BETWEEN TWO WORLDS:
performance, politics & the role of art in social change

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ABSTRACT

Between Two Worlds: performance, politics & the role of art in social change

This thesis draws on the literatures surrounding identity, emotion and affect in order to consider the theatrical as a site of the political. In doing this it takes an interdisciplinary approach, using concepts from international politics, philosophy, anthropology, history and theatre to construct its case.

The argument opens with a review of literatures pertaining to identity and emotion, both in international relations and more widely in the literatures of political philosophy, morality and ethics. Having established that there is a sound academic footing for inclusion of both in a study of the political, the argument proceeds to explore the literature relating to the theatrical – its history, uses and potential. After a discussion of methodologies, with a focus on quantitative technologies, particularly feminist, ethnographic and mediative methodologies; the discussion moves first to an introduction to the field sites and then an analysis of the fieldwork proper. The fieldwork, conducted among theatre students and professionals in Israel and Palestine, consists of interviews and observations drawn from workshops and performances. Through this empirical research the thesis demonstrates an understanding among theatre professionals that their art performs as a political site. The thesis concludes with a summary of the proceeding work, a reiteration of the main themes and a brief reflection on underlying emotional currents within the text.

My original contribution to the literature of international politics lies in my exploration of the political nature of the theatrical. This interdisciplinary approach seeks to further the direct engagement of academic politics with political life "on the ground", as well as an expansion of the ways in which we conceptualize that political life.

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AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BCE	Before the Common Era
EU	European Union
FP	Foreign Policy
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HUAC	House Un-American Activities Committee
IDF	Israel Defence Forces
IOF	Israel Occupation Forces
IPE	International Political Economy
IR	International Relations
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISA	International Studies Association
MAT	Moscow Art Theatre
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Israeli)
MK	Member of the Knesset
NGO	Non-government Organization
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
OIHT	Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre
PCI	Palestinian Citizen of Israel
UK	United Kingdom
US or **USA**	United States of America
USS	United States Ship
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union)

A WORD ON TERMINOLOGY

For the purpose of clarity, it is important that I define the terms that will be used in this project, particularly the contentious or controversial ones. Although not disputed in itself, the notion of theatre means different things to different people. In this work I will be relying on the definition of 'theatre' and, by extension 'performance', put forth in *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre* (*OIHT*):

> […] theatre is taken here to include any performance by actors for other persons, when what is performed is calculated to hold attention and give pleasure, as well as providing other benefits according to time, place and opportunity (*OIHT* 1995, 4)

This is, by design, a broad definition, and one that allows me to draw on multiple examples from a variety of geographic and historical scenarios.

Not only is identity contentious as a concept, the vocabulary used to denote it is fraught with political overtones and double, if not triple, meanings. Because of this, I have included a quick discussion of which terms I am using and what meanings I am assigning to them.

I use the term Jewish Israeli to refer to a citizen of Israel who considers themselves Jewish. This self-description does not make use of the Orthodox criteria for "Jewishness". I have chosen to use the term Palestinian Citizen of Israel (PCI) rather than the term Arab Israeli, with the exception of times when an interview subject has used the term Arab Israeli and I have used a direct quote in the text. For me, the term Arab Israeli has political overtones, ignoring, as it does, the identifier "Palestinian", thereby negating what for some people is a cultural, ethnic and/or national affiliation. I have used the term Palestinian to refer to Arabs who live in the Occupied Territories (Gaza and the West Bank) and consider themselves to be Palestinians[1]. Some of these people may also be citizens of other countries like Jordan or Syria, or hold no citizenship at all, merely travel documents issued by the Israeli government. In the third chapter, the one relating to national theatres, there is an additional confusion to identity terminology. In much of the literature used when researching that chapter, the term Palestinian is often used to refer to the Jews, either native born or émigrés, who were living in the region under the British Mandate. To take this time-specific use of the term into account, in this chapter I refer to Jewish Palestinians and Arab Palestinians, for to refer to the Jews as Israelis would be historically inaccurate.

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[1] As opposed to, for example, an Arab native of Saudi Arabia who is living in Palestine. This is a clarification for hypothetical reasons – I encountered no such person during the course of my research.

In addition to terminology for individuals, the language for military groups is rife with political subtext. The Israeli Army is often referred to as the IDF (Israel Defence Forces, a translation of the Hebrew name). This use of the word "defence" implies that Israel is, in fact, under threat – thus justifying its extraordinary military strength. It is sometimes referred to as the IOF (Israel Occupation Forces), but I am not comfortable using that term unilaterally as that would imply that Israel as a state has no right to exist and the entire region is occupied. As a compromise, and to avoid the confusion that would arise from the use of different terms in different parts of the text, I have elected to refer to the Israeli Army, Israeli military or Israeli soldiers whenever possible.

It is important to note that these are terminologies that I have come up with myself, sometimes drawing on conventions and sometimes not. They do not reflect a consensus of opinion – should such a thing be possible – amongst my interview subjects or other people to whom I spoke while engaged in my fieldwork.

There is one more comment to be made, this about the terms "actor" and "acting". Both of these words are used in a theatrical as well as politically theoretical way. The semantics and double meanings of this, particularly in the sections on performativity, could easily prove confusing. It is not my intention to create a semantic conundrum or linguistic tension over the diverse use of these words. Rather, I wish to acknowledge the overlap of terms, but trust that the reader can distinguish between the situations of their use as an in-depth examination of linguistics and linguistic adaptation is beyond the scope of this project.

"Finding one's voice" is a concept that is often discussed in writing circles: novelists, essayists and creative writers-in-training speak and write about "finding their voice", both in- and outside of academia. I have never, in my limited experience, seen a section in a thesis for a social science discipline that describes or discusses the "voice" of what is to come, but in this instance a few words of explanation may not be amiss. There are significant parts of this thesis written, at the urgings of supervisors and examiners, in what might be termed a "traditional" academic voice. By this I mean that arguments are laid out, referenced and reinforced in a certain way; that language and concepts are used, and chosen, for their reflection of accepted academic ideas and styles; and that the general tone and cadence follow established academic patterns. I say significant parts, but not all.

Because of the interdisciplinarity of the approach used here, because of the immediacy of the topic to the author, and because of the emotional impact described and felt, I have made the choice, upon occasion, to step out of the academic voice and into something more personal. I have made this choice for several specific reasons, and I have supporting references for those reasons that come from academic work. The academic justification will come in the following paragraphs, but first I will discuss the two most important reasons affecting this decision, reasons that are personal. The first comes from my experiences as a reader. When I read work that discusses painful or traumatic experiences I am disturbed when it is written dispassionately, when I cannot get a sense of the person behind the words. This is not to say that all work with a strong emotional impact should be written as a polemic, but I want a sense that the writer *felt something* when she or he wrote the piece, I want there to be blood in it. Because of this experience as a reader, as a writer I am impelled to communicate in a way that I would want to read, in a way that reflects the integrity of my experience of pain when researching and writing about difficult topics and experiences. Secondly, and closely related to the first reason, I do not think that a writer can completely remove themselves from their work and that it is disingenuous to claim to have done so. Our writing is part of us and we are part of it – and to acknowledge this when discussing aspects of our work with which we have a deep personal connection is not just a sign of intellectual honesty, but of strength.

I am not the only one to think this. Linda McDowell, whose reflections on feminist research techniques are discussed in Chapter 2, writes that "it is clear we are all influenced by our life histories" (McDowell 1998, 2136) and, with regard to

positionality, has written that "we must recognise and take into account [of] our own position, as well as that of our research participants and *write this into our research practice*" (McDowell in Rose 1997, 305). Furthermore, Gillian Rose, in discussing reflexivity, writes that it "is formulated in terms of visibility, then, but also in terms of a particular spatiality. This reflexivity looks both 'inward' to the identity of the researcher, and 'outward' to her relation to her research and what is described as 'the wider world'" (Rose 1997, 309). This thesis is rooted in the world of emotions and draws on literature that surrounds and stems from that world, literature from the disciplines of international politics, anthropology and philosophy, among others. Martha Nussbaum's book *The Intelligence of Emotions*, which forms the basis for a significant part of my argument in favour of the inclusion of emotions in the discourse of international politics, contains many aspects of the highly personal. Her discussion of grief, while referencing observations by anthropologists from other cultures, draws heavily on her own experiences surrounding her mother's death. Anthropological writing (Strathern 1999, Bowman 2008) acknowledges the personal voice as strength of the work, inseparable from the experience on which the work is drawn.

Can you write about emotion without bringing emotion into the writing? *Should* you? If academia has accepted the importance of emotional life as an element of research, what makes portraying emotion in writing "non-academic"? What makes the thousand little things that exist on the edges of the writing of scholarship not scholarship itself? I am not the first to express frustration with these bounds of academia. Elizabeth Dauphinée begins her book *The Ethics of Researching War* with a chapter titled "An accusation in the course of fieldwork". This chapter opens with what she describes as an "interpretation" of something that was said to her by one of her informants one evening when she was in the field. What follows is a chilling condemnation of the academic process, an accusation that academics – in search of degrees, conference papers, publications – write about what they think they see, without actually *feeling* that which they claim to portray (Dauphinée 2007, 1-2). The accusation opens:

> You write about violence – you say that fear is a violence – that the things that cause fear and insecurity are violences. But you do not know how that fear sits like a bear on my heart. You talk about fear, as though you understood what it tasted like – what it smelled like – that electrified, trembling scent of mortar dust and artillery shells. (Dauphinée 2007, 1)

Although later in her introductory chapter Dauphinée writes that she knows that there is "nothing academic in that", and that her faculty "would not have liked it at all", she nevertheless writes that "it seems imperative to gather the guts to remember it better, to gather the guts to indicate clearly that these impressions are the groundwork of the

ethics of interaction, the politics of friendship, the imperative to responsibility for even what I do not understand and cannot grasp" (Dauphinée 2007, 8). Dauphinée does not clarify how she thinks we should go about "remembering it better", although she does close her chapter by reminding her reader that "grief, like violence, cannot be washed from the skin like salt" (Dauphinée 2007, 15).

We cannot wash away the experiences of the field simply because the academy "would not like it at all". Nor, would I argue, should we. It is a struggle to know how to convey the feelings that we have experienced, or that have been expressed in the course of interviews. It would be dishonest to write about them in the same way that I write about theoretical concepts, as if the effect was the same. Dishonest emotionally, but dishonest intellectually, too, for how can a work which seeks to address emotions and portray them as worthwhile subjects for study then attempt to eradicate them and their surrounding language from the piece? Ultimately this is a decision that each writer must make for her- or himself, a choice of style and linguistic form. It is my choice, reached through consideration of the ideas cited here, to infuse my empirical work with a sense of the personal and an emotion-rich linguistic style.

An empty space and all of you, and me.
And who am I? […] God of dramatic rites,
God of the transformation from the humdrum
To the wild abandon of the play.
So let us play, so let us beat the drum,
I have returned to the city of my birth;
To the banks of this broad river,
To where the city ends and the wild begins,
A place poised between two worlds
[…]
I have come home, and taken human form
So my true nature be made manifest,
So that I might suspend the disbelief
Of all who dare not believe in me.
Let's play, I said. Look and you'll begin to see.

~Euripides, *The Bacchai*

INTRODUCTION:
BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

> *I have always felt that the action most worth watching is not at the center of things but where edges meet. I like shorelines, weather fronts, international borders. There are interesting frictions and incongruities in these places, and often, if you stand at the point of tangency, you can see both sides better than if you were in the middle of either one. This is especially true, I think, when the apposition is cultural.*
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> ~ Anne Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

The premise of this work is that theatre as an art form has a political nature and as such can create social and political change. It can offer a site at which to consider "the political" at close range. This idea, however, exists on the disciplinary equivalent of a shoreline or an international border. It exists at the place where theories about politics and the political abut the disciplines of anthropology, psychology, history and performance studies. Like Anne Fadiman, I believe that if we "stand at the point of tangency" and draw from ideas and practices of varying disciplines we are able to see the landscape of issues more clearly; we achieve a perspective we might otherwise miss. It is this perspective that I feel is important, as much as my more specific focus on art and social change, the political nature of the theatrical. My original contribution to the literature of international politics lies in my exploration of the political nature of the theatrical. This interdisciplinary approach seeks to further the direct engagement of academic politics with political life "on the ground", as well as an expansion of the ways in which we conceptualize that political life. To be clear, this thesis does not argue that theatre can create social change alone, without support or agreement from international leaders or organisations. It does argue, however, that theatrical performance provides one of many voices, often overlooked, that have significant contributions to make to the political process. It can provide a venue for people to discuss, rehearse, and consider on a smaller scale the things that are pertinent to the larger political conversations. It can also sow the seeds of political ideas, in ways that may not bear immediate fruit (Hübner 1992, Artaud 1970, Boon & Plastow 1998, Brustein 1965, Nasrallah & Perlman 2011). Because of this ability, theatre can be considered a site of what Debrix and Weber (2003) term "mediation", a place where the individual and the international meet and achieve dialog. This concept of "mediation" will be discussed in depth later on, but its importance as a location where the

individual can see him or herself reflected in the greater world is an idea that runs throughout this project.

In this regard theatre can be likened to the fairy tale. Originally, fairy tales taught morality, and valuable lessons about both right and wrong and proper behaviour within the society. Jane Yolen, author of children's books and specialist in childhood literature, writes:

> The fantasy book, like the fairy tale, may not be Life Actual but it *is* Life in Truth. Life in Truth tells us […] of the world *as it should be*. It holds certain values to be important. It makes issues clear. It is, if you will, a fiction based on great opposites, the clashing of opposing forces, question and answer, speech and echo, yin and yang, the great dance of opposites. And so the fantasy tale, […] becomes a rehearsal for the reader for life as it *should* be lived (Yolen 1981, 65).

This distinction between Life Actual and Life in Truth is an important concept for understanding the premise of this work, as is Yolen's comparison of the process of reading a fairy tale to that of a rehearsal. In reading a tale children rehearse their own roles in the challenges life will set them, and through the reading of different stories and the understanding of different roles, a child learns who he or she is in the world. Similarly, through the representation of scenarios on a stage performers and audience can rehearse different versions of Life in Truth. These versions can allow both participants and observers to consider, as Yolen says, "life as it *should* be lived".

Although theatre, at first glance, might seem unrelated to International Relations (IR), it is the purpose of this thesis to show its relevance, to highlight the theatrical moment as a site of the political. Although the traditional IR theories, whose ideas are summarized in Appendix A, reserve no place for such pursuits; it can be argued that this is a failing of a high order. As reported by Ferguson and Mansbach, theory

> […] purports to tell us what to look at and, by inference, what can be safely ignored. By simplifying reality, theory helps us organize our beliefs about an ever-changing world and offers an intellectual foundation for policies. Bad theory almost inevitably means bad policies. Unfortunately, the failure to predict (or adequately to explain, even in retrospect) the end of the Cold War, adds powerfully to evidence from many other quarters that something is seriously wrong with our theories of global politics. (Allan 1992 in Ferguson & Mansbach 1997, 21)

What may be "seriously wrong" with some existing theories of global politics will be addressed in due course. A review of the literatures considering identity in international relations as well as the role emotions play in our understanding of the world, is included in this chapter. A grounding in these two concepts sets the scene for this project's focus on the interdisciplinary site where theatre and politics meet.

RESEARCH PROBLEM: IDENTITY AND EMOTION, 'SELF' AND 'OTHER'

My research is driven by an interest in the concepts of emotion and identity, and the ways in which they are considered on the international stage. The IR literatures surrounding both these ideas, even in the most progressive scholarship which readily admit their importance, fetch up against questions of method and how feeling and knowing can be practically incorporated into political research. From a professional background in the performing arts I know that questions of representation and emotion are topics of great importance to theatre artists. For this reason I began to consider that the art form of theatre might be able to contribute to the political debate on emotion and identity. This is particularly pertinent because many theatre artists consider their work to be intentionally political in nature. As such, I thought it would be interesting to explore the point at which politics and theatre overlap, reflect and exchange ideas.

The question "How do we know who we are?" is one of broad political import and one to which theatre often speaks (Diamond 1996; Cohen, Gutierrez & Walker 2011, Salverson 1996, Schechner 1988). Questions of identity – who defines it and by what criteria, the political impact of allegiance to one identity or another, the potential danger inherent in differing perceptions of identity – have plagued statesmen and nation-builders for millennia (Anderson 1001, Barth 1969, Connolly 2002, Brown 2001). The methods by which identity is created and maintained are certainly not limited to the art world, however the historical view discussed briefly in chapter three, and explored in greater depth in Appendices A, B and D; as well as contemporary experiences portrayed in the empirical chapters four, five and six, show that there is often an underlying current in performances that reflects, constructs and maintains a nation's identity and sense of self. From the gods and heroes of ancient Greek tragedy to contemporary depictions of the heroic patriot, nations and groups construct, reconstruct and revise the ways in which they see themselves – and in which they hope others will see them. This is the creation and re-creation of ideas of Self and Other. (Boon & Plastow 1998, Bradby & James 1980, Eley & Suny 1996, Gills 1994, Shevtsova 1993).

Likewise, the role of emotion in this process interests me greatly. Emotional life is an entity that I feel warrants more attention than is usually afforded it. I have not chosen to delve deeply into the literature surrounding political psychology, choosing instead to use the language of theatre to discuss the emotional moment in politics[2]. The sort of emotion that interests me is that point at which performance fires the

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[2] There will be a further examination of the parameters of the literature later in the Introduction, and in the following chapter.

imagination of the audience, be they in a theatre or at a political rally, allowing them to experience a world outside themselves.

In the U.S. election of 2008, a group of American citizens chose, as President Obama put it in his inaugural address, "hope over fear". It is arguable whether U.S. citizens made a conscious choice to change who they thought they were, moving from a nation paralyzed by fear and relying solely on military power in an increasingly futile bid for world standing, to a nation that made a historic decision on election day, voting in a man who offered hope, and a chance to regain national pride[3]. Although this decision was not driven by theatrical performance in any traditional sense, it does show how, given significant motivation, political and national identities can seem to shift. I will return to this perceived fluidity of identity later in this thesis where I will challenge certain rigid concepts of national identification and security.

During the course of my Masters' studies I became interested in the role that identity plays in the practice of politics, and began to see another boundary emerge: the place where theatre informs life. As I began to design a doctoral project based around the contributions of the theatrical to the political, I became increasingly aware of a number of things. The most striking was the fact that, although the political importance of drama and performance has long been recognised in the disciplines of psychology, education and anthropology, to say nothing of theatre itself, the discipline of politics has remained oddly unwilling to consider it[4]. The relatively recent study of popular culture with regard to political analysis was the closest I could come to finding a home for my topic in the political academy, and even then it was an uneasy fit. Theatre and storytelling, although providing the root from which film and television have sprung, differ from other examples of popular culture in many ways. Popular culture is a broad, and sometimes ill-defined, term encompassing any number of genres, including film, television, music, comics, graphic novels, video games, photography, 'zines, graffiti and so on. In *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, John Storey offers multiple definitions of the term, ranging from attempts to "quantify" high vs. popular culture to the idea of popular culture as something which is produced for mass consumption. Included in his discussion is the idea that the "popular" exists specific to a place and time: the "popular" culture of Elizabethan England may well become the "high" culture of later centuries. I am aware that many people,

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[3] More will be said about President Obama's rhetorical style and its meaning at the opening of the following chapter.

[4] This is, of course, a generalization. For example, the 1986 book *Greek Tragedy and Political Theory*, edited by J. Peter Euben, juxtaposes political theory with the forms and institutions of Greek tragedy. The essays in this book, however, are more concerned with tracing the development of archetypal themes prevalent in contemporary political theory than in advocating the consideration of theatre and performance as a political tool.

particularly in Europe and North America, would not necessarily consider theatre an art form with a wide mass appeal: the cost of a ticket alone often places theatre-going outside the budget of "the masses", relegating it, by default, to the realm of "high culture". I will argue, however, that not only does theatrical performance have popular roots, it is also a long-standing site of political opinion and activity. Putting on a play is, after all, relatively low cost, requiring only a script, and actor or actors and an audience.

Probably the most important of the differences between theatre and storytelling and other examples of popular culture is their immediacy and accessibility to their audience. For the most part, the performances that film and television convey take place removed from the ultimate viewers, and the actors form no emotional connection with their audience. They do not rely on the audience for emotional feedback, nor do they tailor their performance to the audiences' emotional response: the performances in a film or television program are unchanging, the same each time they are viewed although audience reaction may differ. Actors performing before a live audience are engaged in a constant give-and-take, an emotional dialogue with their audience[5]. It is this physical and emotional immediacy that makes live dramatic performance such a powerful place for political activity. A filmed performance, one step removed from emotional interaction with its viewers, may well offer social or political commentary to its audience[6]. It is, however, a different kind of message, without the fine-tuning that can be accomplished when actors and audience confront each other live. This fine-tuning is an important part of theatre's political potential: whereas performances captured on film rely on the audience picking up on cues, be they subtle or blatant, in order to understand the message, during a live performance actors can change the emphasis or staging, or even ad-lib dialogue, to better capture the audience and make their point (Shevtsova 1993; Cohen, Gutierrez & Walker 2011).

Having made the decision to frame my thesis around the broad idea of the political and the theatrical, I then had to choose a field site on which I would focus my research. Although it would probably have been possible to write a thesis on the general contributions of theatre to politics, I think that this sort of work is always enhanced by a clear indication of its practical applicability. I decided to focus on Israel and Palestine because it is a geographic region I know well and in which I have lived

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[5] This fact is highlighted, often in a mocking fashion, by clichéd comments like "you've been a great audience" or "that audience is dead" – an indication that live performers are aware of the emotional energy of the audience.
[6] And, indeed, often does. It is not my intention to belittle the political importance of other art forms, merely to show how they differ from live theatre and, through that difference, why theatre can offer some insights and motivations that other art forms cannot.

and worked in the past. It is also a place where theatre has been and still is used in overtly political ways, despite the fact that it does not have a longstanding history in either culture. The historical background of theatrical practice in Israeli and Palestinian societies is covered briefly in the third chapter and in more depth in Appendix B.

This thesis aims to investigate the space where the theatrical and the political meet and coexist. This investigation draws on interdisciplinary sources, ultimately highlighting the importance of emotion to both the political and the theatrical. In this equation, identity serves as the signifier – something of great importance to both theatre and politics, and a concept that is diminished without the emotional charge that gives it personalised meaning (Nussbaum 2001, 31).

Much as the slogan of early feminist activists was "the personal is political", so do I take the approach in this research that the cultural is political. This thesis is written with the belief that dramatic and artistic forms are capable of the expression of political ideals, and are a greatly undervalued means towards political change. The uses of art and drama in areas of conflict resolution and coexistence have been much studied in recent times, particularly from the perspective of education and therapy[7]. Therefore, much of the literature available on this topic uses the language and theory of these disciplines, as well as the discipline of anthropology. This research has had to synthesize the idioms of these disciplines while incorporating the language of the theatre, and viewing the entirety through a political lens. This has led to the occasional schizophrenic moment in writing, when it is possible to lose sight of the goal in an attempt to clarify the intricacies of a technique of drama-therapy or reconcile an anthropological approach with political fieldwork. It is my hope that I have managed to navigate these challenges, maintaining a political focus while doing no violence to the disciplines from which I have drawn inspiration. The remainder of this Introduction will be devoted to a discussion of the chapters followed by an introduction to the literary themes on which this project draws; namely, literatures of identity and emotion.

DISCUSSION OF CHAPTERS

A discussion of theatre within a political setting cannot take place in a vacuum. As such, in addition to chapters devoted to theory, methodology and an analysis of my field work, I have provided a general historical discussion of the intersection between theatre and politics, as well as a more specialised chapter which briefly considers the

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[7] For examples of this please see referenced works by G. Bowman, R. Morse, R. Schechner, and J. Salverson.

construction and uses of national theatre in Israel and Palestine. The thesis is structured as follows:

After delineating the research problem and outlining the chapters, the introduction moves on to review the literature devoted to political concepts of identity as well as those that foreground emotion. Having established the importance of emotion and identity in the academic context, the first chapter goes on to review the literatures surrounding the political and the theatrical, relating these ideas to the concepts of identity and emotion introduced in the introduction.

The second chapter is a discussion of the methods employed in the fieldwork portion of my research. As a discussion of methodology, it owes a debt to both anthropology and geography, since the types of interviews I conducted and the ways I framed my discussion of location stem from those disciplines. It also discusses the various merits and failings of political ethnography. In this chapter I discuss both the methodological decisions I made prior to conducting field work and my reactions to the physical setting in which it took place. Chapter 2 also contains a step-by-step explanation of the fieldwork design.

Chapter 3 offers a brief general historical background to national theatre movements as well as some more specific information about national theatre in Israel and Palestine. It serves as an introduction to the final three chapters that provide a discussion of the empirical work conducted as part of this project.

Chapter 4 serves as an introduction to the groups visited and observed during fieldwork[8]. In addition, some space will be devoted to a discussion of what the empirical chapters represent with regard to the themes of this research and the kinds of workshops and theatre games that I witnessed.

Chapter 5 discusses the individual interviews conducted with writers, directors, teachers and actors, as well as theatre managers. Where possible, these interviews are linked to the workshop activities discussed in the previous chapter; however there are some situations in which the interviews covered information equally relevant to this research but not directly related to the activities of the youth theatre workshops.

Chapter 6 is devoted solely to the work of Juliano Mer Khamis and The Freedom Theatre of Jenin[9]. Juliano, and his theatre, receive a chapter to themselves because of the tragic events of April 2011, on the 4th of that month Juliano was murdered in his car outside the theatre in Jenin. The killing received much media

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[8] One group, The Freedom Theatre of Jenin, has a chapter devoted to it alone, and the reasons for that choice will also be discussed.
[9] Both Juliano's murder and the theatre he founded have been much in the news in 2011. For this reason, it is the only theatre, and he the only person, referred to without pseudonyms.

attention at the time, and occasioned any number of retrospectives, memorials, news reports and magazine articles. Happening as it did, to a fieldwork contact and in the midst of my thesis revisions, I felt it would be a fitting tribute to turn my grief to a celebration of his work and theatre.

The Point of Tangency, which serves as the conclusion to this work, consists of a review of the arguments presented herein and draws the many threads of discussion together to place the thesis within the body of literature it hopes to inform.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE

Before embarking upon an examination of the theatrical as a political site, it is important to explore the literatures at whose intersection this project exists. To that end, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a review of the literature addressing identity in international relations, followed by an appraisal of works by Martha Nussbaum and Nigel Thrift which foreground the importance of emotions when constructing an understanding of politics.

"Not Fixed By Nature": Conceptualizing Identity

David Campbell's 1992 book *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* is widely perceived to have been groundbreaking in the field of identity politics. Despite the ensuing decade and a half, it stands as a work responsible for opening up initial discussions on the fluidity of identity and its role in international politics, moving away from the purely state-based and exploring the importance of other forms and definitions of identity. Its strengths and contribution to the discipline were summarised by Iver Neumann who writes

> Campbell programmatically quotes Judith Butler to the effect that "the construction of identity is not the deconstruction of politics; rather it establishes as political the very terms through which identity is articulated" (Campbell 1992, 259). The book is a thick description[10] of U.S. foreign policy as a seamless web of discourse and political practice that has played itself out through a series of engagements with others from the time of Cortes up to the Gulf War. The U.S. self is understood as a narrative structure, and it is argued that "for a state to end its practices of representation would be to expose its lack of prediscursive foundations; stasis would be death" (Campbell 1992, 11)." (Neumann 1999, 24-5)

In response to Wendt's argument that "philosophies of science are not theories of international relations" (Wendt 1999, 220), and that therefore little time need be spent questioning the construction of knowledge, Campbell states that it is hard to avoid the fact that those who theorise international relations are, to some extent, philosophers of

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[10] The term "thick description" is an ethnographic one which will be discussed in some depth in Chapter 2.

knowledge (Campbell 1998a, 220). As such he refers to Judith Butler's work on agency, in which she cautions against assumptions about the location and construction of politics and power within society. Unless we question the situations in which agency comes about we fail to "to acknowledge that agency is always and only a political prerogative" (Butler in Campbell 1998a, 220).

Campbell's main focus is the ability of foreign policy to produce and reproduce the identity of the country in question[11]. To further this interest he uses Foucauldian thought to explore the ways in which those acting in official capacities are able to represent, and thus create, images of identity Campbell 1998a, xi). He does recognise, however, that these are not the only practices to create identity. Indeed, he specifically states that

> Any exhaustive account of identity, particularly one indebted to Foucault, would require a thorough discussion of the resistance to the scripting of identity proffered by those with greater access to social resources. Crudely put, one would have to consider the full range of popular resistances to elite practices. (Campbell 1998a, x)

This is the first instance in the literature of the role that popular resistance may play in the representation of identity, and as such is very pertinent to this project. As is discussed in the analysis of my fieldwork, theatre can provide one such performance of popular resistance. Campbell's book, however, dwells mainly on the broader ideas of identity: states, collectives, organisations – those that are most commonly involved with the production and reproduction of foreign policy.

What happens to identity production in the absence of a foreign policy, and what counts as foreign policy? What if the people in question are not in a position to conduct foreign policy in the traditionally accepted sense? The challenge is to adapt some of Campbell's ideas in order to apply them to settings that are outside the realm of "high" politics. The point of Campbell's book is, in his own words, to distance himself from the "claims of "epistemic realism" with its assumptions that there is only one way to think or consider a problem, concept, issue or object. That "understanding involves rendering the unfamiliar in the terms of the familiar" (Campbell 1998a, 4). With regards to the ideas of a "fixed" or "static" identity Campbell says that "identity is an inescapable dimension of being" (Campbell 1998a, 9).

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[11] For more in this vein see Y. Wang (2009) "On National Identity of International Relations Theories." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p74476_index.html (accessed 12 March 2010) and the essays in J. Weldes, M. Laffey, H. Gusterson and R. Duvall, Eds. (1999). *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities and the Production of Danger*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

> Inescapable as it is, identity – whether personal or collective – is not fixed by nature, given by God or planned by intentional behaviour. Rather, identity is constituted in relation to difference. But neither is difference fixed by nature, given by God or planned by intentional behaviour. Difference is constituted in relation to identity. (Campbell 1998, 9)

This, he writes, is performatively constituted, regardless of whether the identity under interrogation is that of a "body" or a "state". This question of performativity has already been discussed, but in Campbell's mind the performative constitution of identity is predicated on "the inscription of boundaries that serve to demarcate an "inside" from an "outside", a "self" from an "other", a "domestic" from a "foreign" (Campbell 1998, 9). In other words, through recognition of difference is identity enacted (performed).

In this section on identity and difference, Campbell's work echoes that of Bill Connolly. Connolly's work on the politics of identity, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (2002, 2nd ed.), suggests that identity might best be grasped through an understanding of difference. He expresses his thesis thus: "to confess a particular identity is also to belong to difference" (Connolly 2002, xiv). By this he means that within a democratic pluralistic society, if one relates publically to a particular identity one is *de facto* setting oneself apart from the common "received" identity. He elaborates further with a personal example, saying

> Identity is relational and collective. My personal identity is defined through the collective constituencies with which I identify or am identified by others (as white, male, American, a sports fan, and so on); it is further specified by comparison to a variety of things I am not. Identity, then, is always connected to a series of differences that help it be what it is. (Connolly 2002, xiv)

This individualised way of looking at identity, and linking it with difference, makes it easier to consider Campbell's work in a way that is more easily applied to non-traditional politics. Once the stricture prohibiting the consideration of the individual in international politics has been broken the way is opened for the exploration of many different kinds of political expression.

Campbell posits an interesting connection between threat and identity. If, as he suggests, risk is "increasingly interpretive" (Campbell 1998a, 2), then so is threat. The "reality" of a threat is immaterial under these conditions, for

> [… t]here need not be an action or event to provide the grounds for an interpretation of danger. The mere existence of an alternative mode of being, the presence of which exemplifies that different identities are possible and thus denaturalizes the claim of a particular identity to be *the* true identity, is sometimes enough to produce the understanding of a threat. (Campbell 1998a, 3)

To illustrate the ways in which danger and threat can be used to define identity, Campbell quotes from the speech given by President Bush Sr. when he announced the US's involvement in the first Gulf War. On that occasion the President said: "In the life of a nation, we're called upon to define who we are and what we believe". In Campbell's analysis, the President "highlighted the indispensability of interpretation to the determination of threat, and tacitly invoked the theme of this study: that the boundaries of a states' identity are secured by the representation of danger integral to foreign policy" (Campbell 1998a, 3).

This linking of security and identity is an interesting one, for it connects the components of my argument about the political potential of theatre. If theatre, as will be addressed in the following chapters, has something to say about the identity or identities of a society – and identity plays a role in understandings of security – then it stands to reason that theatre, in its role as performer of identity, has much to say of political import. More will be said about this in due course.

Campbell proceeds to offer an analysis of the literature surrounding foreign policy and identity. He begins by drawing on the works of Benedict Anderson and Charles Tilly to support his claim that "primary" and "stable" identities do not exist. Against the conventional literature, which suggests that the identity of a nation precedes that of a state, Campbell lays the findings of more recent historical sociology that argues the opposite, that "nationalism is a construct of the state in pursuit of its legitimacy" (Campbell 1998a, 11). Citing Anderson's work on "the nation" essentially being an imagined community and Tilly's argument that few national states develop into "national states whose sovereign territorialization is perfectly aligned with a prior and primary form of identification, such as religion, language, or symbolic sense of self" (Campbell 1998a, 11-12), Campbell shows that there is a growing movement that questions previously unassailable assumptions on the definitions of "identity", "nation" and "state".

Campbell similarly reviews the Hobbesian tradition that is often referred to as reflecting "commonsense": namely that in which Hobbes is credited with "providing the pivotal images of anarchy, conflict, the state of nature, and war that are taken to be the conditions of possibility for international relations and our conventional understandings of foreign policy" (Campbell 1998a, 53). Much of this is presumed to arise from a culture of individualism, a culture that, as Hedley Bull (1984) has described, has been adapted from the individual to the international level (Campbell 1998a, 54). Through his analysis of Bull's argument, Campbell shows that foreign policy actually succeeds in labelling some events and actors as "foreign" and others as

"domestic" – the process of foreign policy, therefore, succeeds in creating and re-creating itself (Campbell 1998a, 62).

Campbell also rebuffs the attacks of those who deride "postmodern" or "poststructural" work as out of touch with the "real world". It is, he says

> […] odd to find those who proclaim their faith in Enlightenment principles publicly stating that they refuse to think about some alternatives — alternatives that many Enlightenment thinkers themselves presaged. It's equally disturbing to find that those who are so insistent about evidence and rigor fail to heed their own advice when it comes to dealing with attitudes they regard as dangerous. (Campbell 1998a, 211)

His argument is that these attackers seek to limit the development of and dialogue about knowledge by "patrol[ling] the intellectual borders that frame the study of world politics" (Campbell 1998a, 192). Although he agrees that many critics will place his work squarely within the "postmodern" or "post-structural" literature, he himself has refrained from so associating himself because of "the way these terms have become over-determined in scholarly and cultural circles, such that anything described as "postmodern" is immediately associated with a number of "well-known" features, even if neither the argument being analyzed nor the works from which it draws sustenance bear any resemblance to its representation" (Campbell 1998a, 192-3). Interestingly he points out that, while attacks have continued on "so called postmodernism", several ideas that were formerly the province of the critical have been appropriated by more conventional scholars. Thus he acknowledges the theorizing identity does not merely have political implications, but can be seen as a political act in itself. Similarly, as will be discussed later, *performing* identity can have political impact and implications.

In concluding his book and explaining why he feels it is so necessary to expand the ways in which identity is considered, Campbell writes

> […] expanding the interpretive imagination so as to enlarge the categories through which we understand the constitution of "the political" has been a necessary precondition for making sense of Foreign Policy's concern for the ethical borders of identity in America. Accordingly, there are manifest political implications that flow from theorizing identity. As Judith Butler concluded: "The deconstruction of identity is not the deconstruction of politics; rather, it establishes as political the very terms through which identity is articulated." (Campbell 1998a, 205)

The relevance of Campbell's work to this project is twofold. The most apparent is this establishment of the political. He opened the field of academic politics to an awareness of alternate forms of identity formation and conception. But equally important to future scholars was his assertion of "distance" from the "claims of 'Epistemic realism'". In both these things he laid the groundwork for future scholars both to expand on his ideas and move them into the realm of practical application. In addition, his expansion

of the concept of the political has opened the way to projects of this type, which sees a scope for political analysis in actions of everyday life.

One such work that builds on Campbell's groundwork is Iver Neumann's 1999 book *Uses of the Other: "The East" in European Identity Formation*. In this book his focus is the ways in which human collectives are represented, because he feels that it is through this representation that the discipline will both "arrive at a fuller understanding of the international system of states" and will also "finally give an ontological status to the sundry subjects or "actors" in world politics" (Neumann 1999, 1). Drawing on the work of Clifford Geertz, Neumann considers the dangers of thinking of the Western approach as a "natural" one. If a researcher does not question the foundations of her assumptions then the research bears an unacknowledged mark of judgement. In this way the Western idea of "personhood", exported by the practices of colonialism, continues to exert power and influence internationally (Bull & Watson 1984 in Neumann 1999, 2). With this as a starting point, Neumann considers the various ways that identity has been discussed in the West, noting that most discussions rely on what he terms "institutionalised knowledge production", namely a way of knowing that is unexamined and whose assumptions are unquestioned. The approach that does not rely on these ways of knowing is concerned mainly with those on the social margins, and is external to academia in practically every way (Neumann 1999, 3-4).

In his consideration of possible ways to conceptualise identity, Neumann explores definitions from many disciplines. He considers the anthropological definition of ethnicity as "collective identity formation" (Barth 1969), the psychological us/them and in-group vs. out-group dichotomy (Hogg & Abrams 1988), Norton's adaptation of Rousseau's idea that the body of the citizen *is* the body politic (Norton 1998) and Charles Taylor's suggested "pre-given narrative" of autobiography (Taylor 1989 in Neumann 1999). Having reviewed each of these in turn, and found each wanting in some measure, Neumann then focuses on what he calls the "Eastern excursion", an approach or way of considering that places much emphasis on the "stranger" during the development of identity formation. The term comes from an interest in the role of the "other" in identity formation of the "self" and draws on the line of research that suggests that without the East (Europe's perennial "other") the West would have little by way of bounded identity (Neumann 1999, 3). In this approach, which draws on the ideas of Anne Norton (1988) and George Simmel (1970), "strangers" – by which he means those who are marginal to society in some way – are important to collective identity formation because their presence in society forces the issue of who is defined as "self" and who as "other". In Simmel's reading of this situation, those defined as "other" are still an integral part of society, whose role is to

stand outside and confront it (Neumann 1999, 11).   This confrontation draws on Levinas' idea of "the Other is what I myself am not" (Neumann 1999, 17), although this definition is highly fluid and flexible and stresses a power differential. For example

> the I may be rich and powerful whereas the other may be poor and weak. And he stresses that the other cannot be conceived of as freedom because freedom invites either submission or enslavement and thus leads to its own extinction. Enter the problem of *collective* identity formation, that is, politics. The other upsets order, simply by being other, and what is one to do when there is a multiplicity of others?" (Neumann 1999, 17)

Neither Neumann nor Levinas seem to provide a satisfactory answer to this, and indeed Neumann notes that Levinas is quite ready to discard his theory when events do not bear it out (Neumann 1999, 18). This may be an example of the problems that can occur when attempts are made to theorise complex scenarios with over-simplified tools. It is these attempts at oversimplification that scholars like Neumann and Campbell, as well as many others, seek to highlight in their work. The first steps in this movement seek to show the poverty of such an approach, and its inability to depict the richness of the human tapestry. Through their emphasis on the importance of understanding the source of knowledge production, and their insistence that this awareness is the only way to further the study of world politics, these critical scholars have opened the way for a new conception of the performance of international relations. Despite their best efforts, however, Neumann seems pessimistic about their chances for effecting real change. He writes that, no matter how great their belief that identities are "context-bound instantiations" there is no way to avoid "the fact that political discourse consists, among other things, of essentializing representations of identities" (Neumann 1999, 212).

In contrast to this, Paul Saurette's article "International Relations – Image of Thought: Collective Identity, Desire and Deleuzian Ethology[12]" (2000) suggests that critical approaches which do not consider the "complex assemblages of desire and power that underlie identity" run the risk of causing further harm to the role of identity in international relations (Saurette 2000). Although he seems to agree that political discourse relies on essentialized representations of identity, he suggests that applying the ethological techniques developed by Deleuze and Guattari might strengthen the critical approach to international relations by "challenging exclusive identities and nationalist imageries (Saurette 2000).   In order to conduct such a challenge, Saurette says, one must excavate the interlinking lines of desire and power that surround and cross the philosophical discussion of identity (Saurette 2000). For this Saurette suggests that a

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[12] This article was accessed in an electronic format that did not include pagination.

> critical ethology would excavate the multiple levels which comprise an ethos of
> global politics and highlight a cultural sensibility and image of thought as a
> complex web of desire, power and representations of identity. In response, it
> would construct counter-concepts which would allow it to trace these fleeting
> lines of convergence, amplification and inhibition so that it could
> experimentally intervene on a variety of layers and effectively disrupt
> dominant exchanges and codings. Only such a comprehensive ethology would
> allow us to profoundly challenge the multiple layers of power and desire that
> underpin hegemonic global practices. (Saurette 2000)

Saurette's ideas are interesting ones, although with a highly philosophical bent. At one point he asks whether, if "every particular identity is constructed, is there really something called 'identity' that is a pre-constructed and inescapable condition of being? And even if there is, is identity a concept capable of capturing this?" (Saurette 2000). Although these are worthy philosophical questions, when discussion moves this far into the semantic and theoretical it is difficult to see how the ideas can be practically applied. Since this project seeks to contribute to the practical, it may be best to set these ideas aside for now.

Further work on identity has been done by Stuart Hall. In his chapter "Ethnicity: Identity and Difference" he writes that identity has been displaced in four different ways. These are: Marx's suggestion of *conditional* identity, the idea that the conditions under which identity is constructed are out of the control of those doing the constructing. Freud's ideas of the unconscious, disrupted identity from below – the ground previously thought to be solid and immovable is now shown to be shifting and uncertain. Saussure's ideas of language and linguistics, upon which so much subsequent theoretical work is based, indicate that, before identity can be stated, the linguistic plain on which it stands must be delineated and circumscribed. And the fourth destabiliser is the one that stems from the lack of certainty that arises from the questioning of the idea of "truth", the vertigo that arises from the idea that the things we thought we "knew" are really only interpretations. (Hall 1996, 340-342). Hall strongly questions the idea of an immutable identity, particularly in the contemporary world. How, he argues, can any group claim sovereignty of self when there are so many conditions outside of their control? Coining the phrase "the Universe is Coming", he cites as examples the spread of Chernobyl's radiation through northern European airspace and the impacts of climate change on areas thousands of miles away from the sites of the environmental damage, and questions whether in such a world there can be such a thing as sovereign "identity" (Hall 1996, 343). Because of this, Hall argues, identity cannot exist without a complex relationship with the Other. The Other, Hall suggests,

is not outside, but also inside the Self, the identity. So identity is a process, identity is split. Identity is not a fixed point but an ambivalent point. Identity is also the relationship of the Other to oneself" (Hall 1996, 345).

This idea of the Other as self is one that lies at the heart of this project. It is echoed closely by the findings of my fieldwork, and in particular by something said by one of my interview subjects[13]. As such it is something to which I will return in Chapter 6, but for now let us consider additional ways to think and write about identity.

It is important to remember that other disciplines treat identity in very different ways. Since this project, by definition, is concerned with cross-disciplinary exchange, some awareness of anthropological treatment of identity would not be amiss. Similarly to the instance of the Baltic states "singing themselves towards sovereignty" (Neumann 1999, 6), a situation which surprised international relations scholars but not anthropologists, Glenn Bowman's experiences of Palestinian self-identification might be surprising to political academics. These identities are based on personal experience and direct societal interaction, they shift depending on the political situation as experienced on the ground. For example, people who once referred to themselves as Muslim Palestinians may, under the stressful attentions of soldiers, settlers and government functionaries, identify more fully with the whole of their society rather than merely their co-religionists and say "I am a Palestinian first, then a Muslim" (Bowman 2001, 8). To understand this, Bowman writes,

> one must comprehend the ways in which politicized identities develop out of those forms of identity characteristic of the everyday exchanges of communal life. In the development of Palestinian solidarity, differential aspects of identity - based on religion, class position, *hamula* affiliation, party membership, and even to some degree age and gender - were subsumed within an enveloping political and public identity. Thus a contingent political identity came to seem essential, while more ingrained and enduring identities were perceived as secondary or limited in salience. (Bowman 2001, 9)

It should not be thought that anthropological conceptions of identity are merely descriptive and therefore untheorised. In this case, the theoretical approach considers the importance of an antagonist on the construction of individual and group identity. Bowman writes:

> What creates the space of perceived communality are not the routines of everyday life structuring and manifesting systems of difference and orchestrating relations between the variant vertical and horizontal role positionings of age, class, gender, education, appearance, religion, etcetera but the presence of an antagonism is perceived to threaten all within its purview with either physical extermination or the wholesale extirpation of their differentiated, subsumed identities. In this sense the antagonism comes from

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[13] This will be covered in more detail in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, however one of my interview subjects said that, for him, the most important step in working with conflict is *not* when you think the Other is like you – it is when you realise that the you are like the Other.

'outside' a system of social and cultural meanings and unifies what is inside as that which is at risk. (Bowman 2001, 8-9)

In this analysis, identity forms and shifts in reaction to outside stresses. Although it is possible that, in the absence of outside stressors, identities might align along different positionings – along educational attainment, for example, or religious lines – in the presence of an 'outside' threat the 'inside', in this case those with the identifier 'Palestinian', becomes a unified whole.

This brief discussion of an anthropological view of identity is not meant to be an aside to the main thrust of the argument. It is rather an entry-point to a discussion of the state, development and future of IR[14]. As Armstrong and Maiguashca point out in the introduction to *Governance and Resistance in World Politics* (2003), the international relations of the early 20th century developed through the embrace and integration of "the perspectives of established disciplines" (Armstrong, et. al. 2003, 2). The argument, as these authors suggest, is that this is an experience the discipline in the early 21st century would do well to remember. If the discipline were more willing to "utilize the perspectives and outlooks of diverse disciplines and scholarship" it would be more able to "respond to the current global conditions with wisdom and even foresight." (Armstrong, et.al. 2003, 2). In their introduction, Armstrong et. al. offer a brief summary of the recent past and current state of the academic discipline of international relations. They start by reminding their readers of the mainstream definition of 'politics' as a continuous "struggle for power among sovereign states, with war the worst-case outcome of this struggle." In this definition 'power' is seen as being a measure of the military and economic capabilities of states (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 3). The introduction continues with a brief summation of the attacks levelled at mainstream, particularly realist, IR regarding its state-based focus and its unquestioned assumptions about power construction, structural determinism, historical bases of knowledge production and the importance of "social and political agency" (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 4). These new theoreticians, some of whose work has already been discussed here, have focused their research on 'global civil society', 'hegemony', 'contingency', 'discursive relations' and 'historical structures', as well as the potential power of 'social movements', 'counter-hegemonic blocs' and 'identity politics' (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 4-5). Unfortunately, Armstrong writes, this 'third debate' has gone largely unacknowledged, or at least un-engaged with, by mainstream IR, and "the new contenders have increasingly become embroiled in abstract discussions about epistemology and ethics" (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 5). Both on account

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[14] And I will return to a review of anthropological literature in the second chapter when discussing methodological techniques.

of the lack of engagement by the mainstream and because of the increasing abstraction of the 'third debate' itself, a serious dialogue about the meanings of 'politics' and 'the political' has yet to be had in our field (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 5).

As a place to begin this discussion, Armstrong and Maiguashca posit two definitions, one for a "politics of governance" and another for a "politics of resistance". The former, they say, is "characterized by an emerging set of structures and processes, ranging from formal institutions like the WTO or the proposed International Criminal Court to informal market mechanisms" (Armstrong et. al. 2003, 5), and are seen by their supporters as a way to order and regulate international politics, especially in the face of globalisation. The latter, which is of more relevance to this project, is "often characterized as a 'politics from below' and as transformative in nature. More substantively, it is seen as comprising social movements, global civil society actors such as NGOs and, potentially, coalitions of Third World states." (Armstrong et. al 2003, 5-6). Through a collection of essays, one of which will be discussed later, this book seeks to theorise the dichotomy between these two kinds of politics. This project is most concerned with the concept of 'politics of resistance', especially in the way it reflects the "importance of the human individual" (Wight 2006, 206).

This idea of the importance of the individual or the everyday is shared by Debrix and Weber in their 2003 book *Rituals of Mediation: International Politics and Social Meaning*. In this book the authors suggest the benefits of drawing on the work of cultural analysts[15] who "have long known that making sense of everyday culture requires an appreciation not only for high politics but also for everyday 'internationals'" (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii). Acknowledging that without this awareness international politics is doomed to be both mechanical and incomplete, Debrix and Weber suggest the adoption of mediation as a methodological tool. In this they are using a definition of mediation that differs significantly from its use in either cultural studies or international relations. Their definition, rather, refers to "a site of representation, transformation, and pluralisation where cultural and international rituals are performed" (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii). In their work they refer to many such sites, including museums, airports and art galleries. Each of these sites offer slightly different forms of "mediation", but all of them draw, at least theoretically, on the experiences of the international by the individual. Their argument is that there exist sites at which the individual can both demonstrate and engage with the experience of the international – and that these are worthy of study in their own right. The question then becomes *how* to conduct those studies, a question to which Debrix

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[15] Such as Glenn Bowman, cited above.

and Weber offer an answer in mediative methodology. It is the recognition of the applicability of the individual's experience to the international that is of such pertinence to my research.

Although the bulk of their work describes the applications and benefits of a mediative methodology, that is not what I wish to focus on here. The methods employed in my fieldwork, which will be discussed in Chapter 2, definitely fall under what could be termed a mediative framework, drawing as they do on the "cultural" methodologies of ethnography. What interests me most, however, is the link provided between the theoretical importance accorded to the everyday by some participants in the 'third debate', and the methodological engagement with those same rituals and individuals. Mediation, Debrix and Weber write,

> is not a neutral operation that transfers and leaves unchanged the two subject and object positions. Rather, mediation is a rite that enables social change. In rituals of transformation, the human subject becomes a creative mediator who uses mediation to make the world to his or her own image. (Debrix and Weber 2003, viii)

Although most of the essays in the book discuss mediation at such sites as art exhibits, photography shows or airports, the idea of a methodology to be used specifically at a site where individuals are encouraged to enact ("perform") social change makes this approach especially pertinent to my research on the political ramifications of theatre. This work suggests that a critical lens might well be applied to the claims of objectivity levelled by traditional IR scholars at their definition of "mediation"[16], which scrutiny would reveal "a social context within which the term is given significance" (Debrix and Weber 2003, xxii). When the strictures imposed by the traditional definition are removed, mediation is revealed as a methodology that allows for a multiple of social meanings and which can take place across both social practices and social contexts (Debrix and Weber 2003, xxiii).

In David Campbell's essay "Cultural Governance and Pictorial Resistance: reflections on the imaging of war" (2003) he applies a measure of mediative methodology. Through his discussions of both the Hollywood film *Wag the Dog* and the development of photojournalism and its impact on the general understanding of war he presents and represents the sites at which social change can be seen to occur. As part of a discussion on how documentary photojournalism impacts the public's understanding of war, Campbell offers part of an interview with photojournalist Don McCullin. For McCullin, photography allows him to enact his role as witness, and to share his work as a form of testimony. Emotion is essential to the role of witness:

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[16] The traditional understanding of "mediation" is usually limited to a "generally peaceful, neutral interposition" (Debrix and Weber 2003, xxii).

'Photography for me is not looking, it's feeling. If you can't feel what you're looking at, then you're never going to get others to feel anything when they look at your pictures.' What McCullin feels more often than not is a combination of disgust at the violent circumstances embracing the innocent, and an empathy with those who become the victims of war. Indeed, for McCullin that empathy is so strong he shares intimately the danger of those being fired upon. 'There were times', McCullin says, 'looking at those people when I felt I was looking at a mirror. There was an empathy because of my background. It never went away from me.' (Campbell 2003, 68)

Through the mediative site of photography, McCullin and, in his analysis, David Campbell, are able to offer a way of "knowing" and "feeling" the world. The photographer, viewer and photograph become part of a mutually defining moment. If one side of the triangle were not there, the identity of the others would falter and be diminished. What can this importance of emotion to knowing of identity offer in terms of this project? Most of the mediative sites exist at a remove from those experiencing "the political" – they are analyses of representations or other static experiences[17]. If, by expanding the mediative methodology to include interviews, we were able to gain an understanding of the political *as it is experienced* – then we would have the beginnings of a methodology to bring emotion and identity into IR.

Dangerous Desires: Emotion vs. Reason in Traditional IR

Thucydides wrote that three of mankind's strongest motives were fear, interest and honour, and in those three words can be found the germ of the ideas which have driven much of relations between states for the last 2,000 years (Saurette 2006, Lebow 2006). Of the three, fear and interest – in the guise of national interest – have been the most widely privileged, seeping into news accounts and the language of the day-to-day. The Cold War is an excellent example of the pervasiveness of both. The American people were told that it was in their nation's best interest to defeat communism, for otherwise the American way of life would be subsumed in Godless-ness and Soviet uniformity. Fear became a way of life, from the "duck and cover" nuclear attack drills in American public schools, to the air raid shelters and emergency food pantries that families were encouraged to build, to the B-movies of the 1950s that invariably portrayed a typical American town besieged, and occasionally overrun, by gigantic insects – Hollywood's dehumanized stand-ins for the Soviet hordes (Whitfield 1991). The perceived key to victory lay in amassing a vast military, and nuclear, arsenal, with which to destroy "them" before they destroyed "us". This emphasis on military power, while providing some fleeting sense of security, eventually led to a

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[17] Debrix and Weber (2003) offer essays that analyse art exhibits, photographs and locations, but do not expand the mediative "site" to include interaction with people themselves.

growing sense of unease in the population (Whitfield 1991, DeGroot 2005). As a consequence of the pervasiveness of fear in both language and consciousness, it is the only emotion that has received much attention in either IR literature or policy discussions (Mercer 1996, Crawford 2000, Saurette 2006, Lebow 2006, Ross 2006, Fattah and Fierke 2009), and even there it has not been systematically studied (Crawford 2000, 116, Fattah and Fierke 2009, 69). This leads us to two problems. The first is the inadequacy of a system which fails to take into account the spectrum of human emotion, and the second is the difficulty of working with a concept as difficult to define and quantify as emotion in a way that is rigorous enough to be academically acceptable. These two issues will prove to be closely interrelated.

