Dominant Fictional Fields

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French cinema historian Jacque Ranciere coined the term "dominant fiction" to help set parameters for a society's self-referential discourse. According to Ranciere, in every society there exists " a preferred form of representation through which members of that society attain an image of societal consensus that provides them with a framework through which they are able to identify themselves. [This constitutes a] storage reservoir of images and a manipulator of differently configured stories (pictures, novels, films, etc.). Fiction represents the codes derived from history and presents historical conflicts in different ways. [… Cinema] represents and presents the myth of the code's establishment and the system of gestures, displacements, and transformations, through which a community identifies itself. It does this by identifying the law of the community, (Ranciere 1976, 26, 28). Ranciere emphasizes the reservoirs of iconography and narratives that serve as the building materials for dominant cinematic fictions present in moving images. Due to the narratives and the iconography latent within cinema, it plays a central role in the design process of dominant fictions in every society. For example, Ranciere points to the famous American film "Birth of a Nation," directed by David Griffith, as the dominant fiction of the United States. It's truly ironic that for a short time the dominant fiction of Israel was also a Hollywood film- "Exodus." Yet, despite the huge popularity of the film in Israel and the world and despite the fact that the film is identified with historical events connected with the State of Israel, "Exodus" is, in the end, not an Israeli movie. Instead, if one attempts to select an Israeli work best able to correspond with Ranciere's definition, Moshe Shamir's novel He Walked Through the

Fields, and perhaps even more its movie adaptation, deserves to be considered Israel's dominant fiction in the early years of the state.

"No Longer the Same Fields" is the name of an article written by Nurit Gertz where she compares the novel with its film adaptation. The fields that Gertz considers as not being referred to in the film "He Walked Through the Fields" are the fields of the pioneering group and the farmers who work these fields. In opposition to the kibbutz members who work in agriculture, the film's hero Uri is connected to other fields. First and foremost, Uri is connected to the battlefield and even more to the wide-open spaces of the Western. In the words of Gertz, " the film is constructed primarily around the thematic tensions that organize various forms of the Western. … 'He Walked Through the Fields' did not fashion social tensions in accordance with the book or in accordance with the national cinema [that preceded it]. On the contrary, it designed them in accordance with the Western," (Gertz 1993, 71, 75) Yet Uri the soldier is not "the man on the horse." Uri is an infantry soldier and the construction of the infantry soldier is completely different from the construction of a cavalry soldier. The unmentioned fields that Gertz speaks about are neither the kibbutz fields that are transformed into the wide-open spaces of the Wild West nor are they the1948 war battlefields where the infantry soldiers needlessly trudged through thorny trenches, or on top of the clumped earth of open furrows. As a transition is being made from the value system of the pioneering group to an individualistic value system, new semantic fields begin to be discussed.

The cult of the fallen soldier that makes the sacrifice of one's life into the central value of Israeli society is one of the foci of 1950s cinema that is characterized by a "Heroic-National Model." This genre developed soon after the emergence on the Zionist

historical stage of a "native born generation of Jews that developed a new vision of reality in its various military frameworks. According to this new vision, the national problem would be solved through the employment of a vigorous military solution, (Ben Eliezer 1955, 157). This generation was represented in Independence War films, such as *Kiryah Ne'emana* [The Faithful City], *Giv'a 24 Einah Ona* [Hill 24 Doesn't Answer], and *Amud Ha'esh* [Pillar of Fire]. Yet the construction of the Independence War soldier somehow arrived at its most effective expression in a film adaptation of Moshe Shamir's novel He Walked Through the Fields that was directed by Yosef Millo in 1968. As is well known, the movie's plot takes places against the backdrop of the Yishuv's struggle against British authority in 1945-6, the years of the Hebrew Revolt movement. Nevertheless, the film was produced nearly two decades later- after the Six Day War.

