AFTER ISRAEL

Towards Cultural Transformation

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About the author

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I am deeply indebted to my family, not for having provided me with the time and space to isolate myself and keep on the work of thinking and writing, but precisely for the opposite, for sharing that time with me. For about two years I have been discussing the ideas in this book with my partner in life Michelle and my three children Dekel, Tomer and Gefen. During the time of writing of this book, I have regularly been adding to our family meals my own dish of questions. I was never disappointed. Something always came out of our debates. Mostly, I found myself in the middle of dinners running from the kitchen to my computer to type out the brightest points they raised. Many arguments in this book are the direct reflection of those conversations. I owe the title of this book to my son Tomer, who suggested it when I first discussed with the family the idea of writing a book about how everyday life in Israel confirms the kind of society we need to put behind us. For him, apparently, it was clearer than for me, that I was not talking about Israel, but about its *after*.

I am privileged to have very special friends and colleagues with whom I am able to discuss my work. In our neoliberal academic age, this should indeed be seen as a privilege. Over a few years now I have benefited from having Ian Buchanan as such a friend and colleague. Our weekly conversations are a sort of laboratory of thoughts, and also a great pep pill for my research that has helped me to refine important ideas in this book. It seems to me that Australian weather has boosted this collaboration.

If the book has achieved some degree of consistency, the reader should blame the insightful observations and comments of Aura Mor-Sommerfeld, Ronnen Ben-Arie, Swati Parashar, Tim DiMuzio, and my partner in life Michelle Svirsky. They carefully read previous versions of the chapters and suggested corrections that truly helped me focus my thoughts. This book offered me a wonderful chance to actualise

A STATEMENT

Israel was a bad idea from its inception. At the time the well-integrated lives of Jews in Muslim societies were completely disregarded by European Zionists, the good intentions of securing in Palestine a home for the persecuted Jews were at one stroke ruined the moment Zionism required the dispossession of the Palestinians from their ancestral home. A national home to be established instead of a native home is always a bad idea. After a century of continuing dispossession and warmongering, Israel's suicidal policies and ways of life have pushed the region into existential instability.

Crutched by all sorts of fundamentalists – the American government, evangelists of all kinds, European orientalists and Jewish diasporas stuck in the past – Israel refuses to recognise the truth of its situation. Consuming the last drops of holocaustic fuel, it runs on air like a maniac. It fires missiles and bombs at civilian populations, it destroys homes and erects separation walls everywhere, as if to say 'I will take you all with me' in a Samson venture: 'Let me die with the Philistines.' On the backs of its Jewish citizenry faithfully carrying out the unsustainable mission of a Jewish exclusivist region, Israel refuses to give up on its endeavours. No negotiation of land, borders or sovereignty can divert us from the suicidal track on which Israel has placed life; the time to reconstruct and adapt Zionist modes of being has expired. No golden path, no negotiations, no balance of interests, no place for a healthier Zionism.

Jewish-Israelis must realise that Israel compels them to an unsustainable form of existence. They must realise that the ways of life described as Israeli wreck their lives in vain. Once they – we – realise it is over, we shall all be liberated from the problem of trying to fix the system of anti-life called Israel. Nothing can be fixed in a political project that deprives the life of its beneficiaries as well as of its victims, Jews and Palestinians. Once we realise it is over, at that very specific

moment old political allegiances will be put behind us. Once we realise it, we will understand that we must now make a new beginning. That very specific moment is the moment of *after* Israel. This is why the most important political project is the cultural project, that of taking away our bodies from the characters, the identities, the practices, the associations and the ways of thinking that together make this Zionist century of ours. By the time Israel would have been celebrating its centenary, another society will be in place from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River. The very same people of today and their children, those we naturally identify as Jews and Palestinians, will be invested in constructing their shared life away from the assumptions that Zionism has forced on the region. *After Israel* means exactly that.

Edward Said identified in 1998 that profound contradiction of Jewish-Israeli intellectuals, bordering on schizophrenia; in spite of their understanding of Zionism's wrongdoings to the Palestinians, in spite of their recognition of the fundamental incongruity between Zionism and democracy, there are still enough Zionists to refuse to surrender their privileged and oppressive ways of existing (Said 2003). In fact, most Jewish-Israelis show a benign quota of self-criticism as regards the oppression, marginality, exclusion, discrimination and inequality that nurture their privilege. But they have no intention whatsoever of fundamentally changing their lives or putting an end to the impoverishment of life they cause. The problem is that Zionists do not understand their oppressive ways of life as conveying a morally problematic existence, nor have they perceived their own ways of being wretched and insecure for themselves. It seems they can live with this state of affairs without major distress or discomfort. This is in fact what knits Jewish-Israelis from all streams and strengths together – from the blunt right-wing to the weak-willed left, from the more fanatic religious nationalists to the hypocritical secularists, oriental and occidental Jews, Ethiopian and Russian, women and men. But Jewish-Israelis must realise the unsustainability of their way of life and redirect their lives into the construction of new shared horizons with the Palestinians.

Any serious attempt at changing that collective political attitude must engineer the means by which Jewish-Israelis can be re-affected

in regard to their perception of their modes of being. A book can offer merely a textual exercise to induce that stimulus. The strategy used in this book is to generate a reflective attitude that may re-affect Zionists by means of exploring how they become the protagonists of privilege and oppression. In other words, *I explore here how Jewish-Israelis become Zionist subjects*. We thus engage in a critical exploration of social training, how Zionist characters and behaviours are constituted in various spheres of social life. For that purpose, each chapter focuses on a specific form of subjectivity that has become dominant in Jewish-Israeli society. This book investigates four forms of subjectivity: *the hiker*, *the teacher*, *the parent* and *the voter*. In order to make it productive, however, the exploration is carried out by intersecting the tales of subjectivity with the forces of profanity. These are the acts, practices and affects that patiently crumble and disintegrate Zionist logics and common sense. These are our *vehicles of transformation*. With the help of the textual intervention of already existing dissident mentalities and practices, the chapters investigate how Zionist characters are formed, and consequently deformed. Thus, I am not assuming that Zionist ways of being are naturally given. On the contrary, I adopt the idea that these ways of being are produced and protagonised. The point is that everything that is produced can also be fractured through the production of new modes of existing and new ways of being. The challenge that the stories about the processes of gestation of Zionist characters puts before the reader may release minute emotional thunderstorms and eventually induce a relocation of affect regarding how Zionists feel about their ways of existing. Individual transformation – through a collective effort – is eventually what is needed to go beyond the Israel we all know.

I am aware that texts on Israel and Palestine are inclined to engage with political solutions, not with cultural transformation, as if a negotiated exchange of land, borders and sovereignty will save us. But no political solution can provide the cultural marrow that is utterly necessary to substantiate a thorough transformation of ways of life – without which new forms of Israeli domination will be forced on everyone who falls under the new series of arrangements of land, borders and sovereignty. This is why there is a vital need for another

answer, one that takes society, culture and politics into account. It is time to understand that formal institutions and policies cannot be changed in isolation from a radical transformation of habits, identities and dispositions. The ways of life and the modes of being shaped and woven during the Zionist century must go. *This is because these ways of life and these modes of being are the continuous war waged against all the inhabitants of the region.* Overcoming these ways of life and these modes of being is to *after Israel*.

The analyses in the six chapters that follow are based on the processing of fieldwork performed in Israel during 2012 and 2013. The ideas stem from the intersection of several elements, chiefly the evaluation of individual and group interviews with activists, the study of legal documents, introspection into social practices, educational policies and cultural and political events, all aided by theoretical literature. In each chapter, the presentation of ideas does not follow a formal or strict academic script. More precisely, the ideas appear and disappear as in a collage, so the chapters can be approached as miniature essays, each on a different topic. Sometimes just a few pages suffice to make sense of something for the reader. Different objects, forms and types of expression are pasted together to form images, although it is up to the reader to see where an image starts and when another is already overlapping it. All in all, the images in this book share a resemblance; in a way, they create a family of images, or an assemblage of images trying to convey an affective text.

For those who prefer to skip the theoretical conceptualisation that wraps the contents of this book, I would suggest starting the reading at Chapter 1: 'The Hiker'. On the other hand, it is my opinion that 'theory' is never just theory, but provides the necessary language with which to read and comprehend. The alternative thus, is perhaps to leave the 'Introduction' for the end.

This book is dedicated to the peoples living in the region that extends from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River and to those who have been expelled from that region since 1948 and for whom I wish their return.

'At any rate, each chapter of this book attempts a diagnosis of the cultural present with a view towards opening a perspective onto a future they are clearly incapable of forecasting in any prophetic sense.' (Fredric Jameson, *The Seeds of Time*, p. xiii)

INTRODUCTION

> The preservation of the texture of a particular social order is
> confused with the preservation of the social order as such ...
> (Félix Guattari, in *Molecular Revolution in Brazil*, 2008)

We begin with an upsetting fact: in most cases, knowledge reveal-
ing past and present-day injustices does not trigger unambiguous
responses. In the face of accounts that explain how oppression affects
real people's lives, some might expect shock and a change in current
perceptions and sensitivities about society. Commonly, however, one
faces disappointment – and all the more so when our own stories as
victimisers are at hand. In the case of foreign stories, we can afford
to develop some sympathy for the distressed, and as victims we are
reluctant to give up our obsession with the narratives of our past
miseries, which eventually become instruments of paranoia. All in
all, society prefers to have its own wrongs go unnoticed, unheard.
At best, these accounts are incorporated only to be rejected as mere
tales spun to serve the wrong ideology.

Oppression in Israel past and present is a case in point. Look
at the substantial academic industry of knowledge informing us
of the ways in which Jewish privilege in Israel has been hewn and
maintained through the ethnic fragmentation of life – the way in
which the Palestinian people has been dispossessed of its right to
have rights, particularly after the violence of 1948 that constituted,
and led to the constitution of, the State of Israel. However, despite
all the incriminating archival evidence, statistical indicators and new
understandings of power relations, one cannot help but wonder how
perpetrators' minds manage to accommodate every piece of informa-
tion detailing their participation in the production of oppression. 'No
whispering in their hearts' causes any discomfort (Reynolds 1998).
No disaster is seen as such: neither the colonisation of Palestine,
the 1948 Nakba, nor the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and

East Jerusalem since 1967, nor the persistent structural exclusion of the Palestinian citizens of Israel. As Ariella Azoulay recently noted, Jewish-Israelis are trained by the regime not to identify the disaster, not to 'perceive themselves as those who inflict such a disaster or are responsible for its outcome' (2013: 549–50), nor much less to recognise the disaster as their own, even though it is the disaster that explains their privilege.

At first sight, the fact that colonialists do not question their source of power and privilege should not surprise us. Intriguing, though, is the way this inability is constructed in the first place. In other words, what is it about the oppressor's collective mind that turns this inability into a habit of produced and re-created neglect? In order for us to acknowledge our own involvement in the oppression of others, then, and to understand how it vitiates our life by substantiating our privilege, educated information and analyses of the consequences of that oppression – and the costs we force its victims to pay – are just not enough. At certain moments, evidence, testimonies and reports to the Israeli public of how it is implicated have aroused some concern. Some Jewish-Israelis are still truly concerned. But, from a bird's-eye view, Jewish-Israeli society seems to have successfully inoculated itself against moral and political reflection; thus, owing its existence to Israel's acts of oppression on the ground, the industry of knowledge about Israeli oppression whirls on without arousing moral concern. That discursive production has become a genre that is taken for granted and that few still bother to notice, an imploded star, a black hole: as far as Jewish-Israeli society is concerned, these narratives do not take off but are drawn into and trapped in the smoky rooms of radicals. Deleuze and Guattari would have defined this discourse on Israel's oppressive traditions as a line of flight that has failed – a resistance with radical aspirations that has self-aborted. In other words, although that knowledge is important in order to understand power relations in the region and potential transformations, the narrative about Israeli oppression has become a 'tale' without Jewish-Israeli listeners.

So, to help people listen and to inspire them to think and feel change, mere exposure to accounts of oppression that point them

out as the villains is just not enough. People erect mental, emotional and discursive walls to protect themselves from having to account for their actions. For Jewish-Israelis, assuming that responsibility would mean stressing inadequacies in their self-image, as well as risking the loss of privilege, so some Jewish-Israelis minimise the significance of the anguish they are accused of causing while others busily justify their actions. Strategists of the Zionist left love to temporalise their apathy, claiming that a proper Palestinian partner has yet to appear. And there is a second problem: narratives of oppression present the oppressors with the horrors of the given as if they were not its perpetrators but rather subjects who are already equipped and fit to change their given. But they are not. In their present constitution, they are equipped and fit to reject the reformatory hopes of the narratives of oppression. In other words, it seems to me that narratives of oppression fundamentally dissociate between the horrors of the given and the historical and cultural particularities of their audience. In all honesty, the disillusion of their narrators is a sign of their own blindness. Traditional scripts on oppression seem to assume that there is little connection between the processes by which real practices become oppressive and the processes by which the subjectivities performing these practices are constituted. We need new mediators between our perception of reality and the ways in which that perception affects us on our path to action (Deleuze 1995). Far be it from me to claim that it is no longer crucial to keep recording the present and conceptualising the practices of oppression we create and entertain. But if we do aim to affect Jewish-Israelis in their own transformation, this intellectual work needs new allies, new mediators.

But who is the subject, the Jewish-Israeli? It is necessary to clarify that a single, unified Jewish-Israeli group or identity does not exist. The Mizrahi–Ashkenazi racial fissure,[1] the secular–religious division, the self-ghettoisation of Jewish and non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union, the cruel racism against Ethiopian Jews, and the gendered processes that still assemble the militarist Zionist machine are anything but a testimony of Jewish homogeneity in Israel. It is widely acknowledged that white Zionists have shown

their oppressive talents not just towards their exterior others but towards their interior others as well. As Ella Shohat put it, Zionism has created not only external victims but also Jewish victims, the oriental Jews (1988). Thus, Jewish communities in Israel might be distinct not just for their celebrated identities and traditions, but also, and more importantly, for their position in the historical matrix of wealth and marginalisation. However, white Jewish dominance has never ended at the material level. Without a shred of integrative intention, white Zionism has always demanded full ideological and organisational submission from the moment it established itself as a colonising enterprise in Palestine. This was the case in relation to the Sephardic Jews living in Palestine at the time when European Zionists launched their colonising project (Chetrit 2010; Giladi 1990) as well as in relation to the immigrant Jewish communities that arrived in Israel from Muslim countries in large numbers during the 1950s and 1960s – and that incrementally formed the post-1948 Jewish society in Israel. So, for instance, the desire to have a greater share of society resulted in the Mizrahim[2] developing loyalty to the Zionist project despite their relegation and the consistent and per-sistent discrimination against them from the outset (Chetrit 2004; Hever et al. 2002; Shenav 2006; Shohat 2006), orchestrated by the white culprit who fabricated the de-Palestinisation of the country during 1948. Therefore, it is right to ask how I can claim to have 'the Jewish-Israeli' as the protagonist of my stories.

Moreover, at first glance, the reader might feel that my issue here is only with the lives of the rank-and-file middle-class Ashken-azim.[3] A book written by a white for whites. I can already visualise the complacent smiles on the faces of racial profilers of all sorts, racists and radicals alike. It would be easy to infer from the term 'Jewish-Israelis' that my concern, conscious or not, is just about white middle-class Ashkenazim. But this would be true only if the contemporary and dominant Zionist beliefs, commitments, prac-tices and political dispositions – the very soul of Israel's machine of deprivation of life – were the monopoly of Ashkenazi Jews. Despite the fact that Ashkenazi families (however demographers would like to define this category today) are the main material beneficiaries of

Israel's machine of deprivation of life, the dominant Zionist beliefs, commitments, practices and political dispositions that make up this machine are not their exclusive monopoly – regardless of the variety of historical, economic, political and social reasons that brought and bring the different Jewish communities to commit themselves to Zionist practice. It would therefore be senseless to overlook the fact that anti-Zionist politics and practices in Israel do not enjoy the massive support of Jews of Soviet 'descent', nor of Ethiopian Jews or of the various other religious communities. It should also be noted that, as Sami Shalom Chetrit states, '[m]ost Mizrahim today are, unfortunately, of the new generations who believe that being a proud Mizrahi is waving a bigger Israeli flag than the Ashkenazim wave' (Krawitz 2009). It is true that, in a historical attempt to shrink the gap of differentiation that marginalised them as second-class partners of the white Zionist project, most Mizrahim found them-selves embracing Zionism's most horrific beliefs and behaviours. The point is that 'all Israeli Jews are implicated in and must take responsibility for the colonisation of Palestine, even though ... as Shohat ... argues, Mizrahi Jews were, and are, Zionism's Jewish vic-tims' (Lentin 2010: 10); therefore it would be thoughtless to overlook the fact that in our contemporary society most Jews in Israel *actively nurture Zionist politics with their minds and bodies*. The pro-Palestinian sympathy of some small fringes within the ultra-orthodox Jewish community, certainly in Neturei Karta, says very little regarding the consensual participation of the vast majority of the heterogeneous Orthodox community in the official Israeli political system at both the national and the local level. Then perhaps it is incorrect to claim that Orthodox Jews are Zionist ideologues or believers, but most of them are undoubtedly Zionist practitioners – they practise Zionist settler-colonial politics. This is, I believe, the readership of this book: *Zionist practitioners*, the Israeli Jews who have made Zionist practice their way of life, regardless of their historical or political reasons for doing so. However, a vivid and appropriate anti-Zionist challenge should find ways to assemble the fragments in the histories and the present contexts of these Jewish communities that can boost the collective struggle of Palestinians and Jews to *after Israel*. If I have

not achieved this aim here, at least to some modest extent, this is a fault I hope to correct in my next works.

As I have said, my issue here is with the broad and heterogeneous array of Zionist practitioners, not with a particular set of ethnically or racially identifiable subjects. I am therefore focusing on the phenomenology of particular modes of being, namely *the assemblage of Zionist modes of being that nurture the deprivation of life of all the inhabitants of the region*. Even if these modes of being have evolved through their internalisation by the distinct Jewish communities in Israel for extremely different and even contradictory reasons and motivations, as previously mentioned, this heterogeneity has not prevented so far the consolidation on the ground of Zionist practices shared by most Jews in Israel. Quite the opposite, if you ask Palestinians. Let me explain again: there is no one whole and unified Israeli Jewishness, and Zionism, as a historical political project, was manufactured by and for Ashkenazi Jews, so to a large extent Zionism in this sense 'cannot be used as a totalizing concept for all Jews' (Abdo 2011: 34).[4] As Ella Shohat maintains, Zionism was never a liberation movement for all Jews, despite the fact that 'Zionist ideologists have spared no effort in their attempt to make the two terms "Jewish" and "Zionist" virtually synonymous' (1988: 1).

Despite this, it is essential to establish that Zionism is not only a historical political project but *a series of contemporary practices*. What I address in this book, therefore, are those who engage in Zionist practices, the *Zionist practitioners*. While I am aware of and in total agreement with the Mizrahi critiques that reject the attempt to conceive Zionism as the national movement of all Jews (see, for example, Hever et al. 2002; Lavie 2005; Nimni 2003; Shohat 1988),[5] I claim that the momentous gains of this scholarship cannot obscure the Jewish rainbow of real Zionist practitioners making Israel the kind of settler society it is. Can we firmly state that Israel's Zionist ways of life are supported and practised only by white, male, secular Jews? Can we claim that in spite of the anti-religious cargo East European Jews brought with them to the colonisation of Palestine, the Jewish religion has no part in the Zionist settler-colonial practice of dispossession? Of course not. It would be insane to claim that. My

approach is not ethnic-centred but practice-centred: when I refer to the 'Jewish-Israeli' I am not assuming a unified Jewish ethnic subject condensed by a homogeneous set of histories and interests coiled around Zionist ideologies; rather, I am referring to those people who walk through their lives enacting Zionist practices, thus becoming Zionist practitioners. So, this heterogeneous category of subjects is created by participation, not by racial, ethnic, gender or religious affiliation. In short, we cannot hide our complicity with Zionist practices behind the colour of our skin.

I certainly claim that a confident Zionist anti-Palestinian consensus exists across large segments of Jewish society in Israel, coexisting with the internal heterogeneities and escapes (the non-consensual behaviours and ways of thinking) of this society. For whoever looks for the accomplishments of the Zionist melting pot, this is exactly where to find them. *The melting pot of hatred*. As Edward Said (2001) put it:

> The core idea is that if Jews have all the rights to 'the land of Israel', then any non-Jewish people there are entitled to no rights at all. It is as simple as that, and as ideologically unanimous.

Let me dare to correct Said and say that, more than being ideologically unanimous, *it is practised unanimously*. Here, I am addressing this consensus in its more general patterns, and, where relevant, the discussion brings forth the historical and political distinctions that bring to the surface the internal heterogeneities of Jewish society in Israel. By more general patterns, I mean the patterns that make Israel the kind of state and society that structurally imperils not only the lives of Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians but increasingly incites the world to support political instability, large-scale conflicts and wars.

