

Drop Anchor.

A Political Artist- Examination of role, process and objective.

An examination of the term “Political Artist” as it is reflected within me during the process of photographing and editing the video-art movie, “*Drop Anchor.*” (Movie can be seen at: www.metropolitanjerusalem.com/)

The political space exists as long as people convene and interact with each other, and at any given moment one can materialize her civic association in the common world and care for this world.¹

Seated on a comfortable rock with my back to the separation fence in the Palestinian village of al-Walaja (in south-west Jerusalem), I find ample time and quiet to examine and deconstruct the present. I chose two books and several articles to fill the time between each photographic session. The first book, which contains WTJ Mitchell’s article “Holy Landscape,”² along with Larry Abramson’s epilogue “What Does the Landscape Want (And What Does It Miss)?”³, enables me to cling to childhood memories and depart from the limits of the camera's frame while I totally merge myself into it. In contrast, the second book “*Civil Imagination: Political Ontology of Photography,*” by Ariela Azuali,⁴ connects me to the present and forces me to face the challenges beyond the screen of my camera, reminding me how difficult is the way to artistic recognition. Indeed, I could not have hoped for a more appropriate environment to read these writings.

When I studied photography, thirteen years ago, my instructors introduced me to texts by Walter Benjamin, Roland Barthes, and Susan Sontag, and taught me that curators and art critiques expect from me as a photographer to internalize the argument that the photograph does not belong to the photographer. Rather, it is the context in which it is shown and the viewers who observe it that provide it with a new interpretation each time. This claim castrated my ability to go out and photograph “political” themes because of the burden of responsibility that I felt once releasing the photographed material to the world. In addition, I felt that the photo did not allow me to speak my mind to the extent that I wanted. Yet I was afraid that if I added an explanatory text or an interpretive title to the photo I would be

associated with the two last parts of Azulai's second and third judgments of taste sentences as follow:

The second taste sentence:

“this is art → this is not art”. The third taste sentence: “this is either aesthetic or politic”.

And from there to the 'third taste's character': “this is too much political → this is not art.”⁵

The photograph needs a text that will seek to destroy the ‘original’, to demolish the pre-given meaning that accompanies its appearance and distribution, and to make this meaning into those fractions of a vase that can be put together just with the pieces of the vase which belong to that text that will be written out of the photograph.⁶

This is what Azulai writes on the words of Walter Benjamin.

But for me, the art works are the pieces of the vase and the text is their glue and warping. They coexist even though it is clear to me that the viewers will first be exposed to the photo and perhaps only later will continue and read the text. With this possibility, it is easier for me to give up my desire for control, because I know and feel that I present everything I want. I accept that from here and onwards the viewer is the one who will make her choices and interpretations that stem from her own world.

... in exhibition spaces, such a photo is presented usually without any added data or details that are, in fact, essential for informed viewing ... but when the [informed viewer] comes to address a specific photo, this general knowledge is not capable of ... assisting her in broadening the perimeter of her gaze and developing it in relation to the specific photo, and thus the photo will lose its distinctiveness, that element that can be deduced precisely from its particularity, and it becomes only illustrative to the subject.⁷

Am I ready to accept that my work be only “illustrative to the subject”?

I do want to present to the viewer all the related information about the photo, the related information about the body of work and about the artist; present it on a silver plate, so to speak. I want to give the viewer the choice [of] whether to approach this information or not. I write this because my art is political and I want my art – and within it, my feelings, my viewpoint, my intention and its meaning - to permeate the viewer's experience and leave with her the information that I offer as a political artist. This is a conscious egotistic calling, to be present in the artistic work when it is viewed and read. As a

viewer, I can testify that I am attracted to text and often find it sheds new light and deepens the meaning of the work of art I observe.