The I. D. F.'s victory in the Six-Day War constituted a demonstration of the military strength of Israel that reached a peak of expression, if not its fullest possible expression. Following the war, large-scale Hollywood-like war films were produced in Israel. Examples include *Haim Tel Aviv Bo'eret?* [Is Tel Aviv Burning?], *Hamisha Yamim B'Sinai* [Five Days in Sinai], *Hamatarah Tiran* [Kommando Sinai], and most importantly Uri Zohar's epic film of the Six Day War *Kol Mamzer Melech* [Every Bastard a King]. Ella Shohat, who was the first to address the army and military films of Israeli cinema, relates the change that began in Israeli cinema following the Six Day War to the military success in the war and to the inspiration that the producers drew from the Hollywood version of World War II films. Six-Day War films "appropriated the epic style and the larger than life heroes of Hollywood war films for themselves. [They] used a faster editing tempo […] and they included a greater number of extras and many more

special effects to create a wartime atmosphere through the use of pyrotechnics," (Shohat 1991, 108,109, 111). These films excelled at orchestrating a perfect combination of war technology and cinematic rhetoric. Napoleon's maxim that "the ability to move constitutes military capability" applies to these movies. Concerning cinema, it is possible to paraphrase this maxim: "The ability to create moving pictures is the capacity for war."

Like every historical film, war films weave a mythohistoric narrative and create a unique iconography through which they communicate the historic event of their time. The historic film contains hidden observations that do not appear in history books. The film "He Walked in the Fields," which was produced in the same period as the Six Day War films, does not deal with a historical story that occurred at the time of its production, and it is different from the Six Day War films in that lacks the rhetorical tools and the production methods of the large scale war film. As a film that was produced in the wake of the Six Day War, despite the fact that its plot unfolds prior to the Independence War, "He Walked in the Fields" functions, in terms of the social values that are contained within it, as " a transitional text." The film bridges the gap that opened up and was growing between two value systems of two different periods in the history of Zionism- the pioneering period and the statist period.

The Independence war films that were produced in the fifties presented a motif that accompanies the National-Heroic genre up until today: The ethos of self-sacrifice that found its symbolic expression in the maxim "it is good to die for our land." This ethos is woven into Independence War films such as Amram Amar's 1950 film *Hafuga* [Ceasefire], Joseph Lejtes' 1952 film *Kiryah Ne'emana* [The Faithful City], Thorold Dickinson's 1954 film *Giv'a 24 Einah Ona* [Hill 24 Doesn't Answer], Natan Akselrod's

1956 film *Dan Quixote V'Sa'adiah Panza* [Don Quixote and Sa'ad Pancha], and Larry Frisch's *Amud Ha'esh* [Pillar of Fire]. Yet it is woven into the film version of "He Walked Through the Fields" anew in a different and more complex form. Like "The Hebrew Film," the Zionist propaganda film, the films of the National-Heroic genre were employed as an ideological horn. These films participated in the establishment of a nationalism military ethos that first crystallized at the end of the thirties. Anita Shapira argues that "the spiritual and moral decision was made during the Arab Revolt. This was the period during which Palestinian Jewish youth assumed the role of warrior as a special mission of their generation," (Shapira 1992, 367). According to Emanuel Sivan, "the new martyrological ethos" already began to crystallize during the Second Aliyah period. Sivan defines it as a "renewal of the chain of those who had fallen for Jewish sovereignty that began with Masada and Bar Kochba and skipped over nineteen hundred years to continue with those who fell establishing the New Yishuv," (Sivan 1991, 177). This ethos was "an secular, activist, and collective, ethos. Yet […] it was also an ethos that attempted to give expression to the uniqueness of the individual who had fallen," (Sivan 1991, 179). From the point of view of the individual, the "new martyrological ethos" argued that a patriotic death was not a conclusion, since those who died founding the nation or defending the homeland achieved a metaphysical existence in the nation's everlasting future. Ella Shohat noted that in Independence War movies "there is an allegorical compensation for the deaths of the heroes, like in the films of many different nations, such as Roberto Rosselini's 1945 film "Rome, Open City" or Gillo Pontecorvo's 1966 film "The Battle of Algiers." This compensation finds expression in the rebirth of the nation, which is the true heroine of the film," (Shohat 1991, 63).

Two historical events in the history of the Yishuv, the Great Arab Revolt and the Holocaust, brought about the transition from a defensive ethos to an offensive ethos: "Until World War II, the mythos of the pioneer and the worker ruled unquestioned. It commanded the youth to be faithful workers on the soil of the homeland and to defend it when necessary. With the war, a message was transmitted that, while the role of laborer continued to be important, it was secondary to the role of warrior," (Shapira 1992, 431). In the film "He Walked Through the Fields," the company commander who demands that Uri enlist summarizes the new outlook with a laconic sentence: "If there won't be a Palmach, there won't be a kibbutz." Yet the military frameworks guarded the social group values even after the transition to an offensive ethos. Youth groups, mobilized agricultural training, and the Palmach, as well as Nahal[1] after the establishment of the I. D. F., enriched the fighting ethos by implanting the values of the pioneering group within it and by placing the seal of the pioneering "gang" on the military group framework.

