Limits of Dissent, Perils of Activism: Spaces of Resistance and the New Security Logic

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Abstract: On 26 December 2003 an Israeli activist was shot by the Israeli Army while he was participating in a demonstration organized by Anarchists Against the Wall (AAtW) in the West Bank. This was the first time Israeli Soldiers have deliberately shot live bullets at a Jewish-Israeli activist. This paper is an attempt to understand the set of conditions, the enveloping frameworks, and the new discourses that have made this event, and similar shootings that soon followed, possible. Situating the actions of AAtW within a much wider context of securitization—of identities, movements, and bodies—we examine strategies of resistance which are deployed in highly securitized public spaces. We claim that an unexpected matrix of identity in which abnormality is configured as security threat render the bodies of activists especially precarious. The paper thus provides an account of the new rationales of security technologies and tactics which increasingly govern public spaces.

Keywords: activism, Israel/Palestine, Anarchists Against the Wall, queer theory, critical security studies

On 26 December 2003, Gil Na'amati, an Israeli citizen, was deliberately shot by the Israeli army while participating in a demonstration. Together with Anarchists Against the Wall—a Jewish-Israeli political action group working in solidarity and collaboration with Palestinians living along the route of the Separation Barrier—he was protesting against the construction of the barrier on the lands of the West Bank village of Mas'ha. As a result of the shooting, Na'amati was critically injured and almost died. It is not rare for civilians to be shot in the West Bank by the Israeli army, particularly if they are participating in acts of resistance.[1] Dozens of unarmed civilians are shot every week by the Israeli army in the occupied Palestinian territories, and between October 2000 and June 2014 more than 1880 were killed in the West Bank alone.[2] However, the vast majority of these casualties are not Israeli citizens, but Palestinians living in the occupied territory. More rare, but still occurring, are incidences in which Israeli citizens are shot and killed, yet these are Palestinians as well (the Arab citizens of the Jewish state) (see, for example, Farish and Tu'ema 2002; Globes 2002; Levinson 2010). Na'amati, however, was an Israeli Jew, and moreover, a young, Ashkenazi man, freshly out of the army, a member of

the most privileged segment of Israeli society. This was the first time an Israeli soldier has knowingly shot a live bullet at a Jewish, Israeli activist. This case of shooting, of course, is not more morally or politically horrendous than the killing of Palestinian civilians. Yet its mere exceptionality calls for an examination.

In this paper we seek to provide one explanation for the shooting, and even more importantly, to understand how soon thereafter, similar shootings alarmingly turned into non-events in the Israeli public domain—they created no public interest and often did not even make it to the back pages of primary newspapers.[3] In the mosaic of possible explanations, ours is not merely a missing piece in the puzzle. It is also part of an initial attempt to examine, much more broadly, what we identify as a gradual change in the ways public spaces are constructed and managed. This change, which can crudely be characterized as a transition from a liberal rationale to a logic of security, carries with it a series of reformulations in the conditions of possibility of political contestation. Specifically, underlying our effort here is a growing sense that there is a break between many modes of activism that still rely on (or operate against) liberal logics, and a political reality that is increasingly securitized. This break means that these modes of activism may ultimately subvert the activists' efforts, and demands thinking anew about the modes of corporeal presence of activists in these spaces.

It is important to stress here that we argue neither that securitization of political spaces is unprecedented,[4] nor that there is incommensurability between liberal and security regimes.[5] Rather, we want to focus on the particular challenges and alterations that the securitization of space poses to liberalism or, more precisely, to the set of assumptions through which such regimes are legitimized. Liberal regimes, in this account, are regimes whose main rhetoric is one of rights and liberties, whose conception of the law is that of an "umbrella" *protecting* all citizens. They are presumably formally operating under the assumption of equality, and are aimed at reducing violence, if not eliminating it altogether, from the political sphere. While in practice liberal regimes never live up to this universal logic and to the operation of the law as such a protector, and while the distinctions between liberal modes of governance and non-liberal modes of governance are often blurred (cf Neocleous 2008), there nevertheless remains a crucial distinction in the justificatory envelope of the regime (that requires, for example, to frame as exceptions those cases of state violence towards its own citizens). Yet, these enveloping rationales are not hollow rhetoric; they are the foundation for the legitimacy of the modern liberal state. This is precisely why different modes of activism can utilize them and rely upon them. Consequently, citizens can take to the streets, loudly objecting to their governments' policies, even aiming to overthrow an acting government or leader, without expecting to get shot, and hence the outrage when state forces do use excessive violence. However, the rhetoric of security introduces new justificatory mechanisms to politicized spaces that often rely both on a different rhetoric and a different structure of the law. When activists presume that they are protected by the liberal logic, while they are, in fact, within a securitized scheme of threats and risks, the consequences may be detrimental.