Therefore, the fact that my stories have 'the Jewish-Israeli' as their protagonist does not mean at all that I am unaware of the many historical and contemporary embodiments of that category. The Jewish-Israeli of my stories is not one, nor does he belong to a set ethnic category of Jews. The Jewish-Israeli of my stories is the Zionist practitioner and should be read in the plural, as the disparate collection of individualities that populate the locus or plane of existence in which the Zionist modes of being that nurture

the deprivation of life converge, however significant the internal heterogeneity of the collection itself. In this sense, the verb 'to *after Israel*' means reviving the Zionist/Jewish distinction by disengaging from the practices that blur it.

¶ As I was saying, exposing oppression in its full horror, trying to explain that military occupation, discrimination and segregation are unjustifiable, and showing that Zionist policies towards the Palestinians perpetually defer any actual resolution have all proved futile in the effort to affect most Jewish-Israelis and drive them to change. These texts mostly fall upon deaf ears. In this book I offer another approach to cope with that inability to perceive privilege in terms of the oppressive practices that secure it. I ask how, as Israeli Jews, we have become the protagonists of such horrible stories. These stories have not been repressed in the Israeli public sphere to such an extent that their voices have been lost; in fact, knowledge of these stories is widely accessible. Yet there is an excruciating gap between that reality and the emergence of transformative impulses to change things. Without guessing how many protagonists need to become 'race traitors' and which alliances need to be forged in order to reach a critical mass that might generate change, it is safe to assume that invitations to consider social transformation are thought unnecessary as long as we do not see ourselves as the protagonists of horror stories.

Let me explain. As has already been said, the Jewish-Israeli society is a very diverse society, and yet most of its members are strongly knitted by a compulsion to uphold the Zionist project of the Jewish state. This commitment is expressed in terms of the kind of practices Jewish-Israelis perform, in the sort of beliefs and dispositions they hold, and by way of the discourses they voice. In this society, there are Jewish-Israelis who at times reflect on the sort of beliefs they were trained to hold and examine the practices they are required to perform as part of the Zionist collective. Others are truly aware of the oppressive character of their beliefs and their practices, yet they embrace them as their preferred way of existing. Such awareness may lead to attempts to exit the Jewish-Israeli collective way of life, but

only a small minority opt for that. The majority of Jewish-Israelis do not critically reflect on their lasting commitment to their collective beliefs, ideas and practices and hence they do not take notice that these are vehicles of privilege and oppression. In other words, most Jewish-Israelis choose, unconsciously or not, to live in peace with the misery they cause. For them, these beliefs, ideas and practices are just their obvious ways of existing in this world, as much as it is normal for them to have their public spaces crowded with armed soldiers, or have their bags and bodies regularly checked by security guards. In fact, most people do not go about questioning their ways of being (Pease 2010).

Furthermore, most people tend to protect their ways of existing from critique. In a society such as that of the Jewish-Israelis, this protection has many sources of legitimation that also help reinforce the cohesiveness of the political community. True, in recent years a sharp right-wing radicalisation has been taking place in all strata of society and many Jewish-Israelis are no longer really concerned with explaining or justifying their deeds. Today, most non-receptive reactions to critique fluctuate from 'leave me alone, this is how we live here' to 'leave me alone, this is how we *should* live here'. The implications and consequences of their deeds on others just do not sink in. Oppressive deeds have been made routine and their consequences ignored. To do this, Jewish-Israelis have developed a sort of 'Teflon coating' that prevents those oppressive implications and consequences from effecting them to change. Their Teflon coating keeps their sense of themselves defensible by erecting discursive and emotional mechanisms to help them come to terms with any critique of their actions. As a result, they can go on with those actions without interruption.

How can we pierce that protective shield and effect Jewish-Israelis to abandon their oppressive practices? Given the failure of the narratives of oppression, I suggest focusing on the processes by which Jewish-Israelis become Zionists, rather than focusing on the visible oppressive practices Jewish-Israelis protagonise in their relationships with others, particularly with the Palestinians, or on the lethal and depredatory consequences of these practices. This means focusing on

the ways in which *Zionist subjectivities* are constituted as such. This is about studying processes of subjectivation, the minute moments of everyday life through which people are constituted and constitute themselves as subjects – becoming individuals with particular ways of thinking, doing and feeling, and with predictable predispositions to interpret the world in determinate ways. Following Guattari, these processes, with no definitive goal and endless in character, create our *existential territories*, namely the spaces to live in that we construct and reconstruct in our interactions with society: minds and bodies, lifestyles and occupations, friends and relationships with others, leisure activities, political dispositions and so forth (1996: 125, 196).

Why should we study processes of subjectivation? Simply because these processes, by forming our social characters and habits, cast us in a central role in the very acts of oppression we take part in. In other words, these processes of constitution that make Jewish-Israelis into Zionists hold the key to understanding how Jewish-Israelis develop the necessary disposition to oppress. In the context of Jewish-Israeli society, studying processes of subjectivation helps to reveal the inherent interconnections between the vibrancy of oppressive practices and the constitutive subjectivation processes through which these practices become wilfully animated. Processes of constitution of subjects need to be understood as processes that involve relations of production – of subjects. In the course of these relations of production, the cultural and material core that *animates* society is produced.

The point of socialisation is that the particular patterns of relations of subject production are present in their effects – in the characteristics of the subject's behaviour, beliefs, modes of life and dispositions. Hence, because of this link between the two realms, by examining the relations of subject production we might be able to shape a critical attitude towards both these relations and their effects. However, it is extremely important to conceive the relations of subject production and their effects as *not being relations of perfect agreement*. If not, we will be seeing experience as a mere reproduction of subject production, and therefore no escape from our despotic identities will be possible. In line with the Deleuzian–Guattarian approach of how subjects are constituted, I adopt the position according to which a

'subject … is as much the product of self-invention, as it is the consequence of a conformity to existing structures' (Buchanan 2000: 86). Subjects are constituted in ways that both transcend the given and conserve themselves in the given. In other words, I adopt the activist position according to which subjects might go beyond their given conditions of life – a subject can transcend itself – and reconstitute their subjectivities by creating and incorporating dissonant meanings, interpretations and practices that stand in disagreement with the patterns embedded in the dominant relations of subject production.

To the tales of oppression I suggest adding *subjectivity tales*. These tales will close the gap that exists between how Jewish-Israelis perceive their socialisation into becoming part of the Zionist collective and how they perceive their participation in practices that factually cause oppression. Simply put, most Jewish-Israelis are unmindful of the ways by which socialisation makes them into oppressors. My claim is that by looking into the production line of ourselves, we might be able to identify the nuts and bolts of our oppressive characters and habits, those protagonising in acts of oppression. The question I ask is what is it about the construction of Zionist collective characters and ways of life that has Jewish-Israelis wilfully playing those oppressive roles.

However, my aim is neither an introspection of processes of subjectivation for the sake of witnessing our submission into becoming oppressors nor to moralise. The aim is experimentation. My suggestion is to stimulate a *critical look* at the various ways by which one becomes a Zionist practitioner in Jewish-Israeli society. What do I mean by critical? On the one hand, I am interested in the processes that render Jewish-Israelis so willing to accept the role of actively producing misery for others; I am interested in how their dispositions become dominant behaviours, and how these dispositions are shaped by and play a role in the maintenance of asymmetrical ways of life and the substantiation of privilege. From this perspective, the mundane is animated by *normative social figures*, their dispositions and habits. These normative social figures crystallise the processes of Zionist subjectivation in the different social spheres. On the other hand, I am no less interested in the ways in which the roles

these figures perform are defied by emerging alternatives, by *acts of profanation*. One can only profane the sacred, and nothing is regarded more sacred in our lives than our normative characters, identities and dispositions. Their survival depends on their ability to prevent inventiveness and creativity (Guattari 1996: 215). Profanatory processes, on the other hand, manufacture new and singular modes of existence that wrest us from the current attachments that fix our bodies to specific social practices and political dispositions at particular times. Taken together, this exercise problematises the constitutive conditions of the beliefs, understandings and perceptions of subjects with regard to the given in an attempt to change this bundle – while keeping in mind that the self is no more than the ways in which the components of this bundle are related (Bell 2009: 43). Simply put, the textual exercise aims at problematising the circumstances behind processes of subjectivation and the conditions of the relations of subject production.

The contribution of this book is to stage *images* that intersect these two interests. To put it in Chris Weedon's (2004) terms, my goal is to delve into how culture *produces and challenges* subjectivities in Jewish-Israeli society. The critical aspect is a result of reading our own processes of subjective constitution through the lens of existing profanatory practices. Images of this sort, I assume, invite us to critically reflect on how we form and conduct our lives and, consequently, urge us to intervene in our own mode of life in order to alter its current course.

I name the reading I suggest *critical protagonism*. This is the process by which subjects recognise situations, practices, thoughts, emotions, discourses and tasks *as parts of their being, as their existential organs*. They do so through the critical images created by text – whether written or lived. Crucially, they recognise the minute moments in which they are constituted as the subjects they are. In viewing the images that the text supplies, they identify the practices in which they participate and the characters they feel comfortable with; they anticipate how a particular narrative will unfold; they are shaken by an unexpected feeling of shame in the face of images that only now become disturbing; or they compulsively repeat their

ardent political support out of their most habitual forces. However, I feel obliged to warn the reader that the notion of recognition I use here has a strong antithetical charge when related to a celebration of identity. Critical protagonism is not about recognising a unified self in order to glorify it – quite the opposite. The kind of recognition I suggest should induce critical reflection, re-evaluation, and eventually transformation, not masturbatory self-celebration. More precisely, by targeting our affective capacities and not just our rational thinking, the text here, in line with Papadopoulos, moves us towards '*dis*identification and imperceptibility' through a process that entails 'refusing who one is supposed to be' (2008: 156).

In order to recognise some of our individuated selves and their functions as protagonists of oppressive subjectivities, to recognise the violence in our own constitutive processes, it is not the voice of oppression that a critical text needs to illuminate. As stated above, to urge a critical reading, the analysis of oppressive processes of subjectivation needs to be combined with the challenging viewpoint produced by acts of profanation that help us see and feel things differently, hence enabling the protagonists to step outside themselves and embark on new projects. As Foucault put it, this consists of using profanation 'as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods used' (1982: 208). Ultimately, I am asking the reader to engage in Rela Mazali's exercise, to look underneath their house, to ask themselves about its foundations as well as to pay more attention to its cracks (2011).

The textual exercise here is my version of Brecht's estrangement or alienation effect (1964), the technique used to make us see the everyday in its historical light as an invitation to change our hearts. Seeing life in its historical light means perceiving its moments as historical constructions that involve the active, though not always conscious, participation of individuals – namely as a specific production under particular conditions. For those who dutifully believe that 'our life is what it is supposed to be', or for those who believe with some resignation that 'changing reality is beyond our reach', the textual exercise here aims first and foremost to enable the cognisance that

subjects are actively – consciously and unconsciously – involved in the production of their modes of being and ways of life. We cannot deny our complicity in the production of the self we are; in other words, blaming parental genetics for the kind of person we are reveals only the passive characteristics of our agency, not the lack of it. For the purpose of illuminating the personal and collective historical aspects in the constitution of our subjectivities, it is crucial to challenge the organic image that we have of our way of life by stripping from it its self-evident quality, and to do so only for the sake of presenting the parts and elements of this image 'as objects with which we have relations' (Buchanan 2000: 160). Of course we have relations with them! These are the parts and elements that, when assembled, constitute the mouth that voices political allegiances, the hands that beat and shoot, the ears that refuse to listen, and the back that rests on the stolen soil.

Coming to terms with the fact that the selves defined as 'we' have intimate relationships with certain parts and elements of our way of life means *protagonising*, or historicising, for it is an effect that 'makes us aware that our spatial habits are tied to a conventional *ordering of elements in space* and that such an ordering is not naturally occurring, and far from being immutable, is entirely contingent' (ibid.: 160, emphasis added). Importantly, the historicism that the text sets out makes us aware of our own historical coordinates, our ordering in space as it is constructed through time. These are the coordinates of the Zionist collectivity, its positioning in time and space in relation to universal ethical axes such as relating to others, heterogeneity versus homogeneity, uniformity versus pluralism, and so on. Therefore, we cannot shake off this evidence as just another set of tales: once these coordinates are known they cannot become unknown. This is the moment of *after Israel*.

Seen through profanatory lenses that challenge the ethical time-space positioning of the Zionist collectivity, a reading of the formation of Zionist subjectivity reveals the innate connections between this formation and the acts of oppression that Jewish-Israelis perform to maintain their privilege. Importantly, this reading restores to oppression the affective powers to which oppressors are immune, thus

inducing judgement and a decision to re-evaluate life. The subjectivity–profanation images provide *evidence* that the ways in which we constitute ourselves and live our lives in Jewish-Israeli society are also *the coordinates of our oppressive actions*. Ultimately, the text leads us to reconnect ourselves as the very protagonists of actions that seriously impoverish life in the region, to accommodate the knowledge it reveals and to change how we see things, experiencing what Buchanan calls 'revelation' in the process (Buchanan 2013).[6] This process might take different paths and enact itself through distinct emotions according to different subjective positions. In no way do I mean to prompt guilt; rather, my hope is that the text will have a positive effect on the reader. Other than guilt, there might be shame, discomfort, disgust or anger. Shame and guilt differ in that shame lacks a clearly defined object. While guilt grips the subject by affixing its reaction to a particular offence and hence losing the reality of the conditions that facilitated that offence, shame overwhelms the mind and body and necessarily leads to a process of re-narration of self. In contrast, guilt, like fear, reaffirms our image of ourselves and of others because it necessitates recognisable selves that can accuse and make those selves answerable. Guilt is thus more conservative as it affirms hierarchies and constellations of power, whereas shame is creative and involves re-narration and a renegotiation of power relations.[7]

In the process of revelation, profanatory texts play a vital role. They intersect with the narratives on subjectivity formation and in so doing create a space, a sort of textual territory, where the political change of heart can take place. For that reason, it is never enough to stress the significance of the acts of silent dissidents and extrovert activists who, in their actions and discourses, make bodies, minds and environments deviate from present trajectories, compositions, dispositions and relationships. We cannot see ourselves as the protagonists of oppressive subjectivities unless our bodies are touched by profanatory forces, coming either from our own exploratory initiatives or from the outside. It is not that the text here completely disconnects itself from the measurable output of oppression, but its images focus the reader on the mundane ways in which he or she tends to become a protagonist in the production of that oppression.

This is important because, in their hearts, Jewish-Israelis do not feel that criticism of the oppressive practices in which they take part is related to the oppressive ways by which they become Zionist practitioners, unfolding Zionist subjectivities. For them, the way others see these practices does not represent the political community of which they feel themselves to be a part. Eventually, the idea of the textual exercise proposed here is to close the gap between how subjects perceive the formation of themselves and how they perceive their deeds. Collapsing this gap is about revealing the reciprocal causative relationships between the daily and mundane processes of subjectivation on the one hand and, on the other, the practices we participate in as fully fledged subjects proclaiming to the four winds 'I'm this, I'm that', including those oppressive practices that impoverish our lives and the lives of others. Collapsing this gap is key to undermining the source of detachment and relief Jewish-Israelis rely on to continue doing what they do in order to reap their privileges on the basis of oppression.

¶ As a way of understanding and responding to the question of how Jewish-Israelis become protagonists in oppression stories, this project undertakes a study of some of society's fundamental social figures in the production of the settler-colonial ways of life that animate the present. Every society, colonial or otherwise, has an array of possible normative social figures or characters who make up its cultural texture and are essential in the constant reproduction of power relations. Israel is no exception. Here, I intend to focus on a series of Zionist figures – *the hiker*, *the teacher*, *the parent* and *the voter*, corresponding to the social fields of leisure, education, family and politics. Each plays a key role in the functioning of the Zionist organism; they are among its vital organs. The idea behind the introspection into these figures follows Brecht's estrangement effect: to break up a given and self-evident reality into its constituent elements and relationships to intensify their historicity in the eyes of the reader (1964; Buchanan 2000: 160). Here, I aim to break the banality of that reality by prying into a collection of minute moments and experiences in the lives of normative Zionist social figures, as well as into their

various relationships. Hence, as an addition, or perhaps as a challenge, to the discourse on Israeli oppressive practices that assumes an impersonal whole that perpetrates actions, I suggest evoking the everyday instances that form the matter and soul necessary to carry out the functions of oppression that the Zionist regime depends on for its survival. However, each of these normative social figures represents a *range* of behaviours, beliefs and dispositions and not a clear-cut persona, so different parts and viewpoints in my stories will appeal differently to different Jewish-Israelis, to different Zionist subjectivities. Let me now briefly introduce the Zionist sociological figures elaborated in the following chapters.

The hiker: in no way does Henry Thoreau's relationship with nature lie at the root of Zionist hiking – Thoreau's walks in the countryside have the great benefit of teaching participants to appreciate nature beyond any instrumental value. In contrast, since the early days of European Zionist immigration to Palestine at the end of the nineteenth century, hiking has been shaped as a strategic political practice that converts every encounter with nature into an occasion to immerse participants' bodies in selective stories of the land. The physical activity of walking builds up a corporeal bond with the soil one treads, a bond that is fully exhausted during one's service in the army. Israel teaches us not just to saunter, but to familiarise ourselves with nature by subjecting its wilderness, landscapes, colours and smells to a particular political ideology. Zionist hiking is a military practice that turns land into territory. Walk forth and conquer.

The teacher: in all societies, education is the piecemeal business par excellence of constructing consciousness and setting the course of the mind. What distinguishes the role of the teacher in Jewish-Israeli kindergartens and schools, however, is that it serves a settler society in arms. The teacher's role is to set the course of the mind in ways that foster uncritical action, indispensable for the long journey that prepares young people to continually carry out the tasks of fortressing Israel. As the French philosopher and activist Félix Guattari states about the role of subjectivity manufacturers as teachers in the production of individuality: 'We are the workers at the tip of an industry, an industry that furnishes the primary subjective matter

for all other industries and social activity' (1996: 123). There are essentially three means of doing this: first, an all-pervasive nationalist discourse in curricular and extracurricular activities; second, blatant complicity with the army, ranging from an official open-door policy for army representatives to enter schools and preach war, to various forms of educational events, including military training inside high school – all establishing the inevitability of soldiering; and third, fortressing Israel in the school system through teaching that internalises Israeli ethnocracy as democracy.

The parent: there is nothing more disturbing about Israeli society than the role played by most Jewish parents. Above all else, they are the Abrahamic immolators. There is no easy way to put it, but we need to ask how a modern society comes to socially reward progenitors for encouraging and demanding their sons and daughters to become soldiers in an army that risks their lives and trains them to actively deprive others of life. It is that 'handing over' of the children, that betrayal, that must be questioned. Undoubtedly, without the teacher's preparatory role, few parents would let national pride overrule their natural concern for the fate of their children.

The voter: what is the image of democracy if not that of the voter? Although we can safely assume that the inequality suffered by Palestinian citizens and the violence exerted against the regime's Palestinian non-citizens will continue to be legalised by the Israeli parliament, and that the political persecution of dissidents will intensify in the years to come, the right to vote and the representative system are precious to the Israeli political system because their periodic manifestation in elections streamlines the common belief that 'despite all difficulties, Israel is a vibrant democracy'. Literally whole libraries have been published that comprehensively demonstrate Israel's non-democratic character, despite its democratic procedures.[8] We shall, then, abandon that indulgence right here. The question that interests me relates to the potential energy – contained in the procedure of voting – to redefine the image Israel wishes to maintain as a democratic polity. I am interested even more in the potential of new uses of that procedure to begin working on some aspects of the foundations for a new political community *after Israel*.

The abstraction of these roles as sociological figures unveils the functions they serve in the Zionist apparatus; these functions help explain the inability of their actors to question their privilege, and their willingness to participate in the production of misery that makes Israel a pariah state. The study of sociological figures is a study of processes of subjectivation, namely *how people become, but also resist, the sort of subject they are trained to become*. Hence, in line with Mansfield, I adopt the view that subjectivity 'is primarily an experience, and remains permanently open to inconsistency, contradiction and unselfconsciousness' (2000: 6). Subjectivity is an always contested construct in which transitory relationships and qualities are established and abolished. Only when processes of subjectivation achieve a high degree of stability does the very process of change become invisible and seem inaccessible, as if all we have left are just dominant subjectivities. But in their essence, these are processual phenomena, plural and dynamic constructions. Hence, despite the representative face people use to show and take pride in, behind and beyond that face, subjectivity always bubbles as 'a double movement, on the one hand of closure and on the other of opening' (Guattari 1996: 216). As Guattari warns, it is thus wrong to determine that subjectivities are constituted by 'a dominant factor that directs other factors according to a univocal causality' (ibid.: 193). Rather, they are constituted and destituted by a multiplicity of forces even though all dominant subjectivities develop by preventing inventiveness and creativity (ibid.: 215). Therefore, the work interactively invested by society and individuals in sculpting human lives, surroundings and the relations between them is in a state of constant tension with inner impulses, external motivations and situational opportunities resisting that modelling, and collaborating to pursue instead exploration and experimentation that leave habitual attachments behind. In this context, it is easy to see why the concept of resistance commonly attributed to emancipatory acts is simply incorrect. In the struggles over subjectivity, resistance is offered by reactionary forces keeping dominant identities and ways of life together, whereas *profanation* is carried out by those forces aiming to dissolve the consistency and pervasiveness of privilege (Agamben 2007).