In Israeli cinema, the "new martyrological ethos" passed through a number of incarnations. The narrative assumed and shed form, and the cinematic rhetoric was continuously adapted to the changes in societal outlook that rested at the base of the narrative and its fashioning of characters. In films of Zionist Realism that describe the beginning of Jewish settlement, such as *Sabra*, *Zot Hi Ha'aretz* [This is the Land], *Harpatka'ah Kolektivi* [Collective Adventure] (1938), *Miklalah L'Brahah* [From Blessing to Curse], and *Hem Hayu Asarah* [They Were Ten], the pioneer guard stands with gun in hand ready to defend the collective. The small pioneering group, not the Yishuv as a whole, is what gives the individual a sense of belonging and common purpose. More than

[1] Literally *No'ar Halutzi Lohem*, or Fighting Pioneer Youth. Nahal combined military

anything else, it gave the individual strong personal ties that connected him with other young men and women who together formed a group maintaining emotional solidarity.

The film "He Walked Through the Fields" constitutes, as has already been stated, a "transitional text" between the values of group solidarity and the values of statism. It is able to function in this way, because two different times characterize the film: The fictional story occurs on the eve of the Independence War, while the production of the film and the frame story of the narrative occur after the Six Day War. A gap of twenty years exists between the two times of the film. In the film characters and scenes that establish the pioneering group's values of solidarity. For example, the figure of the kibbutz leader who worries all the time about what Uri is lacking following his return from the agricultural school; the meeting of kibbutz members where the decision to vote on whether to send Uri's father Willy on a mission to Europe is held; the maternal worry of the kibbutz for the children of the Youth Aliyah; the collective work in the hayloft and during the grape harvest, and the dining hall experience. Yet the values of togetherness are also emphasized in the Palmach camp where the military unit is found. This is evident in activities, such as the dancing of the hora, group singing, hanging around the campfire, and the roasting of chickens. At the conclusion of the film, Uri, the platoon commander, once again dramatically expresses collective responsibility: he spares the life of a soldier who is under stress resulting from his wife's sickness and he releases him from a mission that he takes upon himself to perform.

The warrior ethos was realized in the Independence War when the young generation of native-born Jews, most of whom possessed a pioneering consciousness,

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service with agricultural labor in border areas.

were converted into a generation of soldiers that was known as the "1948 generation." The slogan of those days "the whole country a front the nation an army" expressed the revolution is social status by transfer of precedence from the pioneer to the soldier. The inexplicit ideology of the soldiers of the 1948 generation echoes with the societal outlook that was widespread in the polis of Classical Greece "the whole comes before the part, and it is better than the part […] the whole body insures the individual's life and that the individual's life will be good, [The collective] is placed in the hands of the individual for safe keeping. Yet since the collective is elevated above the individual and even continues to exist after his death, its achievements make it into something more important," (Jonas 1963, 248). Death for the sake of the collective received a transcendental expression that is characteristic of the new martyrological ethos. The soldier who sacrifices his life for the pioneering or national collective continues to exist after his death through the belief in his coalescence with the national future.

In the Independence War films, the cinematic rhetoric stresses the principle of equality existing between the soldiers simultaneously with the absence of the characteristic military hierarchy from both the narrative and the fashioning and organization of the moving image. The cinema reflects the new martyrological ethos that argues that those who fall in battle only seemingly die. These films do not focus on the physical destruction of the body and the dismembered body of the fallen soldier remains behind the scenes. For example, in the film *Amud Ha'esh*, in a scene featuring the shelling of a stronghold in the Negev, the fallen soldier is only represented in a metonymic way when the camera focuses on a razor that a bomb blast tears from the hand of a soldier who is killed. Uri's death in the film "He Walked Through the Fields" is

also represented through the use of a close up featuring a frozen image- the surprised face of Uri at the moment that he is killed. The transition from life to death expresses itself in the change from a moving image to a frozen image. In the films of the fifties "death and independence blend together forcefully in collective thinking […]," (Shohat 1991, 63). The film "He Walked Through the Fields" stresses the idea of establishing the nation through war and battlefield deaths in its narrative and iconography. The myth of the war experience which originated during the French Revolution "relies on the yearning for brotherhood and friendship, on the revelation of life's meaning, and on the personal and national renewal," (Mosse 1993, 34). After Uri's death during the explosion of the bridge, national renewal is described in a scene featuring the bringing of illegal immigrants safely to shore from a ship.