As Dalia Amots wrote:

For we do not intend to forget to Art that it is not a task-force but [only] too abstract an idea that is incapable of enabling real use and utility... The only direct outcome that can grow out of Art is that it is impossible to prevent it from existing. This is a good [asset] that is worthy to be saved and protected. ... [Art] blatantly fabricates and cuts through the many webs of the spirit into ‘a deep internal truth’.⁸

I simultaneously work on two different kinds of art forms that materialize from the political existence.⁹ However, I define only one form as “political” because it deals directly with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While it is impossible to prevent both art forms from existing (I know this from my own experience), it is the “political” one that goes hand in hand with feelings involved in “task force”. For a long time now, I have been thinking about how to combine art with social and political activism. I eagerly read Avirama Golan’s articles and op-eds in *Haaretz* daily, and find guidance in them:

We do not need to look to comparisons or historical examples; it is enough to realize that the fascist regimes rose gradually and their goose steps were drowned out in a flood of reassurances. Even if the fears of the Cassandras seem hyperbolic, no intellectual who lives here these days can calm or be calm.¹⁰

I am at the beginning of a conscious awakening after long years of ignoring my immediate environment. I am now in the gathering and collection phase: I read, wander around the city, join tours and social activities for cooperation between Israeli Jews and Palestinians. I learn, in my own way, about my environment, discover an alternative history to the one I imagined in my childhood, and do not forget the desire to work for a change, a desire that is still articulated in a form of individualistic work – me behind the camera.



Idit Wagner. Al-Walaja tour “Emek Shave”, 2010, Photography.

On one of many times when I crossed the road to my photographing location in Al-Walaja, a vehicle stopped near me and the driver asked, worried, “Is everything O.K.?” - “Yes, why?” I replied. “I saw you with the camera and suddenly I felt bad,” was the response. My face had fallen when hearing this. Suddenly, everything was not O.K, and I started to feel a mild nausea. It took me a few minutes to understand that perhaps the driver thought that I came to take pictures of a terror attack in this sensitive place.

The camera has the power, in fact its mere presence has this power, to generate all this, even without producing a single image and regardless of the photos produced.¹¹

Are photographers and viewers still captured by the convention that photography picks a piece of reality or represents truth? I am still surprised that when I wander with my large camera and people ask me to take a picture of them (I have a designated file for such photos). They also ask me which newspaper I work for and how much the camera cost? Sometimes I say the truth: “Four thousand dollars, and I work on my art.” Usually I receive back a puzzled and a disappointed look. The eyebrows are raised, and there are no more questions. I feel that yes, that for the viewer, professional-journalistic photography is still perceived as documenting truth. Nevertheless, what is odd here is that I too believe the photo, and in this spirit I set out to photograph. Even when I photograph 'a-political' content and the frame does not capture what I wanted, I will find myself preferring to give up on the frame or take another photo instead of cutting or retouching it. How is it that even after twenty years of producing “educated” photographs I

still preserve this sensation of truth? I consciously decide not to fight this, that this sense serves me in a good way. Thanks to it I continue to create. I let myself keep it even if this is not the common or trendy point of view.

I was born in Jerusalem in 1975, and I always perceived the city as a well-known home. I suppose that this is related to the fact that I saw how the city gradually changes and there was always time to comprehend and assimilate, so to speak, the change. In this manner, the landscape always contains the impressions of those who walked in it and changed its outline. Between the years 2001 and 2003, my partner Oded Lowenheim and I lived in Toronto, in Canada, for Oded's postdoctoral studies. To my surprise, I felt at home there. We stayed there during the second Palestinian uprising (Intifadah), and during the September 11 terror attacks in the US. In Toronto, I feel that I breathe better, that there are open opportunities for me to seize, that the world is wonderful and it offers itself to me to explore and discover. When we returned to Israel, we decided to leave Jerusalem, among other reasons due to the irksome Haredization – the turning toward fundamentalist Jewish ultra-orthodoxy – of the city. But as Jerusalemites, any move to a more hot and humid region was rejected, and thus we decided to move to Jerusalem's suburb town of Mevasseret Zion. In August 2011, we returned to Canada for a sabbatical year, this time with our two children. I say "returned to Canada" because this is exactly my feeling – a sense of returning home. Even though we landed this time in Vancouver Island's Cowichan Bay, far away from a large metropolis, and in fact, far away from everything, I know that this is where I want to live; where every day I feel I can breathe air and walk tall. In Israel, this does not happen. Oded and I reflect on our role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, thinking whether to return to Israel and act for peace there or to make an impact from abroad.