A field of forces arises here, between stable subjectivities and transformations, or between stable subjectivities and new becomings. However, we should not understand these two terms as purely oppositional. Rather, from the perspectives of both its genesis and its disintegration, subjectivity is reliant on becoming. It cannot be otherwise. To explain one, we need the other, in both directions: to explain how dominant subjectivities emerged historically (becomings in the past), and also to explain how their produced stability and consistency are always under threat (becomings in the present). The field of forces that extends between stable subjects and lurking becomings is complex and heterogeneous; it is within this field that our lives evolve and change. Then, to add to Guattari's definition, I would say that our existential territories arise and decline within the fields of struggle between subjectivity and becoming.

Attempts at reconstructing subjectivities have the great benefit of making visible the very existence of the process of reconstruction itself, or the promise of new forms of organisation; in so doing, they defy and even ignore the arrogance and absurdity of final identities. However, these attempts are worthy of praise insofar as their intervention remains pure mediality, as means without an end (Agamben 2000). Their action surely has political purposefulness (moving life beyond Israel), but no fixed purpose (the identity of the new society). This is how I suggest understanding the notion of the *after*. To '*after*' the kind of society Israel *is* in the present, we must embark on a series of processes that divest themselves of and diverge from the roles being performed by the dominant social figures and from Israel's national projects and explore other ways of existing. For contemporary Jewish-Israelis, these interventions are problematic precisely because they create their own praxis and their own subjectivities, sliding Israel into its own *after*. But these interventions are also an opportunity to experiment and practise alternative relations to life informed by attitudes and emotions removed from their settler-colonial attachments. It is not farfetched to expect that Jewish-Israelis would prefer to abandon their leading role in oppression stories and become the protagonists of other narratives.

¶ The making of subjectivity involves affixing particular meanings and interpretations to 'things' such as myths, rites, ideas, events, passions and substances, in so doing producing zones or fields of attraction within which bodies orbit and incrementally acquire new corporeal, cognitive and affective capacities and qualities. These 'things' thus become referents or centres of subjectivation, points of signification around which life is organised and given sense. Thus, the relation between a 'thing' and a social sphere effectuates particular 'uses', which in turn beget social functions. Social life is created through orbiting, its meaningful practices, its zones of thought, its hopes and its expectations. Significantly, the forces that bring about the possibilities to enter into orbit are not exempt from bringing about escapes. Immanence is precisely that double substrate.

The significance of profanatory acts resides in their destabilising effect on the dominant roles of centres of subjectivation or reference. Specifically, they destabilise the authority of those myths, ideas, events, passions and substances around which society coils our minds. The Jewish holocaust, for example, is one such organising centre of subjectivation in the Zionist organism. Zionist politics have appropriated the Jewish holocaust in ways that prevent all universal interpretations – of this there is no doubt (Evron 1981; Massad 2002; Zuckermann 2002). As Boaz Evron rightly put it thirty years ago: 'Two terrible things happened to the Jewish people this century: the holocaust and the lessons learned from it' (1981: 16). Anti-humanistic manipulations of the holocaust have pervaded and continue to envenom social life in Israel, even in the most ordinary situations. Let me cite just one ritual as an example. It is not unheard of for holocaust survivors to send for the adolescents in the family, once they have been recruited into the Israeli army, to see them 'exhibit' themselves all uniformed and armed. It is hard to tell whether the perverse pleasure triggered by the image of the young Jewish warrior satisfies a compulsion for retribution or a nationalist introjected appetite, or perhaps both. Either way, such a pleasure problematises the social field by allowing the military bond to regulate individual relationships within the family. In the foreword to Lyotard's *Heidegger and the Jews*, David Carroll states:

The 'lesson' of the Shoah becomes: Let us ensure that what happened to the Jews and gypsies of Europe will never happen in the future, or in the case of Israel, that it will never again happen to Jews. In that light almost any action against any 'enemy' can be justified. What appears to have been learned is that it would even be better to support an authoritarian, totalitarian police state than to side with the victims of its injustices, or, put even more brutally, that it is better to be on the side of the persecutors than the persecuted as if this were the only alternative one had (1990: ix).

More than half a century after the events, it is safe to claim that the memory of the holocaust has played, and continues to play, a central role in justifying the omnipresence of military logic as the '[one alternative] single option' society must follow. This function of the holocaust fascistises other social fields as well, particularly education. Undoubtedly, the most appalling educational activity organised by the Ministry of Education in Israel since the late 1980s is the Trip to Poland for high school seniors, in which they are compelled to visit Auschwitz and participate in the March of the Living ceremony. In theory, the trip is supposed to foster both national and universalist understanding of the holocaust, but in practice it is conducted in ways that magnify the former at the expense of the latter. Importantly, studies have shown that the trip encourages positive attitudes towards the army, which in turn fuel aggressiveness towards the Arab world in general and the Palestinians in particular (Lazar et al. 2004; Segev 2000). However, the trip is not accessible to all students; its cost (US$ 1,500) bars the poor. As a result, the delegations comprise 86 per cent of students from the higher socioeconomic echelons.[9] In other words, these delegations are mainly white, mostly students from Ashkenazi homes, and therefore the trip re-enacts social differences. This is not surprising. Goodman and Mizrahi have shown that racial and socioeconomic divisions between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim are reproduced through the teaching of the holocaust, among other means (2008). According to Goodman and Mizrahi, different teaching and memory techniques are used in different schools;

so, for instance, while in predominately Ashkenazi classes these techniques incentivise an active attitude on the part of the students in relation to the national ethos (encouraging students to share their families' European memories), a passive attitude is induced in predominantly Mizrahi classes, where students are taught how to understand the holocaust. Hence, 'hegemonic national memories are still processed differently by dominant and peripheral subgroups', namely the memory of the holocaust is used 'as a specific medium for social positioning and privileging' (ibid.: 108). Differentiation of education in Jewish-Israeli schools has its historical roots in the late 1950s, the time when the 'educational elite opted for the official institutionalization of differential education', introducing 'lower-level educational programs constructed specifically for Jews from Arab lands, and designed to limit the extent of scholastic failure, at the cost of giving up the vision of full educational achievements for all the new pupils' (Swirski 1999: 175–6; Yonah and Saporta 2002). This should be seen in direct association with the racial division of labour that trapped Mizrahi communities in the lower ranks of society (Swirski and Bernstein 1993). As I will discuss in a moment, this state of affairs demands that Mizrahi interventions are considered as an alternative lens through which to interpret the ways in which the holocaust is articulated in Jewish-Israeli society.

¶ The tragedy of the Jewish holocaust thus found no relief or emotional expiation in the figure of the Jewish state, but rather its extension – also expressed in the inverted relationship established between the holocaust and the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in 1948 (the Nakba), perpetrated by Jewish forces just three years after the liberation of Auschwitz (see Pappe 2006). As this case shows, there is an intimate historical relationship between how 'things' become referents for subjectivation and the cultural texture of a society. The point here is to grasp these relationships as the objective of profanatory acts (Agamben 2007). The holocaust and the negation of the Nakba; the military; the body of the young; the question of land; Jerusalem; the biblical nexus; modern technology; the Jewish intellect – these are the elements of a Zionist subjectivation that has

not only crystallised in the well-known hypersensitivity of Israelis in response to any critique of their state and society (criticism that is always perceived as an existential threat), but has also gained a sustained credibility in both the Jewish diaspora and western societies – sources of support vital for the continuation of Israel as a Zionist state.

Again, the deactivation of centres of subjectivation involves a change in the bonds between myths, rites, ideas, events, passions and substances ('things') and their linked social categories such as parenthood, education, citizenship and so forth. Deactivation means rendering ineffective the gravitational forces of centres of subjectivation. A change in these relationships would lay the foundation for disavowing present qualities, faculties and properties, and consequently for rejecting present inequalities and privileges. Indeed, the idea behind the deactivation of present subjectivations is to free 'things' of their existing attachments and uses, thus liberating the subjects from their habitual subjectivising relationship. Freeing 'things' from their role as centres of subjectivation means returning these 'things' to new potential uses (ibid.).

If returning 'things' to their free use involves the deactivation of present uses, how does that deactivation take place? To be sure, profanation is a political task that requires the negation of present uses, present roles and present common sense. But without an accompanying positive process, such negation will clearly get us only halfway at best. In his *Archaeologies of the Future*, Fredric Jameson raises an idea that he leaves under-theorised, namely the notion of *substitution* as a procedure for the disruption of present operations. Substitution, I contend, covers both halves of the profanatory act because it is a manoeuvre by which a present use or relationship may be deactivated as the result of a simultaneous alternative use. Substitution might be materialised through various techniques. Let me illustrate three of these techniques by looking at Israeli civil society.

A voluntary educational alternative has been offered since 1997 by the Centre for Humanistic Education (CHE) within the Ghetto Fighters' House Museum in Israel. CHE works with high school

students and teachers from the Arab and Jewish sectors in a structured programme that consists of weekly workshops and a three-day seminar held during the school year. Three themes lie at the heart of these activities: the holocaust as a universal formative crisis; humanist social and political values manifested in the concept of democracy; and Jewish–Arab dialogue as leverage to social and political coexistence (Netzer 2008). In sharp contrast to mainstream education, CHE elicits a connection between the Jewish holocaust and the Palestinian Nakba, aiming to encourage what they call humanistic dialogue:

> we cannot accept the idea that the holocaust excuses Zionism for what it has done to Palestinians: far from it. I say exactly the opposite, that by recognizing the holocaust for the genocidal madness that it was, we can then demand from Israelis and Jews the right to link the holocaust to Zionist injustices towards the Palestinians, link and criticize the link for its hypocrisy and flawed moral logic (Said 1998).

But CHE is not alone. Radical Mizrahi educators such as the poet Sami Shalom Chetrit have been unambiguous in their commitment to present the universal lessons of the holocaust (see Oppenheimer 2010: 304–5). Two reasons lie behind the significance of the Mizrahi view on the state use of the holocaust. The Mizrahi perspective on the holocaust is important firstly because the official discourse on the holocaust manufactured a purely European narrative and totally ignored the oriental Jews from Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Greece, who have suffered a similar fate (ibid.: 305). And secondly, it is important because the sublimation of the holocaust as an exceptional event that happened to Ashkenazi Jews repressed the possibility of enunciating and articulating the Mizrahi cultural massacre and the structuration of their socioeconomic marginalisation for generations to come, executed by the Ashkenazi establishment in Israel since the 1950s. As such, the holocaust became a selective site of belonging in Israeli culture, a mark of distinction entirely unavailable to non-Ashkenazi Jews. This partiality must be corrected, as Oppenheimer explains:

> [Mizrahi second-generation writers] such as Amira Hess and Sami

Berdugo clarify that the political perspective of the Holocaust as solely an Israeli narrative or as a means of cultural control is inadequate, and demand that an additional, complementary viewpoint be considered. This complementary stance views the Holocaust as a necessary basis for understanding the experience of immigration and displacement of both European and Mizrahi Jews (ibid.: 303, my emphasis).

A strong and open alternative to the Zionist culture of the holocaust therefore lies in the Mizrahi deactivation of the European Zionist lens as the exclusive means of understanding and experiencing the memory of the holocaust; instead, it offers an engagement 'through the exilic perspective of one who experienced another holocaust within the Israeli space and time' (ibid.: 325). Calling the Mizrahi tragedy in Israel a holocaust is not a provocation but an intervention. It is needed to reveal the historical fact that the appropriators of the Jewish holocaust and those who perpetrated and deny both the cultural massacre of the Mizrahi Jewry in Israel and the Palestinian Nakba are one and the same. Profaning the name of the holocaust is therefore the means by which this ghastly intimacy is exposed and the profits from it are put into question.

However, putting spokes in the wheels gearing the holocaust to boost militarism is not a relevant operation in Ashkenazi homes. There, the dissociation of the holocaust from militarism requires emotional investments at the level of intergenerational relationships. In the case of CHE's education programme or in the Mizrahi ethnic–universalistic redefinition of the relationship between Jewishness and the holocaust, substitution works by *simulation* – as it also does in the small network of Arab–Jewish bilingual schools[10] where students, teachers and parents from both communities come together to form an alternative educational community (Svirsky 2011; 2012a; Svirsky and Mor-Sommerfeld 2012). These forms of education may appear to adhere to a standard educational pattern, but this proves illusory when their internal dynamics and specific agendas are examined. This is the great advantage of the simulacrum and the way in which it opens up new spaces: while it bears a resemblance to the model,

its collective operations are turned against that model by exposing its inherent fascist order.

Substitution can also operate effectively when *active refusal* is encouraged, as in the case of the feminist and anti-militarist Israeli organisation New Profile, which aims to weaken the disciplinary role of the army in the life of Jewish-Israelis by encouraging young men and women to consider their imminent conscription in a deeply critical manner and by helping them cope with their refusal.[11] Importantly, New Profile's activities create a space for profaning Abrahamic parenthood – its adult activists, mainly women, withdraw from the social obligation that turns their progeny into soldiers-to-be. Beyond the ideological and symbolic challenge non-Abrahamic parenthood poses to Jewish-Israeli society, its main effort is exerted in avoiding the kind of everyday parental guidance that practically prepares children's bodies as potential offerings on the altar of the nation and the military.

A further form substitution might take is that of *excess*, which functions by targeting assumed knowledge of central social issues. Since 2002, the Israeli non-profit organisation Zochrot ('remembering' in Hebrew)[12] has sought to raise public awareness of the Nakba and of the Palestinian right of return among Jewish-Israelis. Breaking the Silence,[13] another non-profit organisation, run by army veterans, collects and publishes testimonies of soldiers who have served in the West Bank since the Second Intifada, exposing the catastrophic scope of human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli army. Both organisations surpass official narratives by undermining their reliability, thus weakening the social forces that currently keep Jewish-Israelis bound to one another.

Simulation, active refusal and excess are actualisations of substitution, but there may well be others. These forms of substitution have two features in common. First, as Guattari maintains, the examples illustrate that struggles for the transformation of subjectivity 'are not ordinary forms of opposition to authority' (1996: 176). Rather, they require a sort of micropolitics that brings into question the conspicuousness of the normative individual and hence offers particular responses to specific problems, responses designed to reduce

the existential impact of dominant social roles (see ibid.: 176–7). So, as Agamben noted, rather than attempting simply to abolish present uses, micropolitics endeavours to erode them by confronting them with an unconventional use. The second characteristic is negligence, which is expressed in the productive insolence of acts that ignore the separation between normative life and that which is separated from it (Agamben 2007: 75).

¶ Relationships between 'things' and specific social fields through which the former become centres of subjectivation are not fragile in any sense. These relationships are at the core of larger textures that function as the organs of society. There are three basic forms of connectivity between the centres of subjectivation weaving those textures. Firstly, profanatory acts must take account of the versatility and multifocal presence of the forces of gravity of each centre of subjectivation animating the various social fields in life. For example, in Israeli society, the militarist appropriation of the holocaust plays out in various social spheres, including the family, education and public discourse; another example is the isolationist actualisation of 'being Jewish' expressed in segregation as the basis of housing, education, the workplace and leisure. Secondly, not only do centres of subjectivation of the same type – inlaid across various social spheres – produce social consistency, but this consistency increases through communication between different centres of subjectivation within each social sphere. Within the family, for example, there is a contiguity and alliance of meanings arising from the mothering roles of women as expected by the nation (Herzog 2003) and the roles generated by the professionalisation of the army industry as a male territory that is seen as a continuation of military service. And thirdly, social consistency is intensified by the general connectivity between different centres of subjectivation across the various social spheres. For example, for most Jewish-Israelis, serving in the army, cultivating a myth of persecution and conducting a segregated life away from Palestinian citizens are all natural sides of the same normative coin. Consequently, social spheres share a resemblance of norms and meanings – they share a common sense.

Resonance is the glue that holds subjectivities together and makes societies. Resonance is the sort of abstract communication across social spheres that bestows a sense of coherence, consistency and stability upon society and its dominant social figures. By communication I mean the reciprocal transference of specific logics, mechanisms and affects that animate processes of subjectivation. Productive conductivity across two or more social spheres causes these spheres to vibrate at the same frequency or, in other words, to resonate together. Resonance enables society to feel that things are related, it infuses a sense of home – or, in other words, it nourishes the fecundity of our subjective territorialities by weaving rationalities, meanings, expectations and interpretations across them. High resonance in a society means a strong and internally hyper-coherent core of meanings, perspectives and dispositions circulating across the social field and regulating processes of subjectivation. High normative communication between the roles of the various centres of subjectivation engenders a sense of indistinctness between ideas and concepts – making them a family of related values that becomes part of ourselves. High degrees of resonance of meanings, perspectives and dispositions clog the social field, leaving little room for dissent, regardless of the democratic façade of official politics. High degrees of resonance necessitate the active and continuous complicity of subjects. Fascism, in other words, depends on the eager participation of society's subjects, rather than being forced upon them.

In itself, this somewhat mechanical picture of how centres of subjectivation work might lead us to assume that all individuals are equally subjectivised, that throughout the process of subjectivation we all depart from and confront the same circumstances and relations of power. To avoid such a fallacy, critical analysis must take into account, in some way, the various ethnicised, racialised, ideological and gendered historical and present-day differentiations intervening in the construction of Jewish-Israeli subjectivities. Otherwise, we are left with a hegemonic and homogeneous image of the subject and preclude learning from 'the subversive possibility of a multiplicity of sectorial centers and ... different, incompatible points of view' (Oppenheimer 2012: 340, note 18). In reality, the mechanics of

subjectivation are animated by discursive, material and affective apparatuses that racialise, ethnicise, ideologise, classise and genderise subjectivities – following the logic of power. As Herzog describes:

> Among the more prominent groups for whom the process of building a nation and establishing a state created existential conditions of marginality and exclusion are, first and foremost, the Palestinians. But other groups were also relegated to the margins by the mechanism of Zionist hegemony. This was the fate of Jews originating from Arab countries ... various right-wing groups, and religious Jews, especially the ultra-orthodox. The place of women was also determined by the rules of the dominant discourse (2003: 156).

Nira Yuval-Davis, Orly Lubin and Nitza Berkovitch, among others, demonstrated that 'the Jewish-Israeli woman is constructed first and foremost as mother and wife, and not as individual or citizen' (ibid.: 158).[14] As Abdo explains: 'Herein lies the important contribution of the feminist critique of nationalism. Women in this critique are seen as the keepers, the biological and social reproducers, of the nation state, and as such their domestic, familial or mothering roles are seen to be a priority over all other (public) roles they might play' (2011: 31; see also Sharoni 1995). Whenever this critique assists in the deterritorialisation of Zionist social roles, the text refers back to the critical understanding of 'motherhood as a national mission' (Herzog 2003: 158), through which the role of gender becomes visible.

In regard to the absorption of the oriental Jews in post-1948 Jewish-Israeli society, Yonah and Saporta (2002) offer a Gramscian model that illuminates how the marginalisation of these Jewish communities was produced. In their view, the Zionist hegemonic nation-building process comprises two centres of subject constitution, one homogenisatory and the other differential. The first was universalistic and stressed Jewish union and common fate, while the second placed the oriental Mizrahi culture as the antithesis of the western Zionist project. The tension between the two Zionist arms explains the construction of the marginalisation of the Mizrahim (ibid.: 68–104). Then, as Yonah and Saporta explain:

on the one hand the Mizrahim are perceived as an integral part of the Jewish national public and with the same human value as the other groups in this public; on the other hand, because of their 'backward' oriental culture, they are perceived as having inferior human status compared with European and American Jews (ibid.: 100, my translation).

It is in terms of this racialised inclusion that we should understand both the 'cultural massacre' perpetrated on the oriental Jews by white Zionists (Shohat 1988: 32) and the racial division of labour that originated during the 1950s, thanks to which the strength of the Ashkenazim was constituted at the expense of the Mizrahim (Swirski 1981; Swirski and Bernstein 1993; see also the Adva Center's reports). My intention is to take account of these various, and other, differentiations, to help build *the after*.

