Lea Mauas, Michelle MacQueen,
Diego Rotman (Eds.)

Possession and Dispossession

Performing Jewish Ethnography in Jerusalem

DE GRUYTER

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Performing Jewish Ethnography in Jerusalem

Edited by Lea Mauas, Michelle MacQueen, Diego Rotman

DE GRUYTER

THE MUSEUM OF
THE CONTEMPORARY
המוזיאון של העכשווי
المتحف المعاصر

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An Introduction

Michelle MacQueen, Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman

When different types of knowledge and practice meet, they enrich each other. *Possession and Dispossession* reflects on this meeting of divergent processes in Jerusalem. Through this collection of essays, documents, and artworks, we summarize the work of the Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary since its founding on December 31, 2014, in the spaces of the Mamuta Art and Research Center located at Hansen House in west Jerusalem, at the initiative and under the curatorship of the Sala-Manca Group.

The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary led an art-research project on the relationship between Jewish ethnography and Israeli contemporary art, between academic research and art research. This collection is a result of this project and it serves as a record of a particular way of working and as a catalogue of these projects, where the book is another creative phase.

This collection was originally published in Hebrew in 2017. In the English edition of this book, we want to share these art-research projects and our process of research and creation with a wider audience. *Possession and Dispossession* is not a traditional catalogue, though it does document the exhibitions; it is also not a traditional academic book, though it does contain in-depth research articles. Instead, we see this collection as an invitation—to continue the dialogue created by these projects, to reflect on and interpret these works, and to continue blurring the lines between research and creation.

In the pages that follow, we present fragments from conversations between

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the editors of this collection[1] to introduce where these projects took place, how this experimental method of research and creation works, and how the Ethnographic Department's approach to contemporary ethnography came to be.

Lea — First, it's important as a reminder, that at Mamuta, we host the Underground Academy. It's a group of people meeting and working together. In this Academy are not only artists, but also philosophers, architects, writers, designers, etc. We would meet together once a week. We were both developing projects together and individually. That year, in 2014, we were working with ethnography. The Underground Academy is both a residential program and also Mamuta Art Center's research institute.

The Ethnographic Department was inspired by the João Delgado's Underground Academy – a process that champions the development of experimental methods of learning, research, writing, and creation.[2]

[1] The editors are Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman (the Sala-Manca Group), and Michelle MacQueen (who assisted with the preparation of the English-language edition).

[2] In 1963, the Portuguese-Argentinean poet João Delgado wrote a never-published manifesto in which he said that all museums, universities, and sports clubs should be closed and reopened only a year later. After locking two municipal museums with his own locks, Delgado was arrested and imprisoned. During his sentence, he wrote the basic guidelines for the Underground Academy. Later, the poet Delgado, the painter Rodriguez, the theater critic Arturo Maure, Tilsa Tilsovna, a character from a play, and some prominent figures in Delgado's books and in real life became the first staff of the Underground Academy. It is not known if any student applied to study at the Academy, or if the project interested anyone except for the members who used to meet twice a week for night courses at Rodriguez's home. Later, the Academy functioned in the basement of the local leprosarium. The spaces hosted groundbreaking art exhibitions, and operated a publishing house that issued thirty-five titles and manuscripts, all of which have been lost. The last book it published dealt with the history of the Underground Academy.

Diego The Underground Academy should be read in relation to the Bezalel Academy for Art and Design based on the second floor of the same building, where they run different graduate programs. Our Academy was established in the basement, so in a way we are going underground... In Hebrew actually, the residency is called "The Academy of the Contemporary."

Lea I don't know if this is relevant but the name 'The Underground Academy' was also a kind of reaction to the way the academy is grasped. The Hebrew University is based on a top of a mountain, on Mount Scopus, so in a way we are referring to the idea of bringing the Academy back to the ground, to grassroots.

Diego I think we were trying to combine our specific way of working in the art field in connection to our academic practice. We invited scholars to meet artists and artists to meet scholars in order to affect both worlds.

To date, The Ethnographic Department has hosted encounters[3] and day-long seminars; sent ethnographic delegations to the urban spaces of Jerusalem and the nearby desert; produced projects in visual and performance art; exhibited in other venues in Israel and abroad; begun various research projects; and edited this volume, which reflects, expands, and interprets the processes we have undergone.

Michelle In this way, it seems like the aim is to create a process that works in the middle of two approaches. On the one hand, you're taking a grassroots approach: working with artists at

[3] We held encounters and day-long seminars with Rachel Elior, Yoram Bilu, Galit Hasan-Rokem, Ruthie Abeliovich, Yair Lifschitz, Danny Schrire, Haim Yacobi, Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, Chaim Noy, Freddie Rokem, Alon Cohen-Lifschitz, and Elad Orian.

the Art Center, working at the "Underground," bringing in various communities—taking everyday experiences that allow for learning and creating knowledge. But on the other hand, you're also approaching it from a conceptual space: working in an academic place, working with scholars, engaging with and creating theory and methodologies—learning and creating knowledge from perhaps more "traditional" modes of inquiry.

It seems like both approaches are in dialogue, but it creates a new, different approach.

Lea — Absolutely. We attempt to create a kind of interchange where both the artists and the scholars can learn from another kind of research or knowledge creation or even just new ways to approach matters in art or scholarship.

Diego — The Museum of the Contemporary attempts to approach history through art, ethnography through art, art through ethnography. We look for other ways to understand how art can influence the way that scholarship can be approached or can be practiced and vice versa. I think in those meetings—blurring those more stable definitions—that's where we were working.

Lea — In some ways, I think our approach is something that if it would happen at the University, could have been called 'research-creation.'

Michelle — Lea and I were classmates in the Cultural Studies program at Queen's University in Kingston ON, Canada. There, we learned about research-creation as an approach to research that combines creative/arts-based practices and academic research. In the Canadian context, the creation process of research-creation is defined as "situated within the research

activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms)."[4] Research-creation projects often focus on process, tentative explorations, and experimentation. It obfuscates certainty, in that it does not give us tangible, clear "results." I think research-creation works well in areas that are fuzzy—when delineations are imprecise and there are only vague contours. By working consistently in the "in-between," these projects can bring a new dimension of knowledge to these fuzzy areas. In this way, research-creation can be a means to challenge traditional modes of knowledge. In Natalie Loveless's words, "Research-creation, at its best, has the capacity to impact our social and material conditions, not by offering more facts, differently figured, but by finding ways, through aesthetic encounters and events, to persuade us to care and to care differently."[5]

Diego Some of the scholars we worked with are artists themselves. But research-creation is something that is being developed at the university to include the arts. We were, in a way, trying to include academic scholarship and research methodologies into the art practice being generated at the Mamuta Art Center.

Lea We wanted to give to the artists another kind of way of working that is more research-based, but as Diego said, also influencing the ways that knowledge is created in the academy, both for him as an academic and for other academics that were

[4] The full definition according to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada is available at: https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/definitions-eng.aspx. Accessed August 2020.

[5] Natalie Loveless, *How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 107.

part of these meetings. And also, many of the scholars who came to talk with the artists felt that it was indeed a possibility for them to do so. It is an amazing and on-going process.

Michelle It sounds like you brought this all to a middle ground.
It wasn't just inclusion: you were not aiming to include artistic practice at the university and it seems like you were not trying to just include academic research at the Art Center. It appears to be more than that– creating a process that was not incorporating one into the other, but rather taking the best parts of each world to meet in this new space in the middle.
How did this process start?

Diego The process actually started some years before when we worked together with Ofira Henig, the director of The Lab, a theatre space in Jerusalem. She asked us to curate an exhibition related to the Golem project. Instead of curating an exhibition on the topic, we decided to develop a research project together, by bringing some models from the academy – like a symposium, open calls, long-term research. We started with a symposium with scholars and artists, open to artists and the public in general. And with a similar symposium, we started our project on contemporary ethnography, focusing on the Dybbuk. That was actually the starting point for those projects

Lea We had many different events where we were trying to blur or combine or make other kinds of situations where the art world and the academy get to be in touch.

Michelle These events were another invitation? A chance to meet and talk?

Lea It was never just an invitation to do a talk or to listen to a talk. It was more deep, something more intense.

Diego We were looking for long-term research, for long processes. The events were invitations to relate, to create another stage in this long-term research that combines different practices and approaches to specific topics. I think that artists and scholars might want to be part of something different than what they are used to. Like this book—it's not a typical academic book and it's not a typical catalogue with some articles. It's trying to find other ways of communicating practice and knowledge.

Lea Also in these events, we get to break those hierarchies in terms of who's producing knowledge or who has the right to do what.

Diego Also those tensions that are sometimes in both worlds regarding the other, the biases about art, about the academy. For us to relate it to the academy and us being together as part of our natural, everyday life—I think that those lines just don't really exist, so we play with them.

Michelle Right, and if we can play with these tensions, we can reach areas that you wouldn't find otherwise. If you have to work within a particular discipline or tradition, you are confined by the boundaries of that discipline/tradition. But if those boundaries become arbitrary (or at least not of the utmost importance), you can work to break them down and find out what lies in-between. When the lines are less distinct, when the borders are blurred, you can make a new space that would have been otherwise hidden by the boundaries of these traditions in art, research, ethnography, etc.

Lea — Scholars are artists, everyone is participating and observing. We wanted engaged scholarship, collaboration, and creation.

Diego — But it's also in terms of content—we are never working from nowhere. We are working within Jewish ethnography in the Israeli/Jewish/Palestinian context. We relate to our cultural baggage to connect in these instances.

Michelle — Yes, and I think the Eternal Sukkah project is a good example of that. It deals with the political context directly, in addressing significant issues about land and borders between Bedouin communities, Israel, and Jewish settlements, as well as the longer histories of conflict in the region. But it also brings up questions of boundaries and lines in terms of culture and traditions, in the transformation of a tin shack belonging to a Bedouin family into a Jewish Sukkah that ended up at the national museum. Does the shack/sukkah belong to one group or the other? Whose culture is it? What tradition does it belong to? These questions are obviously in response to that socio-political context. But even asking these questions raises important political implications. It allows us to question the status quo. But the aim of this process isn't only implicating the political and the cultural, right?

Diego — We also wanted to blur ethnography in terms of its divisions in folk art and contemporary art. Our ways of doing research and creation allowed for more possible paths to do this work.

Lea — A starting point for us was to propose other ways of "ethnographic research."

Diego — We were being critical of "traditional ethnography" but we

were using those tools to make inquiries into new topics about possession and dispossession, about the role of the academy, the artist, the ethnographer—we don't have any clear answers about what is good or not. But we ask questions about these entities. We were also dealing with auto-ethnography. We put ourselves inside. The research was put forward through this exploration of these relations to the context.

Lea — We are always rooted in the context, in the socio-political, dealing with our immediate surroundings, the representation of space.

Diego — We're approaching all of these projects, about tourism, gentrification, land, social media, it's from a critical point of view. We're trying to break open and give new ways, new perspectives of thinking on these issues.

Michelle — In dealing with the immediate surroundings, there are always new questions to explore. The context always changes, and then new questions arise. Since this process invites long-term research, and there are so many points of reference, there is also a lineage and conceptual resources to draw on. So, there's constant invitations to explore and a host of tools to draw from while experimenting.

In creating all of these opportunities for questions, I think this process brings attention to the importance of blurring these lines between traditions, ethnography, art, the academy, etc. By blurring the lines, there's creation of this new space where we can maybe find reasons for how and why these distinctions become so solid.

Diego — The projects also kept developing through the writing about

them, and talking about them in the artist talks, in the symposiums, etc. – these were always instances of sharing brought back and provoked new approaches and re-framing of the projects. It's naturally never-ending.

Lea — Yes, always adding new layers. Every movement brings another movement into the art projects. The research and art always come together, they overlap. It's a new layer upon a new layer, new movement again and again.

Michelle — In that way, the process becomes self-creating and self-sustaining. It becomes a new space where we can challenge all of these borders, boundaries, and distinctions. And it's also a new space where we can move with uncertainty, but we can grow greater political, cultural, and creative imaginations.

The first part of the book relates to historical aspects of two sites. The first site is where the Museum of the Contemporary was first established in Ein Karem (after some independent research, we discovered that the actual house was built on the base of Issa Manoun's former house, which was under construction in 1948, declared "abandoned property," and later became the home of the Jewish Polish artist Daniela Passal). The second site is where the wandering museum moved to next, and where the Ethnographic Department was introduced – the former Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe and currently the home of the Hansen House of Art, Design, and Technology. The majority of this section of the book documents works dealing with Hansen House's historiography. This includes the film *Heim*, refashioned by Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel, and the series of amulets created by Yeshayahu Rabinowitz and Hanan abu-Hussein, which correspond with the amulet collection that belonged to Palestinian folklore scholar and physician Dr. Tawfiq Canaan, the

medical director of the leprosarium from 1919 until 1948. Also in this section is documentation of *Paradise Inn: A One-Person Hotel*, a project that operated in the summer of 2015 in the courtyard of Hansen House. This project dealt with the mythology of paradise, its connection with leprosaria in general, and the Jerusalem leprosarium in particular. The projects, whose participants were artists Nir Yahalom, Itamar Mendes-Flohr, Shaul Tzemah, Oz Maloul, Chen Cohen, Shiri Singer, Pessy Komar, and the Sala-Manca Group, corresponded with Boris Schatz's book *The Rebuilt Jerusalem: The Rebuilt Reality* (1924).[6] The text "On the Borders of Paradise" by Diego Rotman offers a reflexive reading of the project and ends this section of the book.

The second part of the book deals with the figure of Jewish folklorist Sh. An-sky (born Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport) and the ethnographic expedition he organized and led in 1912-1914 through the Pale of Settlement, almost concurrently with Canaan's ethnographic research. Here, you will find an update of the questionnaire An-sky composed following his historical ethnographic expedition in Volhyn and Podolia, consisting of some two thousand questions about the way of life of the intended Jewish respondents. Sala-Manca's updated questionnaire consists of twenty-five new questions dealing with "Israeli time," and comes complete with a machine that sounds Israeli national sirens (the siren signaling the beginning of the Sabbath, the Holocaust Remembrance Day and Memorial Day sirens, and a true air-raid siren) available for a symbolic fee.

Rachel Elior and Yoram Bilu's essay "Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Spirit Possessions and Demons, Angels and Maggidim" begins the inquiry into the Dybbuk phenomenon and Ansky's play *Der Dybbuk: Tzevishen Tzvei Velten* (*The Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds*). Freddie Rokem, in his essay "The Many Worlds of the Dybbuk", deals with the stage design of the production of *The Dybbuk* put on by the Habima Hebrew Theater in 1922 and the role

[6] Boris Schatz is the founder of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design.

of the text in the stage design. In his essay "My Homeland, Der Dybbuk: About Possession and Nationalism in the Old-New Film *Der Dybbuk (1937-2017)*," Rotman presents a fragment of a research project dealing with Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel's film *The Dybbuk (1937-2014)*, which is in some ways a re-editing of the Yiddish movie by Michał Waszyński, and in some ways a subversion of it, in part by the integration of *The Moldau* by Bedřich Smetana into the film's soundtrack. The next piece is the documentation of the installation *Tisch* by Sala-Manca and Nir Yahalom, which also includes the work *The Eternal Sabbath* by Samuel Rotman and *Cover for Ark of Fire*, an anonymous work. In his essay "Always Sabbath: Electric Sabbath Candles," Shalom Sabar embarks on a journey to discover the history of electric candlesticks and deals with the applicable questions of Jewish ritual law, the history of their design, and the custom of lighting Sabbath candles.

The third part of the book deals with the holidays of Purim and Sukkot. It begins with a series of photographs from the video art piece *Masks* by Esther Bires and Amitai Arnon, who for 12 years documented their nieces and nephews' Purim celebrations in the city of Ramle and reveal the structuring of social roles among Israeli children through their costumes. The extensive treatment of the festival of Sukkot begins with the essay "The Wandering Jew's Home and a Temple Everywhere" by Galit Hasan-Rokem, a key figure in conversations about ethnography at the Underground Academy. Daphna Ben-Shaul's essay, "Civic Bi-longing: Politicization of the Domestic Site in *Eternal Sukkah*," deals with the project *The Eternal Sukkah* by Sala-Manca in conjunction with Itamar Mendes-Flohr and Yeshayahu Rabinowitz and its performative aspects, and analyzes the politicization of the domestic sphere. Also in this section are documentation of the project and the model *The Eternal Sukkah* created by Ktura Manor at the request of the Ethnographic Department.

"Absentee Landscapes," a project of the Sala-Manca Group in conjunction

with Nir Yahalom, Ktura Manor, Max Epstein, Adi Kaplan, and Shahar Carmel, includes an original copy of the Deller family's painted sukkah (Fischach, 1850? / Jerusalem, 2017) at The Israel Museum. The project is accompanied by a documentary film about the process, a model of the sukkah, and a copy of the lithograph by Yehosef Schwarz, which was the inspiration for the sukkah's depiction of Jerusalem.

The fourth and final part of the book deals with China, a temporary exhibition presented at the Ethnographic Department by Reuven Zehavi. The book concludes with activity pages for children created subsequent to conversations we had with Anat Vaknin-Appelbaum, the designer of this book and an artist who did a residency at Mamuta. Vaknin-Appelbaum invites us to relate to the didactic aspect of shaping the Israeli citizen and Museums' pedagogy.

The projects detailed in this collection are collaborative and ongoing, in dialogue with different artists, researchers, families, and communities. Throughout these projects, we attempt to challenge the apparent division between contemporary art and ethnography, between tradition, preservation and representation, in an approach we call "contemporary ethnography," where the borders between ethnography and contemporary art are blurred. This volume aims to reflect, expand, and interpret the Ethnographic Department's process that develops experimental methods of research and creation.

Diego	In the process of being written, the book becomes the museum.
Lea	Everything is temporary, but they're all starting points for conversations that go beyond conventional frames. We're adding new layers.
Michelle	And now this is a new layer. Taking these projects, the

process, all of these conversations, and bringing them into a new language, into different contexts, and with new viewpoints.

Diego These meetings that happen between the art projects, between the works of scholarship, between these works and viewer and reader—this moment, where through the book, we are confronting the reader with these pieces of art-research—that's it. The book is not done to remember the exhibition. It's another invitation.

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The Museum of the Contemporary and the Ethnographic Department

Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman (Sala-manca Group)

> *"During my visit to the modest Buenos Aires home of the Oxter family, a lower-middle class family, I discovered, on a wall of the living room, Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. It was my first visit to the Museum of the Contemporary." (João Delgado)*

The Museum of the Contemporary (MofC) was founded by the Sala-Manca Group in December 2009 at the first location of the Mamuta Art and Reseach Center in Ein Kerem, at the home of the late Polish-Jewish artist Daniela Passal.[1] The house had previously been declared an abandoned Arab property,[2] but prior to that, as the artists discovered in the course of their research, it had been the home of the Palestinian scholar Issa Manoun. The first exhibition

[1] Daniela Pesal (b.1931, Poland – d.2005, Israel) immigrated to Israel in 1950 and studied art at the New Bezalel in Jerusalem. In 1989, she established the "Al-Dan Forum for Creation" at her home. After her death, her home was left to the Jerusalem Foundation to serve as a creative center for artists. In 2012-2009, the building, which is owned by the Jerusalem Foundation and the estate of the artist, served as the home of the Sala-Manca Group, which operated it as the "Mamuta Art and Media Center at Daniela Passal's house."

[2] Absentee's Property Law 5710-1950 was enacted in Israel in 1950. "The primary purpose of this law", as Nir Hason put it, "was to enable use of lands belonging to Arabs who left Israel voluntarily or forcedly during the War of Independence." After the Six-Day War in 1967, which saw the extension of Jerusalem's municipal boundaries, Palestinians with assets in Jerusalem suddenly found themselves considered "absentee" owners, even though they had not gone anywhere. Sometimes they were living only a few hundred meters away, but this was now considered outside the new Jerusalem city limits and officially in the West Bank. They found their property confiscated only because Israel drew the new municipal border between them and their property, making them no longer residents of Jerusalem—though they never left their homes. Read more: https://bit.ly/34vxhLE. Accessed February 2020.

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▲ “The Skin I Live In”, Sala-manca, gouche on existing walls, 2012.

dealt with the Museum as an institution, the local historiography of the village of Ein Kerem, and the history of the museum space. The MofC also developed a digital storage room of exhibitions that cannot be viewed on the web but are offered as downloads.[3] Each exhibition is available as a "package for printing, presentation, or re-exhibition," depending on the physical and economic limitations of the institution acquiring the download.[3]

The MofC not only related and responded to the structure in which it was housed, but it also corresponded with the Israel Museum that also dealt with or responded to the space in which it resided, albeit in a different way. In his essay "On Remembrances and Forgettings at Museums in the Holy City and of the Holy City in Museums" – an essay that was never published though it was partially cited in the catalog for the opening of the Museum of the Contemporary – Arturo Maure (one of João Delgado's heteronyms) wrote:

> "If, according to the plans of architect [Alfred] Mansfeld, The Israel Museum's design was inspired by the Arab village and was constructed on top of the ruins of the village of Sheikh Bader, and the Museum of the Contemporary is itself an Arab house located in the village [of Ein Kerem], which became a memorial to the Arab village, then The Israel Museum is a souvenir of the Museum of the Contemporary."

Architect Zvi Efrat, a member of the group charged with renovating The

[3] The Storage room features complete exhibitions that are available for download, which underwent a process of digitization so as to preserve the full quality after they have been downloaded in their respective formats (video, sound, photography, text, etc.). After they have been downloaded, the exhibitions could be displayed in the venues available to the secondary curators (those who chose to download the exhibitions) and the conditions they have at their disposal. In this way, the same exhibition could be displayed simultaneously by agents of completely dissimilar nature and financial means. Since the exhibition will be displayed differently, it will also convey cultural and curatorial perceptions that reflect not only the perception of the exhibition's curators, but also those of the secondary curators displaying it.

Israel Museum in 2013, asserted that the perception of the Palestinian village of Malha, the source of Alfred Mansfeld's inspiration in designing the museum, became an origin myth that provided The Israel Museum with a dimension of authenticity.[4] The materialization of the Palestinian village's image in the architectural design of The Israel Museum reflects the paradox in the process of structuring a local, indigenous national identity, which is one subject of interest to the Museum of the Contemporary and the Ethnographic Department operating in it.

The native Hebrew identity – a sort of hybrid consisting of Jewish-Bedouin and Jewish-Palestinian components – was, according to Yael Zerubavel, one of the most common identity options available to the Jewish settlers during the time of the yishuv, the pre-state Jewish presence. Arabs and Bedouins expressed the connection to nature and the land and were therefore seen as the embodiment of the Biblical Jew, the antithesis of the image of the weak, passive, wandering exilic Jew.[5] Performing the native by wearing the kufiyah head-covering and the so-called Biblical sandals and riding horses, and by extension by constructing a museum of a national status with meta-Palestinian architecture, were ways to shape and portray the native Hebrew identity.

In its first location, the MofC dealt with the concepts of home, temporariness, the museum's space, and their own ability or inability to express and inhabit a local hybrid identity. These topics continue to be central in different projects developed by the MofC (as seen in the Eternal Sukkah, the Paradise Inn Hotel, the Deller Sukkah).

[4] See Zvi Efrat "Land Marks: The Emblematic Architecture of the Israel Museum and the Shrine of the Book (draft)": http://efrat-kowalsky.co.il/files/the-architecture-of-the-israel-museum.pdf. Accessed December 2014.

[5] Yael Zerubavel, "Memory, the Rebirth of the Native, and the 'Hebrew Bedouin' Identity" Social Research 75/1 (2008): 315–352.

The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary opened on December 31, 2014, in the basement of the former leprosarium in the Talbiyeh quarter of Jerusalem, now known as Hansen House. The Ethnographic Department of the MofC deals with the seam between an art museum and an ethnographic museum and between visual art and popular art, and with the tensions among originals, recreations, copies, and reimaginings, the key aspects of the curatorial thinking that has informed the Museum of the Contemporary since its inception.

From the Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe to Hansen's House

The Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe ("Jesus' Help"), founded as an isolated refuge for lepers, was established in 1867 by the German Protestant Moravian community in Jerusalem. For twenty years, it was housed in a building located on what is now Agron Street. In 1887, the leprosarium moved to a new building designed by Conrad Schick in the Talbiyeh neighborhood.

"High walls enclose and hide the structure built in a secluded locale, far from the walls of the Old City. The public's fascination with the place generated countless stories about the goings-on inside," reads the informational page about the historical exhibition presented in the former hospital. Until 1948, most of the patients were Arab Muslims, while the nurses were Christian. Tawfiq Canaan, a Palestinian Christian, was the chief physician from 1919 until 1948. In charge of all medical and research issues as well as external relations, Dr. Canaan would visit the leprosarium once a week.

Once the State of Israel was established, Dr. Canaan either left Jerusalem of his own volition or was expelled from the city. According to Salim Tamri, Dr. Canaan took the Arab patients out of the hospital and moved with them to Silwan, where they remained until he eventually set up a leper hospital north of Ramallah. According to the records of the Moravian nurses Johanna Larsen and Ida Ressel, they led fifteen patients to Silwan in 1953 and stayed

of the local committee were present, with numerous guests from the English, German, and Arab Protestant congregations. Among those from the Temple Colony, situated about a quarter of a mile nearer to the city than our Home, was Architect Sandel, who had superintended its erection. At the close of the religious service we were favoured with the presence of His Excellency Raouf Pasha, the Governor of Jerusalem.

"The Dedicatory Service, held in the hall where the patients now gather for worship, was commenced with a hymn and the reading of Luke v. 12-14, and Matthew xxv. 31-46. As President of the committee, Pastor Schlet gave the opening address from Psalm cxxiv. 8: 'Our help is in the Name of the Lord Who made heaven and earth.' 'Jesus' Help', that is the name of the house and the motto of all who dwell therein.

"In fervent prayer he besought the Lord to take the 'Home' into His especial care, to endow those in charge of it with wisdom, love, courage, and perseverance, to solace and alleviate the misery of the patients with the balm of Divine consolations, and to bless all kind supporters of this work of mercy.

"After the opening ceremony opportunity was given to the guests to walk round the Home and inspect its roomy, cheerful, and airy apartments and comfortable arrangements. The building, which is two storeys high, encloses a yard, in which there is a huge cistern for collecting and storing water for the use of the numerous inmates. The south end of the Home contains the apartments for the officials, i.e., the 'House-father' and his family, and the nurses. Next to these, but separated by covered corridors, are the wards for the female patients. In the part of the building facing the west are the kitchen, the store-rooms, etc. The male patients occupy the northern portion of the block, and in the eastern there are one or two sick wards. The dwelling-rooms for male and female patients are separated by the chapel. The bathrooms and wash-kitchen are on the ground floor. The wash-kitchen and bakehouse for the officials are in an out-house. All through the establishment there is convenient communication by means of covered corridors and stairs. A beautiful flight of steps leads up to the front door on the south side. A large garden in front of the house, though not yet in good order, promises to prove a desirable recreation ground for our patients, as well as to provide such light tasks as they can perform."

SETTLING IN.

After six months the Superintendent writes:

"Settling in our new house has found so much work for me that it has been almost impossible to get to letter-writing. The garden, for instance, has demanded more time and trouble than might be imagined. Yet you will have no difficulty in conceiving what a wilderness of rocks and stones it presented, when you remember that building has been going on here for three years, and that the stones have been quarried in the immediate neighbourhood. This had left holes and pits here and there, which had to be filled up if the patients, lame, blind, and crippled as so many of them are, shall walk there with any safety. Now, thank God, the garden, which is so important a part of our institution, has been levelled to a great extent. It is also planted in some degree, but there is a lack of trees to give shade. I brought some of the smaller ones from our old garden, but it will be years before these afford sufficient protection from the fierce rays of our summer sun. This winter I will plant some fig and mulberry trees which flourish here and give a good shade."

THE STAFF OF THE LEPER HOME.
Standing—Sister Gertrude Goerner, Pastor Nielsen, Dr. Canaan, Sister Margarete Ribbeck; Seated—Sister Ida Reisel, Sister Oggalite Norgaard (Matron), Sister Johanna Larsen.

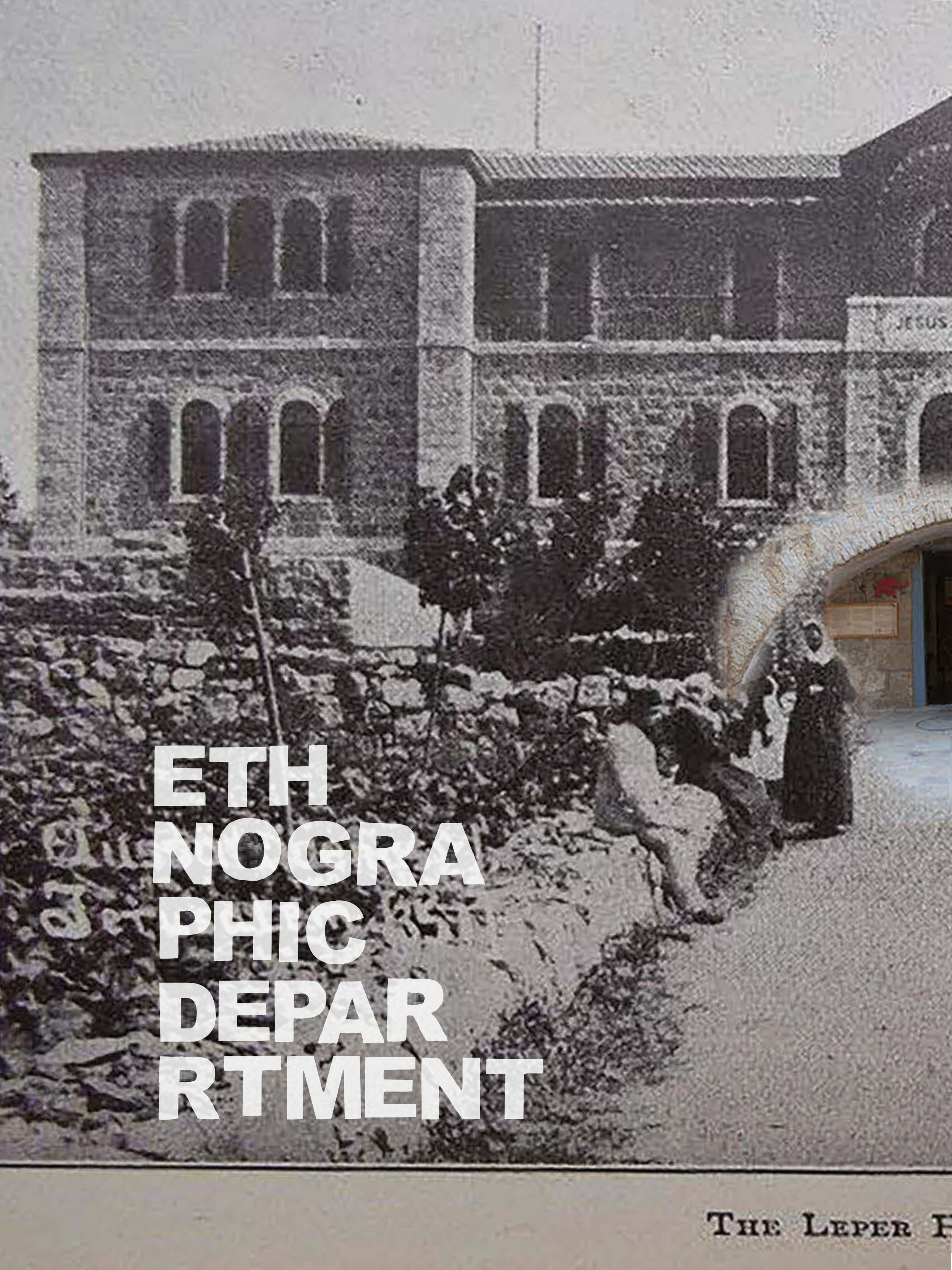
THE HOME TO-DAY.

The promise of fifty years ago has been fulfilled: the garden has been levelled and terraced and planted. The lepers bask in the sunny courtyard or on the grass in their garden; they sit and talk beneath

with them until the leprosarium north of Ramallah opened on June 12, 1960. Either way, the fact that the leper population in the hospital switched from Muslim majority to Jewish majority was a political phenomenon, packing a metaphoric punch in terms of the politics of segregation.[6]

In 1950, the Jewish National Fund bought the leprosarium and transferred its administration to the Israeli Health Ministry. Its name, Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe, was changed to Hansen Government Hospital, in honour of the Norwegian physician who identified the leprosy-causing bacterium. Once antibiotic treatment became available and its success rate increased in the second half of the twentieth century, most of the patients were gradually released. The in-patient wing closed in 2000; the hospital continued to operate as an out-patient clinic until the hospital's final closure in 2009, the year that the Israeli government decided to transfer the building's ownership to the Jerusalem municipality for renovations in preparation for turning it into a cultural center. When the site opened at the end of 2013, it again changed its name to be known simply as Hansen House, as if the spirit of science replaced that of Jesus. Today, Hansen House is an art, design, and technology campus, revealing to visitors one of the most beautiful buildings in the city as well as its mysterious past. The campus houses the Master's program of the Bezalel School for Art and Design, exhibition spaces, screening rooms, the offices of the online cultural journal *Erev Rav*, Mamuta Art and Research Center, and the Museum of the Contemporary.

[6] "The separation of Arab and Jewish lepers in the Talbieh Leprosarium, during the war of 1948, marked those defining moments in the annals of Jerusalem and the Arab-Israeli conflict. In its absurdity, the event encapsulated the depth of the process of ethnic exclusion and demonization after decades of conflict between Jews and Arabs, settlers and natives." Salim Tamari, "Lepers, Lunatics, and Saints: The Nativist Ethnography of Tawfiq Canaan and His Circle, in Mountain Against the Sea: Essays on Palestinian Society and Culture (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 93-112.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Home, Jerusalem.

The Tawfiq Canaan Amulet Collection

Sala-Manca

Tawiq Canaan was born in 1882 in Beit Jala to a Christian Arab family. His father was the first Arab Lutheran pastor. Canaan attended Schneller High School in Jerusalem where he received a German education. In 1899, he and his family moved to Beirut where he studied medicine at the Protestant Syrian College. He completed his studies cum laude and joined the staff of the German hospital in Jerusalem where he married Margot Eilender in 1912. The two lived in the Musrara quarter of the city where Canaan also ran a private clinic. From 1919 until 1948, Canaan served as the medical director of the Jesus Hilfe Leprosarium where he conducted some groundbreaking experiments in treating Hansen's disease.

At the same time, Canaan was one of the fathers of Palestinian folklore studies and researched the living Palestinian heritage. As a doctor and folklorist, Canaan journeyed to Palestine's rural regions where he collected material culture and conducted observations. He tried to present a picture that differed from the one portrayed by most travel literature, which described the lives of the Palestinians and Bedouins as "authentic" reflections of Biblical life. He studied the connection between folk religions, magic, and madness, and started collecting amulets, some of which he received as payment for medical treatment he provided to villagers.

For a time, Canaan engaged in a dialogue about the possibility of a binational state with Judah Leib Magnes, the president of the Hebrew University and a member of Brit Shalom. Concurrently, he started to develop Palestinian national consciousness. After the 1929 riots, he signed

◂ Amulet. Hannan Abu Hussein. Concrete. 2014.

a declaration of support for the rioters. In 1934, he headed a delegation of Arab physicians demanding that the British limit the number of employment licenses issued to Jews, many of whom were at that time leaving Nazi Germany for Palestine. During the Great Arab Revolt, he was already very active in the Palestinian national movement and one of its important spokesmen. He was one of the first to formulate “the Palestinian problem,” which, according to him, was rooted in a Zionist and British imperialist plot to dispossess the native Arabs. On the day that World War II broke out, Canaan was arrested because of his opposition to the mandatory government and was imprisoned in Acre Prison for two months. From that point onward, he severed all his social connections with Jews.

Despite his key role in the history of the leprosarium, Canaan is not mentioned in the historical exhibition about the institution and Hansen’s disease. The exhibition was curated by Ruth Wexler, who, starting in 1988, served as the hospital’s head nurse and worked there until it closed in 2009. Currently, the historical exhibition consists of two rooms featuring original furniture, patients’ personal belongings, and office and medical objects, accompanied by placards with historical explanations about the building and the photographs.

Canaan’s absence from the exhibition, his attraction to folklore, and his status as a Musrara resident, were the reasons we, the curators managing the art center at the former leprosarium and residents of Musrara not far from Canaan’s home, took an interest in him. We decided to begin an initial project focused on the dialogue occurring within the walls of one of the places where he was a central figure. To do so, we invited artists to relate to this character and his absence from the history of the institution by referring to one of the doctor’s several fascinating collections: some 1,400 amulets currently housed at Bir Zeit University. The university’s website allows virtual access to the catalog.

In the June-July 2014 exhibition Footnote 12 and its related event, we dedicated a room to Canaan inspired by his amulet collection. The room was subsequently dismantled and reconstructed within the Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary.

Three artists participated in the original exhibition, each of whom related to the amulet collection differently:

1. Hanan abu-Hussein chose to relate to a single medallion in the collection with the inscription "God gives, God heals." Using it as a model, she poured concrete to create about twenty enlarged medallions and hung them on the building's wall as amulets for the hospital itself (photograph on p. 34).
2. Anat Bar-El opted to relate to the magic dolls. Projecting enlarged photographs of these dolls on the wall, Bar-El created their outlines on the wall itself using white ceramics. During the exhibition, the doll sketches were peeled off the wall, thus losing their power and presence. Their magic powers disappeared alongside their referential force.
3. Yeshayahu Rabinowitz chose to recreate six amulets from Canaan's collection by replicating them accurately from photographs in the virtual catalog (photographs on pp. 38-39). The Palestinian amulets by Rabinowitz, an Israeli Jewish artist, raised questions about the essence of an artistic gesture, cultural appropriation, the construct of authenticity, appropriation of memory, and the line separating referencing from dispossessing. Rabinowitz's work refers not only to the amulets in Canaan's collection but also to fundamental questions of ownership, power, and artistic politics. The act in which Rabinowitz decided to engage not only recreated the original amulets but also their new context as catalog items. By also copying the labels the collection catalogers had added to the amulets, Rabinowitz gave the recreation a key aspect of the amulets' life: their new identity as sorted, catalogued, and political

▲ Left column: Amulets, Yeshayahu Rabinowitz, mixed media, 2014.

▲ Right column: Amulets from Tawfiq Canaan's collection. Cloth, leather, thread, metal.

▲ Left column: Amulets, Yeshayahu Rabinowitz, mixed media, 2014.

▲ Right column: Amulets from Tawfiq Canaan's collection. Cloth, leather, thread, metal.

objects. Rabinowitz's amulet copies are not forgeries; they are original and "authentic" works of art when displayed in an artistic context.

The amulets in the exhibition apparently lack magic potency. They are not intended to be worn for healing purposes but they do have referential and reflexive power in relation to the history of the Palestinian amulet and the politics of cultural appropriation. Their recreation also has political meaning: the presence of the amulets reinforces their absence, the absence of their users, and the absence of Canaan from the Hansen House Historical Exhibition.

In his book *Sincerity and Authenticity*, Lionel Trilling writes that, in the modern era, observers must be presented with examples of authenticity.[1] Rabinowitz's amulets compete with the virtual representations of Palestinian folklore appearing in Bir Zeit University's website. Which of the two is the more original representation (if such a thing exists at all)?

In recreating Canaan's amulets, Rabinowitz, Abu-Hussein, Bar-El, and perhaps we, the curators, too, do we present ourselves as illegitimate heirs or self-appointed conservators of Canaan's heritage? In the absence of the original or in its inaccessibility, the copy might be considered an artistic alternative not only as a reference to an absent original but also as a different original, a starting point for critical historiography and ethnography through art.

[1] Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 100.

Then somebody told them tha
re was a house near Jerusale

Heim: An Archival Film of the Moravian Church

Sala-Manca

Heim (Home), an archival film of the Moravian Church in Germany, documents the lives of patients living at the leprosarium in the early twentieth century. The 15-minute film was translated by Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel who also made it available to the public.

Heim is an unusual document about the daily life at the leprosarium and the lives of some of the dominant figures there, both nurses and patients. Using segments of various texts, most of which were taken from reports penned by the nursing staff, and historical photographs of other places (Jerusalem and Istanbul) and leprosaria (from films about Hansen's disease), the film tells a narratively coherent story. The nurses' reports, part of Moravian mission publications in 1889-1929, were originally published in English, then shortened, reworked, translated into Hebrew, and rewritten by Kaplan and Carmel. Actors lent their voices to the characters telling their stories in German, Swedish, and English.

Kaplan and Carmel's adapted texts contain no less historical truth than the nurses' narratives in their reports, or, more accurately, a different historical truth. "We took stories that were, for the most part, told only in separate reports," say the artists, "and paid no attention to their chronology. When watching the film, it's impossible to tell the order in which the stories occurred. But all the stories happened and were described in the reports. Of course, we had to shorten and cut a lot of material, but we didn't invent anything."

Kaplan and Carmel's statements reflect an effort to highlight the story's authenticity, supported by the use of archival materials perceived as original. The adaptation allows the artists to create a believable, coherent, and interesting narrative in the absence of any other documentary film about the hospital.

The actors' and editors' lack of professionalism—the logos appearing in the archival footage are not fully erased—exposes the fact that the film is not original, but paradoxically and inversely makes it into one of the only authentic documents about the hospital. The power of this authenticity was evident in the Hansen House management's desire to buy the film and screen it as part of the permanent exhibition about the former leper house, after having acquired the permission of Ruth Wexler, in charge of the historical exhibition, who is aware of the film's fictional and reflexive nature, to do so.

Heim as it sincerely reveals its fictional sources, it exposes its own insincerity. Its approach to history and the place it describes is poetic rather than scientific. The artists did not study the institution's history from an objective perspective, but rather they connected to the characters documented emotionally. In this historiographic interpretation, they create a film telling their own interpretation, one of the possible stories of personal histories that occurred at the hospital. In this sense, Heim is an original film and an authentic construct based on historical truths. The film leaves the traces of its making and editing evident to the viewers' eyes, nonetheless succeeding to present itself as a true and one of the most moving stories of the historiography of the place. In their decision to include this film as part of their historical exhibition, the Hansen House directors and the curator of the historical exhibition gave the film its imprimatur of authenticity. The film's presentation next to "original" artefacts undoubtedly helped lend it its sense of authenticity that visitors expect to encounter at the site.

▲ Heim. Stills from Film, Created by: Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel / Editor: Itai Onik / Mix:Nir Matreso. Voices: Selina Bador, Paulina Fogel, Simon Hofman, Gregory John, Mary Tatzlaf / Music: Paulina Fogel , single channel, sound, 15 min., 2014.

The Fragile Boundaries of Paradise: The Paradise Inn Resort at the Former Jerusalem Leprosarium[1]

Diego Rotman

> *The aspiration towards a utopian borderless space, a plan for a space without lines, was the dream of architect Rodriguez [pseudonym of João Delgado], who had signed his business card "Arch. Rodriguez – Plans without Lines: an architect on a tightrope" (from the curatorial text of "Borderlines," Drawing Biennale 5).*

> *As an artist, you already know: first, you should imagine the big lines, then the ensemble, then each part separately, and then you can understand the whole (Boris Schatz, The Rebuilt Jerusalem, Jerusalem: Bezalel, 1924).*

The utopia that Boris Schatz described in his novella *The Rebuilt Jerusalem: A Daydream*, written in 1918 during his exile in Safed, is supposed to be realized in the year 2018. Schatz envisioned a paradisiacal Jerusalem. The Jews will coexist in harmony with nature and with the Arab residents of the city, and, with the consent of the Arab minority, they will build the Third Temple, which will serve as a museum for Jewish art and Jewish science. In

[1] A longer version of this article was originally published in *Borderlines: Essays on Mapping and the Logic of Place*, eds. Ruthie Abeliovich and Edwin Seroussi, 160-173 (Warsaw: Sciendo, 2019), and is accessible at https://doi.org/10.2478/9783110623758. Thank you to the editors for allowing the article to be printed in this collection.