Following the Six-Day War, a change in the design of war movies began. These changes resulted from societal changes that preceded the war. With the establishment of the state a new worldview was born- statism. The state replaced the collective group, and from then on the state represented the collective whole. Yet in opposition to the group collective which constituted a real entity, the state represented an abstract entity. "The principle of statism was a ruling principle that was intended to transfer all of the functions performed by various organizations and bodies during the Yishuv period to the responsibility and oversight of the state […] In the years following [the Independence War] the state set up the Israeli nation as a nation in uniform. Militarism [was converted] from an ideology maintained by small elite groups into a project meant for the whole of Jewish society," (Ben-Eliezer 1955, 280). Films, such as "He Walked Through the Fields" and "Every Bastard a King," model the professional worldview as it was realized

in the framework of the army. Professionalism dictated that from thereon in the soldier was required to carry the burden placed upon him and to even sacrifice his life for the state. In return for the readiness to sacrifice oneself, the state was, seemingly, required to guarantee the safety of the soldier and, in the worst-case scenario, to provide the soldier's body with proper burial. As the well-known rule that one does not leave wounded in the field teaches, whatever price would be demanded the state would worry about its soldiers at all times, in every place, and at any cost. "Already in August 1949 […] Ben Gurion presented […] the **foundational principles that would accompany the construction of the new army: A. professional and organizational efficiency, B. a pioneering spirit** [Emphasis J. N.]" (ibid., ibid.). "He Walked Through the Fields" is a transitional film between pioneering and statism that has the principles of Ben Gurion's project for the construction of **The New Army** present within it. "Statism" was an ideology that maintained the appearance of solidarity and mutual responsibility between the solider and the state in the same intimate and personal form that characterized the relationship between the individual and the group within the ideological framework of pioneering. The state was presented as a replacement of equal value for the collective settlement. In other words, it was a large collective settlement with which the individual was meant to identify and was capable of identifying. Yet in such a presentation of the state a problem, perhaps even an internal contradiction, was present. The individual who was called upon to identify with the state, in opposition to an individual in a pioneering settlement, did not directly participate in the decisions of the state and was given no control over the actions and the errors of the abstract entity. In the new relationship between the individual and society, only the practical aspect of the individual's identification with the whole of

society was maintained. The individual was required to faithfully assume the role that the state assigned him, in the place and at the time designated for it, and to fulfill this role to the best of his abilities. Uri Avineri anticipated and formulated the new human situation in epigrammatic form in 1946 in "*Bema'avak"* [In Struggle], a manifesto of the young generation: "Ideology was the measure of the previous generation. **The task** is the measure of **the new generation** [emphasis J. N.]," (Shapira 1992, 464). After the Independence War, the picture came into sharper focus when the complex elitist code of identification of the Yishuv that was based on Socialism and Humanism was replaced by more restricted code of identification that was based on patriotism. This more restricted, or "statist" code was based on national values, the state, and security.

The expression "to play the role," representative of the social code of the Stoic philosophy of life, was commonly used by the Stoic philosophers of the ancient period: " Fulfillment of the assignment takes the place of the realization of the objective […] what matters is the effective performance of the task, instead of its ineffective performance, without attention to the results," (Jonas 1963, 249). In 1950s and 1960s Israel, the expression "*Bitzuizm*" was common, and it represented a value system similar to the values of Stoic philosophy. Concentration upon professionalism and the fulfillment of one's assignment made it possible for the soldier to make a detour around the discomfort he felt concerning the question of reciprocity in his relationship with the abstract entity: Is the state interested and capable of granting the same type of mutual responsibility that was present in the collective settlement? The professional stuck to his task and did what was asked of him. He was forced to pretend that he was acting in accordance with free will and that the meaning of his actions derived from his professional achievements and

not from his constitution of part of the social fabric. The lack of reciprocity in these relations was camouflaged through an elided analogy between the state and the collective group. The internalization of this analogy served as an ideological tool that allowed the professional to continue to fulfill his task and to perform in a professional manner: "The part is meaningless for the whole, just as the whole is apathetic and alienated from its parts," (Jonas 1963, 249). The intimacy and the solidarity that characterized the private relationships within the collective settlement were replaced with the anonymity of the state.