However, I do not pretend to expand on or expose a comprehensive review of the multiple differentiations by which Jewish-Israelis' peripheral subjectivities were and are created. That effort must include an analysis of other forms and inputs of Jewish subjectivity, certainly the analysis of Mizrahi women, of the ways in which Jews from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopian Jews are included–excluded, looking at the many subdivisions in these categories, and that effort should certainly address how the 'othering' of Palestinians helps affirm Jewish-Israeliness – a colossal research enterprise in itself. My issue here lies elsewhere. It focuses on the modes of being incarnating what can be called Zionist axiomatics, those practices, attitudes and affects that tie together Jewish-Israelis from various backgrounds – as a further level of subjectivation that coexists with the set of differentiations – forming a strong political settler-colonial and nationalist platform. As I have said, we will look at these ways of being through the features of the normative dominant subjectivities, taking into account the fact that they are embodied by privileged and much less privileged Jewish-Israeli subjects. In no way does this conceptualisation form the basis of an abstract Jewish-Israeli; on the contrary, it highlights the visibility of real and vivid Zionist practitioners. This view does not claim to rise 'above' race, class

and gender; rather, it acknowledges the ways in which hegemony infiltrates these categories and animates their actualisations.

Textually, the attack on normative dominant subjectivities can be mounted via different strategies. It can focus on the ways in which dominance and marginality become two sides of the same production and highlight how peripheral subjectivities are constituted, or it can focus on privilege and expose how hegemony reproduces itself. The path we take here is to favour critical voices and practices that assist in freeing us from the historical burden of Zionism, helping to eradicate from the body our Zionist organs – those organs that make us part and parcel of the melting pot of hatred. In more ways than one, this is about deactivating the organisation of the body, weakening the consistency across its extant functions and organs, letting the body become a disorganised platform upon which new organic functions grow and new forms of organisation may take place. The aim of the brief and incomplete discussion of the historical ways in which Zionism interpellates Jewish individuals and collectivities given above is to point in the direction of potential sources that present-day Zionist practitioners may look at in their self-liberatory, though necessarily collective, voyage. The point is, in other words, not to limit the discussion to a critical assessment of how marginalised Jewish subjectivities were constructed in Israeli society but to inform the critical acts of disengagement and reconstruction of subjectivities – at the core of this book – with insights provided by the gendered, racialised, ethnicised, class-based and ideological coordinates of subjectivation that may assist in getting rid of our Zionist modes of being. It should be clear by now that the analyses in this book reject the assumption that it is possible and theoretically beneficial to distinguish and dissociate between 'personal' and 'political' aspects of subjectivity, a division that owes much of its existence to archaic and ideological divisions of labour in the social sciences (Papadopoulos 2008). There is no construction of individuality that is not a collective construction, in the sense of both how we construct it – relationally – and how this construction infuses and is affected by collective practices, beliefs, values and political dispositions.

¶ Now we can go back to the idea of affecting subjects in order to induce the re-creation of their subjectivities. Being affected is about being called upon to re-evaluate some aspect of our ways of living, our habits of mind and political dispositions – in other words, our own subjectivities. 'Affect,' explains Shaviro, 'isn't something you have, but something that invests and invades you, that forces itself on you' (2011: 21). One cannot just claim to be affected. Affect is expressed in new acts, in deviations. Activist profanation requires embarking on projects of disorganisation that, as I state elsewhere, 'instigate new series of material, discursive and affective assemblages intersecting actual life, and attempting to swing structures and traditions away from their stability and sedimented identities' (Svirsky 2012a: 14–15). Profanations of subjectivity are experimentations with new elements that oblige the subject to consider – consciously and unconsciously – redefining itself. Processual in character, they create pathways to cultural transformation; therefore, profanation of existing normative identities and the ways of life they animate does not occur in capricious oppositional acts and cannot transpire simply through provocative activism. In addition, it is imperative to contrast profanatory machines that urge new modes of individuality and collectivity on the one hand with preconceived models of subjectivity on the other. Modelling the former on the latter would in fact force a new referential identity, namely a new form of authoritarian perspective upon life (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 94–5). As Fredric Jameson once put it: 'If you know already what your longed-for exercise in a not-yet-existent freedom looks like, then the suspicion arises that it may not really express freedom after all but only repetition' (1994: 56). Rather, the profanatory processes reconstructing subjectivities manufacture singular ways of existence that wrest us out of our current attachments (identifications and habits) in particular social spaces and at particular times, and hence they are ever changing. Simply put, I am interested in the dynamics of processes of subjectivation, not the authoritative models and identities these processes may produce. Not in ways of being, but in ways of becoming.

As we become exposed to new social contents and new social relationships, more centres of subjectivation are dislocated from

Zionist uses, and existing normative social roles lose their grip on the characterisation of key categories such as parenthood, education and citizenship. They lose their grip on *us*. If the dissolution of Zionist social figures brings Israel into its own *after*, the study of these figures and their disfiguration becomes an activist enterprise in itself. The aim, in fact, is to offer a cultural diagnosis of present-day Israel. However, offering a cultural diagnosis as a transformative horizon challenges the reigning political paradigm that forces us into choosing between political models: two states or one state. But this is a false act of blackmail because there is no choice to be taken: firstly, reaching a two-state condition is a practical impossibility as the only living reality between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River is that of a 'one-state condition' (Azoulay and Ophir 2013).[15] Secondly, many advocates of one state wrongly identify the practical impossibility of two states as equating to the practical possibility of welcoming one democratic state for all. However, the 'one-state condition' that prevents democracy for all is the historical result of a century of Zionist supremacy, diametrically opposed to the egalitarian one-state model. No matter how desired this model might be, it would be false to believe that the actual state of affairs could, as it is, reasonably enable transition into one democratic state.

The confusion of a given reality (the one-state condition) with wishful thinking (one democratic state for all) is exacerbated by the ways in which literature on 'one state' is poisoned by messianic tendencies that mainly vociferate a model without a material strategy for transformation. Affective engagement and well-intentioned proposals, such as in Kovel (2007), or abstract debates over potential constitutional orders, as in Tilley (2005), fail to account for the non-existent cultural infrastructure for such leaps into the future, thus failing to identify the immediate necessities for change. We are faced with a similar disappointment regarding a recent special issue of the Tel Aviv University-based political science journal *The Public Sphere* (*HaMerhav HaTziburi*), issued following a conference held on 17 May 2011 under the heading 'One State from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River – Pipe Dreams or an Emergent Reality?' All the authors in this edited collection start from two axioms – that of perceiving

the Israeli-Palestinian condition in terms of conflict and the right to self-determination – they differ only in the ways they think this right should be pursued by both Palestinians and Israelis. All the combinations of land, rights and sovereignty they suggest are deeply anchored in the divisive seas of the right to self-determination. Like the literature I referred to above, the Tel Aviv University collection suffers from that academic disorder, so prevalent among political scientists, of disjointing a given actuality and its already existing ruptures. However, in this collection Grinberg departs from the consensus: he rightly calls for engaging a renewed political imagination of the present and also states that, in order to seriously address the issue of future relations between Israelis and Palestinians, we should reject the two states/one state debate and focus on the construction of new common institutions (2012: 142–54). Sadly, however, Grinberg frames the latter within the walls of his own political model, into which the given reality will appear as if by magic.[16] In recent years, an important exception to this conceptual modelling has been led by activists of Abnaa el-Balad ('The Natives'),[17] aiming their efforts at building alliances on which to base a broad public discourse of 'one state' in Israel–Palestine (see Svirsky 2012a: 115–16). There is also the Jaffa chapter of the global One Democratic State organisation established in 2013.[18] These efforts are an exception to the rule because they invest their activist energies in new forms of collaboration and new partnerships that discuss the idea of the one state, prioritising alliances over the imposition of a model. This is about propelling the idea of the 'one state' as an impulse rather than as a model.

The 'one-state condition' is the historical, still temporary, result of Israeli supremacy, abysmally separated from the noble 'one state' of equal partnership. But if we are to adhere and commit to the idea of the 'one state', strategy should take account of the 'one-state condition' as a historical state of affairs to be dismantled, not as one that is already inviting equal partnership. It is true that, logically, the practical impossibility of two states invites alternative models into the debate, and hence might provide a historical momentum for public discourse to consider the 'one-state' model. But it would be false to turn this practical impossibility into a reasonable passage

into the one democratic state: *the conditions for that passage do not exist and must be created*. One cannot squeeze blood out of a turnip. As Behar states, 'as critical, engaging and stimulating as the one-state/two states exchange is – in practical terms it remains utterly esoteric once juxtaposed with ongoing material politics free from doses of wishful thinking' (2011: 360).

Although most of the 'one-state' literature textually weds an unquestionably necessary critique of Zionism with a moral and legal infrastructure of claims and principles and the final 'one-state' goal, the connection between reality and aspiration is not historicised. Sadly, no magic wand will bring us closer to that goal. As a result, we are left mainly with a new normative debate: two states versus one state. Whereas the idea of a post-national and democratic unified state for Jews and Palestinians is engaging and I personally support it, structural priority must be given to immediate transformative practices, affects and concepts. Therefore, the reduction of the 'Sea to the River' structure (the one-state condition) into a catalyst to change the plausibility of normative models for Palestinians and Jews in the Middle East crystallises a debate that, in more ways than one, hinders the engagement with the pressing question: *how do we actually move away from the one-state condition?* Under no circumstances does moving away from the one-state condition mean working towards a two-state condition. The historical transformation associated with moving away from the one-state condition – and here lies the gist of this move – requires moving away from the ways of life that Zionist supremacy has forced on both Jews and Palestinians. Designing blueprints, devising road maps, relying on noble values and principles, and drawing upon United Nations resolutions – all have little to do with transformative practices. It is surprising, if not literally frustrating, to realise the extent to which existing openings in actual life that point to new directions are dismissed and disregarded in the arrogant and authoritative practice of delivering political blueprints. This is a refusal to hone our senses, look deeply into society and engage with existing radical instigations and demands – practices, affects and thoughts – wounding majoritarian habits of mind and common sense, and, in so doing, opening actual life to new social

and cultural rhythms. I cannot agree more with the way in which Guattari understands what transformation entails:

> I don't believe in revolutionary transformation, whatever the regime may be, if there is not also a cultural transformation, a kind of mutation among people, without which we lapse into the reproduction of an earlier society. It is the whole range of possibilities of specific practices of change in the way of life, with their creative potential ... which is a condition for any social transformation. And there is nothing utopian or idealistic in this (Guattari and Rolnik 2008: 261).

Blueprint essayists, engulfed by a sense of historical mission and longing to play a role on the stage of international politics, altruistically concede to us a political wisdom whose main function is to draw a line that makes everything else unimportant and irrelevant. The answer lies elsewhere. Life needs to be reinvented. This is not to dismiss the genuine political attempts to establish productive collaboration across the Green Line and with the Palestinian diaspora, aiming to create the foundations of a new post-national discourse. My claim is that there are strong reasons to couple the political paradigm with a cultural-political paradigm that illuminates the still rare and threatened social and cultural activist explorations. In itself, no political solution will save us – only a cultural transformation of present ways of life. Consequently, a necessary step in this repositioning of priorities is to change our perception of the acts of profanation. We need to displace the political paradigm of borders, land and sovereignty from its dominant position, in favour of a cultural paradigm whereby the significance of profanatory exploration can be repositioned. Let me expand on this point: I claim that a certain theoretical and political complicity arises if we look at, in tandem, the prioritisation of the political paradigm on Israel–Palestine on the one hand, and the prioritisation of the narratives of oppression on the other hand. In both, the transformation of subjectivity is perceived by all shades of the mainstream, from right to left, as irrelevant to the foundations of a new society. The effect of this complicity gutters in the oxymoronic assumption that it is the colonial subject

who will carry on their shoulders the task of transforming society. *Therefore, the structural role of profanation is to disrupt the resonance between the subject of theory and the perpetuation of the Zionist subject.*

In this respect, Israeli scholar Ariella Azoulay could not be clearer:

it is time to stop misinterpreting the limited presence of such demands – all of which are quite reasonable ... It is time to consider the possibility that the limited presence of civil struggle in the public sphere is an expression of a civil malfunction that is a constitutive, structural precept of the regime (2011a: 285).

In this case, however, malfunction should not be construed as a failure to work properly, for no Zionist machine has developed civil functions, nor is there one that for some unknown reason yet to be revealed is not working properly: as there is no such machine, there is no malfunction. Let me, then, take Azoulay's point one step further. The limited presence of civil struggle is a sign not of a civil malfunction but of an extreme scarcity. Israeli-Jewish society originated and was instituted on *the unavailability of civil thought and civic virtues*. Unavailability here does not refer to something that the society lacks and strives to achieve. This unavailability is the result of a historical and collective production of society, the result of encounters, chances and choices that produced civil thought only as an afterthought. By *civil*, I mean the realm of life made unavailable by racism, militarism and segregation. That which is culturally unavailable to be played with is intimately related to the range of dominant subjectivities in Israeli society.

From the early days of European Zionist immigration to Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century to the present, Zionism has continually evolved by engineering and deploying all sorts of segregation apparatuses; most saliently, these apparatuses structured ethno-national dividing lines between Jews and Palestinians (Shafir 1989; Smith 1993; Svirsky 2012a) and racial–class lines between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim (Dahan and Levy 2000; Khazzoom 2005; Swirski 1999; Tzfadia 2006; Yiftachel 2000). Consequently, the aspiration of life shared by Jews and Palestinians, the prospect of a demilitarised society, the visibility of race and gender within Jewish-Israeli society,

the capacity for critical thinking and complex action, the passion for democracy, the readiness to share history, the universal understanding of suffering – all these have been removed as accessible opportunities and possibilities that make for the foundation of a society. They have been removed so that they can no longer enter the domain of the habitual. An act of partition is at work here, between these potentialities and the form of life Zionism has imprinted upon its variegated subjects. It is a historical partition that has placed civil life in a zone of unavailability and has set the conditions for the production of social identities and characters. Simply put, Zionist social identities themselves rest on the exclusion of these potentialities (Agamben 2000: 3–14).

Agamben defines this form of exclusion in terms of an act of consecration, the opening of a caesura, a dividing line by which relations of subjectivation and their effects are placed in an inaccessible zone that then becomes sacred (2007: 73–92). In the historical production of Jewish-Israeli society, civil thought and civic virtues have been placed in such a sacred zone, but a zone sacred not in the sense of being an object of religious devotion or veneration; it is, rather, sacred in the sense that, in Jewish-Israeli society, civil thought is untouchable, unreachable, divinely inaccessible in everyday life. In the best interests of a nationalist and exclusivist society, civil perspectives have been removed from the potentialities of life, and unless significant efforts are made, their scarcity continues to define the subjectivities of Jewish-Israelis. This isolation of civil life in a sacred zone signifies a broken life, a life that can no longer retain the character of a potentiality and for which a specific vocation has been prescribed (Agamben 2000: 3–4). As Agamben says in *Language and Death*, 'that which is excluded from the community is, in reality, that on which the entire life of the community is founded' (1991: 105). Once a caesura is created, society invests in two forms of unavailability: one is the removal of the productive relationship with the realm of civil thought and action; the other is the removal of the possibility of changing that relationship. The first makes Jewish-Israelis into civil cripples, while the second perpetuates that incapacity and secures a Zionist historic bloc.

From the point of view of profanation, however, it is insufficient to define a political community solely on the basis of the oppression it involves: that is to say, in terms of what it excludes from the community. The limited presence of civil struggle should rather be read as a double sign: while it registers the poverty of our civil ways of life, it also stands for what comes *after*, as it calls for the creation of new spaces for civil imagination and civil practice. Hence, a political community must also be defined by the ways in which acts of dissent and difference make visible and scramble the common sense of the sacred. There are not two realms, therefore – one of the norm, the other of its defiance. And there is no dialectical contradiction to expose, since the discursive affection for contradictions only sublimates the model being contested. There is, rather, one plane of life characterised by a struggle for singularity, or, as Guattari has it, for '*a fundamental right to singularity*, an ethics of finitude that is all the more demanding with regard to individuals and social entities the less it can found its imperatives on transcendental principles' (2013: 13). It is in this fashion that the following chapters unfold, each staging situations and moments in which current dominant subjectivities are challenged in different, but interconnected, social fields.

No wrong conclusions should be drawn: the rejection of the false debate over the right political model and this book's aim to point towards a long-term process of cultural transformation of life do not in any sense imply the flagging of spirited and radical targets and objectives, nor the weakening of passions – quite the contrary. Nor are we in favour of adopting deceptive 'small steps of inclusion' à la Zionist-left tradition. Targets and objectives need to be chosen according to the force with which they are capable of maddening the present regime of life and its fervent supporters, regardless of their reasons to do so, by their ability to confuse the regime's logic and weaken its strengths, by their physical, intellectual and emotional investments, short-circuiting its actual segregations and adding to its fatigue – all propelling the present regime of life into transformation. It requires no utopian designs, but rather, in line with Jameson, the kind of utopian impulse invested in 'the detective

work of a decipherment and a reading of Utopian clues and traces in the landscape of the real', clues and traces from the *afters* of this present life that express themselves 'in a variety of unexpected and disguised, concealed, distorted ways ... large or small, which may in themselves be far from Utopian in their actuality' (2010: 415).

¶ The call for cultural transformation of ways of life is by no means an insignificant demand. It goes beyond political reform in two directions: in the ways we interpret and use history; and in the ways that imagining the future impacts on the present. In fact, this *is* the problem – the lack of political imagination or utopianism involved in imagining and bringing about alternative futures. As Jameson asks, how might we be able to 'revive long-dormant parts of the mind, organs of political and historical and social imagination which have virtually atrophied for lack of use, muscles of praxis we have long since ceased exercising, revolutionary gestures we have lost the habit of performing, even subliminally'? (ibid.: 434).

Just to be precise, renouncing utopian thought and action does not necessarily derive from an acceptance of the 'no alternative' dogma. It can also derive from a disappointing, though honest, sense that 'there is no necessity for an alternative'. So if we give some credit to this position, the forensic question should be how this sense of cheerful conformism and self-satisfaction has been constructed in Israel. One day on Tel Aviv's beaches, in its excellent cafés or nightclubs suffices to breathe that sense of confidence. The reason for this should not be explained in terms of the essentially western life most Israelis lead or aspire to lead, but by the ways in which enjoying this kind of life removes – at the collective level – any ambiguity that might arise from participating in the crimes of a monolithic political culture delineated by the Zionist horizon. So, roughly, utopian thought dissipates as the eyes fill up with addictive rations of national commitment, blinding people from viewing the alternatives, and with postmodern pleasure dazzling them from seeing the necessity for alternatives.

But Israel is not Tel Aviv, far from it. As a capitalist society (Nitzan and Bichler 2002), Israel's social policies have been in decline for

decades.[19] Extreme neoliberal policies, such as those Israel's administrations have been adopting for the past twenty years or so, have lethally wounded the sense of satisfaction of many, and people do question their political leadership and their position in society. However, as the wave of social protests that flooded the country in the summer of 2011 and since seem to indicate, Jewish commitment to the Zionist ethos (to maintaining the state of war and segregation) is still sufficiently firm. The spontaneous leadership in these protests refused to link their social demands to any sort of anti-war or radical Arab-Jewish agenda (Filc and Ram 2013). In other words, the commitment to Zionist politics is still resourceful enough not to be put at risk by neoliberal economics or older internal discrimination and segregation of Jewish communities. Hence, while economic hardships do ignite the political imagination, the commitment to monolithic cultural politics in Israel keeps that imagination tethered within the general boundaries of Zionism, away from the terrain of *the civil*. As long as the commitment to Zionism holds sway, the utopian impulse is stifled.

This state of affairs begs the question of *how* the commitment to racist, segregationist and militarist politics is recycled. Azoulay explains it in terms of the civil mobilisation of the Jewish population (2011a). I have used an alternative notion, that of the 'active foundation' (Svirsky 2012b). This is both the collective production of society and that which renders its social consistency and cultural coherence. It is that which animates the body of society and its explicit behaviours and states of mind. If Israel persists in its state of war and exempts itself from civic life and Arab-Jewish ways of existence, it is because an active collective foundation substantiates these preferences in the everyday practices of individuals and groups and in the ways in which they construct themselves as political subjects. These preferences, I argue, cannot be understood merely in terms of leadership, decision making and ideologies. The habitual contribution – conscious as well as unconscious – of ordinary Israelis to the activation of practices of exclusion and segregation, to a war-waging political economy and to the reaffirmation of the cult of militarism explains the workings of society in Israel.

1 | THE HIKER

It's hard to remember exactly when I began to renounce going out on *tiyulim* (hiking trips) in Israel.[1] Probably about twenty years ago. I needed the long trip to South America with my family in 2007 and then our relocation to Wales a year later as a chance to re-encounter nature with joy – even if thousands of miles away Zionist ghosts still haunted my walks. From the Israeli familial point of view, the *tiyul* is the obvious option for all leisure weekend activities. Other activities, such as having a barbecue or visiting places or people, are addenda to the *tiyul*. This is not surprising, as hiking has an almost mythological status in Israeli society (Avishar 2011: 59). People hike individually, or just with their nuclear family, but in Jewish-Israeli society hiking is essentially a collective practice, with a strong gregarious force; it is the way many spend time with friends and relatives. Institutionally, hiking has a strong presence in the school curriculum and youth movement activities as well as in the army – hence, it has a normalising character. Apart from one's own circle of friends with whom to hike, there are myriad hiking societies and as many experts as there are households. 'These hikes,' explains Ben-David, 'are very popular in Israel; they are rooted in Israeli culture and began long before the creation of the state; every year many youngsters and families join in this activity throughout the country' (1997: 143). This outdoors lifestyle is substantiated by an array of civil society-based organisations (most notably the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel) and state-funded bodies whose area of expertise is hiking and the preservation of nature. A healthy and nature-loving people, one may presume.