◂ "Paradise Inn - A Dream for Only One Person", plaster construction, art works, souvenirs, website, airb&b. Artists: Nir Yahalom, Sala-Manca, Itamar Mendes- Flohr, Oz Malul, Guy Yitzhaki, Shaul Zemach, Chen Cohen, Pessi Komar, Shiri Zinger, Lior Pinsky. Curators: Sala-Manca, 2015.

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https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110786279-004

this futuristic, utopian vision, the Land of Israel is a Biblical paradise where Jewish inhabitants wear Middle Eastern garb and have biblical names but lead modern lives.

In July 2015, a group of Jerusalem-based artists decided to conduct a dialogue with Schatz's novella, contextualizing and materializing his utopian and paradisiac Jerusalem.[2] They chose to do so not on the Temple Mount, where some traditions situate paradise[3] but in the Talbiyeh neighborhood, inside the walls of the former leper's home in Jerusalem, a nineteenth century hospital established outside the Old City's limits and surrounded, like the city of Jerusalem, by its own walls.

Since 2012, the Hansen House, a center for art, design, and technology, has existed in the compound of the Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe, which during its years of operation was an autonomous paradise for lepers. In its basement, the Hansen House hosts the Mamuta Art and Research Center run by the Sala-Manca Artists Collective.[4] The Hansen House consists of art galleries and a historical exhibition about the leprosarium on the main floor and, on the second floor, the Master's Degree programs in Urban Design, Design and Technology, and Conceptual Design of the Bezalel Art Academy, products of Schatz's partially fulfilled dream.

This essay deals with the physical, semantic, and metaphorical roles

[2] I want to thank Rachel Elior and Chaym Noy for our fruitful conversations and for providing the inspiration for this article.

[3] *The Book of Jubilees*, Noah (8:12) states: "The Garden of Eden is the Holy of Holies and the dwelling of the Lord." The Garden of Eden is in the place where the Third Temple is supposed to be rebuilt, where only the High Priest (ןהכה לודגה) may enter, once a year, on the Day of Atonement. See also Rachel Elior, "The Garden of Eden is the Holy of Holies," *Studies in Spirituality* 24 (2014): 64-118; and Rachel Elior (ed.), *A Garden Eastward in Eden* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2010), 5–59 (Hebrew).

[4] The members of the Sala-Manca Group are Lea Mauas and I.

of the temporary borders and structures constructed for the paradise,[5] which is surrounded by plasterboard walls, then by the walls of the former leprosarium, located less than a kilometer away from Suleiman the Magnificent's rebuilt walls of Jerusalem's Old City of Jerusalem[6] and less than three kilometers away from the separation wall.[7]

The Paradise Inn Resort

> *Paradise Inn, Talbiyeh, Jerusalem. A dream for only one person. Infinite stars and a real gate to paradise. Reserve your room at the former Lepers' home in Jerusalem, where any piece of land can become your temporary dwelling (from the Paradise Inn website)*

> *Paradise Inn is… a metaphor of differentiation and exclusivity… a luxurious paradise that originates from a public institution that was historically used to protect society from lepers and lepers from society. Paradise Inn dwells in the spirit of gentrification, inviting an artist to reside for free in the paradise for a month and a half. In return, the artist is expected to produce artwork for the comfort of future residents (from I Love Jerusalem Magazine [fake quotation of the curators]).*

[5] I was involved in the project as co-curator together with Lea Mauas (Sala-Manca Group) and also as an artist.

[6] The inscription commemorating the reconstruction of the walls says that Suleiman the Magnificent "decreed the construction of the wall, he who has protected the home of Islam with his might and main and wiped out the tyranny of idols with his power and strength, he whom alone God has enabled to enslave the necks of kings in countries (far and wide) and deservedly acquire the throne of the Caliphate, the Sultan son of the Sultan son of the Sultan son of the Sultan Suleyman". (http://www.imj.org.il/imagine/galleries/viewItemE.asp?case=7&itemNum=374383, accessed August 2015).

[7] Construction of the separation wall started in 2002 in order to "erect a physical barrier separating Israel and the West Bank with the declared objective of regulating the entry of Palestinians from the West Bank into Israel." See *The Separation Barrier* (1 January 2011), *btselem:* http://www.btselem.org/separation_barrier. Accessed 3 August 2015.

In the summer of 2015, a major part of the gardens of the historic, walled-off Jerusalem leprosarium became the setting for the construction of a temporal paradise, a summer camp for one single person, a metaphor of exclusiveness – the rebuilt (paradisiacal) Jerusalem of Boris Schatz.

A connection between the lepers' home and paradise exists widely. According to some traditions, based on the writings by the Byzantine historian Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos in his *Ecclesiasticae Historiae* (Church history), the Empress Eudocia, wife of the fourth-century Roman emperor Theodosius, founded an almshouse for 400 lepers in Phordisia. Phordisia is a variation of *foridish*, a word that comes from Persian and means "garden" (hence the origin of the Hebrew word *pardes*, "orchard"). This word, which refers to the tradition of the Garden of Eden, morphed into the Latin word *paradiso*, hence "paradise." The biblical scholar Józef Tadeusz Milik located the Phordisia leprosarium in the Sheikh-Bader area (today's Givat Ram), although the independent researcher Joe Edward Zias, in a less supported theory, located it in Herodium.[8] Zias based his argument on the fact that the Arabic name of Herodium is Jabal Foridish (Mt. Paradise), a name given to it by the Ta'amirhe Bedouin tribe.[9] According

[8] See: Joe E. Zias, "The Garden of Eden or the Free Hospice," *Teva vehaaretz* (1987): http://www.snunit.k12.il/heb_journals/aretz/296017.html (accessed September 2015), 296 (Hebrew).

[9] Yehuda Ziv, "'May his Place of Rest be in Gan Eden' – On Hordos' Orchards" *Mehkarei Yehuda veShomron* 18 (2008): 328. About other settlements whose name uses the word Foridish in its variations, see ibid., 327–342. About the connection between paradise and the lepers' colony, see, for example, Linda W. Greene, *Exile in Paradise: The Isolation of Hawaii's Leprosy Victims and Development of Kalaupapa Settlement*, 1865 *to the Present* (Denver: National Park Service, Pacific Northwest Planning Branch, 1985).

◂ "Front of the Hotel", Sala-Manca, interactive installation, plastic shutters with electronic opening, arduino, candies box, plaster and a door from the JesusHilfe hospital, 2015.

to Hanna Cotton, the toponym *pardesya* may have migrated or been extended to the west, so that Phordisia may be located in the area of Beit Hakerem (today's Ein Karem, a village southwest of Jerusalem).[10] Although the ancient location of the Phordisia leprosarium is unclear, evidently, a lepers' home was situated there, creating a clear semantic and suggestive connection between leprosarium and paradise.[11]

The paradise project, commissioned by the Hansen House,[12] was curated by the Sala-Manca group of artists, directors of the Mamuta Art and Research Center at the Hansen House. The project began with a series of actions:

- Selecting the site of paradise in the former leprosarium gardens with the consequent definition of its borders;
- Constructing temporary walls made of rough plasterboards painted in white, which constituted the factual appropriation and enclosing of the public area;
- Redefining the paradise site as The Paradise Inn Resort, a boutique hotel for only one person;
- Adding eight historical doors taken from the former hospital, seven of which could not be opened, leaving only one to be opened by the hotel guest;

[10] See Hannah Cotton, Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae A Multi-lingual Corpus of the Inscriptions from Alexander to Muhammad (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010); and Rod Edmond, Leprosy and Empire: A Medical and Cultural History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[11] The artists were somewhat familiar with Zias' connecting the leprosarium, paradise and Herodium, but they did not engage in further research.

[12] The commission entailed carrying out a summer project using electronic waste. The curators proposed changing the main topic by adding a series of works using electronic waste to their paradise project.

- Adding a large frontal, closed "window" made of interactive plastic shutters, making it possible to show the inside of paradise for eight seconds in exchange "for only three shekels."

The walls of the paradise site, constructed as a façade or as scenography, were actually delineating the boundaries of this contemporary paradise through a fragile temporary construction. Prohibiting visitors from entering the area created an uncomfortable feeling of exclusion, on the one hand; yet, it stimulated the visitors' curiosity and imagination, adding a symbolic and higher economic value to the closed garden, on the other hand.

In exact (and unplanned) contradistinction to Jerusalem's eight gates, of which seven gates are open and only one, the Gate of Mercy (שער הרחמים – the Golden Gate according to Christian tradition) – the gate through which the Messiah will enter according to Jewish tradition – remains closed, seven of the doors of the Paradise Inn were closed; only one door through which the guest could enter remained open. In order to accentuate the yearning toward the closed garden, the artists left some voyeuristic access points that enabled visitors to understand what they were missing.

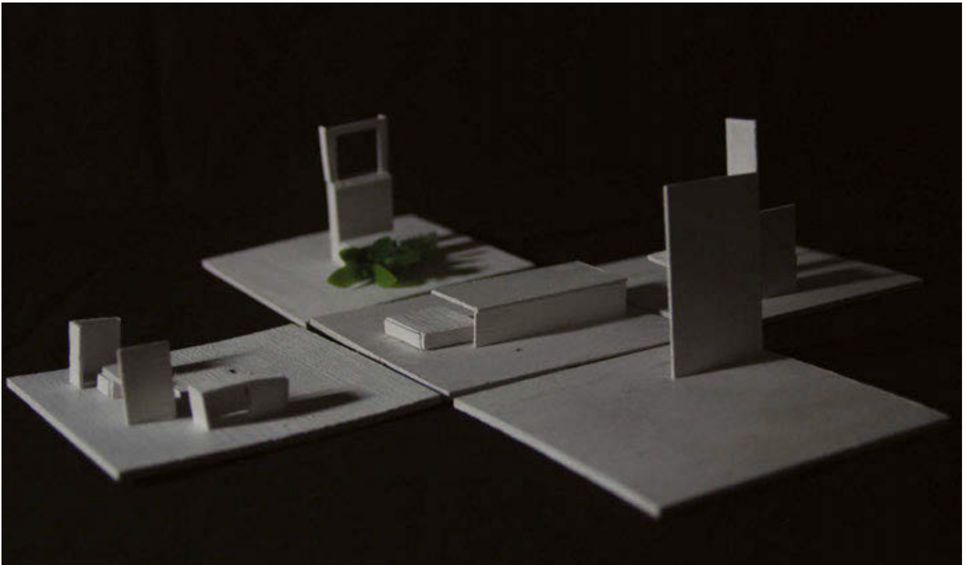
Lea Mauas and I, in another blurring of borderlines between producers and users, defined the project in the curatorial text as follows: "Paradise is built – a haven in the middle of the city, a white façade bounding a garden that has been expropriated from the public. In Paradise, only one human being at a time can experience the ideal and modern natural living, leaving the public with a sense of longing, allowing a sneak peek into a free and peaceful world, at an affordable price."[13]

The curatorial text also defined the undertaking as a critical architectural project in the context of the urban politics of Jerusalem:

In light of the policy of the city of Jerusalem to develop tourism and to use

[13] http://mamuta.org/?portfolio=paradise (accessed February 2022).

▲ "Silent Room n1", Chen Cohen, 2015, photo collage.



▲ "Room Kit", Pessi Komar, sculpture, 10X10X10 cm, 2015.

art and culture as a touristic tool, a group of local artists decided to be part of this new trend… In order to generate a new resource for tourism … they established the luxurious *Paradise Inn* on part of the lands of the former Jerusalem Lepers' Home at Hansen House … The project synthesizes new visionary ideas for a modern Jerusalem: a hotel for only one person, a personal paradise built in the exquisite Hansen House gardens.[14]

The Sala-Manca group planned the Paradise Inn borderlines or framing together with Nir Yahalom, who translated the abstract concept into a physical fragile border made of plasterboard. The interior infrastructure for the guest was a work by Itamar Mendes-Flohr, who was also the artist-in-residence invited to live in paradise for three months. Inviting him to create not only his ideal facilities but also new artworks on the walls of the paradise, adding new interpretations, interventions, and new points of voyeurism, the curators gave Mendes-Flohr the freedom to "just to be there," without requiring any completed products from him.

An observation post from above was an important part of the project. From the second floor of the Hansen House, one could watch all of paradise, describe its contours, and understand the framing of it and the relevance of the walls to the construction of the temporary, earthly version of the mythos, as in "Frame it – therefore it is."

A souvenir shop with works by Pessi Komar, Chen Cohen, and Shiri Singer was created as well, including music for the paradise elevator composed by Lior Pinsky. The Paradise Inn Resort website, which included all the necessary information about the hotel (attractions, size, and facilities), images, a reservations interface, and the collection of artworks of the Paradise Inn Resort, was Guy Yitzhaki's art project. Works by two guest artists supplemented Mendes-Flohr's interventions and Sala-Manca's

[14] Ibid.

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Mamuta

Paradise Inn

Jerusalem, Jerusalem District, Israel

Entire home/apt

1 Guest

1 Bedroom

1 Bed

Check In | Check Out

mm/dd/yyyy | mm/dd/yyyy

Guests

1 guest

Request to Book

You won't be charged yet

About this listing

Paradise Inn, Talbiyeh, Jerusalem.
A dream for only one person.
Infinite stars and a real gate to paradise.
Reserve your room at the former Lepers home.

Save to Wish List

shutters, the planned closed lobby, and seven closed doors. Oz Malul created a kinetic sculpture and pirate radio program broadcasting on the IDF's radio station Galgalatz and Shaul Zemach devised an interactive "forbidden flower" made of electronic waste.

Chaym Noy adopts a scholarly approach to the connection between the idea of paradise and modern tourism. He argues that in late modernity, the mass tourism industry has reproduced, monopolized, and mediated both symbolic paradisiacal images and specific paradisiacal spaces. Tourism has reinforced the longing for paradise while creating those longed-for spaces for consumption. The tourism industry, Noy asserts, has effected the institutionalization and commercialization of contemporary paradises via the uncanny and immensely profitable combination of two characteristic late-modern phenomena – mass communication (mainly commercials) and mass transportation. Noy notes that those paradisiacal touristic spots are defined and real geophysical spaces that combine dichotomies to the benefit of the tourism industry, which differentiates between "home" and "away," the natural and the artificial, here and there. Those places are always temporal dwellings and supervised areas.[15]

The Paradise Inn Resort is in direct dialogue with the paradisiac touristic destinations that Noy describes, with the difference that, unlike the mass tourism destinations, the Paradise Inn Resort serves one single person. It is an exclusive paradise, an island in the middle of the city where the artificiality is the border. The privatization of nature through the plasterboard creates an ironic reference to those paradisiac vacationscapes.

[15] Chaym Noy, "Touristic Paradises: A Critical Reading of Modern Vacationscapes," in *A Garden Eastward in Eden*, ed. R. Elior, 395-409 (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2010), 403-404 (Hebrew).

◂ Paradise Inn page at the Airb&b website.

An Iron Curtain Made of Plasterboard

"גן עדן הוא בין החלוף והיא - החלוף" ("חנוך", פרק ב', פסוק ה')

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom He had formed. And from the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that was pleasing to the sight and good for food, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden… The Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden
(Genesis 2:8–15).

The Paradise Inn proposes defining an apparently arbitrary piece of the public realm as a private paradise. The project did so through delimiting a boundary, constructing a border between the everyday and the mythical, between reality and art, between the normal and abnormal. One may interpret this separation fence as a metaphorical system constructed to frame power relations based on politics of differentiation. The Paradise Inn itself constitutes a border, a definition, an obstruction, a line of division, or, to quote Irit Rogoff's reflections on borders, "either a mode of containment or a final barrier leading up to ultimate liberation and freedom … the border is the line that needs to be crossed to a safe haven away from the tyranny of evil."[16]

Only one person could cross the boundaries of the Paradise Inn. The first (and last) guest of paradise was a commissioned artist-in-residence, who may be followed by potential guests eager to pay the considerable amount of $1,500 a night to enjoy the unique experience of sleeping in the gardens of the former leprosarium, rebaptized or rebirthed as paradise. This border, created by plasterboard, represents a physical attempt to demarcate ownership, to delineate a parallel juridical sphere, to create what Hakim Bay

[16] Irit Rogoff, *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 2000), 112.

called a "temporary autonomous zone" for selected guests, a metonymia of the leprosarium itself.

In his influential book *The Urban Revolution,* Henri Lefebvre noted, "Space and the politics of space 'express' social relationships but react against them."[17] In this sense, the demarcation of the land is an attempt to express, construct, and influence those social relations. In those selected spaces, buildings are footnotes, comments on social relations, or, according to Kim Dovey, part of an environment that frames power relations.[18] Drawing on Dovey, Sara Fregonese, and Adam Ramadan argue that hotels become "evident mediators of state power."[19]

The Paradise Inn was a fragile and temporary structure that attempted to create a critical discourse, a living parody of the state power, a revisit to Schatz's utopia, marking a border within a border within a border. The Paradise Inn is a proposal for a non-collective life, a critical monument to the idea of exclusion and exclusiveness. It is not a real building but a site of demarcation, a process of differentiation, an iron curtain made of plasterboard, an island of fantasy.

The public had no real, direct access to paradise; the hotel walls were the mediators. The main attraction for anyone who did not want to invest time and money was a horrible, cheap white façade, the border of everyday life, designed to create the idea of a forbidden paradise on the other side of the wall.

The Paradise Inn could be perceived as a parody of a tourist attraction. The Paradise Inn was not a "beautiful" or "aesthetic" art work. It was rude,

[17] Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, translated by R. Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 15.

[18] Kim Dovey, *Framing Places: Mediating Power in Built Form* (London: Routledge, 1999), 1–6.

[19] Adam Ramadan & Sara Fregonese, "Hotel Geopolitics: A Research Agenda," *Geopolitics* 20/4 (2015): 793–813.

▲ “Snake from Paradise”, Itamar Mendes-Flohr, kinetic Sculpture, wood, wire and engine, 2015.

rough, shoddy, and inelegant, an aggressive intervention in the idyllic garden of Jerusalem's intimidating former leprosarium. The white building was disturbing: it was an architectural intrusion of Jerusalem's “other” – the “white city” of Tel Aviv – into the stone-based architecture of German Jerusalem. The art critic Galia Yahav, who criticized the artists' interventions on the walls, referred to the white walls as the main artistic statement of the project. Focusing on the project as a comment on the relations between the artists and the institution supporting the project, she wrote in the *Haaretz* daily: “If you asked for an artist-in-residency program? you got a settlement. If you asked for a recycling project of electronic waste? you got faltering junk. If you asked for the Third Temple? you got hipsters. If you asked for paradise? you got hell.”[20]

[20] Galia Yahav, “The ‘Paradise Inn’ Hotel in Jerusalem is a Parody on the Trend of Art-Hotels,” *Haaretz* (24 September 2015).

Yahav ended her article by referring to the paradise's walls: "The plasterboard walls are really stuck in the area, blocking visibility. They are a real aesthetic disruption. Frustration results from the impossibility of entering, seeing, touring it appropriately. Through their crude illustration, those walls clearly communicate that walls are the original sin."[21] The Paradise Inn's walls created the feeling of a Potemkin Village, a façade hiding nothing, but, actually, those walls transformed this "nothing," this "nice garden," into the Garden of Eden. They were the medium for creating a feeling of longing, of being on the other side of the "real thing."

At the Venice Biennale, Santiago Sierra (or, more precisely, a group of Italian workers), in "Wall Enclosing a Space," built a brick wall from the floor to the ceiling parallel to the entrance of the Spanish Pavilion. The only

[21] Ibid.

visitors allowed to enter and visit the work were Spaniards with identity cards, passports, or other legal means of identification. Sierra's work conveyed the idea of covering and revealing to selected people the process of hiding their national representative space in the international arena, converting the Spanish people into the privileged visitor able to testify to a national vacuum hidden from the rest of the world. Unlike Sierra's work, everyone could potentially enter and visit the Paradise Inn; for a certain amount of money, everyone, regardless of race, color, or gender, could be a temporary citizen of paradise. No one, however, decided to pay the bill and cross the border into this parody of a capitalist construction of temporary tourism, which anyone with money could enter and spend a night alone in paradise.

The plasterboard walls were the point of contact between the mythological Eden and the Israeli reality, between the commissioned space of the artist-in-residence and the visitor's curiosity, the platform for a hypothetical dialogue, for an anti-voyeuristic discourse. The hole in the wall created by Mendes-Flohr represented the most literal expression of this anti-voyeurism: neither an entrance nor a means of viewing a slice of paradise, it was a mirror reflecting the voyeur's own eye. An interactive installation of the Sala-Manca group merchandised the view of paradise: three shekels entitled you to eight seconds for viewing the naked paradise, the imprisoned landscape.

Only the elected artist, with his faux magnetic keycard (it was made of wood), was allowed to enter and exit paradise, to sleep in the "infinite stars" hotel, where the only part missing was the symbolic roof. There was no border between hotel and heaven; the Paradise Inn had a direct connection to it. The only contemporary Enoch was the invited artist. During his stay, Mendes-Flohr added some interventions to the walls: a moving snake made from a branch of one of the paradise's trees; a pipe taking out the dirty water from the Paradise resident's kitchen and bringing it back purified (or contaminated); the above-mentioned hole reflecting the visitor's eye; and a camera obscura-like

device providing a blurred, upside-down view of Eden. The wall of paradise, like the skin of a leper, was slowly being affected, weakened, disturbed, and threatened. The artist was its destructive disease or its nurse, the visitors the spectators of an already anticipated death. The paradise, as well as the souls of the lepers, remained invisible, inaccessible to the curious morbid gazes.

The democratization of paradise through capitalism did not bear fruits. No guest wanted to pay the whole price. One of the main questions the project raised was: what were the people missing (if they missed anything at all)? Did the artists want guests at all? Why did they stay outside? The colloquium organized for the closing of the Paradise Inn, with the participation of Rachel Elior and Chaym Noy, provided answers. Itamar Mendes-Flohr, the single and last witness, responded to questions about his experience of living there for the past three months. A day before his expulsion from the paradisiac territory, a day before his entire world was about to be dismantled, he answered with a sincere tone and a smile: "I was in paradise."

The dismantling of the Paradise Inn started the next day. The doors and the plastic shutters no longer barred access. The fragile borders of paradise fell down. In the Facebook page, the curators posted a photo of the front wall of the Paradise Inn without windows and doors, and they added the following note: "The Gates of Paradise have been breached and are open to all, but there is no sense now. Now the [great] flood."

Since the fall of the plasterboard walls, there is no Paradise (Inn). Nevertheless, perhaps ironically, in this very setting of the Leprosarium Jesus Hilfe/Hansen House, a new choir conducted by Noam Enbar has been established: The Great Gehenna Choir, blurring rethorically or sonorically the fragile boundaries between (collective) Hell and (individual) Paradise.

Toward an Updated Ethnographic Questionnaire on Israeli Time

Sala-Manca

As part of the processes of researching the connection between ethnography and contemporary art (some of which was presented in "The Ethnographic Department" exhibit in the Museum of the Contemporary at the Mamuta Center in Hansen House in 2014), we have composed a questionnaire on the Israeli sound regime.

Similar to a Pavlov experiment, the regime in Israel has succeeded in shaping unique local behavioral patterns, distinguishing between membership groups, evoking emotions, and even creating a new local tradition—all by means of sound.

The place of sound as a central means for the individual's equilibrium is known to all. The social use of sound as a means for shaping and control is the result of new technologies developed in the past century, and draws inspiration from older traditions of using sound for social policing during military or religious ceremonies.

In issue No. 18 of the online art magazine *Maarav*[1] (What does Public Space do?), we have chosen to distribute the ethnographic questionnaire on "Israeli Time". Our questionnaire expands or updates the ethnographic questionnaire composed by Sh. An-sky in Eastern Europe a hundred years ago during an ethnographic expedition financed by Baron Günzburg.[2] Members of the expedition headed

[1] http://maarav.org.il/english/2016/05/02/toward-an-updated-ethnographic-questionnaire-on-israeli-time-sala-manca-group/ (accessed February 2022)

[2] See Nathaniel Deutsch. *The Jewish Dark Continent: Life and Death in the Russian Pale of Settlement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

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https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110786279-005

by An-sky composed a questionnaire comprising 2087 questions pertaining to the life of Jews from birth to death, special customs, local traditions, the cycle of the Jewish year, and more. The expedition's work was terminated with the outbreak of World War I on 28 July 1914.

The following questions expand the questionnaire with ethnographic questions associated with the Israeli sound regime, and we ask readers to become information scientists and provide their testimony in order to expand our understanding of sound policing.

To complete the questionnaire, visit the following link:

https://docs.google.com/a/digitalartlab.org.il/forms/d/1MHsOGzdLqvBn1z8KOebVmvGr9xZg0iWpM7L5V1l_YuQ/viewform

Thank you for participating,

Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman

Section 5.4 | Israeli Time: Sirens

Name Rochel

Age 42

Place of residence Jerusalem

Country of Birth USA

1. What is the difference between a Shabbat siren and a genuine alarm, a siren in time of emergency or war?

Shabbat siren indicates that Shabbat is about to start. The emergency alert is a continous sound.

2. How do you feel when you hear the Remembrance Day siren?

A sense of sadness that we are still remembering the deaths of young soldiers. Not to say that we would not need an army but some deaths might have been avoided if we lived in a different political situation.

3. How do you feel when you hear the Holocaust Remembrance Day siren?

Grateful that we live in a country that makes note of what happened and keeps history alive.

4. How do you feel when you hear the Shabbat siren?

Nothing special.

5. How do you feel when you hear a genuine alarm?

A little worried until I know the reason

6. When was the last time you heard a siren or alarm?

Gulf war

7. What did you do when you heard it?

Turned the TV on to see what was the reason and what had to be done -

8. Do you know any stories, jokes, or sayings about sirens or alarms? Tell them.

No, I probably heard but I don't remember -

9. What do you tell your children in cases of a genuine alarm?

When they were young just to relax and sit with each other. If they were very young I would hold them

10. What do you tell your children about the Remembrance Day siren?

How do they respond or what questions do they ask?

Most explanations were in school. We just made some points a little clearer if necessary -

11. Do you use any other means to be aware of a particular situation (Shabbat, Remembrance Day, Holocaust Remembrance Day, war)? Describe them.

Just Shabbat - It's usually a family night which I love -

12. Can you perform the siren?

Ridiculous - No.

13. Do you remember the first time? What are your memories of that time?

I don't think I ever performed as a siren -

14. Do you remember the last time? What are your memories of that time?

No answer

15. What happens to your body (and mind) at the moment a siren is sounded for: (a) Shabbat; (b) Remembrance Day; (c) Holocaust Remembrance Day; (d) state of emergency or war?

A) Happiness and relaxation — B) SAD C) I realize we are in a current situation outside Israel of a resurgence of antisemitism — D) I want to know the reason.

16. If we heard a siren right now, what would you do?

Listen to the radio to try to understand why.

17. What would you do if you were outside? Or in the bathroom?

Outside → look for shelter
Bathroom → finish what I was doing and go to listen to the radio

18. What does the sound of a siren symbolize for you or remind you of?

Not much —

19. Have you heard similar sounds in other countries? What did you feel?

No —

20. Are you familiar with the myth of Odysseus and his attitude toward the Siren? Provide details.

If I remember correctly, the sirens had a musical sound. Odysseus was able to ignore them and survive —

21. Do you need sirens? If so, which ones? Explain why.

Fire, Police, Ambulance and Emergency

22. How do you differentiate between the different types of alarms/sirens?

According to the sound

23. What are your thoughts on how the various sirens affect: (a) Palestinians; (b) foreign workers; (c) Israeli Jews; (d) non-Israeli Jews; (e) foreign tourists; (f) animals; (g) children; (h) politicians; (i) religious figures; (j) police officers; (k) soldiers.

A) I believe they are also concerned but also fearful that may be put in a lockdown – Foreign workers & tourists are probably confused –

24. Is there a difference in the behavior of men and women with regard to sirens? Explain.

Not in my opinion

25. When the siren is sounded on Remembrance Day, do you stand still? If there are people who do not stand still, what do you think about them?

I do stand still. I am annoyed about people walking and not standing – I'm not putting Palestinians in this equation

26. When the siren is sounded on Holocaust Remembrance Day, do you stand still? If there are people who do not stand still, what do you think about them?

As above – I do stand still and feel the same as above –

27. On Saturday, when the Shabbat siren is sounded what are your physical actions?

Nothing –

28. What are your physical actions at the sound of a genuine alarm?

An uneasy feel in the pit of my stomach –

ISRAEL SIRENS

שואה - 10 ש״ח
יום הזכרון - 8 ש״ח
שבת - 5 ש״ח
12 ש״ח

Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Spirit Possessions and Demons, Angels and Maggidim[1]

Rachel Elior and Yoram Bilu[2]

The religious, artistic, and medical evidence of traditional societies amply document the preoccupation with strange voices from the beyond – voices that make themselves known to people in fluid states of consciousness defined as either ecstasy or mental illness, manifestations of great piety or possession, revelations or nightmares, always associated with entities beyond the grasp of the physical.

The evidence presented in these documents addresses the ritual methods communities use to confront liminal situations that threaten the social order, the hermeneutic and therapeutic setting provided in religious, social, and medical contexts, and the cultural patterns that change throughout history.

Other people have perceived these strange voices, audible to the listeners' spirits or wrenched from human beings under duress, as abnormal sounds representing unseen entities in possession of the speakers' bodies. In different cultures, these voices have been understood as coming from external sources, located in either the higher or lower worlds, which could

[1] A dybbuk is spirit possession in the Jewish tradition; a Maggid is an angelic mentor, or a divine voice speaking in a person's spirit.

[2] This essay is a reworking and expansion of the introduction to "Between Worlds: Spirits and Demons, Heavenly Voices and Dybbuks," written by the authors of this essay, to the second part of the book *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk: Dreams and Dybbuks Among Jews and Gentiles* (Hebrew), eds. R. Elior, Y. Bilu, Y. Zackowitz, and A. Shinan, (Jerusalem: Scholion—The Center for Multidisciplinary Research Center for Jewish Studies, Magnes Press, 2013), 217-234.

◂ "Tanz!", Carmel Bar and Yaara Bar, still from performance, 2014.

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seize control of human beings, animate them, and speak through them.[3] These entities, all distinguished by the fact that they cross boundaries and dissolve solid identities, have been interpreted as being the sounds of ghosts belonging to the dead, or as being the voices of intangible spirits or demons, or even as sought-after sounds from higher worlds manifested during the listeners' heights of religious fervor.

The voices have been recognized, both by those making them and those listening to them, as encounters with entities operating in the wide gulf between heightened sanctity, on the one hand, and spirit possession and madness, on the other. Spirit possession refers to the possibility that some supernatural force acquires control of a living body, displaces that person's usual identity, and disrupts his or her normal behavior. The survey in this essay will investigate the social construct and cultural understanding of these encounters, called trances or dissociative states. The concept of spirit possession encompasses the full range of these states, which go by different names in various traditional societies around the world.

In different cultures and societies, these unseen entities define the shifting boundary between normal and abnormal, sanity and madness, and sacred and profane. However, their character and behavioral and experiential manifestations change from one culture to another depending on the meaning attributed to them in different socio-religious and historical contexts. These contexts move on a scale where possession by malevolent spirits represents the negative end and religious ecstasy

[3] Erika Bourguignon (ed.), *Religion, Altered States of Consciousness and Social Change* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press 1973); idem, *Possession* (San Francisco: Chandler & Sharp, 1976); Colleen A. Ward, "Possession and Exorcism in Magic Religious Context," in C.A. Ward (ed.), *Altered States of Consciousness and Mental health: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Newbury Park, California: Sage, 1989).

represents the positive end. Their cultural parallels: evil spirits and harmful demons control people against their wishes, manipulate them, and force them to behave in strange and awful ways, causing them terrible suffering and arousing horror in spectators. By contrast, encounters with entities that are part of the divine entourage, whose voices generate exalted, mystical experiences, which in certain cultures even give rise to ceremonies soliciting their presence.

The social, religious, and cultural formation and construing of these phenomena, some of which will be discussed below in different historical contexts, have yielded a rich literature and dramatic, ceremonial events, created profound interpretations and varied systems of healing and therapy, and exposed fascinating aspects of the human experience in its relation with the supernatural and its effect on this world.

A dybbuk, the Jewish version of spirit possession, manifests as an occurrence in which the spirit of a person who died prematurely – a person deemed so sinful that even entrance to hell is denied to him or her – enters the body of a living person. The prematurely departed is thus left suspended between the two worlds, persecuted and tormented by malicious angels. The spirit enters the body of its victim to find refuge from its tormentors, where it usurps the body's previous identity, from now on controlling that body. The community in which this occurs perceives the dybbuk as a disease, not unlike many other types of spirit possessions defined as culturally dependent illnesses.[4]

However, as noted above, society did not automatically label states of spirit possession as pathological. Society's assessment of them as positive or negative depended on the moral status of the penetrating entity, the

[4] Jeffrey H. Chajes, *Between Worlds: Dybbuks, Exorcists and Early Modern Judaism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Matt Goldish (ed.), *Spirit Possession in Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003).

content of the message, and the social status of the person penetrated. On the one hand, the revelation of entities could be seen as a gift of grace and inspiration or ecstasy, with the possessed having been chosen for being in communion with God and devoted to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, the source of the possession might be the nether worlds, touching on the chaotic sphere of ritual impurity and death, so that its expression in the body and spirit of a human being could be understood as a disturbance and curse, punishment and disease, hysteria, dissociation, or madness.

These entities, whose essence has always been characterized by a traversing of worlds and spheres, defiance of traditional categories, and disruption of identities or sexual ambiguity, have been given many names, including dybbuk, evil spirit, demon, the spirit of impurity; dybbuk from the external worlds, Aslai,[5] Zar,[6] Kula, Asmadeus, Markoob, Daemon, Demon, Satan, and Sheitan.[7] The encounter with forces originating in the sphere of the holy and the eternity of life, which are perceived by the human spirit as distinct voices sometimes heard by others too, are labeled as communion with the Holy Spirit, devotion to God, speaking with the Holy Spirit, being

[5] Aslai is the illness of spirit possession known to the Jews of southern Morocco. It was understood to be the result of a demon penetrating the human body. See Yoram Bilu, "Aslai, Dybbuk, Zar: Cultural Difference and Historical Continuity of Possession Illnesses in Jewish Communities" (Hebrew), *Pe'amim* No. 85 (2000): 138-141.

[6] For a parallel phenomenon among the Jews of Ethiopia, understood as resulting from the penetration of a Zar – a spirit that is neither a demon nor the spirit of someone dead – into the body of the possessed, see Eliezer Witztum and Nimrod Garisaro, "Possession by Zar Spirit in the Community of Ethiopian Immigrants in Israel" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk: Dreams and Dybbuks Among Jews and Gentiles,* eds. Rachel Elir, Yoram Bilu, Yair Zakovitch, and Avigdor Shinan (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2013), 413-431; for more on the Zar, see also Bilu "Aslai, Dybbuk, Zar."

[7] For Markoob, Daemon, and Sheitan, see Elian Alkarinawi, "Possession Illnesses in Arab-Bedouin Society" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 432-444.

◂ "Foreign Root", Shira Borer, still from performance, 2014.

chosen, speaking with the Shekhina, the revelation of a Maggid (see note 1), an angel, or Elijah.[8]

The negative states of spirit possession – such as the Jewish dybbuk, satanic possession in Christianity, and demonic possession in Islam – may be conceptualized as cultural idioms that provide expression for private distress but attributed to supernatural forces, expropriating the dybbuk-possessed from normal consciousness and the community's routine conduct, disrupting control of the body and soul, and blurring boundaries and identities. Such an illness is treated with healing of a religious nature, using an established ritual structure that contains the cultural shape of states of distress and reaffirms the traditional therapeutic ways, their efficacy and significance.[9]

The source for the forces and entities from the world of spirits and demons, on the one hand, and the world of angels and the Holy Spirit, on the other, is to be found in antiquity. They were first created in the world of the Jewish mystics who possessed secret lore and magic and were known as the Merkava mystics ("chariot mystics") and "the

[8] These phenomena are extensively documented in the following: *Maggid Meisharim: The Mystical Diary of Rabbi Yosef Karo* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem: 1960); *The Book of Visions: The Diary of Rabbi Haim Vitale* (Hebrew), Moshe Firestein edition, (Jerusalem: 2006); and *The Letters of Moshe Haim Luzzato and His Contemporaries* (Hebrew), Shimon Ginzburg edition, (Tel Aviv: 1937). For more on the historical and cultural context, see Raphael Zvi Werblovsky, *Rabbi Yosef Karo: Halakhist and Kabbalist* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem: 1996); Rachel Elior, "Joseph Karo and Israel Ba'al Shem Tov: Mystical Metamorphosis - Kabbalistic Inspiration, Spiritual Internalization", *Studies in Spirituality*, Volume 17 (2007): 267-319.

[9] Yoram Bilu, "The Dybbuk in Judaism: Mental Disturbance as Cultural Resource" (Hebrew), *Jerusalem Studies of Jewish Thought* 2/4 (1983): 529-563. For historical background of medical treatment of possession as mental illness, see Carlos E. Forcén and Fernando E. Forcén, "Demonic Possessions and Mental Illness: Discussion of Selected Cases in Late Medieval Hagiographical Literature," *Early Science and Medicine* 19 (2014): 258-79.

secret masters" at the end of the age of antiquity and in the centuries immediately following the destruction of the Second Temple. Their ideas were transmitted to the Jewish sages and the fathers of the early church, and to the religious reality of the masters of the Koran and its interpreters.

The existence of these forces was acknowledged throughout the Middle Ages and into early modernity in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim worlds as the explanation for the full range of phenomena associated with breaking the boundaries of concrete existence and breaching the sphere of the normal.

The dybbuk in Jewish culture – most cases of which involved the penetration of the spirit of a deceased male into a woman's living body, at time quite explicitly through her genitals – is comparable to forced sexual penetration, as is made clear by the dybbuk stories collected and edited by Gedalyah Nigal.[10]

The dybbuk is often a manifestation of private distress of a clearly gendered nature of someone who has been prevented from raising her voice about what is happening against her will in the private domain. In the traditional patriarchal Jewish culture, arranged marriages were the norm. These marriages were arranged by the parents or their proxies for very young girls and boys and involved forced sex as in be'ilat mitzvah,[11]

[10] Gedalyah Nigal, *Dybbuk Stories in Jewish Literature* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1983). See book index, 292-295, entries for married woman, prostitution, fornication, adultery, marriage, wedding, bridal canopy, and arranged marriage. Also see Bilu, "The Dybbuk in Judaism,"533-534.

[11] The first time a couple has sexual relations after marriage; unlike other occasions in which a husband must withdraw and not complete the sex act should his wife realize she has started to bleed, this time – even though the bride bleeds as she is having marital relations for the first time – the husband is not obligated to withdraw and may continue until he climaxes in her

▲ "Between Two Worlds", Li Lorian and Adam Yodfat, still from performance, 2014.

incestuous relations, and the relations prevalent between masters and females servants.[12]

In this cultural tradition, the voice of the dybbuk usually issued from the mouths of women.[13] Without detracting from the validity of this explanation, which focuses on the traumatic aspects of forced sexuality, the dybbuk was also likely to serve as a vehicle for expressing sexual desires and fantasies that couldn't be realized in a traditional society with a rigid moral code that was particularly repressive towards women. The community was required to resolve this disturbance/illness, which disrupted the patriarchal social order, usually occurring in the bodies and minds of socially marginal women around the time of a forced arranged marriage and wedding. The solution was partly effected by an exorcism of the dybbuk, whose public function was to preserve the existing social order and to reaffirm it. The ritual, usually taking place in

[12] For arranged marriages, see Yaakov Katz, "Marriage and Married Life at the End of the Middle Ages" (Hebrew), *Zion* Vol. 10 (1944): 21-54; Yaakov Goldberg, *Marriages of Polish Jewry in the Eighteenth Century* (Hebrew), trans. to Hebrew by Tzofiya Lasman (Jerusalem: The Jewish Society of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 1999), 171-216; David Biale, *Eros and the Jews*: *From Biblical Israel to Contemporary America* (New York: Basic Books 1992), 64-65, 127-128 ; cf. David C. Kraemer (ed.), *The Jewish Family: Metaphor and Memory*, (New York, 1989); for forced sexuality in the Jewish community, see Israel Bartal and Yeshayahu Gafni (eds.), *Eros, Marriage Vows, and Restrictions: Sexuality and Family in History* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 1998); for marriage age in the ancient Jewish tradition, see Adiel Shermer, *Male and Female Did He Create Them: Marriage at the End of the Second Temple Period and in Mishnaic and Talmudic Times* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 2004).

[13] Rachel Elior, "The Dybbuk: Between the Revealed and the Hidden Worlds – Speaking Voices, Silent Worlds, and Silenced Voices" (Hebrew), in *The Path of the Spirit: The Eliezer Schweid Jubilee* vol. 2, ed. Yehoyada Amir (Jerusalem, 2005), 499-536. For sexual coercion related to the dybbuk and its coerced penetration by a dead spirit of a living body through the genitals, see ibid., 509-513, and Bilu, "The Dybbuk in Judaism," 540-542, 545. For English translation, see: Rachel Elior, *Dybbuks and Jewish Women in Social History, Mysticism and Folklore,* (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, NewYork: Lambda Publishers 2008). [Translated from the Hebrew by Joel Linsider].

the sanctified space of the synagogue and conducted by representatives of the male hegemony, standing for the sanctified normative authority, was designed to reinforce the community's values and validate them by performing an action on the passive body the dybbuk-possessed.

The diagnosis of a man or woman as possessed by a dybbuk, demon, evil spirit, or Satan provided a label and meaning for human distress using familiar cultural idioms and traditional religious concepts. The diagnosis also paved the way to healing and reintegration into society by means of the power of the religious ritual where the community leadership had formulated its rules, carried it out in the sanctified space, and transcribed its contents as part of a religious, moral, mystical drama designed to generate moral lessons and a process of communal soul searching. This was effected by pointing to the threatening presence of the world of the dead in the dybbuk's speech, demonstrating the bitter fate of the sinners punished after death. The rabbi transcribing the dybbuk's words often recounted the dybbuk's confession of a great sin that had occurred in the private domain and was now revealed in public, and the heavy penalty decreed in the world of the dead on the sinner who had imagined he could elude judgement and punishment in the world of the living.

The various revelations of the boundary-crossing entities had two expressions: the hearing of a strange voice in a familiar body, and extraordinary, uncontrollable physical behaviors that somehow blurred the boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead.[14]

[14] Similarly, someone possessed by devotion and in communion with God who hears voices from the upper worlds or is possessed by a revelation of the Holy Spirit is sometimes described as a seized, distorted body. This is evident from R. Israel Baal Shem Tov's "ascent of the soul" as described by his followers' testimony: "He stiffened and started making dreadful motions; his body bent backwards so far that his head was at his knees… His eyes bulged and his voice made the sounds of a bull being slaughtered," in *Shivhei Habesht*, Avraham Rubinstein edition, Jerusalem, 1992, 92.

These behaviors included epileptic-like falls and twitches, foul language and speaking in tongues, verbal and physical aggression, and uninhibited actions, such as tearing of clothing, uttering blasphemous words, and crossing forbidden boundaries. Such violations of all that is proper required a ritual designed to reestablish the normative social order, draw clear boundaries, and restore the order that was disrupted.