In an article titled "Landscape, Inspiration, Art," Lea Majero-Mintz examines whether there is a necessary relation between those three concepts. The article was published in 1966, and Majero-Mintz writes that we have to distinguish between two principled perspectives:

the one is saying that the artist is the product of the landscape in which he lives ... for his inspiration comes from the physical, social, and spiritual environment in which he was raised ... the second perspective entails the principle that today's art is international, without any specific relation to a local spiritual climate."¹²

In Majero-Mintz's view, art should be drawn both from the artist's country of origin and from international influences. And she adds:

But it seems that the people of the hills, such as the artists who dwell in Jerusalem, are attached to the first perspective, which sees the physical, social and spiritual landscape as the major source of their inspiration, and they usually show a tendency to individualism. On the other hand, among the people living in the coastal plain, especially in Tel Aviv, there is a growing group which aspires to integrate into the international movement.¹³

Even though most of my years I have wandered in the streets of Jerusalem, I feel today in this city like a tourist, with or without the camera. And nonetheless, yes, I am a Jerusalemite. I live by the Jerusalemite conduct of conduct,¹⁴ I belong there.

Al-Walaja

I position myself on the rock, in front of "my" piece of landscape, the one that I carefully chose. A few months before the photography project I arrived in al-Walaja in a tour of the archeologists' organization "Emek Shaveh" (literally, in Hebrew: "equal valley," figuratively in Hebrew: coming to common ground).¹⁵ The sight that was revealed to me was simply spectacular. At once, the landscape of my childhood returned to me with a great intensity. The deep wadi (Arabic: valley) and the agricultural terraces on its slopes, the cloudless sky, a blazing sun which blurs the details. Wonderful.



Idit Wagner, A Genesis Impression, 2011, Photography.

During the 1980s, I grew up in the neighborhood of Ramat Sharet (Sharet Height), a neighborhood that borders the neighborhood of Malcha. In Malcha, which is the depopulated Palestinian village al-Malicha, lived (as I than believed) twenty or thirty families in old Palestinian houses. To me, they looked very poor and disadvantaged, for who will choose to live in such old and half-ruined houses? Other demolished houses in Malcha were the ruins in which I used to play and wander as a child. In the early 1990s, a new and big mall was erected at the foot of the Malcha hill, “Malcha Mall”, and around it, a new *nouveau riches* neighborhood sprang up. The old Palestinian houses were demolished or renovated, and the character of the neighborhood as it was only a decade ago, was completely changed. As a child, the ruins and the agricultural terraces of Malcha were the most ancient thing I could have imagined. They were there, beside me, at the other side of the road, since the dawn of history, like an image of a caring grandfather or a protective blanket, safely anchoring my own life both in the present and in the past. The terraces and the ruins of the houses bestowed the children’s game with a romantic excitement, an element of daring and mystery. WJT Mitchell is astonished by the selectivity of the memory:

One has to be struck by the selectiveness of the memory and history that is brought to the holy landscape. There is no mention, for instance, that the new Israeli forests often concealed the Palestinian habitation, or that the landscape they cover was not sandy desert, but cultivated olive groves and rural villages.¹⁶

During my childhood, I did not feel such a selectiveness, when we planted pines on the slopes of the Jerusalem hills, by the order of our teachers and the state. This was truth for me, a symbol of native Israeliness, of pride.

As a girl who played among the ruins of Malcha during the 1980s, I was mostly unaware of politics. I did not even think that those ruins served as houses up until several decades ago. Exactly as Abramson writes about his feelings as a youth during the 1960s:

During hikes and picnics, it was always exciting to ‘stumble upon’ one of those ruins that are scattered in the landscape, deserted stone-built houses with wild vegetation growing out of the crumbling walls and roofs. We called these houses ‘H’irbot’ (an Arabic noun meaning ruins, but with a Hebrew case ...). But despite the certain cultural attribution [that is expressed by] this noun, for us these houses were beyond history, a reminder of an ancient age in which humans were part of Nature’s hormonal cycle.¹⁷

As a child, when I heard or read the term “Arab,” I would think of the word “dangerous”. The word “our” was common in speech and in the heart. The concept “Palestinians” was unfamiliar to me. Palestine depicted both the ancient Israel and the land's name before the Israeli state was established, in 1948.

