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ISRAEL AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Jessica Lauren Sherman

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ISRAEL AND ITS DISCONTENTS

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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

The goal of the present research was to evaluate the history of the Israel and Palestine conflict and consider the impact of using psychoanalytic theory as a method of inquiry. The analysis of the conflict focused on providing a summary of competing historical narratives that prevent positive interactions between warring nations. Spatial and temporal formations examined through visual art and film advance the unacknowledged significance of a shared culture that brings Israel and Palestine together. By situating desire and its function as an unconscious determinant in the structure of anxiety, we see that the conflict depends upon disavowing the other by resisting loving thy neighbour that serves as a protective strategy against fear. Perpetuating trauma without realizing its basis prevents Israelis and Palestinians from surrendering to the uncanny space of anxiety.

Psychoanalysis; Lacan; Freud; Absence; Loss; Israel; Palestine; Trauma; Peace; Uncanny; Disavowal; Anxiety; Santner; Žižek

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I don't hate Israelis. All I want, Allah willing, is to have a good life for me and my children. The problem is the Israelis are the obstacle: They are determined to make our life miserable until we leave or we die. I don't want to give them that satisfaction.

Hassan, a Palestinian from the outskirts of Jerusalem

Of course I want peace. All we want is peace. It is the Palestinians who are the fanatics. They won't rest until they throw us into the sea.

Yossi, an Israeli from Tel Aviv

When we say that the Arabs are the aggressors and we defend ourselves—that is only half the truth. As regards our security and life we defend ourselves... But the fighting is only one aspect of the conflict, which is in its essence a political one. And politically we are aggressors and they defend themselves.

Ben Gurion, 1938

It is the magic of Nationalism to turn chance into destiny.

Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities.

CHAPTER ONE: Formations of Difference

A Summary of the History-

In order to better understand the psychological complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is necessary to look at the history of this struggle. Herein, however, lies the first complication, since the perception of this history is drastically different between the two sides. In attempting to keep a non-biased, objective view of the history of both people, leads me to a second complication. History is used to legitimize a certain way of narrating the past that enables a notion of identity that avoids the history of the Other. The culmination of both complications, that is, the perception of history and the construction of identity, produce a greater complexity: history haunts the ongoing conflict between Israel/Palestine because its history is the history of trauma.

Some scholars argue that the history of Israeli and Palestinian conflict started many thousands of years ago with the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (c. 2000-1700 BC) (Chapman, 21). The modern conflict, however, has its roots in a much more recent history. The origins of the Arab/Israel conflict escalated from the emergence of the modern nation state and the effect of nationalism on nomadic people.

At the end of the nineteenth-century, European Jews began to consider the possibility of establishing their own nation state in the Land of Israel. Before the

Holocaust and after centuries of discrimination and anti-semitism, important Zionist leaders such as Theodore Herzl began to theorize a homeland for the Jews. At the time, the Land of Israel was called Palestine and was part of the Ottoman Empire and was already a homeland for 500,000 Arabs. However, Jerusalem had been the historic and traditional homeland of the Jewish people since just before 2000 BC, even though they had existed in diaspora. In the beginning, it was unclear what group of people belonged in the Land of Palestine, and the question of national identity was even more unknown.

In the nineteenth century, the Palestinians engaged in low-yield agriculture such as olive orchards, which gave the appearance of an empty countryside. That explains why British diplomat James Finn wrote in 1857 that "the country is in a considerable degree empty of inhabitants and therefore its greatest need is that of a body of population" (Report to the Earl of Clarendon, Jerusalem, September 15, 1857, Salinas, xv). Likewise, Herzl's writings show that he believed that Palestine was largely unpopulated and he thought, perhaps naively, that the few local Arabs would welcome the prosperity that Jewish immigration would bring. In the beginning of the twentieth century, Jews began to immigrate to Palestine in small numbers. The first *aliyah* (return of Jews) took place in 1881. In 1880 there were 24,000 Jews compared to 456,000 Arabs. By 1914 the Jewish population had doubled. With the increase in Jewish inhabitants, the nation of Palestine was beginning to change. The Palestinian populations started to work and live together with the new influx of Jews. They shared a land and lived in relative peace, irrespective of race and religion. During this time, the nation of Palestine was bi-cultural.

A number of events had a major impact on Jewish-Palestinian relationships at the end of World War I. First, the British took control of the area. Then, in 1917, the British government issued the Balfour Declaration, which stated Britain's support for the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine. This proposal was strongly opposed by Arab leaders, who saw Palestine and Jerusalem as part of Arab national land promised to them by the British. Indeed, in 1915, Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Cairo, had written a letter to Hussein Ibn Ali, Sherif of Mecca, stating that Great Britain was prepared to support the independence of the Arabs. The problem was that the letter was quite vague about the boundaries. Right from the beginning Britain's involvement divided the Arabs from the Jews in spatial terms.

The failure to form a co-joined Jewish-Arab self-government after Balfour led to a series of Arab revolts against Jews and against the British mandatory government in the 1920s. It became clear that a whole state for the Jewish people was being implemented in Palestine, making the British Mandate unworkable. One homeland could not accommodate two peoples who were unwilling to share one vision for the nation. Race and religion escalated the difference between Arabs and Jews, increasing aggression and violence.

As a response, David Ben Gurion decided to form a militia called the *Haganah* (translated from Hebrew: defense). In 1929, riots escalated and the British government issued a decree to severely restrict Jewish immigration to Palestine. Meanwhile, the rise of Nazism and Anti-Semitism in Europe and restrictions on immigration in Europe, Britain and the USA made more Jews immigrate illegally. During this time, Zionism became a popular ideology and the term once defined by Herzl as a mission toward accommodating Jewish need for a secure nation began to gain a following. Extremism also gave rise to groups of Palestinians committed to foiling Zionism at all costs. The divide between Arabs and Jews escalated, bringing about increasing violence and intolerance. The Jews constituted thirty-one per cent of the total population in 1947.