Anthropologist Mary Douglas made an instructive comment regarding the meaning of the phrase "disorder of the mind" manifested in dreams and in attacks of madness, spirit possessions and dybbuks, and the significance of the ritual designed to restore order:

> Disorder by implication is unlimited, no pattern has been realized in it, but its potential for patterning is indefinite… We recognize that it is destructive to existing patterns; also, that it has potentiality. It symbolizes both danger and power. Ritual recognizes the potency of disorder. In the disorder of the mind, in dreams, faints and frenzies, ritual expects to find powers and truths, which cannot be reached by conscious effort.[15]

Douglas's claim is apposite to the entire range of possession states: disordering demons and impure spirits coming from the nether world, the world of the dead underground, on the one hand, and boundary-breaking angels, Maggids, and holy spirits coming from the upper world, the world of eternal life, on the other. The former were considered to be doing the bidding of Satan, while the latter were doing the bidding of God. These entities, always seen as bearing hidden, horizon-expanding knowledge or knowledge threatening the existing order, were an inseparable part of the daily human experience and the conventional interpretive system charged with explaining these extraordinary experiential and behavioral situations

[15] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo*, (New York: Routledge, 1966), 117-140.

▲ "The Shining - radio play for talking lights", Josef Sprinzak, still from performance, 2014.

since antiquity. That is clearly evidently from the world of the Biblical text, the Septuagint, and the Qumran scrolls, the Apocrypha, the writings of Josephus, the New Testament, the Hekhalot literature, and Sepher Harazim.[16]

In his study of folktales,[17] Eli Yasif notes that the Jewish population at large believed in demons and spirits, witches and sorcerers, and other supernatural phenomena, and that these beliefs were extensively reflected in the Talmud and Midrash. The word "spirits" used in Talmudic literature refers to demonic entities and is usually paired with "demons," as in "demons and spirits." These are assumed to exist in tandem with natural human reality, just as the souls of the dead, which are assumed to exist in some sort of lifeform after death, and are imbued with hidden knowledge "heard behind the curtain" that could, under certain circumstances, be perceived by living people. The encounters between the worlds, described in the Biblical text (including the non-canonical books), folktales, and the sages' stories, teach us the very great extent to which demons and spirits were an inseparable part of the daily human experience in the era of the sages and in the Middle Ages, as well as the profound ambivalence

[16] For more about the world of angels and the world of demons, see Efraim Elimelech Urbach, *The Sages, Their Concepts and Beliefs*, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979) 81-160; Rachel Elior, "Mysticism, Magic, and Angelology: The Angel Doctrine in the Hekhalot Literature" (Hebrew), in *Offering to Sarah: Studies in Jewish Philosophy and Kabbalah*, Moshe Idel et al (eds.), (Jerusalem, 1994), 15-56; Esther Eshel, "The Belief in Demons in Eretz Yisrael in Second Temple Times" (Hebrew), PhD diss. (Hebrew University, 1999); Gershom Scholem, *Devils, Demons and Souls: Essays on Demonology* (Hebrew), ed. Esther Liebes, (Jerusalem, 2004); Gideon Bohak, *Ancient Jewish Magic: A History,* (Cambridge 2008); Yuval Harari, *Ancient Jewish Sorcery: Research, Method, and Source* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 2010); Filip Vukosavović (ed.), *All Angels and Demons, Jewish Magic Through the Ages* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem, 2010). For the tradition of the dybbuk in antiquity and dybbuk exorcism in the New Testament, see Yair Zakovitch, "The Legion of Demons in the Herds of Swine" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 235-250.

[17] Eli Yasif, *The Hebrew Folktale* (Hebrew), (Jerusalem: 1994), 161.

with which the sages viewed this demonic world. That view was also linked to the opinion that was prevalent in all cultures from the time of antiquity until the modern era, according to which disorders of the mind and mental disturbances of various sorts were evidence of an invasion and penetration by demons and spirits into the human body. Those who took this view were aware of the necessity of expelling these invaders and silencing the subversive and unwanted voices, and they acknowledged the importance of exorcists.

Among the exorcists revered in antiquity were the Jewish patriarch Abraham who expelled a ru'ah bisha ("evil spirit") that had seized Pharaoh, as related in the Apocryphal Scroll to the Book of Genesis found at Qumran; Tobias Ben Tobit, who expelled the demon Asmadeus that had seized Sarah Bat Reuel in the Book of Tobit; and King Solomon, who was known as the first to possess the knowledge needed to expel demons and the first to write the imprecations with the power to exorcise the evil spirits.[18] Josephus Flavius, who cited this tradition regarding King Solomon, also wrote about the exorcism of an evil spirit that he personally witnessed at the end of the first century of the common era.[19] Several decades earlier, Jesus was also known as an exorcist of demons, as told in the New Testament.[20]

Dybbuk exorcisms linked to individuals of historic or literary value raise several questions: What is the significance of hearing the strange voice of a demon coming out of a familiar body in the world of the exorcist? What is the function of the "dybbuk from the external worlds" in elevating the figure of the exorcist and presenting him as the one who establishes the appropriate social order? What role do spirits and demons, on the one

[18] *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 8, lines 42-45, Hebrew edition.

[19] Ibid., lines 46-48.

[20] Zakovitch, "The Legion of Demons in the Herds of Swine."

hand, and those whom they possess, on the other, play in the social order? What is the significance of the power relations between the disordered, dybbuk-possessed individual, who undermines the normal order of the community, and the dybbuk exorcist, who represents the community's validity and authority? What is the cultural and religious/moral context of the stories of dybbuk exorcisms on the public social level, and what is the significance of the silenced voices erupting from the dybbuk on the private hidden level?

The dybbuk phenomenon is clearly gendered. All cultures provide explicit evidence for the very high rate of women as victims of possession. In the Jewish and Christian traditions, dybbuk exorcists are solely men, though in Muslim culture women and men alike, who were thus endowed or had the relevant ancestral merit, were likely to serve as exorcists or ritual leaders capable of encompassing a symbiotic connection with the spirit in the body of the possessed.

It should be remembered that possession in general and the exorcism of the possessing entity in particular are highly dramatic phenomena with a fascinating theatrical dimension, loaded with meanings and contexts that differ radically from the perspective of either the people possessed or the exorcists.

The latter viewed the possession, by virtue of its subversive, identity-disrupting essence, as a threat to the social order, but also as an opportunity to turn the confrontation with that threat into a morality play and sacred communal spectacle that would reinforce the spectators' traditional norms and the prestige of the religious establishment.

This objective was attained when the spirits, in the course of the exorcism ritual, confessed their bitter fate in the world to come and the terrifying punishments they were suffering in hell.

▲ “Dayn Kol Iz Mir Zis”, Victoria Hanna and Noam Enbar, still from performance, 2014

These confessions provided concrete validation for basic religious truths on reward and punishment, and would arouse exacting soul-searching and all-around repentance. These moral lessons served to strengthen the power and status of the exorcists, who operated by virtue of a shunning ritual that cast terror in the onlookers and by virtue of threatening curses. The exorcisms were meant to solidify the sacred authority and the normative social order and were generally linked to God and His male representatives, the setters of the traditional order, which drew its values from the sanctified past, and to disrupt the dangers of impurity and heresy, the breaking of boundaries and disruptions of the social order – phenomena generally linked to Satan and his representatives, sinful women, or dybbuk-possessed women who had crossed the lines of that social order.

At the end of the Middle Ages and in the early modern era, the Christian world experienced a polarization between faith and heresy and their representations in the form of the Church, on the one hand, and Satan, on the other, as is evident from the literature discussing the Church's and its proxies' witch-hunts, in which it becomes clear that the dybbuk is a matter of Satan having entered the body of a sinful person in order to possess that person and speak from her mouth.

Possession was viewed as the pairing of a witch with Satan; in fact, it was determined that the woman's body served as Satan's refuge. At the end of the fifteenth century, two Dominican inquisitors wrote the famed book Malleus Maleficarum ("hammer of witches"), which describes those possessed as being struck by Satan, claiming that a dybbuk is the consequence of witchcraft – a sin punishable by death according to both the Biblical text ("Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress to live," Exodus 22:17) and canon law.

The book, one of the most widely disseminated works in the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries, served as a legal handbook for the Church and was used to define witches and diagnose those possessed by Satan.[21]

The vast majority of those accused of witchcraft were women, just as the vast majority of the dybbuk-possessed were women. Hundreds of thousands

[21] Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, trans. from the Latin by Montague Summers, (New York: 1971). In 1487-1520, starting immediately after the printing of Malleus Maleficarum (1486), fifteen editions were published, and in 1574-1669, another sixteen editions were issued. The book was written by the inquisitor Heinrich Kramer, a member of the Dominican monastery operating in Alsace and Bohemia, and Jacob Sprenger, a Dominican inquisitor and theologian active in Germany. The most important legal Church document from the early Middle Ages dealing with sorcery and witchcraft was apparently published around the year 900 CE. In a critique of a book about the history of witchcraft, Isaac Lubelsky, who studies the history of Western esoterica, writes as follows, "The Canon Episcopi – "the bishop's law" – describes a phenomenon typical to corrupt women whom Satan had tempted off the 'right path.' The document says that Satan causes these women such extreme mental confusion – including delusions and terrifying visions – that they imagine they are riding through the night with the goddess Diana and covering vast distances. 'Such illusions,' says The Canon Episcopi, 'are implanted in the souls of those lacking in faith, though not by God but rather by Satan. Because Satan can assume the figure of an angel of light,' which allows him to lead the unfortunate women astray. The importance of the document is self-evident. On the one hand, it defined sorcery and witchcraft as nothing but delusion, and those believing in them as ignorant folk of little faith, thus perhaps helping to postpone witch-hunts until a later time. On the other hand, the very mention of witchcraft in this era clearly proves that belief in sorcery in Europe was widespread until the early Middle Ages. Another interesting issue in The Canon Episcopi is the mention of Satan's ability to assume the figure of an angel of light. This, of course, relates to Satan's Latin name – Lucifer ('the light-bearer'), a name whose source is the Latin translation for heylel ben shahar in the Bible (Isaiah 14:12). The document then set out a very clear equivalence between engagement in witchcraft and direct satanic influence, thereby helping to entrench the notion common also in later eras according to which witches and sorcerers worship Satan. This notion made it easier for the Catholic Church – which saw itself as God's representative on earth – to label and persecute certain groups on the pretext that they worshipped Satan." See Isaac Lubelsky, "From Satan Worship to the Mother Goddess in the New Age: Reviewing Jeffrey B. Russell and Brooks Alexander's A History of Witchcraft: Sorcerers, Heretics & Pagans" (Hebrew), *Zemanim* Vol. 107 (2009): 113.

of victims, mostly women, were diagnosed using this handbook, brought before priests and judges, and sentenced to torture and death by burning at the stake. The justification for this horrific punishment was the belief that this was the only way to save the souls of the afflicted on Judgment Day. Christian theologians claimed that the soul could not be truly ill because its essence is Godly; therefore, the disorders and deviances were evidence that an evil spirit had entered the person and therefore had to be expelled. The presentation of the great power of Satan through mental disturbances was in the Church's own interests, as it sought to highlight the polarized positions of faith versus heresy, including their opposite manifestations – one in the holy service in the Church, the other in the worship of Satan and sorcery – and the opposite representations of good and evil on earth – the priests and the witches.

"Spirit disorders" (caused by evil spirits) or "soul disorders" (whose soul was possessed by demons or spirits from the external worlds) were equivalent with heresy and witchcraft, and mental syndromes were understood in line with demonological doctrines as linked with states of possession. The burning of witches as Satan's allies, which took place in the Christian world in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, was the only reasonable conclusion to draw from a view that identified witchcraft as a Satanic crime and as a field of endeavor unique to women. The number of victims of the witch-hunts in that period – one that, ironically enough, is identified with humanism, the Renaissance, and the beginning of the modern era – has been estimated by various studies at between 300,000 and one million women and men.[22] People who suffered from mental illnesses, women affected by anxiety, women who

[22] See Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The European Witch-Craze of the 16th and 17th Centuries*, (New York: 1967); Stuart Clark, *Thinking With Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, (Oxford: 1997); Sarah Ferber, *Demonic Possession and Exorcism in Early Modern France*, (London: 2004); Moshe Sluhovsky, "Woman Between Satan and the Holy Spirit: Possession in the Catholic World in the Early Modern Era" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 270-283.

lived alone, epileptics, depressed or eccentric men and women, anyone who failed to conduct her- or himself according to the standard norms, or people who expressed unusual opinions – all were deemed plausible targets for Satanic possession.

According to Catholic theologians fighting the Protestant and Calvinist heresies, empowering Satan and the public war on him would inevitably result in empowering the Church and strengthening its position and control. In Church circles, the dybbuk was considered a Satanic manifestation and the punishment of a sinner for his sins, but as a disease it was not a part of the Church criminal or religious law. By contrast, witchcraft – the cause for the dybbuk or the Satanic possession – was, based on the Biblical precedent and its interpretation in the New Testament and the writings of the Church fathers, a criminal offense in canon law. Because of the criminal nature of the offense, the legal reports on witchcraft and witches are usually to be found in Church writings and the legal literature of the Inquisition.[23]

Already in the sixteenth century, with the Lutheran Reformation in full swing, demon-expelling and witch-hunting priests were aware of the high rate of women among the possessed. Their explanation was that Satan preferred to work though the bodies of sinful and heretical women, because women's weakness of spirit and flightiness made it easier for Satan to seize control of their minds. The exorcists further determined that, due to women's lack of control of their bodies and minds, they were subject to hysteria (the marks of hysteria – the stigmata – made it is clear that their hosts were in league with

[23] See Shlomit Shahar, *The Fourth Class: Women in Middle Age Society* (Hebrew), (Tel Aviv, 1983), in the index under "dybbuk" and "witchcraft." Also see Mary Douglas (ed.), *Witchcraft: Confession and Accusations* (London, 1970); Vincent Crapanzano and Vivien Garrison (eds.), *Case Studies in Spirit Possession* (New York, 1977). The most common accusation against witches in Poland was that they cast magic and evil invocations that caused damage to people. In Polish, the technical term describing the phenomenon is *zadajac diabla* ("putting Satan in"). The last trial of witches took place in Poland in 1775.

Satan). The Greek word "hystera" means "womb," and the disease of hysteria was, since antiquity until the middle of the twentieth century, connected in medial etiology to the tortured uterus, wandering restlessly through the body because of the lack of sexual activity of women suffering from unfulfilled lust, or from manic hysteria, as explained in *Compendio dell'arte essorcistica*, written in 1576. Other exorcists who were active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also spell this out in their books.

The diagnosis of hysteria, the label attached to the women possessed by dybbuks, was erased from the medical literature only in the twentieth century.[24] In current anthropological research, it is common to explain the over-representation of women in possession cases by referring to social and gender constraints that limited women's ability to participate in the open public discourse.[25] In the historical research of gender, the explanation relates to the decisive role played by sexual relations in which young girls and women on the margins of society were forced to engage, whether as

[24] In 1869, in a lecture entitled "The Etiology of Hysteria," Freud determined that hysterical women and girls were victims of sexual exploitation in childhood or during and after puberty. "I therefore put forward the thesis that at the bottom of every case of hysteria there are *one or more occurrences of premature sexual experience*, occurrences which belong to the earliest years of childhood…" Under pressure by the public furor his thesis caused, Freud retracted and, later on, proposed an alternate theory, namely that the repression of desire caused the symptoms of hysteria. An analysis of familiar dybbuk stories indicates that the various presentations of the disorder have nothing to do with repressed desires but rather reflect an escape from terrifying events and a flight from violence. See Elior, "The Dybbuk," 511-512, and Joseph Prager, "Hysteria" (Hebrew), *Hebrew Encyclopedia* vol. 14, (Jerusalem, 1967), columns 323-325.

[25] See Michel de Certeau, *La Possession de Loudum* (Paris: 1970); Ioan M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism* (London: 1983). For the silencing of women and their exclusion from the public discourse in the patriarchal Jewish society, see Rachel Elior, "Noticeable by Their Absence: The Presence and Absence of Women in the Holy Tongue, Jewish Religion, and Israeli Reality" (Hebrew), *Alpayim* Vol. 20 (2000): 214-270.

▲ “Foreign Root”, Shira Borer, still from performance, 2014.

the result of arranged marriages or rape, that is more general, a topic that could not be raised because of dependencies, master-slave relations, power differentials, and incest.[26]

From the sixteenth century onwards, possession became a key concept Christian theologian used to reexamine the relations between the natural and the supernatural, the Godly and the Satanic, healing of the body and healing of the spirit, the priesthood and laypeople, and men and women. In this period, possession in general became identified with suspicion and doubt as to women's spiritual activity, which was linked to Satan, demons, and heresy, not only to mental disorders with traditional external trappings.

By contrast, exorcism was identified with a true inner investigation of a soul, whether believing or heretical, carried out only by an approved priest using Church treatises that delved into the definition of Satan, demons, and witches, not only with healing rituals practiced in the sanctified space according to a fixed ritual. Therefore, only men who had the power to confront Satan and heresy were capable of being honest investigators, whereas women were usually the object of the investigation and were the object for the penalty incurred through being possessed by Satan and for being guilty of heresy.[27]

In comparative cultural studies, the claim that women use their body

[26] See Elior, “The Dybbuk,” 508-513. Also see Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* (Doubleday: 1972), revised and updated (St. Martin's Griffin: 2005), who says that madness is the choice of a woman who cannot or does not want to take the normative path and conduct herself in the way that is expected of her as a woman. Cf. Tamar Alexander, “Dybbuk: The Female Voice” (Hebrew), *Mikan* Vol. 2 (2001), 165-190.

[27] See Moshe Sluhovsky, “Woman between Satan and the Holy Spirit.”

to transmit personal or public distress (or a combination of the two) is commonplace. The psychological need to speak of things that mustn't be spoken of – such as forced sexuality in the context of rape and incest – and the gender constraint to be silent, according to the social and religious mores regulating women's speech in public, create an intolerable mental dynamic whereby eventually speech finally does burst out of the woman's body, emerging however as an entity that is not her. Thus the woman succeeds both in transmitting her message to the community and in remaining silent, because she is not crossing the gender boundary, but rather only serving as a vessel or vehicle through which some other entity is expressing itself.

From a feminist perspective, the therapeutic success of the ritual is nothing by the downfall of the dybbuk-possessed. The exorcism of the evil spirit re-silences the woman and returns her to her so-called "natural," submissive state and the confined space in the traditional, private realm, where she is supposed to serve her family members with obedience and submit to her husband's will.[28] Sometimes, when the ritual fails, the woman dies or remains forever silenced, paralyzed, and speechless, as a result of the violent actions imposed on her body during the exorcism, as documented in stories of exorcisms, in plays, movies, exorcism testimonies, paintings, and photographs.

The phenomenon of possession in general and of dybbuks in particular were usually documented by men, because only they took part in the exorcism ritual in the synagogue, either as active participants or as

[28] I.e. "a woman's voice is nakedness,"; "the dignity of the king's daughter is inside"; "woman has no wisdom except for the spindle"; "a man's wifeman's wife is permitted to him; therefore, anything the man wants to do with his wife, he does. He has intercourse with her whenever he wants, and kisses any limb he wants, and penetrates her either vaginally or anally, though only making sure he does not spill his seed for naught," from Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, "Prohibitions of Intercourse," 21:9

observers. None of the men who told stories about dybbuks in the traditional world ever took an interest in the life experience of the silenced, dybbuk-possessed women. They focused only on the hegemonic point of view of the exorcist, who represented the community's values and sought to restore the normative order that had been disrupted, repair the reality in which the world of the dead had erupted into the world of the living, and restore the time-hallowed distinctions that endorsed and reaffirmed the social order. He would do this by carrying out a searching investigation of the identity of the dead spirit that had attached itself to the afflicted woman and of that spirit's sins and penalties, in public, while over and over again uttering threats and penalties aimed at the woman's body, so as to threaten the spirit and persuade it to leave.

The dybbuk exorcism in the traditional world, as described by eyewitness testimonies (in recent years, the phenomenon has even been videotaped and photographed), involved creating a sacred space, with the exorcist(s) purifying himself/themselves and donning death shrouds, decreeing ostracisms, blowing shofars, cross-examining and threatening the spirit, sometimes tying the woman down, binding the woman's hands, lashing her – all testifying to the great deal of violence that exorcists apply to the dybbuk-possessed, often resembling a blatantly gendered show of strength, almost inevitably arousing associations of rape and sexual coercion.

At the individual level, various phenomena of possession – by dybbuk, Zar (in the Ethiopian community), Aslai (in communities hailing from Morocco), Ofrit or Markoob (in Bedouin society), and the demonic possession (in the Christian world) – are a source of suffering and pain for those afflicted, expressed in unique idioms of distress. As such, they also challenge the founders of religions and the revivers of spiritual traditions,

religious healers, rabbis, “masters of the name,”[29] priests and imams, “Zar masters” and dervishes seeking to relieve the distress of the victims according to the best cumulative cultural, religious, and medical experience. A similar challenge of a different cultural import faces clinical psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists offering treatment that combine an understanding of the cultural context in which their patients experience their distress, and the supernatural context with the insights provided by modern psychology and psychiatric medicine as to the “natural” source of these illnesses and the possibility of healing them in a given social context.

Entities that supersede the senses, such as demons, spirits, and dybbuks, as well as the states of possession they cause, are part of the traditional medical dialogue currently taking place alongside modern psychiatry, as evidenced in detail by studies analyzing the Zar dybbuk and the Kula among Ethiopian Jews, in light of the adjustment crises the community experienced after immigrating to Israel,[30] and the world of images referring to those “possessed” victims of demons and spirits in traditional Arab-Bedouin society.[31] These studies illuminate the meaning of the difference between the modern psychiatric model, which views states of possession as a mental

[29] Among the famed dybbuk exorcists in the Jewish world who experienced communion with God and Godly revelations or recognition of their religious greatness were: Jesus, the founder of Christianity; R. Yosef Karo, the founder of the Safed school of mysticism; the Ari, the founder of Lurianic kabbalah; R. Haim Vital, who disseminated Lurianic kabbalah; R. Yisrael Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hassidism; and the Hatam Sofer, the founder of Orthodoxy. For more on these dybbuk exorcists, see Rachel Elior, “Yisrael Baal Shem Tov and His Generation, Kabbalists, Sabbateans, Hassidim, and Mitnagdim” (Hebrew), 2 vols. (Jerusalem: 2014), Part 1, 349, 356-357, 361-362, 565-566. Also see Moshe Idel, “Studies in the Method of the Author of *Sefer Hameshiv*” (Hebrew), *Sefunot* 2/17 (1983): 224 and Rachel Elior, “Rabbi Yosef Karo and Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov.”

[30] See Bilu, “Aslai, Dybbuk, Zar” and Witztum and Garisaro, “Possession by Zar Spirit in the Community of Ethiopian Immigrants in Israel.”

[31] See Alkarinawi, “Possession Illnesses in Arab-Bedouin Society.”

disorder of the dissociative kind and attributes them to internal factors in the mental world of the individual patients whose pattern of illness is unique and whose treatment takes place in private, and the traditional therapeutic model, which finds the source of the problem in external entities whose rationale for harming the individual stems from a collective cultural myth, so that the confrontation with them, i.e. the therapy, must be public.

A significant part of the issue of strange voices emerging from familiar bodies, perceived as voices from the world of the dead and beyond the senses, stemmed to some extent from their ability to communicate information about the world of the dead that was usually hidden from people. Voices from the long ago, marginal, silenced, rejected voices, or the voices of the living dead coming from the world of the dead, all involve a disruption of the boundary between the real and the non-real, making the line between the rational and irrational, elusive, mobile, unexpected, and fundamentally unstable. The belief in the heard existence of voices from the world of the dead, like the belief in dybbuks or the existence of witches and Satan, or hearing the voices of demons and angels, and an ongoing preoccupation with them in the communal setting, were in large part dependent on the recognition and validity that highly respected social and religious authorities gave them – the very authorities in charge of the communal dybbuk exorcisms in the Jewish world and the demon exorcisms in the Christian and Muslim worlds – and a written system of communication that established their existence, which gained wider audiences after the introduction of the printing press.

The exorcism of possession disorders was always carried out by a reputable holy man, who represented sacred authority and the power of the Christian Church or the validity of the Jewish community. In the latter, the exorcism was conducted by a respected rabbi who was generally also a kabbalist or famous for his expertise in writing amulets who could expel the invading

entity using a set formula that was part of a ritual fixed since the middle of the sixteenth century.[32]

A close reading of the stories and treatises written by various dybbuk exorcists reveals that possession disorders and exorcisms were common in places and at times of extreme social changes in which heresy and conversions, disregard for Jewish ritual laws and customs, a loosening of ties to tradition, and a decline in allegiance to the institutions of religious authority became widespread.[33] Closing the ranks of the believers behind the fence of the religion and tradition by using threats of what could be expected in the world to come, emphasizing descriptions of the punishments suffered by the sinners in hell, stories of reincarnation and dybbuk or demon and spirit exorcisms, as well as reinforcing the belief in dreadful punishments imposed in the world of the dead on lawbreakers who, while alive, believed they could evade future punishment, is one of the majors keys to reading these stories.

Many of the Jewish dybbuk stories feature the spirits of converts to Christianity, suicides, adulterers, rapists, those guilty of incest, and murderers who had fled community punishment while alive, and they speak extensively – as we're told by the exorcists who transcribe their growls and groans – of their bitter fate and the full measure of their

[32] The first evidence for a dybbuk exorcism, conducted by R. Yosef Karo in 1545 in Safed, is found in R. Yehuda Haliwa's book in a manuscript of *Sefer Tzofnat Pa'ane'ah*. See Idel, "Studies in the Method of the Author of *Sefer Hameshiv*." The spirit exorcist R. Yosef Karo was famed as having had a revelation of a Maggid, an angelic mentor, whose voice he heard and whose words he transcribed starting in 1533, as described in his book *Maggid Meysharim*, Lublin, 1548. See Elior, "Rabbi Yosef Karo and Rabbi Yisrael Baal Shem Tov."

[33] See Yaron Ben-Na'eh, "A Look at the Hidden in the Possession Stories in the Writings of R. Eliyahu Hacohen of Izmir" (Hebrew), *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 305-323. Cf. Jeffrey H. Chajes, *Between Worlds*.

suffering in the world of the dead.[34] In stories of the spirits of the dead being punished for the sins they committed in the world of the living, having been pursued by destructive angels until they found refuge and safety in the body they penetrated, the exorcists, transcribing the dybbuk's utterances with great flourish, clearly demonstrate the claim that, for the sinner, there is no escape from horrific punishment, because "there is judgment and there is a Judge"[35] in the world of the dead if not in the world of the living: sinners who avoided community punishment in their lifetime are punished with merciless severity after death. When reading the testimonies in dybbuk stories it sometimes seems as if, in his dialogue with the possessing evil spirit, the exorcist is confronting the community's past failures by trying to understand, complete, or heal and lessen the faults of the past, while the concrete suffering of the dybbuk-possessed woman is pushed aside.

Possession states and dybbuks were an unlimited source of inspiration and creativity for folktales and stories about the sages, Church documents and books by exorcists, books of spells and morality literature, mystical autobiographies, the history of medicine, cross-cultural anthropological research, historical research of heresy and ethno-psychiatric studies, modern poetry, modern plays, the theater, satire and parody, feminist writing, and queer theory, which relates both to changes in sexual identity and to the containment of different sexual identities in a single body. Shows of dybbuk possessions and exorcisms were an endless source for

[34] See Nigal, *Dybbuk Stories in Jewish Literature*, index, 292-297, under "hell," "destructive angels," "conversion," "convert to Christianity," "murder," "suicide," "prostitution," "drowning," "heresy," "idol worship," and "cross." Cf. Sarah Tzefatman, "A Tale of a Spirit in the Holy Community of Koretz" (Hebrew), *Jerusalem Studies of Jewish Folklore*, Vol. 2 (1982): 17-65.

[35] This is a contradictory paraphrase of the question in Va-yikra raba 28: "Is there judgement? Is there a judge?"

inspiration, hermeneutics, and vast creativity among people from different backgrounds and locations for thousands of years.[36]

Hebrew and Yiddish culture provide much expression to voices rising from the world of the dead and the voices of the silenced, the rejected, and the subversive. In this context, the play *Between Two Worlds*, also known as *The Dybbuk*, by Shloyme Zanvl Rappoport (1863-1920), better known by his pseudonym S. An-sky,[37] holds a unique place. Various studies contain discussions about performances of *The Dybbuk* and their meaning, alongside attempts to discover the author's sources of inspiration in literature, folklore, and ethnography, as well as discussions about the literary and theatrical transformations of the play in the twentieth century.[38]

[36] For examples from various religious and cultural contexts, see *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk: Dreams and Dybbuks Among Jews and Gentiles*, 217-444.

[37] For different contexts in which *The Dybbuk* was performed, in Israel and around the world, see Freddy Rokem, "*The Dybbuk* in the Land of Israel: Theater, Criticism, and the Formation of Hebrew Culture" (Hebrew), *Katedra*, Vol. 20 (1981): 183-202, which notes that the first performance of the play was in Yiddish and took place in December 1920 by the Vilnaer Truppe in Warsaw; about the first performance of *The Dybbuk* in the land of Israel, see F. Rokem, "*The Dybbuk* on the Haifa-Jeddah Road" (Hebrew), *Katedra*, Vol. 26 (1983): 186-193. Rokem's 1981 essay cited above was reissued in Shimon Levy and Dorit Yerushalmi (eds.) *Please Do Not Expel Me: New Studies of 'The Dybbuk'* (Hebrew), (Tel Aviv: 2009). The book contains many interesting perspectives on the play in its various contexts and the unexpected reworkings of the original. See, e.g., Diego Rotman, "The Dybbuk Isn't Moshe Sneh: Satirical Parody of *The New Dybbuk* by Dzigan and Shumacher (1957)" (Hebrew), in *Please Do Not Expel Me*, 179-197; Naomi Seidman, "The Ghosts of Queer Loves Past: An-sky's Dybbuk and the Sexual Transformation of Ashkenaz," in *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, eds. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz and Ann Pellegrini, (New York: 2003), 238-241.

[38] See the studies noted in note 36 above; also see Rivka Dvir Goldberg, "*The Dybbuk* and the Realms of Longing: *Between Two Worlds* (*The Dybbuk*) by An-sky and Its Hassidic Roots" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 355-377; Zvi Mark, "The Dybbuk as Imagery and as Mental State in the Life and Poetry of Yona Wallach" (Hebrew), *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk.*, 377-392; Yair Lifschitz, "One Mustn't Exclude the Dead from Any Celebration: The Lament of the Queer Body in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* and *The Dybbuk*" (Hebrew), *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk*, 393-412.

An-sky, who excelled at observing at the harsh fate of people incapable of protesting against the social order enforced on them, wrote the following of himself: "The happiness and tragedy of my life are that I live more in visions than in reality." The play *The Dybbuk*, was based on oral and written testimonies of dybbuk stories An-sky collected as part of ethnographic expeditions to many Jewish towns in Volhynia and Podolia in 1911-1914. It was further based on artistic and literary evidence from folktales and Hassidic lore, which reflected events that took place in the Jewish world of Eastern Europe in preceding centuries, both openly and behind closed doors.[39]

The play, which was originally written in Russian,[40] was translated by An-sky himself into Yiddish and was put into Hebrew by poet Haim Nahman Bialik. It was also translated into other languages, either as *Between Two Worlds* or *The Dybbuk*, and since its first performance, in Yiddish in Warsaw in 1920, and in Hebrew, in Moscow in 1922, the play has been performed in many versions and treatments. The play contains harsh social critique of the institution of arranged marriages in the traditional patriarchal world

[39] For a comprehensive biography of An-sky, see Gabriella Safran, *Wandering Soul: The Dybbuk's Creator, S. An-sky*, (Cambridge, 2010); for the play and its versions see Shmuel Varses, "An-sky's *Between Two Worlds* (*The Dybbuk*) in Its Textual Transformations" (Hebrew), *Hasifrut*, Vol. 35-36 (1986): 154-194. For the background to the play's writing in terms of the ethnographic expeditions and the uniqueness of the author and his sources, see Goldberg "*The Dybbuk* and the Realms of Longing" and Rivka Gonen, "Searching for 'the People's Spirit': An-sky and the Ethnographic Expedition 1912-1914" (Hebrew), in *Pass as a Dream, Possess as a Dybbuk,* 344-354.

[40] About two decades ago, the Russian version of An-sky's *The Dybbuk* was unexpectedly discovered: C. An-sky, *Between two Worlds (Dybbuk)*. A censored version. Jewish dramatic legend in four acts with a prologue and epilogue (in Russian). V. V. Ivanov published the text, wrote the Introduction, and the glossary. See: S. An-sky, "*Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)*: Censored Variant," introduction by Vladislav Ivanov. In *The Worlds of S. Ansky: A Russian Jewish Intellectual at the Turn of the Century*, eds. Gabriela Safran and Stephen Zipperstein (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2006).

and its disastrous consequences, including madness as an escape from the expectations of a reality that those involved were incapable of meeting.

Every exorcism of an evil spirit, demon, Satan, or dybbuk, across various cultures, had a mythopoetic and mystic dimension that theatrically connected the creative imagination reflected in religious and cultural assumptions binding the hidden to the revealed, the normal to the abnormal, on the one hand, and the moral and religious spectacle presented in for the public's betterment, on the other. This dimension got a new treatment in the twentieth century in secular contexts. The calmly malicious essence of the dybbuk was examined in relation to the writings of Yona Wallach, who in her poetry wrote of her experience of being possessed by a dybbuk, in a state in which "from his throat spoke a different voice, not his, that of another,"[41] and ruled out the exclusivity of the psychological explanation for mental illness based on her own life's experience.

In her poetry and prose, Wallach noted her belief in reincarnation and her deep connection to alternate states of consciousness and the blurring of the boundaries of the rational with regard to dybbuks. Her poetry, surprisingly, shows her profound closeness to the heroine of An-sky's *Dybbuk*, Lea'leh: the spirit of her beloved, Honen, who died when he heard that she had forcibly been betrothed to another, enters her in order to unite with her and create a reality in which she becomes forbidden to another man.[42] The entrance of a spirit from the world of the dead makes Lea'leh dybbuk-possessed, but she prefers the possession of the world of the dead to the demands of the world of the living of the present, or prefers a liberating madness[43] to fulfilling the social expectations of a coerced normalcy of an arranged marriage.

[41] Mark, "The Dybbuk as Imagery and as Mental State in the Life and Poetry of Yona Wallach."

[42] Ibid.

[43] "Die kalleh iz meshugeh gevoren" is the original Yiddish line in An-sky's play.

As a gesture to An-sky's play, *The Dybbuk* was rewritten as *A Dybbuk* by contemporary American Jewish playwright Tony Kushner.[44] Kushner, one of the major voices in American theater of the late twentieth century since his subversive *Angels in America*, added a new layer to An-sky's play, that of the dybbuk as a queer figure.[45] This figure, blurring the lines between masculinity and femininity, contains both in a single body in which there is a gap between spirit and flesh that isn't the spirit's, and between body and voice that isn't the body's. Kushner read the complex place of the dybbuk as body, political, and theatrical imagery, connecting the past to the present, and the hidden to the revealed, and relates to the body that is sick, hurting, and dying (of AIDS) or possessed by spirits from the world of the dead, thus threatening the supposedly healthy normative society from the margins.

In his writing, Kushner maps out a better political future in which repressive, normative social structures are destabilized by figures that the past refuses to abandon. According to Yair Lifschitz, who writes about Kushner's works, these figures "are the only ones capable of sketching out a subversive, revolutionary horizon for a better future; only they are capable of asking, from the margins of the community and the rejected body, what it is and what the political meaning of the citizenship of the dead could possibly be."[46]

The concepts of "possession" and "dybbuk" and their parallels are notable for extraordinary multidimensionality. It would seem that there aren't many concepts linked both to mental disorders and religious persecution, both to

[44] See Yair Lipshitz, "One Mustn't Exclude the Dead from Any Celebration."

[45] For queer theory and what it means, see Boyarin, Itzkovitz, and Pellegrini (eds.) *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question* (New York, 2003) and Yair Keidar, Amalia Ziv, and Oren Kanner (eds.), *Beyond Sexuality* (Hebrew), in *Genders Series*, 2003.

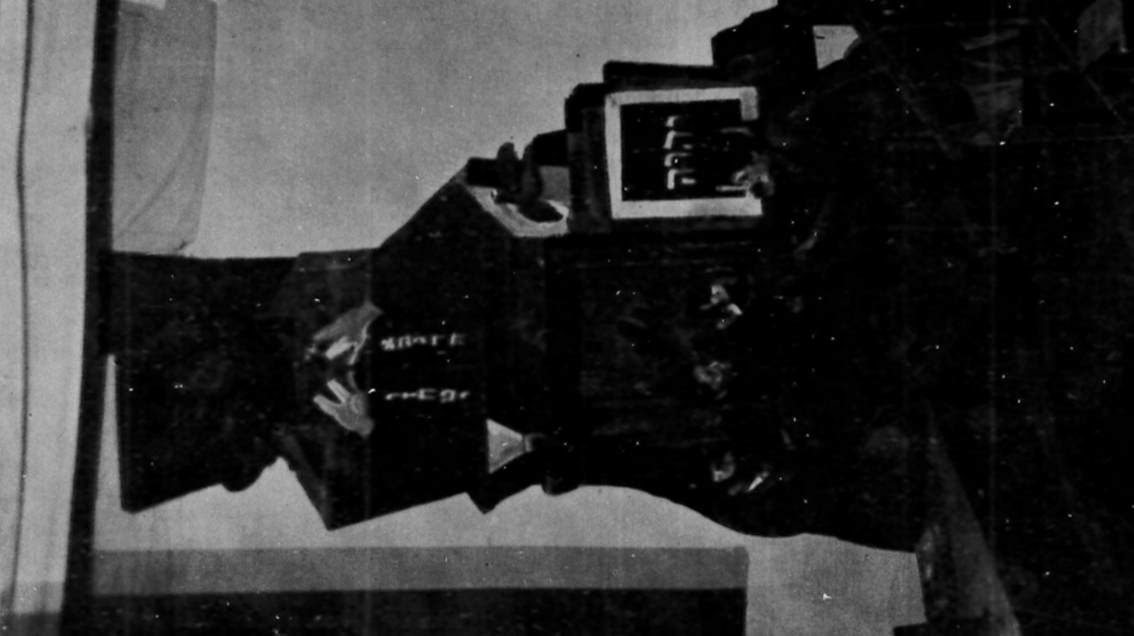
[46] Lifschitz, "One Mustn't Exclude the Dead from Any Celebration: The Lament of the Queer Body in Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* and *The Dybbuk*" (Hebrew).

religious/moral/mystical/communal theater and modern subversive plays, parody and satire, both to gender issues and the destabilizing of supposedly fixed identities, and to ways of escaping standard social expectations.

Furthermore, there aren't many concepts that, at one and the same time, are linked to unusual states of consciousness seen as related to crossing boundaries between worlds and a communal attempt to deal with disorders and illnesses, and are linked both to the reinforcement of society's power mechanisms and to defiance of unequivocal lines by presenting complex, boundary-crossing identities.

In addition, there are not many concepts reflecting, at the same time, voices in folktales as to the meaning of mental disorders and culturally dependent illnesses, and hegemonic voices reflecting the proper attitude to disrupting orders by body or by soul, as seen in books on morality, authoritative medical treatises, and legal books with sacred validation. The treatment of such disruptions of order was always linked to the representatives of the hegemony and the social order and to the symbols of religious tradition and common custom. These representatives assumed the job of interpreting the essence of the order-disrupting distress manifested in an external, supernatural force, seizing control of a person, and confronting it according to the religious and cultural explanation in whose context they operated.

The multidimensional picture emerging from the concepts of dybbuk, possession and hysteria, exorcism of dybbuks, evil spirits, and demons, is indicative of the complexity of the concepts describing transitions between revealed and hidden worlds, and the link between abstract concepts linked to defining the boundaries of the body and the soul, the normal and the deviant, on the one hand, and concrete and symbolic power relations and the establishment of sacred social orders, on the other.



The Many Worlds of The Dybbuk

Freddie Rokem

An-ski's *The Dybbuk* has the subtitle "Between Two Worlds", referring to the complex interactions and tensions between the world of the living and the world of the dead in this play. These tensions can also be distinguished in the particular performances of the play depending on the context within which a specific performance was conceived, first performed and then in many cases, also performe d over time. An example of this would be the famous production of the Habima theatre which premiered in Moscow in 1922 and was performed in many countries for more than 40 years, until the 1960's. In this essay I will examine the scenographic design of the three acts of the Habima production. In particular, I will be drawing attention to the quotes from the Bible in each of the three acts suspended in big Hebrew letters over the stage, which thereby reinforce and expand the complexities of being situated "between two worlds", with one 'leg' in each of them.

From the perspective of the plot, the interaction between the two worlds is triggered by the pledge (נדר) made by two young male friends studying in a Yeshiva whose respective wives are both pregnant. They pledge to betroth the two children to each other should they be a boy and a girl and this is 'recorded' in heaven. However, this pledge is broken many years later by Sender, who becomes the father of Leah and whose wife dies while giving birth to her. Sender's close friend also dies close to the birth of his son, Hanan. We will gradually learn what the tragic consequences of breaking the pledge are.

* All the pictures in the article are courtesy of Habima Theater and the Israeli Center for the Documentation of Performance Arts

◂ Synagogue with Chonen and Leah in the bimah in the center and the Torah Ark in the back (first act).

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Sender breaks the oath by betrothing his daughter to another man. As a result of this, Hanan, who has come to the synagogue to meet his beloved Leah, dies in front of the Tora Shrine in the synagogue. This is where the first act of the play takes place. In the second act, during Leah's wedding to this other man, Hanan returns as a Dybbuk, the spirit of a dead person who has not been properly buried or has died under strange circumstances. The Dybbuk literally possesses his 'bride', speaking through her mouth, and thus serving as a 'living', concrete proof of the existence of this other world, the world of the dead which in Hebrew is often called "the next world" or "the world to come", existing in parallel to "this world", the world of the living, but often interfering in it. In the third and last act, the attempts of the Rabbi to expel the Dybbuk from Leah's body fail, and she dies during the exorcism ceremony in order to become unified with her true lover in the next world.[1]

Besides the interactions between the worlds of the living and the dead on the level of the plot, An-ski's play also exists ambiguously in several linguistic universes, reflecting the dynamic Jewish socio-linguistic contexts within which the play was composed and first performed in the wake of the First World War. It is not clear if An-ski first wrote the play in Yiddish or in Russian, though it is certain that it was Bialik who made the translation into Hebrew, most likely from Yiddish. It was first published and then performed by the Habima theatre, premiering in Moscow in 1922.

The play itself was however first performed in Yiddish by the Vilnaer Truppe, in 1920, on the *shloshim* of An-ski, thirty days after the death of Ans-ski. An-ski never saw a staging of his play as it was quickly gaining popularity all over the world. In 1921 the play was also performed by the Yiddish Art Theatre in New York, directed by Maurice Schwartz. The reason

[1] An-ski had written a four-act play which in the Habima production was compressed into three acts, in three different locations.

for preparing a Russian version, or even first writing the play in Russian, was that An-ski wanted to convince Constantin Stanislavski – the founder and leader of the famous Moscow Art Theatre – where Chekhov's plays had first been performed and who was also directly involved in the founding of the Habima theatre – to have it performed. The meeting between An-ski and Stanislavski was at least one of the reasons why it was later performed by the Habima collective which was working within the Studio-system established by Stanislavski.

In these early performances, *The Dybbuk* first emerged in Hebrew and Yiddish and this can be seen as a linguistic parallel to the two worlds, of the living and the dead. Russian would have been the language of the social revolution which for An-ski, was an important ideological aspect of his life. At the time of the writing of the play, Yiddish was still a vital language, creative in a host of traditional and in most modern literary genres, as well as in a rich oral plethora. The Hebrew language was at that time the 'corpse', the dead language that poets and ideologues strove to awaken to life, gradually creating a veritable Hebrew Renaissance, serving as an important basis of the gradually developing Zionist movement. From a historical perspective, however, the roles of the two languages have been radically reversed, with the Shoah not only murdering millions of Jews but also killing their forms of life and literary creativity, turning Yiddish into an almost dead language. Hebrew, on the other hand, has been transformed into a language expressing all the modes and forms of life and of literary creativity, not only in Israel, but more and more in the growing Hebrew-speaking Diasporas of Israelis in Europe as well as in North America.