There is a wide literature devoted to the importance of emotion in political decision-making and, more recently, to decrying the lack of attention paid to matters of emotion in the wider political context. I will, however, begin with some of the earliest contemporary discussions of emotion in politics. With the publication and general discussion of psychological theories in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, writers of International Relations theories began to consider the international repercussions of the psychological. Theorists such as E.H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr, termed classical realists and considered to be founders of the modern discipline of IR, show the impact of this new way of thinking in their writing (Saurette 2006, 498). As Saurette shows, however, despite the fact that much of IR theory either implicitly or explicitly acknowledges the importance of taking emotions into consideration, in the final analysis emotion is given little real consideration and is certainly under-theorised. For example, Saurette has this to say about Morgenthau:

> Emotions and desire are considered as key elements in Morgenthau's writings. However, even Morgenthau's examination of emotions tends to subsume them into a framework that treats emotions through a lens of 'rationality' and 'irrationality' with a limited number of desires recast as relevant and 'rational' (such as desire for security and power – or in Thucydides' language 'fear' and 'interest') and the rest (such as ideological extremism, honour, respect) dismissed as irrational (Saurette 2006. 498).

This distinction between rational and irrational, and the subsequent division of emotions between the two categories, is evidence of a long-standing tradition of distinguishing between "masculine reason" and "feminine emotion", in which the feminine was seen as weaker and less desirable. Bleiker and Hutchison point out that emotions were believed to embody women's 'dangerous desires' and "were thought to be feelings or bodily sensations that overtook us, distorting thought and the ability to make rational and ethical judgement" (Bleiker and Hutchison 2008, 119-20). This gendering of "reason" and "emotion" in political discourse entrenched a hierarchy whose echoes were heard around the colonial world, thereby laying the groundwork

for much of the current international situation. Particularly in the Middle East, where Muslims and Arabs were coded as "feminine" and therefore irrational and emotional, colonial attitudes have had long lasting effects (Said 1978, Fattah and Fierke 2009). In contrast, Europeans considered themselves to be ruled by (masculine) reason (Said 1978).

This fear that rational judgment would be impaired by emotional involvement was compounded by Robert Jervis' book *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Published in 1976[18], and for a long time the leading work on the role of emotions in political decision making, Jervis' book considers emotion as an explanation for the deviance of behaviours from interests, but fails to take into account the idea that emotion may itself be causative in policy making decisions. In other words, one can claim emotion, akin to "human error", as responsible for "poor" or "failed" decision making after the fact, but the role that emotion plays in the process is disregarded. Although pioneering at the time – Jervis questioned the conventional wisdom that political decision makers saw the world "quite accurately" and posited that political misperceptions have a root cause in various psychological factors that needed to be taken into account – Jervis' work seems to be attempting to satisfy a positivist audience. While questioning the "accuracy" of perception, he nonetheless thinks that there is one world to be perceived, and emotions cause misperceptions. He gives no consideration to the idea that multiple realities may be experienced by multiple participants, with each reality just as "accurate" for each person involved. In attempting to reconcile the psychological concepts with the scholarship of international relations, his bias towards the "rational" becomes apparent. He chastises psychologists for focusing on the emotional rather than the cognitive aspects of their work, and writes:

> wishful thinking, defence mechanisms, and other motivated distortions of reality are focused on to the relative exclusion of the problem of how even a perfectly unemotional and careful person would go about drawing inferences from highly ambiguous evidence in a confusing and confused world (Jervis 1976, 3).

It is clear from this passage that Jervis still wishes to privilege the "rational" and marginalise emotion, while nonetheless drawing on psychological precepts which examine and analyse emotional components of behaviour. Jervis also thinks that considerations of policy decision-making by the psychological field fail to take into account that the people who make these decisions are highly intelligent and, as such, have a particular thinking style that is under-represented in the research (Jervis 1976,

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[18] This book developed ideas initially published in 1968 as an article in *World Politics* 20 (3), "Hypotheses on Misperception".

4). The close association of his description of policy makers as "highly intelligent" with the phrase "perfectly unemotional and careful person" allows for the interpretation that he believes the two sets of attributes to go together. What exactly a "perfectly unemotional" person is Jervis leaves undefined, but the reader is given to believe that this is both the preferred condition for someone engaged in policy decision-making, and the expected state of someone of high intelligence.

This focus on a rational approach to studying the social sciences can be traced directly to the writings and research of such scholars as Ken Waltz, Robert Keohane and Robert Gilpin, termed neo-realist by Richard Ashley in his 1984 article[19]. The Neorealists, to their minds, improve upon the classical realist notions of power, national interest and the central importance of the state by imposing upon these ideas the rigorous structures of natural science[20] (Ashley 1984, 230). They attempted to develop, and prove through historical example, a set of theories that mirrored the theoretical approaches and methodologies of the natural sciences. These theories depicted a fixed international structure and sought to curtail the theoretical importance of a balance of power in favour of the supremacy of self-interested states in a struggle for hegemony (Ashley 1984, 232). Within this theoretical framework, as Ashley says, "power begets order" and "order requires power". Neo-realism very quickly became what Richard Ashley terms a "dominant orthodoxy", at least in part because of the seductive quality of its "scientific" terminology (Ashley 1984, 227). This turn to a behaviouralist model caused emotion to disappear from the scope of IR theory in the mid-twentieth century with the rise of the "rational actor" paradigm. Even those scholars who studied the impact of emotion on world politics tended to do so by "conceptualis[ing] emotions as anomalous limiting conditions that explained otherwise irrational exceptions to the norm" (Saurette 2006, 499). However, as Ashley points out in his article "The Poverty of Neorealism", the neorealist approach – although not specifically *wrong* – is weakened in its credibility by several factors. In his estimation, Neorealism is state-centric, utilitarian, and positivist (Ashley 1984, 238-261). Although all these attributes may be seen as positives by champions of the neorealist world-view, Ashley, and other critics, considers that the overall theoretical landscape is diminished by these restrictions. Through the focus on the state the approach misses the chance to hear the voices of non-state actors, as well as setting it up as the final arbiter of issues that might arise on the international stage. Its utilitarian focus causes Neorealism to

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[19] It is worth noting that these theorists would not choose to refer to themselves as neo-realists, this is Ashley's terminology.
[20] Within this literature there are many voices, not all of which agree with each other or with the overview presented here. And excellent review, and critique, of the literature is presented in Richard Ashley's article "The Poverty of Neorealism" *International Organization* 38 (2): 225-286.

rely on the concepts of individualism and rationalism. Utilitarian individualism denies the importance of social collectives in favour of individual actors and utilitarian rationalism relies on this supremacy of the individual in order to define rationality as the ends justify the means – the actor pursuing the ends being, of course, the state (Ashley 1984, 243). Most pertinent to the scope of this project, however, is Ashley's charge, and analysis, of the positivist underpinnings of Neorealism. In its most general sense, positivism refers to the received "natural science" model of objective truths uncovered by controlled experiment, and the presentation of those truths in an indisputable manner (Ashley 1984). In order for social science to adopt this approach, however, the inherent subjectivity of human behaviour must be reconciled with the objective nature of the claims made by the model. This reconciliation involves a commitment to the interpretation of rationality that aligns with the "is" rather than the "ought" – that rational behaviour "is inherently objective, value-neutral, void of normative or substantive content" (Ashley 1984, 250). The power of this model is so great that "neither neorealists nor we, the fawning audience, can imagine seeing the world in any other way" (Ashley 1984, 248).

Of course, there *are* other ways to see the world, it only requires the willingness to challenge our perceptions, the ideas that shape the way we think it has always been. In the last two decades there has been much movement from what has been thought of as the margins of IR in an attempt to achieve greater recognition and acceptance. This movement has taken the form of increasingly vocal opposition to the world as it is described by neorealists. The challenge to the *status quo* has come from many sides and had many foci. Often the challengers have seen themselves as being in a sort of exile, either self-imposed or forced, from the mainstream of the discipline. From this state of exile, postmodernists, feminists, poststructuralists and other critical scholars use the language of dissent to question the way the world has been constructed for decades. They challenge the positivist assumptions so prevalent in Neorealism by questioning the previously unquestionable: identity, "universal narratives and transcendental ends" (Ashley and Walker 1990a, 262). In addition, there is a growing literature on the importance of emotions in political thought, and it is to this literature that we will now turn.

Foregrounding Emotion & Affect

Since Jonathan Mercer's 1996 presentation at the International Studies Association (ISA) annual conference[21], there has been a (comparative) flood of discussion of and writing on emotion in IR, and that writing has not just come from the margins. In his presentation, frequently termed "pivotal" in the subsequent literature, Mercer responded to the rationalist argument that champions the objective by arguing that "emotion is important to reason" (Mercer 1996, 11), an idea that, simple as it was, seemed to revolutionize the way IR considers the concept. Although practice did not change overnight – indeed as we will see, practice has not changed much in the ensuing decade – suddenly the subjective idea of feeling became theoretically acceptable.

In their 2009 article "Empathy and Strategic Interaction in Crises", Jonathan W. Keller and Yi Edward Yang provide a contemporary example of a positivist approach to emotional resonance in politics. They seek to apply the poliheuristic theory of decision making, which "integrates cognitive and rational theories of decision making" (Keller and Yang 2009, 169), to decisions that play a large role on the stage of world politics. By presenting data gleaned from studies, and by focusing on two case studies (the U.S. & China and the U.S. & Iran), these authors seek to apply a clinical filter to the emotional concept of empathy. The authors use Ralph White's definition of empathy, which states that in order to empathise with your opponent you must try "to look out at his situation through his eyes rather than at him as an individual" (Keller and Yang 2009, 170), and stress Robert Jervis's point that, in order to truly empathise, one must resist the temptation to assume that others share your same world view (Keller and Yang 2009, 171). As far as a definition of empathy goes, this is all well and good. When applied to a positivist model of decision-making, however, it seems to rather miss the point. Empathy is a human emotion and, as such, is clearly subjective in its scope. Subjectivity is not irrational, but it does mean that any discussion of it requires a different kind of language than that prevalent in normative discourse. While couched in clinical terms the notion and use of empathy in world politics is open to attack and misuse: an unpopular empathic decision can be classed as "affective", and dismissed (Keller and Yang 2009, 171 fn., 172). This is not to say that empathy is unimportant in the political decision making process. On the contrary, it is one of the most neglected components of good statesmanship. Empathy considered in normative terms, however, is empathy only half addressed. To say that we "ought" to be more empathic is a statement of good intent, but does not make that crucial step from

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[21] J. Mercer, "Approaching Emotion", presentation at ISA 25 April 1996, copy supplied by the author.

intention to realisation. In order to take that step it is likely we will have to develop a new way of thinking and speaking about IR. Jervis' book and the Keller and Yang article serve as bookends of the current positivist approach to the scholarship on emotion. Across thirty years of scholarship the desire to placate the positivist viewpoint remains undiminished, appearing in a multitude of words from a variety of theoretical approaches[22].

Four years after Mercer's presentation at ISA, Neta Crawford published an article reviewing the literature surrounding emotion and emotional relationships in world politics[23]. Her paper set the standard for a swathe of others that came after, all of which follow a similar format: they discuss the importance of emotion in world politics and IR, review the literature and state of the field, reiterate the belief that these are concepts that need inclusion in political thought and then stop short at the problem of practical methodology[24]. The general feeling seems to be that, while the relevance of emotion to IR and foreign policy making is increasingly recognized, there is no clear way forward in terms of relating this theoretical acceptance to practice and so, when these authors do attempt to apply their work practically, they tend to rely on historical analysis as a way of pointing out neorealist shortcomings rather than designing their own methodology which will bring emotion back in. The problem appears to be that, while questioning the primacy of the positivist approach, many otherwise innovative theorists and practitioners of IR are seemingly unable to move away from needing to prove to the positivists that their research is valid. It seems that they are still constrained by Keohane's dictum that

> Until the reflective scholars or others sympathetic to their arguments have delineated such [a clear reflective research program that could be employed by students of world politics] and shown in particular studies that it can illuminate important issues in world politics, they will remain on the margins of the field, largely invisible to the preponderance of empirical researchers…(Keohane 1988 in Ashley and Walker 1990a, 266).

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[22] This literature includes M. Deutsch (1983) "The Prevention of World War III: A Psychological Perspective" *Political Psychology* 4:3-32, J.G. Stein (1988) "Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception of Threat" *Political Psychology* 9(2): 245-271, A. Mintz (1993) *Integrating Cognitive and Rational Theories of Foreign Policy Decision Making* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, and M. Brewster Smith (2004) "Realistic Empathy: A Key to Sensible International Relations" *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* 10 (4): 335-339.

[23] This article, "The Passion of World Politics" in *International Security* 24 (4): 116-156, provides a thorough and excellent review of the literature available on emotion in international politics.

[24] Among others, this literature includes: A.A.G. Ross (2006) "Coming in from the Cold: constructivism and emotions" *European Journal of International Relations* 12 (2): 197-222, P. Saurette (2006) "You dissin me? Humiliation and post 9/11 global politics" *Review of International Studies* 32: 495-522, K. Fattah and K.M. Fierke (2009) "A Clash of Emotions: the politics of humiliation and political violence in the middle east" *European Journal of International Relations* 15 (1): 67-93, J. Mercer (forthcoming) "Emotional Beliefs" *International Organization* (advance copy supplied by author).

In other words, in Keohane's view the positivists control the debate and anyone wishing to contribute to it must conform to their mode of discourse. Of course, there are a number of problems with Keohane's statement, not least the question of who decides what an "important issue" is, or even who dictates the scope of "world politics", but those questions are outside the purview of this project. What I am concerned with is the next step in the reintroduction of emotions to the discipline of IR. It is true that, as Neta Crawford writes,

> […] there are methodological concerns: emotions seem ephemeral and deeply internal; valid measures of emotions are not obvious; and it may be difficult to distinguish "genuine" emotions from their instrumental display (Crawford 2000, 118).

There is no reason, however, to allow the concerns to limit our engagement with this particular aspect of world politics.

In her 2001 book *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* Martha Nussbaum lays the groundwork for a political understanding of the importance of emotions. She writes that they are "suffused with intelligence and discernment" and, since they are centred on an "awareness of value or importance" they cannot be marginalized in discussions of ethics and moral reasoning (Nussbaum 2001, 1-2). Although Nussbaum is a philosopher, her work, particularly her examinations of the components of ethical and moral theorizing, has some applicability here. While taking care not to suggest that emotions should hols a place of privilege, outside the range of rational criticism, Nussbaum warns that "we cannot ignore them, as so often moral philosophy has done". She contends that a key step in developing "an adequate ethical theory will be to develop an adequate theory of emotions" (Nussbaum 2001, 2). The importance of emotions, says Nussbaum, is that they are the way that humans register and understand "how things are with respect to the external" (Nussbaum 2001, 4). In other words, emotions are important because they help us to understand the world.

Upheavals of Thought is constructed with a strong inter-larding of personal feeling and experience, as befits a book about emotional lives and their importance. While also drawing on anthropological accounts of grief practices in other cultures (Nussbaum 2001, 140), Nussbaum also describes her own experiences of grief upon the death of her mother. In doing this, Nussbaum also acknowledges that emotions are experienced or, at least, reacted to, in very different ways according to societal custom (Nussbaum 2001, 139-153). In response to a challenge that emotions are wild "natural energies" that occur without thought, Nussbaum responds that, unlike a natural energy like wind or the tides, emotions

are *about* something: they have an object. My fear, my hope, my ultimate grief, all are about my mother and directed at her and her life. A wind may hit against something, a current in the blood may pound against something: but they are not in the same way *about* the things they strike in their way. My fear's very identity as fear depends on its having some such object: take that away and it becomes a mere trembling or heart-leaping. The identity of the wind as wind does not in the same way depend on any particular object against which it may pound." (Nussbaum 2001, 27)

It is this tying of the identity of an emotion to an object that interests Nussbaum. "In order to have anger," she writes

I must have an even more complex set of beliefs: that some damage has occurred to me or to something or someone close to me; that the damage is not trivial but significant; that it was done by someone; probably, that it was done willingly. It seems plausible to suppose that every member of this family of beliefs is necessary in order for anger to be present. […] Again, these beliefs are essential to the identity of the emotions: the feeling of agitation all by itself will not reveal to me whether what I am feeling is fear or grief or pity." (Nussbaum 2001, 29)

Because of this need for an object in order for an emotion to have an identity, Nussbaum argues that emotions are "localized", that they "take their stand in my own life, and focus on the transition between light and darkness there, rather than on the general distribution of light and darkness in the universe as a whole" (Nussbaum 2001, 31).

It is this personalization, Nussbaum argues, that makes the emotional life so important, so worthy of attention. Although the downsides of emotional reactions are intensities and ambivalences, it is this very emotional life that allows a person to persevere. By focusing on compassion, Nussbaum argues "that emotions – although unstable and dependent on struggles within individual personalities, are able to draw on resources to "contend against these problems" (Nussbaum 2001, 351). Through compassion the "self" is able to take the perspective of the "other" which "proves a fundamental source of the other-directed concern and emotion" (Nussbaum 2001, 352).

In furthering her argument in favour of the importance and value of compassion, Nussbaum turns to the arts, in particular classic tragedies. These, she says, "promote compassion in their audience by inviting both empathy and the judgement of similar possibilities" (Nussbaum 2001, 351). In dramatic portrayals of victimhood, Nussbaum points out, the audience is able to see something true about both the victims and life: the audience sees

that people can be harmed on a large scale, in ways that even the best efforts cannot prevent. […] this gives people of good will strong incentives for doing something about such disasters, and bringing relief to the afflicted. And further, […] the victim shows us something about our own lives: we see that we too are vulnerable to misfortune, that we are not any different from the people whose

fate we are watching, and we therefore have reason to fear a similar reversal." (Nussbaum 2001, 408)

Drama is also capable, says Nussbaum, of allowing the audience to see victims, or tragic heroes, as agents rather than merely passive. These characters reason, act, show commitment, friendship, and so forth (Nussbaum 2001, 408). This reminds the audience that disastrous events do happen to active, engaged people – that the source of their ill fortune is not an innate passivity. Nussbaum sums this up by saying

> Tragedy shows us that disasters do strike at the heart of human action: they don't cause just superficial discomfort, they impede mobility, planning, citizenship, ultimately life itself. […] Tragedy asks us, then, to walk a delicate line. We are to acknowledge that life's miseries strike deep, striking to the heart of human agency itself. And yet we are also to insist that they do not remove humanity, that the capacity for goodness remains when all else has been removed. (Nussbaum 2001, 409)

It is this ability of emotions to show innate humanity that is so key to the importance of considering emotions in political life. Nussbaum's cognitive theory

> enables us to show why all emotions are not equal. Noncognitive theories typically speak of "emotion" and "passion" as if there were just one thing; and really, in such views, there is basically just one type of (unintelligent, impulsive) force, that moves now in one way, now in another. […] On the other hand, if no emotion is per se morally good, there may be some that are per se morally suspect, whose cognitive content is more likely than not to be false or distorted, and linked with self-deception. […] Some emotions are at least potential allies of, and indeed constituents in, rational deliberation." (Nussbaum 2001, 453-4)

Nussbaum's work has highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence in decision making. Nigel Thrift, to whose work we will now turn, has written on the relevance of emotions and affect in the political process.

Nigel Thrift's book *Non-Representational Theory* (2007) seeks to highlight the importance of affect in political processes and political engagement. Early in his book Thrift writes that "in certain senses at least, the social sciences and humanities suffer from a certain kind of over-theoretization at present. There are too many theories, all of them seemingly speaking on behalf of those whose lives have been damaged by the official structures of power" (Thrift 2007, 3). Despite this, the book lays out Thrift's own theory, which he summarizes as asking three main questions:

> First it questions the divide between theoretical and practical work by ceding certain theoretical conundrums to practice. Second, by questioning what is in the world, it exposes a whole new frontier of inhuman endeavour, what might be called the construction of new matterings, along with their typical attachments, their passions, strengths and weaknesses, their differences and indifferences. Third, by intensifying the intensity of being, it is able to question the load of precognitive conditionings that make up most of what it is to be human. In other words, or so I will argue, it is possible to boost the content of

bare life, making it more responsive, more inventive and more open to ethical interventions. (Thrift 2007, 22)

That he summarizes his theory in the form of questions in telling, as he specifically states that he does not think the role of social scientists is to "hear the world and to make sure it can speak back" but also "to produce wild ideas" and, most especially, "to render the world problematic by elaborating questions. To simply offer solutions is not enough" (Thrift 2007, 18). While clearly stating that non-representational theory is intended as a supplement to the "back and forth of what we currently call politics" (Thrift 2007, 20), rather than a replacement or an invention, Thrift expresses hope that his work will "generat[e] new forms of energy" (Thrift 2007, 20) which will work in tandem with, and as complement to, forms of political action and discourse already in place.

Also of interest to this work is Thrift's stated intention to be "self-consciously interdisciplinary" (Thrift 2007, 20). He has made a particular attempt to align himself with no specific disciplinary tradition in art or social science, and rather to draw motivation from many of them. In defending this choice Thrift writes:

> There is an important sense in which any politics of ordinary moments is bound to transgress these disciplinary boundaries since it involves so many different elements of discipline and indiscipline, imagination and narrative, sense and nonsense. […] This is not […] meant to be a romantic or quixotic quest. It is meant to be in-your-face politics. (Thrift 2007, 20)

Thrift goes on to parse work by Dipesh Chakrabarty and Partha Chatterjee, saying that "many people are forced to live their lives in cramped worlds which offer them little or no imaginative relief because of the crushing weight of economic circumstance, the narrow margins of what they are allowed to think by what they have been taught and what lies bleeding around them and the consequently almost routine harrowing of their confidence that the world can ever be for them" (Thrift 2007, 20). Despite this "crushing weight", "narrow margin" and "routine harrowing" Thrift argues that there are many who continue to value, and demonstrate, "hope, resolution and a kind of dignity", against all odds. "That is surely something remarkable, given most people's restricted circumstances and prospects – and it must surely be something worth nurturing. Indeed, some do go further still. And in that process, they may strike out on to new practical-imaginative territories. Of course, these continuous "rites of spring" hardly mean that all is well in the world. But they do show that life mostly exceeds its own terms and conditions: it is not always captured by the small print of the social contract. There is hope that, in amongst the poisons of prejudice and general paranoia, some small beginnings can be made, summonings of what is not that can leap up and hear themselves, that are able to 'seek the true, the real where the merely factual

disappears' (Bloch in Thrift 2007, 21). Thrift goes on to explore how a "politics of affect" might look, particularly focusing on what he calls a "politics of hope" (Thrift 2007, 25).

Prior to embarking on his examination of affect and its relevance in the political realm, Thrift takes care to acknowledge the difficulties with defining the term. As a word it can have a multitude of meanings, most usually associated with emotion or feeling (Thrift 2007, 175). Although he is clear that he wishes to distance himself from "the idea that some root kind of emotion (like shame) can act as a key political cipher" (Thrift 2007, 175), he nonetheless subscribes to a definition of affect in which it

> is understood as a form of thinking, often indirect and nonreflective true, but thinking all the same. […] Affect is a different kind of intelligence about the world, but it is intelligence nonetheless, and previous attempts to either relegate affect to the irrational or raise it up to the level of the sublime are both equally mistaken (Thrift 2007, 175).

Thrift traces the neglect of affect through history, specifically citing the work of Plato in which art is designated as "dangerous" because it provides an outlet for uncontrolled feelings. Drama, in particular, is cited as a threat to Reason, because it appeals to Emotion, and Thrift traces the argument through Machiavelli, Rousseau, Kant and Hegel "noting various rationalist and romantic reactions, depending upon whether (and which) passions are viewed favourably or with suspicion" (Thrift 2007, 171-2). While questioning the reasons that affect has been resolutely removed from and ignored by academic literatures – even in issues of identity and belonging which, Thrift says, fairly "quiver with affective energy" (Thrift 2007, 172) – Thrift acknowledges that arguments citing affect as "frivolous" or "distracting", part of the work of arts departments and therefore irrelevant to the social sciences, or difficult to capture and therefore unworkable may have been valid once (Thrift 2007, 172). Nonetheless, Thrift argues, to continue to ignore affect is criminally negligent. He cites three main reasons for this:

> First, systematic knowledges of the creation and mobilization of affect have become an integral part of the everyday urban landscape: affect has become part of a reflexive loop which allows more and more sophisticated interventions in various registers of urban life. Second, these knowledges are not just being deployed knowingly, they are also being deployed politically (mainly but not only by the rich and powerful) to political ends: what might have been painted as aesthetic is increasingly instrumental. Third, affect has become a part of how cities are understood. As cities are increasingly expected to have 'buzz' or be 'creative', and to generally bring forth powers of invention and intuition, all of which can be forged into economic weapons, so the active engineering of the affective register of cities has been highlighted as the harnessing of the talent of transformation, (Thrift 2007, 172)

In short, affect now appears and is used in so many ways and by so many disciplines that to ignore it is to severely, perhaps fatally, limit the relevance of ones work. Furthermore, "emotions form a rich moral array through which and with which the world is thought and which can sense different things even though they cannot always be named" (Thrift 2007, 176).

Within politics, affect has been "the subject of numerous powerful political technologies which have knotted thinking, technique and affect together in various potent combinations" (Thrift 2007, 182). These combination of arts and sciences are, says Thrift, often called "engineering", and he expresses hope that discussions of emotion and affect lay

> foundations of a new kind of cultural engineering [...] upon which and with which new forms of political practice which value democracy as functional disunity will be able to be built. I have heard a number of commentators argue that these kinds of engineering experiments are essentially trivial and that we need to get back to the 'real' stuff. I am not persuaded. I am not persuaded at all. It seems to me that *no choice has to be made*. We need to pursue many of the older forms of politics and the political as vigorously as before but we also need the 'research and development' that will allow us to expand the envelope of the political and so both restore the spaces of moral and political reflection that 'man' has collapsed and bring new forms of politics into being. If we don't do it, others most surely will. (Thrift 2007, 197)

Thrift's clarion call to create a new, moral and ethical form of politics which draws on emotion and affect echoes hopes expressed by Nussbaum, Crawford and Mercer, among others. It is to this new, affective political form that this project speaks. The ensuing chapters address literature pertaining to the political and the theatrical, and methodological concerns before moving into a discussion and analysis of the empirical research on which this project is based. Throughout they seek to highlight the importance of the theatrical as a site of the political, drawing on the emotional impact of theatre on the political voice.

CHAPTER 1
THE "POLITICAL" AND THE "THEATRICAL"

History shows us what was and is, and poetry shows us what could and should be.

~Aristotle

This project finds its home at the point where many disciplines intersect. Due to its interest in theatre it draws on literature from drama and performance theory. On account of its focus on individuals and their experience it derives much of its field methodology from cultural and political anthropology. And because of the interest this project has in creating social and political change, there are passing mentions made of ideas from the literatures of both psychology and education. My argument, that dramatic performances have within them the seeds of political and social change and can therefore inform our understanding of the political, is one that requires the connection of many lines of thought and inquiry. In order to demonstrate this I offer an example drawn from observations of practical politics.

In early April 2009 an article appeared in the *Times Higher Education* supplement that considered U.S. President Barack Obama's extraordinary impact from the perspectives of rhetoric and physical presentation. In his article, "The Tools of Power", Tom Palaima examines both the power of Obama's words and delivery, and the history of his style, tracing it from Cato to Martin Luther King, Jr. Palaima is a classicist, and clearly has a keen ear for both linguistic cadence and musical power. He is also a sharp observer of the political moment both in its presentational entirety and in the language on which that presentation relies. His article is a compelling discussion of the role of oratory in political power, carried out with a clever contrasting of Obama's style with that of several other politicians, including his predecessor, the second President Bush. For the purpose of both this chapter and this thesis, however, I will focus on just one of his many points, that of the emotional connection Obama is able to forge with his audience[25]. Palaima writes that he has an ability to make his

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[25] These observations should be viewed in their temporal context and as an example of political performance that is relevant to the discussion at hand. It is not my purpose to embark on a discussion of President Obama's administrative successes or failures, or indeed of his political life at all. This example merely serves to illustrate a point about the ability performance has to influence identity and to engage the audience on an emotional level. In terms of creating and maintaining change, the experience of the Obama Administration shows that change comes from a difficult birth, and no solution is either easy or quick. Their difficulties in achieving their agenda do not disprove my thesis, instead they show that the ability of performance to fire the imagination requires the support of traditional political processes to reach fruition.

listeners "understand and feel his viewpoints in human terms. We feel that his view of the world, and of his and our place in it, are representative of aspirations that are inculcated in all Americans from an early age" (Palaima 2009, 34). These aspirations, Palaima says, are absorbed, starting in childhood, from the mythologies apparent in songs, books, movies and fragments of overheard adult conversation. Mythologies that "spring from our collective belief in the most memorable phrase in the American Declaration of Independence: "Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (Palaima 2009, 34). Thus, Palaima says, Obama has a rare ability to show Americans who they are and might be, both collectively and as individuals, through a combination of mythic recognition and emotional bond.

Another recent American president who had this gift for engaging with the audience was Ronald Reagan. Known colloquially as "the great communicator", Reagan was recognized for his ability to galvanize a crowd, to create in his listeners a sense of belonging (Troy 2007). At the time of his 2004 funeral, his former speech writer Peggy Noonan wrote of the mass outpouring of grief and respect that "he brought us all together one last time" (Noonan in Troy 2007, 2). It should not be forgotten that he was an actor, trained to read his audience and reach them with words. From his memorable "Morning in America" ad campaign to his famous 1987 speech before Berlin's Brandenberg Gate, Reagan had the ability to present his listeners with an image and an identity, creating a community of feeling (Troy 2007, 4). It is these twinned concepts of identity and emotion that define the parameters for the problem I have set for myself.

Identity and emotion have an oft-contested place in the field of International Relations. They have been given various definitions and held more or less weight depending on the fashion of the times. The foregrounding literature on identity and emotion has been discussed in the introduction. The purpose of this chapter is to survey the literatures pertaining to the political, and through this survey highlight the ways in which theatre can act as a site for the political. Due to the limitations of time and space, it is not my purpose to address in depth *all* work that addresses these ideas, but instead to survey the work available and then focus the discussion on those writings which most closely abut and frame my research. In places where the literature has not been fully explored citations are provided to relevant readings.

EXILES AT THE MARGINS: FREEING "THE POLITICAL"

As Jenny Edkins articulates so clearly, there is a distinction to be made between "politics" and "the political"[26]. She argues that what is meant by "politics" is very narrow, usually encompassing "elections, political parties, the doings of governments and parliaments, the state apparatus, and, in the case of "international politics," treaties, international agreements, diplomacy, wars, institutions of which states are members (such as the United Nations), and the actions of statesmen and –women" (Edkins 1999, 2). These can also be termed "high" politics, and can be seen as a strictly hierarchical and controlled form of organization. The institutions themselves are not the problem, but privileging the institutions at the expense of the rest of the spectrum leads to a very narrow view of the world, a view dominated by "high" politics. Edkins specifies that the modern Western concept of "politics" is linked to, and located within, ideas of sovereignty entailing an independent political order and a self-governing subject[27] (Edkins 1992, 6).

What Edkins terms "the political" is a much broader concept, addressing, in her words, "the establishment of that very social order which sets out a particular, historically specific account of what counts as politics and defines other areas of social life as *not* politics" (Edkins 1992, 2). Therefore, "the political" consists of all the things that go into creating the society that creates "politics". The social order Edkins describes is determined through a political process, meaning a broader social context ("the political", or "low" politics) is responsible for creating or deciding what is to be considered the more narrow "politics". Edkins draws on political philosopher Fred Dallmayr's work, quoting him as saying:

> 'Whereas politics in the narrower sense revolves around day to day-to-day decision making and ideological partisanship … "the political" refers to the frame of reference within which actions, events, and other phenomena acquire political status in the first place (Dallmayer in Edkins 1992, 2).

In other words, "the political", or "low" politics, is the political nature of the everyday, the implications that life and the living of it hold for the decision making process that takes place within "high" politics, despite that fact that those implications often go unacknowledged. David Campbell has suggested that world politics "would be better

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[26] Or "high" politics and "low" politics. This distinction is continued in the subsequent section on identity.
[27] Discussion of sovereignty forms a literature of its own in the IR canon. For additional readings on this topic please see: D. Campbell (1992). *Writing Security*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press; P. Evans, et.al. (1985). *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; R. Jackson (1990). *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Third World*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; C. Weber (1995). *Simulating Sovereignty*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Weldes, et. al. (1999). *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities and the Production of Danger*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

understood as a philosophical anthropology of everyday life on a global scale" (Campbell 1996, 24), a suggestion that would certainly be rejected by neorealists, and others who subscribe to their world-view. It does, however, resonate with those who feel that understanding the multiple layers of global life are vital to a good decision-making process in the "high" political system.

Jane Yolen, the specialist in children's literature cited earlier, feels the understanding of people and societies through their stories is an important step for the wider human community. Folktales, she says,

> […] creat[e] a landscape of allusion, enabling us to understand our own and other cultures from the inside out, providing an adaptable tool of therapy, and stating in symbolic or metaphoric terms the abstract truths of our common human existence (Yolen 1981, 19).

Most neorealists, and some others as well, would no doubt shudder at the use of the word "therapy" in this quotation, reminding us that the job of political theory should be to adapt to as many situations as possible, not to provide for psychoanalytic work on a global scale. An older meaning of "therapy", however, is "healing" – and only a truly blind observer could think that the international political system, to say nothing of international politics, is not in dire need of healing. I am hardly suggesting that all policy makers be issued with a collection of folktales from around the world. Rather, I am expanding Yolen's ideas about folklore to a broader level, urging the awareness, if not the total understanding, of societal differences of history and experience. What a follower of these ideas suggests is that the ideas of the political, those that stem from the realm of "low" politics, must be considered in the processes of "high" politics, in order to create a more representative world view and in order to make better policies and decisions. Since, as Jenny Edkins points out, the decision of what is deemed "politics" is made by "the political", individuals, rather than taking their identities from the state, as the orthodoxy would have them do must, instead, see themselves as an integral part of the process. Not just as voters or campaigners, working within the structures of "high" politics, but throughout their lives. The feminist slogan of "the personal is political" must be understood without reservation, and accepted as a mandate, in order for "the political" to take full possession of the power inherent within it. This is a different kind of power from the orthodox conception. There the power was physical, military, "hard" power (Armstrong et.al. 2003, 3). This power comes from a different place and has a different feel; it is the power of people who know that they matter. Jenny Edkins describes the political moment thus:

> [it] is a point at which the future is far from certain, a point at which anything can happen. […] This situation is one in which people are forced to make decisions, to "act", in a manner for which they can find no guarantee in the social framework. That same framework is precisely missing, suspended, because it is

in the process of reinvention. It is only by presuming the new social order, by "positing its presuppositions," that the new order is brought into being, retrospectively (Edkins 1992, 7).

This is the strength of those who make up "the political" – the power to act with no guarantees, without a framework, but instead to trust that, through their actions, a new political or social order can be created. Edkins argues that these "political" analyses are important both during the formation of a new state or new social order, and *after* the fact, as a way to make sense of the ways in which the changes came about (Edkins 1992, 3).

In contrast to the traditional notions of "knowing" and identity that will be discussed in the following section, in this setting who we are as individuals has value, both within and without the institutions[28]. In keeping with ideas of postmodernism, however, identity formation is a subjective process. We do not know who we are absolutely, but rather we learn, create and relearn who we are as the social setting in which we exist is produced and reproduced – we learn to know ourselves through representations (Edkins 1992, 22).

Central to these ideas of self-creation and representation is the role of language. Language, the medium through which people communicate with one another, is a very basic building block of community – both real and imagined. Benedict Anderson's definition of an imagined community is one that is not bounded by geographical reality, but one that exists in the minds or imagination of its inhabitants, people who perceive themselves as connected to others like them in ways other than the physical. Anderson writes about the importance of these communities in the national imagination, and the importance of language in their structuring. The important thing about language and "nation-ness", he writes, is "its capacity for generating imagined communities, building in effect particular solidarities" (Anderson 1991, 133). Neumann, however, points out that this concept should be viewed as a research question, not an end point to research. As is often the case in the social sciences, one person's research flows into another's, leading to an evolution of knowledge (Neumann 1999, 5).

In addition, Chatterjee (1985) reminds us, that it is important to remember who is doing the imagining. Societies that bear the scars of a colonial past "know" themselves and their languages through the frame of the former colonial powers. In recent history they have been prevented from naming themselves, and instead have had to recognise themselves through *imposed* representations. This is something that must be remembered when international discussions take place. A former colony,

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[28] The concept of identity will be more fully addressed in the subsequent section of this chapter.

seated at a negotiating table with its former masters, conversing in the colonial language, cannot forget their past – it is there in the room with them, sitting at the table. So it is, too, for the former masters, although it may be easier for them to disregard that fact. Neither party, in this situation, is truly divorced from the past, nor can they forget who each thinks the other is, and this is one way in which emotion – through the medium of identity – enters the room.

Language is an important part of "the political", with an impact that has been acknowledged by high politics, as well. Throughout history, language – and the eradication or attempted eradication of indigenous language – have been key tools of colonization and conquest, and the development – or failure to develop – language to deal with certain political realities has an enormous impact on the way those situations resolve. As Lev Grinberg writes in his 2009 article "Speechless: In Search of a Language to Resist the Israeli 'Thing Without a Name'", "words have power. They mobilize people and create reality, emotions, and identification. However, when they are emasculated and taken out of context, they weaken, create illusions, and de-politicize" (Grinberg 2009, 108). Grinberg is referring specifically to the lack of language to describe the situation in the geographic area usually referred to as Israel/Palestine. He claims that this lack contributes to the seeming inability to "develop effective resistance to the regime" (Grinberg 2009, 105). Words are powerful, indeed.

Another example of the power of language comes from the Baltic states. They have long held song festivals, through which they "inscribed their collective identities with ever more political meaning; in this case, human collectives actually sang themselves towards sovereignty" (Neumann 1999, 6). This, Neumann says, was a source of great surprise to scholars of international relations, although not to anthropologists whose discipline is more finely tuned to the importance of the personal act to the political scene. Neumann's interpretation is to view language as a marker of sovereignty, which it may well be. Song is not merely language, however, but also music, creative expression and a way of passing ideas, memory and history along in ways beyond the linguistic. The importance of these other modes of expression forms the heart of my research, highlighting the political import of the theatrical moment.

Language is a structure within which the speaker (or reader, or writer) is set, not a tool to describe "the real", and the speaker produces things through the process of speech, rather than labelling a pre-existing "object" (Edkins 1992, 22). This process, through which language, rather than the speaker, becomes the actor, is referred to as decentering: rather than speaking language, *language speaks us*" (Edkins 1992, 37).

This concept of decentering, although often applied to language, can also be extended to the broader social structure, acknowledging the "always already there" social and historical conditions which frame action and consciousness rather than being determined by them (Edkins 1992, 22).

One scholar who has devoted much of her work to the importance of language is Judith Butler. Her ideas are important to this work particularly because of the attention she pays to the perceived danger or threat of speech. Integral to concepts of identity are ideas of ways in which an identity can be attacked or threatened. Although traditional theorists are more concerned with direct physical attack, away from the rigidity of their structures lies the freedom to explore other, potentially equally injurious, threats. The part of Butler's work which most concerns me is her differentiation between the "speech act" and the action either implied or acted upon by the speech act[29]. The speech act is, literally, the act of saying something, the process of saying thoughts. The action is the physical performance of what is implied by those words. This becomes particularly interesting when discussing the notions of threat, as she does here:

> Implicit in the notion of a threat is that what is spoken in language may prefigure what the body might do; the act referred to in the threat is the act that one might actually perform (Butler 1997, 10).

This is an idea that will become particularly relevant later on when I discuss specifics of theatre work. If someone was to perform a play about a suicide bomber – or, in fact, simply to talk about a suicide bomber on stage – would that speech act be as threatening as the act itself would be[30]? Butler has already anticipated this argument, writing that

> Theoretical positions are always appropriated and deployed in political contexts that expose something of the strategic value of such theories. A cursory review of the political instances in which the speech act makes an appearance show that there is significant disagreement on which speech acts, if any, should be viewed as conduct rather than "speech" in the legal sense (Butler 1997, 20).

As this shows, the intrusion of "politics" into "the political" (or of "high" politics into the realm of the "low") in terms of policing speech is something that bears thinking about. Butler herself mentions discussions within the Israeli press which examined the (harsh, possibly inflammatory) public language used by some of their members in the time prior to the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. She questions how, in cases such as this one, "We imagine that speech is heard, taken up as motivation, mechanically or

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[29] This Austinian term is discussed later in this chapter.
[30] Or, for that matter, in a conversation on a mobile phone or in an internet chat room – both situations which leave the speaker open to scrutiny and suspicion because of the perception that if you are speaking about it, you must be planning to act on it, or know of someone who is.

contagiously inducing the listener to act?" (Butler 1997, 21). In this case, as in others which attempt to link language with some criminal act, she argues that representation is "construe[d] not merely as performative, but as causative" (Butler 1997, 22). In other words, the language did not simply allow for the assassin to come up with the *idea*, but did, in fact, *cause* the act itself (Butler 1997, 22; Loxley 2007, 2). The key to Butler's argument lies in understanding the differences and intersections between saying something (the speech act) and doing it (the performance).

Cynthia Weber picks up on some of Butler's ideas, particularly those that relate to the social constructions of the understanding and performance of gender. Many of these ideas, as Weber shows, transfer well to ideas about constructions of identity, particularly state identity. Weber critiques traditional, institutional theories' understanding of sovereignty by pointing out that

> [i]f sovereignty is nothing but a role, this implies that it is something exogenous to the state. It is an act or a part that is not integral to the ontology of the state. In this sense, rule-based theories offer a performance notion of sovereignty. States might, to paraphrase Butler, peruse their closets for their choice of identity, don that identity for the day, then restore the identity/garment to its place at night. Roles, then, imply 'singular and deliberate "acts" as performance does' with clear beginnings and endings (Weber 1998, 88).

If, as Weber suggests, states are able to designate themselves as one thing or another based on the necessity of the moment, what does this say about the process of identity formation? And is the state ever actually "being", or is it always participating in some form of impersonation, even if it is impersonating itself? Weber argues that impersonating a subject, regardless of who or what that subject is, "entails a lot of hard work, both because it is impossible to simply 'be' an identity and because what counts as 'regular' is always changing" (Weber 1998, 79).

Before we move on to a discussion of concepts of "the theatrical", I will devote some time to consideration of the ideas of "performance" and "performativity". Not only are these concepts important for understanding some of the approaches to identity in IR, but they have great bearing on the consideration of theatre and performance theory and the literature surrounding the politicisation of the art form that will be discussed later in this chapter.

"Performativity[31]" and "the performative" are concepts with their roots in the 1950's work of J.L. Austin (Loxley 2007, 1). Although the ideas are arguably much older, Austin's work has proved a catalyst for the idea's impact on the theories of culture, language, law, identity and performance (Loxley 2007, 1). It is of the relation

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[31] Also called "speech act theory".

of the concepts to identity that I will have most to say[32]. Austin's work, originally published in 1962 under the title *How To Do Things With Words*, was in his own estimation, not profound (Loxley 2007, 6). He was concerned mainly with two differing viewpoints on the role of language: the first being that it is the job of language to make statements and the second being that some forms of language, although they resemble statements closely, are actually part of and inherent to an action. These latter forms he termed "speech acts", being interested in the power that language had, when thus constituted, to *do* rather than merely *describe* (Loxley 2007, 8). A "speech act" is "performative" if the speaking constitutes the whole or part of an action. In short, performativity is the process of making speech an active rather than a passive (or descriptive) process (Loxley 2007, 20). It is through a development of these ideas that Austin came to increase awareness of the importance of language to action. Since Austin died before his book was published, he has never had a chance to answer his critics or converse with his intellectual heirs. His work has, however, been adopted into the disciplines of, among others, linguistics, history and the social sciences, as well as philosophy (Loxley 2007, 21).

Judith Butler has written much with regards to the performative nature of identity. Both *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993) are greatly concerned with the ways in which identity is performed and thereby constituted. Although much of her work centres on issues of gender, some of her ideas can be adapted to considerations of other forms of identity[33]. David Campbell, in particular, has used her ideas to support his arguments about the construction and deconstruction of identity in political scenarios. In his work on national deconstruction, Campbell pursues her argument about the critical nature of the performative constitution of identity (Campbell 1998b, 24-5). Drawing on Butler, and on the ideas of Laclau and Mouffe, Campbell writes

> The performative constitution of identity is central to rethinking the relationship between violence and the political, especially in the context of the state. Although the many discourses surrounding the state that invoke its name and declare its purpose give the appearance of simply reflecting a reality awaiting apprehension, such discourses bring that reality into being through the process(es) of materialization. From foreign and security policies to crises of

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[32] A discussion of performativity and performance theory is included as Appendix C. It is there explained why this discussion is not included in the body of the thesis.

[33] I have chosen not to address the literature on gender identity in depth. Although I agree that gendering is a significant problem in international relations and in identity formation more generally, I feel that much of the literature is hindered by a rigid adherence to a gender binary. Any serious exploration of the literature would involve a significant tangential excursion to discuss the concept of a gender continuum vs. a gender binary. Although this would be an interesting area of research, such an excursion has no place in the project at hand and as such would detract from my argument. Therefore I will instead refer interested readers to the works of Jacques Lacan, Julie Kristeva and Judith Butler, among others.

intervention, immigration strategies, the protocols of treaty-making, representational politics at the United Nations, and beyond, the sites of the state's performative constitution of identity are many and varied. (Campbell 1998b, 25-6)[34]

In a similar way to Weber, Campbell argues that to "perform" an identity is to create it – and that there are many ways and places where that creation can take place. It is precisely these sites that I will explore later in the thesis, when it comes time to discuss the empirical work and the way it highlights the political nature of the theatrical. Campbell's interest, however, lies in the "retroactivity of authority", an entity that, he says, highlights the "founding moment that institutes the law, a constitution or the state" (Campbell 1998b, 26). This retroactivity allows for certain events to be seen as *temporally* important, their true value only seen after the fact in the fullness of time. "The coup de force," Campbell writes, "can take any number of forms. It can involve an interpretive act, a violent performance, or a symbolic enactment" (Campbell 1998b, 26-7). Interestingly, Campbell gives an example of one such act later in his book. Describing an event in the war in Bosnia, he writes:

> When a Croatian militiaman stitched an Ustasa symbol to his uniform before going into battle with Serbian forces, he was doing more than acting out a preordained history or exercising a pregiven subjectivity: he was reproducing and rearticulating a historical representation and violently deploying it in the present to constitute his (individual and/or collective) subjectivity. In such moments it is possible to appreciate how individual practices render one not only as an ethno-nationalist but also as an ethno-historian who naturalizes his nationalism historically. (Campbell 1998b, 83)

This event raises many issues of great pertinence to this project. First of all there is the importance assigned to an individual act, and the implication that that individual act has relevance for international relations. This idea is of great importance to the case that I seek to make in favour of the political significance of theatrical performance. If an individual act contains political impact, then a theatrical act, being an act made up of the actions of individuals, can as well. Secondly, there is the importance of the

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[34] For further discussion of this topic please see: David Campbell's *Writing Security*. Also Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Weber, "Performative States" (paper presented to the International Political Theory Group, Keele University, 2 April 1997); Roxanne Lynne Doty, *Imperial Encounters: The Politics of Representation in North-South Relations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); G. M. Dillon and Jerry Everard, "Stat(e)ing Australia: Squid Jigging and the Masque of State," *Alternatives* 17 (summer 1992): 281-312; and François Debrix, "Deploying Vision, Simulating Action: The United Nations and Its Visualization Strategies in a New World Order/' *Alternatives* 21 (January-March 1996): 67-92. In one way or another we are all indebted to Richard Ashley's work; see, especially, Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State: A Double Reading of the Anarchy Problematique," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17 (1988): 227-62.

visual sign, the addition of a politically charged insignia to an already political uniform.

This section has surveyed the literature surrounding the political, tracing it from a broad definition of low politics to a more specialized understanding of speech and individual action as political act. The discussion will now move on to a consideration of understandings of the theatrical, an account already somewhat foreshadowed by the mention of "speech acts", performativity and the importance of language.

THE POTENTIAL OF THE THEATRICAL

In his play The Frogs, Aristophanes has one of his characters pose the following question: "What reason is there to admire the poet[35]"? The answer comes back "For being clever and thought provoking, and because he makes men better citizens[36]". This exchange encapsulates the purpose, or a potential purpose, of theatre. If what is put on stage can "make men better citizens", then what is put on stage has, by definition, a political content and relevance. In addition, John Russell Brown writes in the *Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre* (*OIHT*), that "playgoing is an up-to-the-minute experience, created by people inhabiting our distinctive world, but it also involves us with a wide swathe from the harvest of the past" (Brown 1995, 3). In order to consider the chapters to come in a suitable context, it is important to understand the theoretical and historical bases of a number of preconceptions – narrative, political and visual. It is this need that the current chapter will address. First it will provide a review of the literature surrounding theatre and performance theory, including theatrical ways of considering and representing identity. Through this review I will begin the process of showing that the ways in which theatre approaches identity and emotional connection can be complimentary to the political approaches discussed earlier. In addition to a review of the literature surrounding theatrical identity and use of emotion, this section also contains a discussion of "theatre as politics", which examines certain examples of the intersection of political and theatrical moments.

Bleiker and Hutchison (2008), who argue that International Relations needs to look outside the discipline in order to develop a methodology or, in fact, a language, suitable for dealing with such amorphous concepts as emotion. Two sites that they particularly suggest as places of inspiration are "visual depiction[s] of emotions" and "aesthetic sources" (Bleiker and Hutchison 2008, 117-8). These sites, together with

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[35] In this historical context "poet" should be read as "playwright".
[36] Athenian citizenship, including voting rights, was limited to free-born Athenian men who had completed their military service. The rest of the population, which included women, slaves, freed slaves and *metics* (resident foreigners), were *not* citizens.

Butler's ideas on performance and performativity, overlap on the field of theatre[37]. It is not my goal here to suggest that theatre holds the key, either practically or theoretically, to solving all debates within and shortcomings of IR theory. Rather, this section, and the rest of this thesis, proposes that theatre contains within it certain elements of emotion and representation that allow it to serve as a vehicle of the political and from which, in turn, International Relations could draw a broader and more inclusive language with which to discuss emotion, representation and identity. It is, to draw on Debrix and Weber's term, a potential site of mediation.

Theatre is an art form largely dependent on a form of imagination that is based on representation and emotional connection (Hübner 1992, 6). The actors tell a story and the audience agrees, at least for the duration of the play, to suspend disbelief and accept whatever fantastical or unlikely tales are spun for them. The success of the illusion, however, depends on the skill of the players, the attention of the audience and the quality of the emotional resonance achieved between the two. Through the process of acting it is possible to show an audience varying realities, it exists "between two worlds". Acting itself involves the embodiment of an in-between-ness. Barbara Myerhoff writes about the power contained in forgetting ourselves in the realisation of an illusion. "There are those," she writes

> […] who would say that the forgetting is the very hallmark of rapture, the heights of human imagination, and those who warn us of the madness, the dangers of forgetting that we are always in a play of our own construction. (Myerhoff 1990, 248)

It is the transformation in performance that is the liminal state (Turner in Myerhoff 1990, 249). This transformation is particularly pertinent to *ritual* performance, particularly "emotionally intense and absorbing rituals" (Myerhoff 1990, 248). This emotional intensity, however, gives license to avoid one of the more pertinent parts of ritual performance – that of situational or emotional distance. In this way theatre steps away from the "objective" and embraces the subjective, offering and acknowledging a personal experience within a larger group event.

As is the case with most things, the audience members bring something of themselves to the process as well. European audiences have certain expectations of theatre, expectations that are based in cultural history[38]. As a brief exploration of this

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[37] They overlap with other fields, too, but for the purposes of this project I will focus on theatre. Theatre is not a methodology in itself, but ways in which theatre can be used to inform political research are discussed in the second chapter.
[38] A further exploration of the history of European theatre is available in Appendix B

history, let's imagine a play about the birth of theatre as we know it in the modern West[39]:

This story is interesting because it offers us a theory of why theatre plays the role it does in our society, in our world, and also shows us some of the political inherent in performance. It starts, as European stories about "culture" often do, with the Greeks, particularly in Athens in the 6th century BCE. Before it starts some of the actors are onstage, talking with the audience. Some of the players are wearing masks. One of the actors explains the history of this practice, dating back to ancient Greek performances. Masks, he says, have been an important ritual component of identity for centuries. Not only did a Greek tragedian's mask indicate, immediately, for the audience what part he was to portray, but later

> *[i]n eighteenth-century Venice, when masked balls were a common pastime, it became a convention that anyone wearing a mask remained unrecognized. From this grew another custom. Someone wishing to go out into the street disguised need only wear a symbolic miniature mask in a buttonhole to be considered incognito. That tiny pin was always respected. The wearer was then immune from censorious eyes. The pin said, in effect, "I am not I," and the person behind the pin was free to act the stranger, the commoner, the charlatan, the fool (Yolen 1981, 61).*

Thus, the actor explains, the characters behind the masks are whoever they say they are, regardless of what the audience, or other performers, might think. "Watch and listen," the actors say, "We will show you how these ideas of masks came about."