After the Holocaust, international public opinion began to shift in favour of the Jewish refugees. Meanwhile the Arab population had not changed its stance on the Jewish presence in Palestine. The British continued to restrict Jewish immigration, which led the Zionist leadership to initiate an underground military campaign against the British. In 1946, the most radical right-wing groups called revisionist Zionists carried out terrorist operations against British military headquarters' in the King David hotel in Jerusalem, killing many dozens of people.

By 1947, the British turned the official mandate of Palestine over to the United Nations. In November of that year, the United Nations voted in favour of a partition plan in which Palestine would be divided roughly in halves, one for a Palestinian state, and one for a Jewish state. As Moises F. Salinas has observed, "the partition plan was reluctantly accepted by the Jewish leadership but outright rejected by the Arab governments and the Palestinians population, who saw all of Palestine as their rightful land and did not understand why half of it should be given to the Jews" (Salinas,

“Introduction”, xvii). In response to a failed division of land, hostilities increased. Numerous attacks from both sides were directed against civilian targets, which culminated in the massacre of Deir Yassin, in which 120 Palestinians were murdered, and the massacre of Gush Etzion, in which 130 Jews were killed. The violent attacks came to an apex when on April 12, 1948, as a reprisal for Deir Yassin, the Arabs attacked a convoy traveling to Jerusalem, killing seventy-seven Jewish doctors, nurses, university teachers and students. Without much hope for resolving the conflict, the British Mandate formally ended but the violence remained. As soon as British troops withdrew from Palestine, David Ben Gurion declared independence and the Arab governments declared war.

In 1948, Arab armies initiated a massive attack on Israel. Israel, in response, defended the territorial borders of the partition plan. During the war, about 700,000 Palestinians, whether by force by Israeli soldiers or voluntarily out of fear, fled or were forced out of the Israeli areas of Palestine, creating for the first time the problem of refugees, an event called the *Nakba* (translated from Arabic: disaster). By the end of the war, Israel held 78 percent of the territory west of the Jordan River, significantly more than was allotted to it in the partition plan. Although the Arabs supported the Palestinians against the Jews, it should be noted that “most of the Arab states who absorbed Palestinian refugees refused to allow them to integrate in their societies, placing them in permanent refugee camps” (Salinas, xix). The issue of national identity came to the fore when Arabs living in Palestine were refused to assimilate into any neighbouring Arab country. The surrounding Arab states signed an armistice agreement with Israel but refused to recognize its right to exist. The Arab states supported a Palestinian state that comprised all of the territories. As a result, no peace agreement could be signed because Arab nations refused to share the land of Palestine with Israelis.

With no peace agreement and no solution for the problem of refugees, Israel and the Arab states continued to engage in guerrilla attacks. In 1956 President Nasser of Egypt created an international crisis by blocking Israel from the Suez Canal. In response, Israel invaded Egypt and took the whole of Sinai. Meanwhile, as tensions rose between Jews and Arabs, the Palestinians were ignored both by Israel and by the Arab states, which only used them and manipulated them to advance their own interests (Salinas, xix).

Palestinians in exile organized in the late 1950s when Yasser Arafat founded Fatah, the precursor of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. By 1960 Arafat called for the destruction of Israel, carrying out an increased number of terrorist attacks in the name of Palestinian freedom.

The situation exploded in 1967. Military actions between Soviet-backed Syrians and Egyptians and the American-backed Israelis made the initial conflict between Israel and Palestine into an international war. Arab leaders (with the combined armies of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon) threatened to destroy Israel. After much deliberation, Israel launched a preemptive attack against the Arab forces despite being told by the United States that if they initiated war they would not receive backup. The outcome of the Six-Day War was that Israel occupied the remaining areas west of the Jordan River, as well as the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. The massive territorial expansion placed one million Palestinians in occupied lands and increased the size of Israel well beyond the initial Partition Plan of 1948. The Security Council Resolution of 1967 called on Israel to withdraw from territories occupied in the Six-Day war. However, successive governments have refused to comply with this resolution, and instead encouraged settlement on the land it conquered. Shortly after the war, Israel began to erect Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. Increasingly the settlements expanded, creating the current situation in which Israelis under Israeli civil law live in settlements interwoven among Palestinians towns, who live under Israeli military law. Today there are 200,000 Israelis living in the West Bank, among almost 2.5 million Palestinians (Salinas, xx). The settlement of occupied territory represents the failure of one homeland to satisfy two nations.

In 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a joint surprise attack on Yom Kippur, in response to the Israelis' victory in the Six-Day war. Although Egypt did not recover the Sinai and Syria was blocked from reclaiming the Golan Heights, the Arab world considered the war a victory. In 1977, President Sadat proposed a peace plan with Israel culminating in the Camp David Treaty in which Israel agreed to withdraw from the Sinai. Israeli-Egypt relations were improved; however, in 1978 the Israeli army invaded southern Lebanon in an attempt to crush PLO forces who were launching missiles across the border into Israel. The Israelis withdrew in June 1978 as a result of strong pressure

from the UN only to launch a full-scale invasion four years later. The PLO militia and leadership fled from a besieged Beirut.