But at some point it became no longer healthy for me. Perhaps because the hikes had an overly gregarious appeal, they were excessively organised, and were too predictable. The meticulous preparations for each hike, the sophisticated use of maps, the well-versed talks during

the walks, the signposts on the stones along the trail, the well-fitted rucksacks, the obsessive concern with a sufficient supply of water, the intolerable folk songs religiously repeated by the most committed hikers, the planned stops at strategic points – they all flooded me with the uncomfortable sensation that we were not just going out for a saunter in the wildness à la Thoreau, but rather we were part of something sticky, sharing a commitment, even a mission. I could not stand the obsessive deliberations around botanic classification and depictions of every bit of vegetation we encountered; my only escape was to parody their learned conversations by inventing my own, non-existent terms, as I always suspected they did too. Couldn't we enjoy and appreciate nature without cataloguing its sights, or just be immersed in thought as we walked? The more knowledgeable chatterers cited the alleged biblical roots of these names, implying – perhaps compelling – a bond between the distant past and the present. Of the plants' medicinal uses these erudite fellows showed little knowledge. In contrast, my family hikes in the Bolivian Amazon were all about learning what nature offers us and how to respect that gift, rather than how to define it for ideological purposes.

Nor was I ever at ease with the three-strip coloured guiding path marks along the way. Although trail signs are there to provide a sense of orientation and to safely channel the walk, they are also there as active evidence that that very bit of soil has been tracked, appropriated, registered and catalogued – as the signs of an archive. For me, then, they expressed a sort of social contract with those who had been there before us in a bid to affirm yet again a sense of belonging. As Rela Mazali put it: 'Our paces measured and mapped onto the ground our unfolding, forming beliefs' (2011: 187). But it was precisely this exigency to commit ourselves that alarmed and pushed me away from all that. Have we walked this trail before? It seems we have done. Was it with my students, or my family, or perhaps with friends? One more time, and again, and yet again – walking these tracks, repeatedly, certainly felt as if we were singing a monotonous refrain with our own bodies. It took me a while to realise what others were explicitly calling for: 'the land can be conquered not only by settlement but also by treading it repeatedly' (Avishar 2011: 63, my translation).

Once on the trail, the experts cannot resist temptation. A supreme power guides them to intervene, to imbue the hike with sense and reason, without which it would remain meaningless. The experts do not miss any opportunity, particularly if some stranger comes along with the group – and especially if that stranger is a Jewish visitor from overseas. For the experts – and perhaps not just for them – these visitors provide a golden opportunity to make the voice of Israel heard. And then, once on the trail, the expert is eager to exhibit his rich repertoire of gestures and articulations to which we all respond – trained as we are – with respect and admiration. Bless the guide – our sole interpreter of scenes and meanings! Hands on hips, one foot forward and his gaze riveted on the horizon, bearing the burden of historical responsibility. He turns to us eager to convey his knowledge and his confident smile finally engulfs us. So we listen. Not only can the experts not resist the temptation, they seem to feel blessed with a mandate bestowed upon them, anchored in a century-old genealogy. It would have been simply irresponsible of them to miss the chance to portray that landscape properly for us, and particularly for our overseas visitors who could give the message wings in the diaspora. 'On some occasions ... [he] will take upon himself ... the role of the typical youth movement leader and will assume various responsibilities such as looking after the group's cohesion, maintaining its social life, and, at times, even cooking a scout's meal for the group' (Katz 1985: 51). It always starts with navigation skills: he uses his arms to position the piece of mud we are standing on in relation to the four corners of the earth. As far as the eye can see, every hill, road and town is identified and plotted. One already senses that, more than simple geography, this seemingly innocent spatial orientation involves the possession of territory, with 'us' and 'them'. I always wondered, rhetorically, why we needed to be aware of our coordinates just to smell flowers, digest our packed lunch, enjoy our time in nature, and rest from the pressures of urban living. Besides, what is it about their expert education that makes their annoying cartographic skills so easily unravel the natural landscape into discrete units – units to which we intuitively assign value according to ethnic divisions

with which we were not necessarily concerned a moment before this cartographic ritual?

Once we are geographically and sentimentally positioned (remember: we just went for a walk), a brief exposition follows that might focus on some sort of modern Israeli achievement to be contextualised there in the open. 'Our' sophisticated irrigation system is frequently a good candidate. Then, if the expert is sure that his flock is submissive enough, he intensifies his speech; clearing his throat, inflecting his voice to adopt that monotone but authoritative rhythm we all recognise at once, he gravely expounds on the strategic significance of that hill over there, not forgetting the battles and the heroes thanks to whom we are now privileged to be standing where we are. That's it; the glue has worked on each and every one present, and eventually one of us exhales, '*Eyin kemo baaretz*' ('No place like Israel'). By the time the group has rested and leaves one spot to advance to the next (we don't walk or hike, we advance!), camaraderie has grown palpably to the point where someone actually shouts: 'Close ranks. We are too dispersed!' (In my days as a high school teacher, I was that idiot myself.) Someone else, consciously or not, conscientiously closes up the column as if we need to watch our fellow hikers' backs (was I that idiot too?) – as if we were performing an ancient indigenous rite and not just projecting military conduct. After all, we are not just having a relaxed stroll on a sunny Saturday. I could not stand any of this. It was suffocating. But it was also intoxicating in its magnetic attraction. More than anything, I could not stand the pleasure my body felt as part of that regimented bunch of hikers.

'No doubt walking practices could be categorized in many different ways,' asserts Edensor in his study of walking techniques in rural Britain (2000: 88). Yet Ori Schwarz's sonic model, which is based on an ethnographic study of Israeli hikers (2013), may prove helpful in giving a preliminary framing of our Zionist hiker. In his model, Schwarz identifies four modes of engagement of walkers or hikers with nature. The first category corresponds to nature 'absorbers', formed by those attentive, noise-hostile, silent and spiritual hikers who absorb nature in order to let it transform their interiority (ibid.:

388–91). Another type of hiker comprises those who use nature as a mediator, not to transform but to explore their given interiority through reflective self-expression (ibid.: 391). In the third category nature is used as an active locus for talkative social interaction (ibid.: 391–3), while the 'fourth way to engage with nature is through its physical properties, the challenges it poses to the user's body' (ibid.: 393). In this last category, hikers 'employ masculinised consumption techniques, which in Israel are strongly associated with hegemonic masculinity' and militarism (ibid.: 393). As we shall see, the Zionist hiker who is the focus of this chapter synthesises Schwarz's third and fourth type. In his use of nature, he takes advantage of nature to forge a nation, often by applying militarist techniques. Therefore, it is more exact to see our Zionist hiker not as a 'nature user', as in Schwarz's model, but as an *appropriator* of nature.

Schwarz adds a further level of analysis that unveils 'the contribution of sonic preferences to the reproduction of social hierarchies' between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim as consumers of nature (ibid.: 398); at first sight, this analysis appears to have the potential to contribute to a more nuanced characterisation of the Zionist hiker. Unsurprisingly, Schwarz found that his middle-class Ashkenazi interviewees showed an aversion to 'loud' hiking modes, shouting and having barbecues in nature – behaviours stereotypically attributed in Jewish-Israeli society to lower-class Mizrahim (ibid.: 395–9). But despite Schwarz's critical efforts to lean on his working-class interviewees to transvalue Ashkenazi hierarchisation of modes of hiking, the stereotypical dichotomy associated with the correlation between race/class and sonic preferences remains in place, but with inverted polarity (a standard consequence of identitarian analyses). So loudness, for instance, obtains a positive value in Schwarz's transvaluation but remains stereotypically attributed to Mizrahim.

In addition, when looking into both the genealogy and the current educational practices of Zionist hiking, the stereotypical racial dichotomy of sonic preferences seems to have no explanatory role. As the following sections show, this genealogy is rooted in a primarily white Ashkenazi history, one that largely evolved through an engagement with nature as a site of intensive socialisation and militant nation

building rather than through ascetic or self-reflecting modes. Official educational practices of hiking in Jewish-Israeli schools continue to maintain these patterns, whether in middle-class or lower-class neighbourhoods. This does not mean that the distinction between silent and loud modes of engagement with nature does not exist in Jewish-Israeli hiking; rather, this distinction may yield stronger critical outcomes if operationalised not in terms of signifiers of ascribed racial identities and social positionings that serve only to reassert social differentiations, but instead conceived as a multiplicity that lacks the authority of a single referent. Traditional Zionist hiking, for instance, in the family circle or otherwise, requires normalising moments through lecturing and active participation as well as silent passages of military simulation. In this respect, 'out of place' acts of loudness or quietness may be disruptive or positively profanatory. Schwarz's ideal sonic types omit the profanatory potential of these combinations. In other words, rather than simply being conceived as signs of identity, sonic preferences in hiking can also be interpreted and activated as productive mechanisms of withdrawal or disengagement. Unconsciously or not, having a noisy barbecue gathering where my hegemonic adversaries prefer to saunter or abstaining from the joy of their all too expected conversations and spatial preaching can both be seen as expressions of counter-hegemonic disengagement. Therefore, the study of sonic preferences in hiking may have more to offer than just moulding a continuum stretched between antithetical poles.

¶ One cannot comprehend the nature-appropriator mode of hiking – which might appear bizarre outside the Jewish-Israeli milieu – and its role in everyday culture in Israel without analysing the presence and significance of hiking in the history of white hegemonic Zionism. Studies have established that since the early days of Zionist Eastern European immigration to Palestine in the beginning of the twentieth century, theoretical knowledge of the geography of Eretz Yisrael and hiking throughout that geography evolved as inseparable core elements in the ideological indoctrination and the physical preparation of the Jewish immigrant-settler (see, for example, Almog

2000; Avishar 2011; Benvenisti 2002; Stein 2009). Familiarising oneself with the landscapes of Palestine through one's feet helped the former diasporic Jews of Europe to recapture the land, Judaising it anew. In other words, a particular practice of hiking became part of the nation-building process.

The historical fabrication of a nation should be sought in the changing and intricate material, discursive and emotional ways by which encounters and events turn into opportunities and choices. Chief among these nation-building processes are 'existential territories', which, according to Félix Guattari (1996), are spaces of life that become defined, stable and habitable through the cultivation of subjectivities – our identities, habits, traits, gestures and dispositions. The political mobilisation of the *tiyul*, I argue, involved the constitution of two types of interconnected existential territories, one being the body of the Zionist Ashkenazi pioneer and the other the land itself. Zionist national ideology that called on people to re-encounter the ancestral homeland and reclaim it in order to build a Jewish national home cannot in itself explain the hiking narrative in the Zionist annals of Palestine, or how the hiking narrative helped European pioneers sprout and take root in their desired old-new land. Unlike the native Palestinians and the Sephardi[2] families who lived in the country, the Eastern European pioneers did not know the land, so practical goals such as acquiring knowledge of the land's physical and human geographies were a significant inspiration for these Jewish settlers to go out into the open, to explore, study and physically experience the terrain. As Neumann explains, 'the *halutzim* [pioneers] thirsted for knowledge of the land ... one way they slaked this thirst was by travelling and hiking its length and breadth' (2011: 98).

Education in the growing Zionist enclave played a decisive role in promoting the practices and ideologies associated with hiking and landscape. As Avishar describes:

this educational approach aspired to implant the meaning of being connected to the land of Israel as it was settled anew after 2,000 years of diaspora. The hike was recruited to this end as treading the paths, taking in the views and finding shards of the

distant past while Judaising the landscape; all deepened the bond of the hikers to their homeland (2011: 62, my translation).

This sense of historical remoteness was not shared by Sephardi Jews who lived in Muslim countries and up until the 1930s practised 'religious pilgrimages or business trips to Palestine' (Shohat 1988: 10). But it was precisely that sense of 'remoteness' and the desire to end the diaspora – exogenous to Sephardi Jews (ibid.: 10) – that formed the background from which European Zionism articulated an ideology of reconnection, rebirth and Jewish regeneration.

In 1905, the first Hebrew school, founded in Rishon LeZion in 1886, led the way. Its headmaster inaugurated what was to become a tradition, that of the annual school field trip (Almog 2000: 166–8; Avishar 2011: 61). 'According to its practitioners, knowledge of the (home)land was to be transmitted to the Jewish pupil through both intellectual and sensory means ... [and] the *tiyul* was considered among the most important of such sensory means' (Stein 2009: 337). As Mayer explains: 'These hikes were the climactic events of each year both in school and in the youth movement, gradually increasing in difficulty as each youth moved up the movement hierarchy. Eventually they would also become an important rite of passage in the Israeli Defence Forces' (2000: 290). At first, historical sites were the obvious choices, helping to weave a reconnection with the land of the Bible (Stein 2009: 339), but as the Zionist project developed, the repertoire widened to include sites that allowed 'for a witnessing of the Zionist enterprise and its accomplishments on the ground' (Katriel 1995: 8).

The desire for knowledge of the old-new land eventually resulted in an educational discipline of its own known as *Yediat ha-Aretz* (knowledge of the land), which in Israeli universities is studied in liberal arts departments under the heading *Limudei Eretz Yisrael* (Eretz Yisrael Studies). According to Stein, '[b]y the 1930s, *Yediat ha-Aretz* had been established as one of the dominant sites of Zionist pedagogy within Jewish Palestine and had spawned a field of both popular and educational literature including teachers' manuals and textbooks' (2009: 337; see also Almog 2000; Katz 1985). The point is

that 'knowing the land', as Kadman notes, never included any knowledge of Palestinian existence in its past and present landscapes, this existence having been conceived of as something that a Jewish-Israeli does not need to know about (2008: 48). However, this is only true at the societal cultural level. Objectified in strategic terms, knowledge of Palestinian life became a priority for the leadership of the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine) and for their plans to eventually execute a massive expulsion of the Palestinians. In this vein, the Jewish National Fund (JNF), the main Zionist settler-colonial institution in the pre-state period, was commissioned to prepare a detailed inventory of all Arab villages, 'the villages files' (Pappe 2006: 17–22). The villages were extensively surveyed and mapped; academics and other professionals participated in the production of such knowledge. By the late 1930s, the archive was almost complete and it was updated for the last time in 1947. These archives and maps, narrates Ilan Pappe, were all that remained of the villages after 1948 (ibid.: 18).

The field of *Yediat ha-Aretz* developed on the shoulders of geography education (Bar-Gal 1993; Bar-Gal and Bar-Gal 2008)[3] and of an emergent Judaising cartography (Benvenisti 2002). The Zionist re-mapping and symbolic appropriation of the land – which also comprised the signposting of places and trails and the Hebraising of the ancient Arab names of those places (Avishar 2011; Benvenisti 2002; Kadman 2008) – were driven by a craving to reconnect and revive Jewish existence by means of uncovering and exposing the landscape of the ancient homeland upon which renewed Jewish existence could find a further layer of self-justification for the settler-colonial project, in a sort of historical short-circuiting of times (Benvenisti 2002: 249). As Stein explains:

By bringing the Jewish hiker into intimate contact with the homeland, such travelling practices were thought to foster a powerfully tactile sense of national awakening, affording the Jewish walker with first-hand knowledge of both land and homeland. In terms of the broader Zionist pedagogy in which they played an important role, *tiyulim* were deemed a crucial means of linking nature to

nation, of connecting Jewish history in Eretz Yisrael to a set of Zionist political claims in the present, therein fortifying the latter (2009: 335).

Pedagogical and symbolic technologies never work alone but intertwine with somatic functions. As Neumann warns: 'The claim that the pioneer experience of rebirth is but a linguistic trope, a poetic expression, a literary metaphor, a subjective experience, a symbolic re-enactment of biological birth or some similar phenomenon, stamps the *halutzim* [pioneers] with precisely the tags from which they sought to liberate themselves' (2011: 44). Indeed, one of the main tenets in early white European Zionism was the rejection of the 'exile paradigm' and of the spiritual life Jewish communities had led in the diaspora, to favour instead the constitution of a new Jewish subjectivity, a 'new Jew', incarnated in a masculine 'muscular settler Jew' to be shaped by physical training and hard labour (Mayer 2000; Neumann 2011: 17, 126). For the early Zionists in Europe, this was necessary because the diaspora 'had given Jews many feminine characteristics and made them, as a result, easy targets for anti-Semitism' (Mayer 2000: 284). In 1895, Theodor Herzl, the father of modern Zionism, wrote:

> I must train the youth to be soldiers. But only a professional
> army. Strength: one tenth of the male population; less would not
> suffice internally. However, I educate one and all to be free and
> strong men, ready to serve as volunteers if necessary. Education
> by means of patriotic songs, the Maccabean tradition, religion,
> heroic stage-plays, honour, etc. (1956: 37, cited in Mayer 2000: 285).

For the new Jewish settlers, Palestine furnished the open space and wildness that provided them with the means to remake Jewish masculinity (Gluzman 2007; Mayer 2000). 'Long, exhausting hikes in the rugged terrain of Palestine became an important tool for merging the Zionist message of love of the land and the building of physical strength' (Mayer 2000: 290). So, if Palestinian nature offered a smooth space in which to build a new collective self-perception of the Jew – this Jew being the white Jew – the *tiyul* was a significant

practice that materialised the constitution of that racial subjectivity. As Neumann describes, the pioneers 'prepared their bodies through physical education, hikes and camping' (2011: 127; see also Mayer 2000: 287–8). The practice of hiking was seized as an opportunity to constitute aspects of the 'new Jew': '*Tiyulim* characterised by struggle and danger were thought integral to the production of these New Hebrew bodies and subjects, both through the physicality of the hiking practice and through an overcoming of its associated challenges' (Stein 2009: 340).[4]

As security became an emerging priority for the Jewish settlers, particularly in view of the Arab revolt of 1936–39, the *tiyul* allowed the constitution of an additional somatic component through the constantly evolving edifice of the Zionist Jewish body. Hiking turned into a means of partaking in proto-military training as preparation for future acts of self-defence, attack and land conquest (Almog 2000: 173–4; Stein 2009: 338). Beyond instruction in the use of firearms and in small-group soldierly manoeuvres, this training relied on hiking as its experimental field of action. Unsurprisingly, the physical education curriculum played an equally important role in the Yishuv in the making of a 'physical culture' for the new Jewish body, which, as Ben-Israel explains, was materialised through a close association with paramilitary training (2007). Hiking gives a suitable and relatively safe outdoors context in which to undertake long treks, survey the scenery, carry weights, and practise food rationing and survival techniques, among other practicalities, all essential components of military training (Avishar 2011: 63). Schools and youth movements were paramount in this respect: they provided the growing paramilitary Jewish organisations on the ground with well-prepared and enthusiastic youth. As Mayer explains, 'in the late 1930s and early 1940s, as a result of both an ideological program for a strong *New Jew* and increasing Arab attacks on Jewish settlements, paramilitary training became an integral part of the curriculum of both high schools and youth movements in Jewish Palestine' (2000: 292). In summary, the military function of hiking – together with the practices of knowledge and rediscovery and the new Jewish body – completed a bundle of technologies that became vital in the production of Zionist subjectivity.

Conquering the land – the basic axiom of any form of colonialism, settler-based or not – found an ally in hiking, a sort of living territory that helped root the Jewish pioneer and expand the range of spaces, social spheres and political goals through which the nation was being built, to the point that Avishar can safely claim that 'the youth conquered the land with their feet; they learned to know her first hand. Both the military conquest and the conquest by means of hiking share a physical element that bonds the body with the land, by walking, sweating and even sleeping on the ground' (2011: 76, my translation). Conquest is more than a simple act of satiating domination: it has the energies of a conceptual role in Zionism, an event-concept. In early Zionism, this idea not only blurred the boundaries between military applications and the relation to nature as embodied in hiking, but, as several studies have shown, it ravaged labour, housing and the economy with its separatist impetus to eventually found a *corpus separatum* in relation to both the British occupying administration and Palestinian life (Bernstein 2000; Shafir 1989; Smith 1993). As a nation-building technology, hiking not only helped rewrite Arab Palestine as a Jewish geography (Benvenisti 2002; Kadman 2008; Stein 2009), *but it substantially became a living space for the actual possession of the land*, and, as a consequence, its practices became a significant arena of subjectivation.