The connection I made or did not make between the ancient ruins and the villages of the Arabs was like a connection between mind and heart: the cavities that were generated by my ignorance and lack of knowledge did not bother me. And so, on the one hand, I breathed romantic, ancient ruins, and on the other hand, I lived in a space in which my state of mind with regard to the Arabs was: “the bad and frightening Arabs whom We defeated”, with no connection between the two. Writes Moshe Zuckerman:

... why memory is in the Israeli case ideological in essence[?] Because the emancipation, or what Jewish-Zionist nationalism considered as its emancipation, came at the ‘expense of’. One such group at the expense of this emancipation came to be those who were buried in the Jewish consciousness – certain Jews. There is no memory of the victims of the Holocaust, of the life-worlds of the Diaspora, only as signposts in the direction of the Zionist emancipation. ... Zionism sacrificed, in fact, those who were its *raison d'etre*. But the problem became much more severe when it turned out that in order to establish its emancipation, Zionism had to bring the destruction of those who were here before it. Those who were here as a living entity ... I am talking about lives of people who lived here, who loved here, who envied here, who created and developed here, raised children, created a culture. And Zionism systematically destroyed not only Sheik Munis [A Palestinian village on the site of which the University of Tel Aviv was later built], but hundreds of villages.¹⁸

In a talk I heard a few months ago, Meron Benvenisti, an Israeli historian, geographer and former politician, testifies about his generation, the first generation of Israelis who were born in the Land of Israel after the beginning of the Zionist endeavor (he was born in Jerusalem in 1934): “Even though we destroyed this landscape, we had a childish nostalgia to it.” Benvenisti further implored the audience to remember all the interactions between the Jews and the Arabs without privileging this or that side, because a biased attitude will prevent us from establishing a human connection with each other. He also said in that talk that the Israelis dig and explore the land in order to prove their claim to it, at any price,

and the native Palestinians do not ask themselves questions about their identity and their historical relation to this place. Their being is there, without the need of proving it.¹⁹

I absorb the information, the feelings that accompany it, and continue to ask myself questions about identity. I decide to begin a new project – “Native/Planted” – and start to photograph myself as a tree viewed from the windows of the bedrooms of the nine apartments in which I have lived in Jerusalem and the one in Mevaseret Zion. I come to the apartments and ask to [take a] photograph from the window outward[outwards] to the street. Some tenants allow me to take pictures, others not. This is not my home anymore, and the feeling is strange. I am hurt (against my will) and feel injustice when I am not allowed into an apartment. But when I am allowed in, I am happy to recall the memories and to see the changes done at the place since I dwelled there. I have many memories from those apartments: conversations, friends, pictures, music. But I am interested in the feeling of hurt and injustice that I experience when I am refused entry into an apartment. Of course, I cast my personal feeling on the collective hard feelings of the two people – Israelis and Palestinians – who live in this country. The first remembers what it feels to be persecuted and the second is now being persecuted by the first.



Idit Wagner, From the Project “Native/Planted”- Harav Shrem St. Jerusalem, 2011, Photography.

Mitchell argues that the power of the landscape is a relatively weak one

compared to that of armies, police forces, governments, and corporations. Landscape exerts a subtle power over people, eliciting a broad range of emotions and meanings that may be

difficult to specify. This indeterminacy of affect seems, in fact, to be a crucial feature of whatever force landscape could have.²⁰

Is it possible to ascribe to the landscape a meaning of aggressiveness? While ‘my’ landscape is in front of me or in my mind, I personify it, asking it questions and debating with it, about what is permitted and what will happen in the future? Can such an attitude be applied to the weather or the climate? Battles were won due to the features of the landscape and due to the weather, due to extreme heat or cold, and due to the control of high places. My everyday life is dictated by the weather, for example, my place of dwelling and my daily activities. The local climate is also present in my photographs, and especially in this project; I go out to photograph in the winter, when the days are short, looking for a sky clear of clouds, when it is not too cold and when it is not windy.