The professionalism meant to bridge the gap between the individual and the state is immediately stressed in the opening of the film. The first sequence is part of the frame narrative in which the paratrooper returning from the Six-Day War stops for a visit at the Kaduri Agricultural School where his father Uri, who died twenty years earlier, studied. The next sequence is part of a flashback that tells the story of the paratrooper's father Uri, and it constitutes the central plot of the film. In this sequence, the Palmach unit members at Kaduri are involved in competition to see who can most quickly disassemble and reassemble a Sten sub-machine gun. Kaffiyahs are wrapped around the eyes of the trainees and they disassemble and assemble with their eyes closed. The commander holds a stopwatch and counts the seconds. Uri finishes first and is declared the winner in the competition. The kaffiyah symbolize both the figure of the Arab enemy and the figure of the Palmach fighter who would foppishly wear a kaffiyah around his neck. The eye covering kaffiyah symbolizes the social blindness of the Palmach fighters in whose eyes the ability to perform effectively was most important. The stopwatch through which such professionalism was to be nurtured serves as a symbol of efficiency and control, and the

one who holds it, the military commander, represents the state, an abstract and anonymous entity.

In 1968, the year that the film was produced, the young film actor Assi Dayan, who portrays Uri, the hero of the classic novel of the Independence War, gave the film the shine of his father Moshe Dayan, the Minister of Defense during the Six-Day War. Moshe Dayan, who was also a well-known commander in both the Palmach and in the Independence War, was the I. D. F. Chief of Staff during the years that David Ben-Gurion coined the term "statism." As a result, the name Dayan is identified with the ideological duality that characterized "the new army," which was, in Ben Gurion's words, "pioneering and professional and organizational efficiency."

A short frame narrative that encloses the principle narrative opens the film "He Walked Through the Fields." The opening sequence begins with the conclusion of the battles of the Six-Day War, when Uri the paratrooper, son of the Uri the solider who fell prior to the Independence War, arrives for a visit at the school where his father learned. The young paratrooper looks at a picture of his father that hangs on the memorial wall. At the conclusion of the film, Uri the palmachnik dies following his blowing up of a bridge single-handedly in exemplary demonstration of his professional skills. Before Uri sets out to perform his mission, collective responsibility, the pioneering spirit that Ben-Gurion spoke about, is demonstrated. Uri decides to replace another soldier, a new immigrant who volunteered to blow up the bridge, because the immigrant soldier's wife has been hospitalized. At the moment of Uri's death, with the explosion of the bridge, an image of his face freezes on screen and immediately mixes with waves and later with marching feet and suitcases carried by hand. In the next scene tens of illegal immigrants who were

just brought ashore from the ship that brought them to Palestine receive a hot meal at Uri's kibbutz. The diversionary act during the performance of which Uri is killed makes it possible to get the illegal immigrants off of their ship safely. Through the cinematic technique of freezing the image of Uri and blending it with the figures of the illegal immigrants through use of a dissolve effect , the fallen soldier blends with the nation. After the death of the hero at the conclusion of the main narrative, a concluding sequence appears to complete the frame narrative. Grandson Uri, the paratrooper who fights in the Six-Day War, arrives at the kibbutz to meet his grandfather Willy. Willy receives him with the same words that he received his son Uri twenty years earlier when he completed his studies at the Kaduri Agricultural school: " Uri, get over here you little piglet." The recreation of the meeting concludes the film, and it also brings the new martyrological ethos form of the metanarrative to an end in an oxymoronic form. The fallen soldier, who was to have continued to exist only in a metaphysical way in the theoretical framework of the nation's existence, continues to maintain a tangible physical existence in the film thanks to the birth of his son months after his death.

The film expresses the belief that the successful interweaving of two social outlooks, the pioneering outlook represented by father Uri, the Palmach fighter, and the statist outlook represented by his son Uri, the soldier of the Six Day War, allowed for victory in 1967. The concluding scene of the film containing the contradiction of the metaphysical dimension of the new martyrological ethos returns the debate to additional questions pertaining to dominant fictions promoted by "He Walked Through the Fields." The question of military training being first and foremost among these.