In response to twenty years of occupation, the first Intifada (uprising) began in 1987 and continued until 1993. Palestinian children and young adults took to the streets throwing rocks and petrol bombs at Israeli soldiers. During this time Israel's security forces killed 1,100 Palestinians and bullets injured 20,000. Benny Morris describes the outcome as follows: "The intifada ended in a stalemate...Ultimately, the result of the Intifada was a basic restructuring of geopolitical realities in the region, one of which was the start of the emergence of a Palestinian state" (Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 596). In 1988 the Palestinians National Council proclaimed a Declaration of Independence, thereby setting up the state of Palestine in the occupied territories.

The prospect of a two-state 'solution' was in the works. Yasser Arafat recognized the existence of the State of Israel and renounced terrorism in all its forms. However, Arafat's support of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait made peace with Israel unlikely. The leader of the PLO protested the illegal occupation of the West Bank while approving of the occupation of Kuwait by Iraqi forces in 1990. Arafat supported Hussein as the only military power that had the courage to stand up to the US. Arafat's choice to support Hussein confirmed to Israel that Arab forces were still uniting against Israel.

Despite the set back to peace brought about by the Gulf War the peace process was volatile but still progressing. President Bush organized the Madrid Conference in 1991 that led to the Oslo Peace Accords in 1993. Peace between Israeli and Palestine seemed more likely than ever. However, beginning in 1994 the Palestinians accuse the Israeli government of failing to withdraw from the territories as set out in the Declaration of Principles, while Israel accuses the Palestine Authority of continuing to allow terrorist attacks. The peace process, as it is called, stopped progressing because the trauma of past events between both sides made negotiations with the other impossible. Neither side trusted the other to commit to a vision of peace, but more importantly, the idea of peace in the Middle East became pejoratively reduced to empty signifiers. The possibility of peace was replaced by the repetition of trauma.

In 1994 Israel signed a peace agreement with Jordan. Meanwhile, the sticking point in negotiations became the Old City of Jerusalem. President Clinton hosted talks at

Camp David, but the claim to Jerusalem could not be resolved. In 1995, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was eager to negotiate claim to Jerusalem with Arafat. Sadly, right-wing Israeli radical Yigal Amir, who opposed Rabin's signing of the Oslo Accords, assassinated Rabin. The death of Rabin set peace prospects back several years and set into play another event of trauma and mourning. In 2000, Ariel Sharon, accompanied by 1,000 Israeli police officers, visited the temple mount in Jerusalem and declared that Israel would never give up the Dome of the Rock. The Palestinians took Sharon's action as provocation, which sparked off the second Intifada. By the end of 2001, 862 Palestinians had been killed and 25,000 injured while 239 Israelis had been killed and 800 injured.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon began a policy of unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2003. This policy was fully implemented in August 2005. The formal announcements to evacuate seventeen Gaza settlements and another four in the West Bank in 2004 represented the first reversal for the settler movement since 1968. Despite the withdrawal, a fragile truce between Hamas and Israel expired in 2008. Hamas resumed rocket attacks and Israel resumed aerial assaults and land invasions that endure today. There have been no formal initiatives toward discussing peace progress in 2009. Civilian infrastructure, including mosques and synagogues, houses, medical facilities, and schools, are attacked and destroyed.

The history summarized here is not a complete account of all the events that have transpired in this conflict. The history narrated by Israelis and Palestinians respectively includes many details not discussed here. The summary is meant to accent the difficulty of historizing a conflict with two historical narratives. Each side selects from history examples of violence and suffering that serve to legitimate the other as enemy. The next step is to recognize how each side understands the same historical events differently. History remains marked by different narrative perspectives.¹

¹ Colin Chapman's *Whose Promised Land?* provides the most thorough interpretation of the land as a historically disputed issue. He also analyses the basic facts and interpretation of the historical differences of the two sides. For further information regarding understanding the history of territorial possession see Part I: Understanding the History (page 21-112).

Different Understandings of Histories -

The different understandings of history that contribute to incompatible narrative histories between Israelis and Palestinians can be divided into three main categories. The first category that arguments are drawn from is origins, the second is Anti-Semitism and the third is production.

In regard to the first category of ownership, Jews say that their ancestors first settled in Palestine some time around 2000 BC. The Palestinian Arabs say that they have been living in Palestine since at least the seventeenth century AD. Jews say that the kingdom of David that lasted from the tenth to the sixth century BC was the only independent nation state that had ever existed in the land. The Arabs do not accept the claim and argue that possession of land cannot date back centuries. By this logic, Mexico would have rights to parts of the US and Arabs could claim land in Spain. The Jews also argue that despite being driven out of Palestine by the Romans in AD 135, communities of Jews remained and have continued to live there right up to the present time, validating their possession of the land. The Arabs do not deny this contention and add that for 1,300 years there was hardly any friction between Jewish communities and their Arab neighbours. The Arabs insist that at first they welcomed Jewish immigrants and lived peacefully alongside them for many years. Living with the Jews began to be more hostile only when they realized that many of the immigrants were seeking more political power. When Jewish immigrants began implementing Zionism, Palestine became divided into a Jewish vision that threatened an already existing Arab territory.

The second category of Anti-Semitism is evoked when, after centuries of persecution that led to the killing of six million Jews under the Nazis, European Jewry had to find refuge. Palestine was the obvious place to choose because of all that the land had meant to the Jews in the past. In regard to the Holocaust, the Arabs point out that they were not in any way responsible for the persecution of the Jews and wonder why they should have to suffer for the crimes of Europe. Israel argues that the Arab nations harbor anti-Semitic sentiments that account for their violent actions toward Jewish people. From their perspective, the need for a Jewish state is disavowed because Arabs would prefer the Jews to be eradicated before they would share a home.