It is clear to me that from the first moment that I set my eyes on this piece of landscape in front of al-Walaja, I appropriated it to myself. I felt this appropriation in my body. I came to shoot the movie on several occasions, each time I was supposed to devote the entire day for photography in order to be in the place from sunrise to sunset. I photographed several times until I was satisfied. On one occasion, after I passed through the part of shooting the sunrise, several cars began to enter into my piece of landscape. Into my piece of ancient, virgin, wild landscape! I waited for the cars to leave, but this did not happen. A few days after this, around 4PM, a group of people arrived and settled in the cave in front of me. I waited in vain for two hours, wishing they would leave. The last time I came to shoot, a felah’ (Arabic: a farmer) appeared at noon with a donkey and a plow. The felah’ began working, slowly, in the middle of my frame, back and forth across the field, and I am losing my patience and not shooting. I become angry and cannot think about coming in another day and starting the shooting all over again. Eventually, after two hours of not shooting, I decide to photograph with the felah’ at the center of the frame. When I got back home, I realized to what extent the appropriation of this place took control over me. I am amazed and overwhelmed with the sense of possession of this piece of landscape, with what easiness it mastered me. After several days I realize that the felah’ too will be in the final version of the film. In this manner, I appropriated him too as part of the film but depicted the land itself as his. I think that this was the time when I first felt the shattering of my peaceful sense of nostalgia toward the landscape of my childhood, toward the ruins and the shomerot [Hebrew: traditional agricultural watchmen huts built of stones collected from the field] that are strewn in my mind.

The face of the Holy Landscape is so scarred by war, [archeological] excavation, and displacement that no illusion of innocent, original nature can be sustained for a moment.²¹

In the long hours I spent in front of my piece of landscape, I felt that the landscape was asking me not to turn my head away out of embarrassment and not to move my gaze away when I felt its hurt and injury but, instead, to have trust in it. The immense power of the valley under me dwarfs any person or beast that walks in it. The birds are flying here usually at the level of my eyes, not too much below my shooting location. I felt the loneliness of my piece of landscape, its segregation, and I did not dare to think about its impermanence because such thinking is tantamount to betrayal and turning a back to this place. I try to understand, from what actually am I turning away?

What is the origin of this strong sensation? I then realize that the fence behind me, the separation fence [between Israel and the Palestinian territories] is what made me come out of my shell, this fence suffocates and dwarfs me as a person, it suffocates and dwarfs the people around me, humanness itself. The fence exerts a tremendous power over my state of mind, on my conduct. I am closed in a cage.

The first house in the village of Al-Walaja



Idit Wagner, The First House in Al-Walaja., 2011, Photography.

This house is for me the first one in the village. It is located on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem-Gush Etzion road, in the crossroads between the sole, guarded, and fenced entrance into the settlement neighborhood of Har Gilo and the internal road of the village al-Walaja. This is where you can also see (for now) the

two sides of the separation wall: the side that faces the Jewish settlement is covered by dressed limestone (I wonder who chiseled the stones), and the side facing the Palestinian village which is naked gray concrete. This house was at my back during all the days and nights of the photographing. On the first night I photographed there, a person came out of the house at around 5AM to inquire what I am doing there. I felt terrible for not coming to them the previous evening to tell about my intentions. I regretted invading their immediate view space at this early hour of the day in such a sensitive place.

One afternoon I see a Haredi (Jewish ultraorthodox) young man praying at the gate of the house's yard. I am offended by his behavior, and stand at a distance of twenty meters, staring at him. A few hours later, exactly at the same place, in front of the house's gate, a small old car (probably from the 1980s) stops, and a young religious Jewish man comes out and urinates at the gate while a woman is awaiting him in the passenger seat. This time I am less paralyzed. I go directly toward the man and decide to enter his privacy and stand just next to him. He recoils and seems confused. I am asking: "how do you urinate here, at the entrance to a house, where people live?" He responds: "ho" as if it is sad. The woman laughs when he enters the car and they drive away.