The Narrator begins. "Originally", she says, "Song and dance were unscripted": the actors come on stage and perform a chaotic and spontaneous celebration of the end of the workday and the completion of the harvest. They pass a wine jug around and dance and sing in homage to Dionysus, god of the vine, happiness and unrestrained enjoyment. The narrator explains that this spontaneity was of concern to the societal elites, the chaos frightened them and they perceived it as a threat to the order that supported their supremacy. Actors portraying landowners and priests, the established Greek power structure, come on the stage and attempt to control the revellers' energies, channelling them into an ordered, controlled performance at a public festival. Another actor enters, wearing a laurel crown and carrying a harp. This is the choreographer who, together with the lyric poet, enforces the sanctioned societal control onto the previously free and spontaneous celebrations. Now the performers are forced to perform a Dithyramb, a structured, cadenced and rhyming poem which was performed at specific times in specific places for specific celebrations. True freedom is lost, although the song and dance remain, to keep up the illusion of ecstatic expression. Now everyone sings the same lyrics to the same tune, and performs the same steps. These performers are now the Chorus and are expected

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[39] The idea for this 'play' is borrowed from a story told by Augusto Boal in the preface to his 1979 book *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

to conform to prearranged lyrics and choreography, all in support of the existing power structure and designed to discourage questioning or challenging societal norms – or the identities decreed by those power structures. The freedom of individual expression was subsumed into the choreographed norm. Now it is time for the next step in theatrical development. An actor playing Solon, the Athenian lawmaker, appears. He represents the accepted power structure, the ruling elite. He is sure of the rightness of his opinions and the importance of a conformist public as represented by the Chorus. He watches the Dithyramb with approval until, suddenly, one of the members of the Chorus steps out of line and responds to the main theme of the song, he "answers back". This is Thespis[40], traditionally held to be the inventor of the role of the protagonist who speaks in prose against the expected and conformist poetry of the Chorus. The protagonist is the First, the one who rebels and thinks and speaks for himself. Solon and the other sponsors are terrified. They call Thespis before them and threaten him with punishments for lying, for using the platform of performance to express unwarranted political views. Thespis protests that he is not lying, that his views are his own, and valuable, and worthy of both hearing and discussion. Despite Solon's threats the audience prefers this show, and Thespis refuses to return quietly to the Chorus and mouth the prescribed words to the prescribed melodies. He continues to answer the Chorus in prose, and he continues to innovate. He adds costumes and masks – he creates the idea of character. Now the words he speaks when he responds to the Chorus are not necessarily his own, he has donned a mask and become someone else: he is not himself.

As is argued by the critical theorists earlier in this chapter, power is prevalent in its many forms throughout society, and political decisions that take into account the full range of power and learn to use those dimensions will ultimately be more successful in achieving their goals. What the story of Thespis demonstrates is that political power is also inherent in the practice of an art form. Many artists, Bertolt Brecht among them, feel that theatre and performance offer a very real and pertinent form of political power and action – if only they can be liberated from the allegiance to Aristotelian ethics that places them so firmly in the control of ruling elites.

Much as theories are stories we tell to make sense of the world around us, theatre also tells stories that help the audience to make sense of their world. And, much as theory is written to tell a story that validates the claim to power of one group of people, so too theatre often tells stories that enforce the mythologies of the same group. How do these stories, political and theatrical, inter-relate? How does theory – political or otherwise – consider art, theatre and culture? To address this, it is

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[40] The (possibly mythic) figure who gave his name to the theatrical term "thespian" (Hall 1989, 62).

necessary to break the question down into more manageable parts, to focus on certain features while setting others aside for future study. This thesis will focus on the following aspects of politics and culture, for the following reasons. Language is one of the most fundamental contributors to the political ramifications of theatrical performance[41]. In the examination of Butler's work we have already touched on the vast undercurrent of meaning that flows in and around language. We will return to the political importance of language in the empirical chapters, when discussing decisions about the language used in performance by various groups.

Storytelling connects language and theatre, so we must now address its theoretical importance. Additionally, we will consider the contributions of Bertolt Brecht and Augusto Boal, both of whom have written on the political implications and uses of theatre with a particular focus on the political ramifications of the relationship between actor and audience. Storytelling, both as an art form and, more generally, as a way to communicate ideas, is often seen to be a politically charged act. Walter Benjamin, like Benedict Anderson, is adamant in his contention that the value of the oral tradition is much different from the value of the written word. Unlike Anderson, however, who sees the written word as the most important for the spread of nationalistic ideas, Benjamin sees great value in the oral. In one of his essays he writes

> The storyteller takes what he tells from experience – his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale (Benjamin 1999, 87).

The emotional dialogue between storyteller and audience allows the storyteller to sense the impact his or her tale is having on the audience and adjust the delivery accordingly. This ability to pass along experience, to make the audience *feel* the event as if they themselves had gone through it, makes storytelling a vital link in the chain of national identity. Very literally the storyteller passes along who the audience members are by telling them their history and making them experience it for themselves. This can become a highly political act, depending on *what* story, or truth, the audience is being told. The personal aspect of storytelling heightens the power of the experience. Storytellers often begin either by explaining how they learned the tale or by creating a scenario in which the contents of the story are drawn from their own experience (Benjamin 1999, 91).   This personalizing of the tale is important, because it imbues each version of the story with its own personality, allowing "traces of the storyteller [to] cling to the story the way the handprints of the potter cling to the clay vessel" (Benjamin 1999, 91). Each version of the story, even those told by the same teller,

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[41] For the purposes of this argument we are setting aside the art form of mime, which has its own, although non-verbal, language.

releases the strength and energy of the tale anew. News only maintains its impact during the time in which it is new, during the moment in which it was created. A story, says Benjamin, is different. "It does not expend itself. It preserves and concentrates its strength and is capable of releasing it even after a long time" (Benjamin 1999, 89-90). This allows the storyteller's art to play heavily on memories – it both creates and evokes them – creating a continuity of shared experience on which group/national identity may draw.

Storytelling and theatre are very closely linked in purpose, almost two sides of the same coin. However, much more has been written about the political with respect to theatre. Benjamin writes that "In the endeavour to interest the audience in the theatre expertly, but definitely not by way of mere cultural involvement, a political will has prevailed" (Benjamin 1999, 144-5), indicating that the very attempt to involve the audience in the spectacle of theatre shows political motivation on the part of those making the attempt. Benjamin, in his essay "What Is Epic Theatre?", also writes about the physical arrangement of the theatre. In his interpretation, the gradual lessening of importance of the orchestra pit echoes the increasing removal of ritual from the theatrical act. Although the stage is raised above the audience it "no longer rises from an unfathomable depth" and, as such, becomes merely a raised platform with no ritual meaning. In Benjamin's view, this removes the play and the act of playing from the sublime, reducing it to a more pedestrian and everyday occurrence (Benjamin 1999, 151). This removal of ritual is not necessarily a bad thing, although it does indicate a loss of one of the links with the history of public performance. By making theatre more accessible, more popular, it may make it an art form more likely to be adopted by the people, who have the opportunity to use it for their own ends – to become the actor rather than the acted upon. Playwrights, who provide the words to be spoken and stories to be told in the theatre, have a responsibility to provide actors with the means to create a fully realized, multi-dimensional character; and actors need to take upon themselves the responsibility of creating those characters artistically. Benjamin writes:

> At the proper moment he [the actor] should insist on portraying a man who reflects about his part. It would be erroneous to think at such a moment of Romantic Irony […]. This irony has no didactic aim. Basically, it demonstrates only the philosophical sophistication of the author who, in writing his plays, always remembers that in the end the world may turn out to be a theatre (Benjamin 1999, 150).

Benjamin and other writers, philosophers and playwrights, were very conscious of the theatrical aspect of the everyday. This refers partly to the repeated themes that are found in both daily life and staged dramas, but also to the simple – and not so simple – performance of life. This can be on a grand scale, like President Obama's feel for

public rhetoric, or on a lesser magnitude, like an individual's sense for doing or saying the "right" thing at the "right" time. It is a talent that is generally referred to as "timing". When applied to politics, this theatrical sense allows for a constant weaving and knitting together of tales of identity. The public become the performers and create themselves over and over, both through reinforcing existing identities and by creating new ones.

As mentioned before, one of the playwrights most conscious of the theatre-like nature of the world is Bertolt Brecht. He is consistently aware of the political nature and implications of his work, and of performance in general. His work and philosophy are in direct opposition to Aristotelian ideas of emotional catharsis, instead embracing the tools of protest and persuasion as a way of raising awareness among the audience and instigating social change (Brustein 1991, 231). Brecht's philosophy is that, rather than encouraging the audience to form an emotional bond with the characters, theatre should provide them with a distanced overview of their social and political environment. This emotional distance and use of allegory, combined with a certain "preaching", should galvanize the audience into political action.

Brecht tells stories that propagated and entrenched Marxist and Communist myths (Brustein 1991, 231), and his plays spread the ideals of the early days of the Soviet Union. He was full of praise for Stanislavsky, founder of the Moscow Art Theatre, because he (Stanislavsky) showed his actors that their craft had a social meaning: "art was not an end in itself to him, but he knew that no end is attained in the theatre except through art" (Brecht 1964, 233). Brecht believed that society is full of contradictions, complexity and diversity – theatre must represent this truthfully, and make sense to the audience in light of their own reality (Brecht 1964, 236-7). Additionally, Brecht was aware of the importance of the flow of emotion between actor and audience member, but felt that empathy could be dangerous, that engaging the audience's emotions left them open to coercion by those in power. Rather than encouraging the movement of emotion between the theatre and everyday life Brecht wished

> […] to make of theatre a forum for political and social argument and decision-making which could be carried out into the streets, and which would therefore necessitate cutting out all emotional engagement between actors and audience (Parkin 1996, xxi).

This gives us a glimpse of the dilemma with which specific national theatres were confronted, when they chose to focus their performances on political motivation rather than the outmoded "entertainment for entertainment's sake" provided by vaudeville

theatres. Brecht is of the opinion that the oppressed and exploited masses hungered after art and that they longed

> […] to enjoy life, part of this immense, suppressed hunger. More often than not, at the terrible but wonderful time of the final battle, the 'last fight', and during the great struggles of the initial effort of construction, naked bodily hunger still rules. It is the intellectual hunger which can be more quickly satisfied. The masses also see the arts as a weapon in their struggle (Brecht 2003, 308).

Art as a weapon is a recurring theme for Brecht, and as a playwright he feels it is his responsibility to provide politically relevant pieces with which actors can work. Although he acknowledges that art was not the most powerful weapon available to the masses, he feels that those wishing "to resist unnecessary misery cannot afford to relinquish even the weakest of weapons" (Brecht 2003, 141).

Brecht clearly feels very strongly that the arts, specifically theatre, have a social purpose. In order for Brecht's ideas to work, audiences must be able to see themselves and their world reflected in the world represented in the theatre – this is the only way that communication between the players/playwright and the audience can take place on multiple interpretive levels (Shevtsova 1993, 10). In other words, and to paraphrase Brecht, the actors/audience and audience/actors should be interchangeable (Shevtsova 1993, 140). But is this possible with the existence of a "theatre industry", where audiences, as paying consumers, can demand a certain kind of spectacle or withdraw their patronage? Brecht himself would argue that, once society has reached this bourgeois stage, the political force of art is negligible. He wrote:

> Art is generally the first thing the bourgeoisie throws overboard when its ship begins to sink, and not only because the best artists have already begun to contribute to the sinking of that ship. The proletariat recalls these artists when it takes power (Brecht 2003, 308).

If we accept that there is truth in this statement, that in a wealthy society "art" is replaced with "entertainment", it follows that art and, by extension, theatre are most endowed with political force in societies in upheaval or revolt. And, therefore, that art is most valuable as a political tool in those societies. It is true that, for the most part, blatantly political theatre, performance that clearly aims to comment on a political situation or instigate social reform, is most commonly found in societies that are divided or in some form of crisis. This does not mean to say, however, that these forms of theatre are only found in blatantly fractured societies. Even in wealthy societies art forms play a political role, although there they are more commonly subtle in their approach.

Augusto Boal is a Brazilian theatre director whose career has revolved around his development of various interactive audience techniques, and his creation of a Theatre of the Oppressed. The "play" which was described earlier in this section is

borrowed from Boal. He tells it as a way of making sense of the way we, in the modern world, think of theatre. This, he says, is what it has always been for us, this is how it looks. What happens if we think about this differently? In his book *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Boal issues the challenge that all theatre is political, and also that:

> [theatre is a] very efficient weapon. For this reason one must fight for it. For this reason the ruling classes strive to take permanent hold of the theatre and utilize it as a tool for domination. In so doing, they change the very concept of what "theatre" is. But the theatre can also be a weapon for liberation. For that, it is necessary to create appropriate theatrical forms. Change is imperative. (Boal 1979, ix)

If we listen to Boal and seek change by acknowledging the political nature of theatre and working to shift both what we think of as theatre and also how it may be used politically, where do we get in terms of the intersection between political and theatrical theory? How can we change the stories we tell to make sense of political and creative reality?

Boal's answer to this lies in an incorporation of dialogue into a play. He recognizes that this is risky, but welcomes the risk because of the benefit he perceives in the process. He writes that:

> Dialogue is always dangerous, because it creates discontinuity between one thought and another, between two opinions, or two possibilities – and between them infinity installs itself; so that all opinions are possible, all thoughts permitted. When Two have ceased to exist and only the Sole Absolute Thought remains, creation becomes impossible. Dialogue is Democracy. (Boal 1979, xvii)

To understand the origin of Boal's idea it is necessary to return to the writings of Aristotle. Aristotle's *Poetics* was, to some extent, a theory of Ancient Greek tragedy. It laid out the "rules" and officially chronicled the aims of tragedy, it provided a framework into which playwrights and actors were expected to try to fit themselves and their art. A key part of this was the idea of empathy, a means by which the audience would become so emotionally attuned to the protagonist that they would, for a time, think with the protagonist's mind and experience his or her emotional life. This mode of identification could become a strong political tool, if the protagonist were to speak words in keeping with the aims of the ruling elites. Tragedy told the story – in the dialogue between the Chorus (status quo) and Protagonist (challenge) – of how the audience was expected to see themselves, and the *Poetics* gave the story its grammar (Boal 1979, xix). Boal also parses Brecht's ideas about the development of theatre, pointing out that traditional ideas of empathy serve to bolster ruling elites. Rather, he (Brecht, but also Boal) suggests a new form of theatre where, rather than empathizing with the actors, the audience is encouraged to view the scene from a distance and to

thus gain insight into the broader implications of their environment and society. This is the root of Boal's approach called Forum Theatre.

When Boal writes of "creating appropriate theatrical forms", he was, in fact, envisioning a complete restructuring of the theatrical experience. Traditional theatre sees a passive audience receiving the narrative of an active performing group – which in turn received the text they perform from a playwright. Boal, through his development of the system of Forum Theatre, sought to turn this structure on itself. Forum theatre is a technique wherein an audience is shown a short play in which the protagonist is faced with an obstacle or crisis, generally centring on a scenario that reflects the (or a) reality of the audience. In addition to the protagonist and the rest of the cast, one of the members of the group performs the part of 'the Joker', a figure with no allegiance to any "side" and as such able to mediate events from outside the action[42]. After the first viewing of the performance there is usually a brief discussion of its meaning and contents, facilitated by the Joker, after which the play is started again. This time, however, instead of allowing the theatre troupe to dictate the version of reality that they receive, the audience – termed spect-actors – are encouraged to move the narrative in different ways. When a spect-actor has an idea of a different way the protagonist can handle a situation, he or she is allowed to stop the process and take the protagonist's place. The rest of the cast, representing the accepted societal version of events, will react to the changes in character, while trying to maintain the previously agreed plotline. If, however, the spect-actor's idea is convincing and well thought out it is possible to "win" against the *status quo*, represented by the cast, thereby changing the outcome of the play. During a session of Forum Theatre as many spect-actors as wish may take the stage and attempt to influence societal perceptions with their own ideas. This leads to an experience of "performed debate" that can be enormously powerful for cast members and audience alike[43]. What Boal has managed to do, with the invention of the Forum process, is to give his audience members a direct ability to see themselves in the performed narrative, to give them the power to change the story that is told. Boal's Forum technique has taken the theatrical theorizing that went before and condensed it to a practical form. By placing the ideas behind the theories on stage and giving control to the audience, he has situated a political conversation in a theatrical geography. The following section explores some other practical examples of political theatre.

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[42] To play the Joker in Forum Theatre requires special training.
[43] This discussion of the process of Forum Theatre is drawn from the website of Cardboard Citizens (http://www.cardboardcitizens.org.uk/textpopups/techniques_forum.html), an organization that uses theatre to work with homeless people in the United Kingdom.

Theatre as Politics

Before beginning an analysis of political theatre there are two contrasting ideas of Robert Brustein's which bear examination. The first is the concept of a "theatre of communion", which he describes as:

> […] the theatre of the past, dominated by Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Racine, where traditional myths were enacted before an audience of believers against a background of a shifting but still coherent universe (Brustein 1965, 4).

Against this tradition, Brustein places what he terms a "theatre of revolt", embodied by rebellious modern playwrights who write and stage plays that preach revolution to an ever-decreasing audience. Brustein conceives of revolt as

> […] the energy which drives the modern theatre, just as faith drove the theatre of the past. Revolt, however, is not simply an energy but also a body of ideas, a system of values; and these have both their implicit and explicit aspects. (Brustein 1965, 415)

This was written in the mid-1960s, at a time when revolutionary energy was more easily found in European and North American society at large. That revolutionary zeal is somewhat lacking in the current, early 21st century, climate, bound round as it is with paranoia, fears of terrorism and easy accusations of treason. The implicit value system inherent in the consciousness of revolt is still very much in evidence. However, the explicit expression of those values has dwindled to the margins of society. In most of Europe and North America, Brustein's revolutionary energy has, in the main, passed through the lens of fear and been transformed into, at best, the energy of protest and at worst, apathy or paralysis. Perhaps we are once more leaning towards a preference for a "theatre of communion", where our ideas and preconceptions are not challenged and we are allowed to continue in our beliefs and societal structures without question. Nonetheless, the concepts which Brustein espouses still exist both in our society and in societies around the world, and have a history on which to draw. This section will explore several of the ways politics have been used in theatrical productions, both traditional and *avant garde*.

Theatrical Geography: Myth, Religion, Politics

Theatre, drawing as it does on ancient religious rites and mythic connections, is very tied to space and location (Schechner 1993, 24). As will be discussed in the analysis of my field work in the second half of this thesis, this geographic importance is often overlooked by European artists, but it has a history nonetheless. A brief examination of both the physical arrangement of the performance space and the organization of the audience can indicate something about the society. To return briefly to Ancient Athens,

not only the plays themselves, but even the geography of the theatre was key to Athenian self image. People were arranged by tribe and family, with *metics*, women and other non-citizens seated in their own sections. Within the bowl of the amphitheatre any audience member could see, just by looking around, a visual representation of the social order of Athens, and the ways in which it was differentiated (Green 1994, 8). Athens was not the only society in which the arrangement of the audience provided a visual reminder of political and social hierarchy. Moving forward by several centuries, Elizabethan theatre was also a political entity, not just in terms of content, but also of comportment. When plays were performed at court the seating arrangements indicated rank and status, and the seating of foreign envoys could incite or allay international rivalries (Orgel 1991, 11). Even today, in most European and North American theatres, there is a clear audience differentiation based on ticket price, with the wealthier patrons seated in easily accessible seats with a good view of the stage, and other, less lucky, audience members seated in cramped, visually obstructed seating. While a glance around a modern theatre might not reveal as much about the nuanced social hierarchy as a review of seating would have at the Dionysia or a performance at the Elizabethan court, there is no denying that spatial arrangement has a meaning, whether acknowledged or not, when considering the politics of an audience.

The importance of space to theatre is not just limited to the internal arrangements of a performance area. Location, and a strong tie to landscape or place, can also be a major component of theatrical power. For example, the Nazis, under the leadership of Hitler, Goering and Himmler, used choreography and space in an attempt to create a 'quasi religious' theatre of the people through *Thingspiel* – a so-called 'Blood and Soil' cult in which participants stressed their connectedness to the land and emphasized an ancient pastoral ideal. Although abandoned in the late 1930s as being an unsuccessful instrument for manipulating the masses (Eichberg and Jones 1977, 137), this attempt to use theatre as a tool of indoctrination showed that the government was aware of the potential power of the medium.

Only in the past few decades, and in the Anglo-mainstream, has theatre (and other performance genres, for example, film, television, etc.) been viewed solely as entertainment. Elsewhere, dramatic productions in a variety of styles have been and are used as ways to convey information about, among other things, health (African AIDS plays[44]), hygiene (plays in East Asian refugee camps[45]), and politics (Indonesian

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[44] One example of this is the work done by the Sankofa Center for African Dance & Culture in Ghana, (http://www.thesankofacenter.org/?nav=home)
[45] Mentioned in Anne Fadiman's 1997 book *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*.

street theatre[46]). Although Western Europe seems to have moved away from using, or even being aware of, this very powerful tool, there are still some indications that its power is understood and valued elsewhere.

There are documented cases of theatrically inspired education working in situations in which other methods have failed. For example, in refugee camps in Thailand, Western aid workers' attempts to create and enforce environmental health programs failed miserably until the International Rescue Committee assigned an ethnographer to the project. This person, who brought a deep interest in shamanism and performance art to the assignment, designed public performances and parades to raise awareness of the problems of rabies and public sanitation, as well as their causes and treatments. These performances, enacted entirely by residents of the camp and drawing on local traditions and mythologies, were highly successful and instrumental in increasing the percentage of camp residents vaccinated against rabies (Fadiman 1997, 37).

Similarly, by drawing on traditional local dance styles and the accepted practice of using dance to impart information, the Sankofa Center for African Dance & Culture is able to provide a significant level of HIV/AIDS awareness instruction to communities in Ghana. Through engaging the audience in the performance and updating traditional stories and scenarios for their purpose, the dancers and outreach workers are able to teach people about prevention and give them important information about medical options should they become ill. Dissemination of information is a very important part of their work, but equally important is the fact that these public performances decrease the stigma attached to the disease and make it more acceptable to discuss openly.

Theatre is not just capable of enacting social change in refugee camps and poorer countries. Much work has been done on the uses of theatre in neighbourhood conflict throughout Europe and the United States. In *The Politics of Performance*, his book on the political efficacy of alternative and community theatre in the United Kingdom, Baz Kershaw examines the contrasting arguments about the value of theatre to social change. One view is that alternative or "fringe" theatre was able to impact the dominant culture, forcing it to become more progressive and tolerant and instituting changes in the organization of society and politics. Alternately, counter culture performances may have been assimilated into the dominant culture "through a process of repressive tolerance which effectively neutralised their oppositional ideologies and reinforced the status quo" (Kershaw 1992, 8). Kershaw also found that alternative

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[46] See Barbara Hatley's chapter in *Popular Theatre: A Sourcebook*.

theatre and counter culture movements were being replaced in importance by community theatre projects. In 1986, during the height of Thatcherism, a seminar on community theatre was held in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in north-eastern England. During discussion it became apparent that the mantle of political performance, abandoned by the touring "fringe" companies, had been assumed by local community groups as a way to focus their resistance to Thatcherism. This new emphasis on community theatre allowed whole populations to cultivate "their own ideological identities" (Kershaw 1992, 204). This focus on ideology is very important in terms of social change because, as Kershaw points out, in order to change the ideas and opinions of its audience, a performance must connect in some way with their pre-existing beliefs and the audience members must acknowledge that connection (Kershaw 1992, 21). This acknowledgement is particularly important because

> [I]t is in this respect that the collective impact of a performance is so important. For if a whole audience, or even a whole community, responds in this way to the symbolism of a "possible world", then the potential of performance efficacy is multiplied by more than the audience number (Kershaw 1992, 29).

Long term effects of these projects are difficult to measure, but the argument that a single project does not change a population's perceptions forever is not necessarily a reason to abandon the concept. Instead, it may simply be a more logical idea to continue the projects for longer, with each one leading to another. As chapters four, five and six, which address my field work, will demonstrate, theatre can educate, it can provide a way and a space for people to work through their feelings and experiences, it can bring people together on common ground and help them see themselves and each other as human beings, and it can provide a safe place for people to replay and alter events and their outcomes.

Theatre as Social Commentary: The Playwright as Educator

Historically, playwrights and artists have been able to use their art as a space to communicate ideas and focus public debate, and the theatre has become "the powerhouse, where the changed stories spread the word, imitating and disseminating changes in the value system" (Dromgoole 2001, 12). This ability allows theatre to act as a forum for social commentary, giving a voice and a face to innovative, challenging and sometimes dangerous ideas. Although these subversive productions occur when the work of many creative people intersect, the text is most usually supplied by a playwright. In these instances, the writer becomes, in Shelley's words, 'the unacknowledged legislator for mankind' (Shelley in Dromgoole 2001, 15). This role of the playwright as legislator was sometimes echoed by the alternate professions held by some dramatic authors. While by no means a common occurrence, there have been

various well-known statesmen or other public figures that have also written and produced plays. Niccolò Machiavelli and Voltaire are only two famous examples of playwrights who brought their political ideas to the stage, and at other points in history it has been common for civil servants to serve as playwrights (Frame 2006, 4).

In addition to its role as a mouthpiece for political figures, drama and theatre can offer an opportunity to critique political situations, as well as a chance for playwrights to challenge audience members to examine their beliefs and actions. In this way, the playwright can morph from being the audience's teacher to being its opponent. George Bernard Shaw wrote, in prefaces to his early works, that "my attacks are directed against themselves [the audience], not against my stage figures" (Shaw in Brustein 1965, 10). This sense of play-going serving as a challenge to the audience is still alive in dramatic circles today. As several of my interview subjects explained, staging a play which contains difficult or challenging material is one way of forcing an audience to examine themselves and their beliefs more closely. By doing this, they are able to, even in small ways, effect social and political movement.

Although initially a pastime for the elite classes, by 1882 theatre was being used to "raise the cultural level" of the general public (Frame 2006, 2), embodying a flow of information between the intelligentsia and the masses, the state and society. In his 2006 book on theatre and civil society in Imperial Russia, Murray Frame analyses the role that theatre played in educating the members of the Russian population. In his analysis, civil society and the citizen are bound together by a shared loyalty to the nation-state – this loyalty ensuring that any conversation which takes place uses a common language and is based on a common, shared identity. "Literate culture," says Frame

> […] provides the necessary conduit, and as communication increasingly occurs through common media (such as newspapers, a national education system, cinema), and urbanization and improved transportation make regular interaction over larger geographical spaces a characteristic of modernity, pressure is towards a common set of norms which provide a necessary balance between a plurality of identities and membership of the nation. (Frame 2006, 6)

From this it follows that, where there is a rift in a society, there is a breakdown in the formation of national identity – either one group controls the majority of the activities governing identity formation, leaving other groups marginalized; or there are many conflicting identities present, none of which are willing to give up or change any part of themselves in order to create a more peaceful atmosphere. For quite some time theatre served as the most important medium of communication available to reach mass audiences, and provided a space "where the issues of the day, the growing conflict of ideas, the need for a new sense of cultural identity could be argued out"

(Dromgoole 2001, 18). The role of theatre in creating and maintaining national identities will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

In keeping with the recognition that theatre and the arts were capable of spreading ideas, Fascist governments subjected their more subversive artists to censorship, exile and murder, and drove many creative people to suicide through a campaign of destruction and repression. Artists such as Gabriel Garcia Lorca, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Sergei Tretyakov and Vladimir Mayakovsky were all hounded in this way (Innes, *OIHT* 1995, 416). The defiant anti-Nazi productions of Anouilh's *Antigone* or Sartre's *Les Mouches* (*The Flies* - a retelling of the Electra story), showed many governments how right they were to fear the power of the theatrical message.

In the time immediately following the Second World War, theatre became less political and social commentary moved into the realm of writers and poets. By the 1960s and 70s, however, guerrilla and street theatre became a common form of political expression, as a manifestation of the counter culture. Groups like the Guerrilla Girls staged actions and public performances to raise awareness of societal ills and to focus public opinion on problems that contemporary society was choosing to ignore or leave unsolved[47] (Carlson 1996, 166).

Jeffrey Goldfarb, in his 2005 article on art and freedom, describes his experience of Polish street and guerrilla theatre in Lublin the late 1970s. In this case he attended a state-sanctioned performance of youth theatre. The performance was supposed to take place inside, in a pre-approved, upstairs space, using a government-sanctioned script. Part of the way through the performance, however, something happened. The actors deviated from the script and led the audience down the stairs and out on the street, where they preceded to perform a very different piece of theatre from that to which the authorities had agreed. In this way, Goldfarb points out, the performers turned the rules of the regime against it. "The authorities," he writes

> […] wanted only channelled innovation, knowing that without the proper channels, cultural autonomy might not easily find acceptable limits. But those in the world of theatre, as well as in the other arts and sciences, pushed limits as a matter of fundamental principle; *and in Lublin that day, they did it spontaneously* (Goldfarb 2005, 56).

Whether the limits are tested through a script or spontaneously, this claiming of creativity as a way to assert freedom is an example of what Goldfarb calls "the politics of small things". Through this act, this disregarding of the official rules, the members

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[47] The Guerrilla Girls are a group of feminist artists that was founded in 1985 in New York City. They use art in a number of forms to critique the mainstream art scene and raise awareness of gender and feminist issues.

of the youth theatre were able to challenge the regime and change their reality. They did this

> [...] when the critical chose to secede from the rules of the game of the socialist order. They walked downstairs out of the auditorium supplied by the authorities and onto the street. They stopped playing the games of officialdom and they started writing their own scripts. They began to write without thinking about the censor. They acted as if they lived in a free society, and as a consequence they created their own political freedom. [...] They spoke and acted in the presence of others. They created a capacity to act in concert. And they did so act (Goldfarb 2005, 60).

The idea of creating a new reality through performance is one to which the actors I interviewed returned again and again. This reclaiming of the power to create and perform is a powerful act of defiance, a strongly political act. Maria Shevtsova, in her book *Theatre and Cultural Interaction*, addresses the fact that we often fail to acknowledge this. She writes:

> Many [...] have been slow to recognize that theatre art is generated by social agents in a social context and that, as a socialized and socializing action, it is full of social as well as aesthetic meaning. [...] Theatre practice, though involving creativity, fantasy, imagination – in a word, art – is the action of those who do it. Whether professionals or amateurs, their work takes place in nameable societies which, despite the all-embracing term "society", are neither unified nor homogenous. [...] Try as we might, then, we cannot cut society out of theatre. For this reason alone, an activity belonging to the conceptual framework of aesthetics belongs, at the same time, to a sociological framework (Shevtsova 1993, viii-5)

In other words, and to paraphrase Robert Cox, art is always for someone and for some purpose. Whether pandering to the ruling regime or seeking to overthrow it, performance always seeks to achieve something, to voice certain ideals. Nicholas Dromgoole, author of *The Playwright as Rebel*, wrote that "playwrights remain that divine irritant who puncture that complacency the other media spend so much of their time propping up (Dromgoole 2001, 35). In other words – playwrights have an obligation to make us think.

Now, in the second decade of the 21st century, some scholars argue that theatre is once again gaining ground in terms of political influence, and this example from the late 20th century would certainly seem to bear that out (Shevtsova 1993, Dromgoole 2001, Goldfarb 2005). While recognising that most theatre audiences are self-selecting in terms of economics, these academics argue that this very exclusivity "makes the theatre one of the few arenas where the class which makes the decisions can see, think and discuss the problems with which it must grapple. Playwrights writing for the theatre are still rebels, still examining controversies, still edging audiences into making value judgements, into making decisions about what is right and wrong, what is

worthwhile, what life is about" (Dromgoole 2001, 34). This viewpoint does not question the idea that there is a "class" of people who make the decisions, and does not address the corollary that it might be important to raise political awareness among those who do not usually have a political voice. The practical uses of theatre as a form of revolt, or, at least, of revolutionary political action, as advocated by Robert Brustein, will be discussed in the empirical chapters that comprise the second half of this thesis.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has surveyed the literature pertaining to the broad spectrum of what comprises "the political", and has considered literature relating to the theatrical and the political nature of performance. Beginning with Jenny Edkins' articulation of "the political moment" as "a point at which anything can happen" (Edkins 1992, 7) and moving through Anderson and Butler's emphases on the power of language, our understanding of "the political" has been expanded beyond the hierarchical notion of politics. If the political moment exists at the fulcrum where all possibilities are equal, then anything surrounding it – language, action, storytelling or performance – can become a political site. Simple actions by individuals are seen to have political import (Campbell 1998b, 83).

What, then, of actions by individuals on a stage, the act of writing by playwright, or a tale told by a storyteller? These, say Benjamin, Brecht and Boal, are also politically charged. A storyteller "preserves and concentrates" the strength of the tale, imbuing it with meaning and releasing its power for an audience to imbibe (Benjamin 1999, 90). A playwright writes words and scenarios that allow "political and social argument and decision making […] to be carried out into the streets (Parkin 1996, xxi). And actors engaging the audience in Forum Theatre can enact the political moment again and again, showing a multitude of possibilities blossoming from the same reality.

Viewed like this, the theatrical is certainly a site for the political, offering it a stage and a voice. We will return to this study of the political nature of the theatrical in the second half of this thesis which provides an analysis of the fieldwork conducted for this project, and in chapter three which serves as a brief introduction to them. First, however, let us turn to a discussion of the fieldwork design and the methodological techniques employed.

Story is one of the most serious intruders into the heart.

~Jane Yolen, *Touch Magic*

Why go to the field? Despite the increasing prevalence of political ethnography, it is still relatively rare to find academic politics research with an *in situ* component. When designing this project I considered it imperative to offer a practical example with which to illustrate my argument about the importance of art and theatre in situations of conflict. In this decision I was drawing on anthropological ideas of the importance of human stories and experience of society (Geertz 1973, Clifford & Marcus 1986, Strathern 1999, Bowman 2007) and applying them to political scenarios. For me this was crucial, because the importance of human experience to the political story lies at the crux of my argument that art has relevance for social and political change[48]. My decision to focus on Israel and Palestine drew on many considerations. Most notably this is a region with a longstanding and highly publicized history of violence, and as such the political relevance of the choice could not be disputed. Similarly, this is a region where more traditional attempts at peace-making have had little success, making the time ripe for new and innovative approaches. Furthermore, both regions have programs committed to the use of drama and performance in the discussion of and resistance to the conflict. These factors alone would not distinguish it from other possible locations, for a similar argument could be made for focusing on Northern Ireland, Rwanda or the Balkans, among many other places. Practical considerations, however, made Israel and Palestine a good choice of field site. It is a region with which I am familiar, having lived and travelled extensively in both Israel and the West Bank. This familiarity, as will become apparent later in this chapter, was instrumental in allowing me to carry out the type of fieldwork that I did[49]. One of the criticisms levelled against travelling qualitative researchers, or others who have conducted interviews with people or in settings with which they have no prior experience, is that material uncovered in this way is suspect because of the possibility of confusion on the part of the interviewer (Crang 2002, 648). The possibility of interviewer confusion

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[48] In this belief I am not alone. My works finds companionship with that of Zygmunt Hubner, Richard Schechner, Victor Turner, Barbara Myerhoff and Anna Deavere Smith, among others.
[49] In the section titled "Thick Description" I discuss the importance of familiarity with the fieldwork area.

about interpretation, awareness of the broader spectrum of the situation in which the interview took place, and analysis of the power dynamics in that situation casts doubt on the knowledge claims made based on the substance of the interview (Crang 2002, 649). For this reason, my choice to conduct fieldwork in Israel and Palestine was well-grounded in qualitative research norms. In the absence of time and funds for linguistic immersion and extended field time, choosing a site with which I was already acquainted and where I had linguistic skills lent authority to my fieldwork that might otherwise have been open to question[50].

With it established that I would go to the field, it remained to decide what I would do while there. I wanted to be sure to speak to people both in Israel and the West Bank, and I was fortunate that, through pre-existing contacts and a network of theatre artists, I was able to contact a group of people who were willing to meet with me and share their experiences. The field experience, as I will address later in this chapter, was both gruelling and exhilarating and certainly served to refocus my mind on the practical importance of my work. Upon my return, however, I was forced into a reflexive process of trying to untangle what, exactly, I had done. As I read the transcripts of my interviews I became more and more convinced that those transcripts told only part of the story of the field experience. The rest was contained in the journal that I kept during my time in the field, as well as in other journal entries from previous time I had spent living in the region. These writings described non-interview conversations I had with people, the feel on the street and in neighbourhoods in reaction to a religious or political event, and my own observations and emotional reactions to places, events and people. When the time came to write about the fieldwork experience I did not feel that the contents of these journals could be ignored.

This chapter is the result of my meditation on the subject matter in both my journals and my interview transcripts[51]. It is the result of questions I asked myself both before and after the fieldwork experience. And it is the result of much reading about both social anthropology and political ethnography. As such it is divided into three general sections: methodological techniques, facts on the ground, and responsibilities

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[50] It is important to note that these constraints are not limited to research students. In his 2002 article, Mike Crang discusses the difficulties involved in funding time spent away for the purposes of conducting ethnographic research. The bodies from which these funds are available "increasingly want a clear set of predicted outcomes rather than an evolving programme". Shurmer-Smith (1998) gives an excellent illustration of these issues in her recent research in India describing a project that had to be fitted into one semester while securing a local school place for her son. Meanwhile she had to justify how the research itself evolved in ways far from the original proposal into a study of élite formation in situ. As an account of working through multiple positions and conflicting demands, this is a great case study (Crang 2002, 650).

[51] It is not an analysis of my interviews, which is the purpose of the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters.

in the field. The section on methodological techniques considers quantitative and qualitative techniques and addresses some of the questions surrounding ethnography and its applicability to the field of politics; the "facts on the ground" section addresses some site-specific ethnographic issues and refers to the challenges of three main aspects of fieldwork: identity, security and environment; and the section on responsibility in the field discusses the need for ethical and responsible behaviour to both the region and the interview subjects.

METHODOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES

Political methodology is a topic on which much can and has been said. This section will examine some of the critiques of quantitative versus qualitative methods, and explain the importance of qualitative methodology to this project. It will also briefly consider why a discussion of methodology is valuable to the academic process.

Ian Shapiro's 2002 article on problems, methods and theories in political science addresses the difficulties faced by political theory when it is method- rather than problem-driven. Although his point, the discipline's overall focus on method rather than "the great [political] problems of the day" (Shapiro 2002, 597), has merit, it fails to take into consideration that the issues may be interrelated. In his approach

> [Shapiro and Green make] the case for starting with a problem in the world, next coming to grips with previous attempts that have been made to study it, and then defining the research task by reference to the value added. We argued that method-driven research leads to self-serving construction of problems, misuse of data in various ways, and related pathologies summed up in the old adage that if the only tool you have is a hammer, everything around you starts to look like a nail (Shapiro 2002, 598).

Although I agree that research should not be driven simply by the methods available, nonetheless discussions about different types of methodology are an important component of the process of academic politics. If those discussions do not take place, it is doubtful whether any innovations in political methodology will come about. I agree that the question of method should not drive the choice of research topic, but neither should certain forms of research be abandoned simply because in the process of conducting it new methodological ground may need to be broken. To view this in the microcosm of my own research, the "problem" which drives my research question is the seeming inability of most standard modes of political research and theoretical approach to address in any meaningful way the problems surrounding peace, or lack thereof, between peoples locked in long term conflict – in the case of my research, Israel and Palestine. Hence, my research attempts to examine this problem from a different angle – one that necessarily includes an analysis of suitable methodologies.

Qualitative vs. Quantitative

The first delineation must be between qualitative and quantitative forms of research. There are some who feel the only useful research is quantitative. Frieden and Lake (2005) speak for a school of politics academics when they write that

> [p]rogress in the study of international politics depends on systematic, rigorous theory and empirical testing. International Relations is most useful when scholars can identify with some confidence the causal forces that drive foreign policy and international interactions, not when they use their detailed empirical knowledge to offer opinions, however intelligent and well informed (Frieden and Lake 2005, 136).

This opinion is merely an echo of Keohane's 1988 statement (Keohane 1988 in Ashley and Walker 1990a, 266) about the importance that a clear, empirical research program holds for any "reflective scholar" who wishes to be taken seriously by mainstream, positivist IR. And, like Keohane's argument, this, too, can be set aside as an overly limiting approach. To deny the discipline research methods merely because they cannot immediately be seen as predictive is to weaken it, and to relegate non-positivist data to the realm of "opinion" is foolhardy. These (qualitative) methods merely provide a different and, I would argue, valuable perspective to any political scene. Charles Tilly, in a 2006 defence of the importance of political ethnography, writes

> if you believe (as I do) that how things happen is why they happen, then ethnography has great advantages over most other conventional social scientific methods as a way of getting at cause-effect relations. Most methods depend on correlations and comparative statistics, asking whether observed variation corresponds to plausible consequences of one condition or another. Ethnography engages the analyst in looking at social processes as they unfold rather than reasoning chiefly from either the conditions under which they occur or the outcomes that correlate with them (Tilly 2006, 410).

In this passage Tilly clearly sees no drawback in the non-predictive aspect of ethnographic research. In fact, by citing its relevance for "cause-effect relations", he illustrates that ethnography, and other qualitative methods, can be used to illustrate causality.

Nonetheless, the feeling that a political methodology has to be predictive persists, and there is concern over the ability of qualitative methods to provide this[52]. Patrick Jackson's 2008 article poses the question "can ethnography inform world politics?" In his essay he makes reference to an article by Iver B. Neumann which discusses Norwegian speech-making practices[53]. Although he indicates that he found

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[52] For a summary of concerns about qualitative methods please see Mike Crang (2002). "Qualitative Methods: the new orthodoxy?" *Progress in Human Geography* 26 (5): 647-655.
[53] Iver B. Neumann (2007) ''A Speech That the Entire Ministry May Stand For,'' or: Why Diplomats Never Produce Anything New". *International Political Sociology* 1(2): 183–200.

Neumann's article interesting, providing, as it does, a window into what politicians *do* (a window, he says, not usually available to academics) Jackson argues that ethnography itself does not allow for causality, saying that

> [t]he non-causal character of interpretive research is apparent in Neumann's presentation of his conclusions: the organization of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry is "an example of" a claim by Herzfeld about bureaucracy, Neumann's experience "supports" Douglas' characterization of how individuals act within institutions, and the whole experience illustrates "designer capitalism" at work (Neumann 2007:195–197). All of these conclusions are descriptive, albeit analytically descriptive, rather than causal. (Jackson 2008, 92)

Jackson argues that abandoning causation will not allow for the predictive potential of which quantitative IR researchers are so enamoured. Identifying a pattern, he says, is all very well – but ethnographic techniques do not allow researchers to predict whether those patterns will continue in the future. He also argues that ethnography offers no mechanism for reporting on the effects that the patterns or social arrangements may have long-term. Against the first objection I would place the fact that the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s was not predicted by the positivist political scientists and analysts in the US State Department and leading political think tanks (Keohane 2000, 205; Mesjasz 2008, 889). To the second, I would argue that ethnography conducted in the way it is intended in anthropology, with trained researchers spending years living and participating in the communities they study, can and does provide a long-term window into the effects of political patterns or social arrangements (Bowman 2007). This awareness of patterns can not only offer a perspective on the area studied, but also on the wider implications of political or social structures. Although it may not deliver direct predictions of political outcome, it can lead to a better understanding of political experiences – and understanding that can be incorporated into future political acts (Bowman 2007, fn. 4).

In his final paragraph, Jackson questions whether it is even possible to conduct what he terms "pure" ethnography in the field of International Relations, considering that even political ethnographers give the impression that causal claims are the ideal outcome of their research. Perhaps, he suggests,

> what we should be looking for is a way to combine the intersubjective sensibilities of ethnography with the ability to make and defend causal claims— albeit not the sort of deductive-nomological causal claims celebrated by neopositivists and statisticians. (Jackson 2008, 92)

This, like much of the literature regarding the incorporation of emotion into IR, seems to highlight an existing methodological problem while offering no concrete solution. Jackson makes no attempt to suggest how the discipline might reconcile ethnography

with causal claims, although he does take the welcome step away from "causal" being commensurate with positivist and statistical claims.

One response to this focus on causality as a weakness of ethnography is given by Lorraine Bayard de Volo and Edward Schatz in their 2004 article "From the Inside Out: ethnographic methods in political research". In this article they point out that ethnographic methods offer far more than "stories" or description. In response to the criticism that these methods "merely give rise to hypotheses; it is a preliminary (read: "inferior") sort of research because it cannot "test" propositions", the authors argue that this criticism misses the point (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 270). Ethnography, they say,

> is readily employed to test hypotheses to determine whether and how well general theory applies to a specific case. For example, James Scott (1985) and Susan Stokes (1995) both use ethnography (combined with other methods) to "test" the Gramscian theory of hegemony. The ethnographer offers an intensive evaluation of possible causal chains. Unless we are to rest content with statistical correlations, such in-depth evaluation of causality is critical. Further, the ethnographer uncovers locally attached meanings; in the absence of knowledge of these meanings, the research can miss or misinterpret important political processes. (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 270)

In this way Bayard de Volo and Schatz show that the perceived weaknesses of ethnography can actually be its strengths.

It is highly unlikely that there will ever be a methodology that will satisfy all practitioners in a field. And it is likewise unlikely that people who view qualitative work with scepticism will suddenly change their minds, or vice versa. For this reason it is not my intention to discuss and reject the many arguments in favour of quantitative methods. The discipline of anthropology has been much engaged with a discussion of fieldwork and the ethnographic writing-up of the experience, and as part of that engagement has produced much writing on the value of the ethnographic experience (Geertz 1973, Clifford & Marcus 1986, Spencer 1989, Strathern 1999). In fact, Marilyn Strathern, in her 1999 book *Property, Substance and Effect*, wrote that if one were to set out to invent "a method of inquiry by which to grasp the complexity of social life, one might wish to invent something like the social anthropologist's ethnographic practice" (Strathern 1999, 1). Because of my interest in, and commitment to, the real voices and experiences of people whose lives speak to my subject – by definition, representatives of the "complexities of social life" – I have chosen to conduct qualitative research, drawing both on the writings of political ethnographers and on the broader anthropological literature available on the merits of writing ethnography. Once I had made that decision, however, my methodological quandary was still not fully resolved. Narrowing my choice to the general field of qualitative

methods, and even specifically to ethnography, still left me several options between which to choose.

Prior to leaving for the field I read about the role of ethnography in political research, most specifically in International Relations. I was drawn to the idea of ethnography because I felt it was important to see the interview subjects and their stories in a broader social context, not just disembodied voices on a recording or writing on a survey response[54]. One of the difficulties with doing work in a region of the world that often finds itself in the news is that preconceptions are rife. Most people have an opinion on the region, its history and its troubles. For this reason I wanted to find a way to show the complexities of the situation as I saw them and as they were related to me by my interview subjects, while avoiding writing either an extensive, travelogue-style commentary or a piece of faux-ethnography.

I was particularly wary of making ethnographic claims after reading Wanda Vrasti's 2008 article "The Strange Case of Ethnography and International Relations". In this article she argues that in recent years some critical scholars have tried to adapt the anthropological discipline of ethnographic writing as a way to radicalize the study of IR. The problem with this, she argues, is that ethnography in IR has often been reduced to "an empiricist data-collection machine, a writing style, or a theoretical sensibility" (Vrasti 2008, 279). Through this reduction, the complexity and rigor of a truly ethnographic approach has been lost, a failure that breaks the otherwise radical promise of the practice. Instead of a paper that, through its writing style, makes claims to authenticity of experience, or otherwise mimics the appearance of ethnography without engaging in the deeper experience and analysis that such a work entails, Vrasti suggests that critical scholars undertake an ethnography of the discipline of IR itself. "What is needed", she says

> [...] is a radical critique of the onto-spatial imagination of IR, a critique that can make disciplinarity part of our research, not as an explanatory framework, but as an independent variable. Only a critical ethnographic study of IR, that is, an ethnography that takes IR's own theories, histories and actors as its main objects of research, can accomplish such a task and open up the sovereign foundation of the discipline to cross-cultural or culture-to-culture engagements (Vrasti 2008, 300).

Vrasti's critique seems to be less that ethnography is not pertinent to the study of IR than that ethnography has been commonly *misused* by the discipline and that ethnographic claims are made on behalf of non-ethnographic work. Her suggestion of an ethnographic study of IR itself is an interesting one, and one that reflects a logical

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[54] With regards to surveys, I discuss in a subsequent section why these and other non-interview types of qualitative research were not the first choice for this type of project.

extension of most critical approaches to method[55]. It is not, however, the subject of my project, nor of this chapter, which focuses, rather, on the need to adapt certain methodological approaches to the study of politics while taking care not to lose the rigour associated with them by their original disciplines. Nonetheless, Vrasti's cautioning approach made me aware of the danger in making an inappropriate methodological claim.

The strength gained by a multi- or inter-disciplinary approach, however, is extolled by Inayatullah and Blaney in their 2004 book *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*. In their approach to ethnography and international political economy, Inayatullah and Blaney discuss the importance of the understanding and dialogue between self and other, both in terms of the field and in terms of disciplinarity. By using the example of the work of Karl Polanyi, they claim that

> [his] capacity to position himself in the overlap of political economy and economic anthropology is precisely what gives his work its uniquely critical power – its ethnological character, in the terms we have used here. This complicated legacy brought by the productivity of this intersection of fields is what we wish to retrieve for a critical IPE (Inayatullah and Blaney 2004, 183).

If these arguments are extrapolated, it is reasonable to move towards a consideration of extra-disciplinary tools when trying to integrate fieldwork into the study of IR. While Vrasti's point is well taken, that it is not enough to merely co-opt the style of a sister discipline and claim to have revolutionized political methodology. Inayatullah and Blaney make a convincing case for the strength of work that manages to balance itself between multiple disciplines, drawing on more than one theoretical and methodological tradition. For this reason I believe that ethnography or, at the very least, ethnographic techniques have a place in qualitative political methodology. I do not believe, however, that work should blindly lay claim to qualitative territory without a clear understanding of what that territory encompasses. For this reason a brief discussion of anthropological ethnography seems appropriate, followed by an examination of political ethnographic writing.

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[55] Despite the fact that I agree with Vrasti in her claim that there has been a tendency to co-opt, rather than adopt, methods from other disciplines, and that I share her opinion that a thorough ethnography of the discipline of IR would go a long way towards truly revolutionizing the field, such work is outside the scope of this thesis. I have attempted, through a discussion of various theoretical frameworks, to show the ways in which traditional approaches fail those same actors to whom critical scholars seek to give a voice. By pairing this discussion with an examination of the political impact of theatre, I have sought to show the importance, often overlooked, of artistic endeavour to the political spectrum. Therefore, although a full ethnography of the academic discipline of IR is beyond the scope of this project, I hope my work adds to the indications that such a project is necessary.

"Thick Description": Anthropological Ethnography

As ethnography has long been a tool of social anthropology, it is fitting to begin any discussion of it as a method with the work of anthropologists. Literally, ethnography is the description of a people through writing. But what does it mean, anthropologically speaking, to "do" ethnography? In his 1973 book on an interpretive theory of culture Clifford Geertz wrote:

> if you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should look at what the practitioners of it do. In anthropology, or anyway social anthropology, what the practitioners do is ethnography. And it is in understanding what ethnography is, or more exactly what doing ethnography is, that a start can be made toward grasping what anthropological analysis amounts to as a form of knowledge. This, it must immediately be said, is not a matter of methods. From one point of view, that of the textbook, doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, "thick description." (Geertz 1973, 4-5)

This idea of "thick description" appears and reappears in anthropological and ethnographic texts. But what Geertz points out in this passage is that to use the words, even to apply the methods, is not enough. "Doing ethnography," according to Geertz, involves a particular kind of intellectual commitment, a commitment to an in-depth, careful process of describing the layers of a people, their environment, their society and their day-to-day lives. Strathern writes that it is the process of immersion that is key to successful ethnography, because the immersion in the field site followed by the return to academia, results in a tension that creates a "second field", different from and tangential to both the fieldwork site and the academic office in which the "writing-up" occurs. It is this tension, this stepping outside of both the "home world" and the "field site" that allows the field worker to "manage and thus inhabit both fields at the same time: to recall the theoretical conditions under which the work was proposed, and thus the reason for being there, while yielding to the flow of events and ideas which present themselves" (Strathern 1999, 2).

The process of doing this can be fraught. It involves the researcher placing him- or herself in the liminality between two worlds (Strathern 1999, Bowman 2007 & 2008), maintaining his or her own identity while opening themselves to the experiences and perspectives of the people with whom they are living and about whom they are writing. This can, at times, lead to a strange feeling of in-between-ness and responsibility. As Glenn Bowman explained in a talk he gave shortly after 11 September 2001: "I am half American, half British and half Palestinian – and I know that doesn't add up" (Bowman 2001b, fn. 14). What Bowman means by this is that

through training and experience he "lacks a unitary subjectivity and was thus able to speak […] 'with many voices'" (Bowman 2001b, 18). This ability to see things from multiple perspectives is a valuable tool, but also a heavy responsibility, and one not to be taken lightly. Edward Said urges academics involved in disciplines that involve representation to

> […] think the narratives through together within the context provided by the history of imperialism, a history whose underlying contest between white and nonwhite has emerged lyrically in the new and more inclusive counternarrative of liberation. […] Once again representation becomes significant, not just as an academic or theoretical quandary but as a political choice. […] The point is that anthropological representations bear as much on the represener's world as on who or what is represented. (Said 1989, 224)

We, as researchers, can never exist completely outside of the story of history. Both we and our research subjects appear as characters in an ongoing drama, and we cannot escape "the story thus far". This is an important point to bear in mind while addressing matters of method. Who "I" am within an interview situation is important, as is both who my interview subjects are in themselves *and* who we are in relation to each other. The ability to "speak with many voices" is a privilege, but one that must be handled with great care. The ethics surrounding responsibility to the field are complex, and can often lead to the researcher's participation in an extensive web of obligation and responsibility to their field site and field contacts (Taylor 1987, James, Hockey & Dawson 1997, Vanderstaay 2005[56], Bowman 2008). This is different from other forms of qualitative research, which do not usually lead to such a long-term and significant emotional bond. To truly write ethnography is to engage in a long-term relationship of give-and-take (Geertz 1973, Strathern 1999).