Military training is employed upon the military inductee during basic training and in courses for lower ranking commanders- NCO course and officer's training course. This is training that "erases all the people and the baggage that they bring with them. Afterwards it builds them anew," (Lieblich 1987, 29). In the worlds of one NCO working in basic training: "The object is to 'break the backs' of the soldiers, and after they are 'hunched over'- to begin to build them," (Lieblich 1987, 24). The inductee's transition from the citizenry to the military involves a psychic trauma: "Today I know that I was in a state of shock. I still hadn't grasped that I was a soldier, that I no longer belonged at home, **that I no longer belonged to myself** [emphasis J. N.," (Lieblich 1987, 27). Military training establishes a subject "that does not belong to itself," and, in this way, it makes possible the integration of the soldier into the war machine up until the subject's death. Military training functions in this way, because only a subject "that does not belong to itself' is capable of functioning as an agent of the state performing missions involving killing and destruction, even if these missions are in opposition to its conscience, while mentally ready to die. A study of films of war and trauma that were produced in Hollywood following the Second World War teaches that these films "dramatically present the vulnerability of masculinity and dominant fictions [that shape the masculine subject] when faced with what I would like to refer to as 'historical trauma,"" (Silverman1992, 52). Silverman's observation is also relevant when we attempt to unravel army and wars films in Israeli cinema.

In her study, which grounds itself in the Lacanian model of psychoanalysis, Silverman argues that two basic laws organize dominant fictions. The first law, "The Law of Conservatory Structure," incorporates the concept of "The Name of the Father" (that

frequently alternates with the signifiers "family" and "The Phallus"), the binary opposition "masculine"/"feminine" that evolves out of it, and prohibition on incest that dictates the recycling of women in society. The second law, "The Law of Language," refers to the new subject's participation in the symbolic order that proceeds from the subject's experience of castration and the absent authority of the Phallus. "The Dominant Fiction" constitutes a pattern for subject formation through the establishment of two central behavioral phenomena: gender differentiation and heterosexuality.

In contrast with the subject that obeys the dominant fiction, Silverman describes another type of subject "that developed a different type of relationship to the family, and, in specific cases, to the laws of language and conservatory structure, that did not jibe effectively with the dominant fiction. For subjects of this type, […] psychic reality has a different character than the one dictated by the dominant fiction. The passions and the identifications that form them are likely to cause the development of a dissenting or oppositional relationship to reality," (Silverman 1992, 41). Subjects of this type indeed populate cinema, since, on one hand, the type of subject formation that military training imparts on its trainees relies on homosexual erotics, and, on the other hand, war trauma "brings a large group of masculine subjects into extremely intimate contact with absence [castration] that prevents them, at least temporarily, from maintaining their imaginary relationship with the Phallus [and the family], and causes a retreat from their belief in the dominant fiction," (Silverman 1992, 55). Military and war films that present the lives of men in these frameworks as lives in the shadow of trauma present a dynamic of masculine subject formation that is different from that which is characteristic of the dominant fiction.

In order to analyze films portraying soldiers demobilized following the Second World War, Silverman relies on Freud's theoretical explanation for battlefield trauma. War trauma constitutes a type of wound in "the protective layer of consciousness" that protects it from a surplus of nervous stimuli that stream in through the senses. From the moment that the nervous system's protective barrier is penetrated, consciousness "is flooded by large quantities of stimuli, and an additional problem arises. How to control the stimuli that have burst [into consciousness] and how to reign them in, in psychic terms, in order that it will be possible to dispose of them," (Freud 1984 [1920], 301). War trauma causes a flood of stimuli that exceeds the defensive capability of the "protective layer" and the absorptive capability of the conscious mind. This results in the mobilization of nervous energies from different systems in order to curb and block the flow of stimuli from the outside. This weakens and impoverishes the ability of these systems to maintain themselves and fails to prevent the continued flooding of consciousness with a troublesome pain.