The ultimate goal of our larger project, which will be addressed only partially in this paper, is to argue that a radical mode of activism in which left critique is knitted

with a critique of various normalized identity categories, is unintendedly situated on a particular node in networks of security. We set to show that security logic relies on notions of normality that conflate risks with deviations from a norm, thereby marking digressions from normal patterns as a potential threat. Therefore, normalizing identity categories operate in these contexts in ways that diverge from normalization processes that are part and parcel of liberal frameworks. Our argument will accordingly proceed in three parts. After a brief introduction of Anarchists Against the Wall and a review of some common explanations of the shooting, we move to an attempt to excavate a particular logic from the technology of security apparatuses that will become the bases for our own explanation of the trivialization and legitimation of such cases of shooting. First, we show that security paradigms are prone to identify as suspicious, and also potentially threatening, each deviation from given norms—and the question what a norm is and how it is determined would be central to this analysis. Second, we show that this tendency should be taken into consideration when examining dissident activism as it operates in public spaces that are increasingly securitized. Drawing on the analysis of security technologies we would like to argue that particular modes of activism (primarily direct action activism) mark the bodies of the activists as deviant in relation to certain political orders, and that such a marking may facilitate the deployment of state violence.

Anarchists Against the Wall: A Case Study

Anarchists Against the Wall (AAtW: http://www.awalls.org/) is a political action group which has been participating in Palestinian-led struggles against land confiscations by Israel in the West Bank since 2003. As of 2014, demonstrations which include AAtW activists are still conducted every week in several West Bank villages, including Bil'in, Ni'lin, Nabi Saleh, al-Ma'sara, Beit Ummar and Kfur Qadum. The group generally consists of a couple of dozen mainly Jewish Israelis, middle-class women and men of Ashkenazi descent in their 20s and 30s. While not all participants identify as anarchists, the modus operandi of AAtW is compliant with anarchist principles, as these manifest themselves in similar alliance groups since the 1990s. This includes being a practice-based (rather than ideologically based) loosely formed group of activists organized in a non-hierarchical alliance committed to direct action.[6] Moreover, the West Bank activity of AAtW participants is based on the principles of solidarity and hence is only conducted when invited to do so by Palestinians to join local initiatives (see AAtW 2004; Blecher 2006; Gordon 2007, 2010; Gordon and Grietzer 2013; Nagler et al. 2006; Pallister-Wilkins 2009).

By participating in demonstrations which were met with violent reactions by the military, the activists willingly exposed themselves to military violence. One could maintain that this mode of action—quite rare in the landscape of Jewish Israeli activism until the Second Intifada—would suffice in explaining why they were shot by the Israeli army. Such an argument, however, ignores the radical difference between those who are presumed to be legitimate targets for shooting and those who are not, which stood at the base of this particular mode of solidarity. This mode of activism is thus situated on a somewhat perplexing junction. On the one hand, AAtW is one of the most committed, most radical, and most persistent in its politics

of direct action activism.[7] Yet by its very nature, this particular form of activism *rests* on the very differentiations to which it objects. The decision to conduct joint demonstrations in prone-to-violence settings assumes that the mere presence of Jewish Israelis would reduce the level of violence exercised by the army due to the privileges the bodies of the Israeli activists carry (AAtW 2013; Ayalon 2004; Gordon and Grietzer 2013:10). One can assume to bring about this "shielding" impact only if one is marked as privileged to begin with. This privilege can either be a formal one, within the grid of rights, or implicit yet evident within sets of social hierarchies and prejudices. Both layers were at play in the case of the joint demonstrations.

Let us focus on the former, the legal layer, which was clearer in this case. The assumption that the presence of Jewish activists would deter the army from using lethal violence towards the demonstrators presupposes a particular juridical discourse that secures the rights of "full" citizens. Among these presumably secured rights are the rights to assemble, to protest, and the right for bodily integrity and life, "even" when engaging in political protests. It is hardly a new claim that this juridical discourse is embedded in colonial (Arneil 2012; Mezzadra 2006) and racial (Balibar 1994) hierarchizations, and hence is never truly "universal" as it pretends to be—and it is precisely these hierarchizations that call for practices of human shielding such as AAtWs. Yet within the Israeli legal system, these rights are embodied and spatialized not only effectively but formally and explicitly as well. They are not stretched across the entire territory ruled by Israel (Azoulay and Ophir 2012); rather, this territory is split into two juridical segments: the area within the 67 borders, together with the annexed Golan Heights and East Jerusalem, which is presumably a liberal democracy,[8] and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are under military rule. However de jure, the rights granted for the privileged (primarily Jewish) citizens of this ethnocratic democracy (Yiftachel 2006), are almost miraculously carried by them as they enter into the military rule of the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). Much like in the order of privileges of the *Ancien Régime*, juridical rights in the oPt are tied to particular bodies, rather than being territorialized in accordance with modern law (Ben-Naftali et al. 2005). Thus, a Jewish citizen of Israel entering the oPt can safely assume that she is still under the protection of the liberal juridical framework, despite being outside of formal Israeli territory, while the Palestinian standing right next to her is subjected to a military legal system. Indeed, this radical difference in the distribution of legitimate violence is precisely what allows many Israeli and international left organizations to operate in the oPt: their privileges/rights are carried with them to the occupied territory, and facilitate various modes of protected action (to a greater or a lesser degree).[9] Yet in the case of AAtW this logic failed. Instead, the activists found themselves almost completely stripped from their rights once they entered the space of the demonstration.