From an anthropological standpoint, good ethnography requires a significant commitment of time, energy and intellectual and emotional honesty. The process of developing the "many voices" of an ethnographer involves

> an extended period of intensive participant observation research amongst the people or peoples one studies. Such work, which usually entails learning a local language and living amongst (and in the same conditions as) your subject population, is intended to ensure that the anthropologist becomes aware of not only the quotidian habits and assumptions of the people he or she works with but as well as of the central concerns and conditions of their life. (Bowman 2007, 33)

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[56] Vanderstaay (2005) discusses the importance of reflexivity in ethnographic fieldwork, the importance of knowing the parameters of one's own ability and involvement. During the course of his fieldwork he became involved with a subject's life and family to the point that he felt he had some sort of responsibility for the drug deals and murders in which his interview subject engaged. Although an emotional bond is important and necessary, he stresses that the researcher must remember s/he is not a social worker, and is not responsible for solving or improving the subject's life.

Furthermore, adherents to this particular school of anthropology, popularized by Malinowski, believe that non-ethnographic approaches to social science research yield highly suspect results[57]. Any form of directive questioning, this reasoning goes, allows for the chance of predetermined findings because survey respondents are likely to provide the answer they think the researcher wants to hear (Bowman 2007). By living with and within the society that is being studied, an ethnographer not only learns from the inside out, but also learns what questions to ask, and how to ask them. While the process of writing ethnography may well appear to be merely descriptive,

> [a]nthropological knowledge builds both on ethnographic awareness of the particularities of the specific cultures studied and a learned ability to see those particularities in terms of structures, functions, and relations which are analogous to, or variations on, those operating in the other cultures of the world. (Bowman 2007, 34)

It is this gift of perspective that anthropology and ethnography can bring to political research. While not claiming to be predictive in the way often demanded by positivist approaches, the ability to see patterns, to examine a political situation from multiple perspectives, offers the chance to "see" politics differently. To quote Bowman quoting Nietzsche:

> There is only a perspectival seeing, only a perspectival "knowing"; and the more affects we allow to speak about one thing, the more eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will be our "concept" of this thing, our "objectivity." (Nietzsche 1994 [1887], 92 in Bowman 2007, 38)

In this form of "thick description", the more perspectives brought to bear on a topic, the more *emotions*, the more comprehensive our picture of the situation. The implication for politics is a method of capturing the emotional life of a political scenario, thus adding to the richness of the landscape under study. The addition of proper, complete ethnography, along with other qualitative methods, provides a space in which other forms of political data may be contextualized. Without this context, however, the picture is incomplete and any understanding of the situation severely limited (Said, 1989, Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, Joseph et. al. 2007). It is for these reasons that there has been a move towards ethnographic writing in the field of politics.

Contacting the Political Process: Political Ethnography

There is a significant body of literature that discusses and reinforces the importance of ethnography in political research[58]. Charles Tilly, in his "Afterword" to the 2006

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[57] Most notably surveys and questionnaires
[58] Among this literature the following works are especially worthy of note: Clifford, J. and G. E. Marcus, Eds. (1986) *Writing Culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*; Greenhouse, C.J., E.

Special Issue of *Qualitative Sociology*, defends this importance by highlighting the fact that politics consists, not of large structures and preordained roles, but of "dynamic, contingent interaction among persons, households, and small groups" (Tilly 2006, 410). Thus, he argues,

> political ethnography provides privileged access to its processes, causes, and effects. It makes little difference in this regard whether we take politics in the extremely broad sense of all interactions involving the exercise of power or in the narrower, more manageable sense I prefer: interactions in which at least one government participates as actor, object, and/or influential third party. In either the broad or the narrow sense, political ethnography brings field workers into direct contact with political processes instead of filtering that knowledge through other people's testimony, written records, and artifacts of political interaction (Tilly 2006, 410).

In Tilly's definition, the practice of "political ethnography" exists on a continuum with varying degrees of intrusiveness into the society being studied. The practices that he outlines are: "in-depth interviews, conversation, participant observation, passive observation of interaction, covert observation of interaction, and inobtrusive observation concerning residues and consequences of interaction" (Tilly 2006, 410). This list covers a wide range of practices some of which would not, on their own, meet the anthropological standards for ethnographic research discussed previously. The question then becomes, if the methods have moved away from anthropological practice, can the outcome still claim to be ethnography? It is my opinion that this question returns us to the questions posed by Vrasti's article, and to a reiteration of my position that this question requires far more attention than can be devoted to it here. Nonetheless, I think that there is enough agreement in at least a segment of the field about the importance of anthropological and ethnographic techniques to a political context to warrant an acceptance of the method[59].

Bayard de Volo and Schatz, in their 2004 article on ethnographic methods in political research, produce a compelling argument in favor of qualitative methodology, particularly ethnography. With a specific interest in the sub-field of identity politics, the authors cite the importance of insider perspectives to understanding more fully what group membership and identity formation entails. It is not, they point out,

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Mertz & K.B. Warren (2002) *Ethnography in Unstable Places: everyday lives in contexts of dramatic political change*; Bayard de Volo, L. and E. Schatz (2004) "From the Inside Out: Ethnographic Methods in Political Research" *Political Science and Politics* 37(2):267-271; Joseph, L., M. Mahler and J. Auyero, Eds. (2007) *New Perspectives in Political Ethnography*; Baiocchi, G. and B. Connor (2008) "The Ethnos in the Polis: Political Ethnography as a Mode of Inquiry". *Sociology Compass* 2(1): 139-155; Brigg, M. and R. Bleiker (2008). "Expanding Ethnographic Insights into Global Politics" *International Political Sociology* 2(1): 89-90.

[59] This may end in being a semantic debate, namely whether the use of the same term (in this case ethnograpy) by two sister disciplines to describe slightly different methods is acceptable and not overly confusing.

merely a case of demographics, but also a case of understanding the wider *perceptions* of identity and group affiliation. These insider perspectives, they argue, are most effectively obtained through ethnographic means (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 268). In addition to the benefit to the academic work, Bayard de Volo and Schatz see ethnography as offering a tie to the practical for students of politics throughout their careers. For a graduate student, ethnography offers a chance for "close encounters with people involved in political life", an opportunity which leads to an understanding of political ideas on a far more personal level. "The consequences of good or bad governance", they argue,

> become concretely connected to real-life beneficiaries or victims of state policies. The moral issues at stake in studies of poverty, inequity, or political repression become palpable. (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 270)

With this practical experience leading to a more human understanding of the way politics and policy effect real people, students of politics will be able to create a more applicable discipline, one which reflects the human experiences of its theories. Bayard de Volo and Schatz hope that this will lead to an increase in cross-disciplinary research with other social scientists. Their interest in and support for ethnographic methods does not mean that they feel other modes of inquiry are obsolete, merely that "the method must be appropriate for the question being asked" (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 271), and when appropriate ethnography has much to offer the discipline of politics. Through its judicious use, they argue, "our conceptual and empirical grasp of political life only stands to improve" (Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004, 271).

In a similar vein, the edited volume *New Perspectives in Political Ethnography* expands on the opportunities ethnography affords the discipline of politics. It provides an expanded version of the articles published in the 2006 special edition of *Qualitative Sociology* devoted to political ethnography, and for which Charles Tilly provided the afterword. The editors of this volume put forth the opinion that, given the revival of ethnographic research in sociology it is high time that more ethnographic attention was paid to the sub-discipline of political sociology. The editors take their working definition of ethnography as:

> Social research based on the close-up, on-the-ground observation of people and institutions in real time and space, in which the investigator embeds herself near (or within) the phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do (Wacquant in Joseph et. al. 2007, 2)

and express amazement that ethnography, which seems to them a methodology "ideally suited to explain why political actors behave the way they do and to identify the causes, processes, and outcomes that are part and parcel of political life" (Auyero and Joseph 2007, 2) has been avoided by the majority of political researchers in favour

of more "rigorous" or "scientific" methods such as surveys, statistical analysis, secondary data and formal modelling. What has been lost, in this focus on the mathematical, is "the pace of political action, the texture of political life, the plight of political actors", which have all been overshadowed by the overreliance on quantitative methods by both political sociology and political science. With this loss in mind, the editors set out to compile a volume whose focus on the close observation of the ground-level impact of and impetus for large scale political transformations would highlight the lack and show the disciplines the potential of ethnographic research. The editors are clear that they do not propose that ethnography offers the only method for studying politics, but they remain convinced that as a methodology it provides what Clifford Geertz terms the "thickest" form of political information (Joseph et. al 2007, 3). One of the areas in which Joseph and her collaborators deem ethnography to be the most useful is the one they term "Official Rhetoric in Everyday Life". In describing this category, the editors cite a 2006 study of ethnicity in a Transylvanian town conducted by a team led by Rogers Brubaker which used ethnographic methods to scrutinize "the everyday contexts in which ethnic and national categories take on meaning and the processes through which ethnicity actually "works" in everyday life" (Brubaker in Joseph et. al. 2007, 5). Brubaker's argument is that the study of the everyday experience, which ethnography provides, is imperative in understanding how ethnicity "works" in a given environment. Taking this as a starting point, the editors of *New Perspectives in Political Ethnography* postulate that this understanding of the "everyday" is equally vital to understanding the construction of political habits, the decision-making process of political activists, and the (dis) connection of social movements from everyday life (Joseph et. al. 2007, 6; Mahler 2006, 282).

Much of the work on political ethnography discusses its potential or contested contribution to the field. On a purely practical note, Elizabeth Wood's 2006 article on the ethical and emotional challenges encountered in fieldwork offered the most helpful advice of anything I read about work conducted in conflict zones. The article chronicles her experiences in El Salvador during the civil war there and in my opinion it should be required reading for anyone preparing to undertake fieldwork in an area plagued by violence or unrest. Her discussion of ways to maintain interview subject confidentiality, navigate the ethical concerns of disclosure and informed consent, and survive the emotional toll that such work takes on the researcher all offer much in the way of material to be considered prior to undertaking fieldwork (Wood 2006, 380-384). It was through reading this article that I questioned my own assumptions about confidentiality and began to construct my own ethical framework for interviews and fieldwork conduct, considerations that will be addressed later in this chapter.

The methods described here take place within the broader framework of Debrix and Weber's "mediative methodology", discussed earlier (Debrix and Weber 2003). Although I prefer to term my research ethnographic in nature, it is important to acknowledge that theatre is a "site of representation, transformation, and pluralisation where cultural and international rituals are performed" (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii) and as such, a site where mediation can take place. To quote Felicia Hughes-Freeland and Mary Crain, a ritual can become a "contested space for social action and identity politics— an arena for resistance, negotiation and affirmation." (Hughes-Freeland and Crain 1998, 2). Theatre can be, and often is, such a ritual, and thus the ethnography that takes place around it can be termed, by Debrix and Weber's definition, to be a form of ethnographic mediation.

Having decided on an ethnographic approach, I then set out to read some of the general ethnographic work written on the region in which I would be working. The problem I encountered almost immediately was that the Middle East in general, and Jerusalem in particular has, "too much history" (Bowman 2007). This leads to two different types of ethnographic treatment – the study of Biblical and post-Biblical Jerusalem and the political anthropology of contemporary Jerusalem. The latter often focuses on

> setting out political problems and proposing solutions to them, or at least suggesting means of accessing alternative futures to those dire futures conditions seem to predict. The products of such endeavours appear either as current event reports in more journalistic disciplinary outlets such as *Anthropology Today* or as contributions, often not publicly evident, to 'think tank' work around the issues. (Bowman 2007, 29)

The trouble that Bowman, and others[60], sees with this is the development of a cadre of "Middle East experts" whose focus, rather than the wider perspectives promised by ethnography, is on specific political problems. This approach can cause the wider ethnography of Jerusalem to be subsumed within the ghettoised field of "Middle Eastern Studies": the debate removed from the anthropological purview and placed somewhere between journalism and policy studies. This, again, caused me some concern. Although I could perhaps be forgiven for disregarding this fear, not being an anthropologist, I was nonetheless aware that to some extent I had experienced this "cadre" mentality myself. Throughout the course of my doctoral work I have fought hard, although often unsuccessfully, not to be labelled a "Middle East expert", preferring to see my interests in creative conflict resolution and political theatre as part of a wider perspective on the world. An awareness of the pitfalls often experienced by

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[60] Most notably Michael Gilsenan (1990) in *Very Like a Camel: the Appearance of the Anthropologist's Middle East*.

those who tend to write ethnographically about the Middle East was helpful to me when approaching my project.

Embodied Accounts: Feminist Methodology

Feminist scholars, across disciplines, have long advocated for embodied accounts of social and political life. Whether this be an accounting of everyday experiences in built environments (Degen, Rose & Basdas 2010), the practical experiences of people constructed as "other" (Haldrup, Koefoed & Simonsen 2006) or the experiences of bankers working in the City of London (McDowell 1998), this form of qualitative feminist methodology seeks to understand the impact of policies and environment on the people whose lives exist under and around them. Feminist methodology's relevance to this project lies in the value it places on the human embodiment of political and social activity.

In their 2010 article "Bodies and Everyday Practices in Designed Urban Environments", Monica Degen, Gillian Rose and Begum Basdas explore the ways in which everyday users experience the built environments of Milton Keynes and Bedford. In justification of their work they write:

> [i]n recent years, the centres of many towns and cities have been reshaped by urban design projects, but little attention has been paid to how these transformations are experienced everyday by users of the city. In other words: how do the users of urban centers, such as shoppers, cleaners, or workers, perceive these changes, as embodied subjects in specific material environments? (Degen, Rose & Basdas 2010, 60).

By focusing their work on the lived experiences of the users of these built environments, rather than on the environments themselves, or the policy and urban planning decisions that went into creating them, these scholars are highlighting the importance of the human in the practical application of urban design. By focusing on two urban sites that have been subject to intense design processes[61] the authors, using Latour's 2004 work on affect, "examine how certain aspects of the built environment in these two towns affects bodies in specific ways" (Degen, Rose & Basdas 2010, 60). While they acknowledge that the people in the towns, the "bodies" in question, seem either unaware or uncaring of the built environment's effect on them, with a methodology designed to draw out personal experiences and reactions the authors were able to access the practical, lived experiences of these built environments.

In their 2006 article in the *Geografiska Annaler*, Michael Haldrup, Lasse Koefoed and Kristen Simonsen explore the construction of Otherness in everyday life. Written

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[61] Milton Keynes was a purpose-built new town in the 1960s and Bedford's historic town had recently undergone intense redesign.

in response to the rising popular debate on the importance and value of multi-culturalism, "Practical Orientalism – Bodies, Everyday Life and the Construction of Otherness", focuses on "the ways in which cultural/national identities are constituted and renegotiated in everyday, banal bodily practices" (Haldrup, Koefoed & Simonsen 2006, 173). Beginning with a discussion of European political semiotics "in which former East/West boundaries are blurred and new ones constructed and renegotiated in many scales", the article argues that "the degree to which this process is going on in banal, bodily and sensuous practices" has been underestimated (Haldrup, Koefoed & Simonsen 2006, 173). While drawing on the ideas of "banal nationalism", Haldrup, Koefoed and Simonsen posit that it is, rather, a form of "practical orientalism", in which the process of "othering" develops through direct, in-person encounters during the process of everyday life. As with the Degen, Rose and Basdas article, the research focus of this piece does not have direct relevance to this project. It shares, however, an interest and belief in the importance of the human and the everyday in political and social life.

Gillian Rose's 1997 article "Situating knowledges: positionality, reflexivities and other tactics" functions as a meditation on the feminist methodological goal of reflexivity. Most broadly defined as a recognition of the researcher's partiality, Rose refers to a sort of reflexivity that "aims […] at a full understanding of the researcher, the researched, and the research context" (Rose 1997, 305). How this understanding is achieved and conveyed, and how that plays into the contextualization of the project, is the subject of a review in the second part of her article (Rose 1997, 306-311). Because of the vast array of definitions and approaches to reflexivity, as well as the questions raised in its pursuit, Rose concludes her review with the opinion that the "goddess-trick", her term for the feminist claim that, through reflexivity and positionality the researcher can claim to 'work from their situatedness to produce partial perspectives on the world. They see the world from specific locations, embodied and particular, and never innocent; siting is intimately involved in sighting" (Rose 1997, 308), is as much an illusion as the "god-trick", which claims "to see the whole world while remaining distanced from it" (Rose 1997, 308). The illusory nature of the methodological approach stems, at least in part, from the number of questions that can be raised on the search for context and understanding – questions that are often asked but not answered. Rose concludes that

> [w]hile this absence [of answers] is partly a consequence of [the] recognition of the particularity of any one research project's context, it might also be understood as a sign of the impossibility of such a quest to know fully both self and context. (Rose 1997, 311)

Despite the difficulties posed by reflexivity, Rose continues to strive towards what she calls "a critical politics of power/knowledge production" (Rose 1997, 318). Like other feminist geographers she "think[s] that power and knowledge are inextricably connected", and she "therefore worr[ies] that [her] work may exclude or erase", she worries "about its effects" (Rose 1997, 318). Despite these concerns, the power of her argument is that those seeking to work reflexively in their field should hold fast to those worries, and incorporate them into their work. She closes with the following injunction to her fellow researchers:

> We cannot know everything, nor can we survey power as if we can fully understand, control or redistribute it. What we may be able to do is something rather more modest but, perhaps, rather more radical: to inscribe into our research practices some absences and fallibilities while recognizing that the significance of this does not rest entirely in our own hands. (Rose 1997, 319)

Linda McDowell's article on methodological considerations when conducting interviews with elites in the City of London, offers some more concrete insights into the uses and substance of feminist methodological practices, and as such serves almost as a companion piece to the Gillian Rose article.

In "Elites in the City of London: some methodological considerations", McDowell writes about a series of interviews she conducted with seventy-five employees of three merchant banks in the City of London in 1992 and 1993. Unusually for research conducted at major financial institutions, McDowell's focus was on recruitment practices and the ensuing regular, small scale or individual interactions that create the culture of an organisation. Her research interests lay in the specifics of the individual lives and networks of employees of major banks in the years following deregulation (1986), and in a curiosity about the continuation of discrimination based on class and gender within the world of elite banking (McDowell 1998, 2133). The focus of this article, however, is not particularly the findings of the research she conducted. Rather, the article's focus lies in a discussion of the interview experiences themselves and in testing one of the hypotheses of feminist research methods: namely that there is a supposed empathy and commonality between women which creates certain conditions in an all-female interview scenario. Further, McDowell discusses the processes that go into the selection and representation of the qualitative data that she has collected. For the purposes of this project, it is her discussion of interview practices and the consideration of her role as a female interviewer that is particularly interesting.

When approaching an interview, McDowell had to decide what level of expertise she was going to display to her interview subjects. This often fluctuated depending on the interviewee, as she found that to display any "weakness", especially to some of her younger, male subjects created a power dynamic that was difficult to

overcome – although there were situations in which "playing dumb" worked to her advantage (McDowell 1998, 2138). At no time, however, did she pretend a level of expertise that she did not have, following her personal moral directive to treat others as she herself wished to be treated (McDowell 1998, 2137). The choice of interview location was also important, as that often dictated the sorts of topics that she might raise for discussion. As she writes:

> I had initially, and naively as I soon realised, hoped to do a "proper" ethnography, involving participant observation in different arenas of the banks. I hoped to be able to sit in the dealing rooms, and go on the trading floors as well as observe in the corporate boardrooms, but this proved impossible to negotiate and instead I had to rely on taped interviews. (McDowell 1998, 2139)

The choice of location was left to the interview subject, many of whom were most comfortable being interviewed out of view of their colleagues. For the most part this was to preserve their confidentiality because the focus of the interviews was to gain information about their personal lives as a way of uncovering and exploring forms of prejudice and discrimination in the workplace (McDowell 1998, 2139). With regard to the methodological hypothesis that an all-female interview scenario would foster a "sisterly" setting and an environment predisposed to sharing intimacies, McDowell found that in this setting it did not prove to be the case. She found it more expedient to adapt her interview styles based on personality rather than gender (McDowell 1998, 2138). This is not to say that the gender of the researcher did not play into the interviews – she found that younger men were surprisingly willing to be open with her both about their personal lives and about gender relations in the workplace. Despite the fact that they often recounted blatantly sexist events during the course of their interviews they were not overtly sexist in conversation with her.

Finally, in a section titled Variable Truths, McDowell defends what might be seen as the main drawback to her method of research – the idea that it is open to one-sided interpretation. She chose the title

> with deliberation to make quite clear that what is obtained from this sort of work – whether ethnographic or interview based – is but a single narrative or story told at a particular time to a particular audience. This does not mean, however, that it is neither valid nor reliable. By careful questioning, by returning to issues, by approaching important points in different ways, and by placing one person's version or narrative against another person's […] it is possible to build up a consistent picture […]. I am a determined advocate of the necessity of a comparative research strategy. (McDowell 1998, 2141)

In this way McDowell turns the variable natures of interviews and human perception into an asset – through their multiplicity they provide for a more complete picture of a field site.

Methodological Reflections

Despite the reservations developed through my reading of Vrasti, and my awareness that I was undertaking fieldwork in a region notorious for its resistance to ethnographic rendering, I nevertheless feel that the methods most useful in conducting my research are ethnographic in nature. I did not conduct what McDowell would call "proper" ethnography (McDowell 1998, 2139) because I did not spend months or years in the same community, developing extensive communal networks and embedding myself in all aspects of life in the society. Because my interest in comparative research entailed visits to and interviews with a number of theatre professionals and groups in different geographic locales, I was not able to become completely embedded in any one community in a way which would justify a true ethnographic claim. Nonetheless, my fieldwork went beyond "mere" interviews on account of my long-standing familiarity with the region and my comfort with language and various societal norms. Further observations about the society, region and political life of the field site made up the bulk of the field journal I kept while conducting my research. These notes have informed the writing of this and the empirical chapters in a way not covered by the interview transcripts.

There were feminist elements to my approach, particularly in my focus on the lived experiences of my subjects and the ways in which they embodied the aspects of the political with which my investigations were concerned. There were also the explorations of what Debrix and Weber would term a "mediative site" – that of the theatrical. Since Debrix and Weber recommend the use of tools employed by "cultural analysts" to further their mediative methodology (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii), this returns us to the idea of ethnography. Attempting to fully align my methodological choices with any of the techniques here discussed has the potential to lead to endless circular reasoning. For this reason, I term my methodological approach to be "feminist mediation using ethnographic tools".

During my fieldwork I met with actors, teachers and other theatre professionals in Israel and Palestine (the West Bank). The argument that I hoped my field research would support was that academic politics, if not the political machine itself, would benefit from recognising the political nature of art, and the artists who are often quite clear about the political nature of their motivations. There is certainly a historical precedent for this view[62], and preceding chapters have addressed the theoretical basis for including the arts, particularly theatre, when considering ways to effect social and political change. Before moving on to an analysis of my fieldwork, however, I will

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[62] For more on the historical context please see Appendix B.

dedicate the rest of this chapter to a discussion of assessments of risk and other environmental issues, the specific design of the fieldwork, and a review of the responsibilities incurred by the field researcher.

INTERPRETATIONS OF RISK

The choice of Israel and Palestine as a field site brought some interesting preconceptions to the fore. Although I am aware that Israel and Palestine spend more time than average in the news, often because of violence, it is a place in which I have lived and travelled frequently and at length, and to which I would not hesitate to return. During the preparation for my fieldwork I was required to complete a risk assessment exercise, and this process opened my eyes to the ingrained nature of threat perception. The Risk Assessment Officer, whose prior experience had been predominantly limited to teams undertaking physical geography field trips, was at a loss. Rather than discuss with me, or other departmental academics with experience living or working in the Middle East or similar regions, what would go into a realistic assessment of the risk involved in such work, his fall-back approach was to direct me to the travel advisory website of the United Kingdom. These websites flatly advised against the travel for reasons of "security". It did not matter that, as I and my supervisors repeatedly pointed out, the travel advisory websites in question also advised against travel to the United States, Australia and Canada because of the same concern: "risk of terrorism". Nor did it matter that the *perceived* danger of the place was one of the things that made it especially imperative that I conduct first-hand research there. Despite the fact that I wrote increasingly detailed assessments of the actual risks I might face, assessments drawn on having lived and travelled in the region for much of my life, it took three versions of the paperwork and an ultimate, eleventh-hour, appeal to the Head of School before I was cleared for my trip. This experience with differing perceptions and assessments of risk was eye-opening, and occasioned much personal mediation on the ways in which security may be understood. A further anecdote may go some way to broadening our understanding of the perception of risk.

During the final stage of writing this Ph.D., a friend of mine visited Afghanistan. I was quite envious of this trip, because I have a longstanding interest in Central Asia, and have been fascinated by all aspects of Afghanistan since childhood. One of the things that struck me most about this adventure was the reactions of the people I told about it. With only one exception, people reacted with astonishment and horror, usually the word "crazy" was used to describe either the person or the venture, and most people assumed that he was either stupid, foolhardy, or an ill-informed

adrenaline junkie – when, in fact, none of these descriptions could be further from the truth. When I expressed envy that I was not travelling with him, this was jokingly interpreted as commentary on how miserable my life must be as a Ph.D. student engaged in writing up. This, on a different scale, was just a repeat of the conversations I had had while attempting to satisfy the risk assessment officer. It was clear that Afghanistan had been given a blanket coding as "dangerous", a coding which, upon examination, does no one any good and sheds no light on the realities of the situation.

I maintained regular email contact with my friend during his trip and in one message, between a description of Afghani *qorma* (delicious) and a discussion of the intricacies of navigating local gender relations (complex), he wrote the following:

> I think people are very keen to speak to foreigners because although there are stacks of them in Afghanistan, there is almost zero possibility for most Afghans to interact with them ([they] travel in their secure car[s], stay in their secure and gated accommodation, eat in their secure and expensive restaurants, etc. etc.). So it is a bit of a novelty (and opportunity) to find a foreigner walking openly in the streets, eating in the *chaikhanas*, buying fruit in the market, etc. And in many cases it's not just to practice English, but people are genuinely interested in asking about why I'm here etc etc. I make instant friends when I answer [the question] "but aren't you afraid of the Taliban" with "I don't want to let the Taliban win by letting them control what I do with fear". Of course that is a rather untrue statement, since I'd love to go to Kandahar, Bamiyan, and other places, but won't because of the risk. It's just the risk of walking round Kabul and most other cities is rather small compared to travelling to some other places (*Email correspondence to author from J.P., 3 July 2009. Used with permission*).

This passage struck me with particular force. First there was the image of the "stacks" of foreigners, in their hermetically sealed and "secure" lives, presumably "advising" on or "aiding" in aspects of Afghan life, education, development and policy without actually meeting Afghanis in anything other than the most controlled of circumstances. I wondered how many of them were able to speak even a few words of Dari, Pashto, or other local languages and would therefore be able to communicate with the vast majority of the population. The unfeasibility and, indeed, the arrogance of presuming to advise on a situation you were too afraid to experience made me wonder what chance policies designed in such an environment had of working.

In a similar vein, when I was in Jerusalem on my fieldwork I stayed in a Muslim hostel in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City – a choice, I was told in no uncertain terms by one man I met, that would get me killed. When I asked for an explanation of this reasoning I was given a long and rambling speech about terrorism and how "they" hate "us" – a sentiment I had not seen reflected either in the hostel or on the streets around it. My response, like my friend's in Kabul, was that I do not let tales of fear dictate where I will go: I prefer to judge risk for myself. To say that fear was absent from the decision would be untrue: in both cases fear played a part in the

ultimate decision (I chose not to travel to Gaza, my friend bypassed Kandahar). What both these cases show is the difference between a prevailing tale of fear and an actual careful assessment of the risk at a given time. I feel, both with regards to my research and to the larger issue of geopolitical perceptions, that it is important to be willing to reassess the idea of risk, or at least be flexible in its application. If academics, journalists, medical personnel and other people whose interest or business take them to places commonly believed to be dangerous, are able to put a human face on the people who live there then we will all be richer for it. It is with this idea of recognising the humanity in politics that this research is concerned.

No doubt the argument can be made that this was only the experience of a few people and that he and I were extremely lucky. In a way, however, that attitude almost proves my point. It is the individual experience that interests me, not because the exception proves the rule but because a different reality is often found in the individual, rather than the general. Furthermore, there is a kind of power associated with this kind of challenge to the expected, and this form of power is very relevant to my research.

The dominant interpretation of power, which has moulded the world and shaped the field that we call International Relations for at least the past 60 years, holds that power is military (Ashley & Walker 1990b, Buzan 1991, Baldwin 1993, Booth 1998). A nation is considered powerful if it can defend its borders from attack, and if it is perceived to be able to attack others and prevail. As valuable as military might, and depending on it as an incentive, is the sphere that a powerful nation can influence, through culture, trade, or ideology. This form of power, however, is not a form of much interest here. This project is more concerned with the power of those not usually considered to have a political voice. The sort of power, in fact, that is inherent in the decision to assess risk for oneself, rather than through official channels – or to envision social change upon a stage.

FACTS ON THE GROUND

There are certain aspects of fieldwork that, although not strictly related to methodological measures, are deserving of discussion. Difficulties encountered or observations made by the researcher have an impact on the analysis, and to view the data collected without taking the surrounding experience into consideration would be a grave error. No fieldwork takes place in a vacuum, and it would be a mistake to treat it as if it did. These aspects may differ based on the individual and the location, but in my case they fit broadly into the categories of identity, security and environment.

Although identity is mentioned in the initial discussion of terminology, the identity I refer to here is both the more broad expression of group allegiance prevalent throughout society, and the specific relevance that my own identity had on the project. Security is a word much in use these days, and a concept that gets much play both in the academy and in the media. Although I was required, for matters of insurance, to be aware of the term in its more common usage, the section I devote to it here is more concerned with my person physical safety, although even then it is difficult to get away from the more common political usage of the term. Finally, environment may seem like an odd concept to which to devote much time in a chapter on methods. As I explain in the relevant section, however, the atmosphere and surroundings in which this research took place, to say nothing of the differences between Israeli and Palestinian sites, provide a background necessary to understand fully the content and impact of the interviews discussed in the empirical chapters.

Identity

Identity is an important social component in most places, whether that importance is recognised formally or not, and the way identity is coded in Israel and Palestine is extremely complex. The division is not just Israeli/Palestinian or Jew/Muslim/Christian, but multiple permutations and divisions within and between those basic groups. In addition, the lingering effects of colonialism are still significant components of life in the region. To fully explore the multiplicity of identities in the region could be the subject of another doctoral study in itself, so let us simply acknowledge that the concept of identity is regionally both important and complicated. As a result of this importance, the question "who are you?" is asked frequently, even in the most informal and casual of circumstances. This question of identity, the perceptions which accompany it, and its fluidity as well as, in some instances, its intractability, is to be found at the very heart of my fieldwork, and of this project as a whole. Who we think we are matters, as does who we think others are and, in turn, who they think we are. Because of this, *my* identity became an important part of my fieldwork experience.

This focus on the importance of researcher identity should not diminish the importance or the relevance of the research. Much as we must move beyond the positivist and normative theoretical approach, as described earlier in this thesis, so must we be prepared to acknowledge that the personal aspect to analysis does not detract from the underlying validity of perspective. Although another researcher may have a different personal experience in the same field location – whether based on identity, personality or happenstance – the premise on which the research is based

remains the same. Different interpretations of the meaning of or the motivation behind the interview subjects' words are, no doubt, possible. What would be hard to dispute, however, is that they themselves believe that their work is both politically driven and politically relevant.

Identity is often perceived as fluid, which usually means that a person's identity might change over time as their primary group of identification changes. It can also mean, however, that although the way a person sees themselves may stay the same, how they are perceived by others may change or differ. For example, I am Jewish, carry an American passport and speak Hebrew with a near-native accent. When asked, as happens often in Israel, I am able to answer that my father was *m'Eretz*: a response that usually means I am accepted as "safe", or a friend, by Jewish Israelis[63]. My passport bears multiple entrance and exit stamps for Israel, as well as an extended visa indicating that I have previously lived in the country – a stamp that indicates, through a complex set of identifiers, that I am Jewish. This is an identity with which I am comfortable, and one that I would not deny, but among members of certain ultra-Orthodox sects it is an identity that is questionable at best and fallacious at worst[64]. This difference of interpretation, while it can seem mild and even humorous from a distance, can actually set the stage for deeply difficult and painful, as well as ethically challenging, experiences in the field. It allows my work and political opinions to be disregarded, often with no serious consideration, based solely on who I am *not*, and can lead to a strange and discordant tone in conversations. Interestingly, my (apparently debateable) Jewish identity has never caused me trouble among Arabs, whether Muslim or Christian – nor has the fact that I am an American woman. In my experience, the important thing in those situations was my personal behaviour, that I dressed appropriately and that I was willing to respect the rules of hospitality. My fieldwork was fuelled by countless cups of Arabic coffee and a lot of second hand cigarette smoke. Had I refused the one and complained of the other I have no doubt that I would have had a much more difficult time building rapport and eliciting confidences.

There were a variety of personal factors that needed to be taken into consideration during fieldwork. Language was a major one. I speak Hebrew and don't speak Arabic, although I understand quite a bit. Ideally I would have worked

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[63] M'Eretz literally means "from the Land", a statement that is widely interpreted as meaning that my father was Israeli. In point of fact, my father grew up under the British Mandate and left before 1948 – a political statement in its own right. Saying that he was m'Eretz is accurate, whereas saying that he was Israeli is not.

[64] Orthodox definitions of Jewishness are strictly based on factors of parentage and bloodline, factors which I do not satisfy.

with an interpreter and conducted all interviews in the interview subject's native language. With financial constraints preventing that solution, I conducted all the interviews in English if the person was comfortable in that language, with occasional forays into French, Hebrew or Arabic if they were necessary for clarifying a specific concept or point. My rationale was that this would at least offer a nod in the direction of equalizing a noticeable power differential between the interview subjects, while allowing me to cover as broad a range of topics as possible in my questions.   Prior to my fieldwork I was aware that issues of gender might arise, both in interview settings and more widely as I travelled around the region. I had a variety of clothes with me that I hoped would ameliorate most situations, but as it turned out my gender was never a problem[65]. There was one instance, in the town of Tulkarem, where a local woman saw me from the back (with my hair uncovered) and remonstrated loudly with my (male) interview subject – only to retract her disapproval when I turned around and she realized I wasn't local. In all of my fieldwork this was the only time that my gender was an issue of discussion or comment.

Security

General safety was also something that I had to consider before setting out. As I mentioned earlier, I had to complete a risk assessment exercise that was an experience in both irritation and stereotype. The main concern voiced by the assessor was the issue of "terrorism" and the importance of relying on Foreign Office advisories and travel warnings. In the course of completing the process I had the opportunity to familiarise myself with several governmental websites, many of which issued a blanket warning of terrorist activity, not just for Israel, but also for the United States, Canada and Australia. Were these warnings to be followed to the letter, and travel to, and research in, these "risky" and "dangerous" countries avoided, then much of the academic work done in the geographic regions most closely concerned with post-September 11th politics would be based on hearsay, anecdote and mainstream news broadcast. Not only would political research suffer, but professionals working in the areas of health care, education and housing/infrastructure construction, to name only a few, would be unable to conduct their work effectively.

As a way to put risk in perspective, despite travelling to "dangerous" areas, the time I found myself in the most physical danger, and was actually the most frightened, was on the final Friday of Ramadan in the plaza outside the Damascus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem. At this time I was not in danger because I was Jewish, female or

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[65] In conservative neighbourhoods I generally wore long skirts and long-sleeved blouses, and carried a wrap that could double as a headscarf.

American, nor because I was in a Muslim part of the City. I was in danger because I was a small person going the "wrong" way (into, rather than out of, the Gate) in a large crowd of people in a confined space. Being immobilized in a large crowd, occasionally swept off my feet, was far more immediately terrifying and dangerous than any hypothetical violent attack, and it gave me new perspective on many aspects of the life of crowds. Despite this incident, the issue of my physical safety was one of the least pertinent during my time in the field. Almost without exception people were courteous, friendly and directly helpful, eager to give directions or chat with me while waiting at checkpoints.

Environment

In both Israel and Palestine, the impact of the political situation is impossible to ignore. The ways in which that impact is felt are markedly different, and it is often tempting to dismiss one as being less significant, or less harmful, than the other. It is not the purpose of this research to rank the physical or psychological effects that living in these circumstances has had on one or the other group. I am not convinced that there is much to be gained by either claiming or seeking to prove that the sufferings of one group of people outweigh the sufferings of another, and regardless of the validity of the exercise it is not something that has a place in this thesis. Through this brief discussion I merely hope to show the reader the complexity of the environment in which the research took place.

It is neither my aim nor my intention to single out the region of Israel/Palestine as either more dangerous or more complex than other areas in conflict. By virtue of the place it holds in the imagination of three major world religions Jerusalem is unique – but so are all cities and, indeed, all field environments. It is this uniqueness that makes the individuality of experience so important to the researcher and the discipline. This description of the fieldwork environment is intended to give a feel of the place *as experienced by the researcher*, not to offer an objective (for I do not believe such a thing is possible) description of the scene.

The physical and psychological environment in Israel is of such complexity that it cannot be disregarded. While many places have their own particular "feel", the atmosphere of Israel in general, and Jerusalem in particular, is such that a few words should be devoted to it in order that the fieldwork be viewed in the appropriate emotional setting. For such a geographically tiny country, Israel contains many extremes: beach and desert, plains and mountains. In addition to the geographic diversity, the population is divided along religious, ethnic and economic lines. The differences between the Old and New cities of Jerusalem, to say nothing of the

differences between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, are staggering. To go from the religious conservatism in Jerusalem's Old City to the casual beach culture of Tel Aviv is a lesson in contrasts and culture shock. Amos Oz, in his book *In the Land of Israel*, describes the ultra-orthodox Geulah quarter of Jerusalem thus:

> Yiddish is the language of the street. […] Were it not for the stone, and the olive trees and the pines, were it not for that particular quality of light in Jerusalem, you might think you are standing in some Eastern European Jewish *shtetl* before Hitler. Eastern European with perhaps a tinge of America, and a slight, remote echo from neighbouring Israel. (Oz 1983, 4-5)

In contrast, secular neighbourhoods in Jerusalem have no such echoes of the past, and 60 miles away Tel Aviv has both a thriving business centre and an extensive stretch of beach on which people stroll in shorts and swimsuits. This contrast of environments so closely packed together may seem unrelated to the research at hand, but an awareness that such disparate communities co-exist in such a tiny area is essential when considering the importance and effectiveness of non-traditional political actions.

In Palestine, too, these contradictions exist side by side: Muslim and Christian, devout and secular; all searching for a way to survive the Occupation. In both places a feeling of desperation wars with the desire for hope[66]. People are tired of the conflict. They just want to live their lives, go to work and raise their families. Children struggle to go to school and adults struggle to complete their education or to get to work. Movement is restricted, not just across the border into Israel, where most of the jobs are, but also around the West Bank where a series of "settler-only" roads and checkpoints can make travelling relatively short distances a frustrating and time-consuming experience. Some areas – Hebron, Jenin – are more socially and religiously conservative than places like Ramallah or Be'it Jalah. Suggesting a way in which such disparate communities can communicate is one of the goals of this research.

I spent most of my time in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, taking brief trips to other places as required by my interview schedule. In Tel Aviv I stayed in a Jewish hostel in the Arab neighbourhood of Old Jaffa, and in Jerusalem I stayed in a Muslim hostel in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City. My visit coincided with major religious holidays for both Jews and Muslims, with the result that the religious sub-current was even more evident than usual. One of the most immediately noticeable things about Israel is that religion is a common topic. It is not unusual for complete strangers to ask you

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[66] The following observations are drawn from transcripts of conversations I had during the fieldwork, but not official interviews. It goes without saying that I did not seek out the militant representatives of any faction, so these views are not representative of the opinions of residents of the illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank, members of any militant and/or separatist political party, or people who either believe in a Greater Biblical Israel or the importance of "pushing the Jews into the sea".

your religion early on in a conversation. Religion, belief, connection with the land, and family background are both openly discussed and carefully defined. For whatever reason – and it is difficult to tell whether it is real or imagined – there is a mystical element to the area. I have been coming to the region my whole life, and on each trip I find myself having conversations with people that I doubt I could have anywhere else. Whatever their religion, this place invites confidences and soul-baring from relative strangers, and creates an environment where metaphysical conversations are often charged with an almost euphoric emotional high. Jerusalem, in particular, draws seekers like a lodestone, collecting people who are searching for meaning, truth, acceptance, or community. The secular return to the fold, the atheist finds God – the city vibrates with the zeal of the convert and against this charged backdrop "the situation" plays itself out in a relentless cycle of miscommunication, humiliation, pain and revenge.

It is difficult to keep a clear head. I am as susceptible to the "magic" of Jerusalem as the tourists, volunteers and pilgrims that I meet, although my main fascination is for the polyglot babble in the markets of the Old City, the smell of the air from the Judean Hills, and what Amos Oz calls "that particular quality" of Jerusalem light as it warms the stones in the city walls. I am less drawn to the religious aspects of the place, although on a vulnerable day that also has an effect on me. Most often, though, I am left wondering how, surrounded by such beauty and claiming to feel the presence of God, so many people choose to turn inwards rather than looking at the world in which they live. With each group unable to accept that recognising the pain and historical claims of others does not have to diminish their own, the history of the region is saturated with blood.

DESIGN OF FIELDWORK

The fieldwork component of this project was spread over three separate visits to the region, during each of which I kept a journal in which I noted observations and anecdotes about the region and my experiences. The first trip, immediately prior to the official start of my doctoral work, lasted from February until August 2004 and served as an immersion in Jewish Israeli language and culture. The first half of that time I lived in the Galilee in northern Israel and the second half I lived near Beersheva, in the Negev desert. In addition to honing my linguistic skills, this time allowed me to develop friendships and professional networks throughout the country. During this trip I stayed entirely within the Green Line and focused on developing connections with Jewish Israelis and PCIs. This prolonged field visit would best be characterised as time spent getting acquainted with the overall environment of the field site. The

second field visit was two weeks in April 2007 during which I stayed in East Jerusalem, and renewed and expanded personal contacts in the West Bank. This visit served to reacquaint me with the people and environments I had been immersed in two years before and helped me to reaffirm for myself the relevance of the work in which I was engaged. Neither of these trips should be mistaken for tourist visits. Despite the fact that I did not conduct organised interviews at those times, my journals from both are full of observations about people and their environments, notations drawn from conversations with people on streets or buses and more fully developed essays that examine the patterns of the society as I saw it emerging around me.

The final visit lasted for three weeks in September and October 2008. It was during this visit that I conducted interviews and visited theatre sites and workshops around Israel and the West Bank. Interview subjects were selected through a combination of networking and direct contact. The theatre community in Israel and the West Bank is not a large one, and within it, the subset of people who are interested in theatre-as-activism is even smaller. As a starting place, I was very fortunate to have a relative who has been, since the 1980s, involved with a group that conducts theatre workshops with Jewish and Palestinian Israeli children. He offered me an introduction to the Director of that organisation and to an independent academic with a great interest in peace-building through theatre. In the autumn of 2007 I conducted telephone interviews with both these contacts, from which I drew both the basic plan for my interview rubric and a selection of additional people to contact. One of them was a free lance writer and director much involved in cross-border work who put me in touch with two theatres in the West Bank. Through conversations with staff members at these theatres, and though reading the lists of theatres and workshop presenters at Theatre and Activism festivals from years past, I was able to create a list of people and organisations with whom I wanted to conduct in person interviews, if possible. I wanted to speak with people whose work brought them into direct contact with the creative process: writers, directors, actors, teachers. I was particularly, although not exclusively, interested in people or groups who perform for or with children and youth, because of my interest in helping children raised in violent environments make sense of, survive and transform those environments. I was less interested, at this stage in the research, in speaking with large numbers of people engaged in policy or programming work. My immediate interest lies with the personal, on-the-ground experiences of the theatrical and the political and it is only after that intersection has been clearly documented and analysed that I may wish to bring the research findings to the attention of policy-makers.

Once I had compiled this initial list, I set about contacting the people represented on it. I only had limited time and resources available to me for fieldwork, so my initial conversations with people were designed around trying to find a time during which the greatest number of my contacts were available for interviews and trying to arrange travel and timing with maximum efficiency. In this endeavour I was somewhat hindered by the fact that many of my contacts did not want to arrange specific meetings until closer to the time. I ended up booking flights and accommodation for a time when the most people said they were available and embarking on the trip hoping that the interview times would sort themselves out once I was in-country. With only two exceptions, my fears proved unfounded: in one case, an American woman involved with a group based in Jerusalem had originally agreed to meet with me in that city. When I arrived, it turned out that she was working in Gaza and invited me to come meet with her there and participate in a workshop. Under the terms of my University insurance policy I was not allowed to travel to Gaza and we attempted to reschedule the interview, but with no luck. In the second instance I was hindered by geographical logistics: a visit that I had arranged to a theatre in a part of the West Bank had to be cancelled because, although it was relatively close to Tel Aviv there were no direct routes between the two. I would have had to travel in and out of the West Bank via Jerusalem, passing two checkpoints, both of which are known for significant waits. This, in and of itself, was not a problem, but the only time we could arrange the visit was toward the end of my trip, the last day of which was Yom Kippur. During that day, and from the preceding afternoon, Israel's public services, including transport, shut down. Few Israeli car rental agencies will allow you to take their cars into the West Bank, nor is it a good idea to drive a car with Israeli registration in that area. I was faced with the very real possibility that, if I went ahead with the plan to visit this theatre, I would be trapped either in the West Bank or in Jerusalem and thereby miss my flight back to England. After several telephone conversations and many attempts to resolve the dilemma creatively, I reluctantly cancelled that theatre visit and interview.

Upon my return to the UK I set about the process of working through the material I had collected. This took the form of tape recordings of interviews (and, eventually, transcriptions thereof), the field notebook I kept during the final trip, journal entries and essays written during the previous two visits, photographs, workshop handouts and a few video-recordings of performances[67]. In addition to

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[67] For ethical reasons I did not film any of my interviews or workshops. The video recordings that I have were made by the theatres and groups with which I was working – I ended up with copies of something that was being made anyway.

recorded interviews, I also had copious notes taken during workshops and conversations with youth participants. With the exception of dialogue and commentary contained on the video recordings, I did not record my conversations with children or young people. That level of working with children is bounded by significant ethical questions and I contented myself with noting down the general ideas they expressed and/or describing their motions and performances. This means that no direct quotations from children or young people are used in my empirical chapters, instead I rely on paraphrasing and notations from my field notebooks. Despite this, there are elements from all my interviews incorporated into this project. Some receive more attention than others, mainly because some were longer than others and went into greater detail.

One other thing that bears noting are the job descriptions of the interview subjects. Although they have titles like "Managing Director" and "Executive Director", with only one exception the organisations I worked with were very small, with a small number of employees – often only two or three permanent staff. In these situations, the Managing Director would make the coffee we drank during the interview, the Executive Director was also in discussion with the maintenance person about troubles with the set, and the maintenance person was also an actor and drama teacher. In no way was the choice of interview subject skewed towards highly placed administrators, rather I interviewed as many people associated with an organisation as possible.

RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FIELD

Elizabeth Dauphinée opens her book *The Ethics of Researching War* with a section titled "An accusation in the course of fieldwork". In it she recounts the accusation levelled at her by her primary informant, a Serb named Stojan Sokolović. He charged her and, by extension, academics in general, with using war zones for, in effect, their own advancement. He said that the experiences of the people who were interviewed, the people with whom a field researcher lives and speaks, are really just a means to an end: conferences, career advancement, tenure track positions (Dauphinée 2007, 1-3). During my fieldwork I had a similar experience. In one of my interviews with the staff of a theatre in the West Bank, one of the actors initially refused to speak with me. He said, angrily, that he did not trust foreigners, that they came only to see what they could get from Palestine, to use their contacts as a way to gain funding and work for themselves, that they made no attempt to understand the people or the situation, that they did not treat the Palestinians as people. Despite the fact that this man ended up speaking to me, that, after listening to my conversation with his colleagues, he *insisted*

on speaking to me, saying that I was "very good[68]", despite the fact that during the course of our interview he bared his soul to me, telling me very personal stories about how his life under the occupation influenced his acting, despite all this his accusation still hit home. Did it matter that, in the abstract, my research was designed to "help", both the greater political situation and the more specific theatre community? What did it matter to my interviewees that their testimony supported my thesis, especially when the whole point of my thesis was that they, as artists, had known the political import of their work all along?

I have not found solutions to these questions, nor to the ethical considerations they raise. I think the ethical concerns inherent in this sort of fieldwork could form the subject of one, if not several, doctoral theses[69]. It is likely that the navigation of these issues will be an ongoing matter for me, changing as my professional and personal circumstances change. There is no question, though, that the importance of the practical to my work is spurred by my belief in the importance of the personal, the individual, the real. When describing her experience crossing the border from Serbia to Bosnia during her own doctoral research, Elizabeth Dauphinée writes:

> I remember now how that soldier's eyes had been so strangely blue that they were almost colourless, with silver flecks in the irises that expanded and contracted with the tenor of his voice. I could not write that when I got back home, because there was nothing academic in that, and it did not further the potential for knowledge; it did not lay the groundwork for an acceptable research agenda, and my faculty (which stands vigil over me from places now farther, now closer, and to which I am still answerable) would not have liked it at all (Dauphinée 2007, 8).

In the following paragraph she writes passionately about why that memory, and the recounting of it, is so vastly important, to the "ethics of interaction, the politics of friendship, the imperative to responsibility" – even when one is not sure to what one is responsible (Dauphinée 2007, 8-9). This is a dilemma I know well. I know there can be no possible reason why the taste of cardamom flavoured coffee or the smell of *nargila* smoke should be important to my fieldwork, nor why a hundred other tactile experiences or personal observations can have any academic merit. And yet, the importance of these seemingly unimportant things is summed up in something said by one of my interview subjects. He said that the importance of meeting the Other is *not* to see that the Other is like you, but rather to see that you are a little bit like *him* (Dov Giladi, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz). That, for me, is why these details are important, because they show us the Self *in* Other that allows us to take the first steps

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[68] When asked to explain he said that I was very good at getting people to talk, that I made him feel comfortable, and that he trusted me.
[69] Indeed, at least one such thesis has already been written: Elizabeth Dauphinée's 2004 thesis "Reflections on a Past that is Always Present", written at York University, Canada.

on the path of what Dauphinée calls "the politics of friendship", and because the researcher stands on the border between the two, seeing herself in each and reflecting both to each other. If research can be framed in such a way that the reader can, somehow, also see him or herself in the subject then we have moved one more step closer to making "the political" a personal experience.

Although I have reached no conclusion on the grander themes of ethical responsibility to "the field" as a whole, the ultimate experience of my fieldwork caused me to reconsider my stance on responsibility to individuals. Initially I did not promise anonymity to any of my interview subjects. Upon my departure from Ben Gurion airport, however I had an experience that caused me to change my mind. When I was asked the reason for my visit it would have been easy enough to say that I was visiting family for the holidays, but instead I told the more immediate truth and said I was an academic and had been engaged in research. I was instantly pulled to one side, subjected to extensive questioning about my travel, my contacts, my research, my university, and so forth – and watched as all my luggage was unpacked, x-rayed and swabbed. I answered all the questions politely, because I did not wish to be detained and miss my flight, but when I was asked to turn over my interview notes and recordings, I refused. I engaged in a lively conversation during which I explained firmly that I would not allow academic research of a confidential nature to be reviewed by border guards – and for a time I was in some doubt about whether I would be allowed to leave. Although this was a distressing experience, it is pertinent to this project merely because I changed my mind about using any actual identifiers. For this reason, as noted previously, all names, locations and, in some cases, genders, have been changed.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

My fieldwork had two goals, one of which stems from the other. Primarily it was to talk to the people who are engaged in the work that interests me, to hear their stories and to weave their experiences into the story that I am telling. This personal contact would serve the dual purpose of reminding me of the practical importance of my research after a long time spent in the company of books. It is this personal connection that, for me, is one of the most important gifts of conducting research with a field component. That touch of the practical was rejuvenating in terms of reinforcing for me the necessity of the project. Although a long-term participant observation, or focus groups with various audiences would have been a wonderful benefit of additional time and money, overall I feel that the choice of relatively unstructured interviews was the right one. I was able to conduct interviews with people who are engaged in what I,

and they, view as politically important artistic endeavours, and through this I was able to go some way towards substantiating my broader claim – namely that theatre as an art form can, and does, achieve social and political change, that it acts as a site of the political.

It is this ability to see the human face of the political that makes ethnographic methods so compelling, that led me down the path of "feminist mediation using ethnographic tools". Statistical and numerical methodologies have their place, and it is not my purpose to deny them that. Without the landscape and context provided by the "thick description" of ethnography, however, these quantitative data show only a partial picture. If causality is their goal, and I am not convinced that it is a goal with merit, then the process can only be helped by an understanding of the whole environment, not just those parts that easily lend themselves to mathematical modelling. Although surveys may reach a larger number of respondents than it is possible to interview individually, the directive nature of their construction will not allow for the breadth of experience that will be revealed over time through extensive contact and interaction with a community. Unstructured interviews, especially conducted by someone with a clear sense of the field environment and sensitivity to the overlying situation, provide an understanding and an honesty that other methods cannot. In other words, it is important to remember that the researcher's "field" is the respondent's home.

