnel in hospitals, teachers and students in schools, and journalists. The pedagogical work of familiarizing people with the signs of trauma was specifically targeted toward groups considered most susceptible to being affected by violence. Much can be gained, Brom explains, if people are taught how to self-regulate their overwhelmed system inevitably operating in survival mode in moments of violence. The survival mode is in fact a generalized state of living everyday life in Israel, he continues, detectable in all aspects of life – as you take a drive, seeing people interact in the streets, on television, in the Knesset: "*And to be honest there is something that is attractive to this tension. It's very alive, but at the same time it has to do with this addiction to tension in order to not deal with other things.*"

*Peace of Mind*

In late 2015, I visited ICTP's office in Jerusalem, located in a working-class neighborhood with numerous car repair workshops and fast-food stands everywhere for the workers in the area. ICTP

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was on the second floor of one of many identical grey residential buildings. On the first floor you could see the offices of B'Tselem, the most radical human rights organization in Israel, critical of the military and of the oppressive regime against Palestinians. On the floor above, ICTP's individual offices were arranged in a friendly atmosphere along a wide corridor, its walls covered with photographs of groups of people, holding each other closely, smiling at the camera, and then some drawings and a few paintings by children, with toys and crayons on a table for common use. As the Center became more rooted in Israeli life in the past decade, it developed different specialized departments for distinct vulnerable groups, such as for children and adolescents; for the Ethiopian community that had migrated to Israel in the previous decades and still is struggling with the violence of racism in Israel; and then, the department I was interested in, for IDF veterans from former combat units. Most of them are headed by psychologists who are also university professors, publishing regularly in trauma-related fields.

*Transformations – the inevitable corruption*

Danny Brom described the origins of this department, called Peace of Mind (POM), as an initial collaboration with the IDF once the military leadership had realized the significant need of ICTP's proven success with other trauma clients. The IDF had asked for assistance for the combat soldiers released from service, admitting that its bureaucracy was aware of their potential long-term problems adjusting to civilian life. The procedure had been, initially, as follows: the IDF would choose a particular unit that had gone through any particularly difficult situation and would connect the former commander of the unit with ICTP. Then, the commander would contact all his unit members, and the group would decide together if they wanted to participate in the Peace of Mind protocol. Organized in four sessions over nine months, in Israel first, followed by a trip abroad, participation requires considerable effort from participants. Obviously, the group must be

willing to make time for it and interrupt their normal lives for the periods when they are asked to travel together. To make this more appealing, the group sessions are organized in enviable places; first a trip in Herzlyia, a city close to the beach, where the men can go on a boat trip and do fun activities together. For another session, the group travels together with one or more of POM's psychologists abroad to tourist destinations, which is a further incentive to participate. They visit cities in Europe or North America, where they are hosted by local Jewish communities for a week of sightseeing, POM work, and bonding. More than 600 people had been in the program by 2015, and there was no longer a referral by the IDF at that point; units were self-referring, and POM could choose the ones considered most in need from a "long waiting list."

Although in the interview above we read Professor Brom's emphatic observation that many people in Israel suffer, knowingly or not, from trauma, ICTP's vocation of clinical and educational work is significantly different from NATAL's mission to expand the category of post-trauma into a national trauma. Brom argues, indeed, that military service is a deeply altering period that will transform every one of the young men and women drafted without exception - a "hardening" that makes them out of touch with their emotional life. And even more strongly, military draft is seriously injurious as "it corrupts society":

> Brom: And I think that is one of the worst things of ongoing violence, that you see how it corrupts society, how it changes people who are reasonable people into people who can see only one thing and that is that we have to hit back. That's one of the frightening things about living here.
>
> *EB: Can you elaborate on that?*
>
> Brom: I grew up in Holland. My children were born in Holland. And we didn't have guns in the house or play toy guns. We didn't want that. And then we came here. And then the question was, well, do we allow it? Well, they see soldiers. They see our friends. Every man is every year a month in the army, so how can you not let them play with it in order to cope with that. And at the same time, what does that do? What does that do to your mind, to the way you view the world? I find it very hard, and that is maybe the part where I am traumatized. I find it very hard to really follow what it does to you because it does the same

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to me. But it's one of the things that worries me. When you accept the level of violence and when you accept to hear every day that one or two or three people are killed on that side or this side, what does it do to you? I don't know exactly. (Under foreign skies, 2005)

In the interview with a European broadcaster, a Dutch citizen, like Brom, who had also grown up "without guns" at home most probably, Brom's tone is deeply mournful, reflective of the serious loss he is expecting with regards to his own children who will be drafted and will suffer that inevitable "corruption" in the military body. This suffering does not amount to post-trauma in most cases. However, in some cases it is inevitable and deeply unsettling for those who suffer from it. This is a point Brom explicated in several public occasions, as well as in our conversations. In fact, as he articulated the stages of one's life after service, he stressed his conviction that "most wounds heal with time." In other words, most people have "sub-threshold conditions" in which they simply do not manage some situations of life well on occasion. Most of them might find themselves in variable states of personal suffering that should not be diagnosed as pathological but must be acknowledged and solved as a necessary process of self-knowledge. This involves understanding who they are now as a consequence of their military experience, acknowledging it as an abnormal period for a young person to (still) be growing in.

In response to my initial question about the clinical definition and treatment for PTSD at ICTP/POM, his reaction was emphatic. "It is not psychopathology what we do here. They do not come being told that they must be healed from a disease, and we also try to avoid some remaining stigma attached to PTSD. What we are telling them is that *you've gone through a lot. Let's see how that influences you. What happened to you can be turned into something meaningful, a meaningful experience that helps you grow, understand your life better*." In this proposed trajectory that resonates as an ethical passage, they are invited "to see how it changed you, who you are now because of this experience."

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Despite the claim that trauma is not in the forefront of the interaction with the soldiers at POM, in the first of the four stages of the protocol the veterans are educated in the basic vocabulary of post-trauma and its symptoms. They learn about the possibility of suffering from moments of incontrollable anger, outbursts of rage, about undesirable patterns of behavior that wreck relations, or about nightmares and intrusive images. They learn mechanisms of "self-regulation." The veteran understands why he might have acted in some harmful ways in the past and how he might have arrived in a deadlock in his life because of inappropriate emotions. He learns why staying in an intimate relationship or keeping a long-term job seemed impossible. Personal and social failures are reinscribed in a *normal* pattern of inevitable adaptations, developed in the highly *abnormal* conditions of combat. *It is normal to be and feel as you do after military service*. To this extent, unlike NATAL's emphasis on how all IDF soldiers are susceptible of trauma because of the violence they encounter, POM conceptualizes the army itself as the abnormal context in which bad but necessary adaptations (rage, impatience, lack of emotional awareness, etc.) might develop. And indeed, to illustrate how trauma might look like, or rather the unnatural presence of the army in the veteran long after active duty, Professor Brom said that one man described his state since he had become a civilian as one in which "we are looking for enemies all the time".

*A chosen transformation: success is when we take the army out of the soldier*

Professor Brom argued that, for Peace of Mind's professionals, the essence of the protocol's success is in "taking the army out of the soldier." In our interviews, he explained what he meant by offering small stories about some soldiers' progress. "What they often get (at POM) is a sense of unburdening. They often say that *I was carrying something with me, inside me, I wasn't even aware this affected me so much*." Another participant said at the end of the program: "I can separate myself from the army, I feel I finally got out of the army," which was a realization coming from a

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man who had been officially released from service for years already. When they arrive for the first meeting at POM, many think they have nothing to say, or that they do not have real problems. However, as Professor Brom narrates such states of denial, their stories are often marked by difficult moments in which they had barely survived or had witnessed the death of a comrade. They are events which they had sealed away for years saying, "I am alive, so all is fine" or "others suffered worse." But now they want treatment, after learning about POM's method.

The transformation of clients, whether individuals or groups, is accomplished or validated through the subject's realization at POM that he had suffered in the past; he had carried a burden *inside*, determining his choices. Its weight is perceived presently as an unloading, a freeing act. This narrative of healing is embedded in a classic trajectory of a successful therapeutical intervention of modern psychological work with patients who are fully healed once they realize they had been sick or mad all along. (Foucault, Brion, and Harcourt 2014, 11) This is significant for POM's protocol, and it is embedded in that modern trajectory of healing that involves an acquired capacity to speak the truth about oneself to the extent that the soldiers must become aware of their behaviors and life choices that are being driven by the effects and patterns developed in the abnormal period of service. They must also be willing to unfold the hermeneutical procedure of discerning those burdens inside them and release them once they are identified. The outcome is a self-governing agent with a real choice regarding his future. He becomes free. This threshold is marked by a question that usually appears at some point in the group work or in the one-on-one sessions: *how do I want to live my life from now on?*

What is fundamental at POM is the explicit will to depathologize the suffering acquired during one's military service. The soldiers, even when diagnosed with PTSD, are not "mad," nor told they "suffer from a disease." Indeed, quite a common strategy is referring to the variable degrees of

suffering post-traumatic stress (PTS) instead of the "disorder" (PTSD). Although there are clinical tools for the diagnosis of serious cases, most people leave POM with an ethical inquiry: "essential is the question they form: "What do I take from this? It's knowledge; it's a question asking what do I want to change, to whom do I want to tell about this? Gradually, we talk about what has changed (in their lives), what hasn't."

In a subsequent presentation of POM with one of Professor Brom's colleagues, this ethical broadening was presented as such: "the message we are trying to send is that you are not post-traumatic, you do not suffer any pathology, you are here because of a traumatic experience, a meaningful experience for how you are going to live your life from now on. And there is this question: how can you grow from these experiences? How you can feel reality in a broader sense?" In this last point, essential for POM regarding their effort to transmit the message that the soldiers are going through a normal process, this psychological site employs the same strategy as NATAL, namely to instruct them regarding the most probable symptoms that follow their military "experience." To recall, the "graduates of the friction," meaning the soldiers who had served during the 2006 War, were told at NATAL that they might suffer nightmares, lack of concentration, and possibly anger. These and more were considered normal states, expected in the aftermath of their service.

*On not being able to think in service: the spine-cortex activation in terror states*

*Anyone in your situation would have gone through a similar trajectory marked by bad choices or failures in relating with others*. This is the message conveyed to combat veterans to help them understand why abnormal behaviors are in fact normal responses from a stressed nervous system. As Brom systematically observes, both in his public positions and in his published work, a traumatic experience is highly corrosive to the normal functioning of the human nervous system.

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In fighting, just like in an accident, a human being reacts first instinctually, at the level of the spine-cortex, long before he realizes what he has done and before any evaluative judgment. In combat units, as men are undergoing life-threatening situations for themselves and their comrades, they do inevitably bond with one another. In such states, "you bond with anyone who is near, like a baby in distress who bonds even with her dangerous caretaker."

This proffered analogy to explain a state of utter vulnerability seemed an awkward image to clarify the inevitable, unchosen bond of survival between men at war. It might have intended to express a state of necessary attachment in the short run to survive, even if it is destructive in the long run, as child psychology shows. (Miller 1997) In this light, the analogy carries a deeply dangerous potential for the military draft of all young Jewish men and women. This interpretation can be further substantiated with another remark professor Brom made regarding the radical disadvantage that young Israelis have in comparison with any other Western society's youth. At age of seventeen or eighteen, while most young people "in Western societies" start developing an autonomous life, whether in romantic relationships away from their parents' home, in academic programs, or at first jobs, the Israelis are going first to a gruesome first six-months of military bootcamp training. They are then spending their next two or three years in the highly regulated, hierarchical environment of their units. Many of the social skills developed in this crucial period will have to be postponed. This deeply abnormal setting, with its rigid rules and institutionalized emotional numbing, humiliations, various deprivations, stalls maturation. This explains, he offered, why so many veterans leave Israel for a year or longer after their active duty and spend time abroad, most often in the Southern hemisphere. They try to forget *there* everything about this period and engage in various forms of dangerous and reckless behaviors without self-control: drugs and alcohol, sex, and risky "adventures," with no thought about the consequences. The young veterans rarely know

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what to do with their lives after the end of their mandatory service: should they continue their studies or find a job? Some indeed have to finish high school first, and so it is a widespread practice to save money for this planned trip at the end of their military service to not *think about the past, forgetting it*.

*Trauma and responsibility. "So you condemn yourself"*

However, in an alternative interpretation, we might also consider that the *spine-cortex* as a clinical framework to articulate the instinctual, unchosen bonding *with whoever is near*, with your comrades, and *acting before you think*, *to survive*, suggests that the question of personal responsibility becomes untenable for thinking about the consequences of their violent, lethal actions. The clinical category of post-trauma has been immensely important in redefining the dominant structure for referring to the experiences of suffering violence and undoing neat distinctions between victims and perpetrators. At Peace of Mind, the question of an individual's responsibility for his or her actions as a soldier is a core issue in the protocol and responds to quite a few deep-seated problems raised by the members of the IDF units. As a mental health facility, another POM psychologist stressed later, politics must be kept out of the treatment room.

In a later conversation with this second psychologist, who worked together with Professor Brom in the group sessions, he offered an example of what might happen in a narrative scene organized at Peace of Mind. As these men, much like the rest of society, had learned to never speak to others about their experiences, and in particular their most painful ones, the second and third sessions of the protocol organize spaces for building individual and group narrations of difficult memories or emotional states. Some men carry a heavy load, he explained, which they never share with anyone, not even in their intimate, affective relationships. For such acts of belated, and necessary narration, the group is taken on a trip abroad, "outside of the noise of Israel." Not having to deal with the

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everyday state of shock, bad news, and "noise" of life in the country helps them to take some distance and have a new connection to their lives. This is a time when they must put down their phones and take a break from their agitated normal lives "at home."

In these trips somewhere "pleasant," in Europe or North America, the group comes together through new interactions and common practices: travel, play, exploring new cities, cooking and eating together, etc. In this new atmosphere together, the most important process of the protocol is now unfolding - a narrative process of self-reflection and group reflection. First, each member is asked to prepare a story that he finds significant *for any reason* and present it to the others, either by talking or with the help of an image or any other medium that shows something to the others about him. At some point, after the men have engaged in some "fun" physical activities that help them form a deeper bond as a group, they come together and construct a new group narrative: what had happened to them together, as members of one unit. This is a second modality of bonding, through narration, and this time *chosen*, reflected upon, and negotiated during the stages set up by the personnel at Peace of Mind.

The condition of post-trauma, and indeed also that more recent of "moral injury," explicitly states the problem of military personnel who have suffered as agents of armed violence. (MacLeish 2018) A serious personal suffering, even deep anguish at times, the feelings of shame and guilt can keep a person stuck in a toxic condition of self-harm and of socially destructive choices. Another psychologist at POM offered an example of such difficult cases, like when a veteran might come and say, "I have done unforgivable things," or "I have killed." The mission of POM is to create the possibility for people to reflect more deeply on their actions and on the constraints of the situation in which they were placed. And in such moments of personal anguish, when someone might judge himself as unforgivable, the psychologist explained through the following scene how

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the process of reflection could then take place: to the man who felt he could not be forgiven for what he had done, one of his comrades, listening to the story of the unforgivable act, replied: "I never knew you went through something so hard. I could not see the scene where you killed from where I was located. So, you judge yourself for killing someone. But what you did saved my life. How many years would you give yourself for killing? 15? 20? And now that you know you saved my life, what would you say?"

By focusing on POM's space for narration through the experience of group bonding in such radically different modalities, (first the bonding *inflicted* on them as the result of combat stress and, second, the bonding *produced* through speaking and listening to one another years later), I want to reflect on the uses of a story as it is invoked here. First, the story is a group's shared object - what they will hold together from this moment on; and second, as a shared medium for reflecting on individual lives, the particular forms in which each one developed harmful adaptations, the kinds of suffering that they usually keep hidden, and destructive personal trajectories, as they were influenced by the time of military service. In various public positions, POM refers to the client's improved quality of life as he returns to his life with a better understanding of what happened to him, what he did, what he had to in the circumstances, and what he can now choose for himself with more freedom of perspective. To that extent, the story is a kind of a valuable object, a hermeneutical tool. After the end of the program, one might invoke the story again and again, in order to ground oneself if old behaviors or feelings return. This strategy is indeed an element of standard psychodynamic therapeutical logic coming from psychological studies on trauma. It is reaching the point of a story good enough for one's life to go on and in a better way, more productive when compared with the standards of a normal life. Lastly, this framework of the

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narrative as medium for self-making confirms the vocation of POM to free the "man" from the burden of the military, which he had carried unknowingly for years after the end of his duty.

*"A good story gets you out of the prison"*

At the same time, the narrative of the group is essential as the space that is held by everyone and in relation to one another. One day, the psychologist narrating the scene of the initial self-judgement and subsequent group forgiveness (i.e. *what you did, unforgivable in your old story, saved my life*) explained the banal knowledge (widely shared that is) regarding the strong, intensely intimate relationships produced between members of IDF units. To a considerable extent, they spend their lives together, visiting each other, and vacationing with their families. Yet still the most painful, intimate events, which they have lived together, remain undiscussed between these men. At POM, a space is opened in which they arrive at a better knowledge of each other, see a different aspect of the other's story, and find a deeper dimension of the self.

In the group narrative, trauma is discussed often for the first time. It is the way society works, how the military is built. There is no place for the personal experiences of these events. When we put them in a room, something builds up. *It starts with a question, do we need this, is it dangerous for us?* Don't others need this more (who have suffered more)? But then people start to know each other better. This is how the joint story starts to be put together. People ask for the first time, *how was it for you? How did you feel?* The idea is to create a space to discuss - in society, in families, inside the person - to first acknowledge this.

When people come to POM, whether they received the PTSD diagnosis or not, what is often the case is that they carry a bad story about their past. During the protocol, a better story might emerge, through the double gesture of daring to present oneself to others in new, more personal intimate

ways and second, through the contingency of the collective work of the group, as each one of them brings a new meaning to an old, frozen story of a painful event. I asked one of the psychologists if their work is in fact to produce a new, better story for the unit members. He reacted with an emphatic *No*, as such a straightforward question deserved. "Our method is to use the power of the group," he continued. "The idea of the exposure in trauma is to regulate the story, expose them to the story, to talk (finally). This is how growth happens."

*"In trauma there is no politics"*

As said, there are times at POM when people come with a self-ascribed sentence for what they have done, which they judge as unforgivable. The recent category of "moral injury" has emerged in a US debate regarding army veterans often diagnosed with PTSD. After pressures from US veterans, similarly to the medical community's original acceptance of PTSD (Scott 2004; 1990), "moral injury" has been introduced first into the public debate by the veterans of US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This activist mobilization demands that their after-service states of being be more precisely defined; what they are suffering from is a sense of losing their own ethical values, or what they thought was their morality until they became perpetrators of violence that violated their ethical code. The articulation of suffering, not as trauma, but as a moral injury, would significantly alter the narrative that accounts for the causes of their enduring suffering, which is at times unbearable for those veterans who end up harming themselves or ending their lives. Moral injury, as its name indicates, makes a clear reference to the medical-therapeutical domain and its authority to heal - there is an injury that has been suffered - but also to the domain of morality - the moral subject has suffered a kind of injury as well; he or she returns at home from their missions grieving the loss of who they thought they were. (Callaway and Spates 2016; Farnsworth 2019) To my

question whether "moral injuries" are integrated in POM's protocol, the psychologist took a long pause and reflected.