The clinical form of military trauma due to exhausting military exercises or extended time in the battlefield is known as shellshock. This clinical form is characterized by hallucinations and repetitive dreams that force those suffering from them to return to the location of the traumatic event. The compulsive repetition of the traumatic event is reminiscent of the behavior of children who like to return to a well-known story time after time due to the fact that each repetition provides them with more effective anchoring and strengthens their perceived control over conditions that they desire to achieve. In opposition to the type of repetition enjoyed by children, the shellshock victim's compulsive return to the traumatic event is incapable of controlling

the influx of threatening stimuli. According to Freud, the shellshock victim's effort to recreate the situation is connected to the death drive that expresses itself in the aspiration of all animals to return to their primary state, the state of inanimate objects,

Freud posits that alongside the duality of two basic opposing drives, the vital sexual drive and the death drive, an additional dualism exists. He asserts that the death drive is analogous to man's body that is destined to die and disintegrate, while the sexual drive is analogous to the reproductive cells in man's body that are designated for eternal life. In short, man's body represents the death drive and the reproductive cells present within the body represent the desire for life. I propose that we look at the state's war machine as a system that is based on a similar equation. On one side of the equation, one finds the masculine body designated for breakdown and destruction, while, on the other side of the equation, one finds the family representing dynastic continuity through the reproductive cells found in the male body. In other words, "the world of war and the world of family don't just overlap. They maintain a necessary ideological connection and they inhabit the same space," (Polan 1986, 88). In a series of films belonging to the National-Heroic genre, an oppositional either/or relationship between the soldier and war, on the one hand, and the family, on the other, has been emphasized. This oppositional relationship is especially emphasized in the film "He Walked Through the Fields," whose hero Uri, seemingly, represents a subject in line with the dominant fiction.

The ambivalent relationship in the film between war and family constitutes a central subject of debate. One can demonstrate this claim through resort to a number of different scenes. In the scene that describes his arrival at the Kibbutz, for example, Uri passes by the courtyard of the children's house, where young naked children amuse

themselves in the streams of water emanating from a sprinkler, on the way to the shower. Uri discerns his mother, who is working as a daycare provider, working there and he secretly views a chance meeting between his mother and her new partner, who happens not to be his father. Uri's parents are separated, and, in this way, they signify the possibility, or the danger, of the breakdown of the family in the text. Later in the story, Uri falls in love with Mika, a new immigrant woman, and they move in together. They occupy a room designated for families. Mika becomes pregnant and Uri leaves the kibbutz and joins a Palmach company that is busy training in preparation for military activity. The young woman senses that the pregnancy does not accord well with the current stage in her life, since her partner enlists for active duty. During a short visit by Uri to the Kibbutz, Mika is unable to reveal to him that she is pregnant. Nonetheless, she gets ready to have an abortion, an act expressing her readiness to renounce Uri's reproductive cells and to disrupt the continuity of the familial line. Towards the end of the film, Mika tells Uri's father of her decision to keep the baby with joyful emotion. At this point, Uri's father already knows what Mika does not- Uri has died in battle. According to the dominant fiction, the father's face, which is distorted with pain at that moment, represents "The Name of the Father" that is identified with war, castration, and death. A face with a severe and threatening face similar to that of the father was seen in the film during the shower scene. In this scene, Uri stands surrounded by men his father's age, whose aggressiveness is emphasized through a series of threatening close-ups. All of them stand naked, and several of them are shaving with straight razors in hand. In a close-up Uri's face expresses fear and dread. The men's faces and the razors in their hands represent the threat of castration. In the concluding scene, the father's face distorted with

pain is contrasted with the joyful and radiant face of the expectant mother, who represents the family and the continuity of the family line.

In an additional scene, Uri is in charge of the grape harvest in the vineyard to which the young people of the Youth Aliya are assigned. Mika is numbered among them, and Uri surprises her while she is holding pruning shears and harvesting grapes. Right in front of Uri's eyes, which express astonishment, she suddenly wounds her finger with the pruning shear, hinting at the danger of castration. "It's because of you," she says to him, and she immediately sticks her finger into her mouth and smiles to Uri as the representative of the alternative to the threat of castration- successful coupling. "Here we harvest grapes, not fingers," says Uri as he attempts to calm himself down when faced with an imagined threat. Young men from the Youth Aliya pass them by and Uri teases her: "I don't know what father taught them. Perhaps he taught them Hebrew, but he didn't teach them to work." The Law of Language- the symbolic order- constitutes an insufficient but unnecessary element in the dominant fiction that can be interpreted as "the subject's assumption of a place in the world of the symbolic order through the experience of castration and the rule of the absent Phallus." The pruning shears, which wound Mika's finger, symbolize castration and the wounded finger that she stuffs into her mouth symbolizes procreation and family.