Other analyses of this case claimed that the act of solidarity performed by AAtW activists should explain the shooting. By positioning themselves on the "wrong" side of the wall (or of the demonstration), by performing solidarity with West Bank Palestinians while facing Israeli soldiers, AAtW activists situated themselves at the margins of the imagined Jewish-Israeli collective, if not outside this collective altogether, and thus beyond the realm of the protection of its civic rights. Yet, while this dissociation from the Jewish-Israeli collective may have eased the soldiers'

decision to pull the trigger, it cannot fully explain the shooting, which was a radical break from the ethnocentric guiding rationale of the Israeli occupation. After all, one does not become "shootable" simply by extracting oneself from a collective, and up until that moment, even the most dissident (Jewish-Israeli) activist never faced direct military violence, even if in some incidents they indeed suffered from the heavy hand of state power (be it the police or the judicial system).

The other few cases of extreme political violence in Israel serve to illustrate rather than disprove this claim. The political murder of Peace Now activist Emil Grunzweig in 1983 and the assassination of the then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995 are cases in point—both were a function of non-state violence, performed by individuals, both caused a public turmoil in Israel and were treated as murder cases by the Israeli judicial system. The shooting of Na'amati and, to a greater degree, the cases that followed, are significantly different. Furthermore, even though the cases of political *state* violence are, as aforementioned, not unprecedented, such violence is primarily turned against protests held by the Palestinian citizens. Finally, Na'amati's case did not signify only a deterioration along a sliding scale of violence (from individual to state violence, and from state violence towards marginalized populations to violence towards social elites); it also signified a shift from police to military violence. Hence, it marks a break from the enforcement of civic order, harsh and disproportional as it may be, to the treating of enemies.

As another possible explanation for the shooting, some have pointed to an ethno-classed component. As stated above, the Israeli AAtW activists, as the large majority of activists in the non-Zionist Israeli left, come from the economic, cultural and political elites of Israeli society. By contrast, the non-prestigious fighting units performing the mundane upkeep of the occupation are predominantly manned by soldiers from Mizrahi descent who come from the social, economic and geographic periphery (Levy 2006, 2007). This ethno-class gap may translate into hostility, as the soldiers perceive the protest of the activists not only as objecting to particular governmental policies, but as betraying the ideological foundation of the national unity that the soldiers cherish. While these differences may account for the willingness of the soldiers to shoot, and the easiness in which these acts where conducted, and even the consequence indifference of the soldiers to their injured victims,[10] they still cannot account for the *structural treatment* of this violence. These incidents were tolerated and even backed by both the military and civic judicial systems, and with the exception of Na'amati's case, were largely met by the indifference of Israeli public opinion and media. Never becoming a declared and official policy, these incidents can nonetheless be seen as sanctioned by Israeli authorities, even only retroactively, as none of the commanders on the scene or any of the shooting soldiers were ever prosecuted or even reprimanded (Shelah 2004). As the media and the judicial system are largely populated by those of the Ashkenazi elite, the ethno-classed gap cannot account for the more general, structural acceptance of the shooting.

What emerges from these various explanations and the lacunas in them is an unprecedented distinct case of state-authorized political violence relegating the activists to the treatment of state enemies. Indeed, the activists were completely surprised and shocked by the shooting. Their shock, as well as the underlying

assumptions we outlined above, are clearly demonstrated in their voices heard on the video documenting the event, shouting towards the soldiers: "don't shoot, we are citizens" and "we will meet you at home—you'll have to face us back home; don't shoot" (liemaster 2003).[11] A sense that despite the radical political disagreement both the shooter and his victim belong to the same collective is evoked here, to underscore the illegitimacy of the shooting. While these calls are clearly *strategically* employed to make the soldiers hesitate before shooting or to prevent the shooting altogether (that is: they do not reflect the activists' explicit politics), in so doing they nonetheless latently validate that Palestinian non-citizens may somehow become legitimate targets of shooting. Be that as it may, our point is that evoking this (imagined) shared collectivity relies on an assumption (that up until that point was proven to be correct) that the Israeli state does not deploy soldiers to attack its own (Jewish) citizens.

Undoubtedly, this unprecedented moment is part of a decline in the role that the ideology of democracy plays in Israel, as well as in the state's actual apparatuses of ruling. The war in Gaza of the summer of 2014, wherein demonstrators against the war were violently attacked on the streets and political dissent became dangerous, has demonstrated the ease with which this violence has infiltrated all public spaces and targeted not just the radical activists placing themselves at confrontational zones, but all who step outside the nationalistic-Jewish consensus, also in the main city squares. In this essay, however, we would like to contextualize this shooting within another, even if related, global framework: not that of the decline of Israeli democracy, but a global process of securitization, subjecting public spaces to new rationales of threat management. This framework narrows democratic possibilities, and blurs the distinction between enemies and citizens. As police violence is militarized (the National Guard troops in August 2014 in Ferguson may serve here as a vivid illustration, but so is the treatment of the Occupy movement via a collaboration of the police with counter-insurgency forces; Ciccariello-Maher 2013; Graham 2010), as public spaces are increasingly monitored and restricted, the possibilities for public protest are transforming.