> *This is not who I am, I should not have done that.* Something like *things I did that I am not at peace with*. We did not open this topic, but it came up in some groups. Our mission is not to judge. What I want is to broaden the awareness about the actual choices one had. Moral injury leaves the person in punishment, in prison. But you come and ask them, what is the punishment, and for what? If you leave the soldier with the wound, you leave him with the least abilities to deal with it. This is a responsibility of society and military forces together. Initially, we thought of this program as a way to reach out, to embrace you when you are back. Now it is about acknowledging that suffering.

Moral injury has a strong connotation, at times taken up in veteran groups, as an injury caused to someone's moral system because of the context in which his or her unethical actions were induced and made inevitable in instances when not killing one's enemy might mean losing one's life. Simply stated, a moral injury is the result of having had to commit immoral acts. This is an important nuance; it focuses attention on those institutional environments in which actors cannot fully choose how to act. At times, the veterans did bring stories where they might feel hurt by the military context. The psychologist responded that indeed in such narrative moments people become angry as they reflect on what happened to them. However, "anger is never political," he insisted in our conversation. "When feelings are very intense, it is never about politics, but something *deeper*, which must be acknowledged and healed," he explained.

I want to take this last line as the clearest intention of the psychological workers at Peace of Mind and restore it analytically and historically to the larger context of post-trauma since its codification as a mental disorder in 1980. Analytically, I suggest to read the intention at POM as decidedly congruous with the epistemic field that intends to repair psychologically injured patients and, at the same time, as a political vocation of the highest order. In the latter form, the intention at POM to bring out the inner story in an outer, clearer form could productively be translated as such: *Who would we be, and what life would we have as a society, if these citizens living among us and*

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*carrying these troubling inner stories would not be able to bring them to a clearer form?* As we have seen, a "clear form" in this epistemic locale means a usable story, one that allows its subjects to make use of it to return to their own past in ways that would no longer be destructive for their present social and personal situations. As the name of the program inevitably communicates, a usable story would give one some *peace of mind* precisely where peace of mind is so lacking that it can wreak havoc in a life, as certainly deep regrets and self-condemnations do.

*"Society has created a monster": trauma and society's responsibility*

Without repeating the genealogy of trauma since, at least, Freud's (1990) realization that he had to think about the compulsive repetition of the past "beyond the pleasure principle" in the aftermath of the First World War and as soldiers were returning from the battlefront with nightmares repeatedly intruding into their consciousnesses, I want to emphasize one essential trope in psychological statements (whether clinical or popular) on trauma and post-trauma. This is that the one who suffers, the post-traumatic subject, is to a large extent not fully present in his or her life. The disturbing force (the traumatic cause), although it has happened in the past, is nevertheless still occupying the subject's present, whether in the psyche or the nervous system depends on the explanation, with the former more psychoanalytic (Caruth 1996) and the latter more psycho-socio-biological and neurological. (Van der Kolk 2015; Levine 1997; Levine and Polatin 2017) One repeats, unconsciously, patterns formed as a response to the past. They derail the objectives and the urgencies of the present and set the sufferer on trajectories of self-destructive behaviors, largely beyond one's control.

The preeminence of PTSD as a framework for making the suffering of violence intelligible as object of medical intervention has provoked, rightfully, a plethora of critical analysis that has noted how it excludes relations beyond the confines of the hegemonic preservation of the self - masterful,

whole, sovereign, and ahistorical. In particular, when it is appropriated by governmentality agencies (Fassin and D'Halluin 2007; Fassin and Rechtman 2009), with their projects of desirable futures for selected subjects, PTSD has operated as an instrument to dehistoricize violence and organize "healing" at the level of individualized bodies to be restored to the "homeostasis" (Feldman 2004, 185) of a normative "wellbeing" for individuals who normally should not have to hear "voices" at night, asking them haunting questions. This is essentially a promise of returning the subject from *fragmentation* to a reassembled, functional self and productive subject. What is obvious already is that PTSD, as a medical object of knowledge, operates with a poor but powerful sense of the subject as either whole, prior to trauma and after the healing, or fragmented, owing to trauma.

In this light, it is instructive to consider again the moment when trauma had become institutionalized as an epistemic instrument of psychiatric and psychological diagnosis in the 1980s, and also in the context of a fraught public witnessing a war's, and a colonial war's, subjects in the Vietnam War. The "name" that codified their suffering had come not only as the result of pressure from soldiers (particularly the Vietnam Veterans against War, VVAW) who wanted support but also after more than a decade of a tense public struggle regarding the meanings of the "Vietnam War" once soldiers returned "home" and spoke about the atrocities they had committed against civilians and about the nightmares, voices, and startling presences they could not shake off. As John Kerry, a VVAW activist and future US Senator warned in a congressional hearing committee in 1971, "society has created a monster." Furthermore, he declared, society might not be ready to face it, but in the shape of the returning soldiers, it will have to deal with its responsibility for the war at some point.

In other words, those nightmares and specters would not go away simply because the body had moved from Vietnam to the US territory. By now, we know that it took some time before psychologists believed the soldiers' stories of the atrocities they committed as they attributed the soldiers' stories to personal neurosis or excited nerves producing fabrications. It took time before a psychiatric social worker, Sarah Haley, did believe one soldier who narrated the My Lai Massacre and insisted that this case be studied further. (Young 1995, 108) As she narrated her "discovery" in the midst of general disbelief of similar reports from veterans, she believed that man speaking of his atrocious acts because she was the daughter of a professional soldier, who had served during the Second World War and the Korean War. For her, his story was plausible.

PTSD was codified only in 1980. What unfolded quickly since then is a process that transformed this burning critique of society's responsibility in the war overseas wars. Trauma has been incorporated in the bureaucratic-administrative institutions of the military and state that offer treatment for US veterans who suffer from post-trauma. As anthropologists of military experience have shown, this treatment has medicalized an experience framed as a problem of individual suffering and a task of returning to a normal self - a promise of redress or healing a broken psyche. (Howell 2011; MacLeish 2018) As it is appropriated by the epistemic authority of the medical domain that knows how to read trauma as signs (on the surface and on the body) and as an inner force (inside and in the psyche) PTSD is a complex apparatus of subjectification that expropriates experience and confers authority to select actors who speak in the name of pain and for the body. (Agamben 1993, 14; Fassin and D'Halluin 2007) This discourse is pervasive. It has created a familiar set of words to describe what we all (can) feel and know about violence. It is largely responsible for the imaginary of "society" as a domain of social life ignorant of the "truth" of war. (Sylvester 2014, 1; MacLeish 2016; Swofford 2003)

Once more, this is an argument about the body carrying history, and - as it lives its social life, materialized through a "strategy of accumulation" (Haraway and Harvey 1995, 510) - the investment of a multigenerational discourse that materializes the feeling and sensing states of the citizen's body. In post-traumatic subjects of violence, history as a privileged narrative of a linear trajectory (Feldman 2004, 185) unifies in the body materialized as intelligible landscape of signs or symptoms, from a past violent event (a "war," a "terror attack"), through the present state (of suffering nightmares, flashbacks, but also a time for intervention, for healing) and towards a chosen future (of health). Violence becomes an event, which is delimited and sealed from the present when the intervention is successful. To narrate is already a sign of healing and therefore a confirmation of resealing the social pact of citizenship as self-sacrifice. Thus, the future is already known and usefully stabilized by the trope of healing, clinically defined, for instance, as "post-traumatic growth.

Enacted in the name of the psycho-therapeutical experts in trauma support, the body contains trauma in the concrete sense that it is buried in the depth of the mind and the body but surfacing in dangerous forms at times. It is disastrous for the individuals who suffer unwanted consequences from their bouts of anger or depression, but it is also disastrous for "society," as the trauma will inevitably leak outside of the individual and affect wider social circles. The body is described to the clients as a container of the "experience," and one that problematically leaks at times. We can see here how the matter of the body, concretely as nervous system and suffering flesh become the premise for subjectification through the performative effect of emotions named by the expert: your anger is both normal (during the passage back to civilian life) and surpassable in the treatment administered. As Ahmed (2004, 33) argues, emotions are performative of the very bodies that

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make their circulation into a social life. At times, emotions that name familiar wounds enact social worlds or, as she argues, we might ask about "the different ways in which 'wounds' enter politics."

In this understanding of the stakes of trauma governmentality affectively organizing the imagination of peace and war in the human body, Israel is not an exception. It is indeed a confirmation, in a heightened form, of the thanatopolitical foundation of citizenship, circumscribed by the modern complex of the nation-state. However, what complicates this inclusion of Israel in this classic framework is that the (male) soldiers are not fully returned to civilian states until in their late forties, as they are asked to do reserve service and respond to any call of war. The condition of being a citizen-soldier is a productive space for the ambiguity that circulates the trope of trauma from one body to the other and from the "battlefield" to the battlefield of the city under depoliticized "terror."

In this chapter I considered how governmentality negotiates the apparently stark paradox of military service, which is named publicly as a context that harms citizens. Concretely, what is discussed publicly is the fact that there are obvious costs to sustaining the war effort, which are materialized in the actual lives subjected to suffering in this model of citizenship. When the injurious attachment to the state/nation is named as such by governmentalized agents, and inside a discourse that sustains the logic that causes the injurious interpellation, how do we account for its subjects persisting in these terms for their and their children's lives?

The theme of the *costs of war,* or the "price of war," in the words of one actor (ICTP), is simply the human suffering caused by military service, which is the suffering accumulated by every single citizen during military service. The corollary of this theme is that of a duty or debt – a society indebted to those who suffer "the worst" - which is essential for normalizing this logic of sacrifice that might otherwise become dangerous to the sovereign pact of citizenship. So we can see that

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the intense interest in trauma in the last two decades is productive for its performative effect that constitutes the very "society" that must be strengthened, made resilient or even brought to a normal state of feeling after each new episode of violence. What is glaringly obvious in the protocol at Peace of Mind, however, is the presence of the Palestinian as either an antagonist or as the actual target of the military service of those who return and develop post-traumatic symptoms of their experience "in the territories."

However, the thanatopolitical solution of "necessary costs" does not always hold during treatment at POM, for instance. Some post-traumatic symptoms dangerously become ethical dilemmas at times. More broadly, the sensing body is also performative in dangerous possibilities of public appearance of pain. Excess or transgressions of hegemonic names for what the soldiers feel do not necessarily mean emancipatory resistance from harmful discourses. The excess meaning from a body in pain, inevitably immersed in the trauma discourse, clinical or popular, rather reveals a contested field of possibilities to embody, for public purposes, a discourse that negotiates terms for legitimizing violence, exercised by the Israeli state and through acts of its citizens. In other words, any excess of the "speaking body" might contribute to consolidating the legitimacy of the state or destabilizing it. This depends on the social contexts in which the wound is invoked, circulated, debated, and even, at times, misfired into occasional feelings of being abandoned, as Ido Gal Razon set a scene for that interpellation of the "state" in the Knesset.

What is more interesting to follow next are those moments when the incoherencies that inhabit this landscape of the wound do constitute dangerous moments for the equilibrium performed through the iterations of violence - physical, narrative, and symbolic - on the human body. The next two chapters focus more closely on this point.

# Chapter 4 – "Is this a life? Could you live like this?"

Ido Gal Razon in the Knesset, 11 November 2015: "Look at me what I became. I piss my bed from trauma. They come to me at night and ask me, *Why did you kill me?* Could you live like this?"

"This is how trauma looks like. It can get that bad. But most of us don't suffer like Razon. We don't piss our beds after nightmares. Life goes on." (November 2015, personal conversation with Yehuda, IDF veteran)

Oshrat Kotler: "When you send your children to the army, they are kids...When they return, they are animals." (Israeli Channel 13, News Anchor, 23 February 2019 broadcast)

Achinoam Nini: "I have known this for at least 25 years." (Israeli musician, in public support of Kotler's statement)

What is the place of the body in politics and in a social world as we try to communicate pain in a body? To communicate about pain operates as a double gesture: first, it is a manner to make pain approachable, comprehensible for another, as pain is located in some body; second, it is already a manner of demanding a response: to show or say "this body-mind suffers," once it becomes the gesture that addresses others' attention, means there is already a demand for a gesture in response to and about *that* pain. Clearly, then, saying or showing "this body suffers" seeks a kind of response and to that extent, already shows, in its expression, that there is hope in a social world, deemed able to receive that address. At the same time, to speak about pain or show the pain is not a gesture

independent from the aesthetic regime and legal terms in which we make a body and a mind legible in a historical age. Trauma and post-traumatic suffering reflect, in that sense, a dominant framework that guides our attention to suffering minds and bodies and, with it, our vocabularies and the relation to our sensorial being with others. Yehuda could show me how trauma *looks like* because Razon's body showed its recognizable signs: signs that I believe most of us would easily understand and trace to a post-traumatic register, because we are all familiarized with the signs of pain in the discourse of post-trauma. (Fassin and Rechtman 2009)

As Foucault writes, a question about power, before it becomes a question about why the subject acts, must be about the processes that "materialize" the subject through concrete gestures. What Donna Haraway (Haraway and Harvey 1995, 510) points to when she reflects on the parallel logic of private property and modern corporeality, or the "enclosing of the commons of our own corporeality" (delimited by the skin as the outer border) speaks to urgent questions regarding our possibilities of sensing our mutual implications in a rich, expansive social world. To live a disembodied life is to have access to a poor or impoverished, dehistoricized imagination of corporeality and of the affective relations to one another. If we think about sovereignty as a discourse about the body, conceptualizing it as territorialization/corporealization, then what this formula directs attention to is the question of subjectivity as the project of the autonomy of the subject in an ontology of monadic selves. This is what Derrida (2009, 57, 91) calls the solipsism of the sovereign, whose best definition might be, he observes, the sheer power not to respond and not to register the address of any other. Territorialization/corporealization also rigidly structures how we can talk about pain when pain is strictly located in one body or another and not, for instance, in between bodies. (Das 2007, 40)

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To each body its private pain: this is what we must struggle against. This view appropriates authority over pain in two pervasive arguments that we have seen in the two previous chapters. Pain is either exclusively known by the suffering body, without being able to translate it to another (Scarry); or it is strictly the domain of certain epistemic agents who possess the exclusive authority to speak about the pain in this or that body. (Fassin and D'Halluin 2005) This is the domain of governmentality, which regulates the hierarchy between those subjects who merely have painful bodies and who can only exhibit their wounds, and others (doctors, psychologists, humanitarian agents, bureaucracies screening legitimate victims for compensation etc.), who have the words, the knowledge, and the publicity to speak about the wounds and about the body as an objectified matter.

This chapter starts with the puzzle of the combat soldier's recourse to the register of the sheer viscerality of his body suffering after the combat years, after the "war," and as he contemplates abandonment by the state "at home." It is a puzzle because this subject of biopower, valuable as citizen and as a "macho" hero is not someone expected to appear as a pained, humiliated and humiliating body, powerless that is. What the scene with Razon in the Knesset brings forth is a question about the viscerally pained body of the citizen. First, we might ask how and why viscerality, the body described as in abject pain, might be taken up by the citizen in a public address. After all, a common reading of necropolitics would argue that this is the fate of the abjected subject, who has access only to his or her body as the surface on which pain should speak for itself, precisely because all other means of expression, political have been denied to the dispossessed. (Allen 2013) Yet, the citizen-soldier brings a similar wound to the public space that should speak for itself.

This is where the analytics that asks about the body as the result of historical projects of corporeality (Butler 1993, 9) is useful to reflect further on the relationship between language, body, and the social worlds that are woven together as language becomes an embodied expression of suffering. As I have announced, Razon offers an extraordinary sensory scene precisely because his body speaks for the pain of many subjects, some "speaking" despite his better wish to live a normal life, and surely despite the wish of the militarized regime of the IDF's secret war operations. We must pay attention to the layering of voices, bodies, and claims that Razon, his body and his voice, host during that hearing in the Knesset. It is a scene of responsibility with various subjects interpellated, not in the least the "state" and the "society" that Razon calls to answer for his pain.

Taking Razon as a "scene of address" (Butler 2005, 50) in this extended understanding, I want to consider the relationship between language and the body in two ways here, both *made apparent* in his public address. The first one is the post-traumatic approach of the mind-body in pain, as Razon himself claims it in those terms - as a deserved repair, physical and psychological, after the t shocking events he had experienced in Gaza. This first manner of materializing the body in pain returns us to the first main question of the dissertation: how does a society witness violence, and what precludes witnessing when the atmosphere is one of felt and narrated terror? The second approach is what I call intercorporeal, as I pay attention to Razon's testimony and reflect on the possibility of thinking about *pain between bodies* and as I consider his own words about his suffering. As a man exasperated by voices that ask him a question he himself cannot ignore, he publicly declares: "I have killed for you with these hands," and continues: "and look at me now [the state I am in]. They come to me at night and ask me, *why did we have to die*?" The question emerging from this second mode of attending to his body's voices can be formulated as follows: how does the hegemonic subject, here as agent that perpetrates violence, relate his or her body in

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violence to the body of the dispossessed? This question will be more fully addressed as we turn to Fanon's observation about the psyche of the colonizer in the last section, which is really made in the same process that produces the dispossessed or the colonized. They are subjects of the same subjugating process discussed in Chapter One, the "imperial formation" that produces a sense of value in the differing quality of its colonizer and colonized subjects.

These two registers, the post-traumatic view on the one hand and the intercorporeal pain on the other, might seem wildly distinct. The first rigidly individualizes the injured subject. The latter declares the boundary between the effects of violence in the two bodies clashing, colonizer and colonized, is ultimately hopeless, which Fanon concluded by directly witnessing the colonial violence in Algeria. I want to argue that these two registers are in fact necessarily connected and impossible to disentangle, if we seriously consider Foucault's analytical invitation to think about processes materializing the subject before we ask about the effects of that materialization, e.g. why the actor acts in certain ways.

I will reflect now on Razon's first claim about the body in pain to be restored to health, to the sociality he once knew, and, in general, to the wellbeing he once enjoyed. He wants to turn back into a citizen and a deserving member of the elite category of citizens, who are also combat soldiers and, in other words, have sacrificed themselves.

**Post-traumatic intrusions**

In Razon's testimony, the citizen's *visceral* suffering is publicly spoken about and shown as inner pain, so intense that it can wake you up in the dead of night, sweating, or having "pissed the bed" from so much fear held *inside*, suddenly bursting *out*. This suffering causes a man seeking rest to be interrupted  by voices he does not wish to hear. They are "voices" without a

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body that nevertheless seek answers for their own lost lives, and in that relentless search, work on the sleepless man torturously. Yehuda showed me the scene of Razon's reckoning with the state in the Knesset committee, hoping I might understand what some veterans carry inside them.

This public incident ends with Razon becoming a public figure, engaged in the cause of the many other soldiers who suffered trauma during their military service since then. Razon also renewed his pledge of loyalty to the IDF and against the public revelations of BTS against similar scenes of secret murder of Palestinians.  More analytically stated, I am interested here in the kinds of public radical accusations against the state and the army, by the very soldier who had operated for decades in the thanatopolitical regime of citizenship as sacrifice, a critique that is nevertheless reappropriated in the hegemonic discourse, which makes it difficult to discern the foundational source of harm that predicates protection on sacrifice.