The third category serves to legitimate the claim that Israeli Jews have a right to the land of Israel today because of all they have invested in it. The narrative underscores that the Israeli-Jews have produced a new land; they have drained the swamps and made the desert into a metropolis. Israelis argue that it would not be fair to hand back land to the Palestinians when Israelis are responsible for its success. Israelis believe they are fundamentally more successful than Palestinians. If they gave back the land it would be ruined by their inability to sustain infrastructure in the modern economy. To which the Arabs reply: an argument like this cannot be accepted in a court of law as a valid claim to ownership.

Against this backdrop, there is a kind of dialogue that takes place between Israeli Jews and their supporters on the one hand and Palestinians and their supporters on the other. The Palestinians counter each argument that is put forth by Jews while Israelis counter each argument put forth by Arabs. For example, Israelis claim that Israel took the opportunity provided by the UN Partition Plan to create a state. The Palestinians could have created a state, but chose to destroy the Jewish state instead. Israelis believe the Palestinians forfeited their right to have a state in 1948. However, the Palestinians argue that there were valid reasons for their refusal at the time and the Partition Plan has not expired and still provides the basis for a Palestinian state at the present time.

The general trend of discussions that take place is characterized by a complete disagreement over each matter such that no common ground remains to sustain a plausible attempt at negotiation. Compromise is prevented by clear-cut disavowal of the other side's position. For instance, Israel claims they have won all the wars that were started by the Arabs and refuse to feel guilty for their victories. They maintain that the land they have acquired is rightfully and lawfully possessed by Israel and they will not give it back. Palestinians claim, on the other hand, that it is not simply a matter of winning but of recognizing injustices committed in the process. If there is to be peace, there must be concessions. However, concessions are stifled by traumas of the past.

The back and forth battle over factual history proceeds to questions of identity and nationalisms that evoke a common thread: territorial distribution. According to the Jews they have had a strong sense of identity for centuries and deserve a national home because their nationalism is bound to their religion. From the Jewish perspective, Judaism

is a mark of identification that has perpetuated Jewish difference. Jewishness prevents Jews from assimilating to a non-Jewish nation and promotes anti-Semitism. Conversely, the idea of the Palestinian identity is a new construction, according to Israelis, that was created as a counter-response to the development of the Israeli nation. However, the Arabs living in Palestine claim to have been aware that they are not the same as Arabs in other areas; they are not accepted into Arab nationalisms and need a national home for a similar reason. The uniqueness of the Palestinian and Jewish social position is one aspect of the conflict that indicates a shared difference that provides an opportunity to see sameness where only difference is reinforced. However, either community does not accept aligning Jews with Palestinians because of shared experiences of being an outsider.

Any attempt at bringing these two nations together leads to violence. Even the history of violence has different interpretations which center on the question of responsibility. Israelis argue that the Arabs have started all the wars. However, in several conflicts it was Israel that stirred up antagonism in order to give justification for their defense strategies. Israelis claim that it is impossible to make peace with the Palestinians because of extremist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad. However, the Jews also have extremist groups such as Gush Emunim. The logic of their disagreements take shape in arguments that suggest each side cannot admit to being responsible for their actions. Blame is always cast exclusively on the other.

According to Israelis, Israel started settlements because they won the war of Independence and know what needs to be done to secure the survival of the state. The Palestinians find it hard to understand why Israel seems to be the only country in the world that refuses to carry out UN resolutions and yet it is allowed to get away with it. The effect of the settlements is not acknowledged. Responsibility for having displaced the original inhabitants of the area is diffused by the Israelis, while the Palestinians cite UN infractions as though Israel is alone in ignoring the UN. In other words, there is a reversal strategy in place where the other is blamed for infractions that they themselves commit.

Ultimately, the Jews believe that the Palestinians are not interested in making peace and that most would like to destroy the Jewish state. The Palestinians maintain that

at different stages they have engaged in the peace process, but successive Israeli governments have turned a deaf ear in order to gain more territory and economic stability. Therefore, the three categories of ownership, Anti-Semitism, and production end up producing two competing identities that are premised on being the bigger victim in the conflict. Palestinians' identity is aligned with terrorists uninterested in peace and in favour of violence and suffering while Israelis' identity is constructed as money-hungry expansionists who are unfeeling as long as they are victorious. With such opposing views, it is impossible to resolve the history of the conflict to find out the truth about what has happened because the events of the past repeat in the present reinforcing formations of difference that are inextricably linked to the construction of identities. Their histories attest to their inability to agree as a result of trauma.

Israel and Palestine as a Temporal Formation -

Turning for the moment to Irit Rogoff's book entitled *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture*, I want to explore how the historical inconsistency between Israel and Palestine is further accentuated as a problem of spatial division. Rogoff takes issue with the very question of belonging that Israel and Palestine have been arguing about for years. Her discussion of mapping losses is delicately applied to art in order to evoke the sentimentality of loss, as a personal and memorable experience tied to land and culture. In her view, "...this contested history of one named space speaks of 'mapping loss'" (*Terra*, 84). In the interest of tapping into the social worlds that have been destroyed and scattered across borders and divisions, Rogoff analyzes art that explores causes of suffering, experienced by real people unable to change their social settings.

Rogoff moves from interpreting cartographic meanings toward the deployment of political criticism in her analysis of Mona Hatoum's work entitled *Present Tense*. She briefly highlights the terms of the Oslo Peace Treaty and the ceremony on the lawn of the White House in September 1993. It was at this time that Bill Clinton, Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat met to confirm a burgeoning Palestinian state dependent upon territorial withdrawal. In regard to Oslo, Edward Said commented on the first level of division explaining the concessions that were being made by the Palestinians in 1993: "For the first time in our recent past, we have accepted the division of our people" (*Peace and its*

Discontents, xxix). For the first time in history acceptance of sharing land was inaugurated not only by Palestine but also confirmed by Israel. The prospect of peace seemed likely, confirmed by a handshake between Rabin and Arafat; Arafat renounced terrorism, while Rabin supported the creation of a two state solution based on pre-1967 borders. It was an unprecedented event in the history of the conflict.