¶ A professor of history from Bayit VeGan[5] took his family out for a picnic at a quiet pine grove near Giva't Shaul, formerly Deir Yassin. It was not too cold to stay in the shade, nor too hot to light a campfire, so the professor taught his son camp skills he had acquired in the army. They arranged three squared stones in a 'U' shape to block the wind, and left the fourth flank open. They piled up broken branches on top of twigs, on top of dry pine needles. He let his son ignite the pile. When they listened carefully, they could hear a weak and soft murmur coming from the curves in the road. The trees hid it; the professor did not speak of the village, the provenance of the stones. He did not speak of the village school, now a psychiatric hospital on the other side of the hill. He imagined himself and his family having a picnic, irrespective of

the village; enjoying its land outside of history (Shelach 2005, my translation).

Deir Yassin was a Palestinian village of about 750 inhabitants, 120 of whom were massacred at 4 a.m. on 9 April 1948 by members of Jewish gangs, in spite of the fact that the village had previously reached a non-aggression pact with the local Jewish leadership. Later that afternoon, the survivors were loaded onto trucks and deported, and their houses destroyed to prevent their return (ATG 2008: 151; Pappe 2006: 90–1). In 1946, the village 'had two schools, many shops, a club, a savings and loan committee, and a bus company that connected Deir Yassin and Lifta to Jerusalem' (ATG 2008: 150). One year after the massacre, Giva't Shaul expanded over Deir Yassin's lands. 'Houses which had not been destroyed were given to Orthodox Jews, mostly from Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania' (ibid.: 150).

The *tiyul* as a re-enactment of conquest is indeed better understood today by noting the disdain most Jewish-Israelis show – while hiking – towards the ethnic cleansing of Palestine in 1948–49. According to Khalidi (2006), most villages were totally destroyed, although, while hiking through the length and breadth of Israel, you will probably encounter physical remains of any of the 678 Palestinian cities, towns, villages and neighbourhoods that the Jewish forces destroyed during and immediately after the 1948 war, as the land was ethnically cleansed of over 700,000 Palestinians, forced to become refugees (Khalidi 2006, Morris 2004; Pappe 2006). Parts of the Palestinian villages were completely destroyed so that new towns and rural settlements for Jews could be erected. Palestinian urban neighbourhoods were pillaged and appropriated by Jewish families (Benvenisti 2002; Kadman 2008; Khalidi 2006). However, most sites that were Palestinian villages prior to 1948 lie within unbuilt open spaces where, since 1948, 'groves were planted, parks were created, national parks and natural reserves were declared, and pathways for hiking were opened' (Kadman 2008: 68). As Noga Kadman describes in her groundbreaking book, the point is that:

Travelling in Israel, it is nearly impossible to avoid piles of stones, ruins, remnants of walls and structures overgrown with almond

and fig trees, rolling terraces crumbling with disuse, and long hedges of prickly pear. These integral parts of the Israeli landscape are all that remains of Arab communities that existed before the war of 1948 (ibid.: 11).

According to Kadman, the built-up areas of 182 of the destroyed Palestinian villages lie within more than 100 tourist sites built by Israel since 1948 (national parks, trails, forests, groves and picnic spots), most of them maintained by the JNF and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority (NPA),[6] while the visible remains of 108 other Palestinian villages can be seen in present Jewish-Israeli communities – some of these are not mere remains at all, but houses that are still standing and were given to Jewish families (ibid.: 68–9). The fact that so many remains are situated within national parks and nature reserves is no coincidence. As Kadman explains, after 1948 'the JNF afforestation project served to cover up the remains of the Palestinian villages, to cause their being forgotten' (ibid.: 42; see also Slyomovics 1998: 234). This was the JNF's way of 'contextualising' anew the prehistory of the State of Israel and particularly its ethnic cleansing: not remains that are a live testimony of a catastrophe, but landmarks of a greater Jewish picturesque landscape consisting of biblical ties, tales of heroism and breath-taking views.

Chances are high that, as you head out to your *tiyul*, you will be driving on roads that were originally built at the time by the authorities of the newly founded Jewish state, using the stones and rubble of destroyed Palestinian houses crushed into gravel to become the bedding layers under the asphalt (Gardi 2011: 25–8). After all, as Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett stated in the Knesset on 2 May 1949, just a few months after the fighting ended: 'We tend to see all abandoned property as the property of the State of Israel, and to do with it as we please' (quoted from Kadman 2008: 21). One year later, the Knesset enacted the Absentee Property Law (1950), which officially legalised the appropriation of property pillaged by the state. Chances are high, as well, that as you walk the length of Israel's terrain you will be treading the same dirt roads trodden by Palestinian families on their forced way to exile. And even though

you drive on roads made out of destroyed Palestinian villages, and walk through the remains of Palestinian houses, and pass the typical plants that have endured as witnesses of a life violently put to an end, even when your soles tread the same soil that scathed Palestinian feet in that summer of 1948 as Jewish forces showed them the routes out of their homes and their land – chances are absurdly high that most Jewish-Israelis will not see these as remains or evidence of a disaster that in any way concerns them: a continuous non-encounter of sorts keeps taking place.

> Growing up in Jerusalem, I was taken on many a tour with my school or youth movement to Lifta, the partly ruined depopulated Arab village near the entrance to the city; a spring still bubbles among the ruined homes, pushing water into a small pool. The visits left me with the vague impression that Lifta is ancient, a ruin that has always been like this – desolate, slightly mysterious, beautiful and in some way intimidating with its silence and the narrow paths winding among the heavy-set houses and walls (ibid.: 11).

Among its many other significant activities, since 2002 the Israeli non-governmental organisation Zochrot ('remembering' in Hebrew, in the feminine plural) conducts guided tours to destroyed Palestinian villages as acts of commemoration. Eitan Bronstein, one of the organisation's founders and central activist, tells me that an average of fifty to seventy people participate in each of these tours, generally guided by Zochrot's personnel and, importantly, reinforced by Palestinian survivors and witnesses, former residents of the villages visited (interview 27 May 2013). Palestinian citizens of Israel and Jewish-Israelis, as well as international visitors, attend the tours, which take place about seven times a year. Zochrot's rationale has two complementary aspects: raising awareness of the Nakba, primarily among Jewish-Israelis; and helping support the case in favour of the Palestinian right of return, which the organisation sees as the necessary historical remedy of the Nakba and crucial for the establishment of a new society with a shared foundation.

Ronit Lentin defines Nakba commemoration by Israeli Jews as

co-memory, 'the memory story of Palestine indelibly and dialectically woven into the story of Israeli Jewish dissent – co-memoration of victor and vanquished, united … in grieving the loss of Palestine' (2010: 186). For Lentin, Zochrot practises a performance of co-memory, 'because without the Palestinian witnesses and survivors these acts of postmemory remain abstract' (ibid.: 198). However, Lentin raises a few questions with regard to Zochrot's practices that are worth looking into. One of them is the issue of perpetrators using victim testimonies. As Lentin explains: 'Refracting Palestinian refugee testimonies through the voices of members of the colonising collectivity, often in mediated or attenuated format so as to make them palatable to a hostile Israeli Jewish public, runs the risk of perpetuating their victimhood, and separating the Nakba past from present Palestinian reality' (ibid.: 202). Moreover, the use of Palestinian testimonies by members of the colonising collectivity runs the risk of turning into a classical orientalist situation in which the victim is incapable of representing itself, Lentin rightly adds. I cannot but fully agree with Ronit Lentin's fears and anxieties. However, my response is not that Zochrot should consider withdrawing from the project of accessing Jewish-Israeli society with the sort of content Zochrot has been trying to convey for more than a decade or so, but that it must take these arguments and sensibilities into account. Another issue Lentin raises is Zochrot's practice of signposting to commemorate Palestinian sites. As she argues: 'Though these signposts have a huge impact on tour participants, my question is whether this signposting is enabled by the ultimate Israeli control of the geo-political landscape and its re-memorialising' (ibid.: 206). On this point I disagree with Lentin regarding the way in which Zochrot's members are represented. Portraying them as 'Israelis' who continue to control the geopolitical landscape is somehow misleading. Zochrot's activists can barely be identified as Israelis. They do not share with most Israelis the most fundamental assumptions about the history of the country, nor their vision of its desired future. Identifying them as Israelis is, in a way, re-territorialising their subjectivities. Hence, we should be looking at their activities as being performed by people struggling to de-subjectivise themselves from Zionism's existential territories.

'Some questions remain unanswered,' as Lentin appropriately says (ibid.: 208) – particularly striking is Zochrot's lack of work to connect its actions and research to present-day oppression and continuing ethnic cleansing, but I prefer rather to ponder on them from the perspective that sees in organisations such as Zochrot potentialities to profane.

¶ Although Zochrot tours are not designed as traditional hikes, they do make visible and intelligible that which for most Jewish-Israelis – on their hikes – are no more than old mouldy stones and enigmatic ruins. This point should be stressed further: as an official policy accompanying the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, Israel has made every effort not only to prevent the return of the expelled Palestinians after 1948 (Piterberg 2001), but also to erase any residue of active memory of that ethnic cleansing, to prevent its rising from the ashes (Kadman 2008; Slyomovics 1998). In Amal Eqeiq's words, '*Nakba* is not a one-time event that occurred more than half a century ago. *Nakba*, I came to learn, is an ongoing event of erasure, occupation and dispossession' (2012: 502). Nowhere is there any official sign attesting to the location of Palestinian cities, villages, towns and neighbourhoods that existed prior to the expulsion. As Kadman explains, in the JNF and NPA sites, signposts welcoming the hiker or tourist disregard the Palestinian villages whose remains lie within. In cases where these signs do refer to villages, it is in a careless and partial manner, occulting their Palestinian origin and their history. What these texts stress, indeed, is the Zionist narrative of those sites, either by entirely bypassing modern Palestinian existence, shortcutting across pre-modern times and Zionist times, or by referring to Palestinian villages in terms of the danger they posed to the Zionist project (Kadman 2008: 69–71). When references are made to them, Palestinian villages' remains appear in the tourist information provided by both the JNF and NPA merely as part of nature, as 'a-historical sites in the landscape, as creeks or watercourses, or as a landmark on a hike trail' (ibid.: 71). Student hikers from both primary and secondary schools, the teachers hiking with them, the family member hiker, the youth movement hiker, the soldier hiker and tourist

hiker from overseas – all are equipped with this ideological text that totally marginalises Palestinian existence before 1948 when they go to the national parks, nature reserves and hiking trails. Remains of Palestinian habitation and abandoned orchards are not understood as evidence of a life that existed not so long ago, unless something or someone drives us to ask.

Not once in their years of state education will Jewish-Israelis encounter the history of the Nakba and Palestinian society that existed prior to 1948, nor will they get to know of the various social spheres in which Jews and Palestinians forged and shared a life together that competed with the segregating mechanisms of Zionism (Azoulay 2012; Campos 2011; Lockman 1996). Except for the knowledge available to Palestinian descendants or efforts by civil society organisations such as ADRID (Palestinian Association for the Defence of the Rights of the Internally Displaced) or Zochrot to re-designate landscapes, Jewish-Israelis might quite well pass their whole lives in total ignorance. Obscure to them is the destruction of an entire life and landscape upon which sovereign Jewish existence was built.

For Bronstein, the Nakba is a common tragedy of both Palestinians and Israelis, albeit with entirely different consequences, and hence the correct political action Zochrot has chosen to follow is to bring Jewish-Israeli society to recognise the ethnic cleansing of Palestine, to actively embody its memory, and to envisage ways to repair that tragedy. As he persuasively states:

> Zochrot wants primarily to change the discourse in the Jewish-Israeli society, both regarding the recognition of the Nakba and the need to discuss and accept the Palestinian right of return … and when one decides to change public discourse the question of who is your audience becomes crucial … the Jewish-Israeli public is the one who must go through an enormous self-transformation … and even when this public is ready to listen they need to make true efforts as nothing is easily available in their ordinary ways of life (interview 4 November 2012).

Recently, Zochrot published a colossal work, a Hebrew-Arabic bilingual tour guide entitled *Once Upon the Land* (Gardi et al. 2012). The

guide offers eighteen routes through destroyed Palestinian neighbourhoods and villages. This unique text is the result of collaborative work by Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians who volunteered to prepare a study of the tracks and write them as tours, each in their own style. However, as Tomer Gardi explains in the foreword, the guide is formatted more in the vein of Jewish recognition of the Nakba and the Arabic text is mostly a translation from the Hebrew (ibid.: 8–18). Importantly, the guide does not follow the dictates of the genre. Rather, Zochrot's guide is an activist text that – by using the walking body – explicitly invites the reader to challenge the Zionist ways of appropriating nature and its landscapes. As Amal Eqeiq says in her 'Not an epilogue' to the guide (ibid.: 500–8), apart from statistical information about the Palestinian neighbourhoods and villages that the book provides, the text assembles spatial and temporal cartographies in an attempt to lead the reader-hiker to have not just a cognitive experience but also, and primarily, an affective one. Some of the tours invite us to greatly extend our senses and try to imagine life in the villages before the Nakba as a way to open our hearts and engage with a past that has been institutionally erased. Hence, as Eqeiq explains, 'the tours … show that from a Jewish-Israeli perspective, taking a tour following the guidelines of *Once Upon the Land* can be an intense emotional experience' (ibid.: 506). Niva Grunzweig wrote tour number 17, 'Returning to the South: A tour across Simsim, Huj and Burayr'. In the mid-1940s, Burayr had a population of about 3,000. Its main institutions were located at the village centre – two primary schools, a market, a clinic, a mosque and a grain mill (Khalidi 2006: 92). The village was conquered by Jewish forces during the night of 12–13 May 1948. According to several testimonies, including those given by the forces' soldiers, fifty-five men and women were massacred in the attack (Morris 2004: 258); all the rest fled to Gaza. Here is Niva's own experience while sauntering through Burayr's remains:

> While walking along the paths and among the trees, it was hard not to think of the people who were slaughtered there in 1948. The wind blowing across the eucalyptus trees sounds like people whispering. Perhaps they, the eternal dwellers of the village, are

trying to tell their story and the story of their place to me and to other visitors who come to rest in the grove. The heaps of rock and the strong sense of absenteeism that envelops the place drove me to shudder and reflect. In every Palestinian village I have visited one can feel this absenteeism – after all, they have all been destroyed and not a soul lives in them anymore. But in Burayr – perhaps because of its size, perhaps because of the violent history, or perhaps because of the ancient paths that remain even sixty years later, and mainly because of the fact that an attempt has been made to erase the place and its history by planting a nice shady grove – in Burayr, absenteeism is present with greater strength (Gardi et al. 2012: 451, my translation).

Other texts in the guide are similarly emotional. What is most salient about Zochrot tours is that they require a change in perception and in political disposition regarding the history of Israel-Palestine through an intimate somatic experience of its historical landscape. This is a change that requires one to forgo the split between points of view and to extinguish any legitimacy that has been conferred upon the perception that ethnic cleansing is a catastrophe only 'from their point of view – "their", of course, referring to the Palestinians' (Azoulay 2013: 564). It is the hidden past that is summoned to impact the present and, hence, the future. A desire is ignited to have the original owners of the land back. Hiking with *Once Upon the Land* reveals a country that differs entirely from the one that Jewish-Israelis know and are prepared to die for. It is the country that was 'once upon the land' and upon its destruction a new country was built. Hiking along these trails affords a strong material understanding of what a settler-colonial project entails. As Edna Shemesh describes in her review of the guide in *Haaretz*: 'The editors aim at overturning the genre. They intentionally use a known textual form with the intention to decolonise the very idea of the tour, while hiking into destroyed Palestinian neighbourhoods and villages' (2013). Indeed, from the point of view of Jewish-Israelis, Zochrot's hikes are a serious exercise in political re-education, in more ways than one, or should we say that they are about driving the hiker into a unique

personal catastrophe – one that seems crucial for cracking one's own codifications – as the only way to confront and embrace one's part in the Nakba launched sixty years ago against an entire nation.

> The paths do not lead the hikers back into their childhood provinces or to the landscapes of good old Eretz Yisrael; they will neither walk in the Hasmoneans' footsteps nor follow the plight of the thirty-five (Palmah) heroes along Netiv Halamed-Heh. This text is in fact an invitation to reveal what lies under the Israeli settlements built after 1948 (ibid., my translation).

The fact that many of Zochrot's hiking routes lie within Israeli national parks or natural recreation areas enhances their significance. Now, imagine two groups of hikers, both intending to explore the Burayr area. One group seeks the eucalyptus grove enveloping Burayr's ruins to build a small campfire and have a picnic, as described in the short narrative about the professor of history quoted earlier. The other group wanders about and around Burayr's ruins and reflects on the scene, and as they discuss what they see and feel, they stop for a break. Both groups of people have been through the same school system and have walked the country more than once; very probably most of them – if not all of them – will also have served in the Israeli army. How do these two groups relate to each other? How do their respective visits relate to nature? While the latter dares to explore thresholds, the former gives itself to mere repetition, to duplication. The most significant challenge is to bring the emotional investments of these two groups to affect each other. Once we dare to explore that threshold, new political imaginations manifest themselves in one's own. The militarist gestures with which we were so entangled on our hikes are now thrown at us, causing nothing but shame and disgust. A natural estrangement from old habits follows these new affects, and therefore a fundamental re-creation is called for in our customary relation to nature.

With reference to the French semiotician Emile Benveniste, Agamben explains that in order to profane a sacred technology, such as Zionist hiking, the myth or the narrative needs to be separated from the practice that stages the story (2007: 75–6). In this vein, there are

two basic options: one is to drop the myth and preserve the rite; while the other is to destroy the rite and preserve the myth. In a sense, Zochrot's *Once Upon the Land* does both. It clearly rejects the Zionist myth that was imposed on hiking, but it also rejects the physical aspect of Zionist hiking. But nature has much more to offer beyond this kind of political sauntering.

A warning is required at this point. We should avoid analysing practices as if there were just two opposite options. There is much more in between. It is more exact to keep in mind the fact that revolutionary standpoints are generally betrayed by fascistic and paranoiac drives in revolutionaries, just as we can always find escapes and liberating spillovers in tight-knit racial or totalitarian commitments. The encounter with the Nakba in nature might happen before a transformative moment or it can catalyse it. At first, guilt, remorse or nostalgia might overwhelm the known positions of the subject. The question, then, is whether these emotions are a passageway into new emotional states that might relocate the subject in productive affective territories. In itself, internalising the past can be a very short-sighted transformation. For instance, guilt and remorse cannot be a source of further transformation; they are moralising, obsolete, static and restraining. Nostalgia might be another hindrance. Zochrot tours and acts of re-signposting the destroyed Palestinian villages might easily engrain nostalgic territories. The past that preceded ethnic cleansing was surely safer than the present that followed it, for both Palestinians and Jews. But beyond the affirmative longing for a past deprived of its potential, yielding to that past can seriously shrink the potential of the encounter with the past today. Nostalgia does not suffice for looking forward. The encounter with that past is surely necessary and inescapable, and yet the affects it produces need to be oriented to nourish the construction of new presents – specifically, the construction of new relationships with nature and history. For instance, as Azoulay suggests, new forms of civil partnership can emerge from a 'shared awareness of catastrophe' (2011b: 233). In recent years, Zochrot has been promoting practical thinking about Palestinian return by means of written texts, talks, exhibitions and conferences. This policy extends the ground on which new col-

laborations might be built, as it reaches a step beyond remembrance into co-memory (Lentin 2010), through the idea of reparation. If we aim to keep the encounter with the destroyed Palestinian villages in motion – namely to rescue it from degeneration, from becoming just a ritual that for some redeems their tormented souls, while for others it offers a sentimental refuge – connecting it with return is one significant route to take.

¶ We need the knowledge of the country even more for the sake of our existence and security. Both our security and safety cannot be established without knowing every single path of our country. (David Ben-Gurion, First Prime Minister of Israel)

For about ten years during the 2000s I accompanied many excursions in my capacity as a high school teacher in Israel. Ideological hiking starred on these trips. We either had our own guides among school staff, or else the school hired the services of private firms for this purpose – there was no difference between the two, as they both provided the same ideological seasoning. My students had no chance to acknowledge the Nakba on these hikes. Like the professor of history from Bayit VeGan, our guides were blind to Palestinian ruins from 1948, as was everyone else, on school hikes and in the youth movement alike:

The choice to hike through, self-sufficient, implied the zones around our routes to be unspoilt nature. And we actively un-saw the stone houses of Arab communities that we never linked at the time with the term Palestinian, a term which I had yet to even hear. Or, at most, we saw them as quaintly picturesque, tribal, exotic, part of nature ... Our youth movement marched out a concretization of the Zionist delusion of virgin land to be possessed and fertilized in gorgeous glory (Mazali 2011: 187).

As far as the curriculum is concerned, the guide book *Once Upon the Land* has no chance at all of ending up in the hands of a Jewish-Israeli student, either at school or in one of the Zionist youth movements. In fact, any teacher daring to use their capacity as such to

suggest or lead one of the book's tours risks losing their job. This is because of the so-called 'Nakba Law', enacted by the Knesset in March 2011: 'Amendment no. 40 to the *Budgets Foundations Law (1985) – Reducing Budget or Support for Activity Contrary to the Principles of the State*' (new Section 3b). The law authorises the Minister of Finance to reduce state funding or support to an institution if it engages in an 'activity that is contrary to the principles of the state'. One of these activities is defined in the law as 'commemorating Independence Day or the day of the establishment of the state as a day of mourning' (Clause B4). Therefore, planning, preparing or taking a class out into nature on a visit to Palestinian remains from 1948 will compromise the school's status in the eyes of its ministry inspectors, and will probably lead to severe measures being taken against the rebel teachers. So what do teachers have as normative guidelines for touring and hiking?