The Habima theatre was the first fully professional theatre performing in Hebrew. It was founded in Moscow in 1916-17 by a group of young theatre 'lovers' led by Nachum Zemach. The well-known and acclaimed Armenian director, Yevgeny Vakhtangov, was assigned by Stanislavski to work with the

Habima actors when the collective became included within Stanislavski's Studio network. After the Bolshevik Revolution, it was considered to be an innovative avant-garde theatre within the Soviet context. It integrated different ethnic groups towards the creation of a true trans-national, proletarian culture, including taking the first step towards the creation of a professional theatre in the Hebrew language. It was this theatre which would eventually emerge as the Israeli National Theatre, realizing an important aspect of the Zionist ideology, with the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. The most important Habima production from the Moscow years was the production of *The Dybbuk* which premiered in 1922.

Habima had been established on the ideological basis created by the multicultural openness and tolerance of the Bolshevik revolution. However, this gradually diminished in importance after the death of Lenin in 1924 and Stalin's forceful consolidation of power. In 1926, the Hebrew actors' collective left Moscow for good and set out on a world tour to the United States and to the cultural capitals of Europe. They also travelled to British Mandatory Palestine, mainly performing in the newly founded city of Tel Aviv and developing their work there for a year. They made Berlin their home for about another year, in 1930-31, before finally settling in Tel Aviv in 1931. The members of the collective finally decided to leave Europe after Nazi sympathizers had interrupted a performance of *The Dybbuk* in Würzburg that year. In 1958, they celebrated the first decade of statehood and Habima was named the Israeli National Theatre.

The Habima-*Dybbuk* had by this time become world-famous and this production was played over 1,300 times, closing down for good only in the 1960's when Tel Aviv had been the permanent home of the theatre for more than 30 years. During this time, it had undergone many changes, most importantly perhaps becoming a mainstream, established theatre, catering to a growing bourgeois audience. As *The Dybbuk* premiered in 1922, it was

an avant-garde performance rooted in a revolutionary moment, depicting the revolt of the young couple against the bourgeois values of their parents. While at the same time, it was occupied with traditional Jewish customs and values as most of the actors had revolted against the traditional Jewish values of their parents. The basic 'message' of the production had also become more nationalistic, considering the meeting of the young couple in the next world in connection with the national revival.

As the Habima-*Dybbuk* premiered in Moscow in 1922, it both expressed a deep attraction to Jewish life at this revolutionary moment while it also revolted against the superstitious traditional, religious values. Yet already from the outset, the Habima production (somewhat ambivalently) valorized the utopian future where the two lovers can become united beyond death, not in "this" world, but in some higher form of existence. For the actors performing in Hebrew in Moscow in 1922, this also meant Zion, the home of their spiritual as well as political yearnings. This was not an easy balancing act in post-revolutionary Moscow, but there is no doubt that its artistic results were extraordinary and led directly to the fame of the theatre.

One of its many interesting features, which added to the mysterious and complex nature of the Habima performance, was the use of Hebrew words as an integral aspect of the scenography. These words were all quotations from the Bible, and were suspended over the stage in each of the three acts. These inscriptions are an important part of the set for the Habima *Dybbuk*, as designed by the Jewish, Soviet avant-garde artist Nathan Altman in a constructivist, almost cubistic style with strong diagonal lines on a slightly slanted stage. In the center of the stage in the first act, taking place in the synagogue where Leah and Hanan meet, stands the Torah Ark where the scrolls of the *Pentateuch*, the five books of Moses are kept. On the right we can see the elevated platform, the *bimah*, where the weekly portions of the Bible are recited from these scrolls.

▲ Beggars' Dance (second act).

The word *bimah* which actually means 'stage' was also part of the name of the theatre – the Ha-***bimah*** theatre – which was also called "The Biblical Studio." This draws attention to ways in which the new tradition of the theatre interacts with the old tradition of reciting from the Bible in Hebrew. The importance of the Hebrew language in a performance where the characters in the fictional world speak Yiddish, gave the performance a Zionist ideological framing, drawing attention to the clear cultural dichotomy of the two languages.

The *bimah* is located in the middle of the synagogue, serving as **the center of the congregation**, while the Torah Ark (more to the left because of the custom to direct the prayers toward Jerusalem, where the temple once stood) represented by the holy books, creates **a focal point in the distance**, towards which the congregation is directed, individually and collectively while reciting the prayers. In the Habima production of *The Dybbuk*, the Ark and the *bimah* give rise to a dialectical tension between the distant focal point of holiness (the Ark) and the creation of a center (the *bimah*) for the community of the fictional world, where the holy words suspended over the stage are an appeal of the performance and the Ha***bima*** theatre for the creation of an ideological, communal experience through their art.

The words of the Tora first emerge from the Ark in the more distant focal point as a *deus ex machina*, corresponding exactly to the point where the divine intervention took place in the traditional Baroque theatre, as well as – at least indirectly – in the Greek Classical theatre. The divine words of the Tora are then metaphorically placed on the table of the *bimah*, entering the communal life, and on the stage they become strongly magnified as they are suspended over the stage itself, connecting the actors and the spectators in the auditorium.

In the 1922 Moscow performance, the magnified words in Hebrew suspended in the air no doubt at the same time also divided the audience between the Jewish spectators, who could read and decipher these words and the non-Jewish spectators, presumably the Soviet revolutionaries who most likely regarded these words as some kind of secret code for the Revolution. At the time of the premiere, the Bolshevik Revolution and Zionism were quite closely synchronized. Their common goals are reinforced by the suspended fragmentary quotations which serve as free-floating speech acts coming directly from a higher authority. This serves as reminders as well as promises and warnings, realized through their materiality, being suspended over the stage close to the proscenium arch. As the Habima theatre gradually began performing for more predominantly Jewish audiences and in Tel Aviv for almost exclusively Hebrew speaking spectators, the significance of the division between those who understand Hebrew and those who do not – which was an important dimension of the original performance – was gradually erased.

Another stage sign reminding the audience of such a dual nature of the revolution was the red color of the wedding canopy under which Leah and her true groom unite (through her being possessed by the *Dybbuk*) in their revolt against the bourgeois values of the generation of the father who has not adopted the struggle for authentic social change. This red cloth is simultaneously the revolutionary banner and a traditional Jewish wedding canopy, under which the two struggles are united.

In the thematic contexts of the performance the three 'banners' can be deciphered in the following way:

1. שמע ישראל:

"Sh'ma Israel" are the first two words of the sentence saying "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יהוה אֶחָד) from Deuteronomy (the 5th book in the *Torah*, verse 6:4) which is said twice daily in the prayers; it is the first prayer parents teach their children and they are the last words a Jew supposedly utters before his death.

Here it also means that we have to listen carefully – "Hear O Israel" – something will happen with the way in which the voice will make its sounds with the possession of Leah by the *Dybbuk*, preceding the affirmation of God's unity and uniqueness through the unification of the female and male elements, which happens when the Dybbuk of Hanan enters the body of Leah at the wedding.

2. קול חתן וקול כלה:

"Kol Hatan ve-Kol Kala" meaning "the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride" appears three times in the book of Jeremiah (7:34, 16:9 and 25:10) and in the last of these (25:10) the whole verse, where the prophet actually pronounces God's threat to the people of Israel, reads (in the King James Bible), "I will **take** from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle."

However, the words over the stage together with "the voices of mirth and gladness" (קוֹל שָׂשׂוֹן וְקוֹל שִׂמְחָה קוֹל חָתָן וְקוֹל כַּלָּה) from the verse in Jeremiah, which is actually a threat in the Biblical text, have been included in the last of the seven blessings in the Jewish wedding ceremony, which the wedding

guests (still until today) sing together, celebrating the union of the ‘voices’ of the young couple through marriage.

By means of a slight variation of one syllable from the quote, instead of talking about “the voice of the bridegroom **and** the voice of the bride”, which is the traditional blessing at the wedding, it will in *The Dybbuk* performance mean that the “voice of the groom is **inside** the bride”, coming from her body. This powerful vocal gesture is achieved by changing one consonant from *ve-* to *be-*. The Dybbuk entering the body of Leah is clearly a sexual act, which is only supposed to take place at a wedding, where the voices of the bride and the groom become unified.

3. זה השער...

“Ze he-Sha’ar” is a short quote is from Psalm 118:20 (קיח: 20) where the full verse reads, זֶה הַשַּׁעַר לַיהוָה צַדִּיקִים יָבֹאוּ בוֹ. This verse means “This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter.”

In all the reproductions of this act that I have seen in photos, the name of God is erased or perhaps unclear. But because it is very well-known it can be inferred from the first two words, “This gate…”, which can refer to the entrance into the synagogue, but more typically to the passage from life to death through which every human being will pass, inferring that when Leah dies, she is one of the righteous. Having opened the “gates” of her body to the *Dybbuk* she is now united with him, entering through the ominous gate of heaven.

When trying to expel the spirit from her body in the third and last act, the Rabbi performing a Kabbalistic ritual of exorcism realizes that the vow of betrothal between Leah and Hanan is still in force. When he tries to free Leah from this vow and expel the evil spirit of the *Dybbuk* from the young bride, she falls down and dies and is united with her true lover in the next world, the *igra rama*, the high abode. At this point the chant, with which the play opens, is now repeated in the past tense, describing the journey of the soul in Kabbalistic terms, is repeated:

Why and for what reason
Did (does) the soul descend
From the high abode
To the depths?
The descent is needed for the ascent.
The descent is needed for the ascent.
(ירידה צורך עלייה היא)

The journey of the soul between the two worlds has been completed and the couple has finally been united in the *igra rama* of the afterworld.

The Hassidic Rabbi house Azriel from Miropol's house: The Exorcism (third act). ▸

Dancing with the Dead: Possession and Nationalism in the Old-new Film Der Dybbuk, 1937-2017

Diego Rotman

> *Modernity itself might be understood as a new way of handling (and thinking about) the dead. (Joseph Roach)*

Introduction

"The dead were returned to life, and a culture long vanished, wiped out by the Holocaust, was resurrected on the screen."[1] Film scholar Ira Konigsberg used this mystical formulation to describe the screening of the restored 1937 Polish-Yiddish film *Der Dybbuk*, directed by Michał Waszyński, when it premiered at the Festival Theater in New York in September 1989. The resurrected but already "immortal classic" (according to its American distributors in the credits of the film) was based on the play by Shloymo Zangvil Rapoport (Sh. An-ski, 1863-1920), which had been staged for the first time in Warsaw by the Vilner troupe in 1920. An-ski's *Dybbuk* eventually became a canonical play in the Jewish theatre, subject to many critiques, controversies, and studies, all of which show its ability to give rise to new texts and works, as noted by theater scholar Freddie Rokem.[2]

In November 2014, a 20-minute re-edited version of the Yiddish film was screened in the attic of the former Jerusalem leprosarium, today the Hansen House for Art, Design and Technology. Israeli artists and life-

[1] Ira Konigsberg, "The only 'I' in the World: Religion, Psychoanalysis and 'The Dybbuk'", Cinema Journal 36/4 (Summer 1997), 23.

[2] Freddie Rokem, "Haddybuk be-Erets Israel: Hateatron, habikoret, ve-itgabshuta shel hatarbut ha-ivrit", in *Al na tegarshuni: Yiunim hadashim beHadybbuk*, eds. Dorit Yerushalmi and Shimon Levy (Tel-Aviv: Safra, 2009), 90-107.

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partners Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel, not only re-edited the film but also replaced the original music composed by Henekh Kohn as well as the cantorial songs performed by Gershon Sirotta. The new score, performed live by the Jerusalem Young Symphonic Orchestra, was an adapted version of the *Vltva* (*The Moldau*), the second symphonic poem of *Má vlast* (*My Homeland*) composed by Czech composer Bedřich Smetana in the 1870s. In July 2017, a new and longer version of this new edition of Waszyński's film, this time edited by the Sala-manca group of which I am a member, was screened and performed on the patio of the same leprosarium as part of the Jerusalem Film Festival. The re-edited version of the film with English and Hebrew subtitles was projected onto a big screen hanging on one of the walls. In this version, the entire soundtrack of the film was silent, giving way to a live performance that included a newly composed score based on Smetana's *Má vlast*. This time the score was performed live by 28 musicians from the Jerusalem Street Orchestra, conducted by Ido Shpitalnik, who also contributed adaptations of the new fragments of the music.

Theater scholar Marvin Carlson once characterized theater as "a simulacrum of the cultural and historical process itself […] The present experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations while these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection." [3] *Der Dybbuk 1937-2017*—based on Waszyński's film, which is based on An-ski's theater piece, which was itself based on folkloric tales of *dybbuk* possession recollected from Jewish communities of the Pale of Settlement—invites us to approach the work as a multilayered ghosted performative experience of "recycling and recollection." In this article I deal with this re-interpretation, and resignification of Waszyński's film and consequently with An-ski's *Dybbuk*. My interest on the Dybbuk arose from an investigation on Shimen Dzigan and Isroel Schumacher's

[3] See Marvin Carlson, *Haunted Stage* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001),

I do not fear
שלך

our oaths and excommunication
איני מפחד מהשבעותיך או

▲ Der Dybbuk 1937-2017, Sala-manca, Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel, still from performance, 2017

skit "Der Nayer Dybbuk" (The New Dybbuk), staged in 1957 as a parody of Habima's version of The Dybbuk.[4] I developed this interest through the academic course, "The Dybbuk: Between Theater and Ethnography," which I taught in the department of theatrical studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. This course led to the artistic creation discussed in this article where I and Lea Mauas, as Sala-manca, assumed the roles of interpreters, co-editors and directors.

This article itself, in some way, adds a new reflection to the interpretation presented through the film's performance. In some way, this changing of masks—from creative to scholarly— echoes the dual academic and artistic activity of An-ski, a theme that I develop in the next section of this article. I propose framing the new film-performance of the *Dybbuk* not only as an allegory and as a ghosted performance but also as a collaboration with the dead, the idea of "intermundane collaboration" developed by Jason Stanyek and Benjamim Piekut.[5] I suggest that this process offers one possible way for Yiddish cultural continuity, resurrection, or immortality.

[4] See Diego Rotman, "The 'Tsadik from Plonsk' and 'Goldenyu': Political Satire in Dzigan and Shumacher's Israeli Comic Repertoire", *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. XXIX: 154-170, and see as well: Diego Rotman, *The Stage as a Temporary Home: On Dzigan and Shumacher's Theater* (1921-1980) (Magnes University Press: Jerusalem, 2017), 237-258 (in Hebrew).

[5] Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut, "Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane", *The Drama Review* 54/1 (Spring 2010): 14-38.

Sh. An-ski and Der Dybbuk: Tsvishn tsvey veltn

Written between 1912 and 1917 in Russian and subsequently in Yiddish, *Der Dybbuk: Tsvishn Tsvey Veltn* (*The Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds*) was inspired by stories about *dybbuk* possessions and folktales that Sh. An-ski (1863-1920) collected when he led the Jewish Ethnographic Expedition in Volhynia and Podolia from 1912 to 1914. As a secular, socialist Jew, An-ski understood folklore as the basis for modern Jewish culture, meant not only to preserve the material culture and folklore of the Jewish people from the Pale of Settlement, but also as a source of inspiration for modern artistic creation.

According to Jewish tradition, a *dybbuk* is the spirit of a dead person who takes over a living body (generally a man taking over a woman), speaking from her throat with his own voice. Set in the 19th century in a Jewish shtetl in Eastern Europe, An-ski's *Der Dybbuk* tells the story of the unrealized love between Khonen, a young *yeshiva bokher* (Yeshiva student), and Leah, the daughter of a rich merchant named Sender, who has arranged for her to marry a suitable groom against her will. Khonen learns about those intentions and turns to Kabbalistic practice to acquire supernatural power, which ultimately results in his death. On her wedding day, Leah invites Khonen to dance with her at his tombstone, whereupon Khonen's spirit gains control over her. During the exorcism ceremony performed by Rabbi Azriel of Miropol, the audience is informed that the since-deceased fathers of Leah and Khonen had taken an oath in which they swore that their unborn children would marry one another, infusing Leah and Khonen's love with another layer of meaning. This allows us to understand their love not as a consequence of their free willing but as predetermined by their fathers. Rabbi Azriel succeeds in expelling Khonen's spirit from Leah's body, but Leah finally dies, leading to a reencounter with Khonen in the world to

come. In other words, death is the means by which Leah is able to realize her love for Khonen.[6]

An-ski's *Der Dybbuk: Between Two Worlds* also refers to the interactions and tensions between the world of the living and the world of the dead, or, as Naomi Seidman put it, that of the dead who return to the living,[7] referring by extension to the return of the past to the present time. Rachel Elior suggests that in the play, "The breach of boundaries [of time and space] is bound up in contact with the sacred, concealed realm on the one hand, and the monstrous, abnormal realm, on the other."[8] This in-between status characterizing the *dybbuk* phenomenon and the film in question was one trait of the complex identity of An-sky (Rapoport) as a folklorist, playwright, Russian populist, writer, story teller, and activist, and permeated his efforts to explore in life, in his writings, and in his politics the question of how to live in both Russian and Jewish culture.[9] An-ski argued that the Jewish writer, "lives in two streets with three languages. To live on such a 'border' is a misfortune – and has been exactly the way I have had to carry on."[10]

[6] For an English translation of the play, see Joachim Neugroschel and S. An-Ski, *The Dybbuk and the Yiddish Imagination: A Haunted Reader*, 1st ed. Judaic Traditions in Literature, Music, and Art (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Press).

[7] Naomi Seidman, "The Ghost of Queer Loves Past: An-sky's 'Dybbuk' and the Sexual Transformation of Ashkenaz," in *Queer Theory and the Jewish Question*, eds. Daniel Boyarin, Daniel Itzkovitz, and Ann Pellegrini (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 228-245.

[8] Rachel Elior, *Dybbuks and Jewish Women in Social History, Mysticism and Folklore* (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2008), 81.

[9] Der Dybbuk reflects the cultural hybridity of the Silver Age tsarist empire, as Seth Wolitz indicates: "The work is set among Hasidic Jews, intended for Russians and Jews using an imported aesthetic form: melodrama." See Seth L. Wolitz, "Inscribing An-sky's Dybbuk in Russian and Jewish Letters" in *The Worlds of S. An-sky: A Russian Jewish Intellectual at the Turn of the Century*, eds. Gabriella Safran and Steven Zipperstein (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2006), 167.

[10] Shalit 1937 in ibid., 167.

The first production of *Der Dybbuk* was performed in Yiddish in December 1920 by the *Vilner trupe* in Warsaw under the direction of Dovid Herman. It symbolically marked An-ski's *shloshim*, the thirtieth day after his death, the day when one may again, according to Jewish ritual law, visit the deceased at the cemetery. The production enjoyed unusual success both among the critics and audiences. During its first year and a half, *Der Dybbuk* was performed more than three hundred times. Since then, many versions of the drama in different languages and adaptations have been staged. One of them is the canonical production staged by Habima Theater in 1922 in Bialik's Hebrew translation, directed by Euvgeny Vakhtangov, with Chana Rovina performing the role of Leah. This production had an enormous influence on both the Hebrew and Yiddish theater. It was preserved—almost mummified—during the first 40 years of Habima's existence, with the aging Chana Rovina perennially reprising the role of Leah. In the process, the play became a mythical symbol of the modern Hebrew Zionist theater.[11]

The film production of *Der Dybbuk* drew on the biggest talents in the contemporary film and theatre industries. In 1937 the Fenix Production Company, owned by film producers Felicja and Leon Fenigstein, decided to create a cinematographic version of An-ski's stage play and selected Michał Waszyński to direct it. The screenplay was written by critic, writer and photographer Alter Kacyzne, and the playwright and theater director Mark Arnshteyn, with the the script by A. Stern. The artistic director was Mark Arnshteyn and the historical advisor was the historian Majer Balaban. The cinematography was by one of the leading Polish film photographers, Albert Wywerka; the photography was done by A. Arnold; the camera by Leonard Zajaczkowski and the set design by Jacek Rotmil and Stefan Norris. Lily (Zielinska) Liliana played Leah, her real-life husband Leon Liebgold

[11] See Dorit Yerushalmi, "Bitzilah shel Chana Rovina," *Zemanim* 99 (Summer 2007): 26-37.

played Khonen, and Avrahm Morevski starred as the Miropoler Tsadik, the same role he had played seventeen years before with the *Vilner Trupe*. The other roles were played by Isaac Samberg (*Meshulakh*/The Messenger), Moyshe Lipman (Sender), Dina Halpern (Frade, Sender's sister), Gershon Lemberger (Nisn), Max Bozyk (Note), Shmuel Landau (Zalmen), Samuel Bronecki (Nakhmen), M. Messinger (Menashe, Nakhmen's son), Zishe Katz (Reb Mendel, Menashe's tutor), Abraham Kurtz (the Gabbai Mikhoel), David Lederman (Meyer, the Shammes), Judith Berg (Dancer of the Death).

Director Michał Waszyński represents an interesting figure in Yiddish film history. Born Moyshe Waks in 1904 in the small town of Kowel, Ukraine, he was raised in a modest Hassidic family and received traditional education in *heyder* and the local *yeshiva* until his expulsion at age fifteen for heresy.[12] Soon afterwards, he left Kowel and adopted a new identity by converting to Christianity and changing his name to Michał Waszyński. According to his own account, he studied theater in Kiev, worked as an assistant to German film director Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau in his film *Noseferatu* and, between 1923 and 1925, was assistant director to Euvgeni Vakhtangov, the director of Habima's *Dybbuk*. According to Waszyński's biographer Samuel Blumenfeld, who quotes these stories,[13] these so-called facts were among the many inventions that Waszyński used to tell about himself. What strikes me is the fact that, considering that Vakhtangov had passed away in 1922, Waszyński's own narrative presents him as the assistant of someone deceased.

Waszyński's film added a late expressionist and popular cinematographic interpretation to An-ski's original theater script. Among the most noteworthy innovations is devoting the first twenty-five minutes of the film to Nisn and

[12] Samuel Blumenfeld, *L'homme qui voulait être prince* (Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle, 2006).

[13] Ibid.

Sender's relationship and oath, an important fact in the story, which in the play is revealed only in the trial scene in Act 4. Waszyński added many elements from Jewish tradition and folklore that do not appear in the original play such as cantorial singing in the synagogue, blessings, a funeral procession, a Sabbath meal, superstitions, songs, recitations from the *Tsenerene* and more. The overall effect, according to Zehavit Stern, was to construct "*yidishkayt* as an attraction intended for mass consumption."[14] There are other important changes in the film that allow for a more feminist interpretation: notably, Waszyński decided to leave Leah alone in the synagogue at the end of the exorcism ceremony rather than in the company of Aunt Frede as in the original play, allowing her— a young, modern and brave woman— to stand alone against the scene's dominant male figures.[15]

Der Dybbuk drew a great deal of attention and its reception was controversial. According to media reviews after its release, on the one hand, the film was considered a "triumph of national cinematography,"[16] a drama that "has so much depth, so much beauty, and so much poetry."[17] On the other hand, it was dismissed as kitsch, lacking even a single great scene,[18] and "a fantasy minted from the religious-superstitious mind of the nineteenth-century Polish Jew."[19]

[14] Zehavit Stern, *From Jester to Gesture: Eastern European Jewish Culture and the Re-imagination of Folk Performance* (Ph.D. dissertation: University of California, Berkeley, 2011), 138.

[15] See: Agnieszka Legutko, *Possessed by the Other: Dybbuk Possession and Modern Jewish Identity in Twentieth-Century Jewish Literature and Beyond* (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 2012).

[16] Mieczyslaw Sztycer, "Na srebrnym ekranie. 'Dybuk' - kino Sfinks," *Film* 28 (1937): 4.

[17] Y. Kissin, "Sh. An-skis groyse folk-drame 'Der dibuk' in a talky.", *Forverts*, 29.1.1938.

[18] Stefania Zahorska, "Dybuk", *Wiadomości Literackie* 44 (1937): 6.

[19] Frank S. Nugent, "The Continental Brings In a Film of 'The Dybbuk' New Pictures at the Criterion and the Rialto", *New York Times*, 28.1.1938.

Der Dybbuk 1937-2017

In 2014, the performance festival *Voice of the Word*, curated by Guy Biran (b. 1964) the artistic director of Hazira Theater in Jerusalem, together with Sala-manca, revisited Sh. An-ski's *Der Dybbuk*: *Tsvish tsvey veltn*. The festival commissioned a total of eight new works based on fragments and adaptations of An-ski's text in Yiddish and Hebrew translation.[20] One of these was the re-edited version of the film by Kaplan and Carmel, two Israeli visual artists working together as painters, illustrators, and video artists. Their 20-minute film retained most of the original dialogues in Yiddish with their Hebrew and English subtitles but because the artists did not have the means to separate one sound track from another, the Yiddish speaking parts with background music were silenced, leaving only the Hebrew and English subtitles. Still, Yiddish remained the living language of most of the dialogues, underlining that this is a Yiddish film re-edited by non-Yiddish speakers for an audience of mostly non-Yiddish speakers. In this sense, the work is reminiscent of Evgeny Vakhtangov, the Armenian director of the 1922 Habima production of the play, who knew neither the Hebrew nor Yiddish languages.

Carmel and Kaplan's 2014 performance made important changes to the original film. On one hand, they had the freedom to appropriate and intervene in the soundtrack of the film, adding ambiguous political interpretations through Smetana's music in scenes like Leah's dancing with the Death who is also her lover. On the other hand, because of their lack of

[20] The artists participating in the festival were Josef Sprinzak, Victoria Hanna and Noam Enbar, Li Lorian and Adam Yodfat, Shira Borer, Tom Soloveitzik, Alex Drool, Yaara Bar, Carmel Bar. There was as well one night devoted to a music event by Maya Dunietz, Tomer Damsky, Eran Sachs, Alex Drool and Nico Tine conducted by Ilan Volkov. During the event that happened in different rooms of the former Jerusalem leprosarium were reading of fragments of the original play by Eliezer and Ethele Niborski, and a lecture on the music by Michael Lukin.

Yiddish knowledge and time constraints, budgetary limitations as well as aesthetic decisions, they were force to remove many of Waszyński's additions to An-ski's original play, thereby losing some important elements of the plot. The first 25 minutes of Waszyński's film, devoted to Nisn and Sender's friendship and the oath between them, were completely removed, as were most of the additions of traditional Jewish folkloric elements. Also missing was the story about the bride and groom's tombstone in the middle of the shtetl and its central significance, with its reference to the bride and groom murdered by Khmielnitsky's pogroms in the mid-seventeenth century and its metaphoric association to the impossible love between Leah and Khonen.

Kaplan and Carmel not only re-edited the film but also replaced the original music composed by Henekh Kohn as well as the cantorial songs performed by Gershon Sirotta with an adapted version of the *Vltva* (*The Moldau*). The new score was performed live by the Jerusalem Young Symphonic Orchestra and conducted by Michael Klinghoffer. After the screening, the screen was rolled up to reveal the 12-17 years old musicians, adding an unexpected juxtaposition between the age of the musicians and the topics of possession, and death that underlie the film.

In July 2017, a new and longer version of this intervention to Waszyński's film, based on Kaplan and Carmel version, was re-edited by Sala-manca into a 50-minute film from the original 124 minutes. An important change introduced by Sala-manca was the erasure of the entire soundtrack, including all the dialogues, in order to make way for the live performance of the new score, the live dubbing, and live foleys (the film's recorded sound effects). During the performance at the Jerusalem Film Festival, the actors, the performers of the foleys, the singer, and the orchestra performed in front of the screen to stress the importance of the live performance to this project. The score included a new edition

of Smetana's music and fragments from other symphonic poems from Smetana's *Má vlast*.

At the front stage on the right side, behind a table with props (sand, small doors, bells, clothes, water, etc.), Kaplan and Carmel together with Ashelen Rotman Mauas (b. 2006, daughter of Mauas and Rotman) performed the foleys live. From a balcony, guest singer Ann Elizabet Nudelman sang the *Shir haShirim*. On the left side of the front stage, the Sala-manca group (Lea Mauas and myself) performed live dubbings of all the voices of the characters, sometimes changing the voice register between male and female. An excerpt of the totality of the performance soundtrack thus appeared as follows:

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			**טעקסט** **Text**
Sound Effect	**Shahar Carmel**	**Adi Kaplan**	
Steps on wood	Sender's steps on wooden floor	Leah's steps on wooden floor	סענדערס הויז **Sender's House**
			[כאַראַקטער | אַקטיאָר | קול] [Character | Actor | Live Voice]
			סענדער | משה ליפּמאַן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן **Sender | Moyshe Lipman | Diego Rotman**

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			טעקסט **Text**
Steps on a piece of wood. Friction two fabrics together. Smooching lips.	Sender's steps on wooden floor. Kiss.	Frade's steps on wooden floor	זײַ געזונט טעכטערל, זײַ געזונט שוועסטער, זײַט געזונט! Goodbye daughter! Goodbye sister... Goodbye!
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | לאה מאַואַס **Frade | Dina Halpern | Lea Mauas**
Opening a small door of a box on the table. Steps on a piece of wood.	Sender's steps on wooden floor.	Opening of door. Note's steps on wooden floor	פֿאָרט געזונט, אין אַ גיטער אין אַ מזלדיקער שעה! Have a safe journey! Good luck!
			נוטע | מאַקס באָזשיק | דיעגאָ **Nute | Max Bozyk | Diego**
Steps on a piece of wood	Sender's steps on wooden floor.	Nute's steps on wooden floor.	אַ גיטן. Goodbye! Goodbye!
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | לאה מאַואַס **Frade | Dina Halpern | Lea Mauas**

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			טעקסט **Text**
Steps on a piece of wood. Smooching lips. A small door slammed on the table.	Kiss to the mezuza.	Nute's steps on wooden floor	אַ גיטן. Good luck!
			לאה | לילי ליליאַנאַ | לאה מאַואַס **Leah | Lili Liliana | Lea Mauas**
Petting cloth bag.	Frade's steps on wooden floor.	Sound caressing hair.	דער טאַטע האָט מיר אפֿילו נישט געזוגט ווי אַהין ער פֿורט Daddy didn't even tell me where he's going
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן **Frade | Dina Halpern | Diego Rotman**
A tiny metal chain ring. Steps on a piece of wood.	A slight stamping on the foot.	Tinkling earrings.	אַוודאי פֿאַרגעסן אין גרויס אייַלעניש, חה... עס איז קיין סוד נישט. דער טאַטע פֿאָרט אין קלימוווקע אָנקיקן פֿאַר דיר אַ חותן... He must have forgotten in the rush. It's no secret. He went to Klimovka to decide on a bridegroom for you.

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			**טעקסט** **Text**
			לאה | לילי ליליאַנאַ | לאה מאַואַס **Leah | Lili Liliana | Lea Mauas**
			אַ חאָ... A bridegroom...
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן **Frade | Dina Halpern | Diego Rotman**
Tap on a canvas bag filled with fabrics. Friction 2 fabrics in each other. Steps on a wooden board. Squeeze of plastic bag filled with fabrics.	The sound of a thud between two bodies, the sound of a rustle of clothes. Khonen's foot-stamping sound. One step of Khonen. The sound of a rustle of clothes (Khonen lifts Leah). The sound of heavy footsteps (Khonen carrying Leah).	The sound of a thud between two bodies. The rustle of clothes. The sound of Frade's footsteps.	לאהלע, לאהלע, גאָט איז מיט דיר, וואָס איז! לאהלע, וואָס איז מיט דיר! חנן, חנן! העלף! אין חדר! אין חדר! צי אין חדר, ווײ איזמיר וואַסער, ווײ איזמיר! Leyele, what's wrong with you? What's happen? Khonen, Khonen help! Into the bedroom! Water!

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			**טעקסט** **Text**
Squeeze of plastic bag and cloth bag	The rustle of clothes and bedding.	The rustle of clothes and bedding	**חנן | ליאָן ליבגאָלד | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן** **Khonen | Leon Liebgold| Diego Rotman**
			לאה... לאה... Leye... Leye...
Steps on a wooden board. Squeeze of plastic bag	Khonen's running steps. The sound of Frade sitting on a bed.	Frade's steps on wooden floor.	**פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן** **Frade | Dina Halpern | Diego Rotman**
Friction 2 fabrics in each other.	The rustle of clothes and bedding.	The rustle of clothes and bedding.	לאהלע, דאַנקען גאָט, דאַנקען גאָט... לאה Leye, thanks God..., thanks God, Leye
Squeeze of plastic bag filled with fabrics.	The sound of sitting up straight in the bed.		**לאה | לילי ליליאַנאַ | לאה מאַואַס** **Leah | Lili Liliana | Lea Mauas**
			ווי׳ז חאָנאָן? **Where's Khonen?**
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן **Frade | Dina Halpern | Diego Rotman**

פֿאָליז **Foleys (Sound effects)**			**טעקסט** **Text**
Friction 2 fabrics in each other.		The rustle of clothes and bedding.	צי וואָס דאַרפֿסטו אים? What do you need from him?
			לאה | לילי ליליאַנאַ | לאה מאַואַס **Leah | Lili Liliana | Lea Mauas**
			...ריף אים אַרייַן מימעניו Please call him in auntie...
			פֿראַדע | דינה האַלפּערן | דיעגאָ ראָטמאַן **Frade | Dina Halpern | Diego Rotman**
			ער איז נישט דאָ חאָנאָן... ער איז אַוועק He is not here. He left
			לאה | לילי ליליאַנאַ | לאה מאַואַס **Leah | Lili Liliaa | Lea Mauas**
Friction 2 fabrics in each other. Squeeze of plastic bag filled with fabrics.	Slight thud between Leah and Frade.	The rustle of clothes.	אַוועק?... חאָנאָן! חאָנאָן! אַוועק... אַוועק...[בכי] מימעניו, אַוועק Left? Khonen! Khonen! Left...left...auntie...left

The production also introduced a few major changes. It recovered some of the scenes lost in Kaplan and Carmel's short version. Further, the plot was re-edited; for example, the exorcism ceremony was re-edited. But the most important change in the plot, first proposed by Kaplan and Carmel, was the fact that Leah rebels not only against her filial duty as in An-ski's version, but also against the author of the play himself: at the end of the exorcism Leah does not die.

Hatikva

> *The two fundamental laws of detournement are the loss of importance of each detourned autonomous element… and at the same time the organization of another meaningful ensemble that confers on each element its new scope and effect." (Ken Kab on the Situationist International)*

A recurring feature of experimental cinema is the new relations between image and sound in order to find new, complex or unexpected relationships between both forms. James Benning's *Landscape/Suicide* (1986), *Utopia* (1998), or Jean-Luc Godard *Histoire(s) du cinema* (1998) offer just few examples.[21] The use of new scores and live music performance for silent films is also a well-known approach; a new, current trend is to perform the original score of new movies live.[22] *Der Dybbuk 1937-2017* provides a combination of both: the use of an alternative score that does not belong to the original film, and its live performance as part of a film that was completely silenced for decades until it was rediscovered and rereleased in the 1980s, including its dialogues and foleys.

[21] See Jeffrey Skoller, *Shadows, Spectres, Shards – Making History in Avant-Garde Film* (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota University Press, 2005), 103.

[22] See for example the film-concerts done by Wordless Music (wordlessmusic.org).

Our original score created new meaning for the performance. The use of Smetana's *Moldau* as the score of *Der Dybbuk* as a clear reference to Israel's national anthem—resonating like it but sounding different, reminiscent of it without being it. This musical choice creates a liminal sonic soundscape that cannot be defined in terms of place or ideology. The use of Smetana's *Moldau* is a sonic manipulation capable of stressing the connections and the interferences among different worlds and traditions: European romanticism and the nationalism inherent in Smetana's *Ma Vlast*, the Zionist "Hatikva", and the East European Jewish *Dybbuk*.

The journey into the source of origin or inspiration for the melody of "Hatikva" has inspired an extensive scholarly literature, as discussed in a study by Edwin Seroussi on the grass-roots energies that generated "Hatikva" from its inception until its legislation as the Israeli national anthem, which only happened in 2004.[23] Seroussi addresses the circumstances that shaped Naphtali Herz Imber's original poem (originally named "Tikvatenu" [Our Hope]) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the musical contrafactum in the adaption of a preexisting melody to a new text, which together created "Hatikva." According to Seroussi, Imber's inspiration seems to have been the news of the founding of the Jewish settlement Petah Tikvah [Gate of Hope] in Palestine. Among other possible inspirations for Imber's text Seroussi refers to its intercultural connection with "Mazurek Dąbrowskiego," a famous Polish patriotic song written in 1797 by Józef Wybicki. Modified to became the national anthem of the Republic of Poland in 1926, it includes the line: "Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła, Kiedy my żyjemy": "Poland is not yet lost, while we still live," which is comparable to the line of Hatikva, "Our hope is not yet lost."

[23] Edwin Seroussi, "Hatikvah: Conceptions, Receptions and Reflections", *Yuval Online* 9 (2015), www.jewish-music.huji.ac.il (accessed 10.9.2017).

Hatikva's melody was adapted by Samuel Cohen in 1887, who borrowed it from the Moldavian-Rumanian song "Carul cu Boi" [Cart with Oxen]. This song is actually a variant of a melodic pattern circulating in Rumania/ Moldavia among Jews and non-Jews alike. The same melody was adapted to several texts in Rumanian. Many scholars and musicologists have looked for the origins of the melody in Spanish, Polish, Czech, Rumanian, Ukrainian and Armenian source and even in Jewish liturgy. Others attribute its origins to a folk melody from north-east Italy known as "La Mantovana", apparently the source for "Caul cu Boi." However, the historiographic and popular version that attracted Kaplan and Carmel was the one that relates to the first melodic phrase of "Hatikva," the first main theme of the *Moldau*, the second symphonic poem of *Má vlast* (*My Homeland*) composed by Smetana between 1874 and 1879, with the ideals of romantic and nationalistic music that characterized the late nineteenth century. What makes the connection between "Hatikva" and the *Moldau* so strong is perhaps the fact that Smetana's piece was played as a subterfuge substitute for "Hatikva" by the Hebrew section of the Palestine Broadcasting Service during the British Mandate of Palestine, when it was forbidden to perform any national anthem beside the British one. When Jewish inhabitants of Palestine heard the *Moldau* they were in fact hearing or imagining "Hatikva." Although there is no direct relationship between these pieces, the close musical patterns are capable of provoking in those spectators knowing the Hatikva a powerful and confusing effect in the unexpected musical and ideological connection between the canonic Jewish film and the homeland of others. A Czech nationalist musical composition comes not only in place of the original Jewish music of the film, but also in place of the Israeli national anthem, replacing the sonic representation of the Promised Land with a nationalist composition devoted to a distant European river.

Intermundane Collaboration

> *[Maria Callas's] record company has succeeded in making people think she is still alive… It's a little bit like conversations with the other world (Manuela Helterhoff, Cinderella & Company)*

The first decades of the twentieth century were an era of fascination with new technologies, machinery and the supernatural during a time when many inventors and scientists like Thomas Edison and Konstantin Raudive imagined technologies for receiving spectral messages from the open air. In 1920—the same year of An-ski's death and the premier of the Vilner trupe's production of *Der Dybbuk: Tsvishn tsvey veltn in Warsaw*—Edison, in an interview with American Magazine, revealed his intentions to communicate with the dead:

> I am building an apparatus to see if it possible for personalities which have left this earth to communicate with us […] If our personality dies, what's the use of a hereafter? […] If there is a hereafter which is to do us any good, we want our personality to survive, don't we?[24]

With the belief that the human thought structure remains the same after death, Edison expresses a hope that he can, in Jeffrey Sconce's words, "reconcile fears of discorporative anonymity with a reassuring survival of the autonomous individual."[25] Sconce interprets this longing and search of communication with the dead as a reflection of the hope that those technological innovations would:

[24] B.C. Forbes, "Edison Working on How to Communicate with the Next World," *American Magazine*, October 1920, 10.

https://atlantisrisingmagazine.com/article/machines-to-talk-to-the-dead/

[25] Jeffrey Sconce, *Haunted Media: Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2000), 81.

> […] overcome the trauma of a profound loss. They sought to repair a decisive moment of separation – either in the founding moment of psychic repression or the final moment of bodily death – that left "conscious" subjects abandoned and alone.[26]

The connection with the dead, a central topic in the *dybbuk* phenomenon, allows a new intellectual and technological approach to this necessity of communication with the *other world* one hundred years after Edison's argument. In this section I propose to read the new 2017 version of Waszyńki's film as a contemporary practice of "intermundane collaboration." It follows Stanyek and Piekut's research on collaborations that "enroll, enlist, and manage deadness, not from the grave itself, but from another dead space: the recording studio […]".[27]

Stanyek and Piekut provide conceptual tools for researching those intermundane collaborations in music, its economy and ethics. They view the recording of Enrico Caruso's "Vesti la Giubba" in 1932 as the first joint recording ever of a dead performer who had passed away 11 years before this recording session with live musicians. They conclude their research with a case study of Natalie Cole and Nat King Cole's 1991 recording of "Unforgettable," done 26 years after Nat King Cole's death. Of her experience of singing with her dead father, Natalie Cole said she felt "as if he was more communicating with me, that he was kind of leading me in all the right things. And we were kind of holding hands."[28] Jonathan Sterne argues that sound recording in the nineteenth century "preserve[d] the bodies of the dead so that they could continue to perform a social function after life."[29]

[26] Sconce, *Haunted Media*, 91.

[27] Jason Stanyek and Benjamin Piekut. "Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane", 27.

[28] Ibid., 32.

[29] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham: Duke University Press 2003), 292.

▲ Der Dybbuk 1937-2017, Sala-manca, Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel, still from performance, 2017.

▲ Der Dybbuk 1937-2017, Sala-manca, Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel, still from performance, 2017

Stanyek and Piekut affirm: “Through recording itself, these live persons sign on to future networks where they will play a decidedly different role. They are the becoming dead.”[30]

Intermundane collaborations are a phenomenon among popular Israeli musicians, with Kobi Oz, Yehuda Poliker, and Ilana Eliyah among those who have incorporated the archival voices of their parents and grandparents into their recordings. Edwin Seroussi has written about this phenomenon and defined it as a kind of cyclical return to the soundscape of the past. It is, affirms Seroussi, “a strategy to subvert both the secular and colonial Zionism that attempted to marginalize the religious-oriented culture of Mizrahi Jews”[31] in the case of Oz, and “a tactic that allows the regeneration of the contemporary Israeli soundscape through the sentiment of nostalgia using a parent’s voice,”[32] in the case of Poliker. Nostalgia, argues Seroussi, is “an escape from the present time and/or place […] [as] a reactionary political force […].”[33] Unlike Oz or Poliker who worked with archival material from their own family, Kaplan, Carmel, and Sala-manca’s *Dybbuk* project worked with recorded and filmed bodies and voices of a culture that belong to them in a non-familiar way and without a sentiment of nostalgia.

For the 2014 version of the *Dybbuk*, the artists did not request permissions from the film’s owners, actors, or director’s descendants, and made use of a pirated version found online. However, for the second version that was to be presented at an international film festival, the artists sought access to a high-quality copy. They approached the company that created the most recent restoration of the film and owns the rights; the company’s answer,

[30] Stanyek and Piekut, “Deadness: Technologies of the Intermundane”, 33.

[31] Edwin Seroussi, “Nostalgic Soundscapes: The Future of Israel’s Sonic”, *Israel Studies* 19/2 (Summer 2014): 41.

[32] Ibid., 43.

[33] Ibid., 36.

sent to the person in charge at the Israel Film Archives—which was not expected—expressed a profound disagreement with the idea of altering the original. However, the news that the film has "no copyright owner" for the non-restored version of the film allowed the artists to approach the cinematic *Dybbuk* as an open source archive with a creative commons license as a piece of folklore. The artists made a new digital copy of the non-restored film, re-edited it, and erased the original soundtrack in order to allow the creation of a living soundtrack to be added to this specific and symbolic cultural body.