However, the division of land produced a map that "looked as if it had been eaten up by wormwood, leaving tiny ridges in what had once been a coherent land mass" (*Terra*, 86). Hatoum's observation affirms the importance of looking at the land of Israel as it used to be represented: as a vast landscape of territory where two peoples lived and shared a nation. Since the events of 1967, maps appear cordoning off sections for Palestinians while other spaces are proclaimed under Israeli occupation. What used to be a vast landscape is now represented by maps that demarcate division. Maps filled with red lines and blue borders, crisscrossing and overlapping, attempt to adjust the land based upon associating these lines with historical events. Mona Hatoum, a Palestinian born in Beirut, went to East Jerusalem to make and exhibit a piece of work in the wake of Rabin's death and during the height of territorial discussions. She talks openly about her work:

On my first day in Jerusalem I came across a map divided into lots of little areas circled in red, like little islands with no continuity or connection between them....Originally I was going to draw an outline of the map by pushing nails into the soap, but it looked quite aggressive and sad. I ended up using little glass beads which pressed into the soap...The Palestinians who came to the gallery recognized the smell and the material immediately. I saw that particular soap as a symbol of resistance...I also used it because of its transient nature. In fact one visitor asked 'did you draw the map on soap because when it dissolves we won't have any of these stupid borders?' (qtd in Rogoff, 87-88)

Hatoum speaks about the significance of the Palestinian soap as an example of resistance. She proposes that the soap represents a recognized Arab product that reinforces Palestinian cultural practices that have not been reduced by assimilation. She uses a product that is distinctly Palestinian, as if the soap reiterated the proper ownership of the land. However, the pieces of soap fail to come together completely. Hundreds of

small squares, each a slightly different size and height are placed side by side, combined to form a surface that is uneven at best. The combination of parts immediately communicates a space that is no longer whole. The incommensurability of the pieces, some protruding outward while others are recessing, acknowledges the impossibility of forming a whole based upon parts. Hatoum deliberately uses small squares of soap cut from the original larger bars to reiterate the division of space. Hatoum evokes the disparaging sentiment of separation and division with each square that refuses to join its neighbour. No matter how close the pieces are placed, a thin line of space suffuses the surface. Her work literally draws the artificiality of arbitrary division into the landscape when she pricks the soft surface of the soap with tiny red pins, sketching the borders that divide Israel from Palestine. The end result is a map that ceases to look anything like land or cartography, but bears the resemblance of human production. Although the outline of the territories can be clearly depicted, the reason the work does not resemble a map is because one cannot help but see past the surface drawing, into the texture of the soap beneath. In this instance the decision to use a Palestinian as opposed to an Israeli soap is complicated. The olive oil soap made by Palestinians in Nablus that Hatoum uses is also made by Jewish Israelis living in the Golan Heights. Hatoum herself does not acknowledge the shared tradition of soap that brings together the two cultures. However, these warring people used to share cultural products that attest to a relationship that continues to exist. The land used to be whole, where Israelis and Palestinians lived a similar life. During this time of harmony, they lived and worked together, sharing the land and making soap together. Since then, Palestinians and Israelis have tried to possess even the cultural artifacts such as soap as being distinctively their own.

Rogoff, herself a Jewish scholar, narrates a memory of her grandparents' house in the 1950s, located in Tel Aviv, that corresponds with memories Arab-Palestinians share with Israelis: "the smells of laundry day on the roof of my grandparent's collective house....Yona the Yemeni woman who was in charge of orchestrating this bimonthly festival of fragrant cleanliness with its huge boiling tubs and blue-tinted white sheets billowing in the sun" (*Terra*, 89). The memory affirms a mutual, shared history that runs counter to a history of difference. Having similar memories confirms the similar lifestyles of Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. North American Jews have less in common with

the culture of Jewish-Israelis compared to the similar experiences of the everyday shared between Israelis and Palestinians. Cultural experience is able to transcend nationalism. The commonality suggests that culture bleeds over the demarcation of division.

Furthermore, spatial division is a result of the incompatible identities and histories that these spaces are supposed to, but fail to, subsume. Commonalities can be seen in all areas of Jewish and Arab life. It is not only in olive oil soap, but is also evident in foods such as falafel, shwarma, and hummus, to name only three. As another example of shared cultural experience, Tel Aviv represents a major city in Israel that is almost exclusively Jewish. There are almost no Palestinians or Arabs living there. Rather, Arab Palestinians live in Jaffa, a town that borders downtown Tel Aviv. The view along the Mediterranean Sea in Tel Aviv is a lively social setting where Israelis play with their children on the beach. Only a few miles down shore, there are no more Israelis. Instead, the beaches are lined with Arabs, playing with their children on the beach, mimicking their enemies down the shore. The only mark of difference notable on the beach is in the style of their religious garb. The significance of the divide between Tel Aviv and Jaffa can be seen in the commonality of everyday life. The way they enjoy their time of leisure brings these two incompatible people closer to compatibility. You cannot find a dividing line between Tel Aviv and Jaffa. There is nothing marked in the sand. Yet this space along the sea is perpetually divided.