In what follows, then, we would like to take a closer look at an additional factor that has to be taken into consideration when accounting for these shootings and their public reception. Our aim here goes beyond providing a missing piece in this particular puzzle. It also aims to examine the case of AAtW as one, even if extreme, example of the manners by which the new security framework shapes viable modes of activism. For this purpose we need to make a brief detour, to examine what we see as a developing new logic of security. Ultimately, our argument will be that specific forms of bodily presence that are integral to activism, as such, are growingly subjected to a developing security rationale that governs public spaces. This means that, at times, facets of identity that are seemingly not relevant to the intended political action become central, especially in confrontational zones. The next section unfolds this logic, within which abnormality itself is marked as a threat. The section that follows ties this logic to the work of AAtW and to activism more broadly. We shall claim that while the sole purpose of AAtW is to serve as a platform for anti-occupation activism, and its political goals are emancipatory, anarchist, or post/colonial, many of its activists endorse identity politics that at times marks them as non-normative, and that this fact contributes to rendering them particularly precarious in confrontational circumstances.

Norms and Security: Some Preliminary Notes

There is a long and convoluted history for an amalgamation of security consider-
ations and social deviance. Perhaps the clearest example can be found with the
attitudes towards gays and lesbians in first-world countries during the cold war.
For instance, in the 1950s several thousand gay men and lesbians in the US were
fired en masse from jobs which required having a federal security clearance. The
explanation was that gays are exposed to being blackmailed into subverting the
government. Furthermore, like communists, gays were perceived as security threats
by their maintaining a dangerous subculture, a shady habitus which lured the
young, the feeble minded, and the psychologically unstable to weaken American
society by undermining family formation and nurturing moral decay (Johnson
2004). Similar histories can be found in most liberal regimes (see Chan 1989; Davis
1971; Knapp 2008; Psonak 2000; Robinson and Kimmel 1994).

However, we believe that in the security apparatuses that shape public spaces to-
day, a different logic slowly unfolds. As surveillance and security-related technology
has progressed in recent decades, a certain fantasy concerning security has become
prevalent: a fantasy of purely automatic security apparatuses. According to this
fantasy, security systems can be purged of the inconsistences and biases of human
intervention and rely solely on advanced algorithms of data analysis. These algo-
rithms, mainly composed of video and image recognition, would be able to identify
normal patterns of behavior in a given area, and issue alerts whenever deviations
from those patterns are detected. Ideally, these systems should begin as *tabula rasa*
and incorporate learning algorithms which, over a period of time, identify routine
patterns of movement and behavior. Based on an accumulation and analysis of
the sensory data they collect, extrapolations of normal patterns are defined. We
analyze these systems and the logic of normality upon which they rely in detail
elsewhere (Kotef and Amir 2014); what is important for us here are the implications
of these changes, particularly the ways in which assumptions regarding "norms"
are interwoven into the identification of security threats.

The fantasy of achieving fully automated security apparatuses is a fantasy of
purely statistical claims, of clean objectivity, of a scientifically based determination
that can detect potential threats without the interventions of humans and their
prejudices.[12] Yet, despite these presumptions, judgments concerning human eval-
uations, including morality, propriety, and identity-based preconceptions, infiltrate
security considerations in different ways. A security system in a train station might
provide an illuminating example. State-of-the-art railway stations surveillance
systems operate by measuring and identifying the types of behaviors of persons
on a platform, including the kinds and patterns of movement (directions, speed
and areas of movement) and the amount of time spent there. This enables such
systems to establish statistically normal patterns and, hence, also to single out ab-
normal ones. As these systems are geared towards security, identified abnormalities
are automatically classified as suspicious. When a person lingers on the platform for
much longer than the average amount of time, for example, she might not be a
passenger, but rather a pickpocket, a person considering committing suicide
(apparently one of the major nuisances of train companies), a homeless person
or, perhaps, a terrorist. In other words, such a person may turn out to be a threat

to the security of the passengers or the economic interests of the company.[13] "Norm" here is presumably merely a derivative of statistical calculations,[14] yet examining those identified as potential threats reveals the normative biases of the system: the security system at the station identifies not only terrorists, pickpockets, or people considering suicide but also (depending on its fine tuning) others who do not conform to certain economic orders: homeless people, beggars, or mentally disturbed persons wandering the platforms.

Hence, in this case, like in the historical examples above, social deviations are imprinted into the security logics, thereby potentially also becoming subjected to security-oriented treatment. Yet unlike in the past examples, the intersection of security and assumptions regarding normality do not rest in this case on a thick social grid within which deviation appears as such. The determination that gays were unfit for public service due to security considerations was preceded by, and dependent upon their marking as a distinct category of social deviance. Differently put, for the homosexuals in the cold war, the security consideration was but a derivative of the network of sexual normalization that presumably pushed homosexuals to the social margins, rendering them more vulnerable for blackmail, for example. In the security system of the contemporary train station, however, this social grid is sidestepped, even overridden, almost as if the security discourse precedes, and operates independently of social meanings. Within this framework, both the meaning of "norm" and the apparatuses from which it draws change their meaning: the mentally disabled person lingering on the railway station platform in the example above may be identified and treated as a security risk simply for not conforming to expected patterns of movement and behavior of passengers on a railway platform. Presumably, then, it has nothing to do with any judgment concerning mental disabilities, and a seemingly objective notion of time/movement replaces all other considerations.