As Jane Yolen says in this chapter's epigraph, stories are intruders into the human heart. Although she is referring to the importance of fairy and folk tales, the sentiment is equally applicable to the stories told to a researcher. The individual tales and experiences of the people I interviewed intruded into my heart and made the research topic live and breathe for me. It is my hope that their voices, transcribed and clipped though they are, will have the same effect on the reader when they appear in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3
'SELF' AND THE 'OTHER':
NATIONAL THEATRES IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

The purpose of playing […] is to hold, as't were, the mirror up to nature.

~Shakespeare, *Hamlet Act III, Scene 2, 20-2*

Dramatic productions and rituals have long served to unite groups around common ideals and beliefs[70]. This chapter will provide a brief introduction to the national theatres of Israel and Palestine. Its will then move on to outline briefly the nature of national theatres and the political siting that takes place there, and to introduce the reader to the theatrical traditions in both Israeli and Palestinian societies.

In the quotation from *Hamlet* with which this chapter opens, Shakespeare draws on the Classic, Aristotelian ideas of drama, namely, that theatre should represent a form of truth and not be mere entertainment, and that it should seek to educate through its depiction of the truth. The question that bears posing, in this case, is – whose truth? Who differentiates between the acceptable and unacceptable when defining a nation's character? Government sponsored, or at least sanctioned, theatre offers the audience an approved version of national identity, retelling and reiterating the mythologies and histories in a way that creates a unified sense of self, a sense that can easily be called upon to create divisions of 'us' versus 'them'.

It is only to be expected that there will be reactions against an "official" definition of identity – particularly in societies that are strongly divided along lines of religion, ethnicity, political affiliation, and so forth. As Mäkinen and Wilmer write in their 2001 book on theatre and national identities

> [*Theatre can become*] a site for a community to contemplate and evaluate the representation of its own identity. Since the rise of the nation-state, theatre has helped foster the distinctive characteristics that create a sense of national community particularly in those nations seeking to overthrown the yoke of an imperial overlord and to establish a separate polity (Mäkinen, Wilmer, et. al. 2001, 11)

In the case of Israel / Palestine, not only is there a division between the Jewish and Arab sectors of society, but there are also significant divisions within them. Jewish Israeli society is divided between the religious and the secular (a division that loosely,

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[70] For a discussion of the history of the intersection between the political and the theatrical, please see Appendix B.

although incompletely, aligns with political divisions of right and left), and old versus new immigrants, as well as along racial lines. Arab society divides between religion (Islam and Christianity), secular versus observant, and militant versus pacifist. These multiple divisions provide fertile ground in which to foster the "distinctive characteristics" that lead to group identity building.

National theatre as a concept is discussed briefly in Appendix D. The previous chapter discussed the methodological approaches employed in my fieldwork. This chapter, through its focus on Israel and Palestine, serves as a further introduction to the fieldwork sites. Both Israel and Palestine have and maintain statedly national theatres – Habima in Israel and el-Hakawati in Palestine. For purposes of discussion in this chapter, el-Hakawati, when viewed in the framework of the Occupation and the censorship practiced by the Israeli government, serves the purpose of both a national theatre and a 'counter theatre'.

HISTORY OF HABIMA THEATRE [71]

What is now Israel's national theatre started in Moscow in 1917, although the idea of a Hebrew-language theatre had been in existence since the very early days of the twentieth century (Levy 1979, 30). Although Habima, which means 'the stage' (or 'platform') in Hebrew, was first and foremost a political tool aimed at creating a Hebrew-speaking community with a strong commitment to Zionist ideology (Levy 1979, 20), it took its name from the raised platform in the synagogue from which the Torah is read. Nachum Zemach, one of the founders of Habima who had had a traditional religious upbringing, conceived of the Hebrew theatre as a sacred space – sacred both to the biblical roots of the Jewish people and to the creation of a Zionist ideological platform.

Although in contemporary twenty-first century society Zionism is a very contentious and loaded word, it is important, for the purpose of this chapter, to view it in its historical setting. Late nineteenth and early twentieth century Zionism was born out of the legal restrictions and pogroms that were common in every-day Jewish life in Tsarist Russia and much of Europe. It was a movement that reacted against historical and institutionalized repression and sought a Jewish homeland and autonomous rule. The current political associations with the term had not yet become connected with it.

At the time Hebrew was not a spoken language, but rather an archaic language of tradition and ritual, province of the religiously learned. Yiddish, the popular

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[71] Readers interested in a detailed examination of Habima's history and development are referred to Emanuel Levy's excellent book *The Habima – Israel's National Theatre 1917-1977: A Study of Cultural Nationalism*.

spoken language, had its own traditions – among them a strong theatrical and literary history. The founders of Habima, however, were opposed to Yiddish traditions as symbols of the oppression of the Jewish people in the Diaspora – not least since the language, a bowdlerization of Eastern European tongues written in Hebrew characters, was seen as uncultured (Levy 1979, 21). At the beginning, Habima was more a statement in political activism than in artistic endeavour, preferring to recruit the ideologically compatible rather than those with theatrical experience. The founders mapped out, and the theatre continued to adhere to, five goals, or values: performance exclusively in Hebrew, a biblical and historical stance, purposefully educational productions, a staunch commitment to 'high art', and the promise to eventually found a national theatre in Jerusalem (Levy 1979, 20-27).

The decision to perform in Hebrew was openly acknowledged as a political one, as it was closely linked to the strong Zionist ideals held by the group. Despite the lack of a Hebrew-speaking audience, Habima's founders viewed the use of Hebrew on the stage as a way to revive and expand the use of the language among the Jewish population. Zemach was specific about his desire to form a Hebrew theatre rather than merely a Jewish one; and from the outset the linguistic specifics had a far-reaching political goal. Rather than using the Ashkenazic (Eastern European) pronunciation of the Hebrew, which would at least have been familiar to Russian and Polish audiences from synagogue services and prayer, the group insisted on the Sephardic (Spanish/Asian) pronunciation (Levy 1979, 22), thus deliberately linking the language spoken by the troupe with the language spoken by the small group of Jews who continued to live in Palestine.

The importance placed on Hebrew by the troupe continued a growing tradition of reviving and developing languages. As Benedict Anderson chronicles in his book *Imagined Communities*, the 19th century saw an increased acknowledgement of the importance of language – both spoken and written – to ideas of national and group identity (Anderson 2006, 75). In his argument he is careful to consider the interplay between ideas of "official" nationalism and imperialism (Anderson 2006, 110-1). The difference, Anderson points out, lies in *who decides*. If an imperial power is responsible for turning a language that previously had no literate tradition into a written one, and then privileges that written tradition and ties it to ideas of nationalism, how "authentic" is that as a representation of the people themselves? Does it not, perhaps, say more about the imperial power than the colonized? The role of language, both its encouragement and its eradication, was – and is – a method of exerting control over subject populations (Anderson 2006, 78). With this as its history, the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language *by the group that intended to speak it* was an intensely political act.

The decision to draw on the Hebrew Bible as a source of dramatic material also had a political element. Zemach hoped to show the connections between the heroic past of the Jewish people and their present, and imbue the actors, and their audiences, with a vision of their people's future. Zemach also 'considered a deep knowledge of the Bible and Jewish history important prerequisites for being a true Hebrew actor' (Levy 1979, 23). In this way, Habima's founders equated language and Biblical history with a nationalist tie to political identity and geographic location. The marked themselves as separate from Soviet society, as "Other", which began the transition from seeing themselves as existing within a dominant society to existing autonomously. Once again, the theatrical provided a stage for the political.

In addition to nationalistic and educational aspects of the theatre, Habima was also intended as a high-art experience, not mere entertainment. This was meant to set them firmly apart from traditional Yiddish theatre troupes, which were often itinerant, travelling groups, performing vulgar stock pieces merely as a diversion – the motto of the Yiddish theatre being 'entertainment for entertainment's sake' (Levy 1979, 27). That Yiddish theatre had a deeply rooted tradition and its own artistic aesthetic was immaterial to the founders of Habima. The troupe strove for a high level of professional and artistic excellence, at an international standard. To this end, Zemach sought the advice of Constantin Stanislavsky, one of the founders of the Moscow Art Theatre (MAT). Under the tutelage of Stanislavsky's student Eugene Vakhtanganov, Habima received rigorous dramatic training and eventually achieved both commercial and critical success. They were producing art of the sort described by the Russian Jewish poet Chaim Bialik, who wrote that

> Art must give expression to the truth of life. […] It should be nationalistic and serve the national interests in the same measure and with the same end as the prophets have. This general theatre, the theatre of art, should be filled with a Hebrew, national content, in the highest sense of these words. (Bialik in Levy 1979, 26)

Habima was, from its inception, supposed to be promoting nationalistic sentiment through the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language, the use of biblical and historical references, and a high level of artistic and dramatic expression. Even their art was an expression of a political conviction.

From the outset, therefore, Habima was designed for a particular purpose – namely to depict and produce a core Zionist identity that centred around a spoken Hebrew language, a high moral and educational responsibility and the idea of a Jewish Homeland in biblical Israel, with Jerusalem as its capital. This was not an ideology with a direct path to financial support or sponsorship in early 20th century Russia. In many parts of Imperial Russia, performances in Hebrew were not allowed, and very

few of the wealthy members of the Jewish community either spoke Hebrew or were willing to risk their status by supporting a Hebrew-language endeavour (Levy 1979, 6). Nonetheless, Habima made their stand, despite considerable political risk.

Habima was primarily designed around the contemporary ideas of Russian collectivism. The motivating idea was that a person is most fulfilled when serving society – in this case not only the theatre but the greater Jewish/Zionist community at large (Levy 1979, 65). To this end, members of the troupe – almost all in their early twenties – swore to remain unmarried until the theatre was well established; and channelled all their energies into realizing their dream – both politically and artistically. In many ways, Habima resembled a totalitarian or ideological group, controlling the whole of its members' lives: work, family and free time (Levy 1979, 74).

Immediately after the Revolution in 1917, Zionist activities and the use of the Hebrew language were allowed to continue unhindered in the Soviet Union. By 1919, however, Zionist leaders were being arrested by the Cheka and Zionist and Hebrew language publications were suspended. Although Zionism was not officially outlawed until the late 1920s (Levy 1979, 45) its official non-recognition made it a dangerous ideology to support.

Suffering under these increased restrictions, Habima left Moscow in 1926 and toured extensively in Europe, the United States and Palestine before settling under the British Mandate in 1931. During this time they experienced a change in the expectations of their audiences – the plays that had won them acclaim in the Diaspora were based on Yiddish and popular folk tales, and the Jewish residents of British Mandate Palestine did not want to see plays with those themes (Levy 1979, 109).

Habima as a national theatre under the Mandate was consistently exhorted to portray the Jewish people as the settlers wished to see themselves – as a people fighting heroically for self-realization and a homeland. Paradoxically, when Habima did present plays based on the Jewish-Palestinian reality, they were criticised for not upholding their artistic standards and presenting productions that too closely mirrored actuality (Levy 1979, 129). Nonetheless, the production of Hebrew language 'Palestinian' plays was hailed as the beginning of a new 'native drama', and thus praised.

David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, urged Israel's intellectual community to contribute to building the new state "in heart, soul and deed" (Abramson 1998, 15). In his view, Hebrew literature and drama should serve as a "map of a society's emotional landscape", and writers as the "principal creators of national symbols – banner-bearers of the spirit" (Abramson 1998, 14). Ben-Gurion was very interested in a concerted effort to consolidate a national identity for the new state.

Under his leadership many aspects of Israeli society, including features as disparate as the arts and the military, were involved in the formation of a national identity. The intellectuals and artists were to give the new state its soul, and the army was to be a "citizen maker" (Perlmutter 1968, 619) through the process of compulsory military service. Early Hebrew drama engaged in an effort to educate the masses – generally in Zionist ideology. The Israeli definition of "good theatre" had become synonymous with productions that depicted up-to-the-minute consensus with the political environment in a realistic and nationalist manner (Avigal 1996, 10). Despite this predilection, concerns over "the Arab Question" were becoming part of the national theatre language (Urian 1996a, 23).

Until the 1980s, Israeli theatre had "concerned itself with themes of national identity. Individual problems were seen as only a reflection of collective values, too petty and unimportant for a national theatre company to present" (Avigal 1996, 9). This was a continuation of the original Habima ideal that individuals should be subsumed in the collective good (Levy 1979, 74). This was the beginning, however, of a significant change in Israeli theatre. Following the Lebanon War of the early 1980s, productions tended to be more soul-searching and to have an element of protest about them. Hebrew plays explored themes of the responsibility that Israelis bore for the political state of their region (Avigal 1996, 12). Also in the 1970s and 1980s some theatres staged plays that addressed the place of Palestinians in Israeli society. Although some of these were written by Palestinian playwrights, because of the restrictions placed on Palestinian artists most of these plays were performed entirely by Jewish Israelis (Nasrallah and Perlman 2011, 128).

To students and researchers of theatre studies, Israeli theatre is well known to be both inherently political and ideologically rigid (Abramson 1998, 10), a description that applies to nearly all mainstream theatre, not merely that produced by Habima. However, performances by the national theatre company are more than usually bound by government philosophy and an official version of "the truth", although there have been recent productions which raise questions about the validity of "the party line"[72]. This "truth" dictates the portrayal of Jews on stage, and also governs the ways that non-Jews, particularly Arabs, are depicted. Although some writers and directors make a particular attempt to represent Arabs in a realistic and human fashion, the overwhelming majority of Arab characters are still depicted as stereotypes (Nasrallah and Perlman 2011, 126). This, along with the unresolved and increasingly untenable

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[72] Notably the 1992 production of Gilead Evron's *Jehu*, which, through the use of allegory, questioned the involvement of the Israeli military in the massacres at the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon.

position of the Palestinians in and around Israel, has led to an increase in Palestinian cultural expressions.

HISTORY OF PALESTINIAN THEATRE / EL-HAKAWATI

Historically, Palestinian drama underwent a revival in the mid-nineteenth century[73]. This was closely tied to a more general cultural revival which included increasing education, and the founding of cultural institutions, public libraries and publishing houses (Bulus in Ben-Zvi 1996, 323). This renewed interest produced plays adapted from local literature, traditional Arabic tales, and European classics in translation. Often these plays were staged with an educational motivation, and translators/adaptors were known to change both the plot and the meaning of some plays: rewriting them to conform to religious and social norms by converting female characters to male, interrupting the narrative flow in order to insert portions of traditional Arabic poetry for the edification of school children, or simply using the play's format as a forum for didactic preaching (Bulus in Ben-Zvi 1996, 325). This cultural resurgence lasted about a century, until the events of 1948 caused a complete cessation of major Palestinian cultural events, and the disintegration of the Palestinian urban communities. With the loss of an urban community base, Palestinian theatre proved difficult to revitalize (Habibi in Ben-Zvi 1996, 326-7). Palestinian cities and larger towns were important for arts and cultural development for several reasons. Not only did an urban environment provide a stronger economic base on which to draw for production costs, but it also had a larger population with the time and energy to devote to cultural pursuits. This is not to say that villages and rural communities had no time for artistic expression: traditional crafts, music and storytelling all continued in that environment (Nimr 2007). The more modern and innovative performance styles, however, were disrupted by the Palestinian Diaspora of 1948 – mainly because the communities in which it had taken place no longer existed. In his 1999 memoir *Out of Place*, Edward Said writes of the complete exodus of many in the pre-1948 Palestinian community, mostly people who were educated, financially secure, and felt they would be able to make a living in exile (Said 1999, xiv). It wasn't until the 1960s that, usually with the help of Jewish Israeli theatre professionals, some small troupes began to work in Palestinian towns, mainly Nazareth. These troupes were

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[73] As with the idea of "reviving" Hebrew literature cited previously, it is debatable whether revitalization is the correct term. There is some scholarly disagreement about whether there actually was a Palestinian theatre prior to the twentieth century. While some academics claim there was, others state that, prior to 1948, the Arab plays produced in Palestine were primarily Egyptian, performed by Egyptian actors. For more on this topic see "Perspectives on Palestinian Drama and Theatre: A Symposium" edited by Dan Urian in Linda Ben-Zvi's book *Theater in Israel*.

hampered by lack of suitable spaces – large rooms with a stage and a regular supply of electricity were, and are, not always easy to find.

With the beginnings of a consolidated PCI[74] / Palestinian identity in the late 1960s, many of the actors who were members of troupes jointly directed or funded by Jewish Israelis experienced something of an identity crisis. Many of them resigned and attempted to form more nationally focused theatre groups (Hadad in Ben-Zvi 1996, 329). These theatres, when permitted by the Israeli censor, performed plays that were overtly political in content (Hadad in Ben-Zvi 1996, 330; Awad in Ben-Zvi 1996, 331-4). These attempts to form venues for specifically nationalistic artistic expression marked the first steps towards the formation of a dedicated Palestinian National Theatre.

El-Hakawati, Palestine's national theatre company, was founded in 1977 in East Jerusalem by a group of actors from East Jerusalem and PCI students at the Hebrew University. The group was spearheaded by Francois Abu Salim. In addition to providing a theatrical component to Palestinian culture, the stated goal of its founders was to produce political plays that would protest both the occupation and the internal conflicts plaguing the Palestinian population, aiming to incite a strong response from the audiences (Mahamid and Shahadeh in Ben-Zvi 1996). Thus el-Hakawati, like Habima, was originally conceived with a political motivation. The name el-Hakawati refers to the traditional Arab storyteller, and the theatre itself combines traditional Arab and Palestinian storytelling techniques with European – predominantly French – theatre methods (Urian 1995, 11). This connection allows the theatre to form a bridge between the contemporary political reality and the cultural past of the Palestinian people. The plays performed by this national theatre are mostly collaborative in nature – the actors participate in the writing process, developing characters and dialogue. Although the plays nearly always turn on a political pivot, el-Hakawati takes care never to offer political solutions, thus freeing themselves from the didacticism of most Palestinian theatre groups (Mahamid in Ben-Zvi 1996, 337). This innovative approach has attracted the interest of Jewish-Israeli theatre artists and audiences, and some artistic collaboration has come from it. Many Palestinian artists are torn between their desire to further their own culture's dramatic expression and their need to make a living, which may lead them to work in Israel. The majority of Palestinian and PCI actors, directors and playwrights have had to work in both Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian theatre in order to further their careers. This has led, for some of them, to further crises of identity (Urian 1995, 12), and a questioning of their parts in the Palestinian struggle for autonomy and statehood. These crises have, once again, been

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[74] Palestinian Citizen of Israel

the impetus for certain performers to try to found their own theatres within existing frameworks of the arts; attempts that have, so far, met with only limited success.

It is interesting in and of itself that far less information is available on the Palestinian national theatre than on its Israeli counterpart. Partly this is due to a shorter history, but also because of the power politics surrounding both funding and translation. Perhaps there is a fair amount of literature available from Arabic language presses on the history of the Arab theatre in general and Palestinian theatre in particular, as well as Hebrew language work by such scholars as Dan Urian. Nonetheless, the sources available in English are few, and not widely represented in library collections – a fact which made research for this section complicated. Through the British Library and the New York Public Library, however, I was able to find copies of all the source material available in English.

There has been much discussion of the purpose of a national theatre company in Palestine, and the function of Palestinian theatre more generally. It is usually agreed that the productions need to strike a delicate balance between the permanence of Palestinian culture and civilization, without neglecting the contemporary concerns and experiences of the audience (Slyomovics 1991). One Palestinian theatre professional expresses it this way:

> The challenge is to express the reality of a harsh and dangerous environment; to put one's fingers in the bleeding wound. (Radi Shehadeh in Slyomovics 1991, 23)

As with Habima in its early days, and with many contemporary Jewish-Israeli playwrights, actors, and directors, there is no dispute that Palestinian theatre is seen by its artists and audiences as "a political act entailing complex analyses of a seemingly hopeless situation" (Slyomovics 1991, 34).

INTRODUCTION TO FIELDWORK

What, as Shakespeare put it, is the purpose of playing? What role can theatre play in the lives of the marginalized or impoverished? Much as government sponsored theatre projects can be used to create and maintain the desired image of a national self (Whitwork 1951, 16; Green 1994), popular theatre can be used to create or represent life as people wish it were or as they feel it should be. This is a use theatre can often be put to by zealous nationalists who draw on myth or legend to create or bolster a heroic national ideal. The legends of Ireland's Celtic history and the Israeli national myths surrounding the national hero Yosef Trumpeldor are just two examples of nationalism drawing on historical fiction. In the one, modern Irish concepts of self and identity draw on the idea of the Atlantic Celts and their settling of Ireland – an idea that was

created and spread by W.B. Yeats and other 19th and 20th century Irish nationalists (Wilmer 2004, ix and James 1999)[75].   In the case of the Israeli example, Trumpeldor, along with other members of his militia, was killed in the battle of Tel Chai (a site currently in northern Israel) in 1920. His alleged last words, with slight alteration, have become an enduring slogan and a symbol of the power of place in the Israeli national imagination – "It is good to die for our country". Unfortunately for the myth makers, contemporary research has shown the reporting of these last words to be erroneous (Gillis 1994, 113 and Zerubavel 1995), their entry into myth a convenience for propagandists. This is an excellent example of Ernest Renan's comment that "to forget and – I will venture to say – to get one's history wrong, are essential factors in the making of a nation; and thus the advance of historical studies is often a danger to a nationality" (Renan in Wilmer 2004, x).   Theatre, and other outlets of popular culture, are largely responsible for presenting and furthering the public acceptance of these myths, thereby continuing national identities based on legendary tales. The selective forgetting referenced by Renan is important to a discussion of national theatre because it impacts theatrical depiction (and national recognition) of "reality". If the national identity is firmly held in place by acceptance of a myth, then any theatre group, national or otherwise, must tread gently if they intend to deviate from or question that myth in performance.

Both Habima and el-Hakawati have expressed the importance of language in their productions. Whereas Habima was founded specifically to produce Hebrew language performances and educate a population in the creation of a new identity through language, Arab actors who live and work between Israel and Palestine also have to be careful of their linguistic identity. Although it is safe to say that most speakers of Hebrew *and* Arabic (both Jews and Arabs) have learned the languages as separate entities (rather than as a polyglot mixture), there are many instances in which the native speaker of one will inject words from the other into conversation. Giving Arabic an equal, or at least acknowledged, place in Israeli and Occupied Territory public performance is an important goal of Palestinian theatre. Language, which is – after all – the medium in which theatre is produced[76], is generally seen as a way to create, maintain, and promote a cultural identity (Levy 1979, Ben-Zvi 1996, Abramson

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[75] An additional discussion of a created myth for political purposes can be found in Gwyn A. Williams 1980 book *Madoc: The Making of a Myth*, which describes the "creation" of the Welsh national hero (Madoc) as the original discoverer of North America – thus giving the British a "claim" to the New World which predated Spain's.

[76] This does not, of course, take into consideration the art of pantomime. It is worth noting that the first international pantomime festival in Israel was produced by the Zidan Salama Institute for Culture and Arts in Shefa-'Amr, an Arab town in northern Israel. However, exploring the history and contribution of mime, while an interesting and politically relevant exercise, is outside the scope of this project.

1998). For Israeli Jews in particular, Hebrew, which was only revived as a spoken language in the late nineteenth / early twentieth century, has become a symbol of Jews as a nation, rather than simply adherents to a religion.   For Arabs, too, their language – although far more widely spoken than Hebrew – is an important tie to their past and their ethnic and cultural identity.

A further reality that theatre can throw into sharp relief is the continuum along which the people on both sides of the Israel/Palestine divide exist. Salim Daw, a Palestinian actor, has become known for his refusal to portray Arab stereotypes on stage and screen. He either refuses a stereotyped role outright, or demands to be allowed to make changes to the script, language, costumes, or direction of body language. Once these stereotypes are removed, some very interesting facts about audience perception are revealed. Daw says this about his involvement in a play which originally called for his character to appear in a *keffiyeh* – the traditional "signifier" of The Arab to a European audience.

> I demanded in this case that the Arab wear jeans and an ordinary shirt, without in any way blurring his national identity in the play. Following the changes that I made in [the playwright's] play, which depicted a group of simple characters, including Oriental Jews, the audience confused me with one of the Jewish actors and was certain that it was he who was playing the Arab role. This should teach us that the real extratheatrical differences between us are sometimes not so great after all (Daw in Ben-Zvi 1996, 342).

This demonstrates to the audience – if they are paying attention – how shallow their ethnic, religious and political assumptions really are; a demonstration that highlights the political potential of the theatrical.

Challenges like this, from performer to audience, demonstrate the power that theatre has to bring political questioning to the fore. There has long been a precedent for this, and not just in formal, traditional productions[77]. Despite the fact that theatre is seen, at least in many wealthy western countries, as an entertainment that is the province of the well-to-do, the act of storytelling or performing also has a long-standing central role in creating environments for social change. As Julie Salverson writes:

> Popular theatre is a public and distinctly pedagogical enterprise, with its aims historically rooted in the efforts of poor and marginalized people throughout the world to stage and realize alternatives to their current lives. When popular theatre artists and members of a community negotiate how the telling of their stories will occur, both parties are attempting to set up conditions of reception that will urge and allow the participants and the eventual audience to be affected and changed by what they hear. A climate of witnessing thus involves not only listening to

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[77] Please see Appendix B for a discussion of the historical context of the theatrical and the political.

someone's story, but allowing our attitudes and behaviours to be changed by it. (Salverson 1996, 183)

The implication of this view is that popular theatre is inherently educational, as well as having a strong political bent. Surely, if theatre can educate a population in the legends that go into one national identity, it can also be used to disseminate ideas that can lead to social change; and, ultimately, the altering of a set of national ideals or (self)-perceptions. A production drawing on the stories of the community that produced it has the ability to present the reality of that community in a new light. Therefore, the process of discussion, writing, rehearsing and performing is a learning process for actors as well as viewers. This idea is investigated in the second half of this thesis, which is devoted to an analysis of my fieldwork.

It is interesting to consider the ways in which creative, politically aware Palestinians meet and how they conceptualise their ideas. Although it is likely that they meet in the usual ways – in workshops, cultural centres, and cafés – there is the faintly ironic fact that they are often thrown together by the very regime they then use their art to criticise. Israeli prisons, with their high number of Palestinian inmates,

> […] bring together Palestinian political activists, artists and intellectuals from all over the country. The prison experience is perhaps the single most efficient factor in creating solidarity among such people; apparently it also produces plays (Slyomovics 1991, 34).

The fact that at least a certain percentage of Palestinian political drama is born from the Israeli prison system should give the Israeli government pause. If the very structures that are meant to protect the Israeli public from "dangerous elements" are those that unite the elements into a cohesive whole, perhaps the structures, and the system they uphold, should be more closely considered

This chapter has explored the political role that theatre has played in creating a sense of national awareness, and begun the work of relating this general idea to the specifics of my case study: the region of Israel and Palestine. The next three chapters will address my field work, the first offering a discussion of the youth theatre groups I visited and performances and workshops that I observed, then reviewing the interviews I conducted with various theatre professionals and finally considering one specific case in which the theatrical and the political collided with fatal results. As will become clear in these chapters, the people I interviewed very definitely experience performance as a political act. Their personal experiences, as well as their observations of their communities, audiences and local government officials, all show a marked awareness of the political impact of their work.

In the following chapters the reader will be introduced to theatre games played by youth groups made up of Jewish and PCI teenagers. Through playing these games, the barriers between them – cultural, religious, historical, political – begin to break down, or at least become permeable. The boundaries between self and other begin to blur, and the students are able to play with identity. The reader will also meet a Jewish Israeli playwright whose goal is to have his audience imagine a one state solution, and two Palestinian theatre groups, one Muslim, one Christian, whose lives are so impacted by the situation that they cannot easily distinguish between the personal, the theatrical and the political.

> *The fire is burning*
> *It lights up the sky*
> *From high on the rock*
> *Down to the sea.*
> *It is taking the children.*
> *It is eating the future.*
>
> *Smother the fire, open your hearts*
>
> ~ Tug Yourgrau, *The Song of Jacob Zulu*

This and the following two chapters are devoted to the empirical portions of this research. The chapters are arranged as follows. This chapter serves as an introduction to the groups visited and observed during fieldwork[78]. It describes the activities, exercises and performances I observed, and discusses their importance within the context of the theatrical and the political. In addition, some space will be devoted to a discussion of what the empirical chapters represent with regards to the themes of this research. It should be noted that I did not, for ethical reasons, conduct interviews or record conversations with children and youth. In writing about these I have drawn on notes from my field journals and, in a few instances, from video recordings of activities made by the groups themselves.

Chapter 5 discusses the individual interviews conducted with writers, directors, teachers and actors, as well as theatre managers. Where possible, these interviews are linked to the workshop activities discussed in this chapter; however there are some situations in which the interviews covered information equally relevant to this research but not directly related to the activities of the youth theatre workshops.

Chapter 6 is devoted solely to the work of Juliano Mer Khamis and The Freedom Theatre of Jenin[79]. Juliano, and his theatre, receive a chapter to themselves because of the tragic events of April 2011, on the 4th of that month Juliano was murdered in his car outside the theatre in Jenin. The killing received much media attention at the time, and occasioned any number of retrospectives, memorials, news

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[78] One group, The Freedom Theatre of Jenin, has a chapter devoted to it alone, and the reasons for that choice will also be discussed.

[79] Both Juliano's murder and the theatre he founded have been much in the news in 2011. For this reason, it is the only theatre, and he the only person, referred to without pseudonyms.

reports and magazine articles. For this reason, although the information from Jenin is similar to that gleaned from other interviews, The Freedom Theatre has its own chapter. It stands as a clear and painful reminder of what can happen when the theatrical and the political intersect.

Field Contacts, Youth Groups and Empirical Representations

During the final stage of fieldwork, conducted in September and October 2008, I conducted interviews with the following people[80]:

- Dov Giladi (Co-founder, Teatron Shemesh)
- Mark Guttman (Art Director, Shala'am Centre)
- Daut Suleiman (Manager, Theatre Now)
- 'Adel Rashmawi (Actor/Teacher, Theatre Now)
- 'Isa Wazan (Actor/Teacher, Theatre Now)
- Rana al-Arabi (Director, Theatre Jawhar)
- Sarah Ellis (Director, Shalom Yeled)
- Chen Tietlebaum (actor, playwright, political activist)
- Ehud Sharansky (Director, Shalom Foundation)
- Avi Weiss (actor, "Joker" for Shalom Foundation projects)

Although some information on interviewee and organizational choice was provided in Chapter 2, further information about the goals and types of organizations was not and will be discussed here. A more in depth discussion of some of the organizations and their work is provided in Chapter 5, as part of the reportage on individual interviews.

Teatron Shemesh is a program that offers Jewish Israeli and PCI teenagers a chance to live together and study theatre and dramatic techniques while also engaging in street theatre and other forms of consciousness raising and audience engagement. Their "commune year" is designed to give the participants a chance to get to know each other both on and off stage, first through exercises and theatre games, and then through the process of designing activist theatre performances to take to streets, schools and festivals.

The Shala'am Centre is a funding body that also runs certain programs involved with co-existence in Israel. Mark Guttman, their Art Director, is also a freelance academic who has collaborated with Palestinian playwrights and academics as well as other freelance theatre professionals in the United States. Theatre Now is a relatively new performing and training space in Tulkarem, a conservative section of the West Bank. It was founded by four friends, all originally from Tulkarem, who now

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[80] As has been previously noted, these interview subjects are referred to by pseudonym. Additional information about interview measures can be found in Appendix E.

serve as the Managing Director and the three Actor/Teachers[81]. This theatre runs training workshops for local children in dramatic techniques, each workshop series concludes with the children putting on a play for their friends and families. In addition, Theatre Now puts on regular (adult actor) plays for the children and local residents. Theatre Jawhar is similar to Theatre Now in scope, but is older and is located in Be'it Sahour, a Christian and much more liberal community near Bethlehem.

Shalom Yeled is a program that brings together Jewish Israeli and PCI children in a "neutral" setting. The groups meet separately (the Jewish children together, and the PCI children together) with facilitators from their own ethnic groups before meeting all together as a group. In meetings that encompass political discussions, dramatic play, music and storytelling the groups create their own play, which they then cast, rehearse and perform for their families and friends. Like the other groups discussed above, participants in Shalom Yeled are self-selecting, attending the workshops through self-referral.

Chen Tietlebaum is a freelance actor, playwright and political activist. In this role he has attended international conferences and presented, together with his Palestinian counterparts, seminars and panel discussions on the place of the Separation Wall in the public imagination, both in Israel and in Palestine.

Ehud Sharansky holds a doctorate in Media Ecology and is the director of Culture, Media and the Arts for the Shalom Foundation. In this capacity he is in charge of the arts programs that are funded by the Foundation, and works with the creative staff to ensure that performances and workshops are as relevant to the current political situation as possible. This said, he is a policy maker and an administrator, and his views reflect that. Although convinced of the importance of creative approaches to conflict resolution, Dr. Sharansky's interview did not reflect the level of personal passion that was conveyed in interviews with people who are actively engaged, like, for example, Avi Weiss. Mr. Weiss is an actor and formally trained as a Joker in Forum Theatre. He works for the Shalom Foundation, facilitating plays with a Palestinian "Joker" and walking the audience though the process of imagining a world different from the one in which they live.

These groups, and the interviews conducted with their members, provide empirical representations of the ideas discussed theoretically in previous chapters. The intersection of the theatrical and the political, Weber and Debrix's mediative site, Nussbaum's intelligent emotions and the importance of Thrift's affect or Campbell's anthropology of everyday life on a global scale, are all reflected here, in these exercises,

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[81] One of the Actor/Teachers was travelling in Jordan at the time of my fieldwork.

performances and interviews. They embody the theories, and the research problem, through their use of emotion, explorations of identity, play and discovery of Self and Other. The remainder of this chapter will first explain the acting methods used by many of the groups, including exercises and theatre games; then will focus on the experiences of the commune at Theatron Shemesh, exploring their workshops, discussions and plays.

ACTING METHODS: "YOUTH PLAY PEACE[82]"

The fieldwork for this project can be divided into two rough sections: interviews with professionals and informal conversations with teenagers and children whose workshops I observed. Although there was overlap – in many cases the workshops were run by professionals I was interviewing – the material covered was different, and was experienced in a completely different way. The workshops and street theatre productions discussed here were all conducted by Theatron Shemesh. This was the group with which I spent the most time and with whom I had the chance to develop a rapport.

Theatron Shemesh has an annual "commune" which consists of Jewish Israeli and PCI teenagers. The participants are drawn from graduating high school seniors, and the commune takes place in the year before most Jewish Israelis would go to the army and the PCIs would either go to university or being working. The ages of the participants range from 17 to 19 years old. During the course of the year they live together as well as working to create plays and exercises to express their experience of the political situation in a creative and dramatic manner. With the help of their teachers and facilitators, most notably Dov Giladi whose interview is discussed in the following chapter, they learn different theatre techniques and practices such as mask-making, pantomime and Forum Theatre. It is their responsibility to learn how to work together and to create pieces that can be presented at festivals, for community children and as street theatre. The makeup of the group changes annually, with some groups stronger artistically or politically than others, but they are always encouraged to take on responsibility for interacting with the public as well as coming up with ideas for political drama.

Some of the early exercises they do are common theatre games such as Trust, Mirror and Pantomime; along with working in basic masks. These are widely used

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[82] Information and quotations in this section come from time spent with the Teatron Shemesh commune during my fieldwork. They are drawn from field notes and conversations. Discussions with children and youth were not recorded.

exercises (Spolin 1999, Barker 2010), but in a politically charged environment they can become more than they might otherwise seem.

Trust, which is also used outside of the theatre setting in outdoor education and corporate team building activities (Godfrey 1980, 47), involves a person with closed eyes standing in a circle of others. Slowly, keeping the body stiff, the "trusting person" falls and the others catch and push him or her back to centre. As the players get more comfortable the motion becomes very fluid, and with their feet fixed to the floor the person in the middle can fall and be passed around the group in a very smooth and controlled motion.

To play this game well requires trust in any situation – falling in the dark, even self imposed darkness, is difficult to do for most people – but if you add the political element then this game rises to a different level. This game, when played by members of ethnic groups who have been taught, either overtly or subliminally, that the other group is not trustworthy, can take on a deeper meaning. As Nussbaum explains, this is an emotional response (Nussbaum 2001, 4). Some of the youth I observed had a difficult time putting their trust in members of the "Other" ethnic group. Young PCI women, in particular, seemed to be uncomfortable being touched by Jewish Israeli boys, although this was a discomfort that was not formally discussed in the workshop I observed. Nussbaum says that emotions typically combine with cognitive evaluation, ideas about what is best for the self and the ways in which the environment impacts what is best for the self to provide "a way of registering how things are with respect to the external" (Nussbaum 2001, 4). This distrust is an emotional response to the *perceived* external, but the importance of the theatrical game in this instance is that it allows two discordant perceptions to be tempered by each other, reducing the perception of risk of both. There was a tendency to shy away from personal conversations in those situations, at least in front of a stranger. The group was much more open when able to discuss political scenarios in a removed way, without having to personalise situations, emotions or activities[83].

In Mirror, two people stand facing each other and one pretends to be the other's reflection. This exercise requires a great deal of focus to do well, the "reflection" has to pay close attention to the person they are following and in some cases, for example, when the move requires that the pair look away from each other, the "reflection" has to be attuned enough to their partner that he or she can almost predict the move. This exercise often leads to discussions about the identity of the performers, building on ideas of "reflection" and "seeing oneself in a mirror", seeing the "other" in the "self".

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[83] Author's filed notes, 22.09.08.

These discussions bring ideas of performativity to the fore and, despite the silence of the game of Mirror, Butler's ideas of "speech act". Her argument is that at a certain point, speech can be perceived almost as the action about which the speech is made (Butler 1997, 10). This idea can be extrapolated to performance: if an actor is performing, or mirroring, an 'Other' they can momentarily be seen as becoming that 'Other' – 'Self' and 'Other' merge.

In a workshop I observed, two young women, one Jewish Israeli the other PCI, were playing the Mirror game. They had been paired in this game before, and had developed a very close rapport, so close that they were able to anticipate what the other might do in a situation where they stood back to back. After they completed the exercise, the group was asked to discuss what went into forming so deep a bond, and what that bond meant both in terms of dramatic and political awareness. From the starting point of the dramatic – that performers who are more aware of each other on stage are more supportive and create a better, more cohesive performance troupe; the students were able to make the connection that developing and maintaining that level of connection with a member of an "Other" ethnic group offers a very visceral reminder of the similarities between "Self" and "Other". The most common view, when looking in a mirror, is oneself. When confronted by the Other when the Self is expected, ones' own identity is open to discussion. This pair of performers said that they had developed an ability to see themselves and each other within the movements of the game[84].

The exercise Contact Improvisation builds on skills developed in Mirror. In this exercise several people move in an unchoreographed "dance" in a given space, but must always remain in physical contact with each other. This requires even more focus and teamwork than Mirror. The point of the commune and the workshop exercises is not to belabor the point and force conversation; rather it is to provide the participants with ideas and opportunities to discuss them. Trust, Mirror and Contact Improvisation all provide these opportunities.

Another part of Teatron Shemesh involves working with masks. The students learn to make their own, but in addition to the technical skills they also act and play in them. With the exception of masks made for particular parts in plays, much of the work is done in a basic half mask – a *papier maché* piece that covers the actor from the forehead to the upper lip. This is usually custom made to the actor's face for comfort, and has exaggerated features at the whim of the maker. The mouth is left free for clarity in speaking.

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[84] Author's field notes, 22.09.08.

Teatron Shemesh encourages the participants to work with masks, especially early in the process. Working in a mask can help a beginning actor to leave him- or herself behind and get into character. It will allow an actor to adopt multiple roles and have many different relationships with other cast members[85]. First the commune participants perform a mimed sketch alone – they are usually given a word or item to start them off and then they perform their interpretation of that word: glue, rock, earth. Then they work together in similarly mimed pieces, still in masks, portraying feelings or objects. This work helps them learn rudiments of story-line development, as well as teaching them to work together and communicate on many levels and about many topics[86]. In this way the participants begin to learn or solidify the acting skills they will need later in the commune, and also begin to play with ideas of identity, performance and becoming. The most basic masks made in these workshops had an exaggerated forehead and brow-ridge, usually to convey an emotion: a furrowed brow for an anxious of confused character, or raised brows to convey surprise or alarm. Noses were also features that were accentuated and built up. The students did not discuss the influences that went into their choice of mask apart from discussions of emotion and how it might be conveyed. There was no discussion of the relationship between their personal and assumed identities, the design of the masks drew more on their observations of represented emotion than on similarities they saw between themselves and their characters[87]. This play with masks is a step toward embracing the fluidity of identity described by Campbell (Campbell 1998, 9). Since, as he says, both identity and difference are constituted in relation to each other, the students are able to assume new identities and new differences, not just emotions, with the donning of each different mask.

Both in their living situation and in their workshops the commune participants are encouraged to tell stories and work on their storytelling techniques. These stories can be traditional family stories or stories from their lived experiences. The point is to develop a sense for a story arc, engage with the audience in order to make the story live and, most importantly, to observe and learn from different storytelling styles[88]. These different types of storytelling are very interesting, and the comparisons are striking. In one instance a Jewish girl tells a story in Hebrew, sitting on a chair. She is using no props and is weaving the story around her audience solely with the drama of her voice. Then an Arab boy tells a story. He sits cross-legged on the floor and drapes a keffiyeh around his shoulders. He begins to talk as if he is inviting the audience into

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[85] Author's field notes, 23.09.08.
[86] Author's field notes, 23.09.08.
[87] Author's field notes, 23.09.08.
[88] Author's field notes, 21.09.08.

his home. His initial priority is to create the correct ambiance for telling the story around the audience – only once that environment is complete can he move to the next stage, to weave the story itself. As part of the ambiance he offers the audience coffee, a sign of hospitality. Despite the fact that the preparation is mimed using the pot and cups but no actual coffee, the act of the offering is an important part of the ritual and should not be left out. Whereas for the first storyteller the story itself is the most important part of the process, for the second teller the setting in which the story is told is as important as the tale[89]. This relates to Benjamin's discussion of storytelling as both communal and evocative (Benjamin 1999, 91). The second storyteller, by enacting a ritual of hospitality, created a communal space and, through that ritual, evoked – or intended to evoke – a shared memory of group identity.

Another game that the participants play is called Statues of Oppression. In this game a certain form of oppression is chosen as the subject, and then students take turns "arranging" their fellow commune members in a pose that reflects that oppression. Once the pose is agreed on the members take turns changing the arrangement to "build the ideal situation". I watched commune members act out two scenarios: "Oppression of Palestinians" and "Oppression of Women"[90].

In "Oppression of Palestinians" two students, a boy and a girl, were arranged by a third. The boy wore an Israeli flag and the girl wore a headscarf, as visual indicators of their roles in the game. The third student posed them so that the boy held a toy machine gun and the girl was on her knees in front of him. The boy's hand was placed on the girl's head, he pointed the gun at her and the girl's hands were posed to reach up in supplication and protest. In "Building the Ideal Situation" other students stepped in to rearrange the pair. It took several moves before the whole group was comfortable with the new scene: the girl stood up and the two were moved next to each other, with their arms around each other. First the boy's gun was pushed down to hang at his side, then another student removed it and placed it under their feet. In this game, in particular, the backgrounds of the "statues" are important. The boy is a Jewish Israeli and the girl is a PCI. The first student to pose them was a male PCI. When "creating the ideal situation" the changes were made equally by Jewish Israelis and PCIs, boys and girls. One of the most interesting things about this game was the indecision about what to do with the gun. Although it was an easy and immediate choice that it no longer point at the head of the Palestinian, it went through many other placements before ending on the floor. First it was arranged so that it was held by both, pointing forward, toward the observers. Then it was arranged to point straight

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[89] Author's field notes, 21.09.08.
[90] Author's field notes, 24.09.08.

up, in a stance associated with victory by the students, then hanging next to the boy's leg, pointing at the ground. The student who finally placed it on the ground under their feet was a Jewish Israeli girl. There was quite some discussion about the role of guns in the societies of the participants. Israeli children grow up in a culture where guns are enormously visible. The participants discussed the different way they feel about guns, the Jewish Israelis saying that, at least growing up, the volume of guns made them feel safe, they assumed they were there for their protection. The PCIs, on the other hand, were just as used to seeing guns, but did not necessarily associate them with safety and protection. It was after this conversation that the gun was finally removed from the "picture" and placed underfoot. The participant who did this said she hoped they would be able to move beyond guns[91].

In "Oppression of Women" many students participated in the initial arrangement of the statues. A boy stood in front, tall and talking on a cell phone. The girl crouched behind him, bent over, carrying a suitcase and a pack. She had a scarf that was used in many ways to indicate both her subservience and her tie to the man. After several different moves, in which the scarf was draped around her neck like a halter and also draped over her hair like a headcovering, it was finally tied to her hair and the boy held it as a means of control. In "Building the Ideal Situation" they were arranged so they sat on the ground, side by side, with their faces turned towards each other, smiling. The scarf was used as a connection between them – over their shoulders or in their hands[92].

I observed less discussion around this scenario than the first, and what I did observe was relatively light-hearted. It seemed as though, in the first scenario, the participants all felt a personal connection to the oppression of the Palestinians. There was a serious, personal aspect to the discussion as if they had all seen and experienced the societal price paid for this oppression. With the second scenario it was as if the participants were depicting something they had seen but not experienced directly. It is possible that, because of their backgrounds, the participants felt that oppression of women was something that happens in the conservative and religious parts of their societies, and not to them[93].

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[91] Author's field notes, 24.09.08.
[92] Author's field notes, 24.09.08.
[93] Author's field notes, 24.09.08.

What a Wonderful World We Can Make

In addition to drama exercises and a personal experience with co-existence, the participants in the commune are expected to write and perform dramas that raise awareness in the greater populations. These can take the form of Forum Theatre productions for audiences in various communities, plays for children, performances at activism or theatre festivals and street theatre. In this section I will discuss a Forum Theatre production in Petah Tikvah that addressed racism in Israel, an overtly political parable about the war in Lebanon that was performed at a festival in Acco and a piece of street theatre aimed at the political situation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Forum Theatre: Changing Reality Through Theatre[94]

This play is designed to address the racism against Ethiopian immigrants and their children that is present in Israeli society. It was presented to a group of local residents in Petah Tikvah, a place that has had significant problems with the integration of Ethiopian students into the school system.

In the first scene a teacher tells the principal that white parents won't let their children come to school because there are four Ethiopian students there. The principal agrees to the white parents demands to keep the Ethiopian students out of school. In the second scene a white mother is embarrassed because her daughter wants to play with an Ethiopian girl. The girl eventually pulls her hand away from her mother and goes over to play with the Ethiopian child. After a lot of shouting, the mother finally drags here away from her playmate. In the third scene an Ethiopian mother speaks to the principal. Although the mother is quiet and keeps her temper the principal is stubborn and will not change her mind or explain her decision. The Ethiopian mother does not confront the white parents.

After viewing this short play the audience was invited to watch it again and change the story line when they chose. In this case, the actor playing the principal acted as the Joker. When the play started, this time the audience asked that the principal not give in to the white parents' demands. In keeping with the tenets of Forum Theatre, the actor playing the principal then started a conversation with the white parents, in which role she cast the audience. By requiring the audience to take on a role they also had a chance to "try on" additional identities – they were encouraged to take on roles that had been identified in the debate raging in their communities about schooling for the Ethiopian children. Once she pushed the audience members to articulate many sides of the argument, the actor playing the

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[94] Author's field notes, 22.09.08.

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principal then invited the actor playing the Ethiopian mother to speak to the "white parents" about how she felt when her children were kept out of school, and her other feelings about being in a racist society. This time she was not afraid of the other parents, and took advantage of the opportunity to speak to them and explain her perspective.

This play is particularly interesting because it addresses issues of racism in Israeli society in a context that is completely removed from the situation with the Palestinians. Not only did the commune actors play with their identities in the play, but the audience was also encouraged to question their assumptions about the identities of the actors and their own identities – they were encouraged to act out the arguments that surround them. The commune members staged the political and encouraged a political debate through a theatrical medium. By participating in change in this way the audience was able to conceive of a changed reality, a change that theatre has helped them to consider.

Although this was not discussed at the time, it was interesting that the identities of the actors did not become a factor with the audience. All the participants were seen as actors – their Jewish or Palestinian identities subsumed in this larger one. This is interesting because, perhaps, the audience either momentarily forgot or ceased to care about one politically charged identity because of their focus on a different one. This was an interesting example of a shifting identity[95] as described by Campbell (Campbell 1998, 9).

Wolfland[96]

Wolfland is a play written by members of the commune as a commentary on the Israeli Army's actions in Lebanon and originally intended as a play for children. It is a politicized adaptation of the Little Red Riding Hood story, and as the group worked with the material they began to feel that it was not appropriate for children. After some discussion, they decided to perform it as street theatre at the activism festival that was held in Acco where it was well received. The setting is the scene of an attack, cordoned off with caution tape. Several actors portraying reporters stand in front of the tape speaking into cell phones or microphones as if they are on the news or calling a story into a newspaper. The story they are reporting is very confused and changes over time. First they are reporting the death of a family in an unspecified "attack". A character in military fatigues and a wolf mask, speaking for the "official" news outlet,

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[95] Author's field notes, 26.09.08. This thought occurred retrospectively and therefore was not discussed with the audience.
[96] Author's field notes, 21.09.08.

the Voice of Wolfland, does not deny the attack and expresses sorrow for the deaths – but does not apologize. Then the reporters hear that the story has changed, most of the family was away and the dead number only two – a child and her grandmother. The child, it is reported, was wearing a red cap. It becomes clear, through the reporting, that the Voice of Wolfland views the Red Caps as a terrorist organization. Meanwhile, since this is street theatre, there are groups of actors in the audience who don red caps or hijab and begin shouting slogans and protesting. They are chased away by more people in military uniforms with wolf masks. Then a reporter, who has been speaking with the Voice of Wolfland, reports that it has been discovered that Red Cap (no longer referred to as a child) wanted to die in order to harm the image of Wolfland and hid behind her grandmother when the representatives of Wolfland came to get her. No explanation is given for why she might have wanted to do this. Gradually the reporting gets more confused and fragmented – and the official story makes less and less sense. Finally, amidst renewed protests of people wearing red caps and carrying signs the story changes yet again – to a complete denial of the existence of Red Cap and her grandmother.

This play, while not very subtle, nonetheless made a mark at the festival. It was widely felt to be very well done, although neither subtle nor objective in its storytelling. Although it certainly does not provide much analysis of the political situation, it does present the audience with the spectre of a government controlled media and shows how "news" and the audience's understanding of it can easily be manipulated. Some audience members at the festival, while commenting repeatedly on the play's lack of subtlety, also said that such blatant work might be what is needed since, on occasion, subtlety is wasted when it comes to making a political point in opposition to the *status quo*.

Biladi-Tikvah[97]
Biladi-Tikvah is another piece of street theatre presented by the commune in outdoor locations in the north of Israel, generally in city centres. The action starts off with an actor in black wearing white makeup presenting what looks like a regular mime performance. He interacts with the audience and gets them to relax and laugh by enlisting one or another of then to come and help him with parts of his act. The last one he chooses is a "plant", an actor disguised as an audience member, and after a mimed motorcycle ride and other activities she says that she loves him. This gives the mime a voice and while he is excitedly explaining to the audience about his new

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[97] Author's field notes, 21.09.08.

relationship, another actor comes up and begins to woo the girl. This results in the expected exchange between the two male characters – a disagreement and fight. In a lull in the fight the second male character introduces the girl to the audience, saying "This is Tikvah[98]. Let's see what Tikvah can do". Tikvah begins to sing "ha-Tikvah", the Israeli national anthem. In response to this the first actor begins to sing "Biladi", the Palestinian national anthem[99]. The fight between the two men intensifies, and they are joined by two actors dressed as clowns but wearing pieces of military clothing as well. These clowns encourage the two men to fight, egging them on when they seem to be tired. Meanwhile Tikvah stands in the middle, upset and unsure what to do.

Another character enters, dressed in a white robe with the hem spattered with blood. This character moves slowly around the scene and through the audience, shouting "Blood! Blood!" Eventually she stands on a box behind Tikvah and continues shouting at intervals. During the fight between the two men Tikvah is injured and falls to the ground. After a brief moment of sorrow, the men redouble their fight until they eventually kill each other, on either side of Tikvah's body. At this the white robed figure leaves and slowly Tikvah revives. She walks, attended loosely by the two clowns, around the audience, but now she is bent and crippled. She holds out her hands to the audience members, asking wordlessly for aid.

Both this play and *Wolfland* are street theatre in its clearest form so there is no discussion with the audience afterwards and there is no program with a discussion or explanation of the aims of the piece. Audience members are left to take from the experience what they will. The students were trying to express their frustration with the circular, and pointless, nature of the political situation without resorting to overly wordy speeches or dialogue[100]. It is impossible to say, from this experience, whether the group or the play itself was "successful", since it is not clear how "success" would be measured in this case. The audience, however, did not disperse once the action went from the humorous mime performance of the beginning to the overt political commentary that was the meat of the piece. If anything, more people stopped to watch and stayed through to the end. What they took from the experience cannot be captured in a situation like this, but judging from conversation as the crowd dispersed the performance had sparked both thought and debate. People seemed interested in the word play around *tikvah* and were most struck by the destructive force that the conflict had on "hope".

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[98] Tikvah means "hope" in Hebrew.
[99] Biladi means "my country" in Arabic. Technically, the name of the Palestinian anthem is Fida'i, which means "revolutionary", but Biladi is the first word of the song.
[100] Author's field notes, 23.09.08.

These images from fieldwork illustrate some of the ways in which the political is enacted by the theatrical, using the theatrical as a mediative site (Debrix and Weber 2003). Whether it is through the exploration of identities through masks (fluid identity in Campbell 1998), the blurring of Self and Other through the Mirror game (performativity and the "speech act" in Butler 1997) or through interaction with audience members in Forum or street theatre (Boal 1979), these students have been embodying the political using theatrical tools. The next chapter will explore, in greater depth and with greater analysis, the purposes of the theatrical moment. In that chapter the focus will be on the interviews conducted with adults – actors, playwrights and administrators, all of whom have devoted their lives to a combination of the theatrical and the political.