It is known that when the camera is at a certain place there is a fuss around it – the camera can attract to it a certain doings or commotion, and even generate it, in as much that it can disrupt, distance and even foil it.²²

I enter my car, struggling with my sense of anger toward these two young people, struggling with the frustration from the evil I just saw, struggling not to cry, feeling ashamed. These specific events are etched only in my memory, even though in both cases I have the camera with me. The camera is on me and I am not photographing.

I wonder about this when I drive home, why did I not start to photograph. In both cases I did not even think to take the camera and shot the photo. Why? What does this say about me? Do I fail to fulfill my mission as a photographer? Am I not made from the right material? I am ashamed to admit that I did not use my camera. And suppose that I would have taken the photos? I am sure that my feeling of frustration would have been the same, but my self-image as a professional photographer or a "real photographer" would have been boosted. This issue keeps me busy for many days.

But pushing the photographic event to the margins, displaying indifference toward it or disregarding it cannot cancel its existence and the footprints that this event – that takes place among the participants in the action of photography – leaves in the photographed frame, especially when the in-present camera was activated.²³

I tell myself that I do not photograph evil. In fact, during my entire “Metropolitan Jerusalem exploration” project,” I tell myself that I do not photograph evil. But actually, I feel that my projects point at the folly, at the conflict, at the difficulty and my sadness and confusion and that they do not offer any escape route from this. This frustrates me, I notice that every idea I have or new project I begin starts from this negative feeling and thinking.

This constant preoccupation with evil and negativity makes me more and more bitter, and I begin wanting to leave Israel, pack up the family and get away. In Israel, I cannot find an opening to a better future.

Sa'id and Muhammad

One afternoon, two young men, Sa'id and Muhammad, come toward me from the house behind me to check in and ask how I feel, as well as to satisfy their curiosity. I welcome this visit. We speak English, a ‘neutral’ language. We are strangers on our common land, walking in separate and parallel ways. Sa'id is a university student and he explains to me which villages we see from this viewpoint. I try to describe to them my project: Why I choose to photograph what I am photographing. I tell them where I am from and share with them some of my knowledge about the fence that crosses their village. At one point in the conversation, I tell them that any wall is doomed to fall down eventually. While saying this, I am trying within me to withhold the tears and not to be too emotional, for it is clear that because of the fence, among other things, the condition of the Palestinians is worse ten times than that of the Israelis. So what if I feel that I am being suffocated. Sa'id is looking at me, disbelieving. He asks: “Are you Jewish, are you an Israeli?”

I shoot the video, feeling my breathing, seeing and following my monotonous body movements through the screen while in my head plays infinite repetition a line from A Song of Ascent, Psalm 121:1 - *"I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains: from whence shall my help come"*.

During the long hours of photographing in front of my appropriated piece of land I felt as if the landscape were trying to console me saying - *every breath is an era and I'm here, I will survive this breath and the next one, and those after.*²⁴

The camera, me and the last beam of light slowly disappear in an elegant and touching beauty. I notice that more than I'm enchanted by the real sunset in front of me, I am joyful and hypnotized by the manner in which the camera absorbs this change. I am already the viewer.

Idit Wagner, January 2012.

1 Ariela Azulai, *Civil Imagination: Political Ontology of Photography*. Tel Aviv: Resling, 2010, p. 98.

2 Originally appeared in English in: WJT Mitchell, "Holy Landscape: Israel, Palestine and the American Wilderness." In: WJT Mitchell, (ed.), *Landscape and Power*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002, pp. 261-290.

3 Larry Abramson, "What does the landscape want (and what does it miss)? A Walk through WTJ Mitchell's Holy Landscape." In WTJ Mitchell, *Holy Landscape*, Tel Aviv: Resling 2009, pp. 105-120, in Hebrew.

4 Azulai, 2010.

⁵ Azulai, 2010, pp. 39 and 40.