This is not to argue that prejudices no longer play a role in the discourse of security. On the contrary, our argument is that the social always creeps in via security frameworks that presumably present objective concerns and threats as mere derivations of statistical analyses. Furthermore, as we demonstrate elsewhere (see Kotef and Amir 2014), and as prior research has already shown (see, among others, Bigo 2002; Monahan 2006; Neocleous 2008), any attempt to sharply distinguish security concerns from the operation of other social factors is erroneous, since it contradicts the intrinsic security rationale. Yet, once social abnormalities are enveloped by security rationale, once they appear within security discourses, they are transformed. Primarily, this securitization of social divergence means that rather than correction and disciplining of the individual body and desire, the "deviant" is now subjected to the treatment of security apparatuses. "Norm" thus functions not as a principle guiding treatment and alteration, but as the criterion separating the inside from the outside in an almost Schmittian manner. That is, the norm marks what is to be protected, while the abnormal marks a risk to be minimized if not eliminated. It is important to note that the security apparatuses which are geared towards the removal and elimination of risk factors have a privileged access to violence. Consequently, as we will demonstrate below, the outcome of these processes of securitization of deviance may have severe and perhaps even fatal implications to the persons in question.

Is AAtW Always Already Queer?

We do not seek to argue that such technological shifts are in and of themselves inherent to understanding the case of the shooting. We do, however, contend that the logic that transpires most lucidly in these technologies guides new modes of relating to abnormalities in securitized areas. Very crudely put, we argue that there is an underlying link between the rationale of the securitization of abnormality (that is, the identification of deviation from normalized patterns as risk or threat) and the shooting of the AAtW activists; not—we must emphasize—because these technologies offer a certain bypass to racial or ethno-national prejudices or a fantasy thereof, but because the underlying logic of security serves to shift discourses and apparatuses otherwise concerning identity and its boundaries to the realm of securitized violence. This connection rests on the claim that direct activism and additional features of AAtW mark the bodies of the activists as deviant and hence as a security problem. Accordingly, the shooting must be understood through this intersection: a life that is not only rendered precarious by aligning itself with a political enemy, but also a body which appears deviant and is thus marked as a threat. Our claim is that there are *queer* facets in the activity of AAtW which, *given the framework of the securitization of deviance facilitated the possibility of such a shooting*. More generally, we claim that there are structural elements that may render many other types of political action precarious due to this framework.

Our argument will be in two parts. First, we will examine direct action as generally "queered" in some forms—not in terms of sexual orientation or performance of non-conformist gender, but in the spatial formation of identity. Second we will argue that particular modes of corporeal presence of AAtW accentuate their queerness in these circumstances. Our claim is that these facets of the presence of the activists in a highly securitized zone joined the other elements rendering them precarious, and facilitated the shooting.

Direct Action as Out-of-Placeness

While spatial modes of action are common to many types of activisms (Soja 2010; Takahashi 2009), when examining the corporeality of activists and their interactions with space, direct action activism seems to diverge from other types of political action. Many types of political activities include the movement or the presence of bodies in space, such as rallies and vigils, and they all involve the transformation of mundane space from its everydayness into a political space by mobilizing bodies. Yet, these types of activities are symbolic in nature, oriented towards the raising of awareness to particular issues and operate in accordance with claim-making ratio-nale towards the state or towards other authorities (Tilly 2004). Direct action, by contrast, enacts the changes it aims to promote: the action itself encapsulates the desired change, and the activist embodies it, even if only temporarily and locally (Franks 2003). For instance, forcing open a closed gate along the separation fence, or tearing down a small portion of the fence, as was often done in the demonstra-tions in which AAtW participated, would represent the bringing down of the entire barrier; performing these actions in collaboration with Palestinians enacts a type of

Israeli-Palestinian solidarity which the separation wall aims to foreclose. Hence, direct action activism is *the embodiment of political action*. It is a moment in which political action becomes material and concrete through its consolidation into a body: the body of the activist.[15]

Moreover, space and bodies intersect differently in the case of direct action activism, and thus the politicization of space also takes a different form. Unlike symbolic activism, direct action activism is location specific and necessarily oriented towards the "placeness" of a given space.[16] Space is incorporated into the chosen course of action and functions as its constituting feature. More specifically, direct action is entangled in the possibility to change or trouble the organizing principle governing a given space via disrupting its constituting movements and flows. It seeks to momentarily break existing technologies and sites of motion: to completely stop or severely interrupt regular movements (such as kiss-ins in the middle of roads to block traffic), to create movement through barriers or into restricted areas (such as penetrating nuclear military bases), or to change and redirect patterns of movement (such as to start singing and dancing in the middle of a supermarket). As part of this effort, the body of the activist appears where and how it should not be, refusing normalization and declining to align itself with its "proper" place. It is a body that crystalizes outside of the established order, against it, confronting it, and whose "outside-ness", as it were, reveals, precisely, the limits of this order and the violence that is embedded in it or that is constantly recruited to sustain it. The resonances to queer bodies vis à vis the heteronormative order of sex/gender is, we believe, important here.

In his now classic book *In Place/Out of Place*, Tim Cresswell explores the normative dimensions of the construction of space. These aspects, he claims, most often remain hidden and become apparent only when they are disturbed in some crucial manner. Cresswell's (1996:97–145) analysis demonstrates that this disruption many times reflects on the ways in which identities operate: different dimensions of identities, including gender and sexuality, intersect with the assumed disruptions, facilitating the perception of being out place. Eventually, the combination of these two facets—the significant presence of the body within a political scene and its appearance *as* an interruption to order—means that within the temporal and spatial boundaries of the direct action, the body of the activist overwhelms, and to an extent, overdetermines the presence of the activist, rendering her body queer in some way.