Uri's attitude towards the dilemma of family or war that he finds himself finds expression in his determined support for war. When Uri arrives at the kibbutz in the middle of training for a short visit, he runs to meet Mika. She wants to tell him that she is pregnant, but she fails to speak when she is faced with a tense and impatient Uri: "In my current position, I have nothing against my mother, my father, relatives, and family.

They're all fine, but only on the condition that they don't interfere. Do you understand?" Mika: " Don't worry, I won't disturb you." Uri: "I have two minutes and you want to ruin them with a debate." Mika: "Uri, I need to tell you something important." Uri: " I told you that I was ready to listen." Mika: "It's really nice that you are prepared to listen." Uri: "Thirty men are waiting for me in the wadi and they are more important than me and you combined. In a later scene, Mika repeats what Uri said to his mother word for word. These statements emphasize the conflict between family and war existing at the very moment that Uri represents masculine subject formation that accords with the dominant fiction which obeys the dictates of fictional form.

In the bridge explosion sequence, when Uri orders Semyon, a new immigrant, to blow up the bridge, Semyon, a former partisan with a sick wife, takes the top bullet out of his gun's magazine and gives it to Uri: "In the forests, we would leave the first bullet for one that we loved. I hope you understand. If something happens to me, give this to my wife." Uri takes the bullet from Semyon and puts it in his pocket. Afterwards, when the plans go awry and Uri decides to replace Semyon, he takes the bullet from his pocket, throws it in the air, and catches it in his hand. At the moment that Uri attaches the explosive charge to the bridge, just before he lights the fuse, he sticks his hand into his pocket again. In a close-up shot, one can see how he strokes the bullet and holds it tightly in his hand for a moment. The bullet, whose shape mimics that of a penis, is designated for the woman waiting at home according to Semyon. One can view this bullet as a signifier representing procreation and family instead of the Phallus and the threat of castration at the hands of the father.

Uri's death following the successful accomplishment of the mission to blow up the bridge is understood as a suicide, because Uri does not bother to take adequate cover and exposes his head to the exploding bridge and to the gunfire emanating from a British military position. It appears that Uri turns the desire for death initially directed towards the enemy back on to himself. The way in which Uri dies, that can be understood as both self-sacrifice and suicide, expresses the severely ambivalent feelings that he carried within. This ambivalence accompanies the soldier into the battlefield. There he faces a dilemma that forces him to choose between solidarity with his family, which requires him to either not act or to flee from battle and betray his comrades, and solidarity with his military comrades, who are positioned around him, which requires him to endanger his life and to consequently betray his family and the biological purpose of the reproductive cells present within his body. This ambivalence is an inseparable part of the masculine subject formation of the soldier and the soldier receives it as part of his military training. The narrative of "He Walked Through the Fields" represents a societal effort to create a compromise between family and war by guaranteeing Mika's pregnancy prior to when Uri goes off to fight. As a result, Uri can die for his country without inflicting a fatal blow to the family, since he has already provided himself with an heir. The frame story of the film concretizes the solution that the narrative provides for a troubling dilemma: Uri, the living soldier, is the son of Uri, the fallen soldier, and, in spite of the young man's sacrifice of his life, the family line continues.

The wisest of men said: "It is best to grasp the one without letting go of the other, for one who fears God will do his duty to both," (Ecclesiastes 7:18). In paraphrase, I'd formulate the aforementioned quote as follows: "It is best to grasp the penis without

letting go of the Phallus." Yet this is neither a joke nor a tautology, because the question remains unanswered: Does the military form of masculine subject formation favor the reproductive organ (the penis), symbolic of family, over the great signifier (the Phallus), symbolic of death in our discussion, or does it favor the great signifier (the Phallus), which is equivalent to death, over the reproductive organ that represents the family? It is a tie. From amongst all the commentaries that I read concerning the aforementioned verse, I find Sforno's commentary to be the most useful (even more useful than that of Rashi): "Indeed 'it is best to grasp the one': You should give priority to your efforts at achieving everlasting perfection. 'The other': to everyday efforts. 'Without letting go': from either of these. 'For one who fears God': pays attention to what he is doing. 'Will do his duty to both': He will come into the world peacefully and he will peacefully leave the world having completed both of his efforts in accordance with his intentions," (Five Scrolls 1976, 81). And he who said it already said- it is good to die for our country.

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