Engaging with dead characters through technological manipulation as a means of Yiddish cultural continuity is one possible path indirectly suggested by the artists,[34] who, in the spirit of *Der Dybbuk*, visit the archive instead of the cemetery and invite the dead to dance again with the living. The contemporary artists thus turn the fallen stars of the Yiddish theater into active agents in the co-creation of new content and meaning, and offer them a new role in life and in death.[35] In an act of sonic resistance, or in an intellectual act of sonic possession, the artists' act raises many ethical and economic questions regarding the politics and poetics in the use of archival material that merit further discussion beyond the scope of this present study.

[34] This idea was suggested in an artist's talk following their presentation in YMCA-Jerusalem on November 22, 2017. The talk was organized by the department of Theater Studies at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, it was chaired by Dr. Olga Levitan and took place in the theater hall itself.

[35] With the unexpected death of Carrie Fisher, the actress that played the role of princess Leia in Star Wars, the producers started to plan her comeback in the next chapters of the series utilizing digital manipulation. See: Borys Kit, "Star Wars' Braintrust Sets Meeting to Plot Leia's Life After Carrie Fisher's Death", *The Hollywood Reporter,* 5.1.2017 (accessed 10.9.2017:http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/heat-vision/carrie-fisher-episode-viii-how-star-wars-will-handle-leias-future-960849) and Ben Child, "Disney's dilemma: digitally resurrect Carrie Fisher or write her out of Star Wars?", *The Guardian*, 6.1.2017 (accessed 10.9.2017: https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2017/jan/06/carrie-fisher-star-wars-princess-leia-episodes-viii-ix-disney)

From Vernacular to Post-Vernacular

Similar work to the one discussed here exists in the tradition of avant-garde films, in which artists make active and creative use of cinematic materials from older films to provide a new meaning for the present. One example is the already-mentioned *Histoire(s) du Cinema* by J.L. Godard (1998), in which fragments of old films are re-edited to become fragments of Godard's personal and subjective film on the historiography of the cinema.[36] Jeffrey Skoller approaches his study on avant-garde films following Walter Benjamin's notion of history, which "creates a distinction between traditional historicism as the construction of an eternal image of the past … 'the way it really was' and a notion of historical materialism in which the experience of the past is produced as something unique by the conditions of the present."[37] Skoller approaches those films as allegories where the conditions of the present are central to the reading of the events and objects form the past, allowing a co-existence of two different "present times" instead of a chronology in the history of the object and the viewing of it.[38]

In the *Der Dybbuk 1937-2017* film-performance, when the film characters are live-dubbed by performers, there is a process of "re-writing" into an "erased text," writing with a new voice, a new accent, and a new meaning. Live dubbing, synchronizing the live voice with the movements of the actor's lips in the screen, assumes the qualities of a palimpsest, as suggested by Hakim

[36] See Godard *Histoire(s) du Cinema*; and Jeffrey Skoller, *Shadows, Specters, Shards – Making History in Avant-Garde Film* (Minneapolis MN: University of Minnesota University Press, 2005), 7.

[37] Benjamin in Skoller ibid., xvii.

[38] Skoller, *Shadows, Specters, Shards*, xviii.

Bey.[39] Live dubbing stresses the process of erasing in order to write or actually pronounce the same "old" and "original" text in the same place creating at the same time a new and different text. The aim of this act is not to make the text clearer but to reflect on the act of speech in the post-Holocaust era, to retell the story reflecting the new and specific historical context in which the film is being screened and performed. A new meaning is created not only through the context of the process of watching a Yiddish-Polish film from 1937 in Israel in 2017, but through the live performance and live possession of the film's soundtrack, including the dialogues of the characters. In an act of profound subversion, the young performer give a new life to the film.

In the decision to dub live the film in the same language and with the same texts as the original offers an inverted mirror of the *dybbuk* phenomenon: instead of the spirit of a dead person taking over a living body speaking from her/his throat with his/her own voice, there are the voices of living bodies who possess the archived bodies of the dead actors and their eternalized characters. Central to this translation from recorded to live Yiddish—and the deliberate copying of the original into a new original—is the decision to abandon the vernacular recorded Yiddish of the actors in the film in favor of the "live" academic Yiddish of the two Argentinian-born performers. This act reflects and underlines that symbolic dimension added to Yiddish beyond that of a language of communication, as formulated by Jeffrey Shandler in his definition of post-vernacular Yiddish:[40]

The term postvernacular related to Yiddish in a manner that both is

[39] Bey argues that an ancient manuscript written on parchment still bearing semi-erased traces of earlier manuscripts, preserving a chain of absent-present texts and carrying different layers of history, meaning and ideologies. Hakim Bey, *T.A.Z.: The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonoedia, 2003).

[40] Jeffrey Shandler, *Adventures in Yiddishland: Postvernacular Language & Culture* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 31-58, 126-153.

> other than its use as a language of daily life and is responsive to the language having once been a widely used Jewish vernacular […] in the postvernacular mode the language's secondary, symbolic level of meanings is always privileged over its primary level.[41]

The superimposition of Mauas and Rotman's "post-vernacular Yiddish", a language used by them not in their everyday life but as a symbolic gesture, to the characters of the *Dybbuk*, originally performed on screen by Liliana and Liebgold and others, gives the recorded performance new meaning. It can be said that Lili Liliana and Leon Liebgold's "lively" and documental vernacular Yiddish is being possessed by the *dead-live-Yiddish* of the post-vernacular performers. Here the Yiddish actors are given a second life much akin to a puppet theater, or perhaps, as Jean-Pierre Naugrette notes: "if a transformed body constitutes the surface of a symptom, the altered voice is its depth and completes the incorporation of the 'monster' into its alienation"?[42] Maybe, as expected by the performers, the actors and characters of Lili Liliana and Leon Liebgold are being resurrected or re-incarnated in real-time and becoming participants in a new collaborative project of reviving an eternal Jewish ghost, the Dybbuk ghost, and the ghost of the actors who staged it in the past.

Gender

Más de un espectador se pregunta: Ya que hay usurpación de voces, ¿por qué no también de figuras? ¿Cuándo será perfecto el sistema? ¿Cuándo veremos directamente a Juana González en el papel de Greta Garbo, en el papel de

[41] Ibid., 22.

[42] Jean-Pierre Naugrette. «Discours du corps, ordre du discours: De Stevenson á Kafka» *Les Figures du corps dans la litterature et la peinture anglaises et americaines de la Renaissance á nos jours,* ed. Bernard Brugiere (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1991), 144-145.

la Reina Cristina de Suecia? (Jorge Luis Borges, "Sobre el Doblaje", Sur, 128, June, 1945).

[More than one moviegoer will wonder: Given that there is already usurpation of voices, why not also of figures? When will we see Juana González in the role of Greta Garbo, in the role of Queen Christina of Sweden? (Jorge Luis Borges, On Dubbing Movies, translated by Frank Thomas Smith)]

Agnieszka Lugetko refers to Leah in Waszyński's *Dybbuk* as crossing gender boundaries, staging a "transgender performance," taking control to her own life and performing an act of resistance against the established woman's role in Jewish traditional society.[43] Parker Tyler refers to a complete penetration of Khonen in Leah, "having achieved complete immersion in his beloved, an absolute transvestism."[44] In the sonic live translation of *Der Dybbuk 1937-2017* there is a change of voice register between male and female in unexpected characters: Nisn is performed by Lea Mauas; Aunt Frede is performed by Diego Rotman; the *messenger* is performed by both, as reflected in the quoted fragment of the script above. Borrowing the term from music theory, this entails a process of "voice-crossing" (instead of cross-dressing). Voice-crossing occurs "when two voices exchange position – when the alto moves tenor, for instance – the voices are said to cross."[45] That crossing can cause registral confusion and reduce the independence of the voices. When listening to the human voice, we tend to identify the gender of the speaker. The performers' decision to make an indistinctive use of male

[43] Agnieszka Lugetko, *Possessed by the Other: Dybbuk Possession and Modern Jewish Identity in Twentieth-Century Jewish Literature and Beyond* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 2012), 198

[44] Parker Tyler, *Screening in the Sexes: Homosexuality in the Movies* (New York: Reinhart & Winston, 1972).

[45] Edward Aldwell and Carl Schachter, *Harmony and Voice Leading* (San Diego, Calif: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College, 1989), 102.

▲ Der Dybbuk 1937-2017, Sala-manca, Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel, still from performance, 2017.

and female voices to recreate the voice of male and female characters served not only utilitarian means when there was, for example, no other way for the two performers to recreate a two-man dialogue. In addition, in Israel 2017, it resulted in a humorous technique as a consequence of the unexpected changes of roles, being sometimes the same role performed indistinctly by the two live performers. More importantly, however, it challenged pre-established categories in the sonic representation of a specific gender in a film where gender transformation forms a core theme of *Der Dybbuk*.

Leah

The most important plot change to the film itself is the fact that in the revived 2017 version, Leah does not die at the end of the exorcism. The last words in the film mark the only textual change to the original script, replacing the dialogue between Leah and Khonen that consists of the promise to unite in love their love in the world to come. Quite literally following Roland Barthes's assertion in *Image, Music, Text* that "The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from innumerable centers of culture,"[46] Leah suddenly says the line in Yiddish translation:

> אין אײנעם אַ טאָג װעלן זיך די בלומען צעבונטעװען און אָפּשנײַדן
> די קעפּ בײַ די גערטנערס, אין אײנעם אַ טאָג װעלן די אינדיאַנער
> אױפֿשטײן און אַנטדעקן אַמעריקע.[47]

> [One day the flowers will rise up and cut off the heads of the gardeners, one day the Indians will stand up and discover America].

Leah is citing the Argentinian poet João Delgado, a literary figure created

[46] Barthers, *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana Press, 1977), 146.

[47] João Delgado, "One Day…", *Hearat Shulaym* 1 (2001), 1. The Yiddish translation is by Yitshok Niborski.

by Sala-manca, which appears quoted in many of the artist collective's projects. The quotation contextualizes Leah's individual struggle for her own freedom of speech and autonomy as a Jewish woman as part of a larger revolutionary discourse on freedom and social justice, incorporating this way the artists' voice and discourse into Leah's speech. "In the absence of any other way to resist the forces of the hegemonic power structure," writes Rachel Elior regarding the phenomenon of *dybbuk* possession in Jewish culture, "the *dybbuk* allowed for the expression of such resistance […]". Next Leah repeats and appropriates with her own voice the statement from Act 3 originally spoken by the *dybbuk*:

> ”נישטאָ אַזאַ העכסטע הויך, זאָל זיך גלייַכן צו מייַן איצטיקן רו-אָרט!“
>
> [There is no more exalted height than my present refuge!]

Thus Leah reclaims her place in this world, defining her body, her individuality – or perhaps the diaspora itself, or the other's nation, the other's body – as her last possible refuge.

"Even in death," argues Joseph Roach, "actors' roles tend to stay with them. They gather in the memory of audiences, like ghosts, as each new interpretation of a role sustains or upsets expectations derived from the previous ones."[48] Leah's place in this 21st century Israeli version of the film cannot be considered without reference to Chana Rovina's original performance of Leah in Habima's version of The *Dybbuk*. Dorit Yerushalmi suggests in her reading of Habima's Hebrew version of the *Dybbuk*, following the interpretation of Khonen and Leah's re-union in the "world to come" as a reunion in the Land of Israel. Leah as performed by Rovina "became a

[48] Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996), 78.

national-Zionist myth […] She symbolizes the Land and the Nation, and they are equivalent to her."[49] If Leah/Rovina is the mother of the Hebrew nation, the symbol of the Israeli national theater, in this film Leah/Liliana/Lea (Mauas) is an alternative to her, by opposition she translates back the canonic play and Leah's character into a living Yiddish symbol, she becomes the mother of exile.

The last image we have of Chana Rovina performing Leah is that of a 68-year old actress wearing a wedding dress in the 1,000th performance of Habima's *Dybbuk*, unable to resist the passage of the time.[50] By contrast, Liliana's Leah remains on screen eternally young, alive (in this new version) and revolutionary woman. Leah/Liliana/Lea (Mauas) represents the irresistible myth of the Jewish exile, a post-human body, emerging from the celluloid to digitally reclaim her body, her love, her voice, her life and her culture. With all the pathos in the sonic background of the *Moldau* and its melodic reference to the Israeli national anthem, Leah/Liliana/Lea (Mauas) deconstructs in Yiddish Leah/Rovina's Zionist Hebrew myth. Lea/Liliana/Lea (Mauas) refuses in 2017 to perform her death in exchange for any ideal, for any love, for any Land. Through the performance, Leah refuses to enter the archive. Leah comes back from the past to remain present, to dance with the living.

[49] Dorit Yerushalmi, "Bitzilah shel Chana Rovina," *Zemanim* 99 (Summer 2007): 32. See also the definition of Leah/Rovinaas the "symbol of the Hebrew Woman, the Mother" in L.F. "Prasei Israel lesifrut ve-omanut: Chana Rovina", *Lamerchav*, 27.4.1956.

[50] See the picture here: http://blog.nli.org.il/rovina/ (accessed 19.11.2018).

▲ Der Dybbuk 1937-2017, Sala-manca, Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel, still from performance, 2017

Tisch

Nir Yahalom, Sala-Manca, Samuel Rotman

Tisch (table)

The *Tisch* is a ritual that takes place at the Hassidic leader*'s* courts, meaning The Rebbe (A*dmor* – leader of Hassidic following) setting the table for his followers. The Tisch ceremony is held mainly on the Sabbath and holidays, but also on other occasions such as the *Melave Malka* festive meal and other festivities.

At the Tisch held on the Sabbath and holidays, many of the Rebbes eat their entire meal or part of it there, at the Hassidic table. The followers watch the Rebbe, sing tunes and listen to his sermons and teachings. At most Hassidic courts, a graded tribune is built (called *forentches* in Yiddish), upon which the Hassidim stand and look at their Rebbe.

The Ethnographic Department contains a "Restored Tisch": a tribune constructed of original timber from the Hansen leper hospital; a synagogue bench that has been replaced; *Keter* plastic folding tables; electric Sabbath candles, a work by Samuel Rotman for his parents in Argentina; various chairs; and a plastic tablecloth. On the ceiling are traces of Hadas Ophrat's work "*unseen*".

The Tisch will serve not only as an installation but also as a platform for workshops for the duration of the exhibition, turning the museum installation into the arena of a non-museum event.

▾ Shabbes Tisch. Sala-Manca and Nir Yahalom. Installation. 2014

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“The Eternal Sabbath” Electric Sabbath Candles

The History of a Folk Tradition from a Modernist Perspective

Shalom Sabar

Several years ago, following one of my lectures on the images and artifacts related to the celebration of Sabbath, Diego Rotman, then one of my students, told me about the “electric candles” his father, Samuel Rotman, created while still in Argentina, to be lit when welcoming the Sabbath (Fig. 1). My curiosity was piqued by the story, which seemed rather odd at first hearing. What tied a man, particularly a person who could not be considered an observant Jew, to the “womanly mitzvah” of lighting Sabbath candles? What was this act meant to express and what place did it have in his life? As a scholar of Jewish art and folklore, I was especially intrigued by the fact that the candles were electric – I had never encountered such an artifact among the objects belonging to any of the communities I had studied. Its uniqueness aroused many questions about the object’s design and use.

The centuries-old practice of lighting of Sabbath candles has become one of the most prominent and well-known of Jewish traditions. Although formal religious law permits men as well as women, single or married, to perform this ritual, the lighting of Sabbath candles has become associated primarily with the feminine sphere – usually the mother, the woman playing the most important role in the family’s life. Over the years, a spectrum of customs regarding the lighting of Sabbath candles emerged in the Jewish communities residing in Europe and the Muslim world, each of which acquired its own meaning. The customs have been intensified by elements of the material culture associated with the visual representation of Jewish culture (or folk art), a culture that largely expressed itself in the creation of

◂ Figure 1. Eternal Shabbes, Samuel Rotman, ~1985

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artifacts required to celebrate the commandments (such as the making of a special box for spices to be used in the Havdalah ceremony, the writing and decoration of marriage contracts, and the ornamentation of Hanukkah lamps as well as containers for the etrog or citron fruit used on Sukkot).

With respect to Sabbath candles, two factors are particularly salient for our discussion of Samuel Rotman's electric candles: the materials used as fuel (commonly wax or oil) and the implement used to light them, both from the perspective of their design, appearance, form, ornamentation and materials. Yet, before proceeding, I should mention some of the basic issues touching upon the lighting of Sabbath candles. Specifically, when is this ritual first mentioned? Why do women customarily light candles? And what is the customary number of candles to be lit?

Contrary to common beliefs, the lighting of candles on the Sabbath is not mentioned in the Bible. What is mentioned is lighting a fire on the Sabbath, which is strictly prohibited ("Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the Sabbath day").[1] Whereas the Samaritans and the Karaites take this prohibition literally, Talmudic sages, in their commentaries on this verse, effectively eased the restriction while stating that lighting a fire was prohibited during the Sabbath itself, doing so was possible and even welcome before the Sabbath's entry because it served the festive celebration of the Sabbath as well as other festivities.[2] This is apparently the original reason for lighting Sabbath candles and the transformation of the custom into an obligation[3] – that is, the provision of light during the festive Sabbath meal, which occurs after dark.

[1] Exodus, 35:3

[2] This issue was already discussed in the Mishnah ,tractate *Shabbat*, Chapter 1.

[3] In the language of the Babylonian Talmud: "Rabbi Nachman Bar Rabba said, lighting Sabbath candles is an obligation" (*Shabbat*, 25b).

This idea is generally associated with *Oneg Shabbat*, a concept taken from the Bible ("And call the Sabbath a delight").[4] For the Talmudic sages, this verse meant indulging in the enjoyment of spiritual and physical pleasures on the Sabbath (such as eating and drinking well and even having sexual relations). Such behavior was rationalized in relation to the lighting of candles: "'And call the Sabbath a delight' – means lighting of Sabbath candles. If you are seated in darkness, there is no delight".[5] The Medieval *Tosafists* expanded this argument, explaining that it is impossible to enjoy the meal without seeing the dishes served.[6] Later sources rationalize lighting the Sabbath lamp as an act "honoring Sabbath" or, in Rashi's words: "The Sabbath is honored in that no meal is important unless served in a place having light".[7] In addition to *Oneg Shabbat* and "in honor of Sabbath", we find a third argument, "domestic harmony", that is, the candles' light contributes to the creation of "familial tranquility." In other words, the candles' light creates a peaceful, conciliatory atmosphere among the household's members and prevents the squabbles and incidents that may erupt during darkness.[8]

[4] Isaiah, 58:13

[5] *Midrash Tanchuma*, Genesis, Noah, 1 (for an English translation, see Samuel A. Berman [ed. and trans.], *Midrash Tanhuma-Yelammedenu: An English Translation of Genesis and Exodus from the Printed Version of Tanhuma-Yelammedenu* [Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav Pub. House, 1996], 39-40). The meaningful phrase: "Should you be seated in darkness, it is no delight", does not appear in the ancient edition of the *Midrash Tanchuma* that was edited by Shlomo Buber (Vilna: The Widow and the Brothers Rom, 1885, Vol. 1, 27-28; in Hebrew). According to Leopold Zunz, the phrase was added in the ninth century during the dispute with the Karaites, who prohibited the kindling of the Sabbath lights prior to entry of the Sabbath so that to prevent its use after the Sabbath began. Cf. Marc Bregman, *The Tanhuma-Yelammedenu Literature, Studies in the Evolution of the Versions* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2003), 185 (Hebrew).

[6] See the Tosafot section in tractate S*habbat*, 25b.

[7] For Rashi's argument see the page from tractate *Shabbat* cited in note 6.

[8] In the words of R. Joseph Caro: "There is no peace at home without a [the Sabbath's] candle [=light]." See *Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chaim*, 263, 3.

The material culture associated with lighting of the Sabbath candles during Biblical times was examined in minute detail in the Mishnah. The well-known quote on the subject, which opens with the words: "With what may they kindle [the Sabbath light] and with what may they not kindle them?" [9] begins a discussion of the wide range of materials to be used when preparing wicks and oils. Due to the importance of these tracts and their relationship to the Sabbath, they achieved a unique status in the liturgy and from the Gaonic period (sixth-eleventh centuries) onward they are recited in the synagogue every Sabbath eve, between the *mincha* (afternoon) and evening prayers. The materials recalled in the respective chapter come from the animal (for instance, the oil produced from a sheep's soft fatty tail) and the vegetable world (such as the *tapuah sdom* or desert Calotropis, a type of flowering plant also referred to as Sodom apples or a rubber bush, the hairs of which can be used to produce wicks).

Although the majority of these oils and wicks are listed as prohibited for use when lighting candles, their itemization accurately reflects the reality of daily life in Late Antiquity. Olive oil emerges from the list as an especially refined and highly appropriate oil, as Rabbi Tarfon declares: "They don't light with anything but olive oil".[10] This statement reflects the physical properties of choice grades of olive oil – such as clarity, density, purity, pleasing aroma and stability of the flame – which were recognized in this and later periods.[11] Alternatively, the preference for olive oil in the production of Sabbath (as well

[9] Mishnah, Shabbat, Chapter 2.

[10] Mishnah, Shabbat, 2, 2

[11] Compare, for example, with the paragraph "Laws of the Wick and Oil," *Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chaim*, 264. Caro summaries the rules for the different oils as follows: "In any event, [the usage of] olive oil is a chosen [or: among the best] mitzvah (Ibid., 264, 12). For a study of the realia and background of the materials, oils and wicks mentioned by the rabbis of the Mishnah in Eretz Israel of the time, see Zohar Amar and Avivit Shwiky, *Ba-meh madlikin* (Elkanah: Mekhon Eretz Chefetz, 2003; in Hebrew with English summary).

as for Hanukkah) candles was accompanied by a clear symbolic relationship to the kindling used to fuel the menorah situated in the Holy Temple ("pure olive oil beaten for the light").[12] In doing so, the meaning of the mitzvah was strengthened because it relates to the main artifact found in the Temple but also to the ultimate symbol of Judaism during the Talmudic period.[13]

After the meticulous listing of oils and wicks, the tractate's chapter ends with a passage from which we learn that already in the time of the Mishnah, the mitzvah of lighting Sabbath candles was imposed on women rather than men: "On account of three transgressions women die in childbirth: for negligence (of the laws) during their menstruation, neglect of separating the first dough, and for neglecting to light the (Sabbath) lamp."[14] Over the generations, different explanations were offered for the essence of the woman's role in fulfilling these mitzvot, the relationships between them and their salience in her life. The respective three commandments eventually came to be called the "Mitzvot Chanah ", the mnemonic Hebrew acronym for the female mitzvot in Judaism (i.e., **Ch**alla, **N**ida, **H**adlaka), while simultaneously tying it to the ideal of womanhood captured in the image of the Prophet Samuel's pious mother.

One of the explanations commonly offered in Late Antiquity that tied the three mitzvot to the severity of the punishment, should a woman neglect to perform them, referred to Eve's sin when in the Garden of Eden: "Why was she [woman] given the precept of menstruation? Because she spilled the blood of the first man [Adam]. And why was she given the precept of challa? Because she corrupted Adam, who was the challah of the world. And why was she given the precept of Sabbath lights? Because she extinguished the

[12] Exodus, 27:20.

[13] For a comprehensive selection of illustrations and articles, see the exhibition catalogue: Yael Israel (ed.), *In the Menorah's Light – The Story of a Symbol*, (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1999).

[14] Mishna, Shabbat, 2, 6

soul of Adam, which is described in these words: "the spirit of man is the candle of the Lord'".[15]

Elsewhere I have discussed the visual representation of these three commandments in European Jewish art.[16] For the purpose of the present discussion, it is sufficient to note that within this corpus, images of women lighting Sabbath lamps represent female piety and their specific sphere of activities within the Jewish world. Moreover, sources from the Middle Ages onward treated the mitzvah of lighting the Sabbath lamp not as punishment but as a woman's unique contribution to the household. In his *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides wrote: "Women have a greater obligation in this regard than men, for they are normally at home and are involved in the household tasks".[17]

A further issue in this regard pertains to the number of candles to be lit. In the Talmudic linguistic form, the reference is frequently noted in the singular: *ner shabbat*; mention is made of a single candle even when citing the obligation to kindle Sabbath lights.[18] To this day this phrasing is echoed in the blessing generally recited when lighting candles: *le-hadleek ner shel Shabbat* ("to kindle the light of the Sabbath)". However, in only a few instances did the Jewish communities light only one candle. I personally witnessed a rare example of lighting one sole candle many years ago, when I visited Uzbekistan for the first time. My informants among the Jews of Bukhara were surprised to hear that other communities light more than

[15] Proverbs, 20: 27, in *Yalkut Shimoni*, Genesis, 23; cf. also *Midrash Tanchuma*, Genesis, Noah, 1.

[16] Shalom Sabar, "Mitzvot Hannah: Visual Depictions of the 'Three Women's Commandments' among the Jews of Europe from the Middle Ages to Late Nineteenth Century," in: *Textures – Culture, Literature, Folklore for Galit Hasan-Rokem vol. 2*, eds. H. Salamon & A. Shinan (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2013), 383-413 (Hebrew; English summary).

[17] Maimonides , *Mishneh Torah*, *Sefer Zemanim* ["Times"], Shabbat, Ch. 5, *halacha* 3.

[18] Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbat*, 25b.

one candle. I should also mention that the blessing over a single candle (more precisely, a wick), is preserved in the Portuguese among the Crypto-Jews (*anusim*) who, for centuries, carried out this commandment in secret: "Blessed be the Lord, my God, my only God, who has commanded us to fulfill this very blessed, sacred commandment to light the holy wick and celebrate the Lord's holy evening, so that He may lighten our souls and deliver us from our guilt, offenses and sins".[19]

Turning to Ashkenazi Halakha from the Middle Ages, we find the custom of lighting two candles, which is first mentioned in the second half of the twelfth century by R. Eliezer ben Yoel HaLevi of Mainz (known by the Hebrew acronym Ravyah, born c. 1140, died after 1220): "It appears to me customary to light two candles, one [for the mitzvah, and the other is] meant to provide light while eating [the Sabbath meal], and this cannot be done properly unless there are two lights".[20] According to the Ravyah's interpretation, like those of other Ashkenazi authorities, the Halakhic explanation for lighting two candles is that one candle, in Talmudic tradition, is dedicated to *Oneg Shabbat*, meaning "not to sit in darkness during the Sabbath". The second is "in honor of Shabbat", that is, for the purpose of

[19] This original text in Portuguese and its translation into Hebrew (by Schulamith Hava HaLevy) appear in Samuel Schwarz, *The New-Christians in Portugal in the 20th Century*, ed. C. B. Stuczynsky, (Jerusalem: The Dinur Center for Research in Jewish History, 2005 [1925]), 168. Other versions are available, with interesting differences, but they all mention a single candle or wick. For an additional version in Hebrew translation, see Aliza Lavie (ed.), *A Jewish Woman's Prayer Book* (New York: Spiegel & Garu, Random House, 2008), 166-169 (and see there, 154-183, for a collection of prayers upon lighting candles as recited by women from various Jewish communities). See also idem, *Women's Customs – A Journey of Jewish Customs, Rituals, Prayers and Stories*, (Tel Aviv: Miskal, 2012), 179-184 (Hebrew).

[20] Eliezer ben Joel HaLevi, *Sefer Ravyah*, section 139. See the edition of Avigdor Eptovitcher, 2nd printing (Jerusalem: The Harry Fischel Institute for Research in Jewish Law, 1964), Part I, 265 (Hebrew). Cf. Israel M. Ta-Shema, "Candle of Honor," in Ta-Shema, Early Franco-German Ritual and Custom (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1992), esp. 126-127 (Hebrew).

fulfilling the mitzvah or to comply with the need to remember that one candle is lit not only for its benefits, but also for its acknowledgement of our compliance with a core religious obligation.[21]

Other reasons were later added in support of the explanation that two is the correct and more meaningful number of candles. Most often mentioned was the relationship to observation of the Sabbath as it appears in the two versions of the Ten Commandments: One candle in relation to the verse from the Book of Exodus: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy",[22] and the second candle in reference to the slight but highly meaningful variation found in the Deuteronomy: "Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy".[23] Other sources grounded the reason for lighting two candles in the dualism associated with keeping the Sabbath, which expresses the "importance of the day whose virtues are double" – such as the two loaves of challah bread in memory of the Biblical *lechem mishneh* (originally denoting the double portion of manna that fell on Fridays in the desert),[24] or the two offerings sacrificed on the Sabbath – "And on the Sabbath day two he-lambs of the first year without blemish".[25]

Alternatively, in Germany, Poland and other places, no limitation was placed on the number of candles. In Germany, a candelabra having seven or more branches was lit, while in Poland, there might be a candlestick with three or more spouts, according to the number of children. Under the influence of Lurianic Kabbalah, some lit the number of candles that bore

[21] In the words of Ta-Shema" :In Ashkenaz of the Middle Ages the widespread custom had been not to take advantage or enjoy the single Sabbath candle, but to dedicate that candle primarily to the honor and sanctity of the Sabbath, and lighting additional candles, distinct from the Sabbath candle, for the purpose of light" (*ibid.*, 126).

[22] Exodus, 20: 8.

[23] Deuteronomy, 5: 11.

[24] Exodus, 22: 16.

[25] Numbers, 28: 9.

a mystical value for them, such as ten candles arranged in three levels, in compliance with the ten Kabbalistic *Sephirot* (emanations or spheres). Nor was the number of candles uniform among the communities in Islamic lands, and even in the same community. For example in Morocco, the number of lights varied from to four or to eight, as we can deduct from the Sabbath lamps that came down to us.

The implement used to kindle the Sabbath lights acquired, over the ages, highly varied forms, with each reflecting the material culture, art, customs and relationships with the host environment of the distinctive Jewish community. To date, no comprehensive research has been conducted on the subject, although several important studies have been completed on selected communities while others provide detailed analyses of specific items.[26] Due to space limitations, I mention here just a few of the main features as they evolved in the various communities surveyed.

The Talmudic Sabbath lamp apparently differed little from the contemporary simple oil lamps used for domestic lighting.[27] Workshops in ancient Israel and its environs produced large quantities of oil lamps from different materials, primarily clay and, to a lesser degree, bronze and other metals. Clay lamps were especially common during the Roman and Byzantine periods due to the possibility of producing numerous copies by means of molds. The closed clay lamp was produced in the shape of an elongated pear whose main components were a fuel chamber containing oil, an opening through which

[26] The bulk of research has been conducted on German Sabbath candelabra. See Adi Blumberg, *Hanging Sabbath Lamps* (Jerusalem: The Adi Foundation, 2009) (Hebrew and English). See also Susan Nashman-Freiman, *The Sabbath Lamp – Development of the Implements and Customs for Lighting the Sabbath Lights among the Jews of Ashkenaz* (PhD Dissertation, Jerusalem: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2013) (Hebrew).

[27] Cf. Yehoshua (Joshua) Brand, *Klei ha-Cheres be-Sifrut ha-Talmud [Clay Lamps in the Talmudic Literature*] (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1953) (Hebrew).

the oil was poured, and a nozzle that held the wick (Fig. 2). Such a clay lamp was used on several occasions, apparently on the Sabbath as well, although some clay lamps were exclusively produced to be used on the Sabbath.

The decorations found on Jewish clay lamps—such as a menorah, a shofar, Etrog or palm branch (*lulav*)—were widespread in Jewish art for the entire period.[28] It is nevertheless possible that the motif of the menorah was used to recall the connection between the Sabbath lamp and the menorah used in the Temple, as noted previously, although it is clear that we are speaking of a fairly standard decorative pattern. Moreover, at times the standard design was enhanced to resolve a problem raised in the Mishnah—how to lengthen the hours during which the Sabbath lamp might burn.[29] Thus, Varda Sussman identified a clay oil lamp) third to fourth century CE) of unique shape, found in the Hebron hills, that was specially designed for use without desecrating the Sabbath by adding oil.[30]

During the Middle Ages, a new type of Sabbath lamp was produced in Germany that continued to be used up to the Modern Era: an ornately decorated metal lamp that was hung from the ceiling with the aid of a shaft; at its end a receptacle shaped in the form of a star was affixed, whose long rays served as oil containers; under the star, a drip bowl was placed (Fig. 3). Use of the type of this lighting was prevalent in German society, whereas the Jews used it only on special ceremonial occasions, such as on the Sabbath eve and during Jewish calendar festivities, as we can see from the Passover Haggadah illustrations and other works of art.

[28] For a detailed discussion of the various motifs, see: Varda Sussman, *Ornamented Jewish Oil-lamps: From the Destruction of the Second Temple Through the Bar-Kokhba Revolt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), especially 20-28.

[29] Mishnah, Shabbat, 2, 4.

[30] Varda Sussman, "A Sabbath Lamp from the Third to Fourth Century CE," *Atikot*, 6 (1970): 80-81, Table XXIV, 5.

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Figure 6

Figure 7

In an illuminated manuscript known as the *Austrian Siddur* (c. 1300) from southern Germany,[31] there appears an illustration of a woman, whose head is covered by a headdress and a shawl; she holds a long rod by means of which she kindles the hanging Sabbath lamp in the presence of her husband. A star-shaped lamp from about the same period, in Gothic style and having six spouts, has also survived. It was discovered in the excavations of the Jewish Quarter of Deutz, a neighborhood resting on the banks of the Rhine (now a part of Cologne).[32] Later, after use of this type of lamp continued primarily among the Jews, the general population came to call this type *Judenstern* ("Jews' star"). This term appears mainly in German literature whereas in Jewish literature, the lamp is frequently referred to as the *lampa*. Use of this lamp in all its variations, including its refinement by means of intricate, delicate craftsmanship, was produced by several of Germany's great silversmiths (especially in Frankfurt) for the community's powerful and well-to-do.[33] In parallel, the brass lamps cast in standard molds for the ordinary family remained popular almost up to the Holocaust.

This lamp was popular in the communities which were culturally attached to Germany (such as those situated in Alsace), but its popularity also spread to Italy and the Netherlands. The Italian and Dutch Sabbath lamps, produced from diverse metals, are characterized by wider and deeper drip bowls and short rays; they were usually hung by means of chains rather than a shaft. Similar to the custom in Germany, the number

[31] Manuscript Mic 8972, fol. 119b, Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York. For more illustrations and a discussion of the lamp, see Sabar, "Mitzvot Hannah: Visual Depictions of the 'Three Women's Commandments,'" 385-87.

[32] See Norman L. Kleeblatt, Vivian B. Mann, *Treasures of the Jewish Museum* (New York: Jewish Museum & Universe Books, 1986), 30-31.

[33] See for example Vivian B. Mann, "The Golden Age of Jewish Ceremonial Art in Frankfurt: Metalwork of the Eighteenth Century," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 31 (1986): 389-403.

of the oil containers could vary, sometimes reaching 20 in number. Following the fashion imported to Holland from China, Sabbath lamps were also produced in Delft porcelain with blue ornamentation, set against a white background (known as Delft Blue). This style of ornamental porcelain blue vessels was popular in the Netherlands particularly during the eighteenth century, the same period in which the Jewish lamp in our possession was produced.

Oil lamps with varying numbers of spouts were also common among the communities in the Muslim world. Surprisingly similar in form to the German lamp is the Yemenite *masraja* lamp. Although made of stone rather than metal, the basic shape of the German and Yemenite lamps is very similar: a bowl containing oil with many spouts, connected to the ceiling by means of either a brass rod or a chain (Fig. 4). While this basic form was known in antiquity, the receptacle in the Yemenite version is made of one block of pale beryl, reminiscent in color to alabaster, with wicks placed in the notches of the surrounding spouts, and sesame or mustard oil poured into the vessel's container.

Stone was also used for Hanukkah lamps in Yemen and in both these cases, special meaning was attributed to this material, given that stone is considered not susceptible to ritual impurity.[34] An oil-lit Sabbath lamp or *candil* was taken to Morocco by the Jews after their expulsion from Spain; instead of the ceiling, this lamp was hung from a rod affixed to the wall. Made of either tin or brass (among the wealthy, it might also be made of silver), the majority of these lamps held a square oil container whose front (and sometimes back) corners were "pinched", with each corner holding a wick (Fig. 5). The lamp could contain more than one container, with an additional square oil container, placed on top, having two or four spouts,

[34] For further details and a photograph, see Ester Muchawsky-Schnapper, *The Yemenites. Two Thousand Years of Jewish Culture* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2000), 172-173.

making it possible for up to six wicks to burn simultaneously. Among Moroccan Jews, the number six had a symbolic value in the context of the Sabbath, referring to the commandment: "Six days shalt though labor, and do all thy work".[35]

This group of lamps was embellished with the finest motifs known to Moroccan decorative art, such as pairs of birds, or lilies, together with other vegetal forms, entwined within a Muslim classic octagonal shape (comprised of two superimposed squares). Some of these lamps were distinguished by an engraved inscription bearing the name of a deceased woman (e.g.: "Light [dedicated] to the ascent of the soul of [=in the memory of] Rachel, wife of / Shem Tov Assayag / may the Lord protect and watch over him, who [was taken to the 'Eternal House' [=cemetery] on/the new year 5715 [=28/29 September 1954]").[36] By adding the inscription, the Sabbath lamp was used for in an additional and most exceptional way—as a *yahrzeit* or memorial lamp commemorating an important deceased female member of the family. As far as I know, this practice and type of lamp, however, was followed exclusively by the Jews living in Morocco's cities and not in the villages of the Atlas Mountains.[37]

[35] *Le Judaisme du Maghreb: Traditions et coutumes suivant le cycle de l'année* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2000), 172-173.

[36] The lamp is part of the collection belonging to Paul Dahan, Brussels; a photograph of this item can be found in the collection's site: https://www.moroccan-judaism.org/collection (accessed February 2022).

[37] The author of this article intends to write an article on this unique group of Sabbath lamps. For another object belonging to the feminine rituals performed in the home by Moroccan Sephardim, see: Shalom Sabar, "The Mezuzah Case: A Special Artistic Ritual Object in the Life of the Jewish Woman in the Moroccan Cities," in: *Dameta leTamar: Studies in honor of Tamar Alexander* Vol. 2 [*El Prezente, Studies in Sephardic Culture*, 8-9/2), eds. E. Papo, H. Weiss, Y. Bentolila, Y. Harari (Beer-Sheva: The Moshe David Gaon Center for Ladino Studies, University of Beer-Sheva in the Negev, 2015), 575-600 (Hebrew).

Oil lamps having varying numbers of wicks were also known in communities other than those previously mentioned (e.g., in India and Afghanistan; see Fig. 6).[38] And yet, for the past few generations in Israel as in most of the Diaspora, the implement most closely associated with candle lighting in the Jewish consciousness is not a lamp whose light is fueled by oil but a metal candelabra, affixed with beeswax candles. The number of candles etched into "national memory" is two, set in a pair of brass candlesticks of familiar and most popular design. We therefore find that today's most common image of Sabbath candle-lighting is that of a woman, whose head is covered by a headdress or scarf, lighting a pair of brass candlesticks. This image reverberated in advertisements and illustrated children's books in addition to brochures exhorting women to light Sabbath candles (such as those distributed by Chabad), Rosh Ha-Shana greeting cards, illustrated pamphlets of Grace after the Meals, as well as film and television, whether in Israel or abroad.

Hence, this conventional image of women lighting candles did not emerge out of thin air; it has long and sturdy roots in Jewish culture. Although the use of wax candles is mentioned as early as the Middle Ages,

[38] For examples from Afghanistan, see: Zohar Hanegbi and Bracha Yaniv (eds.), *Afghanistan: The Synagogue and Jewish Home* (Jerusalem: The Center for Jewish Art, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1991), 143-144. With respect to India, customs vary from one Jewish community to anther (Cochin, Bnei Yisrael, and Baghdad); see: Orpa Slapak (ed.), *The Jews of India - A Story of Three Communities*, exhibition catalog, (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 1995), 78, 82-83, 90-91.

and even documented in fifteenth century Italian Jewish art,[39] the main Jewish community making use of brass candlesticks with wax candles in the last two centuries is clearly that of Eastern Europe. Despite the Biblical-Talmudic preference for olive oil (see above), researchers believe that olive oil was rare and quite costly. As a result, the Jews of Eastern European used candles made of beeswax, which was more available and prevalent, easy to produce and much less costly.[40]

Eastern European candlesticks commonly took various forms. Unlike the German hanging lamp, they were generally placed upon the Sabbath table, a fact that influenced eating habits because the candlesticks became, from the viewpoint of the Halakha, *muktzeh* (namely, an object forbidden for use on the Sabbath) — meaning the candlestick could not be removed from the table or from the tablecloth upon which it rested, making it impossible to shift from meat to dairy dishes, thus influencing directly the food habits for the Sabbath.

[39] For a discussion of the halakhic origins, see Nashman-Freiman, *Sabbath Lamp – Development of the Implements and Customs*, 123-124. Several Italian manuscript miniatures depict candlesticks of two candle holders, probably made of copper (based on their yellowish color), placed on the festive table. See, for example, the miniatures in the *Passover Haggadah contained in the manuscript* known as "The *Rothschild Miscellany*," produced in northern Italy in ca. 1470 for an Ashkenazi family (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, Ms. 180/51, folios 156a, 162b, 166a, etc.). For more on this and other related issues, cf. Franz Landsberger, "The Origin of Ritual Implements for the Sabbath," in *Beauty in Holiness: Studies in Jewish Customs and Ceremonial Art*, ed. Joseph Gutmann (New York: Ktav, 1970), 180-81 and Fig. i.

[40] Mordechai Narkiss had already voiced this hypothesis in 1939 as part of his discussion on Eastern European Hanukkah lamps, which also used bees wax as opposed to oil .See M .Narkiss, *The Hanukkah Lamp* (Jerusalem: Bnei Bezalel, 1939), 22 (Hebrew). Additional hypotheses raised regarding the choice of kindling referred to climate (liquid oil hardens in cold climates) and the desire to avoid the use of the oils commonly used in Polish society but forbidden to Jews. Cf. Nashman-Freiman, *Sabbath Lamp – Development of the Implements and Customs*, 125-126.

Figure 8

Figure 9

A popular and well-loved form of candleholder, known in the literature as the "Krakow Candelabra", was made of brass and had four branches. We also know of candelabra of three, five or even seven branches (Fig. 7).[41] Several hypotheses have been formulated to explain the changing number of branches. Folk tradition, for example, speaks of adjusting the number of branches to reflect, as mentioned earlier, the number of children (the branches could be screwed onto the main shaft and be adjusted as needed). Rabbinic tradition also assigned a symbolic meaning to each number, often according to Kabbalistic doctrines.[42] The candelabra were cast in brass according to a simple technique and were often decorated with symmetrical motifs favored by Eastern Europe craftsmen, whether a pair of lions, a pair of deer, a single- or two-headed eagles (animals which symbolize ideal qualities according to a famous mishnah in *Pirkei Avot*, 5, 20), or flowers and plants.[43] On several occasions, a single word would be engraved on the front and back of each lion's body; when read together, they create a phrase comprised of four words: "[To] kindle the Sabbath light".

Parallel to this ornate candelabra, and perhaps even more common, was a pair of candlesticks that were similar in their decoration to the candelabra

[41] The subject was mentioned by one of the great Polish rabbis, R. Moshe Isserles ("The Rema"; 1530-1572), who wrote: "It is allowed to add and kindle three or even four lights, and so we did. A woman who once forgot to kindle lights throughout her life three candles" (Rema, *HaMapah [*Glosses on the *Shulchan Arukh], Orach Chaim*, 263, 1).

[42] For instance, R. Isaiah HaLevi Horowitz ("Shelah ha-Kodosh," 1558-1630) writes: "I saw the fastidious kindling [of lamps] according to the secret of the seven lights, which is correct, because it [fits the verse] 'When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the candlestick' [Numbers 8: 2], while other kindle ten lights because they all together illuminate. And both methods are the words of the living God." Horowitz, *Shney Luchot HaBrit* (Warsaw: Y. M. Alter Press, 1930), 101 sec. 72 (tractate "Shabbat" - "The Secret of Lighting the Sabbath Lamp").