Queering AAtW

If the presence of activists engaged in direct action is somehow rendered out-of-place and hence deviant, if indeed abnormalities are securitized, and if the action of AAtW takes place within an already tense and militarized scene, one can then see how their presence may be interpreted as a security threat that justifies the shooting. This alone, however, would not suffice as an explanation: many other activists operate in confrontational zones and are not regularly shot. In the case of AAtW, however, other factors accumulated, to create an aggregated effect that

turned them into presumably legitimate targets of shooting. One such factor was mentioned above: the body of the activists materialized on the "wrong side of the fence" from the perspective of the Israeli forces, both geographically, as the demonstration took place on the "Palestinian" side of the Separation Wall, but, more importantly, politically, as the activists performed solidarity with the Palestinians. Marching alongside Palestinians, developing long-lasting ties with Palestinians, sharing a camp with Palestinians, the AAtW activists were assumed to mix improperly, to cross acceptable lines of affiliation and alliance, and ultimately, also of identity (Kotef 2011). This type of alliance has become increasingly rare and politically loaded since the collapse of the Oslo Accords, after which the Israeli occupation has been reorganized to entrench the separation between Israelis and Palestinians and the anti-normalization movement within Palestinian civil society has greatly restricted the types and opportunities for Israeli-Palestinian joint action.[17]

The ethno-racial presuppositions regarding the "proper" social, political, as well as personal ties (which are by no means unique to the state of Israel) were met with other non-normative identity performances. These were added as a third layer to the activists' configuration of bodies as abnormal. This third layer includes some queering practices that have been explicitly adopted by the AAtW activists as part of their political stance, which was many times also integral to their dally life. Such practices include appealing to all members, both male and female, using female pronouns, and the adoption of counter-normative features in their appearance. Indeed, the AAtW group has a strong affiliation with queer politics, both historically (many of its participants were initiated into activism in the queer anti-occupation group Black Laundry)[18] and ideologically, as part of a broader perspective which sees the connection between different types of oppressions. Hence many of them also define themselves as feminists and devoted vegans.[19]

Yet when the emphasis of "deviance as a positive value" (Ziv 2010:540), such as in this case, intersects with the logic of securitized deviances (as we identified in the previous section), a certain "tipping point" is reached. This amalgamation facilitated a reconfiguration of the activists' presence and pushed the activists into the category of legitimate targets for shooting. The growing amalgamation between a security framework of statistically derived norms, the configuration of danger deduced from this framework, meant that when their embodied presence turned excessive and, therefore, deviant, the activists of AAtW were caught in a rationale that marked their bodies not as shields but, rather, as the source of danger. Thus, even though the queer politics was often not asserted as having a direct link to the anti-occupation struggle, it affected it directly, and maybe even caused it to fail. Yet, on another level, it succeeded beyond expectations: precisely as in significant strands of queer politics, it exposed the inherent vulnerability of human bodies and lives (Butler 2004; Spade 2011).

Above we argued that there is a tension in the nature of solidarity as it takes form in the practice of shielding: it rests on the very boundaries and hierarchies it seeks to challenge. However, the queer aspects in the politics of AAtW complicate this picture. As Amalia Ziv explains in regard to another anti-occupation Israeli queer organization, Black Laundry, in these cases the call against the occupation does not stem from an abstract, universal discourse of rights or some general

"humanity" but out of vulnerability-based solidarity. The marginalized queers and the Palestinians share a concrete corporeal stance of being exposed to violence. This shared vulnerability and exposure to violence troubles crucial lines of separation and distinction embedded in national and ethnic social positions, and with them some of the hierarchies these positions entail, allowing the building of a broader basis for solidarity to form (Blecher 2006). Paradoxically, then, the shooting was the pinnacle of solidarity itself.[20] Furthermore, precisely in their failure to protect the space of the demonstration from military violence, the activists exposed the degree of violence employed as part of the occupation and its infiltration to all civic spheres. At this point, when the state shoots its own citizens during non-violent political protests, the limits of Israeli democracy appear, exposing it as fragile at best, if not as nothing more than a mere façade. The semblance of providing civic freedom while maintaining a military occupation cannot be regained without significant efforts, which themselves only emphasize the state's own failure. This is perhaps the greatest success of AAtW's political action.

The implications of our analysis are not only relevant for the oPt; what we gradually see as characterizing contemporary political space—any political space—since the mid-2000s is a shift from the liberal composition, to one organized according to the logic of security. The extensive utilization of security surveillance technologies in urban spaces or increasing militarization of local police forces and military-style counter-insurgence tactics in dealing with social upheavals are but two examples.[21] As a result, political dissent is increasingly marked as a security, rather than a political, issue, and hence, calls for a treatment by security means.