The commonality of experience is confirmed in shopping centers. In Jerusalem, Israelis shop in the Jewish Quarter at Ben Yehuda Market while the Arabs keep together in the Old Quarter, shopping at a different market that sells the same things. The music listened to by Israelis echoes the same melody and cadence that the Palestinians enjoy. For these reasons, Hatoum illuminates the textures of daily life in her work and explains through pictures of produce and cooking and shopping markets the ways in which Israelis are the same as Palestinians in order to "shore up some bit of the eroded sense of relation between local identities and land" (*Terra*, 88). Analyzing Hatoum's work makes clear that "everywhere in these texts and images we find maps that separate and fragment and embody conflict while the foods and soaps and laundry blueing cross the lines of imaginary belongings" (*Terra*, 88).

The impact of Hatoum's work manifests differently for Israelis compared to Palestinians. Mona Hatoum recounts: "when the exhibition opened and Israeli people came from Tel Aviv, they started reading a reference in the soap to concentration camps. This couldn't be further from my thoughts" (*Terra*, 90). Hatoum affirms that the reading of the work is inconsistent with what she meant to convey. However, art crosses borders and illuminates unnoticed similarities. Another visitor in response to a different piece, a metal bed with castors attached to the legs that were tied down to the floor with fishing wire responded, "it felt just like their situation, that everything is trying to push them out but invisible threads tie them down" (*Terra*, 90). Although the work meant to represent the Palestinian experience, the spectator felt it expressed herself as an Israeli. Two readings of two different pieces of art by two opposing nationalities demonstrate memories and feelings that are shared from a common history. Two cultures try to co-exist by pronouncing difference while their similarities are denied but cannot be destroyed. Rogoff explains that what seems to be a dispute over land is in reality a clash between two emerging national movements. One is attempting to be stronger than the other. The significance of Hatoum's exhibition is that it acknowledges the similarity between Israeli and Palestinian identities and reminds us that they share more than a homeland.

Review of the Literature -

Avner Falk analyzes the unconscious processes of splitting, projection, protective identification, and the unconscious need for enemies, both on an individual and collective level in her book entitled *Fratricide in the Holy Land*. She argues that the collective unconscious terrorizes the relationship between Israelis and Palestinians. On account of their inability to mourn their losses, Falk focuses on their shared melancholia. Her methodology is ego-psychological and her emphasis is on the Arab/Israeli mind, character and personality. She underscores many important psycho-behaviour components of the conflict through Kleinian psychoanalysis. Her inquiry into the conflict leaves many important Lacanian considerations entirely open to future endeavors (*Fratricide*, 10).

Moises F. Salinas focuses on the identity formations of Israelis and Palestinians in his book entitled *Planting Hatred, Sewing Pain*. He offers interviews with Israelis and Palestinians that showcase stereotypes, dehumanization, violence, and trauma. His work provides interview material on which to suspend a Lacanian analysis in order to supplement his psychology of the conflict with additional psychoanalytic observations.

Other scholars such as Sigmund Freud, Cathy Caruth, Jacqueline Rose, Edward Said, and Dominick LaCapra have investigated aspects of the conflict that you will not find in traditional Israeli/Palestine scholarship. Their work informs most of my analysis and acknowledges a different way of understanding history. Beginning with Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* marks an important work that explains how culture can be understood from a psychoanalytic perspective. Concepts such as the social subject, aggression, the death drive, and the pleasure principle are explained as formations of the psychological world that have effects in cultural contexts. The subject and its surroundings can be understood as a reciprocal relationship: culture always precedes the subject, representing with symbols and artifacts reminders of who and what the subject is based on its history. The reciprocity can be noted by inferring how culture produces images of the subject's past, while the subject itself contributes in the present to the production of the very artifacts that reiterate its composition. In other words, subjectivity and culture demonstrate a relationship that is co-determinous, just like the relationship that exists between subject and other, Israeli and Palestinian.

In this context, Freud brings to light how people's thoughts and actions are motivated by wishful impulses located in the unconscious. He theorizes a subject position that is unaware of its motivations. Forces it does not understand control Freud's subject. According to him, civilization is far from civil. There are many fundamental tensions that polarize the individual from its sense of community. For Freud the social subject is a free agent; however, civilization imposes a limit to freedom and demands conformity that results in repression. Repression of desire allows the subject to co-exist with other subjects. These others who live with the subject also repress their natural instincts and share a common relationship. Freud demonstrates that belonging to a community means learning to live a prescriptive life that runs counter to one's instinctual mechanisms.

The result is a construction of the subject that lives a life of dependency. Feeling discontent with its conformity, the subject transgresses from her prescriptive life and finds perverse forms of satisfaction that hearken back to humankind's primitive foundations. For instance, Freud argues that the desire for sexual gratification is insatiable and common to all subjects. However, despite this shared reality of subjectivity sexual desire has been repressed in civil society. Libidinal desires are kept private as a result of a code of conduct. Restrictions on what is polite to discuss about sexual desire are socially interpreted.

Repression not only limits the extent to which we share our fantasies, it also dictates the prohibition of murder, rape, and adultery. These actions are deemed uncivilized insofar as we realize they exist in our culture; however, we want to repress the idea that we are capable of such vile actions. We demonstrate to ourselves that there are aspects of human behaviour that society wishes to remove from the human being. Nonetheless, murder, rape and adultery still occur because repression is unable to eradicate the elements within us that the law attempts to suppress. The underlying motivation to transgress the law resides in the fact that desire cannot be completely repressed.