The imagery of PTSD organizes the meaning of the body showing pain as Yehuda could see it, and as he wanted to help me discern in Razon's bodily movements, his posture, his tone of voice. It is useful to consider the clinical symptoms in the way that they are defined by the American Psychological Association (APA), which was the epistemic authority that introduced the diagnostic and regulates any alteration in its meanings for the last decades. . Here, I focus on the first cluster of signs, namely "intrusion" as unwanted images, sounds, voices that belong properly to the past but return in pathological states. Later, we will return to this "sign" of PTSD and consider it serioulsy as a claim of some lives to have an answer regarding their murder. In the discourse of PTSD, their presence becomes an intrusion intelligible for others, such as Yehuda, only as a symptom of an inner pain of the citizen. But in a second mode, despite this produced spectrality of the Palestinians killed, their voices still ask a question about politics and do so speak through another's body, e.g., through Razon's "traumatic" appearance. They become momentarily

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concrete enough to receive a voice in the Knesset and to constitute, in their asking an account from the state, a scene of address for the state itself, embodied in the members of the hearing commission.

Thus, we might ask, first, how this potentially dangerous moment in which the state is revealed as the harming, abandoning, careless actor returns Razon, and many others like him, back to a sense of tenable citizenship that holds onto the hope that one is valuable enough qua citizen, despite the obvious signs that he was abandoned. What might also help understanding this is to further deepen this paradox by pointing to a *probable* but *wrong* interpretation of his complaint that you might make. I write this because I made this mistake. Hearing this sentence spoken through Yehuda's voice, my translator, *They come to me at night and ask me why did you kill me?,* initially I had thought that by "they" he is surely referring to the "more than 40 people" he declares he has killed that day, Palestinians in Gaza that is. However, perusing through comments on his Facebook page years later, I encountered a conversation clarifying that "Clear as Wine" had been the subject of inquiry for being a case of friendly fire. IDF soldiers had ended up killing each other because of miscommunication. Both Israelis and Palestinians had been killed by IDF soldiers. To that extent, Razon had been hurt a third time by the IDF, not only because of a failure to rescue him, but for shooting at him and having his comrades killed in this exchange between the two IDF units.

The official IDF rule is still not to disclose the cause of a citizen's death during military service, despite mounting public pressure from grieving families to know the reason for their children's death in service. They all die as heroes in the "mission," each new death ritually inscribed in the next year's list of names of the "fallen" on Memorial Day. (Vinitzky-Seroussi and Ben-Ari 2000) We will never know who "they" are in Razon's sleepless nights, whether his comrades or the Palestinians. And we continue with this chapter, accepting the ambiguity of the spectral body killed

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by the state but remaining stubbornly present both in the citizen's bedroom at night, and in the Knesset, occasionally, during the day.

*The Razon Wagon.  The generations of citizens-soldiers between the state and the nation*

Let me restate some of the relevant points to think more deeply about the relationship between sovereignty and the citizen, or the state and the body, through the public scene opened in 2015 by Razon's testimony in the Knesset. As mentioned in the Introduction, my interlocutor, Yehuda, was the one who introduced me to this testimony in a strong manner: this was a "historical moment" for the Israeli society because *for the first time* the "combat soldier" was coming in front of everyone to speak of his pain, of his weakness, and did so in the most visceral manner. Although in an intense state of anger, indeed a man sitting next to him touches his shoulder at regular intervals to calm him down, he does remember to *recall* to his audience, the Knesset, of its duty to him and to his family. The State of Israel was made by the "Razon Wagon," by the Razon family members who fought in all of Israel's wars, each son following in the footsteps of his father. Indeed, here we get a glimpse of the real argument for Razon's sense of fundamental injury, I believe: the Razon family had been there before the state had fully come into being. Therefore, *the generational chain had made the state* alongside the chain of wars, with each generation carrying its own weight. In a manifest scene of accusation, what was at work in this "testimony," in which a man in his early thirties described his disability and was demanding support from a handful of politicians or bureaucrats, was also a genealogy of the nation since "the Suez" (the 1956 War with Egypt). This inversed the order set by Ben-Gurion; it was not the state that had made the nation, but the nation, through men like Razon's grandfather and father, each in his own war and act of sacrifice, that had made the state. This is the genealogy invoked in the previous chapter by those

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who would prefer to be mobilized for war precisely because they trust their own plans for self-defense better than the state's.

Further, the injury that fired his anger was of having been abandoned, despite his incontestable value for the state, which had come about through his family's tradition of sacrifice. Instead of carrying the meaning of an injury of the person, the wounds he suffered and still carries are woven anew in the thread of debt owed and hopefully repaid someday. To the extent that the state owes him something, it is to heal the relationship and preserve the attachment.

The logic of sacrifice and debt naturally inscribes itself in the temporality imagined by the traumatic experience. The time of the violent event (any shock to the senses) is followed by a kind of suffering to which a response (healing, therapeutic) might be offered. Violence, in other words, is always behind, in the past, and the present is occupied merely by a wound that awaits its repair. It is a smooth temporality that sustains the time of sovereign politics, as Jenny Edkins writes. (2003, chap. 2) Indeed, since this testimony, Razon has become an activist, mobilizing the public for a deeper awareness of the high number of soldiers in situations similar to his: men who suffer intensely, ignored by the state or humiliated as they demand compensation, and who sometimes commit suicide out of despair. Against that miserable end, he has joined a circle of actors active at the grass-roots level in the work of both mobilizing soldiers to speak about their needs and their lack of institutional support and making the rest of society aware of what is in fact hiding under the cover of a tough combat soldier.

*Occupying the mourning time*

The theme of debt for self-sacrifice has, however, a local meaning with a longer trajectory dating back to the aftermath of the 1948 "war" or rather its colonization by the new political elites. The

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fighting had caused many deaths and bereaved families. The next decade crystallized that loss as the sacrifice of the "sons," whose bodies were publicly designated as the "silver platter" on which the state stood. (Bilu and Witztum 2000, 3) Yoram Bilu and Eliezer Witztum place this strategy in the tradition of the modern nation-state and its "nationalization" of the dead as heroes. (2) However, as others note, the Israeli "cult of the dead" until very recently functioned in a far more brutal regime of attachment to the body of the nation than in most Western States. Vinitzky-Serrousi and Ben-Ari describe the intensely brutal technique that has institutionalized the time between the death of the soldier and the moment after his or her burial. It is a procedure of enforced secretiveness and militarized in the strict bureaucratic procedure that takes the bereaved family hostage according to a plan in fixed steps, day by day during this period, in order to secure compliance to the ritual organized by the bureaucratic department of the Israeli Defense Forces that undertakes the burial. Consider the parlance of the procedure in those moment that the IDF knows to be deeply destabilizing, right after announcing the family of their loss: the operational terms are "mastering the situation" and "maintaining total control." (398)

To secure *total control*, the soldiers deployed to announce the death and take care of the burial might forbid the family to have contact with the media in the first days, filter the access of visitors to the bereaved, and have a last say in case the family would want to decorate the grave with inappropriate signs, artifacts, etc. The bereaved, once the body is buried and the IDF team accompanying them leaves, becomes officially integrated in the national "family of bereavement" and are celebrated as "living memorials." (Bilu and Witztum, 13) The IDF unit in charge of this tight controlled burial period is a complex bureaucratic body that manages a "sacrificial moral economy" (E. Weiss 2011, 577) still dominant in the aesthetic regime that appropriates the body of the soldier.

The theme of debt for sacrifice has a further performative meaning, creating an informal rule that regulates the rules regarding what a soldier has the authority to claim as a "service story" and, ultimately, whether a veteran can have an experience of service or not (see more in Chapter Five). The non-combat soldiers, a bureaucratic category that defines those not actively participating in violence defined as "combat," often express some variation of the following statements regarding their military experience: *I did not experience combat; I was not involved in serious instances of physical danger; I have not suffered as much as others, and therefore who am I to complain [about suffering]*? They bring together, in brief, the perceived differences between combat and non-combat positions in a logic that shows how the trope of sacrifice is overwhelmingly colonizing the public possibility of expressing what is, in fact, violence and who suffers it, as a function of the prior decision to locate the combat soldier's body in the "battlefield." The dominant emotions around the identity of the non-combat soldier have been, until very recently, those of shame and guilt. (Löwenheim 2015) In 2015 still, most of my interviewees did start our conversation by first telling me whether they had been "combat soldiers" or not, despite being informed that I was interested only in their activism as civilians. This hierarchy between two kinds of "soldiers" and their differential rights to claim authority when they claim having an "experience" of war is prevalent in other contexts of soldierly subjectivities and contributes to a dominant trope regarding the physical localization of war "there," at a distance from society. (MacLeish 2016, 226)

One function of this distinction between combat and non-combat positions is to place the ultimate experience of violence, danger, and "knowledge" of the truth of war in someone who has suffered more, who has been even closer to the real danger. Thus it defers the responsibility of each citizen's participation and witnessing of the reality of war/army service. More broadly, however, the figure of sacrifice that deserves honoring stands for an even more ominous effect of thanatopolitical

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subjectification, what Danny Kaplan (2006, 125) traces to a cultural complex of "heroic male bonding" and love that can be acknowledged and celebrated only in death.

*"Look at me, what I have become. Could you live like this?*

Being in war, in harm's way, had affected them all, but especially combat soldiers - the most revered in the discourse of virtuous violence for self-defense against all surrounding enemies. This was Razon's message, belatedly coming to inform the Knesset and the nation, after years of solitary suffering for him and his family. However, as historical and genealogical studies of war suffering in Israel show, this had not been the first time a combat soldier claimed deep suffering, traumatic in its extent and force of affecting his post-war, civilian existence. (Lomski-Feder 2008; Lomski-Feder and Ben-Ari 2007)

If Yehuda was unaware of this recent history of combat soldiers previously claiming their war trauma, I could not tell. Staying with his declared self-presentation, this scene of conflict with the state bureaucracy was a turning point for him and for the entire Israeli society, glued to their screens to watch Razon's exhibition of pain because combat soldiers do not *appear* to suffer, ever. Yehuda was instructing me about a definite cultural feature of his world and wanted to emphasize that the description of physical weakness, with such an abject description of the frail and incontinent male human body, was going against the informal but all-powerful rules about what it means to be a man, that is, "macho." But then, "this is how PTSD looks like, this is how bad it can get," he said, orienting my attention to Razon's jerky limbs, the sharp movements that accompanied his narration. The body was speaking for itself, Yehuda implied. I could not miss it, if I paid attention to how bad it looked in Razon's body.

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Yehuda explained that the entire society had failed to see the signs of trauma for a long time. He disliked this concept, post-trauma, and argued that no doctor or psychologist could really help those men who suffered the worst: "how could they if they had not been there? This is not like a car accident". There is a peculiar inconsistency here in Yehuda's position, the kind fruitful for thinking with. On the one hand, Yehuda claimed that the "society" could not really understand what men like Razon, who had participated in the Second Lebanon War, *knew because they had been face-to-face with the enemy; and for having confronted in himself and in others "the best and the worst that a human being is capable of."* The line between those who know and those who do not know the ultimate reality of war was starkly clear to him. It was enough, he said, to look in another combat soldier's eyes, with no words necessary, to make themselves understood to each other. He knew everything that was essential about any other too, at that level. He knew, that is, how to read through the body because he had been close to combat too. To that extent, as his knowledge had been acquired in combat situations and practiced with others like him, it was obvious that others could not understand.

On the other hand, Yehuda was also criticizing "society" for not being willing to see the suffering of combat soldiers. In other words, the suffering was accessible to the *others*, if they tried to face it. In fact, the inability to face the suffering of those who carried it most intensely was his accusation against "society." This unwillingness to confront pain was old, he explained, a socialized blindness rooted, not in the sheer inability to discern pain, but in the unwillingness to sit with the pain of another,and which was often quite close to the "surface," if you dared to pay attention. The origins of this reluctance to sit with pain were in the 1940s, he went on explaining, when the survivors of the European Shoah came to Israel. No one wanted to see their pain or listen to what they knew about *the worst a human being is capable of*. Only with the Eichmann Trial,

Yehuda continued, could the Israeli society open itself to listen to the unbearable. The deep-seated problem was, therefore, a sheer inability among the Jewish citizens to feel with others, in company. The parallel between the survivors of the Shoah and the combat soldiers was natural to Yehuda. They were both instances where private pain was brought "home," upon the arrival of the survivors of the European extermination camps and the return of soldiers from Lebanon after the war. The returned soldier, registering this socialized inability to sit with pain, quickly learned to keep things to himself. However, outbursts, such as Razon's, were bound to happen. "It's like a bottle of Coke," he offered an analogy, "You cannot shake it and not expect it to explode." The suffering of people was working inside them, accumulating a force that would find a way out eventually and become visible for everyone, meaning that *one day it will explode*.

Telling me that I had to pay attention to Razon's gesture, Yehuda's ignorance of a previous episode of warriors' disgruntled critique of war could be either because he had chosen to forget about it or as an effect of produced oblivion that makes every new generation feel as though they are the first to break the myth of mute self-sacrifice. In his mid-30s, he might have been unaware of the landscape with the 1970s public debates that started criticizing the collectivist ethos dominant since the 1948, and, in particular, the logic of the sacrificial death of soldiers. (Gan 2009; Loushy 2015) This reversal since the 1973 War does not mean a critique of war necessarily, although marginal voices have expressed this view as well. Rather, it is a growing critique of the IDF's carelessness in dealing with the lives of the Israeli family's "sons and daughters," an intensification of the caring biopolitical face in the otherwise continuing logic of necessary wars for self-preservation, replacing the sacrificial logic of biopolitical war-making. (Levy 2010; Levy and Mizrahi 2008; E. Weiss 2011) For Yehuda, this was simply a foundational scene, a moment in which something new had begun.

## Hauntings. The excess in the performative bodies

However, lingering too in the Knesset on Razon's testimony day, and irrepressible apparently, was another presence of lives unnamed, *disappeared* in the secret operation, "Clear as Wine." Yet, this presence was powerful enough to bring the Razon Wagon away from the strong feeling of belonging to the community it had erected. They were unmaking his life for the last ten years, since he had finished his service, and they had a demand to make as well - *from him,* during sleepless nights - and *through him*, in this public speech, to the larger audience and the state. In other words, his account of himself, presenting his relevant genealogy, was inevitably also the premise for constituting a scene of appearance for others who had lived and died, uncounted and unnamed, disappeared by the regime of military "operations" organized covertly by the IDF. This too was a kind of testimony and its demand for the state to be held accountable was very clear, on the body of the Jewish soldier and through his voice, even if despite his intention. This is the performative body of trauma also, in its dangerous performances of presence and absence of lives.

What is thus remarkable for our thought on citizenship is the fact that the public presence of the killed Palestinian was emerging in Razon's performance of his own abandonment. That Razon's intention was not to bring justice to the Palestinians killed during "Clear as Wine" or to their families, who mourn for them, was obvious. But it was also obvious that, at night when he was alone, he was in an unwilled but irrepressible conversation with some voices that came to him, asking him to account for some of his deeds. In 2015, *finally*, after years of intimate suffering, that conversation had moved, suddenly, into the most public space of the Israeli polity, in the Knesset and on-screen, and to the attention of the entire Israeli public.. It had become a moment to pay attention to something disregarded until then, not fully discernible as a body disappeared from the world of human relations.

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The sense of multiple voices cohabitating in Razon's mind, ones that were clearly not at peace but fully illuminating relevant questions regarding the logic of secret violence that Razon was publicizing, was striking. Razon's mind was not his, apparently, not fully, since the people he had killed started coming to him at night and asking questions, a state over which he had no control. The trouble was, indeed, that he was unwillingly living with these haunting voices. It was an overwhelming cohabitation inside the living man, and producing intense suffering. In the clinical vocabulary of post-trauma, one would call such voices *intrusive.* As we have seen indeed one cluster of symptoms operates precisely with the notion of displaced images, smells, and sounds that come from another place and time and detract the subject from his present location. They take him or her back to the traumatic "site." Once codified as a cluster of clinical symptoms, the voices would become indeed the object of an attempt to produce a separation between the past and present, the living and the dead. But could it be conceivable to see the voices of the Palestinians otherwise? Could we consider them in their asking such a clear question: why did you kill us? In the name of what principle of government was our life and death included?

Razon had inscribed himself decidedly in the register of post-trauma, but the description of his problem illustrates the complicated web of relations of lives beyond those we think we can choose. For Razon, the question from the dead was clearly disturbing. He wanted to disturb the Knesset as well by declaring it unbearable. The state itself cannot avoid such intrusive presences, or not always. As Mbembe (2016; 2019, 4) observes, regarding the necropolitical production of spectrality for some lives left out of biopolitical projects, their bodily presence is made absent, and this means, ultimately that technologies are at work that deny relationality between lives.

On his side, Yehuda disliked the PTSD label, and the terms coming from psychologists, who would bring it to the same level as other shocking experiences, "like a car crash". These terms for rejecting the PTSD name for their experiences are common among veterans who struggle with the signs of post-trauma publicly circulated, in particular, the images associated with the loss of control over one's body and mind. Although he was emphatic in his satisfaction with Razon breaking the "macho myth," he noted that he did not suffer like that, so badly, so viscerally, that is. He had his own terms for describing the kind of suffering he was carrying, or he tried at least to articulate them as he was negotiating his difference from Razon's kind of suffering. In the Second Lebanon War, he had been a tank crew member. In his assessment, a tank is the "ultimate war machine," and he had been shielded from the worst of the fighting that the combat soldiers deployed on the ground faced. His unit's task was to provide information obtained at a distance, from the tank to the actual scenes of combat. In other words, he stressed that he had not suffered the most dangerous contact with the enemy. Razon had been closest out there. "*He is not crazy, he is injured*":

> I was a tank soldier. A tank is a war machine. It is unbelievable the power you get as a nineteen-year-old, you get a license to kill. Before going to the army, I went to a yeshiva, Ma'ale Gilboa Yehsivat. It's one-year program before the army, to study Jewish texts. There was no politics discussed, but the aim was to take the Torah outside of the study room. In the army, what happens is a symbolic normalization of war. You get more and more pins to hang on yourself. (He slightly touched his upper chest, his shoulders, as if he were wearing them. Pieces of paper.) But you want them, you desire them. What my Rabbi used to say, "the most important thing is to come back". Do not put any price on those pins, they are just like earrings. War is death, violence, machoistic. But when you are in it, it's bad and good. It took me a long time to get out of the military shtanz. It took time for the ice to melt. I mean the macho thin, the constant yes/no, commands, orders you have to give and take. You always have to be decisive, quick, Don't think, just do. The whole experience. It was awful, a lot of sadness and death. But you have to continue your life. You have to continue your life, go to the parents of your dead friends, talk with them, eat at their table, have fun and remember the good things. People are more emotionally injured than post-traumatic. My friends are emotionally injured. There are things I will carry with

me for the rest of my life, they say. I am better in some ways [because of the army], you understand like that what is important in life, you appreciate the taste of water, of food, a night of sleep, what you really need. We become like animals in the cities. We eat so much, there is all this excess, so we learned to appreciate the essential. People have lost the concept of humility. There is no real grace anymore.

There is a big difference between post-traumatic and emotionally injured. With post-trauma it's deep in your being, you cannot remove it. Emotionally injured, it means you can work on yourself, to make it better, the injury, by definition, is something you can heal. Each of us will be forever wounded by our shared experience. And each of us will have to rejoin the world.

I went four months up North [in the Second Lebanon War]. It was very difficult. Talking, is like describing a movie, it's all abstract. That's why we run.

Searching long for the right word to describe how he felt since he had ended his service, Yehuda found with some satisfaction the word "aloof" to explain his relationships with the people "at home." He was keeping himself apart, in other words. Although he declared he was volunteering for the small activist organization I was researching closely, Resisim, whose members worked expressly to make public veteran's stories from their service, combat or no combat, Yehuda did not feel the need to talk. He was then a member of a well-known group in some circles of combat veterans, initiated by a veteran of the First Lebanon War, Rami Yulzari.