Conclusion: On Passing

Situating the actions of AAtW within a much wider context of securitization—of identities, movements, and bodies—we tried to show here that a complex and, at times, unexpected matrix of identity and modes of presence must be taken into account if we are to understand how to trouble and, perhaps, even successfully counter current state powers. We claimed that the action of AAtW relies, in a crucial aspect, on a liberal logic in which the citizen's body is a bearer of rights and can accordingly shield from violence. We continued by trying to expose that in fact, this action is caught within a different logic altogether: a logic of security in which the queered activist body is configured as deviant and, hence, securitized. When deviation is securitized—a byproduct of the rational of security systems, as we argued in the second section—the body of the activists carry the mark of a threat that calls for treating it using security means, including the use of lethal power. The assumptions of the AAtW activists, which were shaped to operate against a liberal context, are thus deemed to fail in a securitized space. This failure cannot be registered merely within the domain of rights (of bodies that lose the shield of the law; bodies abandoned to the violence of state powers); it must also be thought in terms of the possibility of passing—of free movement.[22] The two domains (movement and rights) are tightly entangled within liberal thought, and hence, add another dimension for the queer analysis: historically, it was free movement which first defined the rights and freedoms of the subject/citizen (Kotef). In the same vain,

security mechanisms which now target "abnormalities" are often about the denial of movement, about who cannot pass freely, who is detained, whose movement is restricted or confined.

This entanglement can also be seen clearly in the work of AAtW activists, who not only participated in demonstrations protesting the Separation Fence, but also incorporated other types of actions such as dismantling parts of the Fence, opening gates which were closed off by the army, removing roadblocks. These acts recognize, first, the centrality of free movement to other types of freedoms (perhaps to freedom as such, if one can talk about such a thing), and second, were also part of a more general struggle in the oPt regarding who has the right to secure or deny free movement (AAtW 2004). This struggle, however, was based on the assumption that the activists themselves are free to pass, that they are in a position in which, first, their right of movement is secured, and second, their position as citizens shields them from the violence of the army which awaits Palestinians who dare transgress the imposed limitations. Hence, in a sense, they presumably had much more leeway in terms of the restrictions of movement and they could enter into negotiations with the army (in practice rather than in words) regarding the right to move.

These assumptions have been proven wrong; our argument proposes that they were wrong not merely because of the erroneous liberal presuppositions that did not take the securitization of those settings into account, but also because the AAtW activists could not pass in a different sense: pass *as* "normative" citizens. Indeed, many of the activists never aspired to pass as such, and their politics even endeavored to deliberately counter and trouble such norms. They did not realize, however, that such passing might have been essential to the tie between their bodies and their rights. Therefore, they also could not pass in the first meaning: they could not pass *through* the physical spaces of the demonstration and transgress military erect barriers; they were no longer shielded from military violence. Thus, carrying the mark of the deviant in the context of security, they could no longer "pass" in the full (double) sense of the word.

All this is not to promote a certain tradeoff, in which adopting more traditional bodily politics would allow activists to be more effective in working towards other goals (such as the forces of occupation, as in the case of AAtW). We have analyzed the prices of such a tradeoff elaborately elsewhere (Kotef and Amir 2007), and we do not believe it is somehow more politically desirable. Moreover, returning to the principle of solidarity with which we began our account of the organization, the queer politics emerges as transgressing some of the paradoxes and pitfalls of solidarity-based political work. Above we argued that there is a tension in the nature of solidarity as it takes form in the practice of shielding: it rests on the very boundaries and hierarchies it seeks to challenge. The queer politics that is accompanied by this practice in the case of AAtW, however, re-troubles the hierarchized division for protected and protecting, thereby re-blurring some of the hierarchies this division reproduces in the practice of solidarity-based shielding. Hence, paradoxically, as these distinctions somewhat erode, a potential of enhancing and cultivating a solidarity that takes place on more equal, or at least mobile social and national positioning appears (Blecher 2006).

It was queer theory which has turned our attention to the central role of normalizing processes in the operation of the politics of identities and behaviors. Indeed, queer theory has gained prominence through its ability to provide useful frameworks through which critique of regimes based on normality, and in particular the formation of identities and identifications within these regimes, may be articulated and troubled. And while queer theory was formulized as a critique of hegemonic normality in liberal settings, we believe that it can also provide us with a critical framework through which the securitization of abnormality may be dismantled. Nevertheless, queer critique, both as a political practice and as a theoretical framework, is primarily structured to undermine boundaries, fixed identities, or hierarchies through the blurring of categories and transgressing them. These types of actions are often confronted with violence of some sort, thereby exposing the underlying, yet denied, violence that sustains the liberal political order. In so doing these encounters played a critical role in the formation of various struggles against a liberal ideology that by veiling structural violence sustains and upholds it. However, once spaces of resistance are securitized and political descent is registered as a security threat, the unveiling of violence loses its political signification, due to the extended leeway security-rationalized violence enjoys. The critique and effort to undermine prevailing forms of domination may need to take this turn into account in order to avoid, as much as possible, rendering the bodies of those who express descent even more vulnerable to state violence.

Endnotes

[1] For a full video documentation of the event, see liemaster (2003).

[2] The large majority of these casualties occurred during the Second Intifada (2000–2005). However, despite the relative pacification of the violent outbursts since, there has been a steady exercise of violence by the Israeli army, which results in the steady stream of Palestinian casualties (see B'Tselem 2011, 2014).