CHAPTER 5
THEATRE UNDER OCCUPATION: "THIS MACHINE KILLS FASCISTS"

> *Theatre can […] be a place of important political struggles and events of far wider scope than the number of seats in the auditorium would indicate. Beware of underestimating the theatre! The theatre is both a Shakespearean mirror of the world and also a lens that focuses the rays of many suns. And a lens can start a fire.*
>
> ~Zygmunt Hübner, *Theatre and Politics*

When Woody Guthrie, the Weavers, or the Almanac Singers appeared at Union Halls across America in the 1930s there was no question in their minds that they were engaged in political acts, and certainly the trouble they encountered with the police would seem to indicate that representatives of the government agreed that these artists were advocates of, if not catalysts for, political change[101]. Indeed, the slogan that Guthrie wrote on his guitar, and from which this chapter takes its subtitle, shows that he viewed himself, his music and his instrument as a political tool, if not a weapon[102]. Although there are clear parallels in the contemporary music scene, with artists like Bono and Sting using their fame and influence to raise awareness of political issues, my research interests led me to look elsewhere for performers engaged in political activity through their art.

Because of my twinned interest in emotion and identity, I am particularly interested in the roles that performance plays in societies in conflict. Conflict, particularly ethnic conflict, is closely related to how people perceive themselves and others (identity) and the responses they have to the differences they see in those perceptions (emotion) (Horowitz 1985, Weiner 1998, Moaz 2004). Under those circumstances, what are the kinds of things that theatre can *do*? Performer and playwright Anna Deavere Smith, in her book *Talk To Me*, describes her initial impressions of the American Conservatory Theatre training program thus:

> We were […] all there to study identity, change identities, to learn to "be". There are a variety of ways to describe what acting is. "Being," "Seeming," "Becoming," "Lying," "Truth Telling," "Magic," "Transforming." We were going to learn how to talk to each other onstage, and through all of this how to take our own special message to the world (Smith 2000, 7-8).

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[101] An account of the violence levelled at union organisers and their supporters during this period in American history can be found in Woody Guthrie's *Seeds of Man*.
[102] Through the use of this slogan it is not my intention to imply that Israel is a fascist state, merely to show the awareness that many artists have of the political impact of their work. Woody Guthrie and the slogan on his guitar are simply well-known images showing the artist's conviction of the political import of his work.

As this passage makes clear, acting can be described in many ways, and there is a certain exploratory aspect to the training. It is also, to draw on this chapter's epigram, about communicating something, passing on words, emotions and ideas so the receiver imbibes the experience alongside the description. It is this emotionally communicative ability that makes dramatic performance such a valuable site of the political, and it is the exploratory nature of the process that makes theatre training so important when addressing issues of conflict.

In the previous chapter I described youth workshops, acting games and performances that I witnessed during my 2008 fieldwork. This chapter will focus on the interviews with adults, some of them supervisors for the youth groups described previously. I have a professional background in the performing arts, and so am able to "speak the language" of theatre, meeting performers and arts administrators on their own ground. During my field work I met and spoke with people in venues ranging from cafés to boardrooms to family living rooms, travelled the length and breadth of both Israel and the Palestinian Territories, and consumed countless cups of coffee as an aid to conversation[103].

One topic that it was impossible to get away from was that of identity – and not just in structured interviews. As I discussed in the previous chapter, identity in this region is complex and ever-present: it is not uncommon to find oneself discussing it with a stranger in casual conversation on an intercity bus or train ride, and the permutations and subsets of identity are seemingly endless. It is so commonplace a topic that it is easy to forget that it is not so everywhere. One of the people I interviewed described a memorable experience when he, together with a Palestinian colleague, was on a panel at a conference in Japan on the effect that the Separation Wall had on identity formation. After they finished their presentations there was silence – no questions. But as they packed up and were getting ready to leave, several audience members came up to speak to them. Chen said he was talking with them until very late that night, answering questions because they did not understand the concept of a fluid identity. This was the first inkling, Chen said, of a culture in which identity was a birthright that was fixed: you were either born Japanese or you weren't, it was not something you could adopt. He said it was the oddest feeling, to realise, through speaking to people, just how strange his comfort with multiple, shifting identities was for his listeners – as unusual as their fixed, unshifting identity was for him (Chen Tietlebaum, interview 04.10.08).

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[103] This is true with the exception of Gaza, to which I was not allowed to go for University insurance reasons.

It seems odd to think of Israel and Palestine as a site of shifting identities, especially when Israel is so often referred to as an apartheid state, which would seem to dictate that identities be fairly well fixed. And in some ways they are. As will become apparent from the discussion of some of the conversations I had in Tulkarem and Be'it Sahour, Palestinians do not seem to have as fluid a series of identities as Jewish Israelis, possibly, at least in part, because their physical movement is quite strictly controlled. However, as we saw in the Chapter 3, audiences often have difficulties telling apart "Eastern" Jews and Palestinians on stage, a difficulty which causes blurring along the lines of perceived, if not actual, identity formation.

As was discussed in the introduction and first chapter, Fattah and Fierke offer a powerful call for the integration of emotion into the study of international politics. In their work they are closely concerned with questions of dignity and humiliation, arguing that understanding the emotional component of international relations is an important part of restoring dignity to those for whom humiliation has been the catalyst for violence. The question that most concerns this project is: how can that dignity be restored? The answer to this must surely be in at least two parts, for if dignity is lost through the loss of independence and agency, then it can only be regained through action, it cannot be restored by another. But what sort of action? The historical answer has been violence, but there are other ways too. Rather than erasing the humiliation in bloodshed, theatre can allow actors to transform an event that brought about humiliation into a source of pride. This idea will be developed further in the discussion of my interviews which addressed the uses of performance in identity creation under occupation, as well as in altering perceptions of the self and others.

I conducted several interviews during the course of my fieldwork, and gathered a substantial amount of material: hours of audio recordings, a book of journal entries, video recordings, articles, and photographs. In sorting through this material, it quickly became clear that I had far too much information for one chapter or, indeed, for one thesis – although some of the information that does not make into this project may well form the basis for future work. In this chapter I focus on the contents of four sets of interviews, two with Jewish Israelis and two with Palestinians (one Christian, the other Muslim). I did not choose these interviews to achieve a religious, ethnic or national balance, but because they offer interesting counterpoints to each other – while all agreeing on the importance of theatre on a political level[104].

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[104] It should be noted that all my interview subjects agreed on the inherently political aspect to their work, both as individuals and collectively. I chose not to include certain interviews for various reasons, but none because they disproved my main argument.

Of the two interviews with Israelis, one takes a nationalist approach, and the other specifically does not. These differences highlight divisions within Israeli society, the divisions between those who support a two-state solution and those who feel a single, inclusive state is the only way to achieve long-term peace. Interestingly, these were the first and last interviews I did, book-ending my fieldwork between opposing Israeli viewpoints.

THEATRE INSIDE THE GREEN LINE

My first interview was with Dov Giladi. We met at a café in Lev ha Mifratz, near Haifa. Originally from Switzerland, Dov has trained in acting, teaching and direction, and has had significant involvement in both the Jewish-Arab Youth movement and the Peace Movement. These things gave him the necessary background and skills to embark on what he thinks of as the most important chapters of his life to date: he founded and, for six years, ran the group called Teatron Shemesh, the structure of which was described in chapter 4. From the beginning there were two major challenges: finding money and finding Arabs who were willing to participate. Funding was a problem for many reasons: the group fell between the cracks of traditional funding bodies as the project was both cultural and political. In the post-Oslo climate, funding for cooperative projects was stopped, with the bulk of funding going to work for Arab cohesion/identity building. In addition, Israel had a Sharon government, and in the United States there was, post 2000, the Bush Administration, so there was very little support, either nationally or internationally for work like Teatron Shemesh. The very basic principle of the project was that it should be a mixed group each year, Jews and PCIs, and finding PCI teenagers who were both interested and had the relevant background was difficult. Dov explained that in Israeli schools, even the religious ones, there are some arts or theatre programs. There are between 160 and 170 schools around the country that offer theatre and drama to their students, through high school. There are, however, only two Arab schools that offer similar programs. In addition, the idea of taking a year off is accepted in Israel, whereas for most PCIs this is seen as a waste of time. Additionally, there is the difficulty of language. Dov felt it was very important for the program to be bilingual, but it is not uncommon for PCI youngsters to have very little Hebrew, and for Jewish Israeli youngsters to have no Arabic at all. The difference is that often the PCIs are embarrassed that their Hebrew is poor, whereas the Jewish students feel no embarrassment about their lack of Arabic. This exacerbates a pre-existing power dynamic within the group. Finally, theatre does not draw on a significant cultural grounding in Arab society, which is better known for

storytelling as a form of performance[105]. All of these factors contributed to this being a difficult program to sustain at the level on which it was envisioned.

According to Dov, the political situation also contributes to this, because one of the reasons there are no departments of theatre in Arab high schools in Israel is that there are no Arab actors or directors (PCI or otherwise) who would enter such a school (Dov, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz). This was the first time I interjected the issues of separation into the conversation and Dov's response was:

> We don't speak at all about the West Bank or Gaza. It's really, so separated. I mean especially [since] 1991. I don't know if you know it, but before Oslo began, in 1991, after or during the Gulf War […], Israeli government began with the whole politics of separation and, I mean the Wall that they are building now, it is just the physical image of what began in 1991. And it continued more in the years of Oslo. It became more and more difficult to travel. […] The fact that this project is not Israeli/Palestinian in terms of the West Bank, it is also a political statement, not only a technical problem. I say when you focus on Israeli-Palestinian cooperation between Israel and the West Bank, there is like a message that we have to build peace, two states, between Israel and the West Bank, and that's a lie. That's a lie because it is one country and the Palestinian problem is one big problem and that includes Palestinians from here and of course the refugees in Lebanon and so on and so on. There is a process, beginning in the First Intifada, to focus on the West Bank and Gaza, but that doesn't mean the solution to the problem will be a Palestinian state in the West Bank. […] I'm not a friend of the so-called solution of two states. It's a slogan the Soviets built in '47, it's a nationalist slogan, I'm not nationalist. (Dov, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz)

This is really a very major political statement, one which can draw fire from many of even the most left wing Israelis. It is widely accepted that, in order to preserve the Jewish character of Israel, the Two State Solution is the only viable alternative. It is rare to even hear the idea of one state discussed with any seriousness. Nonetheless, Dov is convinced that one state is, ultimately, the only way to achieve peace. As such, his decision to draw on the PCI community rather than attempting cross-border work is overtly political, and also raises issues of identity. Jewish Israelis are used to being able to equate those two aspects of their identities (an Israeli, in their lexicon, is Jewish). Within a program like Teatron Shemesh, however, that identity gets questioned and expanded. This questioning and expansion is the intent of the theatre games like Mirror, discussed in the previous chapter.

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[105] As Dov explained it, there were two important centres of Arab theatre: Egypt and Lebanon. But the beginning of the Arab theatre was in the 19th century, and productions were of translations of Shakespeare or Moliere, but still this kind of performance was very rare. The Arab equivalent was storytelling. And even once Arab theatre started to gain in prominence, in 1948 the whole top of the Palestinian pyramid went away – and some of the base as well. All the political, economic, cultural basis was gone and the people left had to start again. In the 1970s theatre started in Nazareth, Haifa, and later, very slowly, in East Jerusalem, but it doesn't have the kind of deep history in the society, and it isn't seen as necessary or important.

The purpose of the commune year in Teatron Shemesh is to get a mixed group of teenagers to live together and interact, but also to do theatre together, to work with people two days a week by taking performance to the public sphere through guerrilla theatre, a play for a school, or a project using Boal's Forum theatre. The idea is to try to engage people, make them think about the situation differently, challenge them, make them question their political preconceptions and try to envision change. To foster this engagement, Teatron Shemesh uses Boal's Forum theatre technique on several occasions. Dov's feeling is that, when you have a good group of actors, Forum is the best way of dealing with conflict that he has found so far. The Joker has to be very good, to be able to keep the conversation on track. When the audience stops the action and wants to change the story, change direction, the Joker has to be careful to always take it back to the stage, let the actors play out the new scenario and not allow the audience to get too involved in a discussion. The point of Forum is to let the audience envision a new or different way to see the world, the political situation – but then to let them actually see it, not merely talk about it. In the example of Forum Theatre discussed in chapter 4, the audience was able to actually see the impact of the politics of racism. They saw different realities on stage, and participated in a change by taking part in the new scenario being enacted at their direction. After the play, when the session is over, then people can go, have a coffee and talk about things, but the point of Forum is the performance, to work things out through action, to actually present a different form of reality.

In terms of the impact of the groups – it is difficult to say what the long term impact will be after only six years, but there *is* an immediate impact. Of the Jewish commune members, very few go to the army – this is their choice, there is no policy to try to get them not to go. Of the PCI participants, some want to do civil service afterwards, a decision that can cause controversy within their communities. From both sides there is blame levelled at groups like Teatron Shemesh, parents and communities criticise the fact that after participation their children make choices that are not in keeping with the more commonly accepted social norm[106]. Although this blame can be disquieting for the group, it does show that the group is working, is changing the viewpoints of its participants and, ultimately, impacting the choices they make in their lives. This demonstrates in practice what Horowitz (1985), Weiner (1998) and Moaz (2004) say in theory about the importance that members of groups in conflict getting to

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[106] Certainly among Jewish Israelis, the years of military service are seen as a national obligation, and often as the key to success in the future. Many prospective employers ask to see a job applicants' service record as part of the hiring process.

know each other has on changing the way they see the 'Other' and think outside of the situation.

One question I asked all my interviewees was what they saw as the purpose of theatre. I was interested in the range of responses, particularly since I was interviewing both artists and administrators who would, necessarily, have different perspectives. When I asked Dov this question he replied:

> […] to create something better. Really, to create. […] Because theatre, unlike other things you can do, it is something living, […] it is something physical. It is not only staging things, it is making things real. […] But when I make theatre it's to make a better world, really, I still believe there will be a better world, not today, not tomorrow, not in a year or two/three years, it probably will take quite a time, probably it will take some 20, perhaps 30, years. (*laughs*) I probably will not see it (Dov, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz).

This was a major statement. Another interviewee said that theatre projects "are crystal balls of how relations could be, not what is happening – you see people cooperating on stage" (Mark Guttman, 24.09.08, Shala'am Center). But "crystal ball" implies divination, a potential prediction of the future, but one which might not be realized. To say that theatre can create a better world showed a depth of belief and commitment that I had not expected. Of course, this was only one person, but the attitude was one that I heard echoed more than once, although often in less optimistic terms. To perform the political situation as it exists was not something that many actors or theatre groups wished to do. To show the world as it *could* be was to almost will it into being through the force of art.

When asked how theatre might go about achieving this, Dov said that there were many ways in which theatre could challenge the audience and make it move, "both physically and mentally". As a theatre artist he is a big believer in physical movement, if you engage the audience on that level they are no longer passive observers, but participants in the vision. It is also easier, usually, to move people physically than mentally, so involving audience members in physical movement is a good place to start the process of change. Forum theatre, where the audience, after the scenario is acted out once, suggest ways to alter the situation, is one method of making participants out of observers. This process empowers the audience, allowing them to feel their power in a practical, as well as theoretical, way.

In terms of "mental movement", our discussion came back to identity. As an actor, director, theatre teacher, writer, and translator, Dov is not interested in taking something from the audience, meaning he does not want merely to reflect their existence back to them. He believes that:

> everybody is a big, big palette of many identities. And the more you have, the more you are – the better. […] I want to show you another world, to give you

[something] in addition. […] I show you that the different identities you have, they have different values. [For example, when] you sit here, you are sitting as a woman, you're sitting as … Jewish, Palestinian, theatre person, political person, academic and so on – what's [most] important in your identity? What's now, in this situation now, what is the most prominent, important, for you? What I can do is to say "ok, you think that is very, very important for you, but don't forget you are also: all these other things." […] I think this is also what theatre can do and, it can raise people up with new identities, with new views of things. (Dov, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz).

One of the things often cited as good or important in "person-to-person" peace initiatives is that, through personal contact, participants begin to see "the Other" as also being human. In Dov's view, this is a small victory – so small as to be almost no victory at all. In his opinion, the greater victory is "if you meet the Other and you discover that you are also a little bit like *him*". What is it in the Other that resonates with your life, your experience? For Dov, it is key to be able to recognize the Other in ourselves, and the ability to help the audience achieve that is an important skill for actors. The greatest gift theatre can give its audience is "to be open, [because] we are surrounded by walls. To be more open." (Dov, interview 21.09.08, Lev ha Mifratz).

This idea of openness, of freedom from walls, could not have been more different from the ideas expressed in my final interview. Nor could Dov's anti-nationalist stance been further from the Zionist ideology held by the Israeli non-government organisation (NGO) of which my final interview subject was a representative. Whereas the first interview took place in a crowded and noisy café with an anti-nationalist theatre artist, the last took place in the office of Ehud Sharansky, the deputy director general of the Shalom Foundation, a major, Zionist NGO. Despite the fact that the non-governmental status of the latter was clear, the difference between "politics" and "the political", as represented by these two interviewees, could not have been more vividly illustrated. Dov was deeply engaged with the personal impact of the political situation, the quality of his language and behaviour was pure creativity, raw emotion. He seemed to accept nothing as a given, aiming his work at an idealistic goal with an intensity that defied a more traditional "reality". Ehud, on the other hand, was much more circumspect. His language was controlled; he spoke to me as a senior academic to a junior, not as one theatre professional to another[107], it was difficult to discern any passion for the work, despite the fact that he said that people only do this kind of work if they care about it deeply.

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[107] This is not surprising, as he is not a professional theatre artist. Rather he is an administrator and director of programs. However, the tone of this interview was much more *clinical* than the others. Even making allowances for the fact that the subject was rushed, there was a distinctly *intellectual* feel to this conversation, with very little *emotional* engagement. This NGO operates by hiring professionals in the various fields with which they work. These professionals are often rehired, but they are freelancers, not staff of the NGO itself.

The Foundation is not a political organization, and Ehud is not a political operative, so he is not an example of "politics" in the most traditional sense of the term. However, it felt to me, after weeks of talking to a variety of artists and administrators, that should there be a continuum between "high" and "low" politics, this organization would fall closer to "high" politics than not.

Part of the stated vision of the Shalom Foundation is an ultimate Two State solution. In keeping with this vision, there is a great deal of focus on cross-border work, cooperative productions that bring Palestinians into Israel to perform with Israelis, in front of Israeli audiences[108]. In Ehud's view, the purpose of the Foundation's activities should be to redesign the Green Line, and it is not in keeping with their vision to work with PCIs. In his opinion there is an important difference between PCIs and Palestinians – the Arabs who live inside Israel are Israelis, and the fact that they are not treated properly, while a big problem, is a *different* issue from the problem of the people living outside the Green Line[109].

The Shalom Foundation deals with civil societies, because it believes that there is an historical precedent which shows that peace made solely by governments is doomed to fail (Ehud Sharansky, interview 7.10.08). To this end, its work is aimed at engaging people in the process of making peace so that when the treaty is eventually signed the people will be able to complete the work that their governments have started. In this way the Foundation shows an awareness of the power of "the political", using the theatrical moment as a way to broaden political awareness and participation.

In addition, the Foundation sponsors plays aimed at showing Israeli audiences the reality of the Palestinian situation. They believe that "the medium is the message", that the very structure of the cast of a mixed play conveys a lesson to the audience. If, for example, there is a security closure and the Palestinian actor cannot get to the theatre from the West Bank then that performance is cancelled. The policy is to not replace the actor with a PCI, or a Jewish Israeli – by demonstrating the reality of the Palestinian existence (subject to the closures of the border, regardless of personal work commitments), they increase the audience's awareness of the situation in a personalized way (Ehud Sharansky, interview 7.10.08). It is unclear how effective this

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[108] There was no mention of Israeli actors joining performances in the West Bank or Gaza. This might be because, as an Israeli NGO, they feel their job is to bring things to Israeli audiences, but it might also be because of perceived security concerns. It was suggested that I approach the Foundation for assistance in travel to the West Bank and was simply told not to go for reasons of security.

[109] It is worth noting that, while this is a perspective that has some political merit, it can put the Palestinians who have to cross the border repeatedly in a situation of great stress. It is also an option that is not necessarily open to less politically savvy (or well funded) organizations that do not have the ability to arrange for cross border passes or facilitate travel permit applications.

is, since the Foundation does not keep data on their audiences. Given the political nature of the Foundation the audiences are probably self-selecting – they come expecting to be educated politically. The policy does not seem to address, however, the more subtle ideas that were mentioned in Chapter 4, for example, the fact that audience members are sometimes unsure about which actors play which parts – confusing a Palestinian or a PCI actor with a Jewish one.

The Foundation has three different initiatives, all focusing on children and youth. The program that addresses the youngest children shows relatively simple stories using a mixed cast. These plays are often bilingual in Hebrew and Arabic, showing the children that people who do not speak the language can "manage to communicate, they like each other, manage to work together, touch one another, and are friends. This is the strongest message that you can convey to children." (Ehud Sharansky, interview 7.10.08). The point of this project is to get the children to consider "the wall in [their] heart[s]", the wall that grows from lack of communication and knowledge. After seeing the performance the children are encouraged to draw their reactions and feelings about this "wall", the psychological barriers between people. This draws on ideas of psychosocial theatre referenced by Schinina (2004), encouraging people who have suffered violence to both absorb from and create an artistic response to conflict.

The second program is for teenagers and involves more facilitation. It uses Forum theatre. The initial play is quite short, with a cast of five: two Jewish Israelis, one PCI and two Palestinians. The plot is drawn from the experiences of the cast members, and involves themes of coexistence, themes which are demonstrated onstage through the medium of the mixed cast. For the second part of this experience there are two Jokers, one Jewish Israeli and one Palestinian, who guide the cast through the suggested changes of the audience. This, again, uses performance as a way to *show* different ideas, providing a way for audience members and actors alike to actually enact different resolutions to long-standing problems often considered intractable.

The third program is an expansion of the second, and involves pairings between Israeli and Palestinian Authority schools for six months.   Students in these schools are first given workshops in "the values of peace" and in theatre in which they are guided through examinations of social issues such as family, community and gender, as well as concepts directly related to the conflict. As part of this first part they are required to participate in a Forum theatre performance like the one described above. After these workshops, the two groups meet with each other, under the guidance of facilitators who have been working with them throughout (a Jewish Israeli facilitator works with the Israeli students and a Palestinian facilitator works with the Palestinians). The groups have two meetings, after which there is a final event – usually a joint

performance to which all their parents are invited. As part of the final session the students participate in a discussion in which they are encouraged to talk about the experience. Although many are reluctant to participate in the program at first, at the end they are usually glad they have done it. Many who participated in both the pilot project and the following groups have spoken of the experience as emotionally moving, and said it opened their eyes to "their other sides" – which may show an awareness of what Dov referred to as "the Other in me".

As seems to always be the trouble, funding is in short supply for the arts. The Foundation draws the majority of its funding from foreign organisations, which are more likely to fund work specifically within the Green Line. In most of their projects, the Foundation collaborates with one or several partners – usually the Palestinian Authority which they see as being the most viable partner at the core of the conflict (Ehud Sharansky, interview 7.10.08). The biggest frustration cited by Ehud was that the scarcity of funding for these sorts of projects means that it is only possible to do a tiny fraction of the work that needs to be done. He said:

> If you do very little, you won't have an impact, and if you don't have impact, it is not because the activity is not right, it is because there is not enough money in order to do more. If you do a little, it is like a drop in the sea because the general climate is not consistent with what we are trying to do. […] for example we have worked a lot with youths. Youths they get the messages from the media, and their parents and schools, and messages that we try to convey such as what are the values of peace, tolerance, […] respect for the other, equality. Things like that are not consistent with the general climate. So it's very difficult to get through, and we need to [do] a lot in order to have any impact. (Ehud Sharansky, interview 7.10.08)

This frustration is echoed, in some form, throughout my interviews. People who use theatre as a way to reach people politically, to "move" them, can see the impact that it has on the participants. They can sense the emotional connection and see the attitudes begin to change, and therefore they know that their work helps. There is not enough money available to do as much as would be needed to change the minds of the majority of the population, nor is it likely that Israeli, or Palestinian, society is ready for that much change so quickly. Despite the differences in their political philosophy and approach, though, both Ehud and Dov share a conviction in the importance of creativity in the ultimate solution of the conflict. How they do it and the point of their involvement may differ, but they are united in their belief in the ability of theatre to reach the deep emotional roots of identity and conflict and give those roots a voice.

Theatre in Palestine is, for a number of reasons, substantially different from theatre in Israel. All of the same issues, such as funding woes and the low priority accorded to arts of any kind, apply there, but are magnified in direct proportion to the severity of the political situation. As has been mentioned before, theatre does not have a strong history in Palestinian or Arab society, so in addition to the other issues Palestinian theatre artists are trying to introduce a relatively new art form to an overwhelmed, depressed and angry population. Interviewing in Palestine can present its own challenges. Transportation is difficult to arrange and timing almost impossible to keep to because of road blocks, checkpoints and the unpredictability of pretty much everything that impacts a schedule. People may be wary of, or downright hostile towards, foreigners for a variety of reasons, few of them personal. The overwhelming stress of living in a situation where movement is strictly curtailed, often without warning and for no apparent reason, takes its toll on the population in a myriad of ways. The most common are the usual stress-based illnesses (depression, heart disease, high blood pressure), but unexplained symptoms are present, too. It is not uncommon for people, when asked for an explanation of their condition to shrug and say "it's the situation". Add to this the level of complexity that comes from me being an American woman, and the interview process, while hugely rewarding, should be understood to have been tricky. I met with two different theatre groups in two different cities in Palestine: Tulkarem and Be'it Sahour.

The interviews at Theatre Now in Tulkarem were the toughest I did. This was partly because of the length of the interviews, but mostly because of their content and the experiences of the interviewees. I was unprepared for the emotional impact that conducting highly difficult or sensitive interviews would have on me and had been given no suggestions for ways to protect myself from the force of emotion that was inevitable when discussing deeply painful subjects. I have found that the best way to get people to say what they have to say is to leave myself very open to a dialogue of emotions as well as words, which means that I rely on cues given to me by the person in order to know when to ask what. It also means that I have to be very present, emotionally, in the interview – if I adopt a flat affect and give nothing of myself in return the interview dries up very quickly. This is the case with nearly everyone, but is most noticeable with actors, for whom emotional exchange is a currency with which they are familiar and on which they rely. The difficulty with this, particularly when there is no break to recover, is that I became emotionally exhausted and started to lose myself in the emotional flood. For this reason, the interviews I conducted in Tulkarem were the most challenging, but also the most rewarding, of my fieldwork.

Theatre Now is a relatively new initiative in Tulkarem. It began in 2008 and is the brainchild of four men – an administrator and three teacher/actors. I interviewed the administrator and two of the actors, the third was in Jordan. Despite a deep conviction on the part of the founders that theatre is an important part of surviving the situation with their humanity intact, it has been difficult to gain a foothold in the community. Tulkarem is very conservative – it is the only place I went during my field work where I was more comfortable with my hair covered – and gaining the trust of local people has been a battle, even though all the founders are local themselves. The administrator, Daut Suleiman, said:

> [This is] a very conservative community, it is not like Ramallah or Jerusalem or Bethlehem, it is very conservative and it's very difficult to survive here, especially at the cultural level, we are trying from ten years ago […] to convince the people, the local people here that there is something which is cool in theatre and that it's very important to help the children to explore themselves and to express their feelings. Now we have people who come here all the time and […] we have a lot of people who ask about our activities. (Daut Suleiman, interview 25.09.08)

The kind of plays that are acceptable for production is also dictated by the conservativeness and traditional stance of the community. Generally, it is easier for the more traditional societies to accept plays if they are allegorical (Daut Suleiman, interview 25.09.08). For example, the act of waiting is central to Palestinian life. People wait physically at checkpoints and in queues. They wait for borders to be opened so they can go to work or to school or to farm their land or bring in their harvests. They wait for travel permits and ID cards – sometimes for 13 or 14 years – and they are still waiting. A play that depicts specific examples of this act of waiting might not be acceptable, but an allegory is very powerful. In a recent production, "Waiting for Godot" was adapted so the characters were waiting behind a wall. When he saw this play, Daut said,

> I saw myself and my story and I saw the story of my father and my mother, my grandfather. This the idea of theatre for me, […] When I saw [this play] I cried, because it touched my personal feelings, my internal feeling. I think that theatre can help us to express ourselves. (Daut Suleiman, interview 25.09.08)

In places like Ramallah, where there is already a cultural capital, a more cosmopolitan approach is possible. There it is possible to say and do things on stage that are not considered culturally or religiously acceptable in more conservative places. In Tulkarem it is not possible to do things like that. In order to make sure that the kinds of things they want to say will be *heard* by their audiences, the actors of Theatre Now devise ways to code ideas and feelings, leading their audience to an exploration and consideration of their emotional lives (Daut Suleiman, interview 25.09.08).

When it comes to developing a production in Tulkarem, especially one with children, Theatre Now engages in a process which includes prominent community leaders, teachers and members of the local community. The process starts with a workshop to which they invite representatives from local charities and other interested parties. If it is a project for children, some children are included in the workshop, as well. The workshop broaches the subject and gathers ideas for what the play might be about, what they are trying to achieve with it and how might be the best way to approach it to achieve the outcome they want. After they have the initial ideas, theatre members conduct interviews throughout the community, and then the artistic and managerial staff sit down in a brainstorming session to devise a plot. When they have done this they go back to the original group to make sure that there are no problems with the final idea (Daut Suleiman, interview 25.09.08).

One of the things the theatre has had a problem with is the issue of putting women on stage. It is such an issue that even when the theatre decided it wanted to try, it was difficult to find an actress willing to appear onstage in such a conservative community. At the time of my interview the theatre had not managed to stage a play that included a woman in the cast – all the women's parts were played by men. They were planning a production with a female lead, and were going to "import" the actress from Ramallah, where there is a much stronger cultural tradition and pool of actors from which to draw. There was already some concern about where they were going to house her and how they were going to keep her safe and dispel controversy during the production.

The general feeling among the conservative elements in Tulkarem is that it is absolutely *haraam* for men and women to be on stage together, or for a woman to be on stage in front of an audience that contains men[110]. But there are also people who feel that it is *haraam* for women or girls to be on stage at all, even in front of an all-female audience. It is attitudes like this that Theatre Now is trying to address, by pointing out that theatre and acting provide valuable tools for girls to cope with the occupation, as well as for later in life, when they are mothers teaching their children. It has been a struggle to convince people that the workshops for children – particularly those that work with both boys and girls – are not *haraam*. One of the actor/teachers with the group talked about an experience he had when the father of one of the girls in a group came to see him. The father was initially very angry, saying "what are you doing to my daughter, why is she playing with boys, this is *haraam*". But the teacher invited him to come in and sit down and just watch. The teacher expected he would stay for

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[110] *Haraam* means forbidden by Islamic law.

maybe five or ten minutes, but he stayed for an hour. And he watched his daughter playing and talking, actively contributing to discussions, and at the end the teacher had everyone sit and they all talked – the children and the father. They talked about his impressions of the workshop, and in the end he said "please accept my apologies, now I understand what you are doing here" ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08). His daughter continued to come to the workshops. The actors/teachers say this is a common experience - when new groups start there are always some parents who are resistant, who only allow their children to come because their teachers at school recommend it. And each time there are at least a few parents who come and say "what have you done to my child?" – the children are completely changed by the experience. Those who were withdrawn or angry are suddenly able to talk and laugh and discuss how they feel. The workshops change them ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08).

When I interviewed 'Adel it was easy to see why this might be the case. A naturally exuberant individual, he honestly felt that theatre had saved his life. He first became involved with theatre in 1997, undergoing several years of training with a theatre group that was working in Tulkarem at that time. He became an actor completely by accident. As a youngster he loved plays and movies, and was always the class clown, imitating people. But after school he lost track of that love. He was working in Israel and newly married when he was shot in the chest during a demonstration against the Occupation. He is very open about the fact that he was active for several years in the First Intifada. He said that at the time it was usual, even idealized, to go and die, or to do things that could easily get you killed. Friends of his were killed in various events of the uprising, and in 1994 he lost two more of his friends in the violent riots that followed the massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque. One was shot in the head as he stood beside 'Adel, and that experience had a very profound effect on him. Along with the death of his friends, many of 'Adel's relatives were arrested, his father's law office was burned down, and he saw no point in living. For three years he tried to join Hamas. He laughed as he explained that he wasn't sure how to do it, so he went to the mosque during the very early prayers and talked to people through the *sheikh*, trying to hint that he would like to be a martyr, to blow himself up. He didn't succeed. Then in 1997 he met a friend from school who remembered how he had been the class clown. This friend had heard of a theatre program in the city and asked "'Adel, do you want to be an actor?" He said yes, and:

> discovered a wonderful world. A beautiful world. Theatre! Wow! What are we doing here? Here I can shout, I can cry, I can laugh, I can be angry, I can be happy. No one can ask why are you angry? Why are you happy? Why are you shouting? Here I do what I want. I talk about Israel –fuck Israel! I say fuck America. I say fuck my father. Everything! I shout and I…I loved it. Drama and

theatre. […] Really, I discovered life deserves to be lived. […] Life is good. ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08)

This realization was a powerful one, and it changed his life, gave him a new purpose. He no longer wanted to be a martyr, but instead decided to use his skills as a performer and teacher to help his community, particularly children. He wanted to find children who had thoughts like his, who hated life, and to show them that wonderful world, how to build themselves, their communities and their personalities. He wanted to teach them patience and optimism and trust. He knew that this would take time, that he would need patience and that he should be prepared for it to be a difficult process. But he feels so strongly that theatre can help others the way it helped him, that he is committed to persevering. And when he has the experience of reaching a child in pain, that experience makes everything else worthwhile. He told me a story to illustrate what this is like:

> I had a kid in a drama workshop in [a village near here]. […] I asked the children to write [any] sentence they want. [Any] sentence. I noticed that that child wrote: "I want to die". I started to concentrate [on] that child. I visited his family, I visited his uncles. I discovered that his father […], he was killed. The soldiers damaged, bombed their house and he lives in his grandfather's house. So, he says, "I miss my father, I miss my house, I live in my grandfather's house and I think they don't like me. So, I hate life, I don't want to live". So I started to [work with this child] -the drama workshop is 18 days. On the last day, I asked him again to write a sentence. And he wrote: I love life. And he…and that was great for me. I mean…I… I felt that I did something right. ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08)

More than anything, 'Adel thinks it is important for Palestinians to have hope. One of his sayings is "a man without hope is a dangerous man". Nowadays he talks to Israelis – soldiers who stop him at the checkpoints, people he meets in conferences, workshops and festivals outside of Palestine. And he always tells them that as a nation they should not be "foolish". He says that if Israel would give Palestinians hope much of the violence would cease, that

> If you give them hope, you give them a lot. They know that they are not living for nothing. Because people without hope, are dangerous people. They think –why to live? ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08)

Theatre, for 'Adel, is another way of keeping hope alive in the difficult situation that is life in Palestine. It helps people know who they are, it gives them a vehicle to work through their emotions and, for the performers, it offers an outlet that does not rely on violence, but nonetheless expresses opposition to the occupation.

Theatre Now draws its participants from schools and clubs in Tulkarem and the surrounding villages. Sometimes the students express interest, sometimes teachers or mentors suggest their involvement. The initial, three day, workshops are generally

open to all – there can be as many as 50 or 60 children in these – but if the group moves on to a production the numbers are decreased to the children who are the most committed and who show the most talent. Although Theatre Now is committed to the importance of dramatic work in education and teaching people, especially children, to express themselves and cope with difficult emotions, when it comes to productions they are unwilling to do poor theatre. All children have to have their father's permission before starting the project – and the projects all follow the same pattern: two and a half months of rehearsals with a production that usually runs for ten performances at the end. When asked why they focus on children, one actor/teacher answered:

> I think if you want change in a community, […] you have to start from the roots. You can't change a man of twenty years…maybe you can.. but it is so difficult to change the way of thinking of a man thirty, thirty-five, forty, sixty years old. We don't want these children to have the same mistakes which the men and the others make. This generation you can…it is […] easier to deal with them and their ways of thinking. They are the future generation. They are going to be leading the community after ten years. Now they are fifteen years old. [When they are] twenty-five all of them [will be] finished the university and have jobs. They can make a change. They can make a difference. […] We say in Arabic, "the new branch … it bends", you can bend it the way you want […] and it will stay like this when it dries. And these [children] are the green branches in our community. […] You can change their minds, the way they think. ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08)

'Adel continues to talk about the role of children in conservative Tulkarem society, about how they are very much controlled by their parents and families, told what to think, what to feel, how to behave, what they can and cannot do – and these children are waiting to be told what to do, they don't know how to think for themselves. But theatre teaches them the opposite, how to form and express their own opinions, how to be brave and stand up for what they think is right without resorting to violence.

Over the course of the projects the children change a lot. The shy ones become more outgoing, the angry ones become calmer and better able to articulate how they feel, the naughty ones learn discipline. Drama helps them learn how to put their feelings into words. The experience helps them to deal with problems at home and in their families, as well as problems arising form the political situation. There is follow-up with the participants. After the project is over they are given a Theatre Club membership card. Anyone who works on a production with Theatre Now gets this card, and they can watch any show at the theatre without tickets, without invitation – they can visit any time.

In addition, the children who have completed a theatre workshop are included in the discussions about upcoming productions, so they know that their opinions are

valued. In this way the theoretical weight given to their ideas in workshop is put into practice once they are seen as "graduates". Also, these students are given priority if, when they finish school, they decide they'd like to continue theatre training. Theatre Now offers a three year theatre arts program, at the end of which participants are issued with a certificate from the Palestinian Ministry of Culture. This certificate allows the holder to work in any theatre in the West Bank ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08).

When asked about the purpose of theatre, 'Adel is quick to point out that the "purpose" of theatre differs depending on perspective – the purpose for the audience? The community? The actor? For him the point is to bring reality to the stage in a new way, to put familiar things on stage in a way that surprises the audience. He likes to try to put common situations on stage and show the audience that they don't always have to be sad – show a way to turn a situation so the audience can imagine themselves having different reactions to everyday scenarios. Imagining himself an audience member, though, 'Adel says the purpose of theatre is often to forget, to escape to another, better world. Sometimes it is to be educated – to learn something or see a new place. Taking these possibilities into consideration, the staff of Theatre Now try to create engaging, innovative productions that will serve many different purposes, both for themselves and for their audiences.

This does not mean that the plays are always happy or always end well. The reality of life is grim, and sometimes theatre is about showing the grimness, but in an unusual or unexpected way. For example, they did a play in which one of the protagonists is shot. This play is based on the death of one of 'Adel's friends, and the death takes place on stage, at the close of the play. 'Adel says:

> The play ends when my friend dies [in my lap/in my arms] here. Each show I really cried because I have the memory of the death of one of my friends who had 55 bullets in his chest. He had the mask[111] on his face. And…you know these civil soldiers, [Israeli] soldiers who wear [civilian clothes] they killed him. And we heard the shooting and […] he was on the ground and there was blood. I turned him and took off the mask, and he is my friend. And I…he wasn't opening his eyes, he was dead. […] I grasped him, […] I'm not conscious of what I'm doing but I'm trying to wake him up, but he is dead. Each show I remember this and I cry. And the play ends. ('Adel Rashmawi, interview 25.09.08)

What makes this staging of death unusual is that it focuses on the death itself, and the emotions surrounding it, not on the ceremonial mourning that is often shown in real life. In post-show discussions there are some people who want the play to end with the burial of the dead as a martyr, wrapped in the Palestinian flag, with mourners. But

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[111] A balaclava or keffiyeh wrapped around his face

'Adel wants to make a different point. Look at the *real* emotion surrounding death, he says. This constant show of mourning, the televised funerals – real life has become theatre and the feelings of loss, grief and the continuation of life is lost in the ceremony. He wants to get back to the pain, to show people that death is not glorious. He thinks showing the audience this is one way to break the "cycle of abuse" in which both Israelis and Palestinians are caught. He wants, in essence, for theatre to get away from the theatricality in which death has been wrapped and show it as loss and grief rather than martyrdom.

Another of the actor/teachers ('Isa) has been present for most of this interview, but he initially did not want to talk to me. He said he doesn't trust foreigners, they don't know how to deal with Arabs or their tensions, they don't really understand the stress of the situation, and they are not sensitive to the people. But he stayed in the room and listened as 'Adel and I talked. Slowly, every once in awhile, he began to talk, to add things to what 'Adel is saying, to join in the conversation. 'Isa's English is not as good as 'Adel's, so I have fewer examples of his ideas in his own words. Much of what he said was very personal and incisive, he is an extremely sensitive person who was in the middle of a significant family crisis which was exacerbated by the political situation. Once he began to talk it became apparent how much pain he was in and how very important both teaching and performing were in order to help him survive. They gave him a focus for his emotional turmoil and helped him perform some of his more turbulent feelings in a controlled and safe way. 'Isa talked about his theory about the uses of theatre: in Palestine there are so many things pressing in – traditions, religion, the occupation – and theatre gives people a way to fight back, to be able to destroy one barrier and then another and finally to destroy the occupation itself. He said

> This is our freedom in theatre –you can see. We are here [he puts a point on a blank piece of paper] and there are many things around us [he draws concentric circles around the point] We are here and all of this is around us. And we try and play with these things … to make art with these things [the things that hem them in on all sides]. And our freedom is very, very small. ('Isa Wazan, interview 25.09.08)

What 'Isa meant, and what this quotation fails to adequately convey, is that theatre artists can "play" with the bonds placed upon them. This is a small freedom, but it is freedom nonetheless, and small as it may seem it is a great gift. By "playing" with the enclosing boundaries, artists can transform them, gradually enlarging their central space until, eventually, they are able to transform the occupation itself into something of their own devising.

All the people involved in Theatre Now are acutely aware of the political situation in which they live. Their awareness went beyond any designation of the "personal" being "political" to the point where it was barely possible to distinguish one from the other. Even the most basic of family interactions – for example, 'Isa's desire to visit his sister in hospital in Jerusalem – were governed by politics, in this case the impossibility of getting a travel permit. Their engagement with drama was twofold: partly they saw it as a way to give themselves and others a way to deal with the situation within themselves – the stresses and fears and uncertainty it arouses, and partly as a way to engage the audience in a conversation about *their* feelings and experience of the occupation. Judging from their conversation, theatre aids both the individual and the community. Once again, this draws on Nussbaum's and Thrift's ideas of the importance of emotions and relates it to Debrix and Weber's idea of a "mediative" site, a site where the individual can engage with the political and the international.

After Theatre Now I travelled to Theatre Jawhar in the Bethlehem suburb of Be'it Sahour. The director is a Palestinian Christian woman named Rana al-Arabi. This theatre also works with youth in the community, as well as performing plays for other groups around the area. The work they do with young people often has the effect of illuminating both the actors and their audience. Rana told a story about a participant in one of their early workshops. Many of the members of the community suggested they not accept him into the workshop. They said he was very very simple, that he was "mentally defective" and that the training would not work for him. But the group insisted that he attend the workshops and at the end, he experienced the most amazing transformation. Rana said:

> this guy that used to be a construction labourer he said "Before I took theatre when people used to ask me what I was doing I was embarrassed to tell them I was a construction labourer but now when people ask me what I am doing I tell them theatre" – and he was the best on stage, his relations with his peers changed, his relations with the community changed, his relations with his family changed and people started realizing it was really doing positive change in the community and they wanted more and more training. (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08)

Although Theatre Jawhar is in a Christian part of the West Bank, they do sometimes go to conservative Muslim areas to perform. In those instances they have to be careful not to offend their hosts because, ultimately, they want the chance to perform for the children. In one instance they were asked to go to al-Khalil, which is a very conservative area. Before they went they were asked to describe the play, the plot, the text – and even so, when they got there there was a problem. They were only going to do one performance, but the school wouldn't let boys and girls sit together. So there

was a negotiation before the play could start, because the actors said they came to do the play for *all* the children, not just the boys or just the girls. After suggesting various options, everyone agreed that the boys could sit on one side of the room and the girls on the other as long as there was a something dividing them – something as simple as a ribbon, as it turned out. So the performance went ahead and everyone – adults and children, boys and girls – enjoyed it.

When the Hamas government was elected many people in the arts community were afraid they would close the theatres and the cultural centres. At the time Rana was organising a tour and she wanted to take the play to a village near al-Khalil. Many people told her that the leader of that village was Hamas and they did not think that he would allow a play. But she called him anyway and explained, very carefully, what they were doing and saying in the play, and what it was about and, as it turned out, he was very helpful. "There was no hall in the local school, so he offered to rent the hall they have for weddings, and he brought all the children on buses and after the performance he offered the whole group lunch and he thanked the actors very much for bringing the play and said it was a wonderful thing that the children had had a chance to see it" (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08). This was another example of how the careful negotiation of community relationships is very important for theatre artists. These relationships are important for the artists to be able to perform their craft, but it is also important because careful negotiation and sensitivity to their audiences differing beliefs allows them to reach a broader number of people with their work. In this way they are able to slowly change the ways more conservative communities think about performance. In Rana's opinion there is just as much call for theatrical performance, and dance, and so forth in conservative areas like al-Khalil and Tulkarem. In her words the people in those areas are "thirsty [for cultural experiences and artistic stimulation] – you can see it in their eyes", but everything hinges on approach, building community relationships, getting the community leaders to trust the groups involved. She said that this relationship is very important for all organisations but especially ones dealing with the arts because

> […] art is not a priority. There are lots of other priorities like education, health… so [art] is not seen as a priority, but people are realising that it *is* important for them. Schools that we used to beg in the past [to let us perform], now they ask for performances, they ask us to go and train in their schools, we managed to [make] a change that took a lot of work by everyone who works in [the] arts. (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

In Rana's experience, theatre brings about change – slowly, but the change is there. It requires a lot of care and patience, however, to start to see results, and there are some

things that the communities are still simply not ready to see on stage, or are not ready to see in an extreme form.

> For example, we can't have any nude scene on stage, it's not only to do with certain plays, or religion, it is all over, it has to do with our being raised up like this, more conservative as a society. We cannot, for example, talk about things that are considered still taboo in the community, like it was 50 years ago in Europe, like about gays, lesbian relations. About Muslim/Christian marriages, [but] still we tried to touch on it in one of our plays and we had to be very careful how to do it. For example, we talk in some of our performances about rape, but not in a very open way because it is considered still generally not accepted, but we try in a certain way, and also to do it gradually, you cannot just do it extreme and one day go and perform it. So for example, we have sometime in our children's performances, or adult performances, we have a scene where a man and a woman hug, we do it, we do it here in Bethlehem, we do it in Ramallah, but for example when we go to Tulkarem, when we go to Jenin, we have to be very careful about *how* we do it. We can do it in another way. So, of course, it's like any country where it started to change slowly, nothing comes immediately. (Rana Al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08)

This shows that theatre, if handled carefully and with respect for its viewers, *can* change the ideas and viewpoints of an audience and be part of the process by which new ideas are introduced and digested[112].

Theatre Jawhar does plays for both children and adults, and the intended audience affects the choice of play. When they are choosing a play for children they try to choose something that is fun and colourful to put on stage, often something with music, which tells a story with a purpose but that the children will find fun and engaging to watch. Usually they choose traditional stories or fairytales, sometimes stories by Hans Christian Anderson or other European authors, which they translate and adapt so they make sense to Palestinian children. Often they try to incorporate some sort of message, for example awareness of children's rights, into the telling, so that the play has more than one level: the basic narrative which is fun to watch, but also deeper, political, moral or ethical levels that the children can consider.

When the group chooses a play for adults they are acutely aware that they are not just a theatre group but a *Palestinian* theatre group. Given their preferences, and unlike the actors at Theatre Now, the actors of Theatre Jawhar would rather *not* perform plays that provide overtly political commentary on the Palestinian situation. Their rationale is that they live with the situation every day and cannot escape it, therefore they, for the most part, have no wish to perform experiences pertaining to the

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[112] This brings up that fact that theatre *does* present conservative and traditional cultures with a dilemma – this discussion of new ideas could be seen as immoral, or overly westernised and contrary to local beliefs. Ironically, the fact that theatre can bring change to communities both bears out my point and lays the ground for further debate about the need for ethical considerations when embarking on any action that might create social change.

political situation – and, furthermore, many audiences do not want to see that sort of play, for similar reasons. They have discovered, however, that the very fact that they are a Palestinian theatre group means that their performances are met with an expectation that there will be a political content. Often their plays for adults are invited to perform at festivals in other Arab countries, or in countries in Europe, and audiences at these festivals expect to see something overtly referencing the Palestinian situation as portrayed on the news. Sometimes audiences even see political references where none were intended, simply because the performers are Palestinian (Rana Al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

The process of choosing a play also depends quite strongly on what is going on in the community – the political situation certainly impacts the choice of play. For example, the bombings and trauma experienced in Be'it Sahour during 2000/2001 raised an emotional response that the company wished to portray on stage. To this end they staged a play based on improvisations around the company's emotional reactions to the events. This play toured extensively in the region, as well as being performed in various European countries. A few years later, however, at the end of the second intifada, there was a lot of talk about corruption in the Palestinian Authority, and various other internal problems, and in that climate the theatre staged a play about the farmer's revolution in Cuba. This play is about the symbolism that Che Guevara had for Cuban farmers. This production kept the text, and the Latin American names, but when they toured with the production to other countries, the audiences thought that the play was commenting on the situation in Palestine – because the company was from Palestine. In 2005 the theatre tried to do a play aimed at Christian tourists, alternative tourists, and people who came on fact-finding missions. The area around Bethlehem depends economically on tourism, and in the wake of the second intifada tourism had dropped alarmingly. To try to re-engage tour groups and individuals, the company created a piece of theatre, performed in English that drew on diaries and stories from around the region that came out of the second intifada. This play was called *Born in Bethlehem* and

> it was about a tour guide, a Palestinian tour guide [who is] trying to direct his group in a creative way, so he gets two actors to act the story of the Nativity […]. These two were Palestinian actors, and they insisted that they should stick to the biblical story which was the trip by Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem and the problems they face, coming here, the birth of Jesus, the killing of the children by Herod, and the exodus to Egypt. Now while they are doing the biblical story, they felt there were many similarities between it and [modern] life in Palestine, the difficulties of women giving birth, of children at the checkpoints, the fact that children were being killed, so they kept coming out of the text to talk about daily life, and the tour guide kept insisting that they come back to the text. So we did this switching between contemporary life in Palestine and life 2000 years ago (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

This, obviously, is a different kind of theatre. Not trying, necessarily, to change the cultural attitudes of the audience, but rather to raise their awareness of political situations through allegory and direct comparison. This play was clearly related to the political situation, but even something as traditional as *The Metamorphosis* or as simple as a fable, when performed by Palestinians, can be seen as allegorical by the audience.

In Rana's view, this ability to spark thought and lead to change is at the heart of the purpose of theatre. She said that, for Jawhar,

> theatre is a very powerful way to create change, to create change in the community, to create change outside, to try and have a space where you can talk about a lot of things you are feeling. It's not something you have to do isolated from other people. Theatre is part of the people, it's part of the community. It's from the community and it goes back to the community. So, because it's a very powerful tool in terms of life, people, it affects people a lot. And that's why it really helps in creating more change, more positive change, in the community (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

In addition to being a theatre artist, Rana is an academic and in that guise has attended many conferences in which the topic of theatre as identity tool is raised. Often these conferences are attended by a mix of ethnicities and nationalities, so the role of cultural difference in the perception of aspects of theatre is observable. At one conference Rana participated in a workshop about political theatre in which the participants debated the question "does/should place effect what you do in theatre?". The majority of the Europeans said no, but

> […] a lot of other people who came from other parts of the world said place really effects what we do in theatre because it cannot be separated from the place we come from. And for Palestine, especially for Palestinians, because we don't have a state, because we have been under occupation for so many tens of years, it is, it is built inside us, it is within us, and for this reason we cannot separate theatre from the place we came from (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

It is difficult to know how far to extrapolate this statement, but it seems that, however much the actors of Theatre Jawhar might *not* want to depict the occupation in their performances, nonetheless the impact of living in the place where they live seeps into their work in a myriad of ways and they perform, or are perceived to perform, the space whether they intend to or not.

As always in an arts organisation, funding is a topic of conversation. A major funder of Theatre Jawhar is a Swedish foundation[113]. Funding is a difficult thing for theatre groups in Palestine. Certainly the arts are at the very bottom of any budgetary

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[113] By coincidence, many of the plays performed for children are based on Swedish folk tales. This is truly a coincidence, however – these plays draw on the fact that a woman from Jordan has settled in Sweden and translated many of the regional folk and fairy tales into Arabic.

allocations from the Palestinian Authority and the budget for the Palestinian Ministry of Culture is 0.002% of the whole budget for Palestine (*as per Rana*), and the money available for the arts from international sources ebbs and flows depending on the economic climate and the conventional wisdom surrounding donation at any given time. The current climate is not very generous to the arts, and so funding has become more and more difficult to find and doing theatre in Palestine is more and more of a struggle.

Theatre Jawhar conducts follow-up with their "graduates", a fact that not only allows the youth participants in the workshops to continue to feel involved and connected, but that also gives the company some figures and statistics to show to potential funders. It is important, in a world with increasing competition for funding, to be able to show foundation what sorts of outcomes they can hope for from a funded program.   This feedback is gleaned in several ways. Workshop participants are encouraged to make comments on what has worked especially well for them, and also to suggest other things they might like to try or experience. At the suggestion of a recent workshop group, the theatre has brought in a dance teacher so the group can work on movement and dance productions. When performances have taken place in schools, audience members participate in post-performance discussions in which they talk about what they understood from the production. Sometimes children are asked to draw their impressions of the play and send the drawings to the theatre. Sometimes they are encouraged to go onto the stage and act out scenes they felt were missing or that they would have done differently. Although similar in approach, this is not strictly Forum theatre, as there is no Joker and the company is not set up for the in depth Forum approach. Rana hopes to eventually be able to videotape the post-show discussions. Every year, she writes a final report of all the work that has been done and summarizes the kinds of responses and feedback that has come from the audiences and the workshop participants. These reports have developed into matrices and indicators, so each year the company is able to plan out what it will do and what it hopes to achieve through the various projects.