[43] For a broad selection of examples see: Aleksandr Kantsedikas, *Bronze* ("Masterpieces of Jewish Art," Vol. 1) (Moscow: Image 1989).

used for illumination in the broader society. Among wealthy families, these might be a pair of silver candelabra, ornately embellished with different motifs and objects. Other families used silver-plated candelabra (Fig. 8), whereas the majority owned candelabra made of brass. Images of more simple candlesticks generally appear in paintings by the period's artists (such as Isidor Kaufmann) and Jewish folk art – such a large series of New Year's and other greeting cards printed in Poland and its neighbors. These items disseminated this style throughout the Jewish world (Fig. 9). It should come as no surprise, therefore, that when the masses of Eastern European immigrants arrived in the United States, the image of this particular candelabra spread even further, as we see from Jewish greeting cards printed in New York during the first decades of the 20th century.[44]

Eastern European Jews carried this tradition elsewhere as well. Numerous customs and artifacts that are currently considered by the Israeli public as traditional or generally "Jewish" items originated, in effect, in Eastern Europe (an outstanding example is the braided challah, eaten on the Sabbath eve, or the legless Kiddush cup). Modern Judaica artists likewise frequently prefer Eastern European patterns to those developed in their home countries, such as the elaborately East-European looking decorated candlestick designed by the German-born Ludwig Yehuda Wolpert (1900-1981), a silversmith, who was active in Israel and the U.S. (Fig. 10).[45]

[44] See for example: Shalom Sabar, "The Custom of Sending Jewish New Year Cards: Its History and Artistic Development," *Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Folklore* 19/20 (1998): 85-110 (Hebrew), Fig. 17 (New Year's greeting postcard with an illustration of the *Birkat Habanim* ("Blessing of the Children"), recited on the Sabbath eve, New York, early twentieth century).

[45] On the Judaica created by Wolpert, who was influenced primarily by the clean-lined designs of the Bauhaus School, see Sharon Weiser-Ferguson (curator), *Forging Ahead: Wolpert and Gumbel, Israeli Silversmiths for the Modern Age* (Jerusalem: The Israel Museum, 2012).

The Eastern European tradition also journeyed to other places. An outstanding example is the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazi community in Argentina and other Latin American countries, who devoutly preserved their folk culture with the exception of a few changes in the production and design of ceremonial and other ritual artifacts.[46] The electric candles that are the subject of this discussion (Fig. 1) are a fitting example of the continuity of Eastern European Jewish tradition and folk art on the one hand, and the intriguing, unique changes introduced in that tradition in modern times on the other.

Like many immigrants who remain deeply attached to their home culture, Diego Rotman's grandparents likewise brought with them a pair of typical candlesticks (Fig. 11), produced in Poland, to their new home in Buenos Aires. These candlesticks continued to loyally serve them for many years. Today, after the couple's passing, they came into the possession of their grandson Diego, in Jerusalem. The couple's son, Samuel, did not place any special importance to the traditional candlesticks, not only as a result of the tendencies toward secularization found among young Jews of his generation living in Argentina's capital, but also (and most probably) because of the remoteness of the old traditions they represented. That remoteness was, nevertheless, only partial, thanks to the respect that youngsters like him continued to feel for their parents and their culture.

While employed in an electrical appliance shop selling popular and highly demanded goods, Samuel Rotman decided to create, in his spare

[46] As far as I know, no research explicitly on this subject has been conducted although numerous examples and short discussions have appeared in the small number of books published on Latin America's synagogues. See: Mónica Unikel-Fasja, *Sinagogas de México* (México City: Fundación Activa, 2002); Jaime Spitzcovsky et al., *Sinagogas do Brasil* (Sao Paulo: Banco Safra, 2010); Sara Mónica Vaisman, *Arquitectura de las sinagogas de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Librería Concentra, 2011).

Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12

time, a modernistic candelabra that would integrate values from the past with contemporary aesthetic values. And so, in the late 1980s in his home city of Buenos Aires, free of any deep religious motives and without any planning or thorough historical-artistic knowledge of the subject, Samuel contrived an item of Judaica that is, at least from my perspective, totally original. At first glance, we appear to be speaking of a most improbable concoction: parts of various products found in the shop – an old electrical wire, a black plug, white metal rods, a stylized oval stand, blinking lights, and screws – were joined and soldered into a pair of electrical candles. In doing so, Samuel designed a traditional ceremonial item resembling a familiar and well-loved artifact but more aesthetically and functionally attuned to modern society.

Samuel's parents, who had been raised in the lap of tradition and who had brought with them a pair of candlesticks belonging to the "old world", lovingly accepted their son's gift and his desire to update their traditional culture. They used the two pairs of candlesticks now in their possession – one made of silver and the other of electrical implements – simultaneously although the electric candles gradually replaced the traditional candlesticks. During the last years of his life, Samuel's father lit only the electric candles.

Only one matter now requires a bit of discussion: The ages old halakhic traditions that dealt in great detail with the production of the Sabbath lamp, underlie the electric candlesticks' design. When planning this modernist artifact, Samuel Rotman, apparent without any prior knowledge or conscious intent, captured the tangle of halakhic issues emerging at the end of the nineteenth century with the entry of electric light bulbs and other electrical appliances into daily life. As to our present discussion, Samuel's candles raise a broader issue: Is it permitted to use electricity on the Sabbath and, more narrowly, is it permitted to light an electric Sabbath candle?

Numerous disputes and diverse rabbinical approaches have emerged for confronting the halakhic conundrums placed before the traditional Jewish world by new technology. For instance, is lighting an electric lamp or candle similar to lighting a fire, which the Bible prohibits? Is the use of electricity included among the thirty-nine categories of activities prohibited on the Sabbath, and if so, which category of these activities? Is turning on an electrical appliance on the Sabbath considered an act of "use" or "creation," which are also prohibited on the Sabbath? Is this prohibition decreed by the Bible (de-'oraita) or by the rabbis (de-rabbanan)? And so forth.[47]

With the advent of light bulbs, even narrower issues, such as lighting an electric rather than an oil lamp or wax candles, aroused halakhic debates. The first to discuss these issues in detail was Rabbi Yitzhak Yehuda Schmelkes, the Chief Rabbi of Lvov (Lemberg), who in his volume of *responsa, Beit Yitzhak*, discussed questions that had emerged with modern technologies (telephone, telegraph, electricity). R. Schmelkes went so far as to delve into the kashrut of electric (or incandescent) light (bulbs) within the framework of the Sabbath. This initial discussion already revealed a deep understanding of the new technology and its halachic implications. R. Schmelkes consequently ruled that:

[47] For examples of the Rabbinical literature on the subject, see: Shmuel Aharon Yudelovitz, *Sefer ha-Chashmal le-Ohr ha-Halachah ["Electricity in the Framework of Halachah*] (Jerusalem: Horev, 1954) (Hebrew); Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *Kovetz Maamarim be-Inyanei Chashmal be-Shabbat [A Selection Articles regarding Electricity on the Sabbath*] (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Technology and Halacha, 1935) (Hebrew); Moshe Harari, *Kedushat HaShabbat: Rules Regarding Electrical Appliances on Shabbat and Religious Festivals, 2 Vols.* (Jerusalem: M. Harari, 2006) (Hebrew); Ovadia Yosef, *Shu"T "Me'ayn Omer": me-Asher Nisha'lu Meshekh ha-Shanim al-Yadei ha-Tzibur be-Nochechuti oh be-Emtzauti ["Responsa: Questions Raised Over the Years by the Public Before Me or with My Intervention, 4 Vols.*], esp. Vol. 2 "Electricity on the Sabbath" (Jerusalem: Y. Naki, 2008) (Hebrew).

> Regarding whether we can make a blessing over a gas light, or over electrical [incandescent] Sabbath candle – in my humble opinion, we are permitted to recite the blessing [over an electrical light used as a Sabbath candle] and thereby fulfill the obligation of the mitzvah. In my opinion I believe, one can recite [the blessing] "to light a candle" over any source of light, [material] soaked in oil or a wick serving as a "candle" as well as any source of light attached to any implement having platinum filaments emitting rays of light or carbon arc lamp, without worrying whether this act is totally groundless.[48]

R. Schmelkes' position was not accepted by all the rabbinical religious authorities, who voiced numerous reservations. Some differentiated between an arc lamp, which functioned on the basis of heated platinum filaments as described by R. Schmelkes, and other, more up-to-date technologies (e.g., neon lights). Other authorities, such as R. Avraham Yitzchak ha-Kohen Kook (1865-1935), called for some discrimination between oil lamps or beeswax candles and electric bulbs, while arguing that the latter do not meet the appropriate criterion with respect to either Hanukkah or Sabbath candles, "because they did not exist when *Chazal* amended the rules for fulfilling the Mitzvah".[49]

Sephardic rabbis, as well as rabbis from Islamic countries, also began to discuss this issue before establishment of the State of Israel, but

[48] Yitzhak Yehuda Ben Haim Shmuel Shmelkish, Responsa Beit Yitzhak, *Yoreh De'ah*, Part I, *Przemyśl*, 1875, facsimile edition (Jerusalem, Chatam Sofer Institute, 1973), *Yoreh De'ah* 5 ["Meat in Milk"], 91b. For an additional discussion see ibid., *Yoreh De'ah*, Part II (*Przemyśl*, 1875), *Mikve'oth* ["Ritual Baths"], sec. 31, 34a. (Hebrew).

[49] Avraham Yitzchak Kook, *Mitzvot Raiyah :Birurei ve-Chidushei Halachot"] Halachic Clarifications, Innovation and Comments Regard the Four Sections) Turim (of The Shulchan Arukh and Its Commentators*] (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1985), *Orach Chaim*, sec. 673, 85-86 (Hebrew).

especially after their *aliyah* (immigration to Israel). The first Sephardic Chief Rabbi, Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel (1880-1953), argued that should a mishap occur during the Sabbath meal "due to an electrical power failure, the *Oneg Shabbat* is interrupted", meaning the blessing over the candles becomes void; hence in his judgment, it is prohibited to use electric lights as Sabbath candles.[50] As a result of this problem (i.e., the sudden break in the flow of electrical current), R. Ben-Sion Abba Shaul (1924-1998), who was born in Jerusalem to a family that immigrated to Israel from Iran and served as head of the Sephardic Yeshiva Porat Yossef in Jerusalem, sanctioned the use of electric light bulbs so long as they were not connected to the general electric grid but to a "direct current from which all the electricity was produced"— such as a "battery [the word 'battery' appears in the original, in parentheses] or a matzber [electric storage cell]".[51] R. Ovadia Yosef (1920-2013) also sanctioned electric bulbs, although only in situations where neither oil lamps nor beeswax candles are available.[52]

With respect to the subject of our discussion, the conclusion demanded is that an artifact that may appear, at first glance, to contradict institutional religion and custom, there are, after all, unmistakable instances where halakhic authorities permit the use of such an implement and even view

[50] Ben Zion Meir Hai Uziel, *Mishpetei Ouziel, [Responsa According to My Limited Comprehension*] (Tel Aviv: Yaakov Levitzki Publishers, 1935), Part I, *Orach Chaim ve-Yorei De'ah*, sec. 7, 25 (Hebrew).

[51] Ben-Sion Abba Shaul, *Sefer Ohr le-Zion] Responsa - Rulings and Examinations of Halakhic issues arranged by the Order of the Shulchan Arukh...*] (Jerusalem: Porat Yossef Yeshiva and the Ohr le-Zion Institute, 1993), II: *Orach Chaim I*, 170, with a further discussion in the notes, 170-171 (Hebrew).

[52] "In every place where it is absolutely impossible to obtain oil or beeswax candles, it possible to bless and light electric candles, which satisfies the obligation to light [candles]". See Ovadia Yosef, *Sefer Chazon Ovadia [The Book of Ovadia's Vision: Rules for the Sabbath], Part I* (Jerusalem: The Maor Yisrael Institute, 2008), 212 (Hebrew).

it as preferable, so long as it allows people to fulfill the mitzvah of lighting candles on the Sabbath's eve (Fig. 12).[53]

In conclusion, the electrical candles, visually so remote from the Sabbath lamps and candelabra we have been discussing, truthfully express the progression of this artifact during its long and varied history, whether from the perspective of design or of halakha. Beyond their use as Sabbath candles, which some authorities have sanctioned from a halakhic perspective, Samuel Rotman's electric candles capture contemporary Jewish ethnography in an intriguing way. After coming to Israel in 2008, the candles were displayed as part of an exhibition of contemporary Jewish art, held at Beit Hatfutsot (The Museum of the Jewish People, Tel Aviv), where they were captioned as "The Eternal Sabbath".[54] The candles were again displayed at the Department of Ethnography, the Mamuta Art and Media Center (*Museon shel haAchshavi*, Jerusalem), after which they found a home in the Museum's permanent exhibit, installed at Beit Hansen (Hansen House). In doing so, Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman, the artists so closely associated with Sala-Manca, expropriated the candles to transform them into artistic-ethnographic artifacts, immersed with meanings that go beyond their initial, traditional and straightforward use.

[53] Thus, for instance, some (according to stringent rabbinical recommendations) light a pair of electric candles in hospitals or hotels abroad where the lighting of live fires indoors is prohibited. The Zomet Institute (*Makhon Tzomet*, Tzomet being an acronym for *Tzevtei Mada'a ve-Torah*, lit. *Teams of Science and Torah*) produces electric candleholders that respond to these contingencies (as in Fig. 12).

[54] The exhibition, entitled "The "Drama of Identities", was curated by Irena Gordon. Although a catalogue was not published, a description of the event can be found at the Museum's site: http://www.bh.org.il/he/event/%D7%AA%D7%99%D7%90%D7%98%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%9F-%D7%96%D7%94%D7%95%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA/

As someone involved in this field of Jewish art for many years, this artifact caught my attention immediately after I first heard of its existence. This short article is therefore a tribute to the innocent creativity of its producer and his contribution to the continuity of the world of Jewish traditional artifacts.

▾ Aron Haesh (Fire Ark). Sala-Manca. Embroidery on velvet cloth, fire extinguisher cabinet. 2017.

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M. KIRSHEN

The Wandering Jew's Home and a Temple Everywhere[1]

Galit Hasan-Rokem

In memoriam

Joseph and Margit Hoffman

Who loved Jerusalem and art

The commandment "You shall sit in booths" was originally stipulated as memory-work for the desert wanderings in the legendary (or mythological) past of the Israelites in the Sinai. These wanderings are an elaborate expression for what anthropologists (following Victor Turner) have named liminality or a transitional stage. Indeed, the forty years of desert wandering were a prolonged entrance into the Promised Land. The annual dislocation of the Jews' domicile into temporary structures for a week's time thus cyclically projects liminality to the life of the community and of individuals in a regular ritual.

Alongside the dominant association of liminal itinerancy, the Sukkah booths and festival have also been linked to the pastoral and agricultural stability and regularity of life in Ancient Israel. This is evident in the

[1] This essay was originally delivered as the Annual Lecture in Memory of Margit and Joseph Hoffmann at the 27th Inter-University Folklore Conference at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2008, titled The Wandering Jew's Home and a Ubiquitous Temple (in Hebrew). Cf. also: "Material Mobility vs. Concentric Cosmology in the Sukkah – The House of the Wandering Jew or a Ubiquitous Temple", in *Things: Religion and the Question of Materiality*, eds. Birgit Mayer and Dick Boumann (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 153-179; the Hebrew original of the present text in: The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of the Contemporary, eds. Sala-Manca (Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman) (Jerusalem: 2017), 136-150.

◂ Sukkot, Opatów (Apt), Poland, 1920s, as remembered and painted by Mayer Kirshenblatt.

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references in the Hebrew Bible to temporary structures where peasants and winegrowers stayed overnight in the high season, such as "like a shelter (the Hebrew original: sukkah) in the vineyard, like a hut in a cucumber field".[2] Others have suggested that the booths reminisce the temporary housing of the pilgrims who arrived in Jerusalem on the three great festivals of pilgrimage: Pessah (Passover), Shavu'ot (Pentecost) and Sukkoth (Feast of the Booths). The variation between the agricultural booths and the booths of pilgrims illuminates the inbuilt tension between the unambiguously sacred center in Jerusalem to where the pilgrims flock, and the Sukkah as the concrete mode of celebrating the feast anywhere. It is this inherent ambivalence of the Sukkah and the customs and texts pertaining to it, in relationship to the sacred centrality of Jerusalem, that interests me here rather than a detailed account the commandments regulating the ways in which a Sukkah should be built or of the history of actual Sukkah building. I want to briefly discuss how the Sukkah emerges as a multivalent cultural sign encoding some of the values, dreams and anxieties that Jewish culture has harbored regarding the dynamics of wandering and settling.

In Hebrew culture and in Jewish culture in general the sentience of diasporic wandering and of sedentary life have always existed in parallel. This double consciousness was not created by the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, neither by the Babylonians in 586 BCE nor by the Romans in 70 CE, as we can learn from the many passages in the Hebrew Bible where God threatens to exile Israel from its land as the primary punishment for not complying to all His commandments,[3] and also in the words of the prophets, representing the word of God. Moreover the Bible takes note of the shorter absences of the patriarchs from the Promised Land: Abraham in Egypt, Isaac and Jacob in Mesopotamia and finally Joseph, his father and brethren

[2] Isaiah 1:8

[3] This is evident in Deuteronomy chapter 32.

in Egypt with all the sixty *ribbo* Israelites in Egypt. There is also the massive exiling of the king and people of the Northern kingdom by the Assyrians and the king and people of the Southern kingdom by the Babylonians. The conflicting consciousness of exile and rootedness created, on one hand, a world view predicated on a clear distinction between center and periphery: a universe produced by a "big bang" centrifugally sending its – human – fragments to dispersion. On the other hand, the same culture produced numerous texts, customs and objects that dynamically deconstructed any kind of cemented concepts of center and periphery. These multi-directional spirals of thought and travel prompted continuous negotiations of the Jews' image of themselves and others' image of them, often viewing the center as a positive point of stability, while exactly its stability was questioned by many Jewish cultural texts and practices. These generalizations are based on my continuous research of the European traditions of the Wandering Jew.

The legend grew out of various seeds of the late antiquity and medieval periods that crystallized in the popular culture of the Reformation, expedited by the new means of communication of printed books and booklets. It tells about a Jew named Ahasverus[4] who wandered the world since the Crucifixion and is not able to find rest. This restless wandering serves as Ahasverus' punishment, since he forbade Jesus, on his way to Golgotha, from resting the heavy cross against the wall of his workshop.

The initial function of the Wandering Jew legend was to blame the Jews and thereby justify their discrimination and persecution, and this understanding underwent many versatile transformations in European culture. From Romanticism onward, the figure was adopted as a creative model for dynamic adaptation to new contexts – a quality that modernity considered both as one of its main advantages and an essential component

[4] This name choice is odd, since no living Jew has carried the name as far as we know.

of its self-consciousness. And indeed, instead of continuing to serve apocalyptic and eschatological ideas, the modern figure of the Wandering Jew, strongly associated with cyclicality and endlessness, defied linear models of history. Contrary to the 1914 prediction of socialist thinker Karl Kautsky, the Wandering Jew did not die, neither was he buried, and unlike the vision of a number of Zionist thinkers and historians that related to him, he did not settle peacefully in his homeland.

The narrative of the Wandering Jew begins with an individual being ousted from a center – Jerusalem – to what initially seems as a periphery. Yet he gradually appears in important European municipal centers where he proclaims the apocryphal elaboration on the Gospel, echoing the distant city of Jerusalem, that has now become peripheral. The Wandering Jew in general disrupts linear models of history that set a positive goal at the end. The Sukkah, on the other hand, subverts clear dichotomies between center and periphery.

One of the Sukkah's decentralizing effects appears through the process of cultural adaptation that folklorists have termed the creation of ecotypes ("oikotypes") Ecotypes are shaped according to the various cultural and natural environments in which they land while they circulate. They accommodate cultural products to the local materials of each place, the varieties of wood, straw mats and textiles and to the styles of periods and regions. The Sukkah constructs ideas and images about mobility among Jews in a versatile medium of communication and creativity stimulated by the ecotypical variation.

The defining features of the Sukkah are the impermanence of the structure, especially of the roof that is supposed to be made from natural, preferably growing materials like tree branches, but disconnected from their roots and stems. The interior decoration of the Sukkah enables continuous

innovations that may borrow little or much from the environment's natural resources and typical crafts.

During folkloristic fieldwork on Jerusalem's folk culture supported by the Smithsonian Institute in Washington D.C., we collected considerable amounts of verbal and visual material on Sukkot, now archived at the Folklore Research Center of the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. From this data, we were able to learn much about the specific features of Jerusalem Sukkot. The interviewees proposed that Jerusalemite Sukkot were simpler and built of more modest materials, for instance using simple white textiles instead of the embroidered or multicolored ones that are often found elsewhere. In addition to the poverty of the builders, this was perhaps to highlight the alleged sacred purity of the city. If you encounter black or blue draperies in Jerusalem, said the interviewees, those Sukkahs' builders are probably originally from elsewhere or they have another reason for their divergence. The local variations of the styles of Sukkahs are thus confirmed by specific internal differences in addition to the ecotypical variation mentioned above. The interviewees did not agree among themselves what was preferable for the Sukkah roof: a modest, leafless "*glatt shakh*" basically made of twigs, or a "*live shakh*" as described by an interviewee who preferred a green roof.

The Sukkah is used for the meals during the entire week of the holiday. Depending on the local custom, weather, and the relationship with non-Jewish neighbors, the structure may also be used for sleep. After a week, the structure is dismantled, though many pieces are saved year-to-year, although this action contradicts the idea of transience that is the Sukkah's central message in the biblical commandment. The contradiction reaches a certain peak in the branding "eternal Sukkah" of an assemblable version by an Israeli business venture, for what in the USA is sold under the less presumptuous moniker "Sukkah kit".

The cultural association of eternity and cosmology is also conveyed by the temporal structure of the holiday, celebrated for seven (some places eight) days. The seven days evoke the seven days of creation, including God's day of rest. Building the Sukkah thus emulates the divine act of creation, an *imitatio dei* of sorts, in building an alternative reality where the Sukkah takes the place of the home. This is what enables the erecting of an axis mundi, a cosmic axis connecting heaven and earth, anywhere – consequently weakening the idea of one stable center – Jerusalem – of the world. In other words, a cosmic axis is created wherever a Sukkah is built. This axis is reinforced by the parallel effect of two heavenly bodies that appear during the holiday: the full moon of the month of Tishrei (the first night of Sukkoth)[5] also present on the first nights of a number of other Jewish holidays, such as Passover, and especially the stars that are supposed to be visible through the branches of the *shakh* roof, indicating its temporary character.

The parallel of Passover and the feast of Booths, Sukkot, at the opposite poles of the year cycle – spring and fall – emphasizes the structured framing of sacred time. The two seven-day holidays also bear a strong relationship to the mythical age of Exodus and the desert wandering of the Israelites, combined with the echoes of Creation mentioned above. The fact that, in two periods, two months had the initial position in the Hebrew calendar – first Nissan (the month of Pessah) then Tishrei (the month of Sukkoth) – further destabilizes the claim for universality and permanence of the Hebrew calendar's supposedly cosmological status, and undoes the genealogy of the calendar from Creation. The two interconnected holidays refer to yet another construction of the sacred year cycle, namely the three *regalim*, the biblical festivals of pilgrimage to Jerusalem, completed by Shavuot that

[5] The full moon is also visible on the first nights of Pesssah, Purim, and on Tu Bi-Shvat and Tu Be-Av.

Figure 1

is unlike the other two full-moon festivals, celebrated on the night of an almost-half-moon.

Classical Rabbinic literature, the Mishna and the Tosefta, and the Talmuds in their wake, devoted meticulous attention to the material aspects of the Sukkah: its height, length, width and other dimensions, as well as the adequate materials for its construction. Another aspect that is amply discussed in those sources are the practices and customs related to the sukkah's use. A central theme running through Jeffrey Rubenstein's history of ancient Sukkoth celebration is the triple tension and dialectic between the Sukkah as a commemoration of the desert wandering, as an extension to the Temple worship[6], and as the association to the non-concentric practices of fruit pickers and harvesters who periodically lived in huts.

In Rabbinic literature, these three aspects are intertwined into a braid of presence and absence. The direct communication with the divine through the axis mundi to supplicate for resources of fertility and rain, is lost by the destruction of the Temple. The other absence is the ensuing inability to fulfill the commandments related to habitation on the holy soil of the Promised Land, even there but all the more in other countries. The powerful presence embodied in the Sukkah is the certainty and constancy of a wandering lifestyle, often conceptualized as the punishment following upon the warnings of the prophets, further reinforced by the pressures enacted by Christian environments that encumber the narrative of exile with their particular theological explanations. This strongly links the Sukkah with the above-mentioned themes of the Wandering Jew tradition.

The constant presence of itinerancy in Jewish culture reinforces the

[6] On one hand this extension to the Temple worship emphasizes the concentricity of sacred space and on the other hand, it emphasizes the symbolical and metaphorical aspects of God's dwelling place.

powers of adaptation to ever new milieus, sometimes even interpreted as a universal mission of spreading the Torah or particular Jewish values. The different etiologies, or explanations of the origin of the festival of Sukkoth, engage spiritual and material aspects in varied proportions, however always including both. In the absence of the concentric power of the Temple's axis mundi, the cultural practice and the material sign of the Sukkah produce an alternative, decentered cosmology in which the axis mundi rises each time anew from the depth of the Sukkah to the height of the stars and the moon. Indeed, the rule that the stars should be seen through the *shakh* roof is a minority view in the earlier Tannaitic literature, but is consistently transmitted in both Talmuds and steadfastly practiced until these days.

A brief discussion of a tale from Rabbinic sources shows how the Sukkah served as a cultural mechanism to regulate relations between classes and construct boundaries between genders and age groups. I shall demonstrate with a Rabbinic tale about a prominent and royal Sukkah how this ritual artifact, the Sukkah, contributes to our understanding of the basic tension between wandering and sedentary life as the generative and creative nucleus of the complex of cultural signs generally related to the Sukkah. In this tale, the motif of conversion corresponds with the restlessness of the desert wandering in the wake of the Exodus, and in particular with the collective conversion of hearts of the Israelites at Mt Sinai.

I shall demonstrate this with a text from the beginning of Mishna Sukkah, chapter 1, Mishna 1:

> A Sukkah that is higher than twenty *amah* (a measure of length) is prohibited; Rabbi Judah permits; and one that is not the height of ten *tefah* (a shorter measure of length) and does not have three partitions and where the sun is more plentiful that shade, is prohibited.

The opening passage of the parallel chapter of the Tannaitic Tosefta Sukkah

is quite similar: "A Sukkah that is higher than twenty *amah* is prohibited; and Rabbi Judah permits."[7] The Tosefta then cuts short on the instructional aspect continued in the Mishna, and inserts a historical narrative, in a way typical for the Tosefta as Judith Hauptman has suggested:

> Rabbi Judah said: A case (*ma'aseh*) concerning the Sukkah of Heleni that was higher than twenty *amah* and the elders were going in and out of it and nobody said anything. They [the sages] told him: It is because she was a woman and a woman is not obliged to perform the Sukkah. He [Rabbi Judah] told them [the sages]: However she had seven sons who were learned [literally: disciples of the sages] and all of them were staying inside it.[8]

The Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds continue to elaborate on Heleni's Sukkah, and they also comment on the distribution of learning in the family:

> A Sukkah that is higher than twenty *amah* – is prohibited, and Rabbi Judah permits up to forty and fifty *amah*. Rabbi Judah said: A case [*ma'aseh*] of Queen Heleni in Lod, her Sukkah was higher than twenty *amah*, and the elders went in an out there, and did not tell her anything. They [the sages] told him: Is that proof? She was a woman and exempt from [the commandment of] Sukkah. He told them: However she had seven sons. Moreover: All of her acts were in accordance with the opinion of the Sages.[9]

Following this, another discussion presents earlier Rabbis' views regarding the size of the Sukkah and its internal division into rooms. The discussion is

[7] Tosefta 1,1.

[8] Judith Hauptman, *Rereading the Mishnah: A New Approach to Ancient Jewish Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005).

[9] Babylonian Talmud, tractate Sukkah 2b.

interspersed with fascinating insights about queens in general and Queen Heleni in particular: "She did nothing without consulting the sages"; "A queen sits in a Sukkah the partitions of which do not reach the *shakh* roof for the sake of ventilation"; "Does a queen sit in a small Sukkah?"; "Is it the custom of a queen to sit in a Sukkah made of many small rooms?"; and finally, commending her high moral values and deeds, the following exchange staged as a Tannaitic debate:

> Sages suggested: Her sons were sitting in a permitted and luxurious Sukkah, and she was sitting in a small room in the same Sukkah because of her modesty, and that is why the sages did not say anything to her. But Rabbi Judah suggested that although her sons were sitting in the same space, they did not say anything to her.[10]

The relationship between Queen Heleni and her sons is reflected in the Rabbis' imaginary ruling regarding Heleni/Helene, Queen of Adiabene, a kingdom in northern Iraq or rather Kurdistan of today. She converted to Judaism in the first century CE, with her sons but without her husband. Her main acts are recounted by Flavius Josephus partly in his *Jewish Antiquities* and also in his *Jewish War*. She visited Jerusalem and built a monumental necropolis which can still be seen, and is still called the Tombs of the Kings.[11] The few references in Rabbinic literature to her and her sons, Izates and especially Monbazus, focus on their piety and their generous gifts, mostly of gold, to the Temple of Jerusalem.

I have shown in earlier work that the inter-cultural and inter-religious narrative dialogue here addresses known narratives about another Queen

[10] Ibid.

[11] The site has mistakenly been regarded in the popular mind as the tomb of the Hasmonean kings of Judea, in the second and first century BC.

Figure 2

Helena,[12] whose acts are not very different from those of the Talmudic Heleni of Adiabene, namely Queen Helena the mother of Constantine the Great who lived in the 4th century.[13] Both came on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, both contributed to its sanctuaries, both built or initiated monumental building in the city, both converted, one to Judaism while the other to Christianity, and the sons of both achieved great military victories by miracles as a result of their conversion.

There is a clear dialogue between the sources of Helena mother of Constantine (Eusebius, Gelasius, Theodoret and others) later named St Helena, and the Rabbinic sources (Genesis Rabbah and the Babylonian Talmud) about Heleni of Adiabene. The Rabbis and other Jews living in fourth century Palestine could hardly have missed the rumors about the advent of the Emperor's mother in the Holy Land and particularly in the Holy City, where she revealed the True Cross and built the earliest phase of the Martyrion church (later called the Holy Sepulcher), both which solidified her everlasting changes to the City.[14] The books of Flavius

12 I have introduced the concept of narrative dialogues encompassing multiple modes of verbal, especially narrative exchanges between groups of different identities, especially religious. These exchanges transmit narratives between groups, and are not necessarily polemical or confrontational, but may be so: G. Hasan-Rokem, "Narratives in Dialogue; a Folk Literary Perspective on Inter-Religious Contacts in the Holy Land in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity", in *Sharing the Sacred: Religious Contacts and Conflicts in the Holy Land,* eds. A. Kofsky and G. Stroumsa (Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem 1998), 109-130; eadem, *Tales of the Neighborhood: Jewish Narrative Dialogues in Late Antiquity*. The Taubman Lectures on Jewish Civilization. (University of California Press, Berkeley 2003).

13 G. Hasan-Rokem, "Polymorphic Helena – Toledot Yeshu as a Palimpsest of Religious Narratives and Identities," in *Toledot Yeshu ("The Life Story of Jesus") Revisited: A Princeton Conference*, ed. Peter Schäfer, Michael Meerson, and Yaacov Deutsch (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 247-282.

14 Among the many works on Helena the mother of Constantine, see e.g.: Jan Willem Drijvers, *Helena Augusta: The Mother of Constantine the Great and her Finding of the True Cross* (Leiden & New York: Brill Publishers, 1992).

Josephus were in the libraries of the historians of early Christianity and the Empire who described Helena's journey. Thus, they likely also had access to Josephus' accounts of the Queen of Adiabene. The peak dialogic moment may be the tale of finding the True Cross, as Queen Helena learns about the location of the Cross from a Jerusalemite Jew. This episode reinforces the idea that the Jews are the keepers of the original divine revelation and also the experts on the sites of the Holy Land, even those relating to Christian traditions. Contemporary traditions, and especially the instituting of a special Jerusalem-based holiday (the Encaenia) to commemorate the inauguration of the church on the site of the finding of the True Cross,[15] also conduct a dialogue with the tale of Heleni of Adiabene, indeed with her Sukkah. Eusebius in his "Life of Constantine" mentions September 13, year 335, as the date of the original Encaenia which was the eve of Yom Kippur– that is four days before Sukkoth. Another description of the festival has come down in the itinerary of the Holy Land pilgrimage of Egeria: a woman from South Western Europe, who made her journey towards the end of the fourth century. Egeria mentions the festival – an eight-day long pilgrimage, as some Sukkoth traditions – as one in a triad including Encaenia, Epiphany and Easter, in a possible parallel to the three Jewish festivals of pilgrimage.[16]

The narrative dialogue regarding the festival seems to have been transposed into the local Jerusalemite Christian practice in Jewish and Christian cooperation. The Encaenia was associated with the inauguration of Salomon's Temple that occurred on Sukkoth.[17] In parallel, Sukkoth and Hanukkah

[15] Joshua Schwartz, "The Encaenia of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, The Temple of Solomon and the Jews," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 43 (1987): 265-281.

[16] Ora Limor, "Reading Sacred Space: Egeria, Paula, and the Christian Holy Land," in *De Sion Exibit Lex et Verbum Domini de Hierusalem: Essays on Medieval Law, Liturgy, and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, ed. Yitzhak Hen (Turnhout, 2001): 1–15.

[17] 1 Kings 8:2.

were internally correlated in Jewish traditions, e.g. in 2 Maccabees, further inspiring the Christian festival of Encaenia with motifs known from both. This may also have inspired the Jewish versions of Heleni of Adiabene stories to include motifs from the tales on Helena Augusta – the title bestowed on her by her son – thus her donations to the Temple abounded in Byzantine opulence and her Sukkah gained imperial size. In both cases the conversion involves the undertaking of fulfilling the commands, of the newly acquired religion – in Heleni's case most extremely leading to her staunch support of her sons' circumcision.[18] The sacred center of the Temple is even more explicitly inscribed in the various Talmudic passages on Queen Heleni's and her son Monbazus' lavish golden gifts to the Jerusalem sanctuary. These gifts perhaps echo the style of Byzantine churches both in Jerusalem and Constantinople, which were initially meant to emulate the magnificence of Salomon's Temple as described in the eighth chapter of 2 Kings. Finally, the de-centralizing effect of the Sukkah gains additional weight by the fact that Queen Heleni's Sukkah did not stand in Jerusalem, but rather in the town of Lod, a city in which rabbinic activity flourished much later than any possible dating of the Queen of Adiabene's actual lifetime and therefore also past her visit to Palestine. It is however significant for the choice of Lod as the site of Heleni's Sukkah, that in the Byzantine period Lod may have actually been a more significant site for interactions between Jews and Christians (both constructive and conflictual) than Jerusalem.[19] The Sukkah itself, as a transitory habitat housing the queen, is perhaps the most obvious de-centralizing aspect of the tale about a person who actually commissioned the construction of eternal abodes of stone in Jerusalem for her and her family.

[18] Genesis Rabbah.

[19] Joshua Schwartz, "Lod of the Yavne Period: How a City was Cheated Out of Its Period", in *Jews and Christians in the First and Second Centuries: The Interbellum 70-132*, eds. Joshua Schwartz and Peter J. Tomson (Leiden: Brill 2018), 71-89.

The story suggests some additional elements of de-centralization:

1. Through discussion of Adiabene, the story demonstrates the emergence of Jewish communities that consist of a country's native inhabitants, and are in a distance from the supposed place of origin of the Jews. Thus Adiabene, by definition, does not describe Jews as exiles from Jerusalem.
2. The story illustrates the possibility of Jewish sovereignty outside the land of Israel.
3. It examines the potential of the Sukkah's cultural capacity to destabilize historical models predicated on a centralizing cosmology and to shake the general idea of a religious center in geographical.

The theoretical concept that strongly lends itself to the analysis of the Sukkah is thus Michel Foucault's rather famous heterotopia. Unlike utopia (a term that denotes the realization of an ideal in a non-space), heterotopias (meaning multiple places at once) function as reverse mirrors of culturally significant social conditions. Various utopian ideas and heterotopic practices and discourses are encoded in many of the complex cultural aspects of the combination of Sukkah and Jerusalem. At a Sukkoth reception, about ten years ago a former Mayor of Jerusalem hosted pilgrims of other religions at the site of Jewish sovereignty. This meeting recalled the universalistic utopia of Isaiah chapter 1, yet this event contrasts the city's reality, where there are considerable inequalities between the native inhabitants of the city, based on differences of religion and nationality.

In recent years, Jerusalem mayors have expressed their centralizing and nationalist aspirations by having the public municipal Sukkah erected at the Mamluk-Ottoman structure popularly called "David's Tower." The choice of this location perhaps intends to commemorate the grandeur of

Figure 3

the past Israelite kingdom. On Sukkoth 2004, a Sukkah of light, was placed in another site, next to the city hall on the Safra Square.[20] This placement produced a different embodiment of spiritual utopias, which was partly rooted in diverse Jewish traditions.

In the context of the "Liminal spaces" event, the Sala-Manca group created a heterotopic and critical Sukkah that they titled "Eternal Tabernacle." The Sukkah was made of draperies decorated with copies of the images that covered the Separation Wall (alias Security Fence) between Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories. That wall was built by the Ackerstein construction company and commissioned by the Ministry of Defense. The images covering the wall were likely meant to camouflage the oppressive and discriminatory nature of the edifice.

Albeit encompassing utopian aspects, the Sukkah may reveal very different sides from early periods, especially in the construction of boundaries between those inside and those outside one's group. According to the Mishna of Tractate Sukkah, chapter 2, paragraph 8:

> Women and slaves and minors are exempted from Sukkah practice. A minor who is not dependent on his mother is obliged to practice Sukkah. The case of Shamai the Elder who gave birth and he diminished the roof [of the house] and covered the bed [with shakh] for the sake of the minor.

In modern culture, postcards are particularly heterotopic spaces, marking the lines of the wanderings of both senders and addressees. The heyday of the production and the use of postcards coincided with great emigrations of, especially but not only, Jewish populations from East Europe to the Western hemisphere. Judaica postcards thus constitute a rich archive of Jewish

[20] See https://jr.co.il/jerusalem/jer0669.htm

wandering and travel at the beginning of the twentieth century, as they reflect their heterotopic and deterritorialized facets. The Joseph and Margit Hoffman Judaica Postcard Collection at the Folklore Research Center of the Mandel Institute, at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem includes a beautiful postcard. The German text discloses that it is a printed version of a painting by (Professor) Moritz Daniel Oppenheimer, and indeed a woman and a minor – mentioned in the Mishna text quoted above – are visible in it. But there are also women seated inside the Sukkah, and even a cat is there. The woman outside the Sukkah seems initially of unclear identity, but by comparison with other similar postcards she may be a servant and perhaps not Jewish (see Figure 1).[21] In another postcard,[22] a woman in a similar position and dress, is on her way into the Sukkah carrying the soup bowl, therefore she is positioned as moving into the Sukkah as we view her from the inside (See Figure 2). In yet another one,[23] she stands on top of a table, fulfilling the commandment of "Noy Sukkah" – extensive decoration – for the Jewish family (see Figure 3). The class and gender differences are reinforced in many other postcards showing the exclusively male tasks related to Sukkoth.[24] The continuing creativity of migrating Jewish painters

[21] "Sukkoth" according to a painting by Moritz Oppenheimer (1800-1882). Having been printed by Sana Gesellschaft in Germany in ca. 1904, this particular postcard was sent in 1913. The Joseph and Margit Hoffmann Judaica Postcard Collection, the Folklore Research Center, the Mandel Institute of Jewish Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (hereafter JPC), marked in the catalogue as hof9-0021.

[22] "Meal in the Booth of Leaves" Hermann Junker (1838-1899), printed at the end of the nineteenth century by the P.G.I.F. company in Germany. JPC catalogue number hof9-0062.

[23] "Adorning the Sukkah" by Hermann Junker (1838-1899), printed at the end of the nineteenth century by the P.G.I.F. company in Germany. JPC catalogue number hof9-0061.

[24] "The Jew with the Palm Leaves" by Alphonse Lévy (1843-1918). The postcard was apparently printed in 1903 by the ND Phot (Neurdein Frères) company in France. JPC catalogue number hof9-0098.

Figure 4

employing images of Sukkah is also expressed in a Sukkoth meal painting by a Jewish immigrant from Opatów (Yiddish: Apt), Poland, who immigrated to Montreal, Canada.[25]

Judith Sherman, a survivor of Ravensbrück, the largest concentration camp for women under the Nazi rule, shared a postcard with me that illustrates an especially deep insight on the ephemerality of homes, from a very different sphere of experience than the Sukkah elaborated on the

[25] Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *The Called Me Mayer July: Painted memories of a Jewish Childhood*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press 2007, in which the author recorded her interviews with her painter father. The painting is reprinted with the author's permission.

discussion above. On the fiftieth anniversary of the camp's liberation, Sherman traveled to participate in the ceremony. She sent herself a postcard on which she wrote: "I sent this postcard to myself – I shall be at home to receive it!" (see Figure 4).[26]

Contemplating on this paradoxical subject position, sending a postcard home to oneself, precipitated by the extreme experience of the concentration camp, I shall conclude the main line of argument of this essay: The Sukkah symbolically embodies both the home of the Wandering Jew and a Temple erected everywhere. On one hand, the Sukkah evokes a stable image of a world in which there is a clear center, Jerusalem with its past and potential temples, a cosmology revolving around an axis mundi connecting heaven and earth and enabling communication between humans and the divine.

At the same time, as the home of the eternal wanderer, the Sukkah emerges as temporary, portable, adapted to new climates and environments. It is also associated with the cultural mobility of conversion as in the case of Queen Heleni, as well as the nation shaping desert wanderings of the biblical Israelites. The Sukkah as the condensed, multivalent figure of the heterotopia, everywhere turned into nowhere opens a double exposure – portrait as well as mirror image – bringing together a central tension generally in all human cultures, however especially associated with Jews from antiquity to our own time: the inherent lurking homelessness of the human condition.

[26] The postcard is also reprinted in Judith Sherman, *Say the Name: A Survivor's Tale in Prose and Poetry* (2005), telling the tale of a journey from a Czech town, through the harrowing time of the extermination of Europe's Jews, until she builds her home in the United States, and her children build their own homes in Israel. The signed postcard is reprinted with the author's permission.

Diary for a Portable Landscape - Part I

Sala-manca Group (Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman)

If the home is the republic, if the landscape is the language, if a temporary dwelling is the symbol of stability and a liminal identity, the painted landscape of our temporary dwelling structure may be the mythological origin or the destiny of our portable homeland.

When landscapes are erased, when homes are destroyed, when structures of symbolic homes must be smuggled in order to survive and tell their story, the home/land remain as ephemeral monuments in our memory.

Acquiring and moving temporary and fragile structures, building unauthorized replicas of structures from scratch, transporting homes in order to build an architecture of political collectivity and individual historical criticism, or creating a footnote to history, thinking through landscape, being attached to an unattached home, conceiving of the unattached homeland as the aim of a temporal and portable sovereignty.

*

These and other thoughts and questions, now articulated in words, were first formulated, constructed, dismantled and smuggled through a series of temporary dwelling structures charged with symbolic meaning of remembrance – the sukkah.