Although there have been changes in Israeli education with regard to hiking activities and pedagogies since the pre-state days – ecological and environmental approaches, for instance, have been adopted particularly in the last twenty years or so (Avishar 2011: 70–2) – the same indoctrinatory core has remained.[7] As Stein put it, 'what does merit note is the endurance of the particular discursive and ideological coordinates that have been associated with the *tiyul* since the early decades of state formation' (2009: 348). According to Ben-Israel (1999), a comparison between the Jewish Teachers Union's curriculum that incorporated hiking in the official programme of study in 1907 and the one issued by the State of Israel in 1997 shows that the two programmes are very similar regarding the nationalist educational goals (cited in Dror 2011: 24). Even if the peak of normalisatory hiking – the annual school hike – has been shaken by certain criticisms in the recent past, '[o]ver the years, school trips and hiking have become an essential ingredient of growing up Israeli; a ritual gesture of "belonging" that is rarely reflected upon or questioned' (Katriel 1995: 6).

Today, hiking pedagogy in schools is managed by a special department in the Ministry of Education called Shelah veYediat ha-Aretz ('*Shelah*' is an acronym for 'field, nation and society', and '*Yediat ha-*

Aretz' literally means 'knowledge of the country'), which functions as an arm of the Society and Youth Administration within the Ministry. In essence, *Shelah* studies at school combine pedagogies applied in the classroom and in the field, covering hikes and excursion activities from kindergarten through high school. The *Shelah* syllabus for high schools, for example, is saturated with Zionist themes and topics (Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2006: 49–63). Biblical narratives, the Zionist transformation of the landscape, war heritage, Jerusalem, demography, and the Arabs within and outside the country – all are summoned to be spotted and plotted on the maps. To a lesser extent, nature-oriented content, such as conservation, fauna and flora, water, soils and climates, is included. As an illustration of what happens in class in terms of the preparatory teaching for field trips (one hour a week), in the student handbook for the *Shelah* programme (for junior high schools) we find an exercise called 'Zionism Now!' (Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2005a: 93). This textual exercise requires the student to choose the most Zionist image in their opinion from various images representing Israeli types in contemporary life (a soldier, a national park inspector, a singer, an Orthodox Jew, a kibbutznik and so forth) and to explain their choice. The exercise then requires the student to identify any non-Zionist image and again to explain the choice. It delves deeper and deeper into this nationalist abyss. In another section, we find the lyrics of the national anthem, *Hatikva*, and the students are called upon to interpret it, using notions and ideas taught in class (Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2005b: 77).

Most *Shelah* teachers hold an academic degree in Eretz Yisrael studies or geography and a two-year teaching certificate, having specialised in the area of *Shelah*. The *Shelah* department has four 'major' formal areas of operation within schools – the core programme, the '*Shelah* Star', 'Ascending to Jerusalem' and the 'Israeli Travel' – and one main structural function, which is the crystallisation of all aspects of Zionist school teaching and preaching through walking the land. As the editors of the official textbook explain, the programme relies upon an extensive *fabric of links and associations* between activities on the ground and what they perceive as the system of values of the school. This is created by connecting the hikes and

journeys with the subjects of study – history, civic education, bible studies, homeland studies, geography and so on – according to age (Ministry of Education 2008: 9). These links give *Shelah* a gravitational force that gleans Zionist meanings from various teachings at school. Importantly, however, it is the physical experience that helps this agglomeration, pouring and regimenting these meanings into young bodies. This is shown, for example, in the inaugural words of former secretary general of the Ministry of Education Shmuel Abuab in his preface to the official curriculum in 2006: 'This programme is one of the most important foundations in the teaching of values in school, and the discipline of *Shelah* constitutes an integrative and cohesive nucleus in this endeavour' (Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2006, my translation).

The '*Shelah* Star', 'Ascending to Jerusalem' and the 'Israeli Travel' are three educational components that reinforce the core programme, which I shall discuss below. The first focuses on expanding knowledge and field experience in one chosen region of the country (for high school students), while the second promotes the touring and knowledge of Jerusalem (primary and junior high school). The Israeli Travel – for sixteen- and seventeen-year-old students – entails the preparation and performance of a six-day hike in the field, with about 15,000 students participating in this special programme every year. It is defined by the Ministry of Education as the pinnacle of the educational value-oriented process at school, aimed at 'strengthening the student's personal, Jewish and Zionist identity so as to connect that identity to himself and to other circles in society and the community, as well as to his nation, his land and to the State of Israel' (my translation).[8] Let us have a closer look at how the *Shelah* programme explains the role of nationalism, referred to here as the 'national circle':

> The establishment of the State of Israel as the state of the Jewish people in the land of Israel renewed the historical bond of biblical times between the people and its land. The national circle is comprised of three layers: the Land of Israel, the People of Israel and the State of Israel ... Underlying this orientation is the view that

> the People of Israel, its historical legacy and its culture are connected to the *landscape* of Eretz Yisrael, and that the State of Israel was established precisely because of that essential, historical and cultural bond of the people to its land. In order to materially manifest the bond between land–people–state, the *field journey* travels throughout Eretz Yisrael and introduces central events in the history of the people – from biblical times to the Zionist project – and by means of connecting the past with the present of the State of Israel ... This connection to the national circle enables the student to reflect on his sense of belonging to the Jewish people and on his Jewish identity as inalienable parts of the historical sequence of generations (my translation, my emphasis).[9]

The authors of this text, its practitioners in schools and the inspectors of its practice, as well as the parents of its students and the students themselves, will not see anything problematic in this text. The immoderate nationalist educational recipe lying at the heart of this text escapes their notice, their passions and their cognition. It is invisible to them, as invisible as the Palestinian ruins on their hikes, where 'a cyclic, self-perpetuating process, the sensual experience then powerfully reaffirmed our active unseeing' (Mazali 2011: 188). The fact that they do not see the immoderate nationalist educational recipe at the heart of the *Shelah* programme can be partly explained by institutional efforts to wrap it in a sound pedagogical discourse centred on notions such as 'society and community', 'democratic citizenship' and 'environment'. But let us not be misled. In fact, these notions are secondary and subsumed into the national ideology. In other words, by 'society' or 'community', the *Shelah* programme means the Jewish-Israeli society; by 'democratic citizenship', it has in mind the sort of democracy that only Jewish-Israelis enjoy – at the expense of the non-democratic life of non-Jews; and lastly, the idea of 'environment' is disentangled from any of its segregated actualisations in the Israeli public space. Everywhere in the curriculum, as well as on the lips of its instructors and educators – as anyone who has spent enough time in the Israeli school system can confirm – we find and hear these notions uttered with full faith and

passion. But these concepts are empty vessels serving to ornament a pedagogy that breathes nationalism, body and soul, and they attest to the Zionist democratic spectacle, displaying linguistic pirouettes and gestures that are used to explain and justify policies of privilege and national ideologies. Thus, the fact that the *Shelah* discourse is seasoned with a *bouquet garni* of pseudo-democratic terms needs to be understood exactly as that, and not as an indication of spirit. However, the main problem with this sort of pedagogical language lies in the cognitive and emotional harm it causes, instilling an equivalence of nationalism and democratic life. I will expand this point in the next chapter, where I discuss the high school citizenship education curriculum. For now, let me just say that this damage explains not only certain aspects of how civil thought is actually made unavailable, but also the falsely constructed belief that one possesses such thought.

Physicality and challenge are further aspects of the core programme. 'Going out into the open, exposure to irregular and unknown circumstances, and confrontation with the physical and mental challenges involved in the hikes and journeys, all create a wide scope of opportunities to express the students' qualities and engender social interaction as well …' (Ministry of Education 2008: 14, my translation; see also p. 27). These goals are achieved by experimenting on the hikes with an array of scout techniques such as intensive and long walks, educated observation of scenery, use of maps, practising the timing of rest periods, sleeping out in the open, field cooking and so forth (ibid.: 27–8). Exactly the same sorts of hiking techniques are used in the youth movements, which since their emergence in the 1920s have been a phenomenal cradle of subjectivation (Naor 1989) and are still regarded as having a 'long-term effect upon the national attitudes and cultural assumptions of youth movement alumni' (Katz 1985: 68). According to the Research and Information Centre of the Knesset (2010), in 2006 about 170,000 youngsters were members of Zionist youth movements in Israel (half of them in primary schools), which represents roughly 17 per cent of Jewish students in the Israeli school system that year (Ministry of Education website). In her autobiographic essay *Home Archaeology*

(2011: 187), Rela Mazali shares with the reader her memories of her hikes in the youth movement days of the early 1960s:

> From age fifteen to eighteen, we hiked the land for days and weeks on school vacations, carrying backpacks with all our food and water and sleeping bags and towels and toilet paper and extra socks and underpants and shirts and pants. Out of all proportion with practical constraints, we moved through the landscape as a self-sufficient unit – a tight-knit bickering intense group. We could have been met en route by pick-up trucks with food and equipment, like the non-socialist 'scouts' we completely scorned. We could have detoured into villages to buy fresh-baked bread and cheese and humus. But we carried with us even cartons of eggs that we bought in an excited flock at the neighbourhood grocery store (of pre-supermarket days) at home and then wrapped individually in newsprint and reinserted into the carton to minimize breaks along the way, working together on the floor of the youth movement meeting pre-fab. And we lugged with us kerosene stoves and big tin jerry-cans of kerosene that banged against my shins as I hauled it up a steep path in front of me. Most of us never complained and silently struggled with the oppressive weight, with assaulted shins, with inevitable falls, with breathlessness and vertigo and heat and cold and thorny overgrowth as we emulated, at least emulated, elite units of the pre-state paramilitary, the *Palmach*, a decade and a half after it had been dismantled, seeing as we'd missed out on the real thing. And it was this – our abiding sense of excitement missed and the resultant effort-to-simulate – that made us vaguely, almost aware of the role we were playing; a quasi-military bivouac, marking out proprietary.

The expectation that the hike needs to be difficult and challenging enough to 'form' or 'shape' the students physically and mentally is not a paramilitary element in itself; it becomes so in conjunction with other elements in the programme. Looking into the *Shelah* high school curriculum (*Derech Eretz veDarkei Haaretz*; Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2006), we find two such elements. One is the 'young guide' service and the other is the use of the 'sortie' technique.

The young guides (*mashatz* in Hebrew, an acronym for '*Shelah* young guides') are junior and senior high school students who volunteer to be active in school, helping to prepare the hikes and assist the teacher guides in the field, both with their own age group and with younger classes. Generally, they have acquired some such experience in their activities in one of the youth movements, but they are still required to pass a field training course that lasts nine days and is organised by the *Shelah* regional departments in the summer. The curriculum defines the '*Shelah* Team' as comprising the teacher guides and the young guides, and so it grants the young guides a kind of official status. This system trickles down from the aura of the teacher guide, the complete field person, careful not to dispel his mystique as students whisper about what his military service might have entailed. As the young guides practise their role and skills in the field with students younger than themselves, the kind of admiration is spawned that shapes a pyramid structure of discipline, a game of rank and hierarchy: student – young guide – teacher guide. Young guide graduates who have been active for a year in school are permitted to take part in two specialist courses (for ages sixteen to eighteen). The first focuses on scouting and navigation skills, and in the past was held in cooperation with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). The second is a survival course. These courses and activities might sound attractive for the young, and rightly so, but that is not their point: the aim of 'young guide' practice, as the official programme states, is to engender a young leadership capable of:

> developing self-confidence and the belief in their power and capability to act and to succeed on their own, by means of self-fulfilment and a sense of satisfaction for their contribution that confers meaning and value to their actions, for the sake of promoting participation and commitment in the school community, in the process of consolidating the future Israeli citizen (ibid.: 32, my translation).

We should take a good look at these notions of defining the young guide: *self-confidence, capability to act, self-fulfilment, sense of satisfaction for their contribution, meaning and value, process of consolidation*

as a citizen, contribution to society and so forth. Is this really about assisting the *Shelah* teachers in the practice of hiking? What do these notions of self-constitution have to do with hiking in the school curriculum? The text imposes upon the students a technology of the self, an exploration of self-constitution – but one that is tabulated along one axis with a sense of debt to society (individual satisfaction arises from contribution to society), and along another axis with preconceived collectivist goals (to consolidate Israeli citizenship, conceived as Jewish exclusivist citizenship). Bearing in mind the genealogy of hiking in the Zionist settler-colonial project, this text externalises the wisdom of generations that, through hiking, formal education should and can guarantee the production of certain subjectivities, of particular forms of being. In a straightforward, conscious and unmediated manner, this text illustrates the obsessive pursuit of subjectivising practices.

The 'sortie' technique (in Hebrew, *giha*) is no less appalling. To begin with, in Hebrew, *giha* means a sort of charge or assault performed by a besieged military force against its attackers, or a surprise attack of troops. Now, compared with other field trips, hikes and class teaching in the *Shelah* programme for high schools (ibid.: 6), the sortie is unique in many ways. It is an intensive and demanding two-day journey with overnight camping during which the young guides practise significant leadership roles. The curriculum defines very clearly the order of operations and activities to take place during the sortie, from the moment the class arrives at the campsite until the encampment is folded up. Although individual teachers implement these instructions very differently in the field, it is important to examine these guidelines or instructions as a window into the 'soul of the sortie'. The first day must begin with an opening ceremony that includes raising the Israeli flag and singing the national anthem, followed by the teacher guides holding an opening talk with their respective students in which discipline and camp routine are elaborated. They also pass on their know-how in the theory and practice of erecting the encampment, lighting a camp fire and cooking. There is then a joint ceremony for all classes present and, lastly, an hour of nocturnal reconnaissance of the field around the camp.

On the second day, the groups set out on a long four-hour hike (to a specific site, with specific content), learn observation skills with topographic maps (including the identification of at least three or four items in the landscape), take part in various social activities, and attend a concluding talk facilitated by the teacher guides and a final ceremony that includes awarding certificates to outstanding students and lowering the flag while singing the national anthem. Then, at last, the camp is folded up (Avidan et al. 2007: 25–7; Ben-Yosef and Shaish 2006: 23–7). Line-ups are performed prior to every exit from the camp (Avidan et al. 2007: 24). In summary, exaggerated use is made of national symbols, field skills, physical and mental challenges, and outdoor discipline; above all, a sense is instilled in participants that they must closely survey the place day and night and familiarise themselves with it. Although it maintains the same core elements we have already seen in other manifestations of Zionist hiking, the sortie exacerbates those aspects that make it more acutely resemble the arduous military trek or march (*masa* in Hebrew; for a comparative typology of the hike and the march, see Almog 2000: 173–4).

A hike of epic grandeur in high school is the trip to Masada in the Judaean desert. On the summit of an isolated plateau, Masada was built as a fortress by Herod the Great (30s BC). In the year AD 73, faced with a prolonged siege by Roman forces, Hebrew rebels who took over the fortress decided to commit collective suicide to avoid being captured by the invaders. About 1,000 people perished. On the site are remains of the fortress, which with time has become a very popular tourist attraction. Zionism seized the story and turned it into a powerful myth. This tale favours the courage required to kill oneself over the peril of life in slavery, representing the kind of proactive Jew that Zionism dedicated itself to promoting. In the early twentieth century, Masada became a pilgrimage site for Zionist immigrant-settlers. During this period, school children were taught to look to Masada as a story of strength (Ziv 1998). At some point on their trips, youth movements adopted the motto 'Masada shall not fall again'. This slogan accompanies the swearing-in ceremony of various IDF combatant units who end their basic training by climbing the Masada. Because of its grandeur, as Gratch suggests,

'Masada can be a place to find artistic inspiration, a place to discuss environmental issues, or just a place to feel alone in the world for a moment' (2013: 157) – but for the students and teachers hiking up the Masada, the associations that come to mind connect and synthesise with other elements: the biblical story, the idea of courage, the siege mentality underlying the story, the physical effort involved in climbing the steep mound, and its association with the military. As a mother of a seventh grader, feminist activist Ruth Hiller decided to do something about this link between hiking and the military. A few years ago, when she received her son's school syllabus, she realised that the programme in geography included seven field trips, and each of those trips was to a different battlefield.

> I called one of the geography teachers on the phone. I tried to explain my point of view and how I felt that the children would be learning more about battle heritage than geography with this program. I repeatedly explained that I felt the emphasis in any lesson should be about the positive nature of the subject. Should the children learn about the battlefields, they should also learn about the different options of making peace, of conflict resolution and preventing future wars. I emphasized that I was quite willing that they also learn something about the Palestinian history of the places they were to visit and what was their eventual fate.[10]

As she reports in her article, Hiller's attempts to establish a dialogue with the geography teacher were doomed to fail. The head of the geography unit at school, a former high-ranking army officer – who on retiring from the military at the age of forty received free state training to become an educator – showed no more empathy than the teacher. Eventually, Hiller's pressure bore fruit, as a few months later the school principal informed her that the programme had been changed to include learning about the water resources in Israel.

Eventually, most Israeli youngsters will enlist in the army. There, they will experience two types of hike. One is the hike they are familiar with from school – an activity managed by the IDF Education Corps that takes place mainly during their basic training. The other is the military trek or *masa* that these youngsters have been preparing

for since childhood and practise many times during military service. One is tempted to claim that, as regards the roles and practices of hiking in Israel, education is the link – explaining a sequence that ranges from family all the way into the army. However, it would be wrong to understand the operation of hiking as an upward-surging spiral of pedagogy. Subjectivation processes are far more complicated, not linear. We will not only fall short of understanding important aspects of these processes if we reduce them to a chain – from family, to school, youth movement, army, and family again – but, no less importantly, such an interpretation reinforces the normative logic of that chain of subjectivation, one that, in fact, we aim to disrupt. This is why we cannot simply attack processes of subjectivation at a certain point, as if it were possible to cut a line and expect the entire system to crumble. These processes operate throughout the body from various focuses and planes – corners of life – as networks of forces. On the one hand there are Zionist discourses and narratives that are not necessarily expressed through the hike, spanning different nuances and tones in distinct social spheres – family, school, youth movements and the army. On the other hand, there are the hiking moves of the body in nature, maintaining a certain form across the distinct social spheres of Israeli society. The intersections of the two forms – the discursive and the material – bring about operations of power that subjectivise, that generate subjects with recognisable identities and dispositions (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 66–7). We need to look at this, then, not from the point of view of the individual going through successive 'circles' of subjectivation, with the success of one circle resulting from that of a preceding one; rather, in order to grasp the power of hiking in Israel, we need to adopt the point of view of the abstract map of hiking or the network of subjectivation that is crystallised through hiking. The individual as such, and in his gregarious state, is made subject through minute operations. On the one hand, each of these operations, in a slightly different manner at distinct social sites, conditions his body through tales and narratives; on the other, they arrest potentialities by imposing on the body particular movements and gestures while displaying the body in nature. This double capture welcomes meanings and

interpretations to sculpt the body, as it were, regimenting it to become organised and arranged. In a regimented body, stories and motions are now its integral organs. Other passions and productive relationships with nature, its landscapes and secrets are silenced, stifled before they emerge.

¶ 'You were placed to be in the Galilee. You must not leave.' 'What? Why are all the Yemenis on the frontiers and all the Ashkenazim in Tel Aviv? Do you want us to be your Arabs?' (Cited in Kemp 2002: 65, my translation)

Every year a few of my students were reluctant to participate in the school's hikes. They just refused. Intentionally, they used to come to the hikes in inappropriate footwear or they would 'forget' to bring their water bottles or other compulsory equipment. Back then, it seems now, I did not have what it takes to think in a profound anti-hegemonic way. I never saw those attitudes as a sign of resistance, as an attempt not to succumb to an activity that has all the aspects of hegemony. I saw their acts of disengagement as acts of youthful disobedience, interpreting the motives of my students as a regimented teacher. In the Mizrahi history of protest in Israel I found the proper spectacles that helped me to see those minute acts of resistance clearly. There, we find a rich résumé of practices of disengagement from Zionist territories from which to draw profanatory motivations (see Chetrit 2010). Let me refer to just one of these cases.[11]

As noted in the introductory chapter, the massive waves of Jewish immigration from the Arab countries during the 1950s and early 1960s were absorbed into the country in ways that structurally devastated their chances of building a decent life in Israel. It is during this period that we find the roots of what is called 'the second Israel' – the Israeli social classes that Sisypheanly lag behind the hegemony. Among other discriminatory policies, thousands of the Jewish Mizrahi families who arrived in that period were sent by the government to populate remote agricultural towns, recently established primarily to fortify demographically the frontiers attained in 1948, and also in order to cultivate the lands robbed from the

ethnically cleansed Palestinians (see Swirski 1999: 114–16).[12] These families were, as Adriana Kemp put it, 'reluctant pioneers' (2002: 39). They had no agricultural experience and they were not willing to become farmers. The new villages lacked basic infrastructure for agricultural work and proper housing, not to mention the precarious security situation these immigrants had to face (ibid.: 47). As Shohat explains: 'Sephardi [Mizrahi] border settlements lacked, furthermore, the strong infrastructure of military protection provided to Ashkenazi settlements, thus leading to Sephardi loss of life' (1988: 18). But they were assigned a role in the Zionist nation-building process; they were compelled to cultivate an existential territory they did not want to be part of.