Yulzari's activist work is focused on the claim of a deep but invisible, psychological wound that soldiers carry as a post-traumatic condition after service and on the need to provide support and rehabilitation to the returned soldiers before *things get worse*. In blog posts on his social media page and on the platform offered by NATAL, a major site of psychological assistance to the victims of trauma in Israel (see Chapter Five), Yulzari has made many stories public, both personal and about other veterans who suffer from trauma because of their service. His mission is to contribute to alleviating suffering, the worst of which, as he presents in some cases, is the suicide of veterans. They have reached the last of their personal strength needed to deal with trauma on their own, as well as with the innumerable forms of frustration and humiliation inflicted in relation

to the state authorities they appeal to in order to receive recognition for their trauma and necessary rehabilitation and compensation. In collaboration with NATAL, he offers support to those who might need company and feel isolated, alone with their suffering. Even in the middle of the night, and especially then, he stresses, he answers hundreds of calls on a hotline that deals with many suicidal cases. The cases of soldiers' suicide are in fact the urgency he wants to make public. It is the kind of suffering that goes on silently until the soldier can no longer manage it on his own and takes his life. His personal story is similar as for years he suffered in silence until he received successful psychological treatment, which was, in his case, prolonged exposure (PE) therapy. The treatment and the process he went through along the years, from suffering and up to the point where he transformed the past into a formative experience, had brought him to come to the rescue of others.

*Running with Rami* has a Facebook page and an internal platform that keeps people in touch regarding events, news about the IDF or trauma, or on running sessions. People meet on sunny days to run together, have a laugh, and build a community instead of keeping isolated. "You can get me out of Lebanon, but you cannot get Lebanon out of me," Yulzari had declared publicly at some point, to call for public attention to wounded soldiers. When they run, and as they carry something familiar to each other, each one's Lebanon, the solitude lifts. This is the promise of *Running with Rami* - community found again between those who know the worst truths from war and violence.

Yehuda liked to join these runners and the easy conviviality he could find among former soldiers, "having a laugh together," exchanging ideas. As much as he mocked the deep "machoistic spirit" in which the army socialized them, he also "knew" what another combat soldier feels and *knows* more about life, death, pain, and what a human being is capable of - a depth that the man-not-

animal can only know. IN a radical reversal of the trope that speaks of animal transformations of those who had to fight and maybe kill others, Yehuda argued that those "at home" were living like animals, ignorant of the fully human capacities and needs. Yehuda's critique of the *home*, or of life in the Jewish city so alienated from what war really can teach you, reflects a mode of socializing the (former) combat soldier and *his* special knowledge. Without this special knowledge, and the *aloofness* of this pained knower who "does not need to speak," what would those at home have to face as already known, already present, and much closer to the Jewish city than is currently sensed? Thus, instead of focusing on the mutenesss of those in trauma, how do we start asking about the social conditions that produce the felt sense of futility to explain how war feels? If we proceed from this other possibility that his aloofness is necessary for an essential relationship between society and the territories to keep holding, then his "aloofness" or post-trauma is indeed productive in order to keep the home from being contaminated with the violence, savage, of the colonial occupation "in the territories."

*Post-images. Nausea*

Yehuda refused to define his state as post-traumatic, although some of his friends and a close relative *suffered* badly, and he could use that term for them. '*Post-images' is a better word*, he said. "You drive sometimes, and you see images from there. Nausea. You feel like you want to vomit something out, but you cannot." He paused. "Because it's parts of you that you want to vomit."

Maybe because we spoke in English, not his mother tongue, or maybe for another reason, he did not say "I." He said "you" That impersonal you that English shares with other European languages, as if to enunciate a law, the general, and surely the impersonal. It is the trick that disappears this body, this nausea, and places it in a body, no one's in particular. Maybe your (mother) language

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has that trick too. Mine does not allow it, not really. What to do to with Anyone's feeling? With Anyone's nausea? Can we call it the citizen's nausea already? How to refer to that attachment to oneself that grounded Yehuda and felt attached to, yet at the same time, is indigestible, unassimilable, and still impossible to get out of? Without clinging too much to the metaphor of desired purge, elimination, detox, can we use this attachment to oneself, not to flee, but to see more of ourselves?

After he left, I wrote down what he said, not because I was afraid of forgetting his words but to test their force on me. I was curious about the response that might come from such a statement when it was no longer attached to Yehuda's face but to something more diffused, *made* diffused, circulated that is, by the *work* of terror between bodies. *You feel you want to vomit, but it's parts of you that you need to vomit. So you can't.* What in Yehuda gives the account of nausea, and of whose life by now? He presented himself to me in brief sentences, practical and without adjectives. He let me know that he cared about his volunteer work to make others feel they have a space to come forth, literally on a stage and using a microphone, to speak about things they could not tell their parents or lovers. But he chose not to do that; he indirectly offered glimpses of a community of men who choose instead to run, side by side, finding "talking" unnecessary. Yet if others feel like him, wherein running keeps them going since they cannot vomit parts of themselves, I wanted to know: how does that bond hold the hope of (still) mattering as citizens, as being valuable, and in the name of what "life"?

I want to argue here for the fruitfulness of staying with the ambiguity of Yehuda's nausea and contrasting it with the constraining meaning of PTSD and its colonization in the logic of state/sovereign temporality (Edkins 2003, 9; Feldman 2004, 170; Willse and Goldberg 2007, 267) Yehuda had defined his state as one of living with "post-images" rather than trauma because with

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post-*images* he could work, transform them in a way, and not stay trapped in the logic of repetition of the past. He did not have to speak of the abject signs of trauma's marks in a body, "pissing" and "vomiting," meaning powerlessness and a lack of self-control. But nausea still connotes just that. Once nausea installs itself, everything becomes somehow secondary to its intensity. It feels as if you are slightly besides yourself and your body; it is a kind of occupation of your body for as long as it lasts. Staying with this and other speculations on what nausea might mean for him, and as a body occupied with something that is relentless - the "post-images," with a trace of the experience "up North" - that he would want out but cannot get out, we might reflect on the potential for "nausea" to be a dangerous feeling in the hegemonic discourse that can hardly tolerate ambiguity.

How can we orient our attention to Yehuda's nausea to make it operational for a critique of violence? What we must first note is the social effect, on his body and mind, of the attachment to "injurious interpellation," which, as Athena Athanasiou (2013, 15) points out in conversation with Butler's work, is our historical condition when we start *anything* that might emancipate us. She writes, echoing Butler's reflections on the dangers of any performance-repetition of our roles that

> even though we are compelled to reiterate the norms by which we are produced as present subjects, this very reiteration poses a certain risk, for if we reinstate presence in a different, or catachrestic way, we might put our social existence at risk (that is, we risk desubjectivization). But we might also start to performatively displace and reconfigure the contours of what matters, appears, and can be assumed as one's own intelligible presence.

Yehuda's function as a sovereign perpetrator of violence is a source of harm, and he is searching for the right names to express this which, you might have noticed, are nouns rather than adjectives: post-images, nausea. As Athanasiou points out, an injurious interpellation is, or can feel, as the only social world we have, and to that extent, we can see how, in the absence of better terms to define what state we are in, actors like Razon reenter the register of citizenship, even as they contemplate their abandonment. The very condition of abandonment becomes a state of waiting

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for protection, because he knows that he *deserves* it. On the other hand, Yehuda's "just running"

and "not talking" was accompanied by a state of feeling alienated in a society, at home that is, that

had lost its grace in his eyes.

*Colonial aphasia. Avi, or "noisy in Gaza"*

Avi, like all the other members of Resisim, was a volunteer. He was working in an office as an

accountant and was helping Resisim with its administrative work. However, he had a story of his

personal silence for years, regarding his painful experience during service in Gaza. Although I had

told him I was strictly interested in the reasons for his volunteer work, he started narrating his

experiences as soldier immediately after we sat down with our coffee at a table.

I started my military service on the 26th of November 1999, and I ended it in 2002.

And how come you remember the exact date? He smiles as to something obvious. There are a few things you will never forget - they will stay with you forever. We started with six months of training in Arad, a place in the south. He smiles, looking not at me, but in the space between us, where our coffee cups sit. You learn there how to walk, how to eat, sleep, how to work with your team, with your friends. You learn how to shoot, how to get information.

How to get information?

How to look for the enemy, how they look. You also learn the history of the wars.

I heard this is the most difficult time in service the first six months. That it breaks you.

(He smiles again, without eye contact) It's hell.

And after that?

In 2000 it started to be noisy in Gaza. For about three weeks. That was the first time I shot someone.

Did the training prepare you for that?

You cannot be prepared for this. In the army they ask you to do things against nature. You have no choice. In any other situation, when you are threatened, you usually run and hide, but in war you have to shoot. From the moment you go to

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war, you have to do everything to keep the land. But you don't think about the land in that moment, you think about your friends.

You can choose not to shoot.

You have no choice. You shoot. Think about the six million people. It's the same not a difference. Just another day of the same. (He pauses) It's okay, I don't care if I'm judged. I would do it all again.

And after that?

After those days it got calm again.

We went back in the desert for training, for about two months. I was expecting a vacation soon. But the days before that I was called back. That day I was off, driving to a wedding, my uncle's wedding, when I got a call, that it was noisy again.

I saw a lot of combat.

Do you remember everything from that time? People sometimes say they have forgotten the most difficult parts.

There are things you forget and things you cannot forget. The 30th of November 2000, 4.42 AM. I was in an ambush mission. I was looking at the watch. We were patrolling in a jeep, taking stuff to colleagues to continue their mission. What stuff?

He looks for the word in English, cannot find it and starts using google translate.

Camouflage material. The night before, we celebrated. Not really a celebration but we were happy we are alive. We had been in combat, in a patrol, 4 people, for six hours of shooting. We killed 11 people, terrorists. The ambush was organized for the next day to make sure that everything was clear. He makes an ample move with his army, as if to clear space in front of him. I lost my best friend that day. We lost two people that day, my friend and my commander. And many were hurt, sent to hospitals.

There is a long silence. I have no question on my mind. He is still looking in the middle distance between us. He goes on without my help. I was a soldier for one year and two months, after that I took a course to become a commander. How did you choose that? My commander told me I would be good for that.

How did you feel giving orders to people only one year younger than you?

You are like a father to them. Then you become like a brother, because you take care of each other, your life depends on them and their life on you. In war you grow up fast. In three years, you grow like in twenty. No one anywhere else in the world is dealing with life like we do in the army.

Were you talking with your friends, with your brothers, when it was tough, about how you felt?

You only talk years after. Resisim is doing this, it offers a forum. You talk, laugh at things, because you are with people who understand you, and you understand them.

You did not talk about it with your friends or wife?

My wife does not understand me. For years I used to cry at night after she fell asleep. She cannot understand the big picture. She cannot understand the experience of fighting. Do you have children? No? It's like that, I will never understand a woman in the moment of giving birth.

But there are women in combat, right? They know.

It's not the same. Women will never be sent to fight like men, in dangerous situations.

And when did you decide to speak about your service?

It wasn't at Resisim. It was six months before I got married. I was in a workshop, called the "Outlook Program". My boss had sent me there after a bad period. I had a bad time, and he wanted to help me. It was like surgery, without tools. Like peeling an onion. (With his hands he makes a gesture of holding something in his palms and opening it.) You hide it for years, from yourself. Even if it's there. I know it when I cry.

How do you feel about the whole discussion around trauma?

Everybody has a PTSD scratch from this time. You can ignore it, hide it. But the price of loss, the missing people, remains. Resisim is a very nice gesture for fighters to talk to each other. On Memorial Day, there is a group speaking meeting, when stories are told about combat. There was once a eulogy for the funeral of my friend and was talked about in the newspapers. There you could feel it's not okay to cry in public. I have friends who suffer post-trauma. They have lost people and feel responsible. But it always happens later. You have no time to think in the army, like a machine you act, you fight the war. This is the war you think you are fighting, but the war with yourself- you start that years after. Then you understand what you lived, feel guilty, you say that what you did was wrong. When you have time to think. It's a war with yourself, with regret. It infects all your life. You think if you could have done things differently, your choices, about the unit, did I give enough to my country, was it enough?

Avi has two kids. I ask him, how he feels about his boys going to become soldiers when they will turn seventeen. He becomes silent again, and looks again away from me, in between us.

I will be proud of them, he says.
Do you know why we are called Resisim?
It means fragments, right?

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It means shrapnel. Because our memories are like shrapnel.

I recall Stoler's useful expression, colonial aphasia, a "condition in which the occlusion of knowledge is at once a dismembering of words from the objects to which they refer, a difficulty retrieving both the semantic and lexical components of vocabularies, a loss of access that may verge on active dissociation, a difficulty comprehending what is seen and spoken". Avi's naming of noise is reflecting that occlusion of thought, the inability to name what was happening to him, and what he had been viscerally close to in Gaza as a soldier. This last point illuminates Stoler's insight in the present regarding colonial aphasia as a produced inability to name facts for what they are and, surely, for what they mean to a people's coherence as a political community, built in the violent exercise of ruling over another and thus demanding exclusive presence.

To be able to articulate what is at work in a state of being ruled as a colonizing citizen has something essential to do with the ability to locate one's body in the colonial history of one's present state and one's terms of being a citizen. As Robbie Shilliam (2016: 244) shows, the inability to think that condition (e.g.,the foundational racialization that made possible "Britishness and Englishness" as in fact colonial products of the empire) reproduces the logic of historicism, which mediates through the body of the "nation" a far broader project of racial, cultural, and civilizational preeminence. This observation, regarding the genealogy of European democracies as a process of creating a credible distance between the civilized peoples and the "enemy," reaches, in this stage of the First Intifada, a radical disembodiment of the other, becoming simply "noise." To connect this to Razon's disturbing nights, in which he was uncontrollably reflecting on the people he had killed, Avi's recourse to this name for his state of suffering, a decade after his service, is far more serious in the simple sense that he is not discerning his military service in relation to other lives, even as they might be called "terrorists."

Avi's inability to name what he had lived through, even years after his service, reflects the produced incapacity to discern the body of the other, as he is immersed in the atmosphere of "absolute enmity," as Mbembe argues, without possibility of imagining relationality. It is an inability produced by the very logic of the warfare that he was waging in Gaza in the early 2000s, which was so-called asymmetric warfare where a state army was fighting against an "enemy" who was impossible to fully discern from the life of the civilians residents in Gaza. This is the essence of counterinsurgent, colonial warfare.

Here, I want to deepen the analytical attention to the question of how the body of the citizen mediates this relationship that depoliticizes war, wherein war becomes a necessary means for survival and which must be preserved through continuous violence. The argument builds on Derrida's thoughts on the archive as principle of command and order and suggests considering the body of the citizen-soldier as a kind of archive – for storing the right memory of the past and for focusing public attention on the future.

The present terms of the visible order - the legal day-to-day logic that preserves the order in place as it assigns bodies to their proper places (Rancière 2006, 3) is in a troubled relationship with the fact of its origin as moment of contention, whose memory is of a violence prior to the constitution of the enclosure from where the sovereign can exclude. As long as the subjects do not have the means to return to the memory of the state of war as the state's foundation, the danger of what we might call a *civil* war can be kept at bay– a danger always deferred but never fully extinguished. Further, as we saw, Foucault's emphasis is on the indelible *traces* of that original war that cannot be effaced from the present. These are frustrating traces for the sovereign, they cannot be easily removed, through neither the law nor institutions. The "body of the State" is *marked*, a mark or a *stigmata* that is so much like a wound, a mark/wound that cannot be erased. If the war is deferred

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(to the outside of either the prehistory of Europe or to the absolute outside of "America" as the land of no-law, of the savage), what name will this violence have to bear so that the "state" can preserve for itself as the ultimate power to kill without consequences?

**The body as the sovereign archive**

At this point, these tactical uses of genealogy through reading texts by Hobbes, Schmitt and others, who have worked to erase the blood from the foundation of the state (2006, ix), is no longer enough. Attention to a different kind of archive is required to understand better how the terror at home is felt but unnamable, how the divorce between the body and the public speech circulates the effort that breaks the silence only to better consolidate the "public secret" (Taussig 1999, 2-3) of sovereign, thanatopolitical citizenship. The public secret is a condition of sharing not merely the content of the "secret," but the rule that preserve its unspeakability in public. *I know it, and you know it, and we know not to speak of it*. In Taussig's words, the public secret is "that which is generally known, but cannot be articulated." (5) It thrives in states of terror, and it is suggestive that Taussig's occasions to observe its social life are (post)colonial. The public secret is what keeps "us" together more strongly than anything else. If there are powerful forces conditions that make some knowledge impossible to articulate while it is on everyone's mind, this does not mean that there is necessarily silence in its place. To the contrary, "culture of terror" thrive on acts of narration that intensify terror. (Taussig 1984)

The next section makes the case to consider the possibility that, first, no state memory functions outside of the archive. This is a rather straightforward point made by Derrida. Second, I want to suggest that citizenship, as a corporeal regime that codifies value, can be considered a kind of archive – a localization of memory where memory is both stored, guarded, and redeployed at

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appointed times, as Derrida would say. Both arguments point to the narrative act as a product of a culture of terror and, to various degrees, reproducing it.

If sovereignty is a project of memory, and this memory requires erasing the troublesome memories of the origin, I then ask how the process of forgetting violence is actualized, solidified, and indeed a political project of self-formation of making subjects as a material subjugation. This matter, flesh made in torture (see next section), makes it possible for the preservation of a necessary distance between the citizen and his body, and the disqualified and his or her body. This is not to dehistoricize the body as some biological substance outside of historical contexts and cultural mediations. Instead, I consider the body as the always contingent effect in a process of embodiment. To that extent, this process of embodiment, repetitive imprinting, and learning across generations (the nation here is a perfect example), and which requires time to work, can be considered a kind of archival body or archive, to the extent that the project of embodiment is controlled by the hegemonic discourse. As we know, there is always an excess, but before we consider that excess in the subsequent chapters, the *effort* of the archive to contain history in the body, and as a kind of a chosen body, is a necessary intermediate step.

Derrida (1995, 9) recalls the etymological origins of the archive, derived from the Greek *arkhe*, meaning to lead, to command, and to begin:

the meaning of "archive, … comes to it from the Greek *arkheion*: initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded. The citizens who thus held and signified political power were considered to possess the right to make or to represent the law. On account of their publicly recognized authority, it is at their home, in that *place* which is their house (private house, family house, or employee's house), that official documents are filed. The archons are first of all the documents' guardians. They do not only ensure

the physical security of what is deposited and of the substrate. They are also accorded the hermeneutic right and competence. They have the power to interpret the archives. Entrusted to such archons, these documents in effect state the law: they recall the law and call on or impose the law. To be guarded thus, in the jurisdiction of this *stating the law*, they needed at once a guardian and a localization. Even in their guardianship or their hermeneutic tradition, the archives could neither do without substrate nor without residence. It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this **house arrest**, that archives take place. (all emphasis except for the bold, in original)

There is no surer house arrest than the body itself, the sovereign body, the foundational enclosure, and the object of accretion with ever renewed signs of presence. Let us return to the genealogical tracing of the effort to make a presence where the terror comes, in fact, from facing an absence. We also should focus on the moment that the hegemonic discourse names a "war" and a "war of independence" at the origin of the state. The human body is an archive whose accumulation is not only discursive, consisting of representations and visual artifacts, but also of sensorial and affective investments, which give the sense of the tenable enclosure in which we are located. The next chapter aims to show this. To position the analytical perspective on the body as an archive of power is therefore a manner to open the body for a different possibility of memory and how we came to be today.