6 See: Ariela Azulai, "An un-signed photograph," available in:

http://readingmachine.co.il/home/books/book_462_166/1104830326 (in Hebrew). The metaphor of the vase's fractions comes from Benjamin's understanding of translation from one language to another. Azulai writes: "Benjamin suggested deconstructing the dual relationship between 'original' and 'translation.' Instead, he offered three terms: the language from which one translates, the language into which one translates, and the pure language – a language that Benjamin imagined as a vase, the wholeness of which is the outcome of the fit and harmony between the two translated languages. The relationship between the pieces and parts is not based on similarity among them, for one part of the vase is not similar to the others. Rather, fitting the various parts to each other is done according to their relationship to the pure language. Thus, the 'original' is not the original text, as is common to assume, but a hypothesis of wholeness that in relation to it the two texts – in the two languages – are just pieces and parts. Yet it is important to note that these parts are actually fragments and splinters, which apparently were made by an act of violence, breaking, shattering, destruction, or smashing. In other words, the pure language, the hypothetical 'original', is merely an act of reconstruction out of a condition of destruction. That means that the original does not exist prior to its copies, but that from the ruins we can produce the possibility of the original, and this possibility is always subsequent to the ruins of the shattered whole." (My translation from Azulai's Hebrew text).

⁷ Azulai, 2010, p. 46.

8 See: Dalia Amotz, "Over-reality, empty view, signified nature." In:

http://readingmachine.co.il/home/articles/article_161 (in Hebrew).

9 "At any place where human beings are with each other, whether in public space or in private spaces, in an open or closed place, at the public's eye or away from it, their existence is political." Azulai, 2010, p. 99.

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- 10 Avirama Golan, "More than a few fringe extremists threaten Israeli democracy," *Haaretz* November 17, 2010 (<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/more-than-a-few-fringe-extremists-threaten-israeli-democracy-1.325114>).
- 11 Azulai, 2010, p. 24.
- 12 See: Lea Majero-Mintz, "Landscape, Inspiration, Art." In Gedaliah Alkoshi and Shraga Kedari (eds.), *Jerusalem, a Yearbook for Literature and Ruminations*, Jerusalem: Ugdan Publishers, 1966) in Hebrew. All quotes from p. 358.
- 13 See: Lea Majero-Mintz, "Landscape, Inspiration, Art." In Gedaliah Alkoshi and Shraga Kedari (eds.), *Jerusalem, a Yearbook for Literature and Ruminations*, Jerusalem: Ugdan Publishers, 1966) in Hebrew. All quotes from p. 358.
- 14 The term comes from Michel Foucault, "The Subject and the Power." In: Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, Brighton: Harvester, 1982, pp. 208-26, at pp. 220-1.
- 15 See: <http://www.alt-arch.org/index.php>
- 16 Mitchell, 2002, p. 263.
- 17 Abramson, 2009, p. 11.
- A similar reference to Palestinian ruins can be found at Noga Kdman's *The Depopulated Palestinian Villages of 1948 in the Israeli Discourse*, November Books, 2008, in Hebrew: "During my childhood in Jerusalem, I participated in many school and youth movements trips to Lifta, the empty and half-ruined Arab village near the city, in which a spring runs its water into a pool. These tours left in me the vague impression that Lifta is such an ancient place, that its essence is in being a 'ruin', as if it always stood desolate, somewhat mysterious, somewhat beautiful and threatening, with its silence and the narrow lanes between the houses and the heavy walls."
<http://www.text.org.il/index.php?book=0810081>
- 18 Moshe Zuckerman, "Memory and History: Which Collective Memory?," from the website: <http://www.zochrot.org/>
- 19 See, in this context, Edward Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," in WJT Mitchell (ed.), *Landscape and Power*, second edition, Chicago University Press, 2002, pp. 241-260, at p. 253. There Said talks about the work of Keith Whitelam [*The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (Routledge, 1996)], who shows how 19th century archeology and biblical studies conceived, and perpetuated this conception, of ancient Palestine as a land inhabited only by Israelites, whereas in reality there were many nations and ethnicities living in that land even at times of Jewish or Israelite independence.
- 20 WJT Mitchell, "Preface to the second edition of *Landscape and Power: space, place and landscape*," in Mitchell (ed.), 2002, pp. vii-xii, at p. vii.
- 21 Mitchell, 2002, p. 27.
- 22 Azulai, 2010, p. 25.
- 23 Azulai, 2010, p. 25.
- 24 Unfortunately, the landscape is changing rapidly. New settlements, roads, military outposts, and fences cut through it. See: Raja Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape*, London: Profile Books, 2007.