Many Mizrahi families opted to find employment outside the farms, even if that employment was temporary or seasonal. They neglected the land and did not put to work the basic agricultural equipment they were provided with. Not as an organised protest movement but as strong-minded individual *acts of disengagement*, as Kemp defines them, more and more families left their farms to look for better horizons near urban centres. Between 1951 and 1956, almost 2,000 families left their farms (Kemp 2002: 60). They literally refused the role they were assigned in the national project (ibid.: 42); they refused to commit to the territory – land, frontiers and agriculture – they were supposed to conquer. The state reacted violently. A law was enacted to compel the Mizrahi families to remain on their farms (the Candidates for Agricultural Settlement Law of 1953; ibid.: 52) and severe penalties were enforced such as denying food coupons to those who left the farms. The government involved the police to enforce its policies on the Mizrahim, who were required to pay fines for leaving; they were also blacklisted in national employment services and were refused alternative state housing (ibid.: 61–4).

What these struggles show is that by refusing to turn land into productive national territory, many Mizrahim rejected their racialised incorporation into the white Zionist project – however minor and non-organised these acts of citizenship were. Their withdrawal or disengagement from these territories-to-be is a lesson that sheds

new light on other withdrawals from landed territory, including hiking. The application of the lessons learned from these episodes in the Mizrahi struggle to the practice of hiking is not a far-fetched fabrication considering the experience of space as represented in Mizrahi fiction. According to Yochai Oppenheimer, contact with the landscapes of Israel on hikes 'does not create a sense of home or of belonging to the homeland' for the protagonists in Mizrahi novels who 'are unable to detach themselves from the periphery – that is, from the consciousness of being shut up within an ethnic enclave' (2012: 360). In other words, for its victims, marginalisation has an ideological toll that hegemony is not able to amend, rendering space 'divested from its ideological signs' (ibid.: 360), devoid of the magnetism early European Zionists invented. When viewed from the margins, the centre lacks the uniformity Zionism claims to be responsible for: between the universalistic hand that homogenises into Jewish wholeness and the hand that differentiates by racialising and marginalising (Yonah and Saporta 2002: 68–104), a body of life arises, a body that is inaccessible to full ideological pervasiveness. Mizrahi writers, as Oppenheimer explains, offer an alternative view of space detached from its nationalistic investments, one informed by the experience of class and race, that of the periphery (2012: 364).[13] In these novels, 'the "land" always remains unfamiliar and nameless', and 'for the Mizrahim ... the Israeli space was not an object to be conquered actively' (ibid.: 358–9). Detachment from hegemonic existential territories – whether as a result of racial marginalisation, as with the protagonists of Mizrahi fiction, or ideological, as in my own case – may function to propel alternative subjectivities. They convey a perception of the nationalised landscapes as hostile. In essence, the refusal in their midst disarms the possibility of *making the hike productive for Zionist purposes*.

¶ In recent years, Jewish-Israelis have taken up a new trend in hiking that, at first sight, seems not to insist on the myth while preserving the corporeal measure of Zionist hiking. This is the Israel National Trail (INT, in Hebrew *Shvil Yisrael*), a long hiking route of about 1,000 kilometres that crosses Israel longitudinally from Dan in the

north all the way to Eilat in the south. The National Geographic Society voted the INT one of the best epic trails in the world, and since its official inauguration in 1995 the INT has been walked by hundreds of Israelis every year. The entire walk requires one to two months, although hikers also do it in segments. It is interesting to take a look at the questionnaires that tertiary education students in Israel use to research the INT experience. I have found many items in common in two of these questionnaires.[14] In both, ideology and love of country are optional answers to the question 'What are your motives for undertaking the hike?', alongside nature, curiosity, satisfaction, fun, health and social motives. Respondents are asked to sort different statements by degrees of agreement and disagreement. Six out of the thirteen statements deal with the themes that make up Zionist hiking: physical and mental challenge, identification and love for the land of Israel, expression of ownership of the land of Israel, and opportunity to know the land of Israel. Such questions and statements indicate the presence of a certain ethos relating to hiking, something that is part of the investigators' (and hence of their tutors') evident logic as well as of their respondents' logic. But one can hardly say that these questions and statements have a universal character.

Recently, more and more parents have been hiking the INT with their sons and daughters in what seems to be an environmentalist alternative to more traditional ways of celebrating the *Bath* or *Bar Mitzvah* (girls at the age of twelve, boys at thirteen). Some agencies are already exploiting the business niche of what can be called '*Mitzvah* journeys' and offer organised trips with guides and various social activities. Hiking the INT maintains the same physical relationship to the hike as in traditional Zionist hiking: numerous family stories can be found on websites as well as in blogs about the INT, all stressing this long and interesting hike as a challenging opportunity to test your body and mind, and rightfully so. However, on these websites the hike itself is not grounded, at least not strongly, in nationalist narratives. They focus on the experience itself, and on enjoying nature. The point, however, lies elsewhere. I sense that the *Mitzvah* journey along the INT is limited in its intent – pursued consciously

or not – to rise beyond Zionist traditional hiking. One needs to remember that the trip is performed as part of a celebration that is essentially understood in Jewish tradition and culture as a rite of passage. But the message of the passage, the promise to become a full member of the tribe, is actualised by means of mental and physical challenges. These 'means' are in fact a familiar space of practice for most Jewish-Israelis, as we know it from school, the youth movement and in the army. The end result is that the text of the *Mitzvah* passage – materialised through our familiar embodiment in nature – easily falls captive as being strongly reminiscent of and evoking the one paradigmatic passage in Jewish-Israeli society: conscription. Ultimately, even if unconsciously, the *Mitzvah* hike on the INT turns into one more field experience that prepares participants for the army, inhibiting the possibility of other potentialities to play out in this particular hike.

¶ The 'Law of Return' (number 5710), which was enacted by the Knesset in 1950, grants every Jew the world over the right to immigrate to Israel and become a citizen of the state. In Zionist discourse, a Jew immigrating to Israel actually 'ascends', performing *aliyah* (Hebrew for 'ascent'). In contrast with other citizenships, the kind Israel grants a Jewish immigrant entails many economic benefits to help the new immigrant settle in. Demographics was the name of the game at the time the law was passed, and for several decades afterwards, but in our neoliberal times, *aliyah* is seen more as an ideological idea that continues to illuminate the way rather than as a practical policy. More than immigrants, nowadays Israel needs political and financial support, as the Zionist epoch has never known such attacks as are launched against it at present. A politically well-connected Jewish community in the United States, comprising about 75 per cent of the diaspora – and in other strategic places such as Canada, the United Kingdom, France and certain places in Latin America – is far more important to Israel than having them literally in the country as problematic immigrants. As Veracini recently noted, this change in perspective has permeated the priorities of the Jewish Agency, having 'shifted its focus from supporting immigration to

promoting the links between Israel and Diaspora via the sponsor-ship of temporary visits' (2013: 36). In this vein, last year the Jewish Agency considered discontinuing its funding of higher education for new Jewish immigrants and focusing instead on 'Jewish identity-building' programmes for Jewish communities overseas. The reason, explains Jewish Agency Director-General Alan Hoffmann in his letter to *Haaretz*, is that 'while a robust absorption basket is crucial for the success of those who have already chosen to make the move to Israel, it is not raising the numbers of those making that choice' (2012). Consequently, the Jewish Agency has been working to focus on a new mission: 'bringing ever-larger circles of young Jews to visit and experience Israel' (ibid.). Although Hoffmann claims that the new policy 'will encourage *aliyah* in ways that are far more relevant and effective for today's generation', I would like to claim that this new policy does not reflect a new solution to an old problem – namely encouraging *aliyah*. More than anything it expresses Israel's pressing political necessities.

Let me explain. Although the official Palestinian leadership (representing the Palestinian Authority) has recently achieved some success in the international arena, notably the acceptance of Palestine as a UNESCO member in November 2010 and the United Nations 'non-member observer state' status in November 2012, Israel is no less preoccupied with the slowly but steadily increasing support for the growing boycott movement (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions or BDS) around the world. Renowned physicist Professor Stephen Hawking's decision to pull out of an Israeli conference hosted by Israel President Shimon Peres in June 2013 has granted BDS un-precedented prestige and a strong cultural imprint. BDS is openly regarded by Israeli politicians as a threat to the state, and a special law was enacted in 2011 that criminalised public calls to support the boycott. The point is that, in order to persevere as the kind of state and society Israel is, it cannot afford to trust American administra-tions without helping to fuel ongoing Zionist political pressure on Washington by the Jewish leadership through the Jewish lobby and AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee). In this context, as pathetic as it may sound, closing ranks within the American Jewish

community has become a matter of national security for Israel. This is rapidly becoming an urgent mission as the impact of BDS grows in the United States as well as in other countries, particularly on the academic and cultural front. Of great significance is the fact that, in December 2013, the American Studies Association courageously voted to support an academic boycott of Israel. Naturally, Jews in the United States are exposed to this growing debate more than others, so for the Zionist leadership in Jerusalem the question is how can Israel help them cope, for Israel's own sake.

This is where the changing agenda of the Jewish Agency makes sense, a change that has been defined by Claudio Manaker, the Jewish Agency representative for Latin America, as a paradigmatic change of policy (Iton Gadol 2011). From its own perspective, Israel needs a strong emergent Jewish leadership in the diaspora, certainly in the United States, with which to oppose the BDS epidemic. In his study of young American Jewish leadership, Wertheimer found that '[i]n the aggregate, the overwhelming majority of leaders in all age groups claimed to care about and feel attached to Israel, with over 90 percent of older and younger establishment leaders affirming their emotional attachment and nearly 85 percent of non-establishment leaders claiming such an attachment' (2010: 15). His team also found that '[a]bout 56 percent of younger Jewish leaders of all types have participated in ... long-term programs. In contrast, just about half as many (30 percent) of older establishment leaders have spent as much time in Israel on a single visit' (ibid.: 26). The wide range of visiting programmes sponsored by the Jewish Agency aims, as Director-General Hoffmann states, to make sure that '[t]omorrow's Jewish leaders will be even more connected and knowledgeable about both Israel and their Jewish heritage as a result' (2012). These pro-grammes are officially defined in terms of establishing meaningful Judaism and strengthening the link to Israel by means of a 'signifi-cant Israeli experience'.

As Shapiro indicates: 'It was recently estimated that there are over 200 Israel programs, which include kibbutz work, archaeologi-cal digs, art trips, and Jewish studies programs' (2006: 6). Under the general management of the Jewish Agency subsidiary the Israel

Experience (founded in 1958), these programmes, tailored mainly for Western Jews, offer a week-long visit to Israel as well as longer ones – up to a year – with names such as 'Livnot U'Lehibanot' ('To Build and Be Built'), 'Taglit-Birthright Israel', 'Masa', 'Sar-El' and 'Gadna'. Most programmes are tailored to young people in their twenties and early thirties. From the United States alone about '16,000 young American Jews travel to Israel each year' (ibid.), while about 500 Jewish youngsters a year come from Latin America (Karlik 2012). These programmes concentrate mainly on Judaism and Zionism, but, importantly, a major component in all these visiting packages is hiking. In her rich ethnographic account of the programme Livnot U'Lehibanot, Shapiro recounts:

> Although these hikes often appear to begin in the middle of nowhere, they are actually routed along parts of the extensive system of marked trails that criss-cross Israel. Participants carry a day's supply of water on their backs – usually three or four litres, depending on the season – and ingredients for a picnic lunch. The point, according to Livnot staff, is to 'hike Jewishly', that is, not necessarily to hike quickly or cover lots of ground, but to be aware of and appreciate one's surroundings, both in nature and history. The hiking itself is physically challenging, but the group breaks often to enjoy the environment and its significance: sitting on a windy slope over an ancient city to learn of its first-century hero- ism, relaxing in the shade of a large tree to understand the Jewish significance of the carob, or stopping near abandoned mills to learn about the sixteenth-century textile industry ... While some participants have hiked and camped in the wild before, most have not 'roughed it' to this degree, and must adjust to experiences like urinating in the woods and, on longer hikes, sleeping outdoors without tents. One of the highlights of the program is a three-day hike, which represents an extraordinary test of determination and commitment ... Later in the program, the two-day Desert Hike offers ... a different sort of physical, emotional, and spiritual chal- lenge (2006: 26–7).

We have found these characteristics in the domestic forms of

Zionist hiking. As Shapiro explains: 'Livnot places a high value on the hiking process and presents itself as a program that uniquely combines work, study, and hiking. These tiyulim come to form some of the most potent and cherished memories that participants take home from Livnot' (ibid.: 27). Everyday life poses obvious limits to ideological education as regards its own domestic clients, but these are circumvented when the clients are foreign. In other words, in more than one sense it is easier to indoctrinate a Jew visiting Israel, particularly if they come with a preconceived mission. In their case, taking their Jewish bodies on hikes is not about training them for the army but about experiencing Jewish and Zionist myths in a contemporary manner. My contention is that by means of these programmes, and particularly through the hiking component, Israel goes to great lengths to expand the circle of Jewish consumers and practitioners of the motto 'One needs to conquer the land with one's feet.' As Shapiro goes on to say:

> Through participants' extensive hiking of Israel, the land becomes perceived as 'theirs'. No longer simply an abstract concept, nor just another location far from home, Israel is transformed into a place that belongs to participants by virtue of their Jewishness and the presence of their footsteps. Israel is also presented as a country that has been marked with the presence of Jews through- out history, and is ready to be similarly marked by the presence of Livnot participants (ibid.: 58–9).

Elements from the past are operationalised to constitute new magnetic axes of subjectivation for these young non-Israeli Jews. As O'Sullivan explains, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, these objects 'are then mobilised in the present and in order to move beyond that present' (2006: 316). 'Beyond the present' here are the political dispositions these youngsters will deploy as future leaders of their communities in America and elsewhere. Everything resonates here: Jewish Agency Director-General Alan Hoffmann is aware that 'Western, largely English-speaking Jews are not moving to Israel in significant numbers' (2012), and thus the funds and energies invested in these Jews under the new Jewish Agency paradigm have a different

goal than that of *aliyah*. Building their Jewish identity and roots to combat assimilation are the explicit aims of the new policy and are perhaps being achieved, but I contend that the main goal is to develop a long-term cadre of future leaders who are able and willing to fight for the continuation of a Zionist Israel. Hiking is perhaps no more than a small cog in this subjectivation machine conjointly operated by Israeli and global Zionist forces, but it is certainly an important one as it leaves a strong imprint on the body and can always be summoned to substantiate a political stance: 'I have been there, I have seen it with my eyes and walked it with my feet.' The ideological and somatic features of Zionist hiking instil something that cannot possibly be provided by the traditional ties between Jews in the diaspora and their families and friends in Israel; it ignites affect in ways that enable people to feel the strongest connection to the land, bodily maintaining a continuous emotional flow that persists as somatic memory, intentionally constructed.

In a sense, sharing Zionist hiking practices with diaspora Jews gives away something that for about a century was nurtured as the image of the new Jew in Israel – the '*Sabra*' (native-born Jewish-Israeli) – in fact, the image Ashkenazi Jews built of themselves as the 'proper' Israelis (Almog 2000). If we like, this sharing expands the right of return granted to every Jew into the actual right to the land. At the very least, this process spreads a strong sense among the diaspora Jews that 'the land becomes perceived as "theirs"', as Shapiro put it (2006: 58). And in a way, this can be seen as part of what Veracini has recently defined as 'recolonisation', a process 'in which the entire settler colonial project of Israel depends, once again, on external support' (2013: 35). As Veracini explains: 'Recurring emphasis on Israel as the country of *all* Jews rather than the country of Zionists inevitably produces a recolonisation effect, subjecting Jewish Israelis to the political determination of others' (ibid.: 35). The point here is to look at the ways in which Israel willingly participates not only in the production of its own Jewish subjectivities but also in the fabrication of subjectivities of potential Jewish leadership overseas. As they visit the country, these future Jewish leaders learn that the command is not merely 'walk the length and the breadth of the land',

but rather it becomes 'walk the length and the breadth of the land, and return to the diaspora to defend us'.

¶ That hiking has a strong presence in Israeli social life has now become clear. 'By now, trips and hiking have become a cultural idiom that extends far beyond the pedagogical domains of school and youth movement; bookstores abound with texts that lay out the rich possibilities for hiking trips that are open to the public' (Katriel 1995: 11). The website of the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that 'the Israeli passion for hiking has biblical roots – just as the Israelites conquered this land, so too can modern Israelis stake their claim by walking every trail and nature path'. And they certainly do. True, '[i]n the act of hiking both the individual and the group mark out a territory, claiming possession by use of the body – that is, by the act of walking' (Ben-David 1997: 140), but Israelis already possess the land and they control it 'with a mighty hand and outstretched arm', so why does Zionist hiking continue to play this formative role? What sorts of territorialisation does hiking involve nowadays? And what do they express? The siege mentality inculcated by Zionism in generations is looped in an infinite quest to ground itself. One channel is to continuously confer indigeneity upon Jewish existence in Israel as a process by which Palestinians are de-indigenised. As Veracini put it (2010: 21–2): 'Indigenisation is driven by the crucial need to transform an historical tie ("we came here") into a natural one ("the land made us").' Hiking might be seen as a corporeal means of indigenisation; 'Our bodies,' explains Janz, 'do not stop at our skin, they stop somewhere beyond, where our space becomes identified as ours' (2001: 397). That identification is gained through a process of discursive mediation, in which *a* past is summoned to bear on the body of the hiker; the biblical past and that of the proverbial early Zionism pioneer – both somehow interlaced in a productive relationship – are summoned in a quest to reincarnate them in the hiking body organising itself to become a soldier. This cannot be done in one fell swoop; in fact, this should be done continuously, in a series of endless repetitions, calling for a national home with hiking bodies, marking territories, as when

birds sing their refrains. If the nuclear family or the closest group of friends 'fails' in its duty to indoctrinate through hiking (either because not all Jewish-Israeli families are fond of hiking or due to a more nature-oriented style of hiking), the school will take care of it. Some young people, approximately one in six, will have this reinforced through high doses of hiking in one of the youth movements. And just to make sure, the army will generously offer hiking practice that gives individuals the chance to finally put everything together: 'Oh, so this is what hiking was meant to be!' It is no coincidence that pre-military preparatory frameworks in the private sector offering expensive courses to eleventh and twelfth graders include hiking in their repertoires. They acknowledge the value of the relationship between hiking and military training. But these are not really mere repetitions. As Rela Mazali put it, this is about 'a cyclical, self-perpetuating process' that relies on the sensual experience that powerfully reaffirms capacities and incapacities (Mazali 2011: 188). This is a process that construes the range of our gaze and the sorts of objects our sensors and radars are able to detect. Every repetition is different in the sense that it adds a certain amount and modality of accumulation to the process of producing identities and dispositions towards life. And time and again, from one walk to the next, a rhythm arises: 'My subjectivity lies in the set of rhythms and repetitions I have found to be useful' (Janz 2001: 396). Some hiking rhythms for diaspora Jews and others for domestic Jews; while the former express the promise of future political and financial support, the latter express the forces that defend the fortress here and now.

Thus, the question is how to supplant the *tiyul* as the ritualised practice that it is in Israeli culture (Katriel 1995) by enabling the body to express new potentialities in its relation to nature – perhaps by engaging in a sort of political saunter as suggested by Zochrot, by means of sonic or bodily disquiet, by refusing the productivity of Zionist hiking like the Mizrahi agricultural refusal, or in a more ecology-oriented alternative, as in ecofeminism. Zionist hiking, as we saw, is profoundly gendered. It evolved as a space of nationalistic and military training. In schools it is introduced to students predominantly by male teachers (in the *Shelah* classes), despite the

fact that most school teachers are women. The deterritorialisation of Zionist hiking must take into account the gendered division of labour at work. Ecofeminism aims precisely at that intersection: 'The philosophy of ecofeminism is based on an examination of the interconnections between the domination of women, the domination of nature, and the need for transformation of traditional ways of thinking' (Henderson 1992: 50; see also Andrew et al. 2005; Gaard and Murphy 1998). Re-creating hiking in Israel should therefore be about abolishing the macho-military appropriation of nature, among other things, to give way to forms of non-gendered collaboration with nature. This is not only about transforming our own subjectivities but is simultaneously about changing the earth's subjectivity, by freeing the constraints and captures that made land into territory.