Derrida's genealogy of "law," as stabilized by an archival arrest, adds a necessary supplement to Foucault's work. The archive is not essentially concerned with the past but with the future. (26) What is kept inaccessible to memory and its logic of localization and exclusion is all done in the name of a chosen future that must occur. This is historicism's objective and the premise that always legitimizes the sacrifice of the present (and its lives) for the sake of the future, a known future already inscribed in its origin story. As an "archontic" power, sovereignty is preeminently a regime

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of memory that operates by regulating the necessary forgetting of its violent origins and its violent principle that keeps it going, which is terror. *That forgetting is not only produced in the memory of the dispossessed but just as much in the memory, or the absence of memory, of the citizen as the subject of the "victor's" discourse.* The bodies that materialize hegemony, whether they be soldiers, border guards, or bureaucrats, must be guarded from discerning how their own living corporeality constitutes an archival principle. This is the principle of localization, the house arrest, that regulates the imaginable relations with the past and the future.

The absence of memory, enacted in the subject hailed as valuable, whether as a citizen or a soldier-citizen, in our case, is not merely an inability to remember because the facts have been erased from the archive. More difficult to account for is the absence of memory that happens when the facts are present and accessible to the citizen as public facts but do not led to the possibility of forming a judgement on them. The condition of military service submits the citizen to annual return to the military condition. However, the accumulation of experience regarding the actual purposes of the "service" does not necessarily become a judgement on the nature of citizenship and what it requires. It is in this sense that "Breaking the Silence" instantiates both a genuine effort at criticizing the IDF and an illustration of how this critique is replayed by each generation, without changing the facts on the ground and despite their horrifying lessons about the "disaster" of citizenship (Azoulay 2015). To return this last point to thinking about the archive, Derrida points out, to make something public does not necessarily mean that it would become also, necessarily, not a secret. Let us read him again: "It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the nonsecret." (10)

*The stigma of the inadmissible war*

"In Israel, the stigma regarding trauma and PTSD is lessening now. It was hard for the soldiers to admit that they suffer, but now they can more easily speak of their problems. They even use this word themselves when they come to us" (personal conversation with a psychologist in Jerusalem, 2015)

Let us read Foucault's (2003, 90) question regarding the inadmissibility of the foundational war, the one that formed the very order of citizenship, again but differently this time:

> *What is this war that the State has pushed back into prehistory, into savagery, into its mysterious frontiers, but which is still going on? And second, how does this war give birth to the State? What effect does the fact that it was born of war have on the constitution of the State? What stigmata does war leave on the body of the State once it has been established?*

Very straightforwardly, I suggest considering these stigmata as a trace of the violence that cannot be named, "inadmissible," and more to the point, publicly inadmissible: what we cannot name among each other, as citizens. This trace obviously appears in forms that are at times disturbing (nightmares for Razon, a dysfunctional social life for Avi, nausea and "post-images" for Yehuda) and which are appropriates in the register of post-trauma. However, they irremediably "spill out" of the containers of the names given.

Regarding the French rule in Algeria, Frantz Fanon (2004) reflected on what he named, with a dose of hesitancy, the traumatic effects from colonial violence a kind of disorder: "brief psychotic disorders if we want to use the official term but putting particular emphasis on war in general and the specific circumstances of a colonial war." (184) To clear the ground regarding possible confusions born of misunderstanding the peculiar logic of colonial warfare, Fanon goes on to explain that, despite a broad understanding that these "pathological processes" would be

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temporary, as a dominant view had asserted about the returned soldiers form the First and Second World War, his view is that

> on the contrary… the pathological processes tend as a rule to be frequently malignant. These disorders last for months, wage a massive attack on the ego, and almost invariably leave behind a vulnerability virtually visible to the naked eye. In all evidence the future of these patients is compromised.

Fanon's hesitancy is serious at the end of his book - a critique of colonialism. He expects resistance to his "notes on psychiatry," which might seem "out of place or untimely" in his book. (181) Still, he could not avoid the *fact "*that the psychiatric phenomena, the mental and behavioral disorders emerging from this war, have loomed so large among the perpetrators of 'pacification' and the 'pacified' population. The truth is that colonization, in its very essence, already appeared to be a great purveyor of psychiatric hospitals". (ibidem) His tone is therapeutical, and the intention is to bring a sense of urgency to what colonial violence is planting as long-term seeds with durable effects for both the colonized and the colonizers. Indeed, the brief selection of cases he presents describes, in a clinical language, cases of both Algerians and Frenchmen (soldiers and police officers) who illustrate the damage of colonial violence.

*Case No. 4 - A European police officer suffering from depression while at the hospital meets one of his victims, an Algerian patriot suffering from stupor.*

> A----- , twenty-eight years old, married without children. We have learned that he and his wife have been undergoing treatment for several years to try and have children. He is referred to us by his superiors because of behavioral problems. The immediate rapport proved to be fairly good. The patient spoke to us spontaneously about his problems. On good terms with his wife and parents-in-law. Good relations with his colleagues at work and well thought of by his superiors. What troubled him was having difficulty sleeping at night because he kept hearing screams. In fact, he told us that for the last few weeks before going to bed he closes all the shutters and stops up the windows (it is summer) to the utter despair of his wife who is suffocating from the heat. He also stuffs cotton in his ears so as to muffle the screams. Sometimes in the middle of the night he switches on the radio or puts on some music so as not to hear the nightly din. (194)

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Fanon explains that "his tribulations," which the patient describes "in great detail," had started once he had been transferred to an anti-FLN (Front de Liberation Nationale, the Algerian anticolonial insurgency) brigade and assigned the task of torturing prisoners. Fanon refers to another case:

*Case No. 5—A European police inspector tortures his wife and children*

R ----- , thirty years old, referred himself to us of his own free will. He is a police inspector who for some weeks realized that "something was wrong." Married with three children. Smokes a lot: three packs a day. He has lost his appetite and his sleep is disturbed by nightmares. These nightmares have no particular distinguishing features. What bothers him most is what he calls his "fits of madness." First of all he does not like to be contradicted: "Doctor, tell me why as soon as someone confronts me, I feel like hitting him. Even outside work I feel like punching the guy who gets in my way. For nothing at all. Take for example when I go to buy the paper. There's a line. So you have to wait. I hold out my hand to take the paper (the guy who runs the news stand is an old friend of mine) and someone in the line calls out aggressively: 'Wait your turn.' Well, I feel like beating him up and I tell myself: 'If I could get you, pal, for a few hours, you wouldn't mess with me.'" He can't put up with noise. At home he has a constant desire to give everyone a beating. And he violently assaults his children, even his twenty-month-old baby. But what frightened him was one evening when his wife had bitterly protested he was being too hard on the children (she had even said to him: "For goodness sake, you're crazy. . . ") he turned on her, beat her, and tied her to a chair shouting: "I'm going to teach you once and for all who's the boss around here." Fortunately his children began to cry and scream. He then realized the full gravity of his behavior, untied his wife, and the next morning decided to consult a "nerve specialist." He had never been like that, he says; he seldom punished his children and never quarreled with his wife. The present problem had occurred since "the troubles." "The fact is," he said, "we're now being used as foot soldiers. Last week, for example, we operated as if we were in the army. Those guys in the government say there's no war in Algeria and the police force must restore law and order, but there is a war in Algeria, and when they realize it, it'll be too late. The thing that gets me the most is the torture. Does that mean anything to you? . . . Sometimes I torture for ten hours straight." (196-197)

And now let us read again, across decades, from this more recent instance of colonial warfare, Ben-Ari's troubling sense of alienation upon return "home" from his first deployment in Hebron, after the first year of the policing the Intifada, of the civilian protest of a foreign population:

Having come back deeply troubled by what I saw and felt in Hebron I think that I expected the party to provide an opportunity for us to discuss, to raise questions, or at the very least to hint at what this particular period of duty (our first during the intifada, the uprising) had "done" or meant to us *as soldiers, as human beings*." (372, my emphasis)

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Laleh Khalili (2020, 173) has drawn a convincing genealogy of the contemporary liberal military archive on the "counterinsurgency" tactics of Western military bodies and reconnected the "colonial present" (Gregory 2004; Stoler 2016) controlling civilian populations through the military, to colonial warfare as a core mechanism of colonial rule. (173) Fanon's writings on the long-term mental disorders that colonial warfare implants, in both colonized and colonizer, can intensify the urgent points in genealogies as Khalili's or Stoler's regarding the durable life of imperial formations. He points to an analytical perspective regarding the government of all those involved, colonizer and colonized, in an "atmosphere" that corporealizes and terrorizes, although in differential forms, everyone alive. I raise this point not to take a psychologizing explanation of violence too far but to highlight what we might get if we focused on the *atmosphere* produced and on its somatic, corporeal signs that Fanon is discerning from that disaster.

The increasing occurrence of mental illness and the rampant development of specific pathological conditions are not the only legacy of the colonial war in Algeria. Apart from the pathology of torture, the pathology of the tortured and that of the perpetrator, there is a pathology of the entire atmosphere in Algeria, a condition which leads the attending physician to say when confronted with a case they cannot understand: "This will all be cleared up once the damned war is over. (216)

Fanon goes on to enumerate a host of "psychosomatic symptoms" of violence ("stomach ulcers," "renal colic," "disturbed menstrual cycles," "hypersomnia due to idiopathic tremors," "premature whitening of hair," etc.). However, in his plea for the whole "damned war" to be over, his attention to the body and to the soma exhibiting the psychological suffering, suddenly returns the body to politics, to the hierarchy that bodies both reflect and contest. Let us pay attention to his plea for considering the *specificity* of colonial warfare as it affects the body of the colonized and on how this specificity is *misread* by the medical field, the European episteme that is:

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We now know perfectly well that there is no need to be wounded by a bullet to suffer from the effects of war in body and soul. Like any war, the war in Algeria has created its contingent of cortico-visceral illnesses…This particular form of pathology (systemic muscular contraction) already caught our attention before the revolution began. But the doctors who described it turned it into a congenital stigma of the "native," an original feature of his nervous system, manifest proof of a predominant extrapyramidal system in the colonized. This contraction, in fact, is quite simply a *postural concurrence and evidence in the colonized's muscles of their rigidity, their reticence and refusal in the face of the colonial authorities*. (217, my emphasis)

What I want to suggest in these last lines of Fanon's attention to the body in violence is the emphasis on the somatic, or the body, not as the result, or consequence of a pathology, but I believe, as a manner to reverse what the psychiatrist in him would have as direction of causality. The body has a posture, an attitude vis-à-vis the regime of oppression. Fanon knows that this body will be read in a certain manner that would depoliticize the attitude through what we might say, an Orientalizing logic, that "knows" the body of the non-European without having to engage with the real existence, the colonized people. Fanon's warning, as he invokes this body in its "refusal," speaks directly to imperial governmentality in the instance of psychiatry, which he also exercises, regarding how it might misread the signs. In other words, he warns against colonizing the body of the oppressed, first through military subjugation and then through a simplistic reading of the body, but also against the consequence of that misreading for the colonizers themselves.

# Chapter 5 - Memories that feel like shrapnel

**A Memorial Day for the living**

On Mount Herzl in Jerusalem is located the most important Jewish military cemetery. It holds a great number of the remains of citizens who have died in military service. On most days, the cemetery is a solitary place, but it comes alive on Memorial Day. Then, mourning relatives, friends, politicians, and the media occupy the site - to honor the "heroes" or the "fallen." Irrespective of the circumstances surrounding their death, those buried there are heroes, while the families are included in the constructed "family" that contains all those who have lost a son or daughter in service, those designated as "living memorials." (Bilu and Witztum 2000, 5)

On a normal day, with no one in sight, you can slowly explore the layers where the graves are aligned, placed from the oldest to the most recent. The first oldest section displays standard white stones with an identical engraving, a simple mark of the name of the dead. This simple marking is an inheritance from the British Mandate and imitates the burial practices of the former colonizer. It is a banal sign of Western modernity- the nation-state knows how to perform the honoring ritual of those who have given their ultimate offering well. Since it is the same offering, they therefore bear the same mark.

The more recent graves look different. Almost each stone has been modified in some way. Some have flowers on the stone, and all of them have small objects, even toys and other trinkets. The usual explanation for this change is that, in the last years, the families of the deceased have gained a significant, vocal public position against the IDF's standard aesthetics, which wants its soldiers

to receive the same treatment in death. (Bilu and Witztum 2000) Indeed, in the last decades, the public sphere has been shaken by waves of protests that have particularly come from middle-class parents who oppose the trope of "sacrifice" () and at times have even contested the necessity of wars. However, we might also consider that such a move, which personalizes the stone of the son or daughter, makes the death more tolerable. It indicates the deceased was loved when he was alive and is still after his recent, non-standard death. Nevertheless, he remains fixed on Mount Herzl for the annual visits, the ritual, the honor, and the containment of the ghost to a specific place. (Derrida 1994, 9; Nguyen 2016, chap. 1)

To restrict the ghost of the dead to the cemetery, in Derrida's view, points to the anxiety of a political and social order that cannot tolerate intrusions from other domains, such as the past and its potentially dangerous demands. This does not mean that the past does not demand things from the living, as he points out. The inheritance that the survivors must acknowledge is essential. The injunction from dead ancestors, always a father, always an archontic principle, demands justice to be done for a crime in the past, and a wrongdoing suffered by the nation. Revenge is always incomplete; it will always transmit one more act that the next generation will have to accomplish. Maybe more importantly, as Derrida notes, revenge, as settling the score from a past injustice, is the other name for law-making in the sovereign order of tolerable violence. The cemetery is central as a place between the dead and the living. It is where the living appropriate the dead and the meaning of their death; it is also a productive place precisely because of the anxiety caused by the spectral presence of the dead, who are not fully fixed in place. Rituals restrict that presence and make it usable for the living, appropriable: "let us stay there and move no more." (Derrida 1994, 9-15)

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In this chapter, I turn to scenes that *show* the living citizen-soldier's tense effort to discern what exactly is his life when he returns home, not dead and sealed in the grave, inside the state's hierarchical order but as a bearer of an *experience* accumulated during his service. The terms that define this subject, someone who has accumulated an "experience," are those I found in the field. Either they were keen on turning the recurrent invocation of pain into a "meaningful experience" or viewed combat service as a distinct experience, incommunicable to others. Here, a further nuance is added by the actors I follow. This nuance comes from when they speak, search for words, and move through scenes of narration, making gestures that are narrative gestures but also bodily signs of their experience as something that is, at times, more than a memory, heavier, and carried with them in their body.

In the end, I met the man who in fact made the entire argument of this dissertation possible. He responded to my phone call, an anonymous phone number with a Hungarian prefix, and accepted to talk to me about his activist work in one of the lugubrious offices in the bunker-style building of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in 2015. After that, as a so-called gate keeper to the social circles of veterans contributing to his activist group, Resisim, many were willing to talk to me - *because I knew Yaron*. Yaron Edel had finished the nine-months group treatment at Peace of Mind (POM) and was, in Doctor Brom's words, the best man to help me understand why POM was successful, not simply in treating individuals who suffer from PTSD, but as an experience that opens perspectives on expansive manners of living a rich life, free from the burdens of the past that weighs on all citizens. Yaron acknowledged POM's relevance for many soldiers but mentioned that he had always been a "talker" and communicated willingly, happily, and effectively about personal matters. This had been his advantage compared to others who had to learn it from scratch.

You had the idea of starting Resisim right after finishing the program at Peace of Mind (POM)?

No, it happened a few months earlier, during Memorial Day. I was with my girlfriend for two years already. On that day, she started asking me about the [Second Lebanon] War. I remember I was mad at her, I screamed, we fought. I felt betrayed by her questions.

Betrayed? Why?

I felt she could not understand me. I didn't feel I could talk to her about it. But the next day I went to the Ashdod Cemetery. One of my men is buried there. I was with the others from the unit, and we started talking. My life changed that day. I realized there are people who can understand me. Before that I was alone. That was the biggest pain. All my friends suffer the same.

And then POM came.

POM gave us the tools to talk about a common experience. Only 10% of soldiers actually go to combat. I was the commander, so the army contacted POM, and they contacted me. There, it was about the pain, an open wound. And there is still no legitimacy to talk about these experiences. To be skeptical is the logical response when someone speaks about pain. The main issue for me is how to change how it appears in the society. For instance, there is this myth about the combat soldier who does not suffer, who is tough. He is indoctrinated by the army and the society. The hero complex is that you are not hurting. And every soldier in combat is a hero. So they deal with their problems on their own. They don't need help in fact.

In public, death is celebrated. So talking about your experience becomes impossible. I mean, how to compare myself with people who have died or were wounded? When they come at Resisim, most people had never talked about their service time. This is the most Israeli conversation, and no one is having it.  What we want is a refoundation of society. We don't collect testimonies. What we want is for everyone to tell their story, combat or non-combat service.  It's all about the story.

What is the difference between a testimony and someone's story?

A testimony is about deciding the truth: dividing, accusing, is it right or wrong? And so on. We don't care about the truth.

What do you mean when you say you don't care about the truth? They can say whatever they want?

We are not like Shovrim Shtika (Breaking the Silence). Our stories are not anonymous. Once someone decides to come up and tell something about themselves, they do it with name and surname. It's a big decision, because then you come onstage, and you speak to others. They see you, listen to you. We have our procedures to listen to stories, and sometimes we listen to them one on one, when the person is vulnerable. We have trained staff for that, a social worker (volunteering). We use refugee scholarship, the work with

Holocaust survivors, so we are careful not to do harm. But the essential part is to have people come and speak in front of others about their military service.

Weeks later, I visited him in Tel Aviv and asked again what he meant when he described Resisim's interest in everyone's story but not in any truth of the story. He hesitated for a minute or two, looking away in the distance rather than in my direction, both of us seated in an open-air café. "You can lie as much as you want. We don't care about that. Because the truth is far more horrible than anything you can invent. And we all know it already."

*To form an experience in narration*

All those who volunteered to support Resisim's work referred, almost identically, to the imperative of opening a public space for a "societal transformation" that would come about when every individual would feel free to speak about his or her experience in the military. The obstacle was not only in having those at home, e.g., parents, "girlfriends," etc., listen but in each of those returned from service. The obstacle was social to the extent that society instills in *you* the belief that you have an experience or not, depending on the function you carried out in the military, i.e. whether you were in combat positions or not. Indeed, the "experience" of the combat soldier is a long-circulated trope that confers authority to speak about military affairs and "wars" only to the combat soldier, which we have traced to the formation of the sacrificing figure in the 1950.

In the year following Yaron's sudden realization that he could talk about his feelings with his former subordinates and name his personal suffering, which was kept secret from his most intimate relations, Resisim had a major public breakthrough. This was impressive if you consider their modest beginnings through crowdfunding and a few thousand Euro collected in total. They opened an office in Jerusalem, but by the time I met Yaron, Resisim was planning to relocate to Tel Aviv, where its founders were living, namely Yaron and his partner. In that first year of the organization's

life, they had printed leaflets inviting people to a "special" Memorial Day, "dedicated to the living" *for once*. Many people came, the room was full, people spoke on stage using a microphone. The feeling was one close to elation. At least, this is what another member of the NGO, Edna, told me. She had served in the military as an educational officer, a position dominantly occupied by female soldiers. An educational officer broadly operates as a kind of ideological agent that supports the rest of the soldiers through regular cultural programs, listening to people's personal issues, giving advice on personal dilemmas, and, often informally, offering emotional support in hard times. The actual work is, in fact, an ambiguous bag of tasks. They are an instructor on the right way of thinking about common dilemmas among young soldiers in service and someone to whom soldiers can turn for emotional warmth, comfort, confession, etc. After service, Edna had become a psychologist and was working as a social worker. At Resisim, she was in charge of the most professional of its departments, which was dedicated to listening, in safe space, to the more difficult stories that were not easy to tell right away in public, in front of others. As Edna explains:

> When I came to Resisim I started listening to others. In one of the events, a man was speaking in front of a large audience. He was telling his story, what you would call a banal story, nothing bad had happened. And I thought then, *I have a story too, what happened to me is also an experience. I had no idea a year and a half ago that I have a military story.* And this gave me meaning. I think a lot more about it, now I understand the way it built the way I am now, how it affected my political take on things.