Sukkot/Sukkah

The Jewish holiday of Sukkot is one of the three holidays mentioned in the Bible during which it was customary to go on pilgrimage to Jerusalem

◂ Khan al-Ahmar

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during the period of the First and Second Temples. The name of the holiday is the plural of the word sukkah – the huts in which the Israelites lived in the desert during their exodus from Egypt (Exodus 33:6). The holiday's relation to Jerusalem acquires additional meanings in the Bible when several of the prophets refer to the city using the term "sukkah" – see, for instance, Isaiah (1:8) and Amos (9:11).

The holiday commemorates the exodus from Egypt by means of the commandment to build sukkot (Leviticus 23:42), temporary structures topped by a covering of branches or fronds. During the holiday, one's house become a "temporary residence," while the sukkah becomes one's "permanent residence." During the holiday, Jews are commanded to sit in the sukkah where they will eat, study, and even sleep during the seven days of the holiday. One of the central customs related to the holiday is the decoration of the sukkah; these decorations lend it a festive air and are a means of expressing the identity and ideological outlook of its builders. In the ultra-Orthodox community, dominant motifs include rabbinical figures, like the seven ushpizin, or exalted guests, who are symbolically invited to the sukkah, as well as various religious symbols. Members of the national-religious community adorn their sukkahs with decorations that have a more national character, such as images of the local landscape, its fauna and flora, and the Israeli Declaration of Independence. Across most of Jewish communities Jerusalem-related symbols are always central motifs in sukkah decoration. Overall, the sukkah symbolizes the tension between a permanent residence and a temporary residence.

The Eternal Sukkah #2

In 2014, we were invited to create a public sukkah for the holiday of Sukkot in the gardens of the Hansen House for Art and Technology in Jerusalem. After a long process of research and discussion, we, together with artists

Itamar Mendes-Flohr and Yeshaiau Rabinowitz, decided rather than constructing an extravagant or innovatively designed sukkah, to delve into the sukkah's charged meaning in the Israeli context and to highlight the temporary nature of the structure and its associations with exile.

If, according to the United Nations, refugees are those who, for reasons of persecution, have been exiled and cannot return to their country, then the ancient Hebrews in the desert could, the artists argued, be understood as early refugees and their sukkot, shanties in the desert, as a refugee camp.

Our questions then were (1) how to bring an "authentic" and contemporary house from a refugee camp from today's Israel/Palestine to Jerusalem, and (2) how to turn it into a kosher, functional, and "authentic" sukkah.

We traveled to the Judean Desert in the Palestinian territories to meet the al-Korshan family of the Jahalin, a Bedouin tribe uprooted in 1948 from its lands in southern Israel and relocated to the West Bank as refugees. The al-Korshan family settled in the Khan al-Ahmar area and pastured their animals on neighboring village lands. After Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967 and, as a consequence of the establishment and expansion of Ma'ale Adumim, a nearby Jewish settlement, the Israeli army increasingly restricted tribe members' access to many of the grazing grounds.

Tribal families live in temporary structures not connected to potable water or electricity. They live in huts built with found materials: scrap metal, wood taken from construction sites, tin from water heaters, and old billboards. Roofs are mostly tin covered with plastic sheeting. All of their homes and other structures are under continuous threat of demolition by Israel's Civil Administration. Today there is a master plan for building a Bedouin town near Jericho, intended to accommodate about 12,500 people from three different tribes. But the Bedouin families oppose "the plan to cram members of different tribes and clans altogether [...] in the

same space [that] runs counter to their tradition, their way of life and their livelihood."

We traveled to meet the al-Korshan family of the Jahalin tribe. We were hosted in the traditional Bedouin tent made of natural materials. We were served tea and listened to Abu Suleiman tell the Jahalin tribal story and the tribe's worries over the current threat of once again being relocated against their will. We explained our wish to connect the long-past Jewish exile to their actual exile and told them about our idea to transport a piece of one "hidden" reality to Jerusalem, where what was hidden would be made visible. We proposed buying a shanty they were then using for storage and paying €1,300 for it, money the collective had received from the Hansen House in West Jerusalem.

The Mukhtar (the head of the village) gave his blessing, arguing that this might be an opportunity to publicize their story more widely and to build a stronger and better structure. Together with the al-Korshan family, we dismantled the shanty in the dead of night to avoid detection by the Civil Administration. By the time we would start reassembling the dismantled hut as a sukkah in the Hansen House, the al-Korshan family – using the money they received – would start building a new and sturdier cabin exactly where the old one had stood.

In September 2014, the dismantled Bedouin home was transported to the center of Jerusalem as "construction waste," the "home" temporarily reverted to raw materials. This journey also manifested the tragic fact that the "home," at least as waste, can easily make its way to Jerusalem, a pilgrimage that cannot be freely undertaken by most of the Jahalin.

The Bedouin tent was reconstructed in the Hansen House gardens. Some interventions were done to refer to the relocation and make the Bedouin structure into a kosher sukkhah: the roof was exchanged for palm fronds and

the carpets with matting, while a paper decoration made by our daughter became a symbolic sukkah ornament.

At the very moment that the ephemeral architecture of the Bedouin shack changed its roof from recycled tin to fresh palm fronds, the exile of the Jahalin tribe was materialized as a Jewish sukkah, and the Jewish exile was materialized in a Bedouin cabin of a refugee family.

Jewish visitors to the Bedouin sukkah in the well-established Jewish neighborhood of Talbyeh in Jerusalem, a Palestinian neighborhood until 1948, had the opportunity to experience the Bedouin diaspora through the commemoration of the Jewish holiday. Visitors could enter the "almost real" home of a refugee family, become familiar with their story through a text, and fulfill the Jewish commandment of dwelling in a sukkah while experiencing their people's history as refugees.

The illegal Bedouin "home," originally destined for demolition, changed its status and became a legal and kosher Israeli sukkah, surviving conversion and translocation thanks to this identity. But we aimed to complete the translocation by rebuilding it inside the inner sanctum of the Israeli art discourse by selling it to The Israel Museum.

The plan generated much thinking about the meaning of such a step, including the danger of cultural colonialism, Western manipulation, and exploitation of a so-called disadvantaged or disenfranchised community. Aware of these contradictory layers, we proposed that, in any sale, half the sum would be given to the al-Korshan family as a "copyright fee" for the design. The al-Korshan family accepted the plan on condition that any exhibition of the sukkah would be accompanied by an explanatory text of the project and the tribe's role and background.

We contacted The Israel Museum curators, to try to involve the museum in

the process, adding new layers and meanings to the shanty's history. After long and heated debate, the sukkah and a short documentary film were among the pieces slated for acquisition for the Museum's permanent collection. What was formerly construction waste that was turned into a home and later a kosher sukkah would become the object in a cataloguing, conserving, and canonizing process. This process was not only directed at a work of art but also encompassed an illegal building – the first of such undertaking ever.

The sukkah was exhibited for the first time in We the People, a collective indoor exhibition curated by Rita Kersting from September 2015 till March 2016. In the temporary exhibition, the sukkah, rendered useless as a ritual space, became an art piece shown indoors. Inside it, a film documenting the process was screened and an explanatory text added. In addition, a symposium featuring Abu Suleiman, scholars, and activists was organized and held during the exhibition.

Eco-Tourism

For a few hours, the dismantled Bedouin hut in the desert left an empty space to be filled with a new and stronger cabin that same night. The new cabin became a focal point for displaying Bedouin culture and hosting tourists visiting the Bawadi eco-tourism project.

"Bawadi," as its Facebook page states, "is a Bedouin driven eco-tourism initiative offering guided hikes along the ancient shepherding routes of the West Bank, Palestine, often known only to the Bedouin […]. Bedouin youth […] continue their traditional journeys through Palestine and give voice to their story […]. Inviting guests to experience the song, the story, and the silence of the desert, Bawadi is both a vehicle for advocacy and for income generation for Bedouin youth wishing to safeguard and promote their distinct culture and traditions." Visitors would have "traditional Bedouin lunches,

dinners and overnights under the stars in local communities. [...] Sharing the little-explored and spectacular landscapes, flora and fauna of Palestine's deserts with visitors is a celebration of the Bedouin's living heritage."

If, at the museum, The Eternal Sukkah became a displayed ethnographic object out of its natural context, in the Bawadi experience, the desert– the real place– becomes, in Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's definition, a destination culture, an open-air museum for displaying and performing the Bedouin heritage under threat of forced exile.

Bedouin villages and heritage, whose legitimacy are unrecognized by the Israeli government, undergo a process of self-recognition, recreation, and interpretation. This process redefines Bedouin folklore and traditions through the active process of performing, textualizing, and sharing. Bawadi is not an art project: it is an activist initiative against the territorial and economic policies of the Israeli government, a counter-performance against the performance of hut demolitions.

According to Israeli law, the Jahalin do not legally own the lands where they live and do not have the right to wholesome living conditions. But, according to their own beliefs and narrative, they own the secrets of the desert and know and perform the ancient shepherding routes being converted, through this initiative, into the Bedouin heritage hiking routes. It is actually through the practice of walking or hiking that the Jahalin enact their sovereignty in the desert. They walk their heritage in order to share it, and share it in order to own it.

Bawadi hikes are part of a performative process of decolonizing, a walking practice contrary to a translocation process intended to proceed according to Israel's expansionist politics manifested in the E1 Plan for the area east of Jerusalem.

The dismantling of the Bedouin structure and the incorporation of the structure into an art storage room, was a symbolic process of archiving the revolution. It performs a secret practice of incarceration, a dystopic performance, in a hidden part of the museum.

▲ Jahalin Construction, Khan Al-Ahmar, 2014.

▲ "Eternal Sukka", Sala-Manca, Itamar Mendes-Flohr, Yeshaiahu Rabinowitz in collaboration with Al-Korshan family, Hansen House, 2014.

▲ “Eternal Sukka”, Sala-Manca, Itamar Mendes-Flohr, Yeshaiau Rabinowitz in collaboration with Al-Korshan family, The Israel Museum, 2016.

Civic Bi-longing: The Politicization of Domestic Site in Eternal Sukkah

Daphna Ben-Shaul

In October 2015, during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles), I visited the exhibition We The People (Hebrew title: Guf Rishon Rabim) at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, which included an installation titled Eternal Sukkah, comprising a Bedouin home and an essential component of the Jewish sukkah—a *skhakh*, or roof of branches and date palm fronds. Not far from the museum cafeteria, an actual festival sukkah (tabernacle) had been set up, suitably decked out, where families sat down to eat. The museum's Jewish Art and Life wing[1] thronged with visitors, who gazed at a late nineteenth-century sukkah that had been smuggled out of Germany in 1935 and donated to the Bezalel National Museum in Jerusalem, a wooden sukkah with painted walls that had served the Deller family in northern Germany. The standard public sukkah near the cafeteria was a natural and transparent rendition of the community's expectations—while the wooden sukkah is part of the archive of collective memory, with its implicit message of the Jewish nation keeping itself distinctive in the diaspora, and the portents of displacement in the wake of the Holocaust. The Eternal Sukkah installation, however, transcends the usual reference contexts, and confronts its viewers with political message that challenges the notion of belonging.

About a year before the museum's purchase of the Eternal Sukkah installation for its collection, I attended several events related to it, after Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman of the Sala-Manca Group and the directors of the Mamuta Art and Media Center had been invited to set up a sukkah for the holiday in the courtyard of the Hansen House Center for Design, Media and

[1] Its full name: The Jack, Joseph & Morton Mandel Wing for Jewish Art and Life.

Technology. The Eternal Sukkah installation—created in collaboration with Itamar Mendes-Flohr and Yeshayahu Rabinowitz—was the result. Before Sukkot of 2014, its creators—along with other partners at The Underground Academy, a research study group run by Mamuta Center—visited the Jahalin Bedouin community who reside between Jerusalem and Jericho, near the Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim,[2] where they heard firsthand about the tribe's expulsion from their land and the itinerant lives imposed upon the Bedouin population as a whole since 1948. Their story is part of the tragic and fragmented fate of Palestinian refugees since the Israeli-Arab wars of 1948 and 1967—although it is virtually absent in direct references to the Palestinian right of return. In their present plight, these Bedouin are, as the artists put it, "the Other of the Other."

The artists appointed themselves an "ethnographic delegation"—a performative practice in the manner of the delegations dispatched by S. Ansky (author of The Dybbuk) to Jewish communities in Russia in the years 1912—14. In the course of their meeting with the Bedouin community, they spotted and bought a tin shack from the Al-Kurajan clan (represented by one of its members, Abu Suleiman) that had been set aside as the clan's winter quarters (and different from the archetypal structure that they had been offered earlier). They bought it for NIS 6,000—from the NIS 10,000 budget allocated for the construction of the sukkah—and used the balance of the funds to cover its transportation and other needs of the project. After carefully labeling the various parts of the structure, they dismantled it under cover of darkness, packed up the components in a container, and transported it to Jerusalem, where it was unloaded and reassembled, with the addition of a sukkah element. The Al-Kurajan clan used the proceeds of the sale to build themselves an improved version of the old shack during

[2] Also involved in the project are Ktura Manor, Hagar Goren, Chen Cohen, and Nir Yahalom.

the night. In December 2014, the components of the disassembled structure and the documented record of the action were displayed together in an exhibit titled The Ethnographic Department—part of the artists' Museum of the Contemporary project that they had curated at the Mamuta Art and Media Center, following negotiations with the Israel Museum.

For me, the artistic and performative score surrounding Eternal Sukkah is a means of examining the artistic stance that generates politicization of the Bedouin home and the sukkah as a domestic site, thus exploring how it realizes their inherent political potential. The installation's political dimension is naturally related to the Bedouin's present plight and to the issues of displacement and identity politics at the heart of the discourse. But before that, I propose examining Eternal Sukkah as a test case of the terms for the manifestation of the political.

To this end, I propose three dimensions, or perspectives. The first is a broad definition, with a view to understanding the portrayal of the home as a means of political transcendence—i.e., reaching beyond one's group of belonging. I shall then examine the politicization itself in a bid to understand how the home is made into a symbolic public event—in this case by highlighting its transient nature, and changing its contexts of belonging. Finally, I shall propose that we see in Eternal Sukkah symbolic pro-civic ways of repeated enactments of the abandonment of homes, through the field of art and its conventions. This significant and fascinating project, which is founded on a simple constellation, is an opportunity and an invitation to carry out textual deconstructions and reconstructions that seek to reveal something of its complexities.

I: Political Transcendence

What is it that makes Eternal Sukkah a political statement? At the most obvious level, it is an architectural object that invites political examination and serves as the focus of performance—in this instance, of actions that imbue it with a political content. These actions, carried out within an artistic framework, express a civic commitment toward a marginalized population—a minority group of little power suffering from discrimination—while at the same time linking it to other spatial and cultural contexts. In it, the Muslim Bedouin identity is merged with the Jewish one; one ethnic group whose life is associated with displacement and a nomadic lifestyle is interlinked with another ethnic religious and national group.

However, notwithstanding its encapsulation of a historic and mythical shared destiny, structure does not negate the political significance of the action—indeed, it heightens the stark asymmetry of power and control of the parties involved.

In the spirit of Jean-Luc Nancy's distinction between politics and the political, Eternal Sukkah does not directly belong to politics or to the political arena per se, but is a political aesthetic articulation of the critical difficulties involved in control and the imposition of sovereignty—i.e., the application of policies and regulations that do not accommodate alterity, and are oblivious to, or perpetuate, differences.[3]

As Adi Ophir points, unlike politics, which is "the realm of matters in which everything that appears is already political," the political requires politicization, or in other words, an attributive act that serves as a "political

[3] Jean-Luc Nancy, Philosophical Chronicles (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 23–28.

baptism."[4] In this instance, that act is the casting of the Bedouin structure as an "Eternal Sukkah." It began with the self-formation "ethnographic delegation," which dislocated the structure from its original setting. From an external point of view—one outside that of place and community—this meant removing it from its usual situation in the dusty ethnic landscape that we are accustomed to drive by, in which the arid nature is equated with the poverty-stricken encampment of tin shacks and tents, goat herds and wandering camels. The structure thereby lost its affiliation, yet continued to be associated with the historiography of real people, and with the stories of the families expelled from the Negev region in southern Israel in 1949 to the areas of Abu Dis and Al-Azariah, then subjected to repeated evacuations and a peripatetic existence in the Judean Desert, their temporary settlements and dwellings perennially under threat of demolition, and their existence at the mercy of the Israeli Civil Administration and military authorities.

Since the development of the Adumim region in the northwestern corner of the Judean Desert after 1967 and the establishment of the Jewish town of Maale Adumim near where the Bedouins reside, the latter's fate has been determined by the Jewish settlements in the region, where many of them work. For the past decade or so, they have resided at Khan Al-Ahmar, in the area known as "E1" (East 1)—a funnel-shaped area of 12 sq. km. between Jerusalem and Maale Adumim, the site of Palestinian and Bedouin villages, that Israel considers as part of Jerusalem's "security zone." In the terminology of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians, this area, which is also known as Mevasseret Adumim ("Adumim Gateway") is a "C"-type territory—namely, a region of the occupied West Bank under full Israeli civilian and military control—and therefore under the

[4] Adi Ophir, "Political," *Mafte'akh – Lexical Review of Political Thought* 2 (Summer 2010): 92-93 (in Hebrew), http://mafteakh.tau.ac.il/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/2-2010-06.pdf

jurisdiction of the Mevasseret Adumim regional council. The aspects of the political attribution are intermingled with this charged score, such that is no longer possible to separate it from the sequence of actions—including the structure's sale, transportation, disassembly, temporary installation, and other stages.

Added to the performance are various discursive events held in the Sukkah in its capacity as a hospitality space during the Sukkot holiday. At the opening event, the artists launched the project by presenting it to an audience, with lectures about the Jahalin clan and the wider Bedouin community, and with a meeting with Rabbi Jeremy Milgrom, who spoke of the renewed religious experience in the Sukkah, in which disparate types of itinerant life and displacement were linked together. Abu Suleiman Al-Kurajan had also been invited, but was denied a permit to travel to the event. Another event featured an open meeting with experts and activists about the issue of public housing and the lack of housing security in the Israeli urban domain. After that, we ate together and listened to a performance of percussion music played against the walls of the tin shack. In another event—titled What Did You Do Last Summer?, organized by the independent online magazine Erev Rav—the Sukkah served as a focus of a gathering dedicated to the responses of cultural artists and activists to Israel's Operation Protective Edge in Gaza in the summer of 2014.

Through these events, Eternal Sukkah served as a public sphere of critical discourse (albeit a uni-directional one). Embedded within this shared space are hope and commitment to change—a kind of civic "Hosanna." These meetings suit well Miwon Kowon's observation, regarding the discursive paradigm that tends to characterize contemporary site-specific art: there is linking of the site to discursive frameworks and to the creation of

interdisciplinary meetings between various bodies of knowledge.[5] In this regard, talks and negotiations—with Hansen House, with representatives of the Jahalin clan who took part in the first phase and made suggestions, and with the Israel Museum—are also discursive situations, just as the labeling of the structure's components for the purpose of disassembly and reassembly is a research act involving study and skill. These encounters and research are an integral part of the project's political construction. Although the structure preceded the artistic creation, from the moment it became subject to a range of actions and transformations, its value and meanings were governed by the related discourse frames of reference.

Eternal Sukkah does more than merely draw attention to a story of continual uprooting. The various actions that place the structure squarely in the political realm are also those that give the work "an aspect in which the government is presented or publicly shown as problematic."[6] Understanding such actions (in this case, artistic ones) as political is because they are a "public problematization of the government or of the power play that is (or should be) involved in their regulation."[7] Chana Katz and Erez Tzfadia link the hegemonic manifestations of regulation to a neoliberal logic of socio-economic stratification that is aimed at securing the status of a group framed by a collective national identity.[8] This entrenchment of identity politics inflicts damage on groups that threaten the socio-economic order, who are denied the right to quality of life. This reality of detrimental disparities, as highlighted in Katz and Tzafdia's study (at the local level and

[5] Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 11–32.

[6] Ophir, "Political," 86.

[7] Ibid., 92.

[8] Chana Katz and Erez Tzfadia (eds.), *Abandoning State – Surveillancing State: Social Policy in Israel, 1985-2008* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2010) (in Hebrew).

in Jewish Israeli policies in general), often confirms the stratification created by past Israeli welfare policy and its association (or, in the Bedouins' case, the lack thereof) with the Hebrew nation-building processes.[9] Ensuring the territorial, national and cultural existence of identity requires a heightened degree of disciplinary surveillance, that is founded on the creation of an identity-based and legally-sanctioned government discrimination in a system of simultaneous abandonment and surveillance (which, according to Katz and Tzafia, is encapsulated in the hyphen between them).[10]

The scattered Bedouin population is a quintessential example of government discrimination between surveillance and abandonment, whereby their areas of herding and roaming are restricted, their communities are denied connection to utilities infrastructure, thousands of demolition orders are issued on tents and shacks, and homes are demolished on a wholesale basis—especially in the West Bank, the Jordan Valley and in southern Mt. Hebron. In addition to these are the plans and execution of forced concentration of Bedouins in a number of permanent settlements. These solutions serve as a government and community-based solution, but raise severe issues, including the lack of sufficient consultation with the communities themselves, and enforced changes of lifestyle.

Yeela Livnat-Raanan has examined how the surveillance-abandonment apparatus has been applied to the issue of the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev region. In her view, this is a form of colonial rule, involving an ethnic struggle between the state and its citizens, and an heightened conditioning between abandonment and surveillance. Thus, the massive apparatus used in the demolition of illegal homes may be seen as a

[9] Ibid.

[10] Chana Katz and Erez Tzfadia (eds.), *Abandoning State – Surveillancing State: Social Policy in Israel, 1985-2008* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2010), "Introduction: The Hyphen Between Abandonment and Surveillance," 9–31 (in Hebrew).

product of enhanced surveillance (which establishes that construction done without permits is considered a hazard), while demolition may be carried out on an arbitrary basis, or simply in retaliation for refusal to comply with administration's directives.[11] In this context, Livnat Raanan cites the words of Yehudah Shenhav: "If the sovereign authority turns a blind eye to violations of the rule of law in the colony, and allows the exception to become the new permanent paradigm—i.e., the exception would become the rule—there is no point in complying with the rule of law."[12] This idea is expressed in the constant construction of homes without governmental oversight. Within this vacuum—which increases the need for control and policing—and in the absence of any adequate treatment by the local authorities, the Administration for the Advancement of Bedouins in the Negev fulfils the ambivalent role of sovereign control and provision of services and welfare, alongside various civilian organizations that have sprung up and operate as well. The harsh outcomes of control of lands—which, in the Bedouins' view, belong to the community—together with the lack of a bureaucratic apparatus or planning, are indicative of a policy rooted in collective, legal, and moral justification: "This is not abandonment due to weakness, but of the state's volition."[13]

The subversive nature of Eternal Sukkah is not in its explicit depiction of the abandonment of unsanctioned villages and homes, but in its suggestive portrayal of the government behind it. The structure is not an expression of direct civic protest activism and a proposal for a solution, but an expression

[11] See Livnat-Raanan, Ye'ela, "Colonial rule of civilians: The case of the residents of the unrecognized Bedouin villages in the Negev," 291–308 (in Hebrew). According to this article, at the time of its publication (2008) there were approximately 84,000 registered cases of illegal urban construction throughout the country—42,000 of them in Bedouin communities.

[12] Ibid., 296.

[13] Ibid., 296.

that raises questions and unravels definitions of belonging. The action—which the artists describe as the planting of a piece of reality within another reality—is carried out physically and conceptually through dislocation and redefinition, followed by relocation and reframing. The structure that is uprooted from its geographical, community, and plan belonging no longer serves as a place of habitation, but assumes a Jewish identity and becomes a scenographic installation in the artistic realm. It serves as an unstable point of reference for an event that takes place amidst the flux of profound change. Although the action is based on understanding and ethnographic knowledge achieved through study and direct dialogue, it does not confront the sovereign politics so much as it grapples with what Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe dub "the retreat of the political."[14]

One of the key meanings of this retreat is a communal social life, marked by a New Totalitarianism, within which the political is self-evident and unquestioned. It is a retreat to a life that provides an answer for the legitimate need for belonging and welfare, and a response to the crises of democracy, to the loss of the secure foundations related to supreme authorities and the loss of hierarchies, by means of an ingathering in a shared internal space. Even if the space exists in a highly stratified and contrasting social make-up, its related tendency is to reject heterogeneity from its imaginary boundaries. For this reason, as Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe point out, it appears as a state of "total immanence."[15] The demarcation of the political (or the re-treating, as they call it) is not merely a binary challenge to the sovereignty of a total power, but rather, as they put it, a transcendence beyond the closed or introverted nature of identity and identification that this inexorable

[14] Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, "The 'Retreat' of the Political," in *Retreating the Political*, ed. Simon Sparks (London & NY: Routledge, 1997).

[15] Ibid., 122—134.

power generates.[16] The entrenchment within the boundaries of belonging may also explain the outlook that gives rise, among other things, to the policy toward the Bedouin population and the scant interest that their living conditions raise within the Jewish Israeli public. Even if living conditions are not easy, one must still distinguish between the perpetual state of crisis, or emergency routine, of the Bedouin community and a legitimate and privileged affiliation to a national and religious group of belonging.

In these terms, Eternal Sukkah is a form of "political transcendence"—not only because it channels the tangible structure to something beyond the empirical (environmental, material, and functional) existence, but because it points us to what lies beyond all that is closed, secure, and defined (or circumscribed)—beyond the circle of immanent belonging to an all-Jewish Israeliness, or to any other particular group. That circle—symbolic, stratified, conflicted and heterogeneous—may be seen in the performative ritual of dances around the bimah (dais) of a synagogue during the Jewish holidays of Sukkot and Simhat Torah. In Eternal Sukkah the corrugated tin shack is transposed to the privileged setting of a well-kept cultural centre in an upmarket neighbourhood such as Talbieh in Jerusalem and to the drawing power of a proper Sukkah. However, this is not only a simplistic transition from a forgotten corner of the country to a privileged one, but a dynamic and unresolved unraveling of the demarcation lines of belonging and power relations. The political transcendence that occurs through the use of the physical structure, points to the acute problematic nature of those very conditions. It is a form of multi-faceted release—which is both successful and prone to failure—from the thrall of a social space scrubbed free of Otherness.

In Eternal Sukkah, the numbered diagram for the disassembly and

[16] Ibid., 122-134.

reassembly of the structure are an allusion to the rituals of constructing a sukkah, which in turn are reminiscent of repeated biblical instances of "divine architecture" embedded in the routines of human endeavor (such as the instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle of the Ark, and the Jewish Temple, in the book of Exodus 25: 27). The logos beyond the execution is also dependent in this case on a natural partnership between art and skill. However, here the artists have changed the rules, subverting the divine commandment for the community to be responsive to political problems. The relevant commandment in Levit 23:42, "At Sukkot, ye shall sit seven days **all members of Israel in booths"** (my emphasis–DBS), is subtly changed in *Eternal Sukkah* by the implicit addition of a question mark to underline that, in the words of the Talmudic Sages: "All of Israel are worthy of sitting in a single sukkah"?

II: The politicization of the dwelling

How is the politicization that takes place in Eternal Sukkah related to the relocation of the structure and its designation as a sukkah? It begins with the rendering of the structure into a public performance space—which is public inasmuch as it is overt, and aimed at encouraging gatherings that turn individuals into a public. Between the artists' "ethnographic delegation" and the negotiations conducted over the structure's public installation and its rendering into a museum exhibit, the boundary between interior and exterior dissolves, and the difference between intimate and social relations, and between the private domain and the social, civic, and institutional space, is blurred. Any performative politicization of a dwelling undermines its existence—such as installations that remove the function of habitation from its domestic setting and expose it (or block it) to external

circulation[17]—as in the case of performances that are held at private homes in recent years, including in Israel.[18]

The decision to perform in an actual home is a political one, in part because it challenges designated performative spaces (such as theatres and galleries) and the institutional regulations surrounding them. This dissolving of the boundary between interior and exterior gives rise to further manifestations of entrenchment in the field of belonging. This is evident in the symbolic rhetorical uses of the word home in a bid to designate the national group, in expressions such as "national home" (or "Home of the brave"), or by incorporating the word home in the names of political parties.

In the symbolically loaded case of Eternal Sukkah, in which the word home is absent, the home's open character lies in the identity and the form of the structure itself: it is in the rickety temporary nature of the tin shack and in the architecture of the sukkah, which in this case has four built sides. Traditionally, a sukkah is set up and dismantled every year to serve as the family's habitation and place of eating and sleeping for the seven days of the Sukkot holiday, as though it were a real home (women and children—and

[17] For example, Gordon Matta Clark's split house (*Splitting*, 1974); Rachel Whiteread's houses that were filled with concrete and the outer walls were peeled off (e.g., *Untitled [House]*; 1993); or Micha Ullman's outline of a house plan, *Foundation* (1989), on Rothschild Boulevard in Tel-Aviv.

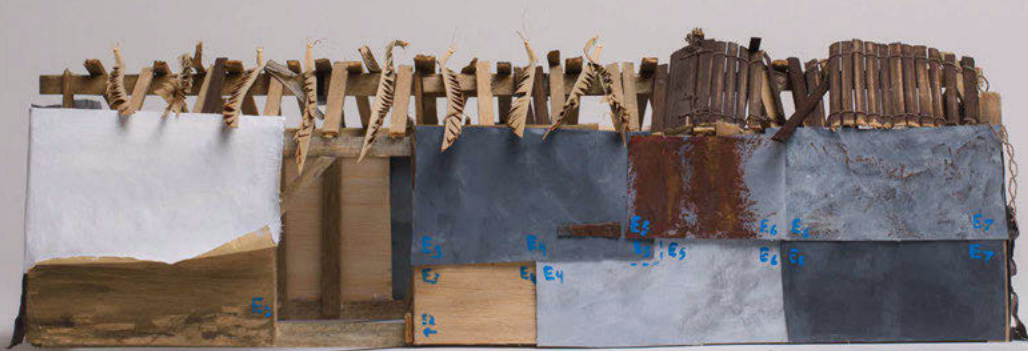
[18] Israeli instances of the global phenomenon of holding performances at private homes include, inter alia, those of the In-House Festival that has been running since 2011 under the artistic management of Dafna Kron as part of The Jerusalem Season of Culture; *The Peacock from Silwan*, directed by Sinai Peter and Alon Chen at a Palestinian home in Acre at the Akko Festival in 2012; The Apartment, directed by Michael Ronen in production by The Arab-Hebrew Theatre in Jaffa at the apartment of the theatre's manager in 2012; Tamar Raban's The House of Rabandra Abla in an apartment in Haifa with Ensemble 209, Bamat Meitzag in 2012; and The History of Batya M.: The Return Home by Sala-Manca artists Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman, at their home in Jerusalem in 2013–14.

anyone who is seriously inconvenienced by this, for any reason—are exempt of this commandment). Traditionally made with walls of fabric (rather than wood or corrugated tin, as in this case), they allow a view of what happens inside, and the outside to penetrate in. The thatched roof of branches and fronds—an essential theological component of every sukkah—is not intended to provide total protection from the elements, allowing the elements and the sky to penetrate as well. In this case, the commandment of hosting others in one's sukkah is—with deliberate irony—linked to the opening of the structure to guests and offering "Bedouin experience". Thus, the act of crossing the dwelling's threshold, its opening up to guests and its inclusion turn into inter-national (or at least, a Judeo-Bedouin) statement.

In his work Politika, Aristotle pointed out that the home (oikos) and household economics (oikonomia) are designed to satisfy the daily needs of a family and ensure its continuity. For this reason, the home should be regarded an essential place that is run along stable, hierarchical lines. The polis, and political power in general (politikos) are the essential antitheses of the home.[19] Everything that is carried out outside the domestic realm is in the public realm, which allows for plurality, freedom, change and creativity. Alternatively, everything within the home setting is ostensibly beyond the political, clearly demarcated by boundary lines (horoi) and by the hearth, or heart, linked to the domestic element associated with Hestia, the goddess of home, hearth, and family.

However, already in the writings of Aristotle we can see how the home and the state are linked together. The polis itself is made up of many households and is dependent on their existence, and the private ownership of a given piece of land is contingent upon entering a partnership with the

[19] Aristotle and Carnes Lord, *Aristotle's Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 1–24.



▲ Model of the Eternal Sukkah, Ktura Manor and Sala-Manca, Balsa, bamboo, aluminium, paper, oil pastels, acrylic colours, 2016.

polis. As Hagar Kotef points out, the political turns out to be the nature of the household, while the essence of the household is revealed to be political.[20] There is no dichotomous distinction, because the state, as the political entity, is made up of households. Thus, the household is essentially political—just as the state, which consists of houses "exists by nature." [21]

When seen in this light, the presentation of Eternal Sukkah as a public space merely uncovers the political nature that is already inherent in the relationship between interior and exterior. However, the nature of a structure that is built without a permit is primarily to be rejected; inhabitants thereby find it difficult to fulfill their natural and essential needs, and their equitable partnership within the state entity is unwelcome. The performative artistic action that blurs the boundaries of the private also casts a spotlight on the fact that the ties of dependence between home and state, between the part and the whole, are in acute dissonance with each other.

In Hannah Arendt's well-known discussion of the human condition before the modern age, when the distinction between the private and public becomes a political question, "privacy was like the other, the dark and hidden side of the public realm, and while to be political meant to attain the highest possibility of human existence, to have no private place of one's own (like a slave) meant to be no longer human."[22] According to Arendt, in the modern era the household has been made into an organizational unit that is dependent on the institutional, bureaucratic and normal infrastructure of the state. At this stage of history, the private has been assimilated into the manifestation of the social and in the body politic. That assimilation

[20] Hagar Kotef, "Ba'it" (Home/House-Hold), in *HomeLessHome*, ed. Ariella Azoulay (Jerusalem: On The Seam Museum, 2010).

[21] Ibid., 384.

[22] Hanna Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 64.

made possible the rise of all things public—the social existence in which "our feeling for reality depends utterly upon appearance"—a sensation that becomes particularly evident, in part, "in artistic transposition of individual experiences."[23] The legitimate attribution to the political realm is not exclusive to the contemporary Bedouin home; however, now that we have internalized our dependence on state institutions, its politicization is made possible through artistic expression. Thus, although it is not a direct activist action, and its effectiveness is moot, Eternal Sukkah is a site in which individuals can take part in the body politic.

Arendt points that there are "a great many things which cannot withstand the implacable, bright light of the constant presence of others on the public scene."[24] In other words, these aspects of intimate existence are kept out of sight, for private matters; they are the little things that remain within the magic (or the nightmare) of one's four walls. The merciless light of the Judaean Desert in itself is not enough to fulfill a political function, nor does Eternal Sukkah reveal its residents' private lives. However, the public nature of a dwelling that is removed from its original setting does make it possible to cast a bright light on the relationships of subordination to which it is subjected.

The trend of actions that turn the private into public, and the individual into a public, is also what gives the home its metonymic status. In the words of Henri Lefebvre, the home has become a representational space; for example, one that is "directly lived through its associated images and symbols, […] space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays

[23] Ibid., 50.

[24] Ibid., 51.

physical space, making symbolic use of its objects."[25] In this case, the images and symbols are associated with the iconography of both the tin shack and of the sukkah. The highlighting of archetypal values of public interest, like the publicizing of an object, is a basic political practice: even if we were to differentiate the Bedouin dwelling from the sukkah, we could still link it to a range of meanings that are part of the political dialectic. Its nomadic nature is replete with many direct and indirect allusions: from the lack of housing security, to familiar cultural and historical associations, and even an ironic reference to the voluntary mobility of the global age. As a catalyst of political discourse, the home creates an interplay of ever-widening circles of representation: from family to local community, from community to the wider Bedouin population, from the experience of transience at the heart of the Palestinian displacement to all refugees and forced migrations—and from them to the discrimination of ethnic groups and populations who are denied equal civic status (or indeed any civic status whatsoever).

The political dialectic inherent in the Bedouin home points to a dual representation of belonging and its absence, of putting down roots and uprooting. The lack of personal and civic security is cast into the notion of the home as a focus of belonging; even in the transient and threatened conditions in which it is built, it continues to serve as a home base, and to broadcast a sense of stability and continuity (notwithstanding its repeated dismantling and re-erection). The domestic presence is particularly evident in the structure's internal space, which (apart from providing shelter and decoration) was reconstructed from mattresses, mats and carpets, cushions, and wall coverings that work purchased as part of the

[25] In Henri Lefebvre's terms: "*Representational spaces*: Space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, [...] space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects." Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 39.

deal. At the launch event, the Sala-Manca artists recounted the words of Abu Suleiman, the family representative who—once all the various fabrics and internal coverings that had been woven by the women had been removed—commented that it was no longer their home. The duality of the domestic belonging and its revocation is another outcome of the dwelling's designation as a sukkah and in its association with the deep-rooted cultural affinity (which is not necessarily religious) felt by the Sukkot visitors, who included holiday travelers as well as art buffs.

The sukkah, as is well known, represents the temporary dwelling in the desert during their protracted displacement between Egypt and Israel, but is also linked to the Festival of Sukkot as an ancient agricultural festival, when temporary structures may have served as temporary dwellings in the fields during the autumn harvests. It may also be associated with the pilgrims who sought shelter in temporary structures surrounding the Jerusalem Temple during Jewish holidays. This symbolism is also implicit in the nature of the thatched roof, which comprises plant material that used to be rooted in the ground, but has been cut and detached from it.

Miriam Lipis sees the Jewish sukkah as a form of family, community and urban architecture that functions as a ritual and symbolic immersive environment, one that involves the entire body.[26] This experience creates the physical conditions of a complex belonging that incorporates the notion of exile, and the tension between presence and absence. In her view, at least four real and imaginary locations are represented in the sukkah: 1) A local and transient place, which creates a tangible belonging that simultaneously veils the exilic yearning for a place that no longer exists, and highlights it. The local sukkah is demarcated as a protective home, while tied to its external

[26] Miriam Lipis, "A Hybrid Place of Belonging: Constructing and Siting the Sukkah," in *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, ed. Julia Brauch, Anna Lipphardt, Alexandra Nocke (Ashgate, 2008), 27–41.

surroundings, thus claiming its place in public and community spaces, and occasionally directing attention to abandoned areas and encouraging urban transformations; 2) Being in a sukkah in Jerusalem and the Land of Israel as the epitome of belonging and the home of the Jewish nation; 3) The sukkah as a biblical representation of the narrative of wandering, migration, and displacement, and as a generic verbal basis for realizing the sukkah at a material and environmental level; 4) God (one of whose names in Hebrew is makom—"place"), who also resides in the design of the sukkah and its perception as a channel for communication, through its permeable roof, not merely to the exterior, but to the sky and the stars, where the divine resides, or to the "clouds of glory" that protected the Children of Israel in the desert.[27]

These presences are ideas that tend to take on tangible expressions. For example, they may appear as the drawings on the internal walls (which may include the Ten Commandments, the holy guests of Sukkot, and symbols of Jerusalem, as well as local landscapes and people), or in the Four Species of Sukkot, which are linked to allegorical values (such as various types within the Jewish people). There are many foci of belonging, of course, throughout the period between Sukkot and the Jewish holiday marking the giving of the Torah in the Sinai, in the form of prayers, poems, and the various Hosannas—Hoshaana Rabah (the seventh day of Sukkot) and Shmini Atzeret, and the festival of Simhat Torah (the Celebration of the Torah) at the end of Sukkot. According to Lipis, those locations validate a hybrid social identity that is neither circumscribed by religious identity, nor an enduring hangover of absence from the Diaspora.[28] Because it lies somewhere between exterior and interior, between real and imaginary places, and between here and there, the sukkah embodies a paradigmatic

[27] Ibid., 27-41.

[28] Ibid., 27-41.

notion of identity—one that is a dynamic site of differences and belonging possibilities.[29]

Eternal Sukkah also serves as an immersive environment, although not everyone can pass the barrier and immerse themselves within it with their entire body. It is an environment marked by a double duality: a duality of cultural identities (Jewish and Bedouin), each of which features a tension between belonging and non-belonging, between settlement in a place and wandering. The local place itself is split between its new surroundings (Hansen House) and the original surroundings of the Jahalin tribe (the home itself). The association with its original surroundings is disrupted: the desert—the environment of the perennially displaced—is left behind, and replaced with an imaginary "Diaspora-like" space.

Placing the Eternal Sukkah structure in the courtyard, in a walled garden that is distinct from both the building and from the outside public space, is not only an act of affiliation to a given institution, but a ready trigger of the mythological connotation of the Garden of Eden, or the hidden garden—a place that is both a non-place and an object of yearning.[30] This location gives rise to a thought experiment involving a twofold desire, or a yearning of belonging that might be termed bi-longing. In this guise, the sukkah is wrenched from its exclusive Jewish connotations to become a hybrid immersion (between identities) and liminal one (between locations)—between the home that we have left behind and the one which we have

[29] Ibid., 27–41.

[30] In Hotel Paradise-Inn—a work by Sala-Manca and Nir Yahalom in the summer of 2015—paradise is a direct reference, through an ironic marketing of an unattainable utopia as a tourist attraction. In it, the Hansen House courtyard was surrounded by white plaster walls (walls within walls), and viewers could only peer through it to view various actions and works of art. Only one guest artist— Itamar Mendes-Flohr— was allowed to enter and stay at this "hotel".

not yet reached, even when it depicts a struggle for a national state and a yearning for the homeland.

The theological dimension of the places implicitly present in the sukkah continues to be relevant, but undergoes a transformation into a civic thinking that might be seen as an artistic and conceptual play on "civic surveillance." Ruthie Ginsburg offers this definition in her discussion of a photograph taken by human rights organizations in the Occupied Territories, noting that civic surveillance "shows how concern for Palestinian rights is interlinked with protecting officials acting on behalf of the state and operating under its auspices."[31] Divine protection is apparent when the artists themselves respond to the directive "And ye shall keep it a feast unto the Lord seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations" (Levit. 23:41).

However, like the dual game of the civic surveillance—which both protects the guards and generates its own form of patronage toward the surveilled—the Eternal Sukkah artistic project also plays on the authoritarian status. Being politically transcendent itself, it places the problematic tensions between abandonment and state surveillance at the front and center of the home. From that perspective, the fusion of the Bedouin tin shack and sukkah—which turns displacement into a kind of common denominator—may also give rise to sense of solidarity between groups and individuals who live in constant threat from the authorities (for reasons of national security or otherwise) within the confines of their homes. That shared homelessness also directs attention to the fact that the endless Jewish Israeli efforts to justify the nation's belonging to the land and to portray the Israeli state as a national home involves demolishing the homes of anyone who is perceived as a foreign element under its sovereignty.

[31] Ruthie Ginsburg, *And Ye Shall Serve as Our Eyes: Israeli Human Rights Organizations as Seen Through the Camera Lens* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2014), 11 (in Hebrew).

III: Protocols of Abandonment

What are the manifestations of abandonment that attain public, artistic, and political representation in Eternal Sukkah? How is it possible to express the undermining of the home by conceptual use of the artistic context itself and linking it to social generalizations? As previously noted, a home that is politicized is at risk by turning into a public entity, and through representational values that cast the domesticity as something problematic, or a political dialectic. However, there is another dimension, which is apparent in the repeated symbolism of the undermining itself—namely, the symbolic repetition of the act of demolition. In other words, even if the artists (in this case, the members of Sala-Manca) are empathetic agents who are expressing solidarity with the victims of surveillance and abandonment, their action effectively replicates that harm in various ways. This is apparent in Adi Ophir's description of the conditions for the emergence of the political, which includes the severing of the automatic repetition of patterns of takeover and imposition of force. Accordingly, he notes that the freedom to act and the desire to bring about a new reality lies in the ability to trigger the "fundamental impermanence of relations of subordination."[32] Performance and political action in the artistic realm have the power to subject the repetition of forcible impositions into a symbolic spatial representation. This results in making it possible to reveal how they work and transcribe them, and make the artistic act to assume a dual or multifaceted purpose—even if its ethical aim is clearly pro-civic.