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud explores how the human condition is marked by immutable instincts. The predisposition to violence and aggression typified by the human being are examples of the subject's symptomatic response to obstructions to the pleasure principle. When the instincts cannot be free, the pleasure principle is subject to dissatisfaction that leads to a culture frustrated by its own position. During this struggle, a recurrent obstacle that prevents satisfaction leads to frustration that can manifest in apathy, anxiety, melancholia, paranoia, psychotic delusions or hysteric outbursts, among other symptoms. The very organization of civil society gives rise to repression, the return of the repressed, symptom creation, and, finally, the possibility of working through symptom formations. That is, Freud's theory in this evocative text is meant to underscore that civilization enjoys its symptoms, that it can only know discontent as through a glass darkly. This is precisely why Israeli political policies acknowledge fear, reinforce it and cordon off space through borders that divide the subject from the other. Examples of border and division are protective measures that

serve to satisfy a frustrated pleasure principle. The subject satisfies its desire by frustrating what causes its own frustration.

Territorialization and expansion feed the Israeli fantasy that by increasing its size, Israel will increase its national superiority. Israel has equated its size with its ability to remain a state. By taking over land from Arab nations since the Balfour Declaration, Israel has responded to the countries that refuse to recognize its right to exist with over compensation: Israel now exists even more by existing in larger measure. Israel endeavors to prove Arab nations wrong by becoming a powerful nation against the odds, that is, by becoming the exception to Arab nationalism. Conversely, terrorism and victimization feed the Palestinian fantasy that is set up against Israel's endeavor. The Palestinians argue that there is no other recourse for Palestine but to engage in extremism in order to block the more powerful state of Israel. Palestine claims that its actions against Israeli civilians are a last resort; not one they chose but one that is forced upon them. They create the idea that they are only doing what they require; terrorist tactics are not a choice but dictated by Israel's policies. Palestine is able to justify its future statehood by increasing its victimization; if Palestine can convince the world that its status as victim is comparable to the victimization of the Jews in the Holocaust, perhaps Palestine will have a state all to its own. Perpetuating the last resort narrative facilitates the creation of a Palestinian nation by revealing the danger of not giving Palestine a state. Extremism is intended to achieve its aim by exploiting what it is capable of if it is ignored. That is, at the present date, Palestine is attempting to become an even larger victim than the Jews were after the Holocaust, in order to be acknowledged as requiring a state, just as the Jews were granted a state because of a history of anti-Semitism.

By threatening the security of Israel, Palestine successfully frustrates what Israel wants most: safety. Palestinians who support terrorist tactics acquire satisfaction by taking away security and recognition. Israel responds by implementing its own terrorist regime in an effort to frustrate Palestine with tactics of resistance geared toward spoiling the possibility of having more safety and security than Israel. Palestine, in turn, accused Israel of having terrorist regimes, in an effort to lump them into the same pejorative category. The cycle is premised on dispossessing the other of what it wants and reclaiming that desired object as its own. Therefore, dissatisfaction leads to satisfaction

through frustrating the other. The effect of this cycle is a form of lethal political antagonism that endures because its basis relies on a perverse pleasure that takes the other out of the desire equation.

Cathy Caruth who does not deal with the conflict in Israel/Palestine specifically, but does conceptualize what it means for history in the conflict to be a history of trauma, considers the implications of desire as a constant force. In her book entitled *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* the peculiar and paradoxical experience of trauma is defined by Caruth as "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (*Unclaimed*, 11). From her perspective, conflict is a repetition of trauma marked by losses and structures of mourning. Trauma is not in the past but is a present conceit. Trauma is lived with as opposed to lived already. History and the social network of civilization are in trauma as it takes place; life is always going to be traumatic. Life itself unfolds now as unpreventable and endures by repeating what is repressed. Caruth pushes Freud's revelation that society is unable to satisfy its pleasure principle into theological terrain.

According to Caruth, before Moses led the Hebrews out of slavery, Judaism did not exist as an organized religion. The story of the Exodus provides unity to Jewish historical memory, providing a place to begin telling the story of Jewish creation and survival. She argues that at present, Jewish historical memory is always a matter of distortion, of filtering out the original event through the fictions of traumatic repression. Rather than focusing on the unity of the Exodus story as a definition of Jewish solidarity to God, Israel has come to be traumatized by the Exodus because it marks the beginning of Jewish independence. Leaving Egypt meant living for the first time in a scattered cultural community and beginning Jewish diaspora. According to Caruth, this dispersion has had one lasting implication. From Caruth's perspective, "history, like trauma, is never simply one's own, history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's traumas" (Caruth, 24). Her argument is that since the Hebrews were united, they have tried to repress their Arab origin. Jewish historical memory resists accepting its shared heritage with its other. It attempts to begin its tale with its own creation as though the Hebrews in a sense were always/already Jews to be. Her assertion is meant to align subject with other

regardless of attempts at dissociating the terms, in an effort to theorize our collectivity; therefore, Caruth uses the story of Jewish creation to complicate our passive understanding of identification. She broadcasts that we are implicated with each other; we have no choice but to live with a perpetual other we cannot fully assimilate. She shows that when we fail to acknowledge the other we repress we are unable to dispossess ourselves of the other's influence. This other provides a context of non-identity on which our very identification depends.