"In this country, if you are dead, you are a hero. And everyone talks about you. But if you return alive, there isn't much you can say," Yaron said in order to explain why Resisim demanded stories from *everyone, regardless of if they were combat or non-combat soldiers.* Later, as I stared talking to others who volunteered at Resisim, "Shrapnel," or who knew about it and participated more erratically in their social events, I could register a solid tone of respect for Yaron, *who had been a commander during the Lebanon War.* In his presentation of the group to me, he stressed that he wanted the distinction between combat and the non-combat soldiers to no longer intimidate the

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latter, those who had learned to believe that they did not have an army "experience" because they had served in positions considered menial, and who thus thought that they had not risked their lives or seen "danger." And indeed, in our conversations, he kept his military story within the most austere, basic terms: he had been a commander during the war. He had lost a man. He had been alone, isolated for years, but then he had learned how to express his internal anguish. Now he wanted to help others do the same.

Eran had just joined Resisim and was volunteering in the "department" coordinate by Edna, supporting the collection of stories and whatever assistance was needed for those who were struggling to tell their stories, first in a more private but friendly face-to-face conversation. Eran spoke about the shame of not having been like some of his friends, or like Yaron, a combat soldier.

> I used to be a regular soldier, working in a medical team. Yaron, on the other hand, was an officer. While in training, the [Second Lebanon] War started. Most of my colleagues went there, up north. The youngest people stayed behind, in Israel. When I compared myself to other people in Resisim, I felt a bit of shame. They were in war, I stayed behind. Sometimes I still feel ashamed. This channeled how I started talking because I did not experience what they experienced. I was not in a fight, but I felt the war. But it is a lot harder when you are inside the war. I used to talk to my colleagues who went in combat, telling them I wish I could be with you. And they always replied, "You cannot imagine how happy we are that you are not here". Their experience, the experience of doctors was hard. A lot of blood, body parts, treating people under fire. I had a friend there. He was generally considered a hero. But the macho side, that's not alright. They don't speak about the trauma, the suffering, because of the norm in society. Talking about the heroic acts, this is the only thing they are talking about. But the stories about the feelings you had, no! At least once a year I meet my comrades in reserve service. My best friend is from the army [time], but we don't talk about feelings. About Israel, we like to say we are an open place, very familish and loving, but up to a certain depth. When you go a little deeper, when you start talking about the bad feelings, it's not welcome. It's not something you can share in general. People shut down if you try.

Despite this emphatic and recurrent concern for a democratic space to listen to "anyone's story," and because "everyone has a story," once I started paying attention to other moments of Yaron's activist and public life, the tension between his democratic will to refer simply to anyone's military experience and his public performance as a former combat soldier appeared starker. It was not just

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that everyone expressed deep respect for his combat experience, which was probably enhanced by the fact that some of the activists had known him during their IDF service, meaning that they had been connected through the hierarchical chain.

This respect was more ingrained and had to do with that "shame" Eran described who, pronouncing that word, lowered his voice, making the word resonate more intensely. It was as if he was trying to mark, with his pronunciation of the word, a distance between his past shame and his present ability to discern the shame working through him. That discernment was also part of the public discourse regarding Resisim's unique position among activists in Israel. Through narration, once you were ready to perform it in front of others, the narrator could get some distance from his or her past self and see himself or herself more clearly. This kind of self-liberation through narration was alluded to in various conversations. That being said, Yaron was navigating the space between his will to erase distinctions (combat/noncombat) and a serious attachment to his combat experience in a more hesitant manner. I want to pay attention to his hesitation between these two attachments that have to do with distinct values regarding social roles. The first one is what he described as his civic value, while the second one is much heavier, burdened with the decades-old tradition of the combat soldier's authoritative experience as someone who knows war well and, to that extent, knows something more than the rest.

*Performing the memories stored in the body*

In one of the larger public events where Resisim was bringing people to listen to those courageous enough to share their "story" secret until then, Yaron appeared on stage for a 20-minute performance. With his back to the audience, standing on a stage, Yaron starts describing what soon becomes a scene of an IDF mission. In it, he is the commander of a unit, a few men, his subordinates, are by his side. He describes their positions in that war scene. We understand that he

sees them and that he stands with his back to us, describing the scene, because he is "there" now, even as he narrates a moment from the past, at least ten years prior, during the Second Lebanon War.

He describes the landscape at the entrance of a "very important [Lebanese] village in the overall plan" in great detail. There are "terrorists" placed in strategic locations. Some of the other IDF soldiers are to his right and left, indicating locations in the room as if the room had turned into the scene of the battle. He helps the audience approximate the distance. "He was as close as you are in that corner next to the wall." With his face still turned away from the audience, offering glances to the spectators over his shoulder at times, Yaron seems to transpose his body and memory back to that moment of "battle," and back to the past, all from the safety of a staged room. His tone becomes more engaged; it communicates the sense of tensed readiness of the unit for combat. The "terrorists" are firing at them, they are close, and the fire is "intense." He starts "placing" other objects in the room, such as obstacles and the soldiers with him in that scene. Because he orients the spectators' attention towards imaginary objects and bodies from the past but asks the audience to see them there, where "you stand now," the war scene is not merely *shown* as a picture in front of the spectators, but it is located there where the spectators sit in their chairs.

He gesticulates "there," indicating where a dead soldier lies, covered in a blanket. Between you and the next chair, even now as you might think you are in Jerusalem watching a performance, there is a dead body. It is covered in a blanket. I see it. This is what Yaron seems to indicate but also what wants the audience to start seeing: some veterans still see what they had once seen. There is no mention of post-trauma and no explanation of the scene that would separate this time from the time of the event - the occupation of the village. The narration happens in the war scene. It is, according to the PTSD register at least, an image of the past that returns. You might call it an

intrusion, but Yaron had invoked that past to make a point for the living, in that "Memorial Day for the living".

Yaron turns further away from the audience, his eyes fixed on the wall. His body ducks for a second, as if he just avoided a bullet, and he becomes more agitated. The performance becomes more fast-paced, like he would do if he wanted to survive. He is in a war scene. Yaron is in Lebanon, the body is in that village, and *it* reports from *there*. He continues showing this. A soldier has been hit. Yaron lowers his shoulders and imitates a man carrying the heavy body of his comrade. He is one of his subordinates, Suisa, "I like Suisa a lot," Yaron says as if he still sees him. There is affection in his voice, an obvious tenderness. Suisa falls to the ground. Yaron wants to come to his rescue, but he says in that moment his knee was locked. At this point in the performance, Yaron turns completely around, his face to the audience, and he continues his story. "For three seconds that lasted in fact like 10 minutes…everything became very silent…complete silence…and white…" His knee seemed to say, "Hi, you are not going anywhere," Yaron explains, translating his knee's message to the commander, Yaron, the one who froze for a crucial moment in battle. Still, the commander wants to move and save his friend, Suisa, whom "he likes a lot." The visceral intensity is obvious. Another soldier saved Suisa, Yaron tells us; he reacted quick, he got a citation for courage later. He is now fully turned towards his audience and explains that no one saw him "freeze," he was the only one to "see it". His shame was not from having been confronted with another's accusation - it was only his own silent incrimination. He carried that scene, that "silence" with him ever since, and the self-accusation: "Why didn't you save Suisa? Suisa is your brother, isn't he? You tell him he is a dear brother when you see him." And so his audience learns the reason for his "loneliness," his self-criticism.

Yaron was lucid about two dominant public "feelings" that make former soldiers feel lonely, whether they had been combatants or not: shame and guilt. More complicated than personal emotions, they are the reflection of an inheritance that, since 1950, has marked the figure of the combat soldier as the one who gives everything in war. It is a figure that serves so that the living may compare themselves to that notion of self-sacrifice, and it is a comparison in which everyone loses, including the combat soldier, who does indeed sacrifice a lot.

*Eran: a story is not a [self]judgement*

What is a story? And how is it different from a testimony of a soldier, such as the ones published by Breaking the Silence?

The main thing I see in stories is that it allows people to share thoughts and feelings. It makes it easier to tell to others. If you call it testimony, it becomes something official, it can close the possibility [to talk]. There is a word for testimony, "edut." For me, when I pronounce it, now that I think about it, it feels like you are in court, in an official position, and you are asked exact details, the time, the place, information. In a story, you can add your values.

And how is storytelling brought about in your group?

We sit and hear stories. Most people there are really good listeners. They studied psychology, social work. I felt very comfortable, it was easy to share my feelings. I was often hearing stories, and so I felt like sharing mine. When I went to Resisim, first I wanted to do something for myself. I wanted to do something for others as a way to help myself. And I did see the need and the good cause. Helping others made me feel good. But unexpectedly, while I was hearing their stories, I could share the shame. And then, in general, in that training, I felt openness, not for something like post-traumatic, just being without feeling judged.

There are two types of sharing stories. There is the one-on-one [telling and listening] and, second, the training sessions in group. We are trained to see when people are not ready to speak. I saw once a guy who talked in a group session. I felt he was disconnecting himself from the story. You are trained to see that after a while. He seemed to put the story outside of himself.

What do you mean outside of himself?

I am not sure why, but I was afraid for him. He needed to tell his story because it was his duty to speak, but he seemed overwhelmed. I thought he might harm himself. There was

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> maybe the anxiety in standing in front of an audience. And we know that there is always the risk that bringing back these memories might awaken demons. You need to be very aware of signs people show, signs of post-trauma, the kind like you see in movies.

Yaron absolved himself on stage, acknowledging his ability to look back at the past and see some facts that the younger Yaron could not see. He had kept silent because he feared people might laugh at him, criticize him, and tell him he did wrong, which were all, in fact, his own false ideas, because he realizes now that no one would accuse him for what he could not control. In this case, obviously a locked knee is the result of a nervous system in an autonomic (what mainstream medicine argues cannot be influenced by intention) state of "freeze". In Doctor Brom's therapeutical term and in the terms of the post-traumatic vocabulary and imagery at Peace of Mind, by tracing the trajectory from the past to the present, Yaron could live. With a clearer, more objective story about what had happened to him, to his body, to his capacity to judge the situation in a period of post-trauma, right after his service, in his lonely and solitary years, and now, Yaron alive in a healed present.

The performance above is nothing but a banal instance of a citizen fully immersed in the discourse of patriotic loyalty. We find out that his loneliness after his military service, the reason for his fraught romantic relationship, and his "distance" that he constantly felt from anyone else were because he thought he had not done all he could for his "brother". Reflecting from his non-alienated state of the present, Yaron indicated, like others at Resisim, that the problem with such a feeling of shame and guilt (for not having seen, lived danger) ends up plaguing everyone, including the combat soldier, who, again, does in fact quite a lot in terms of sacrificial service. As he narrates, he had been under heavy fire, "many terrorists" had been killed that day, "it was a

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good morning, in military terms," and he had helped the mission, despite those three seconds where he froze.

*Aesthetic returns "home"*

On that alternative Memorial Day, Yaron continued on stage with another story. His tone shifted, markedly trembling, making pauses, breathing as if he did not want to go on. As the Israeli military advanced in Lebanon, as Yaron and his men moved on, at some point they decided they needed rest. They entered a home, divided each team into one room. Yaron took an armchair and placed it under the stairs. *Everyone who is a professional knows that the stairs are the most solid. And we are professionals*. We do not know why the house was emptied, why the village's inhabitants were no longer there, or whose armchair that was. What we do know is that Yaron's commanders had decided to choose this house, with an orchard, where some more soldiers were in at that point. Some soldiers were ordered to sleep in the "salon,", while Yaron takes a vacant armchair and tries to sleep for a while, after 24 hours of fighting.

One hour later, as the story continues, although interrupted by him slightly choking on his words, he woke up because of the intense noise and because everything was covered in a white dust. A comrade had been hurt, and he got out of the house as a superior shouted at him to come and help downstairs, "this is a massacre, this is a massacre!" Yaron repeats the words he heard shouted. We learn how Yohan died that day, his subordinate, a Frenchman like him, who had immigrated to Israel and joined the IDF, just like Yaron's French parents had immigrated a few years previously. The register of suffering changes significantly. Yaron mentions so many body parts, no longer attached to discernible soldiers, and a whole team losing all but two men. This is when Yaron explains to his audience the vocation of Resisim, which is for "guys" like him, who know very well what he talks about when he says he has nightmares or that he cannot sleep no matter what

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he tries. The "guys in the room" surely know the "anger" he also carried, and the feelings that others would not be able to understand: how could they if they had not felt the sand in the mouth after an explosion, teeth-grinding sand, and in a state of shock because of the noise and the dust? But then, he explains, he was wrong to believe that. He had alienated his parents and sister with his silence, he had treated his partner badly as she had tried to ask him what Lebanon was for him. His call is as follows:

> And I have a suggestion: to look at the Memorial Day as an opportunity, because it is coming back every year, in which we, the ones with the scars, that we are actually thinking about these things…[come together] *The siren during the past years since I was released from duty is mostly about the moments when I felt the sand in my mouth or that night when I decided not to rescue my friend.* From talks I had with friends I understand they feel the same. I mean, Memorial Day opens something. It doesn't matter what to those who died, but to those who survived, something opens up. We talk about something, it is on our minds on that day. If we open Memorial Day in this manner, with our experiences… Fighters is a very specific definition. Mother, father, sister, wife, partner, everyone is thinking about something in these moments. And this is an opportunity to talk and open things, so we won't be alone with these difficult feelings. My name is Yaron, I am 30 years old, I'm married with Hadas, and I want to be free from the army.

There is no single pattern in Shrapnel's public mission. In fact, the interviews proved to be spaces of multiple contradictions in the positions taken by its members, at times during the same interview. However, some of these contradictions are worth reflecting on, not to try to "solve" but to consider how personal negotiations regarding a tenable present are actually made and how they might evolve. For instance, Yaron shows a rather straightforward instantiation of the trope of the wounded combat soldier, despite his desired stance as the head of a public organization wishing to fully transform the culture that allows only macho soldiers to narrate "war stories." In his attempt to bring into the public sphere emotions that he considered forbidden (intolerable both for those who tried to preserve the culture of machoism and for those who simply could not stand too much pain narrated by their children), he nevertheless reproduces that very image of the combat fighter. He transfixes his audience with a story that "only 10%" of soldiers can narrate, because

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they have been "there," and know the feeling of teeth-grinding sand, of *shrapnel coming at your face.* Still, he ends his "stories" with a strange plea, addressed to no one: he wishes to be free from the army. You might recall that this is the concise manner in which Peace of Mind presents its vocation to heal those soldiers considered most susceptible to trauma. What POM wanted, again, was to take the army out of the soldier, to produce a separation from an indistinction that was in fact governing unaware subjects. The soldiers could not let go of the "military shtanz" in Yehuda's terms - the rigid body disciplining, the "yes/no," the lack of nuance, the absence of a reflective judgement about one's actions and one's chosen future, etc.

Previously we have considered the significant force of the cultural distinction between combat and non-combat positions and how it reinforces the largely shared cultural sense that only a few have the right to speak about their military experience. What we have also seen is that class, a racialized ordering of Ashkenazi combat soldiers, who "know" the truth of war, had monopolized the public sphere with their authoritative knowledge, spoken or (mainly) withheld. However, in his declared effort to break the powerful cultural distinction between the few courageous men and the rest, by democratizing the right to speak about one's emotions, Yaron had reproduced some of the more banal and entrenched emotions - "loneliness," "shame," and "guilt" "for not having done enough"- which continue the common discourse on feelings that men are said to avoid but must finally confront.

Besides the straightforward pedagogical purpose of Yaron's performance to exhibit alienation and the return to sociality, let us note some facts about the event he embodies and present in his visceral, embodied vision of being back there. The Second Lebanon "War," as it is crystalline from the details of the "mission" that he provides, had been an act of invasion. That village so "important" for the mission, in which they had managed to kill a number of terrorists, is also a

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village that looks empty as we try to indeed inhabit the scene where he labored so intensely to draw us in. We are led in a house with quite a few rooms, capacious enough to allow for at least two groups of IDF soldiers who seek a moment of respite, an hour or two for sleeping after a full day of fighting. We are shown a guest room, where some of the soldiers now rest, and an armchair that Yaron places under the stairs. This scene is in someone's home, vacated, evacuated, maybe hours before the Israeli soldier, these foreign soldiers, neared the village. And more to the point, this is a scene of "counterinsurgent warfare," a logic of violence, of terror, in which the distinction between enemies and civilians is tenuous and whose results are often indiscernible bodies of "collateral dead". In the midst of Yaron's act of narration in profuse detail, and as his audience was drawn in to focus deeply on the bodies wounded and dead from his unit, a host of other bodies, terrorized, on the run, possibly hiding, were indiscernible and inaccessible to the narrative act performed by Yaron. But they were there, if we learn to move through the scene shown by the soldier's body. We must consider the details, the armchair, for instance, and imagine it maybe a little worn out, from the chain of generations that used to sit there in the afternoon when it is too hot outside.

**The other soldier's story - a perpendicular line on the continuous story of men**

However, this was not the only vision for the instrumental role of narration or of "telling a story" to become more understanding of one's past and, therefore, of one's present situation. Consider Alida's explanation of the reasons why she was volunteering at Resisim while being a student.

> It's a healing story because you make the effort of telling the story, and this requires a transition one has to make in oneself. The perpetrator suffers a trauma, and that is usually an ethical trauma, and there is no forgiveness inside. The victim, on the other hand, suffers a psychological trauma. When you bring both together, exposing the stories of soldiers, it produces a cultural trauma. For Resisim, trauma is a fluid term. It is not about the hero, not

about the dead. It is sometimes about waiting at home, around the soldier, about the people who have not been in combat, but are out there [in service]. We are all affected. We are so used to suppress[ing] it [that] we are not aware of its depth. The absence of awareness is generalized. This is why we need to take care of ourselves.

Trauma is here, but no one thinks they suffer from it. The guy on YouTube, Razon (we had talked about him), he says to the committee, "I killed for you". He was the only survivor in his team. What we found out later was that they were killed in friendly fire. He is a combat soldier. This is why the huge attention he gets now. But still, he brings something new in the debate, because he is a combat soldier, and he suffers trauma.

What is a story for you in Resisim?

The story is not like a classical narrative. It's an ongoing trauma, in a certain time and place, that you keep going back to, or not coming back from, and it is about how you avoid it, or try to. But it is also about healing. It requires courage to go back to that experience. This is why it's important for the audience, because it is transformative for yourself and the audience. The transformation is from not recognizing how you are affected, from not knowing, to understanding. It is a very alternative way to look at trauma. The group in which we discuss this is not a classical support group, there is no hierarchy, for instance.

You have an experience, and you do what you want with it. When you speak, that's transformative, you create something new, you materialize in the world something that until then was only in your head. Trauma is a big thing to speak in front of a microphone in a room full of people.