[3] To date, five AAtW activists suffered significant injuries as a result of such shootings. In addition to Na'amati, these include Itay Levinsky, who was shot in April 2004 between his eyes, by a rubber-coated bullet; Jonathan Pollak, who was hit in 2005 by a tear gas canister fired directly at him, causing internal brain hemorrhaging (Traubmann 2005); Matan Cohn, who was shot in the eye by a rubber-coated bullet in 2006 (Yasur Beit-Or 2006); and Limor Goldstein, who suffered from a severe brain injury in 2006 after a rubber-coated bullet was shot at his head from a short distance (Karpel 2006). In addition, dozens of other activists suffered less severe injuries (see, for example, Zonszein 2013). Of course, these numbers are still significantly lower than those of the Palestinians who were shot at in the same demonstrations, including several resulting in death.

[4] In many geo-political contexts, political spaces have been subjected to the logic of security for periods of time, and resistance had to confront a securitized structure. Latin America of the 1970s and 1980s, or Italy of the 1930s are but some examples.

[5] Foucault's 1977–1978 lectures at the Collège de France clearly demonstrate that the logic of security is essentially a liberal logic (see Foucault 2007).

[6] The term direct action here follows Benjamin Franks' (2003) articulation as a form of political intervention which is prefigurative (an accordance between means and ends), non-representative (the agents are objecting to their own direct oppression on behalf of no one but themselves, and the actions themselves are configured as non-symbolic), and non-consequentialist (acts cannot be justified as a means to an end), which draws its meaning from the identity of the partaking agents and of the particular and local configuration of the oppressing forces they aim to oppose.

[7]   It is important to note that this form of solidarity should be distinguished from the politics of Jewish-Palestinian dialogue and co-existence (Gordon 2010; Pallister-Wilkins 2009).

[8]   Judging the validity of this claim is beyond our scope here. For examinations of this matter, see Kimmerling (1999) and Smooha (2003).

[9]   Shooting incidents at international activists, mainly those belonging to the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), started occurring in late 2002, when Israeli forces used intense military means to fight Palestinian resistance. Some of these instances were with fatal outcomes, resulting in the death of two activists, Rachel Currie in March 2003, who was run over by a military bulldozer while trying to prevent a home demolition, and Tom Hurndall in May of that year, who was shot while trying to protect two children from Israeli gunfire. Other instances resulted in severe injuries. See: http://palsolidarity.org/. However, almost all of these incidents occurred during fighting, that is, when the army was prone to use lethal power. In the settings of clear non-violent demonstrations, however, most attacks on left activists by the Army amounted to verbal abuse, beating and shoving—never direct and deliberate shooting with the clear aim to kill or severely maim.

[10] For instance, when Lymor Goldstein was severely injured in a demonstration in Bil'in in 2006, the soldiers refused to call for medical aid (see Daniel and Jonathan 2006).

[11] This shooting not only surprised the activists, it was also received as a shock in the Israeli public debate, followed by discussions in the Israeli parliament (the Knesset), and reached headlines in the Israeli mainstream press (Ayalon 2013).

[12] It should be noted that this aspiration is dependent on geopolitical contexts, and would be less central the more the regime relies on explicit differentiations between populations. For instance, in Israel, racial profiling is central to the security apparatus, and so far, despite attempts to appeal against it, it is still officially part of the security protocols of public spaces; in states considering such profiling illegal or socially unacceptable, the attempt to constitute a value-free, purely statistical security screening would be more dominant.

[13] The information we have here, both regarding the technical operation of the systems and the demands or needs expressed by customers, is based on a series of interviews with several key members of the security industry in Israel.

[14] This, in short, is the normalizing technology of security as Foucault identified: a statistical calculation of the frequency of a given phenomenon, which is devoid of value judgment, and is inferred from the natural flow of things and living beings, their patterns of movement and modes of action (Foucault 2007).

[15] This is not to claim that the activist is a stable and predetermined identity, which grants the individual a particular role within social and political relations. Quite the contrary. This is situational articulation of the activist position. This approach is explicitly aimed at questioning "the self-identity of the activist as the solitary agent of social change, set apart from the apolitical 'non-activist'", as suggested by Nicholas Blomley (2007:285).

[16] Following Doreen Massey's articulation, we refer here to place as "articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself" (1991:28).

[17] For an elaboration of this argument in the historical context, see Gordon (2008).

[18] For more on Black Laundry, see Baum (2006) and Ziv (2010).

[19] This is in line with anarchist movements internationally which tend to hyphenize anarchist struggles and to combine them with other agendas (Gordon 2010). For the queer perspective, see Ayalon (2005) and Bartal (2013).

[20] This solidarity of precarity is not devoid of tensions that have to do with different perceptions of masculinity and femininity (such as a tension between hyper-masculinized, para-military presence of Palestinian youth and the sometimes queer presence of the Israeli activists, who are, moreover, often pacifist and object to military violence of any form); with gendered power relations (and several cases of sexual harassment during the demonstrations); and with colliding ideologies concerning sexuality (that expressed themselves most frequently in a request that female Israeli activists would dress modestly). Such debates merit a more nuanced analysis than what we can provide here, and demand we shall not romanticize this form of solidarity.

[21] For a discussion about the blurring of the distinction between internal and external security forces, see Bigo (2001).

[22] For a discussion about passing and its relation to the ability to move, or to get around, see Wagner (2013).

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