Similarly, the repeating patterns of harm that are implicit in Eternal Sukkah can be broken into three artistic and performative strategies. Fundamentally, these are the expositions of dismantling and destruction; of the threat inherent in a foreign presence; and of intensified relations of

[32] Ophir, "Political," 90.

power and control. These strategies may be implemented out in tandem, and any one of them may result in dominance. Because these are all methods of ushering in the appearance of the pro-civic political by means of symbolic reproduction of abandonment of the home, and since coercive actions toward civilians is an integral part of the state politics, it is probably better to define them as tactics that face or confront strategic policy. Of these, finding symbolic or radical ways of portraying the dangers involved in dismantling—as in the dismantling and reassembly of the tin shack as a sukkah—is the most total and at least the most direct. The relations of power and control are less obvious then, and might be incorporated within the household management.

These relations are part of the oikonomia that is part of the social fabric that Giorgio Agamben dubs a dispositif (apparatus): a set of practices that require "[t]he intersection of power relations and relations of knowledge."[33] However, one must distinguish between a routine economy of relations and the artistic political preoccupation with a critical intervention that is destructively applied on the home. The appearance of an alien presence of one sort or another within this score may also be identified as the threatening penetration from the outside, although it tends to erupt from within. If the home is defined by the boundary lines that link it to the outside and by the hearth within, its artistic and political violation may be explained as disruption of the fragile equilibrium that is forged between them. In other words, the protocols of abandonment are the product and invention of practices that generate and simulate a menacing eruption that is liable to break out within the home or without.

The performative aspect of these methods of depiction—which is evident

[33] Giorgio Agamben, *What is an Apparatus? and Other Essays*, trans. David Kishik and Stefan Pedatella (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 3.

in the interactions carried out in public—also takes place without an artistic context, especially with regard to the massive presence of the destruction of the private home both in the historical past and in the Israeli present.[34] It is possible to gauge the degree to which such demolitions are public by the degree to which they are covered in the media and in fulfillment of the government's desire to demonstrate a show of force for deterrence purposes, or by the degree to which there is a need for civic activism, to bear witness to the destruction, to draw attention to it and criticize it.

This includes, for example, the paucity of evidence of the obliteration of Palestinian villages in 1948 (which has been highlighted by civic organizations such as Zochrot); the highly selective revelation of details about the Palestinian and Bedouin homes that have been demolished on the pretext of the lack of building permits; the rendering of the destruction of thousands of homes in the attacks on Gaza and of homes in Israel by Palestinian rockets into a media and Internet spectacle; the reporting of the destruction of the family homes of insurgents as a deterrent measure; the saturation television and press coverage of the Disengagement Plan (Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip) in 2005; and live documentation

[34] See Ariella Azoulay's analysis of "archetypes of destruction" in Ariella Azoulay, *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography* (New York: Verso, 2012), 156–180. In her view, this is the key to reading sovereign interventions into space which are various forms of presence aimed at preserving relationships of subordination. These include demolition as a form of spectacle, and as an enduring testament of the damage (in the form of ruins and abandonment, which is intended both as a visible deterrent and as an integral part of the landscape. One of Azoulay's explanations is the "condition of unprotected exposure to power" (141): instead of making the individual's affiliation to the state contingent upon their residence within the national territory, the destruction of houses serves to deny his civic belonging by approaching his domestic setting—thus, the dismantled private space no longer grants the right to a place in the public realm or in the body politic. See "Three Forms of the Relation between the Private and the Public." Ibid., 138–142.

of enforced evacuation and destruction of marginalized neighbourhoods and communities for economic reasons. Among the many harsh images of the evacuation of the Givat Amal neighborhood in Tel-Aviv in 2015—involving primarily clashes between police and demonstrators—one image has remained with me, which is not of the evacuation itself, but of activists (most of whom are clearly from elsewhere), who demonstrated their support by sitting on a row of chairs and watching the proceedings.

Domestic power relations also involve a form of performance, in that they involve an enforced surveilling and circumscribing oversight. Aristotle noted this in his definition of the various types of control relationships within a household, for example control by a husband of his wife, a father of his son, the master of his slave. He also distinguished between a man's dominion over his wife (which he likened to the rule of the polis over its freemen) and his dominion over his children and slaves (which is akin to the rule of a king).[35] In other words, Aristotle found parallels between the overt power relations within the public realm and those within the private realm. Following Hannah Arendt, Ariella Azoulay explains the threat inherent in the takeover by the public space (which is based on equality) of the private space (that is characterized by differences): "This desire aspires to create racial, ethnic or religious uniformity in the private domain, and in the image of this purified space, to mark the boundaries of the body politic and 'egalitarian' political space that would accommodate it."[36] In these terms, which she uses in connection with the destruction of homes, power relations are aimed at obliterating differences and at publicly erasing the singular existence that is identified with the home, which then becomes plural, homes.

[35] Aristotle, *Politics,* 21–24.

[36] Ariella Azoulay, "When a Demolished home Becomes a Public Square," in HomeLessHome, ed. Ariella Azoulay (Jerusalem: On The Seam Museum, 2010), 418.

However, this drive for uniformity or equivalence between exterior and interior and the desire to achieve these by undermining the home is doomed to failure. The reason is apparent in the complex notion of what Freud, in 1919, dubbed the unheimlich (the "uncanny") and linked to the literal possibility that the terrifying erupts within the tangible home itself (both within the domestic and family *heimisch*, and the domestic and secret heimlich).[37] In his description, the uncanny emerges through the appearance of certain aesthetic and mental symptoms—a kind of theatre of alien presences that erupt before one's gaze through the boundaries of the home, yet effectively from within. The images of the stranger, the doppelgänger, the shadow and the ghost are all threatening echoes of the home entity; a mechanical, repetitive, and compulsive presence within the home heightens the grid of routine. The fear of blindness and of the dark (which Freud, in his discussion of Hoffmann's "The Sandman", links to the fear of castration), of death and of being buried alive, all produce an explicit disorientation and denial of belonging to the home itself. In these symptomatic expressions there is a mechanism that is political no less than mental. The differentiation of the home threatens to nip any appearance of social estrangement in the bud, before it erupts and comes to light. Within the home, plurality—which in the public space is constantly putting equality to the test—turns into a fear of strangers and to xenophobia of all kinds. The "un" in unheimlich, which according to Freud is a sign of the repressed that is revealed in its aesthetic and mental embodiments, is also the mark of the alien, meaning he who is politically repressed.[38]

[37] Sigmund Freud et al., "The Uncanny," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 17 (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), 219–252.

[38] See the parallel drawn between the uncanny as a mental construct and manifestation of political estrangement in Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 192.

These methods of undermining the home—a type of symbolic protocol of abandonment—appear repeatedly in Eternal Sukkah. The combination of temporary, foundation-less construction (the structure is literally placed on the ground) and the finality of the act of demolition is commuted into various forms of dismantlement. The artists also took pains to execute it themselves—thereby giving it a completely different character. Contrary to the familiar brutality of home demolitions (for example, by the standard D9 army bulldozer), the careful labeling of the various parts of the recycled structure is reminiscent of the meticulous care for highly valued buildings marked for conservation. In all likelihood, if these elements had not been taken, they would have been reused in the erection of other illegal homes. Transporting the structure to Jerusalem replaces both the repeating pattern of changes and transfers of the home and the mobility and transportation of a work of art in a legitimate container. After its installation during the Festival of Sukkot, it was once again dismantled. From December 2014 onwards, selected packaged parts of the structure (collections of various materials) were exhibited at The Ethnographic Department exhibition in glass cabinets (including one which visitors illuminate themselves), as well as a scale model (a miniature of the assembled structure), an explanatory text, and in a film documenting the action. This phase—which also included research and discursive events about the exhibition as a whole—turned the Eternal Sukkah exhibit into a conceptual memento, or artistic traces of previous disassemblies and assemblies. The object and the event thereby became a form of self-incorporation and self-reflection (mise-en-abîme—like a theatre within a theatre) at The Museum of the Contemporary.

In every sukkah involving the routine of disassembly and assembly, a continuity is forged that is linked to national revival. This is evident in the biblical verse “In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins,

and I will build it as in the days of old" (Amos 9:11), which is cited, in slightly modified form, in the traditional blessing of the food in a sukkah. The familiar modern custom of buying an "eternal sukkah" highlights the ritualized continuity of the action, and the durability of the structure (as reflected in the advertising slogan of a typical brand of sukkah, "Quality and Durability for Years"). This repeated construction is not only a representation of the actual, indiscriminate demolition carried out within the territories of abandonment, but is repeated, in tame form, in the artistic disassembly and reassembly.

Unlike the assembly and erection of IKEA furniture (an association that struck some visitors, including myself), this "gentrification" of the demolition act can indeed carry on indefinitely. Through the artistic template, which is detached and possibly increasingly distant from the desert reality, the demolition of homes is portrayed not as an expression of resurrection, but as a form of inertia, of the use of excessive and limitless force on behalf of the dominant group of belonging, while recalling the tendency for "total immanence" (as defined by Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe). It is the same inertia that is evident in the collective and well-internalized Jewish-Israeli rituals of permanent destruction or wandering, migration and unending exile. Judging by the plethora of parallels between the tribes of the same region, the destruction of the home is a multifaceted and persistent threat.

The repeated re-assembly, which as previously noted was carried out after the structure was sold to the Israel Museum and first displayed in September 2015 at the exhibition We the People, challenges this eternal sequence and subjects this inertia to an almost comic degree of manipulative gentrification. The entrance to the museum (graciously sponsored by the museum's "Here & Now" Contemporary Israeli Art Acquisitions Committee) is a conscious play, on the part of Sala-Manca and the curators (Amitai Mendelson of the Israeli Museum, and Rita Kersting the exhibition curator), on the new

conceptual value that the work has acquired after its display at *The Museum of the Contemporary* at Hansen House, and its monetary value (ten times the original purchase price). Although the structure was displayed at the museum at its New in Contemporary Art exhibition (which was the subtitle of the We the People exhibition), the broader framework of the curation surrounding the tension between the individual and the title We the People (the opening words of the U.S. Constitution) is the museum as a whole. The museum houses a national collection and collective memory archive attesting to the eternality of the Jewish people—including models of synagogues and the painting of the wooden Sukkah. Thus, at the museum, the Eternal Sukkah installation takes on a dual or triple metonymic status: it represents at once the Sukkot event, the museum-like display at the Hansen House, and (through those two) the action involved with the original tin shack.

Although the structure on display at the museum was assembled and complete, the accompanying text specification was an echo of its fragmented nature, underlining that it is an artistic assemblage: "Wood, corrugated tin, nails, mattresses and fabrics, mats, thatched roof and a decorative paper; 7 x 2.5 m; video, 15 min." As befits this further phase of the work's appropriation by the art world (after the fundamental link of imparting it a renewed value by its display at the Hansen House exhibition), the interior of the structure at the museum was of a more minimalistic and sterile design. The palm fronds that make up the thatched roof were somewhat wilted and most of the roof was made of a commercial woven-mat reusable sukkah roofing material made of strips of wood woven together. The original decoration (of strips of newspaper print) was hanged again, after having worn out. Within the structure a TV documentary was projected, giving the fleeting impression of a domestic living room and the appearance of a frame-within-a frame which heightens the self-reflexive iconography. The placement of the structure within the white cube brought the series

of transformations and settings to the point of excess, which would likely grow with future dismantlings and installations. This stage, too, has been a kind of stand against the inertia of demolition that occurs in the areas of abandonment, involving a discursive and documented events in various parts of the museum, this time with the Jahalin representatives, further meetings with families of the Jahalin tribe where they currently reside, which continually reintroduce the work's political function.

The practice or perpetuation of the relations of power in Eternal Sukkah began with the arrival of "the ethnographic delegation," which was steeped in a conscious post-colonial pursuit of a genuine ethnic item. Eternal Sukkah became an "exemplar" (one of a series) that indicates to the public obliteration of innumerable homes, while reproducing an act of obliteration of a singular home. The dismantling of the tin shack under cover of darkness and replacing it with an improved version with the proceeds of its sale, and transporting it as building waste, is depicted by the artists as though it were a smuggling operation, with particular emphasis on the checkpoints that the local (Arab) inhabitants would have found difficult to pass through. This chain of events places the tension between permission and transgression squarely within the representational space.

The political parallel that Aristotle drew between the dynamics of control within the home and between the state and the individual undergoes yet another playful order. Although the response to the consensual invitation to build a sukkah was an anti-opportunistic action, it plays by the rules of the game—and yet, its acts of political attribution do succeed in forging a tangible and symbolic partnership in conditions of "legally sanctioned lawlessness." The freedom of conceptual art is the freedom to diverge from relationships of subordination in situations of institutionalized abandonment. *Eternal Sukkah*'s very entry into the museum collection heightens the ambivalent ethics of the relations of power (putting an interesting spin on its illustration).

On the one hand, the museum economy is an authoritarian analog of the control of the individual's life and property and of the initial conscious appropriation carried out by the artists. This extends to the surveillance and internal control maintained within the museum (although the Sukkah is open to the public, when I attempted to enter it, I was immediately stopped by a guard's reflexive "No entry allowed"). On the other hand, the museum has also joined in the civic-political benefaction: half of the work's purchase price was given to the Jahalin tribe, and its support for the work has increased the visibility of the project and of the plight of the Bedouin community. Moreover, the sale of the piece to the museum has allowed the artists to assume a secondary role of being subordinate, themselves, to the museum institution. The consensual tactic of introducing the tin shack into the museum hall has meant that their own courtyard has acquired an intermediary status between community and establishment.

The theme of repeated demolition and the relations of power are well established in the initial concept of welcoming the stranger guest—first into the tribe, then into the sukkah. Instead of repressing the stranger, he or she becomes a doppelganger, or overt shadow. The Jewish identity, or perhaps the Bedouin presence, are both parasites, in the sense that they are both forged through the site (para-site), where it is unclear who is possessed by whom. The manifested symptoms of the uncanny is embodied in the sukkah home as a two-way anxiety, although it is powerless to change the asymmetry of power or the discrimination or blinkered attitude to which they are usually associated. Its placement at the Hansen House—built in 1887 as a leper hospital, its traces present and documented in the preserved and restored building—adds yet another dimension to the amalgam of social Otherness.

Unlike the radical eruption of the repressed uncanny in Freud's depiction, Heidegger characterizes the uncanny as a kind of initial and persistent

▲ Transpoting the Eternal Sukkah into the Museum.

unsuitability for existence (dasein) in the world. If so, turning the foreign identity into something hybrid and simultaneous (one that is not "merely" Jewish nor Bedouin), heightens the condition of mutually spurned differences, and makes it possible to attribute the uncanny experience to a persistent universal sense of not-being-at-home. Thus, Eternal Sukkah conjures up not only the common space, but also a kind of mirror image of liberation and utopian equality. If we are not equal, we might at least enter (albeit, not all at once) a home where difference and threat are in common, and be reminded thereby that this is our enduring common ground.

The estrangement inherent in Eternal Sukkah is also an inevitable outcome of its quintessentially singular nature. This is not a scenography of tents, such as the one that swept the Israeli urban landscape in the demonstrations for social justice of 2011, and was a particularly prominent expression of a collective sense of socio-economic abandonment. Those provisory tents, which created an imaginary sense of "us," was riven by a multiplicity of voices and encampments aimed at deliberately introducing a heterogeneous politique—one that is highly stratified and accentuates the problematic nature of the Other. Eternal Sukkah, on the other hand, imposes the opposing patterns of repetition upon the unique solitary object, making it an uncanny mechanism. Thanks to the preservation of the specific home and the adaptation of the sukkah to the needs of Hansen House, it is still a site-dependent installation, while also alien to it. As the ultimate antithesis to the home, the museum divests Eternal Sukkah of its "sukkah-tic" credentials. In the museum context, it would be more appropriate to call it a Duchamp-like "readymade object" (objet trouvé), to be situated alongside the works of Duchamp and the Dada movement in the museum's wings.

Eternal Sukkah is reminiscent of the variability of readymade objects that are based on a clear manipulation (such as a bicycle wheel mounted on a

▲ Installing the Eternal Sukkah.

stool). But even the most radical of these (where the new artistic value does not involve a physical change) are in fact uncommon objects—the kind that change by rejecting their everyday purpose, purely by virtue of the nature of the installation, or the artist's stamp. In addition to being a rare Judeo-Bedouin artifact, the strangeness of Eternal Sukkah is derived in its most institutional incarnation so far from the fact that it is an uncommon object. The museum domestication of abandonment practices underlines the simulation of detachment—one that returns us, in the heart of this hall, to viewing the landscape of tin shacks through the window of a passing car.

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The political transcendence beyond one's group of belonging, the politicization of the domestic site (including the sukkah) by making it public and a representation of political dialectic, as well as the activating repetitive methods of abandonment— these are not merely abstract dimensions of politicization. In Eternal Sukkah, these dimensions become tangible and active pro-civic practices. The economy of destructive forces directed against an "Other" population is practiced in a unique and uncommon, eye-opening context: the encompassing of the two sides in a shared cultural and geopolitical space elicits a profound parallel between them. In the economy of satisfaction that the artistic and performative domestic site tends to summon and challenge, there is a certain utopian liberation from differences. Yet, it is hard to feel quite at home in the Eternal Sukkah. Any visiting outsider should expect to be confronted with an explicit presentation of the Bedouins' plight: they will experience the difficulty of imagining people who are not there, yet are prevented from moving about, and are kept homeless and outside, as though not invited either to their own home or to ours.

Diary for a Portable Landscape - Part II

Sala-manca Group (Lea Mauas, Diego Rotman)

The Deller's Sukkah Replica

After selling The Eternal Sukkah to the Israel Museum, we thought we should bring something out of the museum and into real life. We became interested in a painted wooden sukkah from Bavaria dated to the 1840s because of the sukkah's beauty – the panels feature an impressive panorama painting of Jerusalem, seamlessly melding the holy city's landscape with that of the pastoral Bavarian village of Fischach – and because of the sukkah's biography. In 1937, in Nazi-controlled Germany, the sukkah was moved from the attic of the Deller's house in Fischach to Berta Fraenkel's house in Munich. Fraenkel, who fled Germany with her five children to Palestine where she was reunited with her husband, smuggled the sukkah in one of her lifts. She did so at the request of a close relative, Dr. Heinrich Feuchtwanger, a scholar, collector of Judaica, and dentist who had convinced the Dellers to donate their sukkah to the Bezalel National Museum, which had opened in Palestine in 1922.

The inside walls of the Deller Sukkah are painted with original paintings of the local Jüdenhof (Jewish street) and Fischach landscape and freestyle reproductions of the works of others. The main wall, showing a painting of Jerusalem, is based on a lithograph by German geographer Jeoseph Schwartz. The painting on the right wall represents both sides of the Jüdenhof. The first house on the right is the Deller house with its garden, where the sukkah was erected every year. Other notable buildings are the synagogue and what was apparently the Jewish school. The wall on the left depicts Fischach's forests, and a house. The last wall shows two men, the

◂ "Deller Sukkah (1840 ~ - 2017)", still from installation at Mamuta Art and Research Center, 2017.

local baron and his hunter, or perhaps Abraham Deller with his son or servant, going hunting with a dog.

Over the years, the Deller sukkah was widely reproduced in pictures, sometimes as an iconic item representing the Jewish diaspora's longing for Jerusalem, sometimes as a representation of the central role the Jewish community played in Fischach's development, and often as a valuable piece of Jewish material culture. But we find the role played by the Deller sukkah and its reproductions as part of the heritage of three families – the Dellers, Fraenkels, and Feuchtwangers – to be of the greatest interest: they developed a parallel family tradition in which a picture of the Deller sukkah hangs on the wall of their contemporary family sukkah. The actual sukkah becomes a backdrop for displaying another sukkah displaying paintings representing objects of longing and belonging, including both a personal and a collective heritage. The act of remembrance of the days of wandering in the desert during the Jewish exodus and the remembrance of the days of the Jewish diaspora in Germany are represented or practiced through this mise en abyme.

The Replica

In the winter of 2017, we invited the carpenter Nir Yahalom and the painter Ktura Manor to join us in the project of building and painting an unauthorized but accurate replica of the Deller family's painted wooden sukkah. We photographed the original sukkah at the museum and began our research into it.

We had to adjust the construction to the quality of the local wood and to the budget we had, creating a local version of a Bavarian sukkah. We constructed it with low quality lumber. Unable to use Bavarian flora for the roof as was the custom in Fischach, and instead of installing plastic ornaments and artificial flora as is often practiced in Israel, we covered the roof with palm branches

from the Hansen House garden. The sukkah was resized to allow it to be installed indoors in the room devoted to it. During the creative process, we constantly looked at the pastoral pictures of the village in the sukkah and, later on, at the few pictures of Fischach we located via Google images. We found ourselves suddenly longing for a place we had never before seen and were in no way attached. We decided to visit Fischach to see what remained of the painted landscape: we wanted to enter the painting. In February 2017, we started a reverse pilgrimage: we and our children traveled to Fischach on a "roots trip" of a family we never heard of before.

Many buildings still remain in Fischach: the Deller house, the synagogue, and the Jewish school. But the absence of Jews was extremely present. We therefore abandoned the idea of a faithful replica, or we understood it differently. We decided to intervene in the replica slightly:

The walls of the synagogue in the new sukkah feature two graffiti inscriptions in pencil: a Magen David that shows that the current dental clinic was once a synagogue; a copy of the sign installed by the director and owner of the clinic; and a sign with Dr. Dominkus Wunderer's name, a copy of the sign in front of the building attesting to the actual function of the former synagogue as a dentist clinic.

Instead of the figure of Esther Deller pictured in front of the Dellers' house, there is graffiti with the names of the families living there when we visited, the Gross family and the Ozdel family (a German and a Turkish family respectively).

Standing in front of the Deller house in Fischach, the most surprising fact for us was the presence of the monumental village church, which was missing in the background of the original sukkah. We debated the issue – to bring the church back or leave it absent in the reproduction – until a week before the opening, when we invited the curator of Judaica at The Israel Museum, Rachel

▲ Fischach Postcards, Adi Kaplan and Shahar Carmel, oil pastel on paper, 2017.

▲ Model of the "Deller Sukkah (1840~2017)", Adi Kaplan, Shahar Carmel and Sala-Manca, Balsa, oil pastels, hinges; 25*25*18cm, 2017.

Sarfati, who didn't know about the project, to visit the new Deller sukkah. We shared our discovery about the church with her. Rachel answered that she was already aware of it: during the restoration process of the original Deller sukkah done in 2000, the restorers discovered that the church was indeed painted on the sukkah, but was later erased by another generation of the Deller family or perhaps by the owners of the sukkah themselves after seeing the church painted for the first time.

On the Politics of Historiography, Restoration, and Narrativization

Although the new sukkah would finally be almost identical to the original, it would have the opposite meanings: the paintings on the walls of the sukkah would be subtly transformed, changing the depicted environment. The image of Jerusalem on one of the walls, which in the original was an object of yearning, would become a kind of proprietary statement as it was painted in Jerusalem; the scenes of the pastoral German village, which used to provide a kind of visual record of the original local landscape, would become a wistful memorial of a community and time that no longer exists. The new sukkah, or the artists, were yearning for exile, or yearning for the possibility of finding Jerusalem in another place.

Kingston Sukkah: The Erased Landscape

In August 2018, we started what we thought might be a long period of being out of home/land.

We moved from a small rented apartment in the intense neighborhood of Musrara, in Jersualem, previously a Palestinian neighborhood that became the birthplace of the Israeli Black Panthers, into a 1960s bungalow with a garden in bourgeois neighborhood.

We rented the only furnished house we could find in the small city of Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and decided to build a sukkah in the backyard, adjacent to the Cataraqui Golf Course. The Sobermans, the owners of the house, had died at the beginning of the previous decade, and their children had put the home up for long-term rental "as-is"—a kind of "family museum," with a 1960s decor, just as their parents had left it. We lived in the house for a year, inside the set of another family. It was the first time we were building a sukkah in the house where we now live: a temporary structure in the courtyard of the Soberman family house, in the Canadian city of Kingston, adjacent to a golf course built on the lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples.

The sukkah's structure was a replica of the replica of the Deller sukkah – a structure as a quotation of a quotation. We bought the lumber at the local Home Depot branch. What in Jerusalem was a long process of acquiring, cutting and painting the lumber to make it look old, was here as easy as taking a supermarket trolley and putting the cut lumber into it and paying for it with cash. The walls remained decorated with some bird toys bought at a Dollarama and some other paraphernalia produced by our daughter and her friends. Not having had enough time to paint, the walls remained bare.

For Sukkot, we organized a series of events around the holiday and our former projects: relating to temporary dwellings, the situation of the Bedouin in Palestine/Israel, public housing, and home insecurity.

Against the tradition in which you are supposed to build a sukkah for a week and dismantle it, our sukkah remained in the yard for the whole year, creating a parallel of time, in which the symbology of the holiday was challenged or stretched. Although we were not living in it, the temporary dwelling turned into our object of reference in the Soberman house and became a reminder of our temporality, fragility, and migratory status.

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▲ Model of the Kingston Sukkah, Ktura Manor and Sala-Manca, balsa, acrylic and water colours, 25*25*23, 2020.

▲ Image on p. 276-277: “Deller Sukkah (1840~-2017)”, Sala-Manca in collaboration with Ktura Manor (painting) and Nir Yahalom (construction), wood and acrylic colours, 250*250*180, 2017.

▲ Image on p. 278-279: “Kingston Sukkah”, Sala-Manca in collaboration with Brian Hoad (painting), 250*250*230, 2019. 250*250*180, 2017.

During the winter, we came to see the green landscape vanish beneath the snow. We realized that we wanted to make this temporal landscape into the eternal fixed landscape of our sukkah. In painting the walls this white desert, we wanted to express not only the already growing feeling of longing for the snow, the winter silence, but also that this snow desert was a place of liminal stability. It was an expression of social loneliness; a counter reference to the threatened desert geography of the Jahalin tribe, a consequence of the Israel territorial politics; and an anti-quote to the lied history of conquering the desert we grew up with in Argentina, which was in fact an Indigenous genocide.

For this project we commissioned Brian Ohad to paint on the chemical treated wood acquired in the local branch of Home Depot. To paint the snowy and vanishing landscape of the frozen lakes in our temporary/eternal and symbolic home, nude trees and snowed fields become a painted quote of a place and a time we are leaving behind.

עיסאוויה מהגן הבוטני

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תרגיל ענף, סט

תרגיל מייסן

שני ברבורים

תרגיל בכחול לבן, סט

תרגיל הפגודה

עיסאוויה מהאגם

תרגיל חמגשית

תרגיל דאגות מיותרות

כד

About China

Sala-Manca

Reuven Zahavi's exhibition "China" is named after traditionally decorated Chinese porcelain in common domestic use. Zahavi presents the Issawiyeh Tableware—a collection of disposable plastic plates which he uses as platters for his drawings. (The collection's Hebrew name, Servis Issawiyeh, comes from the Hebrew-fication "servis," meaning a dinnerware serving set.) The drawings offer a view of Issawiyeh, the large village at the foot of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, as seen from the windows of the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design.

Sketches depicting the Palestinian village — whose inhabitants live in dire conditions despite its inclusion in Jerusalem's expanded municipal borders of 1967 — replace the Chinese or European landscapes associated with "china." At times it even seems that the familiar pastoral images meld with those of the crushed village. "The village," Zahavi says, "where smoke rises daily and booming sounds are routine, stays transparent to the Mt. Scopus community." This transparency is conveyed by the illustrative drawings that decorate the plastic plates – flora and fauna, lakes and bridges, gardens and hunting scenes or other "Chinese" and imaginary scenarios. All of these express Zahavi's distant stance and the posture (or imposture) he assumes towards the village and its people.

Zahavi observes the village from the grand windows of the Bezalel Art Academy with its distinguished artistic history, thus connecting his work to a tradition depicting the Jewish landscape in Israel. But his choice to sketch the village through a foreign aesthetic tradition defamiliarizes the

◂ Reproduction from original catalogue in Hebrew.

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Palestinian village. This defamiliarization invites both artist and viewer to direct their gaze at the transparent village, to take note of the art academy's location and position, and to contemplate the artist's relation to both.

The choice to sketch the drawings on disposable plastic raises riveting questions regarding the status of painting and of the artist. This choice boosts the plastic's value and simultaneously raises doubt as to the artwork's merit. "The white plastic plate," Zahavi says, "stubbornly refuses any paint medium. It is a cheap imitation. It is recycled in a series of 'reflexive exercises' whose purpose is to concretize the problematic stand of the spectator, the object and the artist via a reality of transparent oppression."

The collection presented in the exhibition presents the artist's self-reflexive stand as a teacher at the Bezalel Academy. In painting the village on a disposable plastic plate, he expresses the fragile status of the village and reacts to the fact that many at the Bezalel Academy are unwilling to see the oppression of this neighbouring village, nor the police brutality toward its inhabitants. In this action, Zehavi also suggests doubts regarding the simulation and posturing of materials not only on relation to the art object itself but also regarding the social and political as well.

The exhibition of the collection in Mamuta Center's Underground Academy at the Hansen House as part of Jerusalem Design Week positions Zahavi's work not only in relation to the tradition of Israeli landscape painting, but in relation to the language of design, craft and mass production. Zahavi raises questions regarding the status of the functional, disposable object in relation to reality, to the immortality of art, and even to that of the nation. "China" – a beautiful collection of highly charged sketches on a set of cheap plastic plates – comments on the very act of drawing, and contends with the erasure involved in gazing at the village of Issawiyeh from the gorgeous windows of the university at Mt. Scopus.

▲ Plate from “China” set, Reuven Zehavi, plastic, ink, 2016.

Masks

Amitai Arnon, Esther Bires | 12 minutes

Photography and editing: Amitai Arnon | Produced in 2014

The film *Masks* was shot over 12 years wherein Esther and Amitai documented two siblings at Purim festivities, dressed up as different characters and embodying various roles. In Purim, as in the carnival, sacred and sanctified things are legitimately parodied. For 12 minutes a partial portrait of the children growing up is presented, in states of abandon. Their adolescence and identity play is shaped by the immediate surroundings of their life, the Israeli town of Ramla – according to the national and religious timetable and the growing children's life cycle during the film.

Link to the film:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8Mp1eJVz3s

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Humus, Tahini, Vegetable salad,

Activities for Kids

Anat Vaknin Appelbaum

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Paint

Paint the drawing by those colors:

1- Yellow

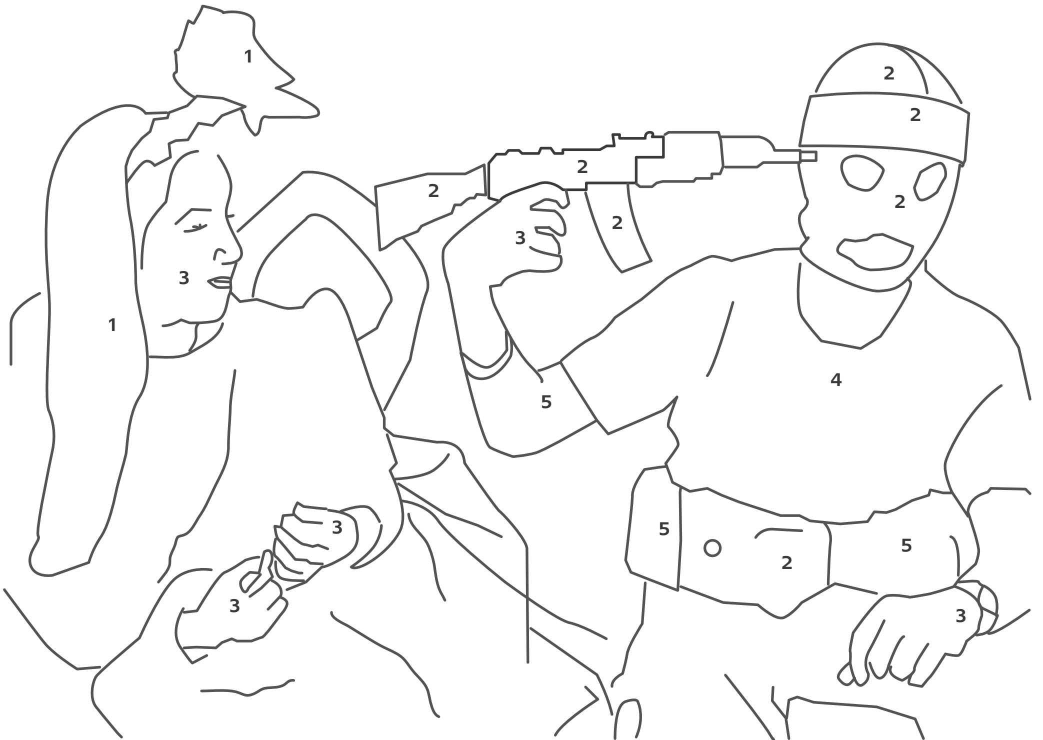
2 - Black

3 - Skin Color

4 - Khaki

5 - Brown

* Inspired by an image from the movie “Masks”, Esther Beers and Amitai Arnon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Word Search

Find the following words:

Ethnography

Sukkah

Jahalin

Politicization

Contemporary

House

Tawfiq

Hansen

Museum

Dybbuk

Authenticity

Amulet

Art

Fischach

p	v	m	u	s	e	u	m	n	f	a	d	v
o	a	c	a	u	t	e	n	t	i	c	i	t
l	r	e	t	h	n	o	g	r	a	p	h	y
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i	j	t	,	k	h	u	s	g	f	t	d	n
c	l	a	k	k	m	d	j	e	d	h	y	t
i	b	w	j	a	h	a	l	i	n	e	b	e
z	v	f	t	h	g	o	m	n	n	n	b	m
a	p	i	e	s	b	x	u	u	g	t	u	p
t	t	q	a	m	m	b	v	s	l	i	k	o
i	a	m	u	l	e	t	c	i	e	h	a	r
o	n	f	i	s	c	h	a	c	h	y	r	a

Electric Shabbath Candles

Materials:

2 Jambo LCD LEDs

2 transistors

2 cables

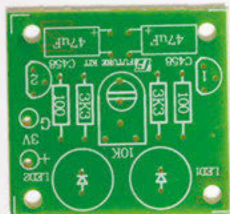
3 resistors

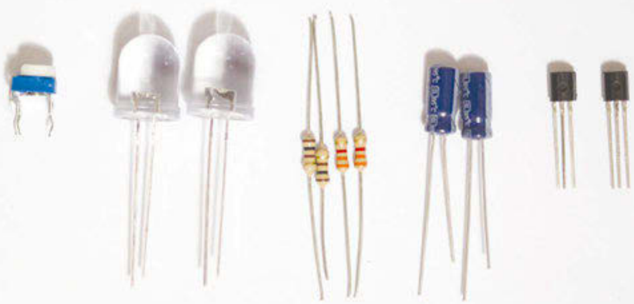
1 potentiometer

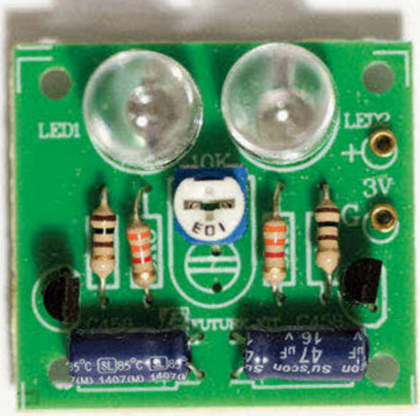
1 battery holder for 2 3V AAA batteries

Instructions:

Connect the materials according to the picture in the next page. Inspired by Samuel Rotman's Eternal Sabbath Candles.






LED1
LED2
3V
10K

Recipe for Beet Letters

Materials:

2 large beets

1 pot with boiling water

Cookie cutters in the form of letters

Instructions:

Boil the water in the pot

When it has come to a boil, insert the beets

Boil the beets for one hour

Slice the beets

Cut out letters using the cookie cutters to form the following sentence:
"The Soul Descends"

* Inspired by Shira Borer's performance

Contributors:

Hanan Abu-Hussein has been an active artist in Jerusalem since 1996. She graduated with a BA and a MA in ceramics design from the Bezalel Academy, Jerusalem. She is a teacher and lecturer and has showed exhibitions in Israel and abroad.

Amitai Arnon and Ester Bires are video artists who live and work in Jerusalem. Bires is the director of the video department at Kiryat Ye'arim high school. She also holds a MA in Cinema Studies from the Tel Aviv University and is a graduate of the Mandel School for Educational Leadership. Arnon is a graduate of the Bezalel Academy and works as a professional film editor. Arnon and Bires have been working together for more than a decade.

Dr. Daphna Ben-Shaul is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Theatre Arts. Her research is engaged with contemporary theatre and performance, reflexive theatre and performance, performative voiding, creative collectives, and spatial practices. She is the editor and co-writer of an extensive book on the Israeli Zik Group and has published articles in major periodicals. Her research on contemporary Israeli site-specific performance is funded by the Israel Science Foundation (ISF).

Yoram Bilu is a professor emeritus of anthropology and psychology at the Hebrew University. His research interests include the anthropology of religion, culture and mental health, the sanctification of space in Israel, and Maghrebi Jewish culture. In 2013, he received the Israel Prize in sociology and anthropology and in 2015, he was elected to the Israeli Academy of Science.

Shira Borer is a graduate from the Bezalel Academy. She is a designer and lecturer at Shenkar College for Arts and Design. Borer also studied Chinese and Japanese calligraphy.

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Chen Cohen is an interdisciplinary artist working in photography, video, installation and performance in Tel Aviv. She is a graduate of the Bezalel Academy (MFA) and the Musrara School (Photography). Cohen interned at the Maamuta Art & Media Center (Jerusalem) via the Underground Academy. Cohen has exhibited in several solo exhibitions as well as numerous group exhibitions, and her works can be found in both public and private collections.

Prof. Rachel Elior is the John and Golda Cohen Chair of Jewish Philosophy and Mystical thought, is a Professor Emerita at the Department of Jewish Thought in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Prof. Elior wrote 16 books on Hasidism, Sabbatianism, Messianism, Kabbalah, Hekhalot Mysticism, Dead Sea Scrolls and the role of women in Jewish culture and Jewish history.

Galit Hasan-Rokem has served as Max and Margarethe Grunwald Professor of Folklore and Professor of Hebrew Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem where she now is Professor Emerita. Hasan-Rokem studies folk literary, ethnographic and inter-cultural aspects of late antique Rabbinic literature; theory of folklore; Jewish motifs in European folklore, especially the Wandering Jew; Israeli folklore. She is also a published poet and poetry translator.

Adi Kaplan & Shahar Carmel are artists living and working in Tel Aviv and are both graduates of the Kalisher Academy of Painting in Tel Aviv. They are an artist duo focused on long-term multidisciplinary projects. Their projects include painting, writings, short films, all of which are sometimes combined into pictorial and musical performances, shows and radio dramas.

Pesi Komar is a graduate of the Beit Berl Art College and also holds a BA (honors) in Art and Education from Emuna College. She is a member

of Studio of Her Own, Center for Women's Art in Jerusalem. She was an artist-in-residence with the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center. She was the recipient of the "Artist & Lecturer" Grant from the Israeli Ministry of Culture and Sports.

Michelle MacQueen is a PhD candidate in the Cultural Studies program at Queen's University (Canada). She holds a Bachelor of Music from Acadia University and a MA in Music and Culture from Carleton University. She is drawn to interdisciplinary work that fosters connections between culture, arts, activism, and social change. Her research focuses on tourism and political economy of culture.

Oz Malul is a sculptor, performance artist, and musician. He graduated with a BA in Art from the Bezalel Academy, Jerusalem (2005), and a MA from Columbia University, NYC (2008). Malul has presented solo exhibitions and participated in many group exhibitions in galleries and museums in Israel and around the world.

Ktura Manor lives and works in Tel Aviv. She graduated from Tel Aviv University, HaMidrasha School of Arts and also holds a MA from the Bezalel Academy. Manor presented solo exhibitions in Ramat Gan Museum, and group exhibitions in Israel and world-wide. She was an artist-in-residence at the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center.

Itamar Mendes-Flohr studied theatre, drawing, and photography and works in theatre, drawing, sculpture, carpentry and in their intersections. Mendes-Flohr has been an artist-in residence with the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center for six years. His work has been presented at festivals and in galleries and museums throughout Israel and world-wide.

Sala-Manca (Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman) is a group of artists and creators active since 2000. They published Hearat Shulayim art journal and also created and produced the Heara events for contemporary art between 2001-2007. In 2009, they established the Mamuta Art and Research Center in Jerusalem and since November 2013, Mamuta is located at Hansen House. Lea Mauas is a lecturer at the Visual Theater School where she focuses on performance and public space. Diego Rotman is a Senior Lecturer, researcher, multidisciplinary artist, and curator. He is the current Head of Department of Theater Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research focuses on performative practices as related to local historiography, folklore, Yiddish culture and theatre.

Yeshaiyahu Rabinowitz is a graduated from "Yeshivat Siach" (Rav Shagar) and Shenkar Art and Design College. He teaches science and crafts at Henrietta Szold Elementary School. His work tries to find the performative within static objects, like sculpture, in an attempt to confront the form and the spectator. He was an artist-in-residence at the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center.

Freddie Rokem is Professor (Emeritus) in the Department of Theatre at Tel Aviv University. He is currently the Wiegeland Visiting Professor of Theater & Performance Studies at the University of Chicago. Freddie is one of the most renowned and influential theorists and historians of European theater and performance traditions. He has been a visiting professor at many universities in the United States, Germany, Finland and Sweden, and is also a practicing dramaturg.

Shalom Sabar is Professor of Jewish Art and Folklore at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research and publications concentrate on

the history of Jewish art, ceremonies and rituals, objects in the life and year cycles, visual folklore and material culture of Jewish communities in Christian Europe and the Islamic East. He also guides traveling seminars to study Jewish communities and sites in Europe, Central Asia, North Africa, and India.

Shiri Singer is an artist and a writer, working in video, performance, and experiments in new writing practices. She graduated from Minshar School of Art and her texts have been published in several different journals. Her first book was published in 2017. Singer was an artist-in-residence with the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center.

Shaul Tzemach lives and works in Tel Aviv. His studies were originally in visual arts, but his practice has since broadened. His work deals with new media, kinetic and interactive art, generative art, video mapping and 3-D screenings.

Anat Vakninn Appelbaum is a photographer and a graphic designer. She is a graduate from the photography department at the Bezalel Academy. Vakninn-Appelbaum has participated in artist-in-residence with the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center. She has participated in many group exhibitions.

Nir Yahalom worked as the Mamuta Art and Research Center's Technical Manager between 2011-2017. He is an amateur architect, yoga teacher, and carpenter. As an artist, he has collaborated with many of Sala-Manca's projects.

Guy Yitzhaki is a Jerusalem-based artist, photographer, and writer. He studied Mathematics and Computer Sciences at the Hebrew University, and Photography at the Musrara School. He has exhibited in Israel and abroad,

and he was an artist-in-residence with the Underground Academy at the Mamuta Art and Research Center.

Reuven Zahavi is an artist and lecturer at the Bezalel Academy who lives and works in Jerusalem. His works involve painting, drawing, video and digital mediums, and his works have been presented in Israel and abroad. Zahavi is also a scholar who researches the relationships between art, design, craft, and technology.

*

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Yair Meyuhas pp. 162, 246, 273, 278-279, 280
Andrew Malakhovsky pp. 124-125, 145, 146, 153, 157, 268, 276-277
Itamar Mendes Flohr pp. 50, 60-61, 160-161, 190-193, 226-227
Sala-Manca pp. 46, 64, 88, 216-217, 228-229, 230-231, 266
Anat Vaknin Appelbaum pp. 24, 26, 34
Dima Nof pp. 72, 76, 80, 84
Shira Borer pp. 94-95

*

Translators:

Einat Adi (Civic Bi-longing: Politicization of the Domestic Site in Eternal Sukkah)
Galit Hasan-Rokem (The Wandering Jew's Home and a Temple Everywhere)
Yonatan Orr-Stav (All other texts)