I didn't suffer any trauma, what I did was boot camp, learn to fire a gun. My freedom was taken from me, but you look at it in relative terms, you tell yourself *others had it much worse.*

How is it to be a woman in service?

In war or in the army, a woman's experience is always mediated through a man's experience. They are a straight line, you have to go through this in order to express your experience. In the 1990s, there was a feminist claim to equality. They wanted to participate in pilot combat course, and the supreme court approved that, so they got into border patrol, police, combat even. They wanted to be equal, similar to men. In the Second Intifada, in border police, women started talking about this. You should see this movie, "To see if I'm smiling."

It is easier to talk about men's trauma. And the medical terms have been internalized already. The feminine trauma is not talked about at all. When you have to relate to your trauma through his experience, the move you have to make is this perpendicular line on the straight line. The perpendicular line says, "I don't have a story," or "it's a weak story", not a "war story". There is a hierarchy, some experiences are worth more than others.

But what I know is that I did have my experience. I saw Ethiopian people treated like shit. My image of service is an image of ridiculousness. Most of the things that happen to you are simply ridiculous. Everything is suddenly taken from you. You are put in a uniform,

and you look funny - you don't even recognize yourself. And you laugh a lot at the whole situation to stay sane. This is what I did in bootcamp.

Now, I live my life - it is a normal life. The biggest challenge is to talk about the obvious, the presentation of normality in society, how we pretend to be normal. When I was inside the experience, I was a soldier. After the army, there is a whole ritual of forgetting. You forget many things, you want that.

*On aesthetic separations. "It is interesting (worthwhile) to look back"*

Resisim was then an organization, if small, quite heterogenous in terms of its vision of what the "societal transformation" should be. Yaron's partner, Hadas, is an artist and architect and a member of the group and leading the artistic department. The project she was most proud of had been a very successful exhibition in Jerusalem the previous year, for which Hadas had wanted a woman curator, Hili Greenfeld. Its title was "It's Interesting to Look Back". Looking back is what people try to avoid generally.

It was very important for me to have a woman as the artist in charge for this. She set up the project as she wanted. We had asked people to send us personal photos from their service time, the good, the bad, it was their choice. In this country, many people have their "army album" with photos they treasure from the army time. And we were overwhelmed by the volume of material we received, beyond any expectation. Some of it is already online, and we want to create a project where everyone can collect and combine photos in their own online archives, as they want to remember that time. For the exhibition, Hili made crystal globes and placed some of these pictures inside. From a distance they looked wonderful, beautiful objects made of glass, like the ones you buy for Christmas. With tiny, beautiful images inside, and if you shake them there might be snowflakes. She placed them in the room, on a large wooden table, and the visitors could interact with them as they wished, they could play with the globes, shake them. As you approached the table, some had very difficult images inside, like a helicopter that had crashed to the ground with

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soldiers inside. Memories are like that, there is so much nostalgia after the service time, but when you start looking deeper, there is much suffering too. The exhibition was a success, so many people came and discussed about it. The name of the exhibition was "It is More Interesting to Look Back". Nostalgia is like a pill, it helps you forget many things, a sugar-coating pill. And it is true that *there* people make their best friends, of course.

The photograph of the crashing helicopter she refers to is prominent in the collective memory of Israelis. In 1997, 73 soldiers had lost their lives at the border with Lebanon, and this incident is largely considered the trigger moment for a powerful activist movement against the continued Israeli presence in Lebanon. It had influenced the result of the next elections and led to the withdrawal of the IDF three years later. Depending on who remembers this episode, various possibilities of referring to IDF and being a soldier ensue. However, what is maybe most significant in this episode is that a strong activist movement was born and posed a serious critique, not only to the occupation, but to the logic that military affairs cannot be disputed and, in particular, not by grieving mothers.

Hadas, similar to Yaron's emphasis on the role of art, said that there are sometimes things people cannot say - there are no words for some states. Art was intervening in this space that the words could not cross, between the past and the present.

> What I am interested in is professional art. And it is for the entire Israeli society because everyone is connected to war. Art is a great tool to move from a private experience to a public one. Our first exhibition was imagined on this axis from private experience to collective experience and from private to collective memory. But you cannot really separate them. The national education is part of your private experience, of belonging. We are interested in the individual relationship with the collective, how you go against it or try to blend in, accommodate. The exhibition asks a question, because everyone sees things differently, gives meaning, and needs different spaces and times for that. So for the viewer or the spectator, we thought of giving the possibility of seeing it in her own time. It is an inner process and art is a bridge between the experience and the people.

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Each person saw something different, from a different angle, a different location. It is a question about the hidden point of view, the blank point of society. Nostalgia was Hilly's idea. It is about memory of war coated with glitter, and you think something precious is there. You look back at your memories, and the "good times" are there, your friends, but it is all wrapped up with the war. It is all very beautiful, and you want to touch it, and so you get mixed feelings. Nostalgia is very important here.

With the online collection of photos we received, we tried to keep everything very raw, with as little intervention as possible in the photographs and in the way they are presented, arranged, archived on the website. We actually ended up forming an archive without intending to. We received so many photographs, and then we felt we have to share it all. So we left them almost as they came, without hierarchies, without order.

An archive without order.

Yes, our idea is that everyone who visits the site can make their own archive, with their own sense of order, and maybe they can also save them as they see their own archive. But it is not for us to order them. We are against hierarchies, hermetic orderings. We want to bring together Israeli news and Lebanese news. *You cannot have what you want.* This is the frustration of the archive, what it says.

I do not ask her to explain this, because I think I understand. In return to the frustration, she means

to say,  you stare at it, build with it, work with your ow desire to destroy the very idea of "access"

to the archive by asking the viewer to constantly negotiate the entrance with every new occasion,

with any of the entries provided by the globes exhibited on the table.

What does it mean at Resisim that "the truth is not important"?

What we want is to bring forth the idea that everyone has a story. A lot of people think their story is not worth telling. What we wanted with the exhibition, with all this, was not the *witness* but the story. It created an experience, a question about looking back and forth, forgetting some things, sugarcoating the past.

The current discourse on war, military, and trauma should be more inclusive. It is not. The regular memorial ceremony talks only about the dead. The prayer for the dead is the most important. But what about the living? They suffer, they have feelings that are unresolved. The artist for the exhibition, Hilly Greenfeld, it was important for me to have a woman artist doing this. We are all in the army, all the time. It is maybe because you do reserve service each year, or as a mother, a girlfriend, a sister, they are also in the army. And trauma is not only about combat. There are these scouts who see things only through their binoculars, and they still suffer. It is not only about the warrior fighting alone in his tank. And women are participating in many ways.

*The table between the two Lebanon wars*

Hadas continues, describing the story that had built the affective context for the exhibition.

> The pictures in the crystal globes are from the Saluki battle during the First Lebanon War. The globes were put on a table, and this was also a very special work of art in the exhibition, because the artist made up a story about it and presented it there. It's not a true story, but it contains an important truth. The story is about this table belonging to a friend. His father had died in the First Lebanon War, and his dog was always sleeping under this table. And then the friend went to the Second Lebanon War. This table connects the two wars. When he returns from the war, he sells the table and leaves Israel for good, with no explanation.

Following his life trajectory from a distance, via social media, where he has a reputable name as someone who helps other soldiers, I could find out that Yaron was not well for a long while after 2015, when we met. In a Facebook post that had garnered thousands of followers and hundreds of comments, most commending him for his courage, he narrates his current life in one of the more difficult days he had, as a veteran carrying that wound. Most people still are not aware of what a veteran goes through, even if the marks of suffering might be there. For some time, Yaron has a dog who carries visibly a tag announcing that he is a professionally trained dog for disabled soldiers. The dog can feel Yaron's emotions, he writes, and knows to come and calm him down long before an outburst might take place. He cannot go anywhere without the dog, but in public transportation he is not allowed inside the bus with her, despite the visible tag. On the day of his viral Facebook post, he felt homicidal, he writes. A taxi driver had refused to accept him in his car with the dog. He wanted people to know how difficult it is to live the post-war, and how much more difficult it is to live the post-war in a society that is so insensitive to this kind of suffering; to the humiliations a soldier must go through if he demands compensation for his wounds from the state agencies; to losing a job because his angry episodes are still impossible to manage at times.

In another post, a year after, he writes that, from that point on, he would no longer speak to anyone, give interviews, or take public positions about PTSD, trauma, and the suffering of soldiers. He would still welcome conversations with other soldiers, should they need his personal help, but his

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public activity in this field was ending. His state was one of too much suffering. He needed a time to mark a complete separation from it and to make possible so, maybe, the *beginning of another kind of life*. Maybe he meant that "separation" from the army, finally achieved, as Dcotor Brom had promised it.

*A story as embodied gesture to return to the world*

Jarret Zigon (2012, 204) argues that narrative expressions, and in particular the wish to tell a story about oneself, might best be analyzed not as forms of action, classically understood as means to communicate some content, convince, and so forth. Instead, it would be better to consider narratives, and storytelling, as embodied practices that constitute, in narration, attempts to return to a sense of being part of a "common world" - a sociality that, for various reasons, might have been lost. He writes,

> narratives and their analysis can bear the most fruit for the study of moralities when we move away from reading them as meaning-making articulations – and particularly as providing mutual understanding of these meanings – and instead read them as articulations of the embodied struggle to morally be with oneself and others in the social world.

I tend to agree with Zigon's dissatisfaction in considering stories merely for the content the actors intend to transmit. There is an incredible resource to consider in the ways of returning to a social world after world-destroying violence, once we start to pay attention to gestures as modes of searching for a way to be at home in a context - helping, supplementing the narrative effort to convey meaning. However, we must ask about the lives that have a place in these social worlds that narratives weave. If speaking is an embodied condition (Butler 2003) we might also consider that no embodied possibility comes without a heavy burden of a tradition that regulates the register in which gestures have also been transmitted as ways to join the world in less expansive ways than

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Zigon intends to cover: for instance gestures that seek to reconfirm belonging in familiar worlds that we have lost through any alienating shock. Nothing guarantees that alienation from an injurious attachment, and even as it is declared so, does not become reconfirmed as desired attachment: simply because the imagination of other modes of being in the world have been evacuated. If we consider that an act of narrative appearance is being exercised when we feel that our embodied existence is threatened or has been tenuous for a while, that it needs a sense of legibility or value in the eyes of others, Zigon's perspective on narrative as a manner to receive a sense of confirmation of being real enough returns us to the daunting problem of familiarity with terror as preferable than becoming a stranger and having to start anew.

To imagine otherwise one's social and civic life, meaning a life lived in other relations with the citizens and with those defined presently as enemies, is a difficult reorganization of one's social life: not impossible, but oftentimes *feeling* so: intimidating, exhausting to enact every day anew, against obstacles. It is, in brief, a lonely life, as Sara Helman (1999, 396) shows, poignantly, in the realization of a citizen contemplating his wish to refuse service but nevertheless pursuing it, year after year, because otherwise "I would have no one to talk to."in order to avoid the feeling of alienation from one's familiars. For the younger generations this refusal has become much less difficult to make (refs), an alternative ethos and practice of citizenship, demilitarized, remains still the exception to the rule of a dominant imperative of acting as citizens inevitably drafted to the IDF at age eighteen, and having to bear "the costs"of a naturalized state of inevitable war. I make this point in order to raise an analytical question regarding the possibilities of counteracting a hegemonic order of social life and affective belonging, a question about what might make possible an alternative imagination of social life and affective relations, without which any present attachment does indeed feel inevitable.

That feeling loved might not necessarily indicate a nurturing environment can often be the case, and surely this is the case of Israelis' militarized citizenship. (Kaplan 2006; M. Weiss 2003) Danny Kaplan, Meira Weiss and others show that the nation's project of corporeality and of value can be deadly. It is a culture that prepares youth for service in a profuse discourse on military love, passionate precisely because it is inscribed in a trajectory of expected, and glorified in advance, loss of the other. Kaplan's articulation of the thanato-erotics of the nation is indeed a strong, disturbing observation regarding the simultaneity of love and lethality that structures the possibilities of feeling for another or for oneself: love can only be mediated through the sense of already having lost the other to war's destruction, a loss always suspended and therefore somehow already having happened. It also furthers my argument that the crucial role of the imagination of citizens in order to enact any critique or indeed outright resistance confronts serious obstacles precisely because attachment to citizenship cannot be disentangled from those registers of affective life that are fundamental for the feeling of living a meaningful life, like love, friendship and support offered and received.

For reasons that I have discussed in chapter One, and which I defined as Ben-Gurion's specter, a tradition inherited and stubborn in how it connects the meanings of security/war - public service and affective expression of civic concern for one another, nothing seems to escape the logic of the thanatopolitical sacrifice, and in particular "love." Yaron had expressed his victory against the dominant discourse because Resisim was speaking for the living, but his choice of organizing it as Memorial for the living hesitates between the uncanny and the grotesque. Is the Memorial for living dead or the dead still living? His very performance in which his embodied narrative expressed his presence more in Lebanon than in the present of Jerusalem/2014 indicated his own

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tenuous "living" between two worlds and thus not fully present where the stage was in fact attended by the living and which he could not face while he was "still in Lebanon."

For Yaron, the sound of the siren produced immediately the memory of shrapnel, of white dust and of terror. The siren he refers to is the signal on the "Day of the Fallen," or Memorial Day (Yom HaZikarom), calling on everyone to come into one body, silent, and honour those who have sacrificed their lives. As Edna declared, in her manner of explaining why Resisim was *for the living*, and not for the much spoken *for* dead "heroes," she offered this: "On Memorial Day, the country stops. It simply stops. When the siren starts, you can hear it from everywhere, and everything stops, the cars stop in the traffic, you get off from your car; and no one does anything else on that day. Everything closes."

We make full circle with this last presence, all invasive, of noise, after we have considered it in Hebron first, and then in Jerusalem in the El-Hakawati Theater, and later also in Gaza, where the whole phenomenon of the intifada was mere "noise" for the soldier in Chapter 3. This time the noise occupies the present of the citizen and it orders silence, mournful, for the "fallen." However, if we reflect with Kaplan on the permissible love for the other mediated only through an act of imagination of the other being dead already, mortally wounded in the state of war, fallen as sacrificed, we start discerning that the siren is in fact regulating the life of the living as a thanatopolitical reminder of what "love" and "life" can be named to be, only if the citizen mediates them first through some dead body that can stabilize such feelings.

In this sense, Hili Greenfeld's "invented" story about the table that connects two Lebanon wars is deeply perceptive of that inheritance that transmits to each new generation its own "Lebanon." The story is a kind of discerning tool to approach an attachment to an inherited object, like an old table, or a full library of a beloved grandfather who was a learned rabbi, and consider how that

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inheritance infused with certain intense feelings might in fact be a continuum from *one Lebanon to the other*. At that point, a table that meant solidity, nourishment, a smooth surface on which to gather even more familiar inherited objects might be abandoned and "without explanations."

*Against the archive*

Let us reflect in one last manner on the soldier's aloneness, or aloofness, in the feeling of standing apart, and without a voice or ability to think through what has happened to him after service. The fact that governmentality's agencies of intervention, to heal trauma, to restore sociality, do name this inability as the central problem and the preeminent terrain for intervention should make us pause and reflect on how acts of narration can work to enmesh us in forms of injurious attachment and to impoverished worlds of self-expression. Once more, to have something in the public does not make it less secret or less violent. For this reflection on the body as archive of the sovereign order, let us return to Resisim there where, I think, the potential in the wish to speak about the citizen's loneliness discerns in fact a problem of alienation from the possibility of embodying a condition of being contemporary truly with the events of one's life.

When I met Hadas, one night at the end of her work in Tel Aviv, and in order to ask a by then a rather standard list of questions regarding the public mission of Resisim, what I discovered in fact was the calm, quiet presence of someone who was seriously thinking about deadly inheritances of the living. In Yaron's various public stories, she appeared as a figure which I had found a rather standard embodiment of a common trope: the "girlfriend" who is seen by the "macho" combat soldier as someone who could not possibly understand; and later on, as the woman who insists in "understanding," grateful acknowledged by Yaron for having tried, and for having stood staunchly on his side. However, she had deployed a radial Derridean tactics to undo the archive of the state by that transgressive move of showing the body lying inert in a field, where one expected to see

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the standard images of anyone's *army album* of curated photography, "memories of one's youth, of the first love and friendships for life." Hadas again:

> We are interested in the individual relationship with the collective, how you go against it or try to blend in, accommodate. The exhibition asks a question, because everyone sees things differently, gives meaning, and needs different spaces and times for that. So for the viewer or the spectator, we thought of giving the possibility of seeing it in her own time. It is an inner process and art is a bridge between the experience and the people.

Hadas wanted to give the citizen, as a spectator of his or her own national memory, the possibility of seeing it *in her own time*. What might it mean to think seriously, as a personal question of the contemporary, about looking at one's past in our own time? In a personal conversation with Greenfeld, the artist, she said that there is much that can be done with art, but not necessarily in order to shift large political choices through interventions such as hers:

> I believe the relationship between art and politics is much more complex than approaching it directly. It is very easy to have a clear political quote in an artwork, but does having it really creates a dialogue or questions things? It might create an immediate reaction, but in my view an artwork has to resonate in several aspects, it can be in a subtle way but a deep one. In my view every action of an artist has a political statement - an artist that does not touch any political topic - has also a political statement - he/she state something by ignoring, being escapist (it won't necessarily be an interesting one).

I emphasize what was often invoked in the group's activities - the importance of military *experience* as a domain reached through an act of courage; a sort of a threshold, produced in narration, that *must* be cohered by the citizen forming a "personal story," invited to form that narrative coherence from the messy period of past service, precisely because Resisim activists narrated their personal transformation from one conscious state to another, namely from someone who thought they do not have an experience to someone discerning in the past an experience after all. More analytically, the imperative of producing a "societal transformation" organizes a domain of narration that calls into being a subject of desire – one capable of telling a story about his or her

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past by suddenly seeing elements that can be linked into a narrative thread, *this* following *that*; a succession; and maybe a chain of events with a meaning realized years later and in the very act of coming in front of others with that question: what did happen to me during that time, after all?

A story about the military past was at Resisim the domain of an injunction coming from the civil society, in whose name the members spoke as actors aware of their labor of carving a space for something new to appear: new because unpredictable. This is the most generous interpretation of their disinterest in "truth", as some were aware that the archive had solidly colonized the register of the true and false. The group positioned itself as authoritative in virtue of their claim to occupy a unique positions in the spectrum of soldierly talk about service, not testimonial (not like Breaking the Silence and not even concerned with the "truth" – "edut" is conveying an oppressive regime of judicial inquiry and proof of truth) nor the carrier of a claim for something else (financial compensation or institutional support for wounds incurred during service, like Razon and the post-trauma subjects). In this sense, they connected a space of absence in the public sphere (what cannot be talked about, on the one hand, what is not yet conscious to the subject as having been a personal experience on the other) with a figure roaming that space mute, frustrated by that alienating muteness, unable to express what he or she carried in a chaotic complex of memories, nostalgia and pain mixed together without discernment of the meaning of it all. The injunction to form your experience into a narrative story, was giving the speaker, as Edna explained, something almost like an object: "like a drawer with shelves" – you know what is on each shelf and you can retrieve it if you need to. It was an injunction for the citizen, and one that came *from citizens* who declared that they were missing an essential form of appearance to one another. What Yaron hinted at with the story of his "friend" who was famous but who felt that no one knew who he was concerns precisely this logic of public appearance that would unmake, when practiced, the state of the public

secret: the known facts which remain unspoken about the "war." It was therefore also the domain to negotiate what is legible in the public sphere as violence that citizens can talk about freely.