Unfortunately, this is another example of how things planned in Palestine do not always materialise – often as a direct result of the political situation. If things "heat up", if funders, or "outside" theatre groups that were planning to collaborate with Palestinian artists consider the region to dangerous to either invest in or visit, or if they experience difficulties in visa applications/entry permits, often their support will evaporate, leaving the theatre unable to achieve its stated goals for the year. This means that, in order to maintain a relatively consistent production schedule, the

theatre has to have alternative plans in mind – and, to some extent, in place, in order to continue to do their work under difficult and unpredictable circumstances.

The pressure involved in this kind of life is unbelievable. Rana says she often lies awake at night trying to figure out how the theatre's projects and salaries can be kept going from month to month – and this is on top of the more "day-to-day" worries of life under occupation. She says:

> "why didn't I get a job from 9-3, go home, not worry about anything", but then when you see young people, how it is helping them, really. For example, when we go to concerts and performances and we see that the children we trained before are there to see it, not because we asked them but because now for them it's valuable, and it makes you feel that this is valuable, when you hear for example that the young people you have trained are very strong characters usually, they are doing well at university, they are involved in lots different activities, they have, they are full of confidence in themselves – you think, yes, this is the reward, this is what you want to see. (Rana al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08).

In addition to collecting statistical "follow-up" from participants, the company tries to assist former students by finding them additional training, both locally and internationally. They view this as both an investment in the community, and also in the theatre company, because people they help to get a higher level of training will be the future of Jawhar. To this end they have secured scholarships, in some cases the first international scholarship ever awarded, for their former students to study theatre arts at European universities[114].

While the quality and tenor of these interviews was quite different, it was clear that Theatre Jawhar and Theatre Now feel that both training in theatre skills and the availability of dramatic performance are immeasurably valuable for individuals and the community. It helps develop strong personalities that are capable of and comfortable with making their own decisions on difficult issues. It instils a sense of self that is tied to skill and ability. Through performances, communities see different ways that they can approach everyday dilemmas – both actually and allegorically. Theatre Jawhar is an established theatre and Theatre Now is much newer, but the staffs of both are willing to brave uncertain employment and heightened stress in order to do work that, despite low funding and societal priority, they consider to be essential for the health of their communities.

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[114] This is particularly important as there is no college or university in Palestine that awards degrees in theatrical arts.

CHAPTER SUMMARY: THE IMPORTANCE OF "THE OTHER IN ME"

All four sets of interviews considered here agree on the political nature of their work, and all can show – to greater or lesser extent – that their projects have an impact on the individuals they touch. Whether it is the choice of a Jewish Israeli not to go to the army, the decision of a PCI teenager to join the civil service, or the realisation by a Palestinian child that their life has value – these are clear indications both of attitudinal change and of the inner strength that theatre training would seem to encourage. The second observation is not so immediately pertinent to the research here, but the first bears a direct relationship to the intersection of the political and the theatrical, the creation of social and political change. None of my informants indicated that it was easy in any way – their work is a constant struggle on most fronts: financial, societal, artistic. Nor do they think that the arts alone can solve all political problems. Indeed, it has never been my contention that the arts are a solution in and of themselves, only that they play a part in conjunction with, and with the support of, more traditional political actors – that they are "mediative" sites that offer insight into the political. The people with whom I spoke in 2008, even the ones whose words are not included here, know that their work is political and can see the impact that is their proof. The students whose work was the focus of chapter 4 described feeling that they were performing before an audience and getting people to think, to reconsider and, possibly, to change[115].

As for the answer to my oft-repeated question "what can theatre *do*" – let us return to the "accusation in the course of fieldwork" from *The Ethics of Researching War*, Dauphinée's informant told her:

> You pretended to understand what we had done – you organised conferences over it – you developed theories about it – but you never really cared what had happened to us, because it was not you. We were not *you*. And so, what you wrote about us – what you wrote about who we were – was its own measure of destruction (Dauphinée 2007, 2).

This accusation bears with it a guilt that I feel, despite the fact that its like was not levelled at me. How, when you have spent time with people, talked to them and encouraged them to share their thoughts and experiences with you, how do you then walk away and return to the life of an academic in a relatively safe and tidy European country? There is no conclusive answer to that, for there must be as many possible responses are there are people who conduct research in the field, responses that are governed by personal ethics, availability of resources, time and institutional affiliation. What *can* be said, however, is that fieldwork gives us the opportunity, rarely fulfilled,

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[115] Author's field notes, 23.09.08.

to see ourselves in the Other. Dov's observation is as valid for an academic as it is for an actor or an audience member. We – and, with luck, our readers – have the chance to see the ways in which we are like the people we see represented in the media around us. It is not so much that they are human just like us – but that we are like them. Theatre can show us that we, too, are 'Other'.

The following chapter is dedicated to the life, work and death of a theatre artist who knew, to well, the importance of 'Self' and 'Other'. Depending on the location, he could be seen as 'Other' to two groups of people – both of whom made up his own definition of 'Self'.

CHAPTER 6
"HOPE IS BULLETPROOF": JULIANO MER KHAMIS & THE FREEDOM THEATRE OF JENIN

Resistance of the heart against business as usual.
~ Bread & Puppet Theatre in Glover, VT

Above my desk is a photograph from a battered flier. It shows a circle of children and teenagers lying on their stomachs on the floor, their heads together. The picture is taken by someone squatting or kneeling outside the circle and its focus is drawn down tight, the edges faded to black, leaving nothing to distract the viewer from the children's faces. All their attention is concentrated on the man with the grizzled beard who joins them in the circle, their faces rapt and listening, an audience in thrall to a storyteller.

The flier is from The Freedom Theatre in Jenin Refugee Camp, and the man holding their attention is Juliano Mer-Khamis, the theatre's co-founder and main guiding force. Juliano, called Jul by his students and friends, was one of my fieldwork contacts and his murder on 4 April 2011 in the midst of my thesis revisions was a reminder, both direct and painful, of the possible real-life consequences of political activism[116]. An eloquent and prolific man with seemingly boundless energy, one of Juliano's most often-used words was "hope". When encouraging his students and actors to depict their lives on paper, in paint or on stage he would always seek to draw them away from the obvious: the guns, tanks and destruction. "Where is the hope?" he would ask them[117]. Drawing on imagery from one of his students he thought of hope as a flower, growing in rubble. To nourish the flower it was necessary to pour water on it – and that was how he thought of the work done at the Freedom Theatre, it was there that hope was watered (Khalidi and Marlowe 2011, 1).

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[116] The murder of Juliano Mer-Khamis was covered on the international news and both he and his theatre are well-known entities. For these reasons he and The Freedom Theater are referred to by their actual names rather than pseudonyms as used for all other fieldwork contacts.
[117] Email correspondence with author, 3.10.08.

"THE FAULT LINE OF CREATIVITY AND DOOM"

Juliano was born to a Jewish mother (Arna Mer) and a Palestinian Christian father (Saliba Khamis). His mother, despite her Palmachi[118] past and involvement in the fighting surrounding the formation of the State of Israel, quickly became disenchanted with the situation imposed on the Palestinians by the Israelis. In 1989 she started a program to educate and support the children in the Jenin Refugee Camp and in 1992 the Swedish Parliament awarded her an Alternative Nobel Prize for this project. Her previous work had centred around art and education, but with the prize money she decided to start a small theatre to teach the children dramatic arts and give them a chance to act out their feelings physically, instead of just through paper and paint. Arna was trained as a psychodramatist, but it was her son Jul, then a working and successful actor in Israel, who took responsibility for the theatre games and activities. In 1995, at the celebrations marking the 5th year of the project, Arna said,

> The intifada, for us and our children, is a struggle for freedom. We call our children's project Learning & Freedom. These are not just words, they are the basis of the struggle. There is no freedom without knowledge, there is no peace without freedom. Peace and freedom are bound together. (*Arna's Children*, 2004)

Arna was already very ill at the time of the 5th anniversary celebrations, and she died later that year. Her theatre was ultimately destroyed during the Israeli Army's incursions into the camp in 2002. This destruction brought Jul back to the camp for the first time since his mother's death, on a search for the children with whom he had worked in her theatre six years before. The result of this search was the film *Arna's Children* (2004, First Hand Films) that won numerous awards and received critical acclaim.

Arna's Children is by no means an easy film to watch. It juxtaposes footage of children playing theatre games with voice-overs describing their fate six years in the future; and the images shift between the past and the future so the soft-faced, silent child whose home was destroyed dissolves into the laughing boy on stage who in turn fades into the hardened resistance fighter he became during the Battle of Jenin. In many cases, the final fade is to the image on a martyr's poster, posted on the walls of the camp after a violent death.

In response to a question about the pro-Zionist argument that despite his mother's "rehabilitation of the Arab mind" children in her theatre still grew up to become "terrorists", Juliano replied that the attitude is a sick one, the thought that

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[118] The *Palmach* was the elite fighting force of the *Haganah*, the Jewish community's underground army during the British Mandate of Palestine.

the problem of violence is the violence of children and not the violence of the Israeli occupation […]. You don't have to heal the children in Jenin. We didn't try to heal their violence. We tried to challenge [channel] it into more productive ways. And more productive ways are not an alternative to resistance. What we were doing in the theatre is not trying to be a replacement or an alternative to the resistance of the Palestinians in the struggle for liberation. Just the opposite. This must be clear. I know it's not good for fundraising, [but] I'm not a social worker. I'm not a good Jew going to help the Arabs and I am not a philanthropic Palestinian who comes to feed the poor. […] Everybody who is connected to this project says that he feels that he is also occupied by the Zionist movement, by the military regime of Israel, and by its policy. Either he lives in Jenin or in Haifa or in Tel Aviv. Nobody joined this program to heal. We are not healers. We are not good Christians. We are freedom fighters. (interview with Juliano Mer-Khamis by Maryam Monalist Gharavi, 2006)

At first, when Arna and Jul started their work, the children did not trust them. They went to the painting and theatre classes, but it took time for the trust to grow. Initially the children thought they were spies for the Occupation because they were Jewish. In later interviews they laughed with Jul about that. Israeli interest grew in the theatre that was taking shape in Jenin, and eventually the media followed Juliano there to film him and the children. During these interviews, which are painful to watch as some of the interviewers try to manipulate their young subjects, relying on the assumption that they speak and understand very little Hebrew; one child says that his first thought, once he got to know Arna and her son, was "Why isn't there an Arab who would do this for us? Why would Jews, who are enemies of the Arabs, why would they do all this for us? I really wondered" (Yusuf, *Arna's Children*, 2004). This initial distrust, predicated on political stereotypes, slowly dissolved into genuine love and trust of the person as an individual. Looking back after her death, Yusuf said, "I love Arna, like my own mother" (Yusuf, *Arna's Children*, 2004). When asked what purpose he thinks theatre plays in the resistance, he says, "I can tell people how I feel, what I want, whether I love life or not" (Yusuf, *Arna's Children*, 2004). Yusuf died in a suicide attack in Israel in October 2001).

Another child answered the same question in this way:

When I am on stage I feel like I am throwing stones. We won't let the occupation keep us in the gutter. To me, acting is like throwing a Molotov cocktail. On stage I feel strong, alive, proud (Ashraf, *Arna's Children*, 2004).

At least for a time, Ashraf was able to replace an overt expression of violence with acting as a way of identifying himself. For a child living under occupation, identity is a tenuous thing. Children I spoke with defined themselves through their family: as son, daughter, grandchild – other than that who they are was defined by resistance to the

occupation[119]. Restrained/Constrained in all ways: physical, mental, emotional – strength, life and pride are difficult to come by. Acting gave Ashraf a sense of self, a sense of dignity that allowed him to "throw stones" at the occupation without physically picking up a rock. Sadly, this brief experience in childhood could not compete with the overwhelming physical violence of life under occupation. Ashraf died during the Battle of Jenin in April 2002.

After his work on *Arna's Children*, Juliano renewed his commitment to continuing his mother's work with the children of the camp. His interviews with former students describe both the strength and value given them by the theatre training and the sense of loss when they had to deal with the deaths of friends and relatives. The few surviving children from the first theatre, now adults and, in some cases, parents themselves, recounted for Jul the experiences that led some of their friends and classmates to violent resistance (*Arna's Children*, 2004). Yusuf, quoted above, was known as the happiest of their group. Always with a smile or a joke for his friends, he changed after a child wounded in an Israeli attack on the camp died in his arms as he carried her to a hospital. After that, his friends told Jul, Yusuf was altered. Although he had not known the child he tried to save he was not able to stop talking about her. He became quiet and withdrawn, and rarely smiled. Although his surviving friends and family were not aware of his plans to commit a suicide attack in Israel they all noticed the change and in retrospect they felt he had taken care to say goodbye to all of them, and their faces, as they recount his death register grief but no surprise. His two surviving friends from the theatre said that he took time to talk and laugh with everyone, as if he wanted to remember his friends and the good times they spent together. Often the young men who had been students of Arna's would watch a video of a play they had done at her theatre and comment about what fun they had had then, how life had been different – how it had been a good life (*Arna's Children*, 2004). It is impossible to say why, under similar circumstances, one person will pick up a gun whereas another will stay home with his or her family. However, it is clear that the theatre work in childhood gave these young men real joy and they remembered the time with pleasure. It is also clear from the interviews that the theatre gave them an alternative to the overt expressions of violence that ultimately killed them.

Spurred, in part, by a realization of the importance that the theatre had had in the lives of these young people, in 2006 Juliano opened another theatre, The Freedom Theatre, with the support of various European funding sources. One of his partners in this new theatre was Zakaria Zubeidi, another former student of Arna's who had been

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[119] Author's field notes, 29.09.08.

a leader in Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade during the Battle of Jenin. After the Battle of Jenin Zubeidi renounced violence in favor of "cultural revolution" and was offered amnesty by Israel (Urquart 2011a, 2).

Juliano became a well-known figure, both for his acting – a career he continued to pursue with considerable success – and for his activism as a theatre professional on behalf of the Palestinians. In one memorial piece he was described as "a political artist, living on the fault line of creativity and doom" (Oz-Salzberger 2011, 2). This volatile place affords its residents the chance for enormous impact and allows for both great love and great hate. The memorial held for him at Harvard University in the spring of 2011 filled a lecture hall with colleagues, friends and supporters who memorialized him with music and stories. In the weeks following his death many articles and commentaries appeared both condemning the murder out of hand and seeking to understand it. One article, written by Conal Urquhart and appearing in <u>The Guardian</u> was subtitled "Jenin residents claim public opinion turned on director for performing plays that went against Islamic conservative values" (Urquhart 2011b, 1). This article highlights a broad and deep misunderstanding between Juliano and at least some of the residents of the camp. The chairman of Jenin's "popular committee" is quoted as saying

> He [Juliano] said that his message was to liberate citizens from the authority of their leaders and children from their parents. Then there was mixing of the sexes and dancing. We tried to discuss it with him and persuade him that he was mistaken but to no avail. Public opinion turned against him (Urquhart 2011b, 2).

The article goes on to quote another camp resident who said

> We are Muslims. We have traditions. We looked for our children and found them at the theatre dancing. If he came here to bring jobs that would be good but instead he comes here to corrupt our girls and make women of our boys (Urquhart 2011b, 2).

Both these quotations focus on the perceived corruption of children and youth, and subscribe to the conservative idea that Muslims, especially Muslim girls, do or should not participate in certain European activities (like dance or acting). The first quotation indicates a fear of destabilizing the *status quo* of authority within the camp. The second, in addition to implying a conservative interpretation of Islam and gender roles, shows a lack of understanding of the value and potential of theatre.

The article also cites a "*fatwa*-style" leaflet that was circulated in Jenin following the murder. The leaflet lists a number of criticisms of the man and his work, as well as justifying the actions of the gunman. He is criticized for believing in co-existence between Palestinians and Israelis and the idea that his plays were any form of resistance is attacked:

> What kind of resistance [to occupation] is the play Animal Farm, which made the young men of Palestine bark like dogs and lick the floor in shame and the young women wear the costumes of pigs and roll around the ground in degeneracy? (Urquhart 2011b, 2).

This, again, implies a low opinion of theatre as well as a lack of understanding of the fluidity of an actor's identity and the identity that acting and performance can present on stage. That the young actors may have been imitating dogs or pigs in order to make a political point or societal observation within the context of the play is immaterial. The actions (and costumes) were considered shameful and degenerate, and the leaflet's author(s) opined that anyone who encouraged this within the camp could, and *should*, be killed (Urquhart 2011b, 2).

Other articles show very different reactions by camp residents to Juliano and his work. In an earlier article, published by *The Observer* on 10 April 2011, an older woman in the camp is quoted as saying "He was wonderful, wonderful" while she kissed the tips of her fingers to emphasize her affection for him (Urquhart 2011a, 2). The theatre was supported by sheikhs who led prayers on the stage and his work was respected by colleagues in Israel and other parts of the West Bank – his name and work came up repeatedly in my interviews. Nonetheless, even Juliano's partner, Jenny Nyman, admitted that "there is no doubt that in an oppressed society like Jenin, there are always people that are afraid of change" (Urquhart 2011a, 2). This fear had taken the shape of violence before: Juliano had received death threats and the theatre was fire-bombed on more than one occasion (Frykberg 2011, 2).

It is difficult, of course, to narrow the scope of an argument of this magnitude to a single thread. There seem to be, however, echoes here of Rana's point in the previous chapter. Theatre Jawhar is very careful to respect the culture of the environments in which they perform. Performances in Be'it Sahour or Ramallah, which are far more liberal, can show men and women on stage together, and can show contact between them. Before taking a production someplace the theatre is very careful to make local contacts and discuss the story content and the staging to make sure that they will not offend or shock. The idea is to make changes slowly and to recognize that slow and gradual changes have a chance of making an impact, whereas large, challenging performances may shut down the communication before the new ideas have a chance to take hold (Rana Al-Arabi, interview 25.09.08). This should by no means be interpreted as blaming the victim for his own murder – that violence could be seen (and praised) as a realistic method of solving a disagreement says more about the violence in and around Jenin than anything about Juliano himself, his method of working or his artistic vision. It is possible, even likely, that given his stated

views Juliano would view himself as a victim of the occupation rather than as a victim of Palestinian violence (Urquhart 2011a&b).

Many of the criticisms levelled at him, and the theatre, by the conservative residents of Jenin centred on the perceived "corruption" of children and youth. In the quotations above concerns were voiced about "dancing", "mixing of the sexes", "making women of our boys" and "wear[ing] the costumes of pigs", as well as the broader complaint about encouraging children and teenagers to question authority. Initially Jul was respected in the camp for "highlighting damage inflicted by the Israeli army", but as soon as his work also began to question the Palestinian Authority, or challenge the hierarchical structures within Palestinian society, or simply to reflect some more European storylines and methods of expression – he became a much more controversial figure (Urquhart 2011b, 2).

It seems that the crux of the matter centers on children. The competition for the allegiance of children and youth, who form the bridge between a society's past and its future, can be a hotly contested one. In a society where history and memory are paramount any deviation from the canon can be seen as a threat (Ashley 1984, Ashley & Walker 1990a & 1990b, Campbell 1998a). Juliano understood this. He once said that "Theater is change, theater is freedom. Theater is expression, not in the context of this religion or that political party. Obviously, it threatens the old guys, the conservative sections of the society" (Khalidi and Marlowe 2011, 3). There are other arts programs for children but

> [U]nlike many theater programs in the camps, where kids are permitted to create within the parameters of adult political messaging on Palestine, and are often limited to nationalistic re-enactments of victimization and resistance, the Freedom Theatre challenged its young actors and audiences from the start. Classics such as *Animal Farm* and *Alice in Wonderland* were reinvented as fresh, exciting, revolutionary theatre, commenting with nuance on the occupation as well as internal societal oppression. (Khalidi and Marlowe 2011, 3)

It is this focus on children, and allowing them the power to think, question and express their feelings and opinions creatively that creates such fertile ground for both critique and activism. The actors and audiences at The Freedom Theatre were encouraged to see and experience revolution in actions on the stage, as well as to observe and critique the politics they experienced in the camp. These explorations stepped outside the accepted (and expected) nationalistic depictions of victimhood, resistance and identity and allowed the participants to imagine – and create – a whole new form of activism and revolution. In this, their work echoes the sentiments, expressed by 'Adel Rashmawi in the previous chapter, about the theatricalised forms of grief that accompany the funerals of those killed resisting the occupation. 'Adel wants the audience to strip away the motions of grief and actually *feel* ('Adel Rashmawi,

interview 25.09.08). Similarly, The Freedom Theatre encourages its students to express how they feel in their own ways, not through a repetition of accepted tropes.

The hardships and dangers of living under occupation take their toll on the entire population. In an attempt to convey the magnitude of the impact Juliano described:

> […] almost 3,000 children under the age of 15 suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. This camp is sieged by electric fence, people cannot go out or in unless you have a permit. We have two gates, like a big prison… People went back to the survival way of living, to the jungle … everybody for himself, because there's nothing left. There's no future, there's no hope … and people don't trust anymore, not even each other. […] There is a new generation that lives in a discourse of religion, of tradition, of chauvinism, or patriotism, of violent relationship. The Israelis succeeded to destroy our identity, our social structure, political and economic. Our duty as artists is to rebuild this destruction. Especially the identity … who we are, why we are, where we are going, who we want to be. […] We hope that this theater will generate a political, artistic movement of artists who are going to raise their voice against women discrimination, against children discrimination, against unnecessary violence against civilians. To bring back the just cause … to bring back the discourse of liberation that was lost between Hamas and Fatah, between families, between factions, between interests, between the PA and Israel. (Juliano Mer-Khamis in Khlalidi and Marlowe 2011, 2-3).

The "fault line of creativity and doom" described by Fania Oz-Salzberger is not just the site of Juliano's life and work, it is also the site of life in the camp; and the pivot point of that life is children and young people, because they are the ones who will either bring change to the situation or allow it to continue with violent resistance.

THE JASMINE REVOLUTION

On 4 April 2011 Juliano Mer-Khamis was shot in his car outside the theatre in Jenin. He had his young son on his lap and the babysitter was in the passenger seat. The leaflet circulated in Jenin after his murder closes with praise of the gunman, saying "He did not do it with a silencer, or in the dark but in broad daylight, face to face, and he made sure not to harm the woman and child who were in the car at the time." (Urquhart 2011, 3). Although the author of the leaflet probably did not intend it, this sentence highlights a very salient point. It assumes that the child was not harmed simply because he was not struck by bullets. The point that Juliano, his mother, the facilitators at Theatron Shemesh and countless other actors, artists and teachers spent and spend their lives trying to make is that children are affected by violence, even if they remain physically untouched – and that, unless they are given ways to replace the violence – drama, art and music among them – the ambient violence becomes as damaging as a bullet wound.

It is distasteful to use death to make a point. Jul's murder should not be taken as "proof" of the political nature of theatre, nor as "proof" that theatre is harmful or dangerous. Rather, it is a sad and painful comment on the continued violence done by occupation. It would be a mistake, however, to allow his death to cancel out that for which he worked so hard and in which he believed so deeply.

In her memorial to him in the week after his death Israeli writer Fania Oz-Salzberger wrote that

> A double lesson should be learned from the life and death of Jul: romanticize nothing, yet keep working on the side of hope. [...] It is up to his many Israeli and Palestinian friends to prove that Mer-Khamis was no mutant, no anomaly. As he was laid to rest, in a secular cemetery on the outskirts of Haifa, the mayor of this peaceful Jewish-Arab city said that hope had been shot. But our future, like that of the whole Middle East, depends on the knowledge that hope is bulletproof (Oz-Salzberger 2011, 2).

The image that this conjures for me is of the long reach of art, the way it can outlast its creator and continue to touch those who outlive its maker. Music, painting, photography and sculpture may all be considered more lasting than the fleeting theatrical moment. The words and ideas of a play, however, and the force of a performance can carry forward in time just as strongly as the notes of a symphony or a marble sculpture. And the hope that can be bestowed by this process should not be belittled. In the midst of the so-called Arab Spring of 2011 the students of The Freedom Theatre wrote the following promise to Juliano's memory:

> The revolutionary message will not pass away. It will come storming the yellow sands and the mountains covered by almond trees … from here, from the Freedom Theatre's stage, where men were and are made to be free and engaged in the cultural revolutionary battle for freedom… In thousands of silences only one voice is raising up; it's the freedom fighters', who[m] you taught [how] to carry the cultural gun on their shoulders. Juliano, your mother's children have passed away, your mother, Arna, has passed away and so did you – but your children are going to stay, following your path on the way to the freedom battle, and we will go on with your revolution's promise, the Jasmine revolution.
> ~ Juliano's children (in Khalidi and Marlowe 2011, 2)

The children and teenagers I met during my fieldwork, as well as the adult directors, writers and actors whom I interviewed, have all been damaged by ambient violence and have made the choice to meet physical violence with cultural resistance, to water the flower that is hope. If you live in an environment of violence and fear then that fear eventually controls your identity such that you can only be defined through that violence. As 'Adel Rashmawi, one of my field contacts, said, said in the previous chapter, "hope gives people a reason to live". Without hope, people are dangerous – they do not see a reason to live. If you see no point to life, can you realistically be said

to have an identity? Or does your identity become little more than death? (interview with 'Adel Rashmawi, 25.09.08).

It is this question that the groups discussed in this chapter, and those before it, seek to answer with hope and a blossoming of life and creativity. Whether through theatre games aimed at blurring the boundaries between "other" and "self", street theatre designed to create discussion and foster thought, or a retelling of "Alice in Wonderland" that offers a creative way to resist the occupier and confront societal oppression, all of these groups offer tools that tie their audiences and participants to life. Sometimes the actions highlight the overtly political, in others the implication is more subtle, more nuanced. Always they request work and involvement from the viewers as well as the cast. The process of creative revolution does not begin in the rehearsal room and end on the stage – it continues, in conversation, discussion, thought and action long after the curtain descends.

At the time of this writing the future and security of the Theatre is unclear. Raids and arrests have interrupted the process of mourning and gotten in the way of the group's attempts to move forward. Despite this, there is hope. Juliano's children are committed to continuing his path of resistance, a form of resistance that uses art and culture, not rocks and bullets, as its weapons. It is to be hoped that they find the water to sustain them on their journey.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:
THE POINT OF TANGENCY

> *Hope is the thing with feathers*
> *That perches in the soul.*
> ~ Emily Dickinson

The focus throughout this work has been the intersection of the theatrical and the political: the point of tangency, the place poised between two worlds. Anne Fadiman's point of tangency is that place from which the surroundings can be viewed with greater clarity than can be had from within themselves. Euripides' place between two worlds is "where the city ends and the wild begins", a no-man's-land between the known and the unknown, the wild and the tame. Our intersection has had elements of both. It is an interdisciplinary study that draws on the literatures of politics, philosophy, anthropology, drama and geography, but is fully situated in none of them. From these myriad ideas come arguments about Self and Other, and the importance of the theatrical as a political site. It is this perspective that I feel is important, as much as my more specific focus on art and social change, the political nature of the theatrical. My original contribution to the literature of international politics lies in my exploration of the political nature of the theatrical. This interdisciplinary approach seeks to further the direct engagement of academic politics with political life "on the ground", as well as an expansion of the ways in which we conceptualize that political life.

The introduction offers a review of the literature surrounding identity, emotion and affect. It beings with a discussion of the fluid concepts of identity prevalent in critical IR (Campbell 1992, 1998a; Neumann 1999; Connolly 2002; Saurette 2000; Hall 1996) and anthropology (Bowman 2001), it then considers the ways in which personal identity can be brought to the fore (Wight 2006). Of particular interest to this work is the 2003 book *Rituals of Mediation: International Politics and Social Meaning* by François Debrix and Cynthia Weber. In this they address the importance of "everyday 'internationals'" in making sense of both high politics and everyday culture (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii). To avoid what they warn could be the mechanization and incompleteness of international politics, Debrix and Weber suggest a methodological approach that they call "mediation": a study of a "site of representation, transformation, and pluralisation where cultural and international rites are performed" (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii). To qualify as a mediative site by their definition, something has to be a place where "an individual can both demonstrate and engage

with the experience of the international". These places, they argue, are worthy of study in their own right, because the individual experience is both pertinent and applicable to the international. The idea of a mediative methodology is of great importance to this work and the discussion returns to it, but first the review moves on to a review of the literatures of emotion and affect, focusing on the works of Martha Nussbaum (2001) and Nigel Thrift (2007).

Nussbaum's work focuses on what she terms "the intelligence of emotions". In it she argues persuasively for the importance of emotions when approaching ideas concerned with ethics or morality, or devising any ethical or moral system. While she warns against over-privileging emotions (Nussbaum 2001, 2), Nussbaum nonetheless reasons that emotions' ability to show innate humanity is key in understanding the importance of emotional life and understanding when approaching ethical decision-making. Her work focuses on the importance of understanding the differences in emotions – they are not all equal. Highlighting the failings of non-cognitive theories, which approach all emotions as equal and valueless, Nussbaum argues for an ethical cognitive theory that uses emotions as allies to the act of rational deliberation (Nussbaum 2001, 454).

Nigel Thrift's work acknowledges the importance of affect and explores its uses in the political process. His hope is that, in incorporating affect into political engagement, the political process will become re-energised through a heightening of "the intensity of being" (Thrift 2007, 22). The impetus behind his work is his interest in the "hope, resolution and a kind of dignity" that is sometimes demonstrated by those whose everyday lives are lived in "cramped worlds", under "crushing weights" and within "narrow margins" (Thrift 2007, 20). His aim, which is a summation of the views expressed in this review of the literature, is to create a new, moral and ethical form of politics, one which encompasses the mediative sites delineated by Debrix and Weber and uses the intelligence of emotions espoused by Nussbaum.

The first chapter continues to review the literature pertinent to this project, this time focusing on readings that surround ideas of the political and the theatrical. Beginning with a discussion of Jenny Edkin's work about "the political", this chapter builds on the thoughts of the importance of identity, emotion and affect discussed in the Introduction by showing how the political can benefit from an expansion to include these ideas. As an entry point into this expansion, Anderson's (1991), Butler's (1997) and Chatterjee's (1985) work on language and performativity pave the way for considering the theatrical as one of Debrix and Weber's "mediative sites".

Having established that the theatrical is a fit site for political exploration, the first chapter moves on to review the literature surrounding the theatrical, particularly

the extent to which it draws on emotion (Myerhoff 1990) and identity (Benjamin 1999, Brecht 1964). There follows an exploration of the theatrical literature dedicated to manifestations of identity and discussions of theatrical work with a political bent (Boal 1979, Kershaw 1992, Dromgoole 2001). Building on David Campbell's idea that the actions of individuals can have an impact politically (Campbell 1998b), and drawing on the theatrical concepts that address the political, the literature discussed in this chapter bears out the argument that the theatrical can be a political site.

The second chapter addresses the methodological concerns of the project. As is fitting with a project as interdisciplinary as this one, the methodological approaches draw on a number of fields. While not a "true" ethnography (Vrasti 2008) it nonetheless owes a debt to anthropological research styles (Bowman 2007, Bayard de Volo and Schatz 2004)), and in its interest in the individual experience it draws on feminist research techniques (Rose 1997, McDowell 1998). Most assuredly it takes its cue from the "mediative methodology" advocated by Debrix and Weber, with its exploration of a site where the individual "can both demonstrate and engage with the experience of the international" (Debrix and Weber 2003, vii) as is demonstrated by the theatrical literature on political engagement as part of performance (Brecht 2003, Boal 1979, Brustein 1965, Goldfarb 2005). In an attempt to locate my methodological technique within or beside these varying approaches, I have coined the phrase "feminist mediation using ethnographic tools" to describe my field approach.

The third chapter serves as an introduction to the fieldwork proper, offering some background on Israeli and Palestinian theatrical traditions and referencing literatures of national theatre (Avigal 1996, Mäkinen, Wilmer, et. al 2001). In introducing the field site(s), this chapter offers some background – emotional, historical and theatrical – to the people, activities and performances discussed in the second half of the thesis. These include an understanding of the historical uses of performance in both Israeli and Palestinian societies (Abramson 1998, Slyomovics 1991) and the importance of language and visual signifiers in both dramatic traditions (Levy 1979, Ben-Zvi 1996).

The second half of the thesis (chapters four, five and six) is devoted to discussions and analysis of the fieldwork. This starts with an introduction to the people and groups interviewed, followed quickly by a description of theatre games and exercises that I witnessed while in the field. These activities, combined with analysis gleaned from my field notes, show a distinct awareness among the participants of the theatrical as a site for political discussion and protest. Even early aspects of their training which focus on movement and character development, especially the Mirror game and work with masks, have the potential for political

undercurrents. Once these young theatre artists move into creating and performing their own work these political themes become more apparent. The plays *Wolfland* and *Biladi-Tikvah* show a definite political voice, as do uses of Forum theatre that was designed to engage with the political process (Boal 2000).

Following discussions of the programs and workshops for young people, the analysis shifts to the interviews I conducted with theatre professionals. Here once again we find empirical evidence to bear out the theoretical musings of Campbell, Thrift, Debrix and Weber, among others, of the importance of the human experience and individual voice on the experience of the political. Whether they are protesting the occupation through a production of *Waiting for Godot* or engaging with tourists through a retelling of the Nativity story, here we hear the political voice at work upon the theatrical stage.

The final chapter relates the theatrical and the political in a very practical way. It recounts the murder of a theatre artist in the West Bank, and discusses the political siting of the theatrical in a real place and time. In this murder, and in the political and societal turmoil that surrounded it, we see the coming together of all the elements of this thesis: identity, emotion, Self, Other, politics and theatre all convene in the life, work and death of a single individual. His identity as both a Jewish Israeli and a Palestinian; the emotions surrounding him in the camp and the emotions he sought to elicit from his students and audiences; the multiple identities that went into his "Self" and the ways in which he was perceived as "Other" in multiple sites; the politics of the situation, the politics of being, the politics of the individual and the group; and the theatrical world to which he belonged all his adult life and which, for him, was the most powerful weapon – tragically, the events related in the final chapter encapsulate the argument of this project. The theatrical *is* a site of the political. It offers the scope for a mediative analysis, it hears the individual voice, it knows the value of emotions and it engages with the international and the political of the everyday.

"THE THING WITH FEATHERS": REFLECTIONS ON HOPE

I did not set out to write a thesis about hope, but it appears, upon reaching the end, that hope and its importance have been a recurrent underlying theme. Both in President Obama's inaugural address, quoted in the Introduction, and in Martha Nussbaum's book about the intelligence of emotions, hope is depicted as the opposite emotion to fear (Nussbaum 2001, 26). Nigel Thrift, elaborating on his idea of a "politics of affect", writes about the hope that sustains people whose lives are "crushed" "cramped" or "narrowed" – a hope that allows for resiliency of spirit

against all odds (Thrift 2007, 20). He refers to the study of this emotional strength as the "politics of hope" (Thrift 2007, 25). 'Adel Rashmawi, one of my field contacts, stressed the importance of hope when he said that a man without hope is a dangerous man (interview with 'Adel Rashmawi, 25.09.08) and by extension, a people without hope are a dangerous society. Juliano compared hope to a small flower that grows in rubble, in his eulogy the mayor of Haifa likened the murder of Juliano to the shooting of hope, and in her reporting of his death Fania Oz-Salzberger wrote that the future of the Middle East "depends on the knowledge that hope is bulletproof" (Oz-Salzberger 2011, 2). By all these accounts, hope is a powerful emotion and, in its ability to propel us forward, it speaks to the political process.

I do not think it is possible to produce theatre without hope, what would be the point? Therefore, perhaps the greatest gift given by the theatrical to the political is that of hope – when we perform we have not given up.

Appendix A:
KNOWING THE WORLD: IDENTITY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

One of the ways in which emotion can impact politics is through the concept of identity for it is hard to consider a sense of self without some form of emotional connection. And, like emotion, research into the politics of identity often fetches up against Keohane's dictum about empirical rigour. As will become apparent in this appendix, there is as much discussion of methodological approach in identity politics as there is in discussions of emotion. Starting with Hume and Locke, who used the term *identity* to "cast doubt on the unity of the self" (Gleason 1983, 911; Ricoeur 1990, 125-28; Neumann 1999, 216), the concept has passed in and out of fashion and through multiple meanings and usages[120]. This section will provide an overview of the ways that identity is considered, while highlighting the ways in which certain approaches are most pertinent to this project. For the purposes of this project the literature on identity in IR can be divided into roughly two groups: the constructivists and the critical theorists, which latter group encompasses both postmodernists and poststructuralists.

Before embarking on an in-depth discussion of the literature considering identity in IR, a few words must be said about the concept of nationalism. Much of the literature on identity draws on or refers to literature on nationalism. Nationalism and the concept of a "nation" are both topics of great concern and interest to the consideration of identity in international relations. Additionally, ideas of nationalism are relevant to my work and Appendix D is concerned with the development of national theatres, a development that demands at least some familiarity with the debates surrounding the term[121].

No discussion of nationalism would be complete without citing the work of Ernest Renan. His lecture of 11 March 1882 at the Sorbonne, titled "What is a Nation?" is referred to repeatedly in the literature. In this lecture Renan attempts to dissect the meaning of the concept of "nation". His premise is that, at the time of his lecture, there

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[120] These ideas are further explored in Philip Gleason's 1983 article "Identifying Identity: A Semantic History" *Journal of American History* 69 (4): 910-931 and Paul Ricoeur's 1990 book *Oneself as Another*, University of Chicago Press.

[121] For a review of the literature on this please see Eley, G. and R.G. Suny, Eds. (1996). *Becoming National: A Reader*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. Also Ernest Renan's lecture at the Sorbonne (11 March 1882) "What Is A Nation?", Anthony D. Smith (1983) *Theories of Nationalism*. London, Duckworth; Hans Kohn (1955) *Nationalism, Its Meaning and History* Princeton, Princeton University Press; Karl Deutsch (1966). *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality*. Cambridge, MIT Press. For a critical take on nationalisms, please see Partha Chatterjee (1986). *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: a derivative discourse*. London, Zed Books Ltd. and (1993). *The Nation and Its Fragments: colonial and postcolonial histories*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

existed both "real" nationalities and those groups which had popularly been assigned nationhood, but whose bond was more racial or linguistic (Renan 1996, 45). He also holds an assumption of universal ideals, writing that "there are such things as reason, justice, the true, and the beautiful, which are the same for all" (Renan 1996, 49). Renan's work focuses on the concept of the *patrie*, or fatherland, a deep emotional connection that, he feels, supercedes linguistic or religious bond and is essential for defining "nationhood". Although he claims to write with "an absolutely cool and impartial attitude" (Renan 1996, 45), it is clear that his opinions are heavily influenced by his shock over the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, which led to the redrawing of international boundaries and the re-apportioning of "nationhood" on an individual level. Although highly Eurocentric and sometimes jarring to today's critical ears, Renan's definition of a nation suggests an oddly non-traditional approach. He writes that

> Man is a slave neither of his race nor his language, nor of his religion, nor of the course of rivers nor of the direction taken by mountain chains. A large aggregate of men, healthy in mind and warm of heart, creates the kind of moral conscience which we call a nation. So long as this moral consciousness gives proof of its strength by the sacrifices which demand the abdication of the individual to the advantage of the community, it is legitimate and has the right to exist. (Renan 1996, 53)

For someone whose starting claim has been coolness and impartiality, this closing comment reveals a certain emotional connection to his topic. In short, for Renan nationhood implies a shared national "soul" (Renan 1996, 51), the understanding of which he implicitly denies to large political bodies. When it comes to redrawing national boundaries in the aftermath of a conflict he advocates for the consultation of the people who live on the land being reapportioned. Only they, he claims, can understand the bonds of *patrie* that hold and define them, and only they can ultimately choose the nation to which they belong[122]. Although there is much in Renan's work to make the modern reader uncomfortable, particularly his assumptions about rationality and gender, his closing comments show a heartening willingness to engage in politics from the people up, an engagement that presages the critical feminist approach of "the personal is political".

Interestingly, nearly 100 years later Anthony Smith wrote almost exactly the opposite in *Theories of Nationalism*. While Renan advocates for individuals defining, through their shared soul, the boundaries of a nation, Smith claims that the individual

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[122] To Renan this appears to be a "knowledge" rather than a choice. To his mind the bonds of *patrie* are so strong that to choose another nationality would be almost impossible. This is interesting because, although he allows for involvement at an individual level, it clear that he feels that identity is disseminated from the national 'soul'.

is meaningless when taken apart from the community of his or her birth. This community, Smith writes,

> has a life history, it is self-generating and self-sufficient, a seamless, mythic entity, ascertainable through objective characteristics – of history, religion, language and customs. Nations are "natural" wholes, they constitute the sole historical realities. Therefore the individual is primarily distinguishable in terms of his nationality, and only secondarily by social and personal traits. To opt out of the community is to risk the loss of a man's individuality. (Smith 1983, 198)

In this way, Smith argues a constructivist line, positing that without the whole the part is meaningless – the whole constructs the individual. Although at heart Renan and Smith seem to be saying similar things, the difference in their phrasing is striking. One assigns great agency to the individual, the other none at all.

Benedict Anderson, in a piece written after the initial publication of *Imagined Communities*[123], suggests that the ideas of the census, cartography and the museum have all contributed to the creation of communities (not just the colonized communities which inherited their senses of self from the colonial powers that had conquered and controlled them). These three things, Anderson says, "profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion – the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry" (Anderson 1996, 243). This approach seems to take a middle ground between Renan and Smith indicating, as it does, a multi-directional exchange of community-creating markers. In this addition to his previous work, Anderson suggests that it is not just the colonial powers that shape their subjects but also, to some extent, the information gathered about their subjects that shape the way it considers the realm it governs.

Nationalism, although bearing a tangential importance to this project, is not its main focus. Rather, the discussions of "knowing" that surround the concept of identity are of greater pertinence here. Therefore the following sections will be devoted to the ways that IR scholars have thought and written about this concept.

"Rigid Identities": Alexander Wendt & Constructivism

The work of Alexander Wendt is a bulwark of the Constructivist school of thought, so called because of their interest in "the construction of identities and interests" which leads them to "take a more socio-logical than economic approach to systemic theory. On this basis, they have argued that states are not structurally or exogenously given but constructed by historically contingent interactions[124]" (Wendt 1994, 385). As this

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[123] Anderson's *Imagined Communities* will be discussed in Chapter 4.
[124] This argument receives significant attention in E. Adler (1991) "Cognitive Evolution" in E. Adler and B. Crawford, Eds., *Progress in Postwar International Relations*. New York, Columbia

indicates, Wendt's work assumes a state-centric approach because, as he says, states "remain jealous of their sovereignty" despite the growing international importance of non-state actors. Because of this "jealousy", he argues that states resist collective identification more strongly than other actors, which makes the collectivization of states difficult to theorise (Wendt 1994, 385). Despite this, he says, the development of a collective identity is "an important condition for the emergence of "inter-national states," which would constitute a structural transformation of the Westphalian states system" (Wendt 1994, 385).

This "structural transformation" is a development he seems to welcome, but with some distinct reservations. Wendt's initial assumption, from which all his theorising starts, is that the international system is anarchic in nature (Wendt 1992). With this assumption guiding his thoughts he is bounded in terms of the critique he can level at the international process. Throughout his argument he is hampered by both his insistence on anarchy and his fealty to the state-centred approach. When raising the need for discussion about states' collective identity, Wendt says

> "This might seem irrelevant to international politics, since states are hardly known for their altruism, […] but in order to even raise the question, we need to first see that such a motivation is logically possible, and that it implies a different logic of anarchy" (Wendt 1999, 106).

This passage draws on a number of assumptions, not least those pertaining to state-centrism and anarchy. Later in the same section, Wendt hypothesizes an international system with significant collective identity. In this system, Wendt posits, states will be freed from the perceived need to balance their military power against their neighbours in order to secure their identity. Drawing on Stephen Walt's argument, Wendt writes that

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University Press; R. Ashley (1987) "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space" *Alternatives* **12**: 403-34; T. Hopf (1998) "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory" *International Security*, 23(1): 171-200; P. Katzenstein, Ed. (1996) *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, New York, Columbia University Press; F. Kratochwil (1989) *Rules, Norms, and Decisions.* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; N.G. Onuf (1989) *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations*, Columbia, University of South Carolina Press; J. Ruggie (1993) "Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations." *International Organization* **47**:139-74; R.B.J. Walker (1990) "Sovereignty, Identity, Community" in R. B. J. Walker and S. Mendlovitz, Eds., *Contending Sovereignties*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner; A. Wendt (1992) "Anarchy is What States Make of It: the social construction of power politics." *International Organization* **46**(2): 391-425.

states balance against threats not power, and as long as states are confident that others identify with their security they will not see each other as military threats. […] Instead of balancing, states that have achieved this level of mutual identification are more likely to secure themselves by observing the rule of law in settling their disputes, and by practicing collective security when threatened from outside […] This is not a self-help system in any interesting sense, since the self has become the collective. (Wendt 1999, 106)

In this passage, Wendt implies that identity and security are closely linked[125] and, through the introduction of security, that interest is also of concern (Wendt 1999, 224-233). In order to understand how Wendt conceives of identity, however, it is necessary to consider his argument in greater depth.

Although he is aware of what he calls the philosophical meaning of identity – "that which makes a thing what it is" – he rejects this approach as being too broad to be of use to political theorising. Because of this, he says, he will

treat it as a property of intentional actors that generates motivational and behavioral dispositions. This means that identity is at base a subjective or unit-level quality, rooted in an actor's self-understandings. However, the meaning of those understandings will often depend on whether other actors represent an actor in the same way, and to that extent identity will also have an intersubjective or systemic quality. […] Two kinds of ideas can enter into identity, those held by the Self and those held by the Other. Identities are constituted by both internal and external structures." (Wendt 1999, 224)

In this way, Wendt acknowledges some of the more complex underpinnings of identity construction that will form the basis of a critique of his work by other scholars later in this appendix. By dismissing them as "too broad" he falls into the trap that suggests that if something is too complicated it may be better not to attempt it. As will be discussed later, there are schools of thought that have grappled with these broad and philosophical ideas, often to the furtherment of knowledge. Although these scholars will be critiqued in their turn, it is important to note here that Wendt is aware of these challenges to his work, but has chosen not to engage with them.

Wendt's work draws on four kinds of identity: personal/corporate, type, role and collective. His concept of personal identity is a rigid one. He writes that only one such identity is possible and that

[i]t always has a material base, the body in the case of people, many bodies and territory for states. But what really distinguishes the personal or corporate identity of international actors […] is a consciousness and memory of Self as a separate locus of thought and activity. (Wendt 1999, 225)

Wendt goes on to say that without consciousness and memory the physical body is not an "agent", may cease to be "human" – a dangerous concept. What of individuals

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[125] The Democratic Peace Theory, the idea that democracies do not go to war with each other, draws on this concept.

suffering from amnesia or those in a coma? Although it is doubtful that Wendt intends to make such a potentially broad philosophical statement, it is nonetheless frightening to conceive of "human-ness" being so easy to discard. Surely what makes us human is deserving of more thought and reflection than this?

Wendt expands the "personal" identity through the "type" category – this being the sort of identity that an agent may have many of: age group, speakers of a language, sexuality, etc. These identifiers are fluid and an agent may align with many of them, however they are only identities in so much as they are imbued with meaning by society at large. This may have been true at the time of writing, but with the increase of internet use the reality may have changed. Wendt claims that identity cannot be something not considered meaningful by society[126]. In this age of online discussion groups it is not uncommon to find communities (or "chat rooms") given over to discussions of topics that, to the uninitiated, seem devoid of social meaning. It is not uncommon to find people bound together through "on-line community", people who have not met in person but nonetheless feel a bond, a shared identity[127]. It is also possible for groups, through self-identifying, to create a greater awareness in society at large and, perhaps, to develop societal power[128]. Although "type" identifiers may be an accurate description, it is not easy to say that the recognition must originate with society – the identifier may come from the group, which – through a variety of means – is able to create recognition in the society. The process could then be said to be reciprocal: the identity is internal, the power ascribed to the identity is given through virtue of its external perception.

Wendt defines "Role" identities as something that furthers dependence on culture and Others. In his work these are identifiers that have no intrinsic properties of their own, they exist only in relation to Others (Wendt 1999, 227). He continues by saying that roles are enacted because people "carry Others around in their heads" (Wendt 1999, 227); in other words, that certain relational identities are understood (student/professor, etc.) and that it is through this understanding that these roles, and the identities they encapsulate, are maintained.   This idea has entered into international relations literature through the work of "foreign policy role theorists" (Holsti 1970, Walker 1987). The position of role theorists seems to be that "the social

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[126] The examples he gives are people named Max and those with dry skin (Wendt 1999, 226).
[127] A quick search of the social networking site Facebook shows groups devoted to a fondness for a particular kind of food, an affection for a country, state of city, and even to providing solidarity for people with red hair or a particularly uncommon name.
[128] An example of this would be the increasing awareness of the trans-gender community in the United States which has used internet *fora* and chat groups – as well as blogs – to gather members and raise awareness of themselves as a social and political group (For example: www.transohio.org and www.*kyrgyzlabrys.livejournal.com/).*

structure of international politics is too 'ill defined, flexible, or weak' to generate significant role expectations, and so states' foreign policy roles are entirely a function of policy-makers' beliefs and domestic politics, rather than their relations to Others" (Wendt 1999, 227). This in turn leads to a discussion of agent versus structure. The Constructivist approach indicates that structure is the part of the process that *constitutes* the role, whereas the agent *takes* the role (Wendt 1999, 228). If this is applied then, presumably, society – international or otherwise – is the process and the individual, corporation or state is the agent.

Wendt is interested in identity but only, as Neumann pointed out, in rigid, structural forms. In his work identity is important, but only in certain ways: he shies away from the broader, philosophical arguments that will be taken up later in this appendix. While acknowledging the importance of thinking about the concept, he is unable – or unwilling – to break away from the state-centred approach. Although he writes about personal identity, and includes it as one of his four types, his writing does not consider the possible importance that personal identities might have for international politics. For Wendt identity is key to interests – the two concepts are closely tied together, and identity without interests is immaterial. Also key to Wendt's constructivism is the way that International Relations is conducted based on social constructs, not on givens about who or what states are (Wendt 1999, 70).

There is much additional work on identity that draws on and refers to constructivism in general and Wendt's work in particular. In 1997 Yosef Lapid and Frederick Kratochwil edited a volume entitled *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR*. This book provides a summary of the then-contemporary work being done with regards to identity research. In this book the editors have attempted to amass a collection of work that explores the multiple definitions of both culture and identity, their goal being to "match suitable definitional assets to declared theoretical missions" while avoiding the temptation to push for a consensual definition of the terms (Lapid & Kratochwil 1997, 7). It is in this refusal to be bound to a single definition that their work lays the foundation for some of the more compelling innovations in the field. As Lapid writes in the introduction:

> "*the perception of multiplicity* and the *pervasive theme of construction* are the two central motifs dominating the current rethinking of culture and identity in social theory. Under the impact of these motifs, new approaches tend to highlight hitherto ignored or denied dimensions of culture and identity such as their socially constructed (as opposed to primordially given) nature; their optional (as opposed to deterministic) dimensions; their fragmenting/ diversifying (as opposed to integrating/ homogenizing) implications; and their multidimensional/ dynamic (as opposed to unidimensional/ static) features. (Lapid & Kratochwil 1997, 7, emphasis in the original)

What the work contained in this volume argues is that the reintroduction of culture and identity (however defined) is key because it identifies the importance of the non-bounded aspects of IR. Once theorists begin to step away from the naturalistic prescriptions of the ways in which people and their interactions on the world stage are considered, the richer and more varied our understanding of that world becomes (Lapid & Kratochwil 1997, 8-9). Identities – long considered to be fixed and "natural" – are in fact fluid and multiple, constructed by society and constantly being formed and re-formed by their constituents. This volume argues that "embracing the idea that cultures and identities are emergent and constructed (rather than fixed and natural), contested and polymorphic (rather than unitary and singular), and interactive and process-like (rather than static and essence-like), can lead to path breaking theoretical advances" (Lapid & Kratochwil 1997, 7).

As a whole, this book offers, through essays, many opportunities to consider the roles and importance of culture and identity in IR. Through the vagueness of its definition of those concepts, however, it does not issue clear parameters – other than to imply that there are no (or, at least, few) parameters for the study of identity, culture and the importance of both to IR. In one chapter (Ferguson & Mansbach) considers the interplay between identity and loyalty. It takes a broadly historic, and non-Eurocentric, approach; considering Mesopotamia, Greece, Mesoamerica, China, the Islamic World and Italy from the 4th century BCE until the Italian Renaissance. Their work is more concerned with "polities" than "states", considering that identities are formed in far more complex ways than can be bounded by state-hood (Ferguson & Mansbach 1997, 29). J. Ann Tickner's chapter argues for the importance of the introduction of gender into international relations. She makes the case that women's identities as women have been under-represented in the field of international politics, and as such the overall view of the international has been impoverished (Tickner 1997, 151).