Hadas and Hili invoked a lucid strategy against the sacrificial culture that infuses the practices of individuals when they "look back" at the their youth and find little means to discern on their own what that past meant. To go against this archive of the state that operates so intimately, at the level of the most cherished feelings (for one's friendships and loves knitted in one's twenties) is also a genealogical tactic. The return to the military albums with an unobstructed vision of their thanatopolitical foundation (the crashing helicopters) offered a way to think about some of the stubborn obstacles to being present as discerning subject of a judgment regarding what one feels and what that feeling does further to social worlds. That return through the mediation of the exhibition throws light on those affective attachments to injurious promises of happiness; and to lethal condition of feeling love and feeling loved.

To think about citizenship as a promise of feeling loved might also explain why political trajectories that organize collective political resistance to militarism are less probable than merely individual conscientious objectors to military service. My argument, to clarify, is not that such dominant discourses about feeling attached eliminate the possibilities of imagining otherwise, but it is an argument that the imagination of different social worlds should be considered as a difficult work, and one that cannot be easily undertaken by individuals without a supporting background for the "civil imagination" (Azoulay and Bethlehem 2012) that must first be divorced from an intense order of attachment, not merely rhetorical (history lessons, say), but affective and embodied, as the love for the comrade is narrated by veterans.

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That background for the imagination of alternative attachments, supportive of possibilities to choose relations otherwise, and hopefully not feel alienated into a no-world *with no one to talk to*, really must ensure the presence of different genealogies of the political body, and therefore of the terms that have organized historically the possibilities *to feel in one's body*. I referred before here to Ariella Azoulay's argument that since its foundation as state, Israel's militarized condition of securing sovereignty has been a disaster not only for the Palestinian people decimated by ethnic cleansing and decades of necropolitical military violence, but also a disaster for the citizens, essentially deprived, she argues, of the possibilities of discussing in a public space about their injurious attachment to military draft. As we saw before, her genealogy of the "state of war" shows, through attention given to the body of the agent of violence, how a significant effort at making citizens has been invested precisely in instructing the Jewish citizen how to bear his or her body at a check point, and in the encounter with the "Arab." Similarly, in chapter one we have seen how the logic of sovereignty a concretely the work of making its presence felt is primarily a reiterated logic of teaching each new generation of IDF soldiers how to positions themselves vis-à-vis the enemy population, as occupying, policing force of control, discipline, punishment, and choreographed                                                                                           terror.

Azoulay (2013, 550) writes that "as long as the disaster of the 'visible victim' – the Palestinian who suffered expulsion, dispossession, and destruction – is preserved unseen, those who inflicted it or their descendants – the Israeli Jews – will not recognize their own disaster. The disaster of becoming the perpetrators of the "visible victim" has been kept out of the visual field." In her terms, the disaster of citizenship is most at work in the impossibility of fully participating as members of a society in a public sphere – publicity is the main target of destruction of the rhetoric

of war as necessary work of self-preservation, a work in which some topics are inaccessible as matters of public speech. Therefore, maybe a better tactic in order to break the continuum of historicism would be to consider not only what is said, but also what is often mentioned only as "noise" or left out because it feels "unsayable," and therefore it is performed, attempted as public performance, as the body trembling, shaking, stooping, the hand agitating voiceless in the air. This does not mean that we should stop at the gesture that, for instance in Yaron's performance, carries the imaginary but heavy body of the soldier, his comrade. That gesture of a heavy weight carried on his shoulders is important precisely if we consider how that body still circulates lethal forms of love among the living who take up the vocation of storytellers of war for the edification of the society and for fashioning a kind of return to a more authentic social life for the soldier-citizen.

Hilli Greenfeld's "It is more interesting to look back"

# Conclusion

I said goodbye to Hadas when it was already dark. Tel Aviv had a different atmosphere than Jerusalem. There were no soldiers in sight. She had kept her promise to send me a link to watch an animated film that she thought was speaking for the whole dilemma of the citizens. The short movie is a stop-motion animation. It shows a young IDF soldier on the roof of a house in the heart of the kasbah, with traditional stone houses. The landscape is desolate, with ruined and bombed houses, derelict objects everywhere, and no body in sight, dead or alive. The soldier looks merely bored; he smokes a cigarette. He seems to be posted in a position where nothing happens, where he must wait and watch. Out of nowhere, a very small and thin boy appears, dressed in a white rabbit suit, the epitome of vulnerability and of an endearing, tender childhood. He wants to play.

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Since there is no one else left, he nags the soldier throwing objects at him. A chase ensues. The pace of the run is fast, the soldier is drawn into the maze of kasbah's narrow alleys. Suddenly, he no longer looks assured of his obvious preeminence. Ominous black clothes hang above him, hundreds of abayas that must have belonged to the city's dwellers, long gone after the war scene, after the counterinsurgent mission. They strangely look like hanging bodies, hundreds of them, blown by a wind that becomes increasingly violent.

In the next scene, we see him almost naked, walking through the desert, exhausted and dehydrated, only one boot left, the other lost. In the ensuing scene, he is near a house, completely naked, thin, and scared. As he stands in front of the gate, an oversized door that makes his body look tiny, the young boy in a rabbit suit appears. Without uttering a word, the boy points the floor, where hundreds of keys are thrown and abandoned. He pushes one of these huge keys towards the man, who picks it up with both hands and lifts it with great effort above his head, trying to reach the keyhole placed too high above his head. He scrambles, he tries to push the key in the hole, and he miraculously succeeds. At that point, an old woman dressed in a black abaya comes out of the house, looks down on this tiny man that can easily fit in one of her palms, lifts that aching dehydrated body, and takes it to her bosom. The soldier falls asleep. It is a scene of obvious relief, of nurturance. You might argue, rightfully I believe, that it also points to a moment of infantile regression, but I want to mobilize another kind of attention to this naked body nurtured. He is rocked by the woman and in his nakedness, we understand that his regression also means an utter vulnerability that has received, through some act of grace, much needed nurturance.

The last scene of the movie shows the soldier on the floor of the house, alone, and brutally woken-up from his sleep by a soldier who just broke down the door of the house, and staring at the naked man with a rifle in his hand. The soldier with the rifle is the same man, dressed and armed, looking

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at himself puzzled, naked, half asleep, and still carrying from that slumber a touch of the tenderness from those oversized arms, the palms that housed his naked body. The woman is gone, and the man in the two hypostases, uniformed and naked, faces himself, facing oneself in the nakedness of a brief moment of no-attachment, but watched suspiciously by his other self, of the injurious attachment, uniformed, armed, and entering the house through a gesture of destructive violence.

What can we discern in this scene and its metaphor that shows the soldier's body in these two modalities so radically alien to each other, uniformed and naked, all-powerful and destructive, utterly injurable and without recourse to any instrument of (violent) protection? I want to refrain from any too straightforward psychoanalytic interpretations of the same subject's two bodies. Instead, I want to point out that Hadas wanted me to see it to understand what the dilemma of the soldier's suffering was about. In that confrontation between the uniformed and the naked man there was nothing but the uniform and the rifle, against the backdrop of a traditional village, which could be anywhere in Lebanon, West Bank or Gaza, evacuated, emptied out. What was striking for me then was the visceral reaction of his vulnerable body, a visceral register that seemed pervasive in the dominant public sphere I was trying to understand in 2015 and since then. That viscerality seemed to communicate, in strange manners, to the other regime of corporeality of the necropolitical subject, the life made bare through the destruction of public space, and which often imposes a register of immediacy of the wound that should "speak" for itself. I do not argue that viscerality as a register of the immediate evacuates politics in the same manner for the "Jewish" and "Palestinian" subjects. It is far messier than that, and more contested by real actors that show the lie of that two-sided logic of the absolute enmity which is inherited in the name of citizenship from Ben-Gurion until the present.  Still, what does this nakedness mean? And should we even try to give a name for it, an explanation? Wouldn't that the effort, the hubris of "explaining" his naked

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vulnerability take us even further out of the locale of violence; we, this writer and this reader looking from our respective desks and computer screens to this scene happening "there" as if we are not implicated already by it and the violence circulating through it?

This dissertation has started with an argument for practicing attention, which we can only exercise as individuals capable of discerning our location in the world, our situatedness. (Haraway 1988) For that purpose, we have considered with Butler, Arendt, and others that relationality is prior to the body, and sustaining any appearance of it. More strongly, we depend on others for our sense of reality. Through recourse to genealogy, both as a conceptualization of power's archival folding of meanings in the body and an operational tool to discern through the folds of the body as a project -the citizen's figure-, we have reached the first threshold to consider the uses of terror. Terror is about the body in more than one way; it is more than a force that intends to diminish and harm those that are unwanted. It operates as a force of attachment to a body – individual, social, that secures a sense of value for those nominated as bios, citizens, "brothers."

The ultimate sense of value is the sense of being seen, but this desire is ambiguous and productive for the statist project. It can mean the desire to avoid confrontation with an alienating loss of familiarity in which we might not know who we are. To that extent, terror can offer a home of sorts, an enclosure where we can even feel "love."When that love feels (suddenly) hollow, in traumatic moments for instance, we can intensify it by still speaking about it more profusely, and performing the ritualized expression of the only tolerable love: around the grave, in the silence of the siren, and even in the proximity of the living "buddy" that we can love only if we already imagine him dead, sooner rather than later. (Kaplan 2006)

For the men and women in Resisim's circles, the suffering of the citizens is in their perceived lack of a public sphere in which they might be able to see each other and to allow to be seen. It takes

some courage for that. This was one of my first thoughts after hearing Yaron's story before I met him. It is the absolute vulnerability that unmakes the sovereign logic, is it not? Is it not the sovereign who sees but cannot ever be seen,the one who declares (innocent or guilty, forgiven, or sentenced) but never has to respond to anyone? (Derrida 2009, 57, 91) In this light, we might even say that publicity and sovereignty are two antagonistic principles. We become substantially "real" in the public sphere because others consider, with attention, what we have to communicate with each other, as we weave relations. The sovereign principle denies relationality, and thrives in its ipseity. (Derrida 2009, 40)  However, the ethos of preserving relationality encounters a strong objection that appears glaring in the very act of narration performed by the citizen, even as the narrator addresses his "equals" to enact that space of relations. The glaring objection appears in the story itself: there, another presence is real but not acknowledged as equally participating in the web of reality's thickness that Yaron yearned for. That presence has been disembodied by violence. However, in the political enclosure that Yaron calls "home" and even a "society," the sphere of publicity is essential for anybody to become real. And he sensed that even though his "war story" could not make any place for the Lebanese and Palestinians targeted by his unit. "The body is less of an entity than a relation" Butler (2016, 7) writes. The body comes after the relation, meaning that the sense of being weighty enough is a function of the relation. Butler's (2011) argument is maybe most poignant for the citizen yearning to feel real. She argues that "who we are, bodily, is already a way of being "for" the other, appearing in ways that we cannot see, being a body for another in a way that I cannot be for myself, and so disposed, perspectivally, by our very sociality."

The problem of actual public spheres, particularly those cohered as "society" is that they already have nominated those bodies whose eyes, ears, and other gestures communicate, verbally and otherwise, and weave a social world. These public spheres have sold all the tickets for their

performance long ago and no one else can take up a seat "now." But now is the only time of politics after all. However, the sovereign order of memory that structures the right past and the right (and well-adjusted) future would not consider the present moment because the present is, as Benjamin wrote, the moment of the struggle that always endangers the stability of the archive.

By 2014, when Yaron's performance enacted his public appearance *for the sake of the* "living" during Israel's most important national day, the "wall" of separation (and by this I mean also the checkpoints and the double legal system and the separate road infrastructure for the Jews and the Palestinians, and so much more) had been in place for a decade. The "territories'' had been sealed off from the Israeli public view. The story of the wall in the Prologue was meant to convey its purposes not only as a material obstacle intended to keep the "enemy" outside "Israel." It was more than that: a technology for making viable subjects, with a century of material and discursive negotiations. Its main purpose is to defer the danger of a "space of appearance" that will become inevitable once the body of the Palestinian is allowed to fully "mingle" with the citizens' bodies. It is in this sense that the 1950s and 1960s military administration of the Palestinians in Israel and their ghettoization in a few localities show how old is the logic of the wall. Impoverished as a condition for a genuine space of appearance, the Israeli citizenship has been -since the very beginning- the militarized domain of the higher priority of the state. Citizenship originated as a technology of "security" and to serve the state, as Ben-Gurion declared it.

The memory of that distinct, articulate declaration of the state's need, as well as of its anxiety (a heterogenous nation with untamable, multicultural, multilinguistic, and multiethnic loyalties) to substantiate "security" might be present among discerning historians. However, the citizen's memory also needs to catch up with the history that has carved Yaron's body, for instance, out of the many other possibilities of living and living-with-others. In this sense, the present effort to

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create a public space for the Jewish citizens, even as they might criticize limiting conditions of expression to one another, will not be effective in easing the "loneliness" and the "aloofness" of the citizen because the space in-between -where his own life would become real (as well as mine and yours)- is simply somewhere else than "at home." In other words, the space in-between of appearance cannot be decided in advance, and this is more broadly the problem of all national "public spheres" and their valuable bodies. As I wanted to show, the body of the citizen is a process of subjection not only of others, made into abject figures (a heap of bodies, not alive nor dead, as Fanon would say), but of one's own fuller existence, with a fuller memory and sense of relationality.

To put it differently and returning to the argument of historians that shows how the exclusion of Palestinians from the political scene has been the most consequential force in the articulation of Jewish "citizenship" without the military draft the place of the Palestinian people in Israel would reveal glaringly that to be Jewish means ultimately to be always mobilized for the "new war." It is fundamentally a "sacrificial body." (Weiss 2011) Here, it becomes easier to see the productive figure of the combat soldier as he (a necessary "he") mediates the passage between "territories" and Israel as a democracy and "familish place" (a place for brotherly love for each other, that is). As he returns from "there," that place of savagery, so clearly unlike his normal self, and even as he admits that he has lost his moral values or that he is enraged and haunted by "voices," he is still someone who has returned from *there*. However, I also wanted to follow the possibility that such *intrusive* voices and the occasional personal or collective realization of a "loss of values" might constitute a moment of danger for the continuum of historicism. (Felman 1999) This is because in this space occupied by governmentality and the biopolitical vocation to restore the health and well-being of the *familiar* self, new and destabilizing interpretations for one's ill-being might seep in.

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In Chapter Four, we have seen more than the familiar vocation of the medical apparatus of post-trauma, global by now, to restore the wellbeing of the traumatized soldier, and even "resilience" against future harms. More than simply containing the suffering brought "home" by the returned soldier, the agents of governmentalized assistance work to produce that space of post-traumatic suffering as legible idiom for the soldier and the society, meaning everyone. This generalized effort at naming everyone who is traumatized indicates an archival strategy. The strategy was organized obviously, first, in order to name who is hurt by the "war" or the "terror situation" and therefore whose future is valuable. However, it does more than that. By stabilizing the explanation concerning why "we" must respond to suffering, finally, because Ben-Gurion's generation had failed to see the suffering of so many, what is erased is the other legacy of Ben-Gurion's generation, which has racialized the Jewish people and distinctly located the Mizrahi and poor, working class in the periphery that is increasingly untenable while having the Ashkenazi, "European" middle class in the central cities.

Post-trauma can operate as discontinuity of the archive, but this requires an effort at discerning what "moves" through you as you gesture, speak, or feel anything. It requires embodied attention and learning new skills to attend to the body. More dominantly, as an apparatus of governmentality, it is a privileged domain for self-conduct as the skill of detecting -in one's thoughts, memories, feelings, bodily sensations, and even in life choices- the persistent, stubborn trace of the past that is still working inside the self. The pedagogical training in the hermeneutic process of digging inside the self pacifies the one subjectified as post-traumatic: *all your abnormal reactions and feelings and life choices are normal considering what you have gone through*. This caring trope furthers that folding of the statist archive's layers, which is the body itself. This body that carries the pathological objects inside (images, voices) and expressions outside (the rage, the inability to

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keep a marriage bond going) appears, in public sites, to better show the distance between territories and home. Or so the governmentalized name for suffering the experience of military service would want.

In this sense, the nausea of the citizen, and his aloofness, all the malaise of the quotidian life that does not feel right can be interpreted in more than just one way. So we must pay attention to Yehuda's nausea, shared with others with whom he runs for a temporary relief. On the one hand, it might be a sheer inability to think what happened to him in those years "up North" and inside that tank so enticing for the young man, "like a war machine." This inability to judge is systematic and widespread. It is coterminous with the body of the citizen formed in the colonial logic of the valuable life. Yehuda's nausea then would be an instance of what Stoler (reference) calls "colonial aphasia": words simply do not match the horror of the obvious reality. As the colonial process is ongoing and supported by an increasingly untenable military regime enacted by the citizen, Stoler's observation is critical here. However, in a second interpretation of the citizen's nausea, we might consider how nausea feels. It is a kind of decidedly pervasive bodily malaise. Even as we might struggle to mind other tasks of the day, and even as we might apply ourselves to those tasks with some success, the sensations of nausea sit as a forceful background to everything else. Nausea occupies you. It also singles you out in a way, keeps you apart from everything else that was familiar, for as long as it stays.

Lastly, Chapter Two offers a point of tension with the story in the rest of the thesis. The performance of the body terrorized by the military occupation is, I believe, in stark contrast with Yaron's performance of visceral suffering for one simple reason. Yaron performs his own body suffering and tries to make us "see" what he sees, feel exactly what he had felt – more strongly still, what he sees because he is still in "Lebanon" as he performs it. In other words, he is reenacting

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– or at least this is the obvious intention, and reproducing thus the idiom of post-trauma as a pathological inability to be present because the past is so heavy, still repeating the gestures of the past now, in the present. The meanings of this last trope in trauma, what the body still carries, and what the body remembers, the "body keeps the score" in van der Kolk's terms (2015), can be employed for both emancipatory projects and for consolidating the statist and sovereign logic of the enclosure. I tend to believe that van der Kolk's framework, invoked at times in the clinical site at Peace of Mind, is radically dangerous for the statist archive because this author tends to ask *what social structures form violent conditions that traumatize people*. However, in Yaron's performance it ended up being depoliticized because of the larger trope that carried it: the combat soldier knows, after all, something that we, the rest of us, women, the non-combat soldier, the citizens, cannot know.

In contrast, in the El-Hakawati Theater the apparent performance of the viscerality of the body, made of fragile flesh that can shiver and tremble and be easily destroyed by boots, missed one element that was decisive in Yaron's performance: it lacked a narrative voice, a claim of that body by the person, by someone who can say "I." In that space of freedom from the person, from the "I" and the explanation that attributes temporality, causation, the visceral claim (this body is mine, and I suffered in this body of mine), we are given the occasion to watch an eloquent moment on that stage: a momentary doubling of the body. Between the body targeted by sovereign violence and the body paying attention to that necropolitical violence, there was suddenly a distance. In that distance, witnessing was made possible for us to stop and think. Consider, for instance, that in repeated sessions the actor practiced the gesture of someone frightened, or startled, or exhausted as only a strong noise can exhaust its subject (it is after all a well-known technique of torture). What he had to practice was therefore an act of imagination asking simple but essential questions:

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how does a body startled look like? How would a father tending to a baby look like as he loses his balance and tries to recover it in order not to drop the baby? That body imagined does not need to be Palestinian nor Jewish in order to deepen the act of imagination. That body does not need the claim of an "I." Instead, it offers perspective: there, we can think.

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