Similarly, Peter Lomas, in his 2005 article "Anthropomorphism, Personification and Ethics: a reply to Alexander Wendt", challenges Wendt's dismissal of the role of the human individual in International Relations[129]. He says that Wendt's argument opposes 'physicalism', through which states are "reduced" to their individual members (Lomas 2005, 349). His argument lies most specifically with the narrow definition of "personhood" that Wendt has culled from social theory. The problem with this, Lomas points out, is that it "sets up an opposition between false extremes, as

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[129] He is responding to Alexander Wendt's 2004 article "The State as Person in International Theory" published in the *Review of International Studies* 30: 289-316.

well as being false to the full nature of human beings" (Lomas 2005, 349). Lomas expresses scepticism that such a "perfect corporate agent" as Wendt's state exists, and suggests that any claims to its existence should be viewed with suspicion. To support this argument he refers to examples such as the Sun King's *l'État c'est moi* or the depiction by Cold Warriors of the Soviet Union as evil personified (Lomas 2005, 351). As Lomas points out

> [t]his procedure inflates one individual, or a few, to the putative dimensions of the collectivity; it implies no real interest in questions of identity, or in how a society of individuals might be better understood as integrated for the sake of agency – which seems to me the core of value to be extracted from Wendt's project. (Lomas 2005, 351)

Furthermore Lomas points out a semantic difficulty with Wendt's argument. There is a difference, he says, "between anthropomorphism (the identification of a non-human entity as a human one) and personification (the identification of a human entity as an individual)". This distinction is blurred by the definitions with which Wendt opens his argument[130]. Because of his determination to portray the state "not merely as human – which as a human creation it unavoidably, in some sense, is – but also as an individual, an undivided person" (Lomas 2005, 351) he has fallen into the realist trap of falsely inflating a single individual to the personification of the state while bypassing the true wealth to be gained by an analysis of the collectivity contained within a state.

Colin Wight's 2006 work on structure and agency in International Relations suggests that identity is relational. Although any one conceptualisation of identity is not based on a single parties' understanding – the concept is both flexible and fluid – the beliefs held by different agents are important because of the role they play in structuring identity *within* those relationships. As Wight explains, various social contexts may *appear* identical, but the beliefs and understandings of the individuals within the contexts are key to understanding the construction of relationships and identity (Wight 2006, 83). In this way Wight moves away from Wendt's reticence in dealing with the breadth encompassed by philosophical ideas of "identity" and towards a more critical understanding of how identities exist and shift in the greater world. He also moves away from Wendt's human/structure/agent triad by suggesting that the form and method of structuring identity is specific to each. He writes that

> [h]uman individuals are, of course, structured entities, but this does not mean that the analogy between humans-as-agents and structures-as-agents is a productive one. For the ways in which each entity is structured endow it with

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[130] Wendt says that "to say that states are "actors" or "persons" is to attribute to them properties we associate first with human beings – rationality, identities, interests, beliefs, and so on' (Wendt 2004, 289).

properties not possessed by entities with differing structures. This point becomes crucial when we attempt to uncover what it is to talk of agency in the social world (Wight 2006, 206).

In this passage Wight clearly states that an engagement with the philosophical underpinnings of the concept are imperative to any conversation about identity. In a further discussion of agency, he responds to Barry Buzan's argument that "what is particularly agential about agents is the 'faculty or state of acting or exerting power'" (Wight 2006, 206). This argument is relevant to both the natural sciences and the leading use of agency in IR, namely that agency is the exercise of power. Wight embraces the philosophical when he writes that

> [w]hat sets the limits of the boundaries between the social world and the natural world are the dual notions of meaning and intentionality, and both, I would argue, are properties best reserved for human agents. […] If we accept Buzan's definition we are forced to conclude that structures must at the same time be agents since they too possess the 'faculty or state of acting or exerting power'. (Wight 2006, 206)

This mode of reasoning is reminiscent of postmodernist discussions of "the death of the self". In *Gender Trouble* (1990) Judith Butler (drawing on Durkheim and Mauss 1963) posits the idea that subjects (of which the self is one) are constructed, and therefore a fiction. She contends that

> [t]he enabling conditions for an assertion of "I" are provided by the structure of signification, the rules that regulate the legitimate and illegitimate invocation of that pronoun can circulate. (Butler 1990, 143)

I will return to Butler's ideas later in this appendix, but for the purposes here Wight draws on her work to argue that it is possible to agree with the general idea of this inherently philosophical approach without following the reasoning to its logical conclusion that "the individual is simply a blank slate upon which are inscribed the codes of culture" (Wight 2006, 207). Thus Wight suggests that Constructivism, while providing some first steps for considering identity, is hindered by its rigidity. An adaptation of some constructivist ideas to a more fluid approach, he argues, might allow for a more realistic engagement with a social world.

Petr Drulák's 2006 chapter "Reflexivity and Structural Change" offers two particular contributions to this study. In the first instance he raises the issue of reflexivity in Wendt's work, and in the second he offers a review of literature pertaining to "political learning". With regards to reflexivity, he draws on the work of Guzzini (2000) who argues that, despite reflexivity being central to constructivism, Wendt manages to, paradoxically, ignore it in his work. In *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999) he assigns it a key role in his theories of structural change, but then does not incorporate it into the "scientific realist meta-theory" (Drulák 2006, 140). Despite

the fact that it's importance goes unrecognised, reflexivity is a major component in Wendt's *Social Theory*, coming into use when naturalist explanations have been used to their fullest. In his 2003 article "Why a world state is inevitable", however, Wendt shuts the door on any perceived inconsistency and simply ignores the role of reflexivity completely (Guzzini 2000, 150).

Drulák's interest lies in structural change, for which the reflexive approach is important. He therefore addresses the question "How do constructivists think we learn?" as it applies to social change. As such, he expresses interest in amending Wendt's work to compensate for the weaknesses pointed out by Guzzini, and thus to "bring reflexivity back in". In this instance Drulák uses reflexivity to mean "internal learning" (Haas 1990) and "rule altering politics" (Beck 1994), both of which offer ways to theorise structural change (Drulák 2006, 141). This reflexive approach is important to my work because it is the "internal learning" that takes place during the theatre process that I wish to highlight.

The second contribution that Drulák makes is to provide a review of the literature surrounding the discussion of learning in politics, and the importance (often ignored) that reflexivity plays in the process. Drulák points out that "while rationalist 'simple learning' refers to changes in behaviour, the constructivist 'complex learning' addresses changes in identities" (Drulák 2006, 144). Joseph Nye posits that political actors "learn" through outside induction, that examples of learning are attributable to world events (Nye 1987, 380), and Levy suggests that learning is 'experiential', as opposed to deductive or intuitive (Levy 1994, 286).

Maja Zehfuss is also concerned with the limitations of Wendt's constructivist approach to identity. In "Constructivism and Identity: A dangerous liaison" (2006) she challenges Wendt's conceptualization of identity claiming that his argument disintegrates under it's own assumptions. "On the one hand," she writes,

> the possibility of constructing different anarchies is fundamental to Wendt's approach as it is this which constitutes the departure from rationalist or 'mainstream' theory. Anarchy, as he puts it in an early piece, is 'what states make of it'. This claim rests on the constructedness of identity as the character of anarchy depends on how identities and hence interests are defined. On the other hand, Wendt proposes a 'scientific' theory of the international system. This makes it necessary, in Wendt's view, to take states as a given. (Zehfuss 2006, 94)

Zehfuss points out that this approach limits identity to a bounded state characteristic that is both constructed and given. Wendt contradictorily argues that the world is constructed – but only in part. In his defence of scientific realism he accepts certain aspects of the world as givens (Wendt 1999, chapter 2). He acknowledges "that identities do not exist apart from articulation and contextualization, have no clear bounds and fail to be logically coherent" – this challenges the validity of the

constructivist approach. Since a concept cannot be both given and constructed at the same time, Zehfuss points out that, taken literally, Wendt's approach requires one to hold two mutually exclusive perspectives (Zehfuss 2006, 94). In addition, Zehfuss cites concerns with Wendt's methodology, argues that there are serious ramifications to what he excludes from consideration. In fact, she says, those things excluded from Wendt's approach make his approach untenable. If, she says, "the self cannot be defined apart from context, […] identities are inherently contradictory, if identities depend on concrete articulations for their existence […] then Wendt's *via media* [middle way] is in danger of coming apart" because its central concept is both essential and impossible (Zehfuss 2006, 95). Actors (for Wendt, states) "acquire identities, which [he] defines as 'relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self" (Wendt 1999, 21). These identities are only possible through collective understandings of certain roles and signifiers (Zehfuss 2006, 95). In Zehfuss's analysis, the difficulties with Wendt's approach to identity are that it is *only* important in so much as it provides a base for interests and that identity is both pivotal and a threat to his approach. Wendt does not question that the international system is anarchic, or that it is inhabited/controlled by states, and he claims that his analysis is focused on the state system, and that the process of identity formation holds little interest for him (Zehfuss 2006, 116). He does not see beyond or within this to the possibilities of other actors and their importance. Ultimately, his questioning approach has not gone far enough.

To summarise her argument, Zehfuss writes that the main failing of constructivism is that

> political questions, for instance about how subjects come to be in the first place, are ignored. Therefore, constructivism and identity may be in a dangerous liaison not only because identity is both necessary for and a danger to the approach. The liaison also endangers the possibility of considering the political implications of constructing and representing identity. As a result, constructivists may just miss the politics in international relations. (Zehfuss 2006, 117)

In contrast to Wendt's attempts to quantify identity, Zehfuss refers to David Campbell's opinion that "identity is rendered in essentialist ways as a variable that can be inserted into already existing theoretical commitments" (Campbell 1998, 218 in Zehfuss 2006, 114). The juxtaposition between the two approaches is an interesting one. Campbell's work on identity contributes much to the ideas with which this appendix is concerned. The following section will explore the more fluid conceptions of identity suggested by Campbell and other critical scholars.

HISTORICAL INTERSECTIONS/HISTORICAL CONTEXT (INCLUDING A DISCUSSION OF CENSORSHIP)

It will quickly become evident that theatre, and the dramatic moment, has been used in a myriad of politicized ways throughout the last 3,000 years[131]. For the purpose of manageability my research focuses mainly on theatre and its development in Europe and North America. Because most of the Western democratic powers (the European Union, the United States of America, Canada, etc.) claim political and cultural descent, at least partly, from the democratic ideals of the Greek city-states, I have devoted significant space to a discussion of the development of Greek (Athenian) theatrical tradition, and the alternate uses of performance within that society. In this tradition, theatre has long been a way to promote ideas and identity, political among them.

It is important to note that theatrical ideas tracing from ancient Greece, although prevalent in Western Europe and the U.S., do not represent the only or, in fact, the predominant form of performed narrative. Storytelling, dance/drama, and puppetry are long-standing and respected dramatic forms in other parts of the world. I am focusing on the development of what might be termed a European style of theatre for two main reasons. The first is logistical – space and scope will simply not permit an in depth examination of all relevant forms of performance narrative and their political implications. The second is that, faced with the necessity of a narrowed focus, concentrating on the political involvement of European theatrical style seemed to provide the most broadly supportive base for my project. My fieldwork took place in Israel and Palestine and the theatre performed there, thanks to colonialism and European-Jewish settlement, is based on European theatrical styles. It is important to remember, however, that this is a relatively new art form in Arab countries: prior to the last century most performed narrative took the form of public storytelling, complete with props, backdrops and sound effects. Given this reality, tracing the history of European theatrical development and its political involvement, while far from ideal, at least provides a framework that is broadly applicable to both.

The purpose of this appendix is to provide an historical context for the intersections of the theatrical and the political discussed in the body of this thesis. There is a broad field of literature already in existence, in departments of both historical studies and drama, which details the complete history of world theatre. This

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[131] Again because of limitations in the scope of this project, there are several instances where historical events or particular theatrical themes are mentioned in passing, and without a developed analysis. Wherever possible I have attempted to provide citations to assist readers who would like further information on these topics.

appendix seeks to show that political uses of theatre have been longstanding and accepted. Be it the religio-historical tragedies and politico-comedies of ancient Greece, the dramatic intrigues of Elizabethan England, or the defiant anti-Nazi productions of Occupied France, theatre has a long history as a political instrument.

The Source of "Theatre Consciousness"

What we in the contemporary Western world call "theatre" has developed out of the religious rituals and storytelling of earlier civilizations. When elements of music, singing, and dancing combine with narrative, a rudimentary theatre practice is born (Schechner 1993, 24). Whether through shamanic ritual or musical offering, there is enough evidence for the importance of performance in ancient societies that the Society for American Archaeology has a working group entitled "Spectacle, Performance and Power in Premodern Complex Societies" (Inomata and Coben 2006, 4). Over time, theatrical performance has changed in purpose, moving from religious rite to national event, and further to a style of narrative entertainment. The first step in the European development of this art form was the performance, by memory, of the tales of Homer in a public forum. These performances were financed by local rulers and were staged with the intention of imparting wisdom and knowledge to people who would not otherwise have had access to it (Green 1994). The 6th century BCE Athenian Tyrant Hipparchos arranged for Anakreon and Simonides to perform the complete works of Homer "in a desire to educate the citizens, so that he might rule over the best possible subjects, since he was so good and noble that he did not think he should grudge anyone wisdom[132]" (Green 1994, 2). In this example one can see that the origins of drama "are buried in a past when the link between State and Stage was inextricably close" (Whitworth 1951, 16). Rulers sought to use drama/culture as a means to educate their subjects, but at the same time, they controlled the choice of subject matter for the performance, thereby controlling the knowledge or information the populace was allowed to access. In so doing they acknowledged the power – both intellectual and emotional – of public performance, and asserted their control over that power.

ATHENIAN DRAMA: THE ORIGINS OF EUROPEAN THEATRE

The ancient Greek city-states, most prominently Athens in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, began to change the mode of presentation, moving from religious choral odes or "praise songs" performed by a bard and a chorus in honour of gods or heroes, to an

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[132] The Greek word *tyrannos* means sovereign or master and carried no pejorative meaning. It was applied to both good and bad leaders and referred merely to a leader who had taken power on his or her own, rather than through heredity or constitutional law. Anakreon and Simonides were two of the most famous Greek poets and performers of the 6th century BCE.

innovative, but equally stylized, form involving three actors and a chorus of singers or dancers (Gentili 1979; Hall 1989, 63, 114). These plays continued to be staged as part of religious festivals, but they gradually became a more and more important part of the proceedings. The early plots were retellings of the myths that were the mainstay of the Greek religion, and local identities[133] (Hall 1989, ix). The gods and heroes whose stories were depicted were as real to the observers as their own ancestors; the religion was a living part of the day-to-day in a way that most residents of a modern secular society cannot begin to appreciate[134].

Staged Identities

The theatre of 5th century BCE Athens was, in essence, although not in name, a national theatre, showing Athenians representations of themselves as first among the Hellenes. Although the Greek political system, at that time, consisted mainly of city-state identities rather than an overarching Greek identity, there was already the beginning of cohesion between the city-states.

If we consider the early theatre of Greece to be, at some level, an expression of identity, it also bears examining how the Greeks were defining themselves, what they marked as "safe" and "dangerous". While according actors a protected status as "servants of a god", those same servants were also seen as slightly unsafe. They were almost viewed as shape-shifters, their talents for impersonation lauded, but also feared. Edith Hall, noted scholar of both Drama and Classics, has written on this topic, highlighting in particular the issues surrounding gender on the Classical stage[135]:

> The protean ability of the expert player to assume multiple identities in the course of a performance was much admired by ancient theatre-goers, but was also regarded as a frightening, destabilising, and socially dangerous renunciation of identity, especially when it entailed visibly turning into a woman (Hall in Taveen 2001, 11).

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[133] The term "national" identity cannot accurately be applied here because the modern concept of a "nation" did not yet exist. It is clear from the historical record, however, that there was a process of identification, both of Self and Other, already in place. The decades of enmity between Athens and Sparta, for example, or the divisions of city-state residents (from citizens to *metics* to slaves), confirms the existence of divisions based on identity long before the modern concept of "nation".

[134] When asked about the role of theatre in Ancient Greece, self taught but respected scholar Mary Renault said "Barring a sprinkling of intellectuals, the whole vast audience believed the whole thing had actually happened. They might be highly sophisticated and critical about the way the story was rendered, but they believed not only that Oedipus really did put out his eyes in Thebes (and perhaps he did, who knows?) but that, for instance, Achilles was the child of a man and a goddess […] And then behind all that was an immemorially ancient folk memory of masked rituals going back, probably, tens of millennia to some horned shaman in a cave, there was magic in it." (Mary Renault to David Sweetman in *Mary Renault: a biography*, 1993).

[135] Edith Hall's 1989 book *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* is an excellent exploration of the ways in which Ancient Greek drama created and cemented the identities of the citizens of the city-states, and differentiated them from other, to their mind inferior, beings.

This fear says much about how the Greeks classed "Self" and "Other". "Self" really only referred to free male citizens of the city-states, the keepers of "civilization". However, theatre, and religious rites, showed the value placed on that which is, otherwise, to be feared. Greek religious ritual recognised that societies, and individuals, are made up of many different, and occasionally conflicting, elements. In order to maintain the ideal of rational, ordered, male virtue, it was sometimes necessary to give in to wild abandon – to forsake the logic of Apollo for the madness of Dionysus, even if only temporarily. The fact that theatre took place under the auspices of two very different gods only serves to accentuate its dualistic and changeable nature. In Euripides' play *Bacchai*, for example,

> […] Dionysus liberates prisoners, deranges the rational, effeminises men, and with his earthquake visibly, manifestly intrudes the untamed verdant natural world into the brick-built, ordered interior of the supposedly 'civilised' city. In one of his last plays, produced posthumously after a long lifetime of thinking about the nature of theatre, Euripides created a tragedy proving that Dionysus, and our relationship to him, are ultimately unknowable. Apollo at Delphi famously told the ancient Greeks to 'know thyself'; in Bacchai Dionysus warns us to be aware that we do not and cannot really know ourselves and our universe at all (Hall in Taveen 2001, 14).

In fact, it was the very temporary nature of this internally conflicted event that made it valuable. Citizens who were habitually drunk, or otherwise immoderate in their habits, were considered to have ignored the second Delphic maxim: Nothing Too Much. Between these two maxims, and the precepts of Dionysus, there is a world of difference. One preached restraint, the other urged abandon. One advocated rationality, the other, the irrational. The events of the Dionysia, closely tied to the transformative power of a play, allowed the population to balance the rational and the irrational, and provided an outlet for what would otherwise be unacceptable[136].

This recognition of the importance of balance between rational and irrational, as demonstrated in certain myths and religious festivals, was a significant part of the importance of theatre. In time, the role of theatre within society began to change, and

> […] there can be no doubt that the use to which theatre was put at this period [4th century BCE Athens] was new. It became an identifier of Greeks as compared with foreigners and a setting in which Greeks emphasised their common identity (Green 1994, xiii).

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[136] The Dionysia was a 2-part religious festival held in Athens in honour of Dionysus. It had several components, but the performance of tragedies (and, later, comedies) was a highlight for the population, and victory in the dramatic competitions was, for both poets and actors, a career enhancing achievement.

Those who belonged to the Hellenic tribes considered themselves superior to other Greeks[137], and all Greeks were superior to the "barbarians" who lived in Thrace, Persia or the northern steppes. Each individual city-state was responsible for the organisation of the theatre, wealthy citizens were obligated to sponsor plays for the greater festivals as part of their religious responsibilities, and the performances were conducted as part of a national festival (Whitworth 1951, 16) – not unlike the modern performances of the Passion Play of Oberammergau in Bavaria. This play, which has been performed at regular ten-year intervals since the mid-17th century, is considered to be an expression, not only of faith, but also of national identity[138]. This idea of theatre as national instrument is the subject of a separate appendix, which will address the specifics of national theatre movements. However, for the sake of historical context, it is important to understand how, early in its history, theatre played a role as "national" identifier.

Within the structure of the political life of the city-state, plays were performed as both political and religious statements. The gods of the Olympic Pantheon were the deities of a state religion – their worship was closely interwoven with politics and to deny or question them was held to be both blasphemy and treason[139] (Taplin, *OIHT* 1995, 21). Greek theatre, which began as a religious rite, was also used to build consensus, sow conflict or implant ideas (Hall 1989, 93-8). Actors, considered servants of both Dionysus, god of wine, and Apollo, god of lyric poetry, were protected by a sacred truce and were able to travel freely throughout the Hellenic world (Taplin 1995). Touring companies were able to bring new ideas and political news to provincial towns, both through their stage productions and by their participation in the gossip mills of the towns they visited. Travelling companies of actors were usually welcomed in the smaller cities, both for the chance to hear the news and because they brought the promise of entertainment. Plays were written, not just to retell the myths and historical tales that made up the structure of the Hellenistic self image and world view, but also to tell of innovations in philosophy, mathematics, political thought and religious development (Hall 1989, 190-1). In doing this, the poets and leading actors were able to exercise a great deal of political power. They were able to frame their plots in such a way that audiences could be drawn to one side or the other of an argument, seeing current events, or the impact of history, illuminated in new ways (Hall 1989, 93). In this way, political views could be disseminated quickly to large numbers of the public. One example of this is the trial and conviction of Socrates which happened by public opinion in the theatre (*The Clouds* and *The Birds* by

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[137] The Macedonians, for example.
[138] For more on the Oberammergau Passion Play, see James Shapiro's book *Oberammergau: The Troubling Story of the World's Most Famous Passion Play*, New York: Pantheon.
[139] This latter being Socrates' great crime.

Aristophanes) and on the streets, long before it was carried out by the People's Court in the Agora (Habicht 1997). Although it is unlikely, in this instance, that it was the intent of the playwright to incite state-sponsored murder, nonetheless these plays unwittingly proved a foil for ambitious politicians in the City, as well as inciting the general populace. Another example is the depiction of Persian hierarchy, administration and geography in plays by Aeschylus, depictions that were responsible for the opinions and mental image that most Greeks held of their great adversary[140] (Hall 1989, 94).

Clearly, there was more at work in this situation than the performance of a play or two. The political workings of ancient Athens, and other city-states, were complex in nature, convoluted, and steeped in diplomacy and intrigue. Politics conducted among ancient Greek citizens were part and parcel of the business of the *agora*, the *gymnasium*, and the schools of rhetoric – in short, the everyday. A boy learned to be a good citizen through careful instruction by the adult males around him, and through a coming-of-age and initiation process, carefully structured by the city-state (Goldhill 2005, 179-94). The role and importance of Greek drama should not be underestimated, however. The plays performed at the Dionysia and the Lenaia served an important civic function in Athenian society, showing the audience who they were and who they could strive to be, as well as presenting a clear-cut depiction of "the Other" and his inferiority[141] (Goldhill 1986, 267-8).

Theatrical events, particularly those associated with the greater religious festivals, were well attended - often by those who would otherwise be only peripherally involved in the political arena. As Oliver Taplin writes, the theatrical productions of the greater religious festivals retained the careful choreography of religious rites, designed to awe and impress:

> When a tragedy held that vast audience [14 – 20,000] enthralled, the sense of collective concentration must have been very powerful. This would be increased by the communality of broad daylight (the tragedies began soon after dawn). The thousands heard the same words and focused on the same stage picture. In this democratic theatre there were no limited view seats; and a kind of 'funnel' of attention must have built up, all focusing down towards the orchestra. It was an enormous civic event, a purposeful political act of communality. (Taplin, *OIHT* 1995, 20)

The impact, both emotionally and politically, must have been electric. Plays were not an everyday occurrence, and were attended by the majority of the population, not just the citizens. An event like this could spark debate and discussion among the audience,

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[140] Depictions that were not always accurate.
[141] The Lenaia was a minor religious festival in Athens that honoured another aspect of Dionysius. It also had dramatic performances as a highlight of the festivities.

long after the performance itself. The first innovations in theatrical forms were to move from choral odes to lyric poetry to tragedy. Eventually the theatrical craft added comedy to its repertoire. While tragedy dealt solemnly with the interactions of gods and men and sought to educate the audience in morality and piety, comedies depicted men among men – often using physical humour to satirize political figures and critique society (Habicht 1997).

By the late 4th century BCE there was political pressure to limit the freedom of artistic expression allowed in the new Athenian comedy performed at the festivals (Taplin 1995, 43). This pressure came from Macedon, where Philip II (and later Alexander III), was flexing his new military supremacy in an attempt to be accepted by the Hellene societies of the south[142]. Comic performances were often done in portrait masks, leaving the audience in no doubt as to who was being derided and mocked on stage, and it is likely that Philip had no desire to see himself as a butt of the highly sexualized and scatological jokes that often made up the meat of a comic performance. Despite these steps towards politically motivated artistic censorship, theatre and drama remained a well-supported component of civic and religious life (Goldhill & Osborne 1999, 79).

Interestingly, despite Macedonian attempts at censorship, Alexander III of Macedon was among the first to incorporate theatrical performance into his victory games, including drama and music with the traditional athletic contests. The major theatrical performance mounted at Tyre in 331 BCE, in honour of his victory there, is probably the first example of a calculated display of "nationalism", designed to foster cohesion among his troops and promote a unifying Hellenistic worldview (Green 1994, xiii) [143]. This decision is perhaps not so surprising, given the view the southern Greek city-states took towards their new Macedonian commander[144]. By staging plays designed to unite greater Greece against the Persians, Alexander not only gave his soldiers a good show, but also conferred acceptability on his command by identifying himself and his men as "not Other" (Hall 1989, 52). To further cement his identification as a "Hellene", Alexander pioneered the establishment of theatres in the cities of his nascent Hellenistic Empire (Holt 2005, 40). An examination of the archaeological record across Hellenic and Roman Central Asia will show, as well as the ubiquitous bath houses and gladiatorial arenas, a fine selection of amphitheatres in

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[142] This is an example of the power of the Hellenistic identity: even a highly successful military commander like Philip, who had beaten many of the city-states in war, sought validation as a proper Greek through inclusion in the Hellenic identity.
[143] A theatrical depiction of "we are *this* because we are not *that*".
[144] For more on this subject the reader is directed to the *Logoi*, the collected orations of Demosthenes, which contain attacks on both Philip II and Alexander III.

which ancient Greek theatre, both tragedy and comedy, was performed as a way to reinforce and retain the language and culture of the conquering civilization (Holt 2005, 46; Hall 1989). In this way, theatre and the theatrical event were used as a multi-layered political tool.

Theatrical Censorship Through History

As this chapter has demonstrated, in recent history many countries have recognized the political impact of theatre – both for good and for ill. For example, and as touched upon previously, in 19th century Russia theatre played a highly political, and encouraged, role. It was viewed not just as entertainment but as education, and playwrights, often civil servants, saw themselves as fulfilling their duty when they wrote words intended to advise and enlighten the ruling classes (Frame 2006). By the late 1800s the Russian public had come to expect political content when they attended the theatre (Frame 2006, 1). However, the state kept strict control over the theatres, partly to control what was performed, and partly to control who was able to attend the plays.

The censorship of performances was nothing new. A curtailing of the artistic voice for political reasons had been in evidence certainly since the 4th century BCE, and occurred and recurred throughout history as governments felt it was warranted. In 1737 theatre censorship was introduced in England under the Licensing Act. *Tom Thumb*, a 1730 play by Henry Fielding, and other satires directed at the government, had brought the subversive power of theatre to the attention of Prime Minister Walpole, leading him to consider the need to license and control plays and theatres. Censorship had existed in England before this, but this act allowed it to be formalized by entering it into statutory law, rather than continuing to be governed by Royal Prerogative (Thomas, Carlton and Etienne 2007). A full history of the censorship of theatre would take far more space than can realistically be allocated to the topic in this chapter, and could stand as a thesis unto itself. Suffice it to say that governments and elites (including the Church) have been concerned enough over the political and social power that plays might wield their audiences that either overt or covert censorship of the theatre has been practiced throughout history. At one time or another there has been theatre censorship in such diverse countries as the Roman Republic, Kenya, Iran, India, France, the United States, Nigeria, and Guatemala, among others[145].

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[145] A brief but comprehensive history of theatre censorship can be found in volume 4 of *Censorship: A World Encyclopaedia*, pp. 2407-2416.

Israeli Censorship of the Theatre

Censorship in Israel, both generally and of the theatre in particular, stems from many sources, predominantly a combination of the religious and the political[146]. In its official form it was practiced by the Board of Criticism of Films and Plays, a body inherited almost intact from British laws of 1737 and 1843, via the British Mandate (Abramson 1997, 114). Abramson describes the make-up of the Board thus:

> The Censorship Board's membership was not fixed, fluctuating between fifteen to twenty representatives of the public and the bureaucracy, almost 50 percent of them religious of "traditional". Amongst the members of the Board there were sociologists, educationists, criminologists, the director of a hospital, many legal experts, and government officials. The number of members was not fixed, but the law demanded that one should be a woman. Two members, of whom at least one was a government official, constituted a legal quorum. (Abramson 1997, 116)

The Board was appointed by the Ministry of the Interior, and was not required to explain the reasoning behind its decisions.

The Board itself was suspended in 1989 for a two-year trial period (http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=950DEFD6143DF933A2575BC0A96F948260, 19 January 2008), and was finally abolished for good in 1991. The most common reasons for censorship address religious concerns about morality and depictions of "un-Jewish" values, as well as political concerns about security and inciting civil unrest. There were further acts of censorship when the censor felt that something in the play would cause significant public offense, like linking the government with the Nazi regime[147]. Censorship in various unofficial forms, including self-censorship, continues, however, as well as in the form of the Film Ratings Board which is able to ban films[148]. Productions have been censored for portrayal of themes or ideas that may cause civil unrest, particularly among Arab residents and citizens of the State (Slyomovics 1991, Abramson 1997). Productions have also been censored because of actual or perceived issues of morality.

Legally, the system is a combination of the religious and the secular, and a certain attention is paid to avoid causing offense to adherents of Halakhic law. Rabbinic edicts are taken seriously, and few elements of society, even the most secular, can avoid at least some consideration of Orthodox mores. To this end, theatre productions have been liable to picket and censorship if their contents are perceived to be heretical, sacrilegious, lewd or otherwise offensive to the Orthodox community (Abramson 1997). This situation throws the internal conflict of Israel into sharp relief.

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[146] It should be noted that Arab censorship exists, as well. Some examples of this are discussed in the chapters of the thesis pertaining to fieldwork.

[147] An excellent example of this form of censorship was the 1982 production of *The Patriot*, discussed later in this chapter.

[148] See discussion of the film *Jenin, Jenin* later in this chapter.

Is it a religiously conservative theocracy, with laws and norms of acceptable public behaviour governed by the most rigid of religious laws? Or is it a modern secular state that encourages the most liberal Western European values? This conflict of self-identification is a thesis unto itself, and it cannot be addressed here in any depth. However, the inherent contradictions of Israeli self-identification cannot be completely avoided in that they touch on some of the points at the core of this project. Many of the myths at the core of Israeli nationalism draw on the heroics of early Jewish settlers and fighters. Many of them had experienced hostility, violence and discrimination in their countries of origin and, later, many were survivors of Nazi concentration camps. They were committed to the creation of a Jewish homeland where their religion would not be a liability. Although "Jewish homeland" was a dearly held concept, and many of the early settlers considered themselves ardent Zionists, it was predominantly a political, rather than religious, ideology (Zerubavel in Gillis 1994, 107). Many of the early Zionists, despite coming from religious homes (Levy 1979, Zerubavel 1995), turned their backs on organized religion and viewed their Jewishness as primarily an ethnic or cultural affiliation. This may have been a form of rebellion, or a way of distancing themselves from a past they saw as backward and weak. The state they fought for, and the national identity that their memory is used to enforce, is at odds with the religiously conservative element in the current population, most notably the ultra orthodox immigrants to the settlements. This is one of the problems that arise when a state is founded, however important the historical reasons, on the basis of religion. Religion, as has been proved repeatedly throughout history – from the Inquisition and the Reformation through modern debates and Vatican II, is a fundamentally subjective thing, widely open to interpretation, change and disagreement. The definition accepted by one person or group may be completely intolerable to another. Additionally, these religious disagreements have proved to be highly emotional galvanizers, things that people are all too ready to both kill and die for.

When considering the role that a national theatre might play in a Jewish state, it is important to take into account the position of dramatic representation in Judaism. Simply put, the role is not a prominent one – in fact, dramatic representation has historically been viewed by religious Jews with deep suspicion (Abramson 1997, 111). Traditionally, theatrical representation and play-acting are only permitted during the carnival holiday of Purim, when all manner of otherwise taboo activities are allowed and encouraged (Rokem 2001, 98). This deep aversion to dramatic performance can be traced back to the Hellenic conquest of Palestine in the 4th century BCE, prior to which theatre was virtually unknown to the Jews. There remained until quite recently the

association of dramatic representation with depravity and wickedness, viewing it as something that sprang from and was part of the pagan and gentile worlds, rather than the Jewish. This view is quite extreme, and is certainly not shared by the majority of modern Jews, however, it bears mentioning here simply as a clue to understanding the role of censorship in the State of Israel.

Israel, while claiming to be modern and liberally democratic in its outlook, nonetheless carries out a war within itself between the secular parts of its society and the ultra-orthodox religious parties who are the self appointed guardians of the State's morality and spiritual well-being.   Religious opinions are written by rabbis for use by religious members of the Knesset (MKs) in their political debates. One such decision reads (in part): "Saving a man spiritually is not less than saving him physically. We must prevent a moral descent into corruption, and as a man with a viewpoint of religious conscience, I determine that this is an *obligation*" (Rabbi Natan Zwi Friedman in Abramson 1997, 124, emphasis added). This determination of obligation does not just apply to the Orthodox with regards to their own communities. The legal response to the argument that if something – for example, a theatre production – is offensive to a religious community they should simply not watch it is one of reproof. Despite the fact that Israel prides itself on being a society that encourages freedom of expression, the legal view is that that freedom stops short of anything that may offend the religious sensibilities of another (Judge Moshe Landau in Abramson 1997, 124).

One of the reasons that religion and theatre come into such conflict in the state is because of the body of work available to theatre artists, playwrights and dramaturges. In much of the world, theatrical institutions have a broad canon of historical works to draw on, works that have been staged repeatedly in a variety of ways, and which draw on a collective sense of heritage, common language, or widely understood and recognizable myths. Hebrew theatre does not have this expanse of history to draw from. Although there were some early works written in Hebrew, the vast majority of those written before the 1930s were academic and literary works – never performed and not suitable for the stage (Rokem 2001, 96). Since Israel is a country based on immigration, with a population that comes from a wide variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the use of Hebrew as a cultural tool is very important. Glenda Abramson writes that "language on its own is able to alter reality" (Abramson 1998, 19), and the Israeli theatre's use of Hebrew is a good example of how this might be possible. However, language needs to have some idea to communicate. What commonality exists for playwrights and storytellers to draw on in order to bind the community together? The answer is often found in the Bible – these are stories that nearly all Jews know and will recognise on stage (Rokem 2001, 97). Since the Bible is a

text, and not a script, the translation of the stories onto the stage requires interpretation – and interpretations often open the way for charges of heresy and obscenity. In addition, according to Israeli director Hanan Snir, Israeli theatre lacks the cultural or theatrical memory on which to build a theatrical tradition. In an attempt to create a ritualized atmosphere that will reach the audience on both an emotional and an intellectual level, writers and directors often use political reference as a way to create a connective framework (Rokem 2001, 110). This, when combined with Biblical texts, can cause uproar and sometimes violence in Israeli theatres. There are a number of books and articles which offer a detailed reading of the better known politically contentious Hebrew plays[149]. Nineteen sixty-seven marked the beginning of the Occupation, which caused a disintegration of the ideological cohesion that previously marked the population. The Israeli self-image had not been one of conqueror and occupier, and the new state of affairs caused a deep divide in the population. Some were deeply troubled by the developments, and raised significant moral questions about the political situation. Others felt this to be the fulfilment of a Biblical promise (Rokem 2001, 98). One of the most frequently referenced myths in the post-1967 era is that of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac[150]. The Isaac story is a myth that has great resonance in modern Israel because the story is one of the founding myths of Judaism and the sacrifice of Isaac is reflected in the sacrifice of generations of young soldiers in Israel's wars. The difference is, of course, that in the story Isaac ultimately was *not* sacrificed, the angel stopped Abraham by offering a substitute. In reality, the sacrifice of young men and women continues. The valorisation of suffering and sacrifice that is endemic to Israeli society provides rich material for artistic exploration. However, in questioning the validity of referencing the Isaac myth, playwrights and theatre companies attract criticism from both the religious and the political right. In criticising the ideal of self-sacrifice (or sacrifice of a great treasure) that is the central motif of the Isaac story, artists are seen to be criticising not only the Israeli army, but also one of the founding ideologies of the State of Israel[151].

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[149] For further information on this, please see Abramson, G. (1998). *Drama and Ideology in Modern Israel*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Ben-Zvi, L., Ed. (1996). *Theatre in Israel*. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press and Rokem, F. (2001). "The Bible and the Avant-Garde: The Search for a Classical Tradition in the Israeli Theatre" in *Theatre, History, and National Identities*. H. Makinen, S. E. Wilmer and W. B. Worthen. Helsinki, Helsinki University Press; as well as plays by Hanoch Levin, Yehoshua Sobol and Motti Lerner.
[150] The best known example of this is Hanoch Levin's play *The Queen of the Bathtub* (1967), which criticises Golda Meir's government.
[151] The story of Isaac is one of the founding myths of Judaism, the point where Abraham's faith in God was tested and found to be strong. This mythology has translated to the secular, to play a central part in the Zionist ideology.

Israeli drama also uses the technique of allegory to link Biblical tales and political events. Gilead Evron's play *Jehu* retells the story of a cruel and ambitious war lord from Kings II, making thinly veiled reference to Ariel Sharon and the Israeli military's involvement in the 1982 massacre at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in southern Lebanon. This use of Biblical thematics has managed to incense critics on both the political and religious fronts. The religious orthodoxy is opposed to the depiction of Biblical stories in a way that jars with their interpretation and the entrenched political right contests a portrayal of events that casts any doubt on the "rightness" of the military's actions (Mäkinen et. al. 2001, 108).

Censorship on political grounds has been another factor with which Israeli artists have had to contend. These restrictions have taken both official and unofficial forms, and have changed shape over time. One of the most highly publicized cases involved Hanoch Levin's 1982 play *The Patriot*. In this play, which was initially banned for no (stated) reason and later passed pending the removal of a few lines, there was a conflation of the Palestinian experience under Israeli occupation and the Jewish experience under the Nazis. Although this play was widely disliked and received almost no critical acclaim, it is notable for its instigation of wide-spread public debate on freedom of speech and issues of censorship. One of the people I interviewed during my fieldwork had seen the original stage production and described how it managed to circumvent the Board. The cast and crew were unable to find a way around the ban on a particular visual image[152]

> [The visual image] was censored, [but] what did they do with every other part that was censored? They said basically screw you to the censorship by not performing it, but by turning the houselights on and just reading – the stage manager, not the actors. That was cool. (Mark, interview 24.09.08, Shala'am Center).

This approach, while ensuring that the play was seen as least a few times, served more as fuel for the freedom-of-speech debate than as any additional artistic merit. This just shows, however, just how politically potent theatrical performance can be.

Although all forms of art, including literature and fine arts, may be subject to censorship, films and plays are subject to different strictures. This is because it is the view of the censors that a performance in front of an audience is "dangerous" because of "theatre's acknowledged capacity to incite audiences" (Eber in Slyomovics 1991, 27). This fear of incitement has led to the requirement of permits for theatrical performances in Israel proper, Arab East Jerusalem or the areas occupied post-1967. At one point scripts had to be approved:

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[152] The image of a Palestinian boy dressed as a Jewish child would have been at the time of the Warsaw Ghetto, with his hands up.
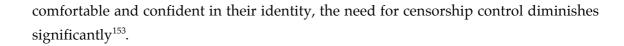
by members of the Ministry of Interior's Committee of Censorship of Plays and Films as well as by the censorship committee of the ministry of Education and Culture. Plays in the Occupied Territories – the West Bank and Gaza – must pass in addition the censorship of the Military Government. (Slyomovics 1991, 28)

This level of control indicates that theatre and playgoing are seen to be volatile, potentially dangerous, activities. In fact, it would seem to support Glenda Abramson's claim that, "in Israel, a play [is] not viewed as a creative art, but as a socio-political document" (Abramson 1997, 115). It is difficult to say whether this level of concern is specific to Israel, or to other divided societies. It is interesting that, in Israel, so much bureaucratic energy goes into restricting public access to events that might incite unrest, rather than curtailing the government actions depicted at these events. For example, when Yitzak Laor's play *Ephraim Returns to the Army* was banned in 1985, the Board issued a statement that stated outright its concern that the play would raise negative feelings toward the State and the whole military establishment. The Board also cited its fear that, in particular, Arab audiences would be moved to "anti-government actions". At least one Israeli journalist was aware of the irony in this statement, and wrote an article ridiculing "the Board's belief that the Arab public becomes revolutionary as a result of seeing a play in the theatre, rather than as a consequence of the disabilities of their daily lives" (Abramson 1997, 120).

More recently, in 2003 the short film *Jenin, Jenin* by Mohammad Bakri, a Palestinian filmmaker with Israeli citizenship, was banned by the Israeli Film Ratings Board on the grounds that it was libellous and potentially offensive. The film, which depicted actions taken by the Israeli army in Jenin in April 2002, was challenged by five Israeli soldiers who felt the film depicted them, wrongly in their opinion, as war criminals. Bakri publically challenged the ruling as an example of the unequal nature of Israel's democracy, and of the unwillingness of the Israeli public to give an open hearing to "someone else's truth"
 (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/2802947.stm, 19 January 2008).

The issue of censorship is highly contentious, particularly in this era of a global discussion of democracy and free speech. The very existence of a Board that is able to issue a ban raises questions about the meaning of the term "liberal democracy" as it is used in times of increased threat, or the perception of an increased threat, to national security. These discussions of political terminology are interesting, but not directly pertinent to the topic at hand. These concepts do have some bearing on matters of national identity and its construction, however. The very fact that some ideas are viewed as being dangerous and potentially detrimental to the popular sense of nationhood indicates a perception of fragility and insecurity to the identity as a whole (Abramson 1997, 114). It is arguable that, in situations where any population is

comfortable and confident in their identity, the need for censorship control diminishes significantly[153].

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[153] This point has, in fact, been made by David Shaham, a former Israeli censor. It is his opinion that "a society which is uncertain of itself and its beliefs, a society which feels that the building it constructed is all whitewash and lacking a strong skeleton, such a society is always filled with the fear of demoralization which it attempts to overcome with the help of the strictures of censorship" (Shaham in Abramson 1997, 114).

To discuss performativity in relation to performance theory is to run early on against a wall of semantic difficulty. Although the term was originally used in the field to describe anything that was a performance, in the wake of Butler's work the term has reacquired a more Austinian meaning (Loxley 2007, 140). To make matters more confusing, work on performativity in performance theory is marked by significant cross-pollination and borrowing of ideas and concepts between performance theorists and those whose focus was on the study of the "speech act" (Loxley 2007, 141). To unpick the exact origins of relevant ideas may well prove to be an exercise in futility, and may not ultimately serve a purpose. In addition, much of the in-depth discussion of performativity and performance theory becomes so esoteric and removed from the experience of most performers *or* audience members that to devote much of the thesis to its exploration would involve a significant tangential excursion. For this reason I have included this section as an appendix, and the sources cited in the reference list, and invite the reader to make of it what she will.

During the history of theatrical performance, and performance in general, the types of performance and representation on the stage have changed and developed. Each point of change has come about because of some societal or political upheaval that led artists to challenge the *status quo*. The field of performance theory is the study of how and why people perform, as well as a body of work that discusses the impact the performance can have. A brief listing of some aspects of performance theory follows.

In the early 20th century, Artaud argued for a "Theatre of Cruelty" that would destroy naturalist demands and restore theatre to a sacred place in society. Representation was to be done away with and performance to become the living voice for society (Artaud 1988). In this, Artaud saw himself as attempting to restore the theatre "to its place," by which he means he sought to rescue Western humanity from the base conditions in which it found itself (Artaud 1988, 110). He felt that anti-representational theatre could help save what he saw as a society in decline. He felt that overly stylized performance – like Balinese ritual dance – was potently meaningful precisely because it was not distracted by narrative or by the "need" to depict a world that is "forever elsewhere"[154] (Artaud 1970, 36-49).

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[154] This perspective is deeply colonial in nature. Artaud is seeing this performance outside its context and lacks the knowledge to "read" it. This dance contains a narrative (Geertz 1980), just not one that is immediately recognizable to someone who does not know the signifiers. The representation is "mythic" rather than "natural", but it is – nonetheless – narrative.

Peggy Phelan coined the term "ontology of performance" to describe the way performance can by used to understand as a way to challenge the world. "The world" is anything that takes place beyond the borders of the performance. Additionally, this ontology is intended to challenge the characteristics of those borders (Phelan 1993, 146-66).

Allan Kaprow was inspired by Jackson Pollock's "action painting" to create performance that was action for the sake of action. Called "Happenings", Kaprow's pieces involved motion and action in and between a variety of sites, without the necessity of an audience (Kaprow 1993, 1-9). Although a "Happening" might have some of the trappings of traditional theatre (costumes, lighting, dialogue), there was no illusion, and therefore no complicity between actor and audience. This was the performance of an action rather than a situation. Kaprow called this the dissolution of art "into its life sources" (Kaprow 1993, 221). One example of a performance that might be included in a "Happening" is someone sweeping. In a traditional, representational play the actor would "act" sweeping: she would add character traits, a sense of place or temperature, she would be other than she is. In a "Happening" the idea was that the motion should happen, not be performed. The problem with this is how to do an action without attachment or context. Would this mean the actor would simply be being herself, sweeping where she is? Although this process raises many questions, they are not ones that are immediately applicable to the practical question of performance and regions in conflict.

Richard Schechner, in contrast, was interested in expanding the questions of performance outward, rather than narrowing them inward. He visualized a model of four concentric circles, the largest on the bottom, the smallest on top. The smallest circle represents "the drama", by which he means the "components of the event as a whole". These components include elements that can be packed up and transported to another venue. "The drama" rests on "the script" which is the basic 'code of events', the way things are intended to happen. "The script" rests on "theatre" which is the "event enacted by a specific group of performers" – no longer something that can be transported elsewhere. And finally "theatre" rests on "performance" which is the "whole constellation of events that take place in and among the performers and audience from when the first spectator enters the field of performance to the time the last spectator leaves" (Schechner 1988, 72). This is a way of conceptualizing and framing performance theory that makes sense to me. Rather than dictating how a performer or spectator should behave or react, this offers a way to talk about the work that happens, regardless of what sort of performance it is.

Butler's work on performativity in the theatre has some applicability to performance theory. "In the theatre," she writes, "One can say, 'this is just an act,' and de-realize the act, making acting into something quite distinct from what is real. Because of this distinction, one can maintain one's sense of reality in the face of this temporary challenge to our existing ontological assumptions" (Butler in Loxley 2007, 142). She continues in this passage to discuss how cross-dressing performers can challenge assumptions about gender or sexuality. Although this presents some interesting ideas for *reading* theatre, in terms of textual or visual analysis, it prohibits the viewer from having the emotional experience usually expected at a live event. As such it has limited applicability to this project because of the project's interest in the emotional moment contained in live performance, and that moment's political impact. Austin himself seemed to view life as something of a performance, arguing that "our everyday, 'outward' or 'onstage' performances are not to be equated with the insubstantial" (Loxley 2007, 144).

I find it difficult to relate the majority of this work to the practical component of my project. Although it is intellectually intriguing, and adds a cerebral component to the emotional event that theatre-going usually is, I find that it makes me uncomfortable for just that reason. It attempts to reframe as an intellectual exercise something which, when it is successful, creates an emotional resonance. Although the usual critical questions can, and should, be posed: namely "why should theatrical "success" be measured only in this way" and "why shouldn't theatre-going be an intellectual endeavor", much of this writing reminds me of the "rationalist" work discussed early in Chapter 2. These scholars rarely acknowledge the human and emotional elements – both the performers and the audience members have been written out of the exercise. Schechner's work is the most pertinent to my project because it does not offer assumptions for how the audience should or will respond. Rather it provides a framework and vocabulary with which to conduct a conversation about the nature and impact of performance.

Finally, rather than adding to my work, I fear that this debate will distract the reader from it. Although it can aid in my discussion of how to define certain terms, to follow it to its logical conclusion leads to several tangential pieces – nearly all of them ill-suited to a discussion of the practical in the region on which I focus.

When viewed against the broad sweep of the millennia of history, the concept of a national theatre is relatively new. Discussions of the need for a formalized theatre dedicated to the preservation or promotion of "nationhood" date from Europe in the mid 19th century (Cook 1976, 2). Historically this was a time of national pride and empire building among European powers, and there were some societal movements that felt the nation's cultural life should reflect that. Taking the United Kingdom as an example: in 1848 a proposition was made by a Mr. Wilson, a London publisher, for a national theatre that would preserve the heritage of the English stage by maintaining Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon. It would ensure the regular production of a selection of his works, and make theatre attendance possible for the general public. The idea was that Shakespearean plays, if made readily available to the public, would imbue the populace with higher moral standards and solidify national sentiment around certain ideals. Mr. Wilson's proposal consisted of six points, the second of which opined that, since "the human mind receives most quickly and retains most durably, impressions made by dramatic representations", the public would benefit from a venue where they could always attend performances of plays by Shakespeare, who was thought of by at least a certain element of English society as "the world's greatest moral teacher[155]" (Whitworth 1951, 28-9). This proposal, although preserved, went unrealized, and the idea of a national theatre next appeared in London in 1904. Although this time the idea was backed by a number of notable signatories, and did, in general, receive some public support, funding was not forthcoming. Part of the problem was a discussion of what, exactly, a national theatre was supposed to do. The underlying idea of creating a lasting monument to a playwright whose status approaches that of national hero could, it was argued, be realized by building a memorial space (Cook 1976, 4), rather than creating something that would incur long term running costs. Interestingly, the 1904 report contained a list of plays considered "suitable" for production by a national theatre. Not all Shakespeare's plays were included, and some, it was indicated, would need to be cut significantly prior to performance. Some other authors such as Moliere (*Don Juan*) and Yeats (*Countess Cathleen*) were included; but others, including Shaw, Tolstoy and Ibsen, were deemed to be of a "disputable class", and were not (Cook 1976, 4). As this proposal of censorship makes clear, the work performed by a national theatre was, at

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[155] The proponents of this view were clearly unfamiliar with the language in some of his comedies.

least in the early conceptions, liable to control. This meant that some governing board was making political decisions regarding suitable representations of national identity.

By the mid-20th century European empires were being disassembled, and movements were underway to promote a sense of national pride both in the former colonial powers and in the newly independent former-colonies (Cook 1976, 3; Wilmer 2004, 20). Seeking a focal point on which to concentrate nationalistic sentiment, the National Theatre Bill was given its second reading in January 1949, suddenly receiving promises for funding (Whitworth 1951, 15), although the theatre itself was not actually completed until 1976. It is debateable whether or not the productions and scope of the National Theatre actually make it a tool for distributing and maintaining ideas about national "norms". However, the decades of well documented discussion prior to its formation indicate that an important idea behind an English national theatre was its role as arbiter of national identity.

This is only one example of the path to a national theatre. Other countries and ethnic groups have their own national performance groups, including Scotland, France, Slovenia, Sweden, and Indonesia. In each case, the national theatre seeks to perform at least one of the following actions: to promote language or cultural identity (Wilmer 2004, 22), to preserve an (actual or perceived) heritage (Cook 1976, 2), or to consolidate and maintain a common sense of nationhood (Wilmer 2004, x).

There is some anecdotal evidence, particularly in divided societies, which indicates that national theatre companies sometimes function as the conscience of the country, asking the difficult questions that neither the public nor the government have posed and seeking to raise awareness and debate, if not outright dissent. More often this role is taken by the fringe or experimental theatre groups, but the national companies do sometimes play this part, as well. This is discussed briefly in chapter three, and examples are given in chapters four, five and six.

Listing of interviews conducted (with pseudonyms):

[Date, pseudonym (position, affiliation), location]

21 September 2008, Dov Giladi (Co-founder, Teatron Shemesh), Lev ha Mifratz
24 September 2008, Mark Guttman (Art Director, Shala'am Centre), Netanya
25 September 2008, Daut Suleiman (Manager, Theatre Now), Tulkarem
25 September 2008, 'Adel Rashmawi (Actor/Teacher, Theatre Now), Tulkarem
25 September 2008, 'Isa Wazan (Actor/Teacher, Theatre Now), Tulkarem
25 September 2008, Rana al-Arabi (Director, Theatre Jawhar), Be'it Sahour
26 September 2008, Sarah Ellis (Director, Shalom Yeled), Tel Aviv
4 October 2008, Chen Tietlebaum (actor, playwright, political activist), Jerusalem
7 October 2008, Ehud Sharansky (Director, Shalom Foundation), Tel Aviv
7 October 2008, Avi Weiss (actor, "Joker" for Shalom Foundation projects), Tel Aviv

Standard List of Field Work Questions
- What does theatre mean to you? How did you get involved in it in the first place?

- What do you see as the purpose of theatre? What can/does it do?

- Is there a sense that theatre programs have any political impact in a long-term way?
- (and do ones that last longer have a better success than ones that are quite short in duration?)

- When groups develop scripts and decide who plays which part, is there a general rule that people don't 'play' themselves (or only play themselves), or does that depend on who's involved?

- Are participants in programs solely self-selected?

- Is there much of an acknowledged need to offer support to participants after they 'age out' of the program?

- In what kinds of ways are things like travel restrictions or security alerts dealt with?

- Are there ever situations of censorship (either externally- or self-imposed) in terms of what is put on stage?

- Is there much of a sense among funding bodies that these programs have a very important role to play in conflict resolution and moving forward, or does the money always come from a small group of the same contributors?

It should be noted that these questions served merely as a starting point, and as a way to ensure that I had a few points of commonality with which to calibrate my interviews.

It is also a point of interest that many of the theatre and programs with which I had contact are required to provide statistical indicators to sources of funding, as a way to indicate that they are meeting their goals for impact in their communities. These indicators are often available, either online or upon request, in the form of annual reports. Although it might be methodologically satisfying to show adherents of these research methods that quantitative data is available to support the qualitative claims, I was unable to devise a way of providing these citations while maintaining the confidentiality of my sources. For this reason I will leave a quantitative study of arts impact in regions of conflict to my quantitative colleagues in the field.

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