Caruth argues that the story of Moses provides a singular offering to the Jewish people that embroiled them in a trauma. The trauma is becoming the Jewish people. Of sustaining the commandments and living as the chosen people of God. This election premise expounded in the Torah is repressed and returns. Over time, the unity of the Jewish people led to frictions with opposing formations that would not accept their status as elect. For Caruth, Israel is simply a response to Palestine insofar as Israel's formation as a united front always against its persecutors, that is, exists in order to show the enemy that it survives. The result of setting out to prove unity is competition for national sovereignty. The interconnection of history, then, is based on the inability to admit commonality. Sameness causes the trauma of failed unity. The common civilization that exists between Israel and Palestine is polarized because of a misrecognition of plurality. Phrased differently, recognizing the Other as formative and inextricably tied to the subject as a quality of being offers a vision of the future attuned to co-dependency.²

Recognizing the existence of one's relationship to the Other is not a utopic conceit; striving for undefined peace is utopia. Acknowledging one's place in the world with the other is a factor of existence that cannot be changed. Our inability to sustain a position of discontent is what prevents peace. Modern society attempts to achieve the impossible by being ignorant of what is possible. Peace has come to mean the perpetuation of trauma. Peace is a term that most commonly refers to an absence of aggression, violence or hostility, but which also represents a larger concept wherein there are healthy or newly-healed interpersonal relationships, safety in matters of social or

² The term co-dependent is used to evoke the idea of mutual reciprocity. In this sense, mutual refers to the way two sides can agree to recognize the value of the Other. Mutual recognition can be achieved not only by valuing the Other as similar, but sharing in the reciprocity of differences. For this reason, the idea of co-dependent suggests that mutuality is not an either or distinction, but a practical exchange of agreement based on similarity and difference.

economic welfare, the acknowledgment of equality and fairness in political relationships. In world matters, peacetime is a state of being absent of any war or conflict. Peace time is marked by reflection on the nature of peace and is also bound up with considerations of the causes for its absence or loss. Among these potential causes are: insecurity, social injustice, economic inequality, political and religious radicalism, and acute nationalism. What I am suggesting is precisely the opposite of utopia because peace is premised on understanding what is possible. We need to consider what accepting a level of suffering as a formation of distopia may offer. What if we must transcend trauma in order to achieve peace? Peace cannot be the goal. Coming to terms with the past as interconnected traumas allows the future relations of subject's to possess knowledge of its repressive content. This knowledge suggests that we need to sustain a vision of subjectivity that is attuned to being discontent. Civilization as we know it is marked by a restless longing for contentment. Embracing the impossibility of achieving contentment makes living as discontented people a reality rather than a fear. It means acknowledging our anxiety and not deluding ourselves. Caruth provides a theory of the Exodus story that epitomizes the interconnection of Arab and Jewish history that shares trauma that cannot be undone, but which substantively portrays identity as a process of discontentment. The significance of Caruth's revelation is that Jew is to Arab as subject is to Other. The added caveat is that this non-relation is premised on discontentment while contentment provides the means for the structure of dealing with this anxiety.

The problem is that the relationship between subject and Other is a non-relation. In other words, subject and other are antagonistically associated, producing not harmony but frustration. The additional significance of this problem is that the divide between subject and Other is intimately bound together despite its non-relation, destined to produce dissatisfaction. The peace processes often discussed in Israel/Palestine scholarship fail because peace is not a solution to a problem of non-relation: the solution to non-relation is acknowledging discontents rather than striving for the impossible. Our tendency to work toward peace without recognizing our discontents as Freud defined it suggests the very obstacle to peace: delusion. The possibility of peace produces a traumatic encounter itself because contentment, which defines peace, runs counter to the lived condition of civilization as unsatisfied. As Freud argues, we are discontented not

because we want to be, but precisely because we don't want to be. We are perforce a civilization attempting to achieve the impossible utopia of freeing ourselves from our position and failing. The subject cannot achieve peace with the Other. That would be to change a structure of non-relation to one of relation. This would also be to legitimize a fantasy rather than recognizing discontents. The non-relation of the subject and Other is not peaceful but traumatic. When peace becomes traumatic, that is, when harmony and contentment are seen as realizable the tendency is to ignore aspects of the social order that cannot be changed but need to be lived with. The possibility of achieving peace becomes intimately bound to acknowledging shared traumas. The relationship with the Other cannot be rectified once and for all. Rather, the conflict between subject and Other must be accepted as a condition of civilization, morphing in each instance that passes.

Discontent, dissatisfaction and dispossession are all words used by Edward Said when he analyzes Israel/Palestine. He offers insightful criticism about the post-Oslo years in his book entitled *The End of the Peace Process* where he addresses the importance of a new sense of modernity rather than an emphasis on peace. He describes a refreshed awareness of our subjective composition as essential to the future development of Israel/Palestine understanding. He defines this new position by an acceptance of disunity and disharmony that can contribute to the amelioration of both. According to Said and Freud, the human condition will suffer endlessly by what gets in the way of its pleasure. The preoccupation with achieving peace is directly at odds with Said's observation. Peace itself is utopia; however, Said argues for a courageous peace, a formation of recognition that enables the subject to channel its anxiety by understanding its composition. He provides a mission for getting beyond the horrors of the past by offering a vision into a new relationship with the whole world that has the courage to face its fear. The fear that he refers to is the existence of an unchanging discontentment. The fundamental fear that Said alludes to in his analysis of Oslo is a fear of sameness that generates the production of nationalism. The creation of the nation state is a response to the fear that without the nation everyone is equal. By creating competition and rivalry between expressions of the nation, individual identities are created to assert authority. Each nation wants to be the best nation in comparison to all others. Nationalism is always already a pronouncement of difference attempting to overcompensate for shared

community. Talking about Prime Minister Netanyahu, Said claims "he lives in an Alice in Wonderland construction of his own making, sounding off like the March Hare or the Queen of Hearts with scarcely a concern for facts, possibilities, and the existence of other interests in the world besides his" (*The End*, 256). He concludes that examples of delusion suggest the absurdity of thinking that matters can be concluded happily and to everyone's satisfaction.

In addition to his own writing, Said collaborates with other thinkers like Jacqueline Rose. Both show that psychoanalysis can help us understand the symptom of statehood where there is something inside the very process upholding the state as a reality which threatens and exceeds it. The excess of statehood is the morphing dissatisfaction of subjectivity. The state attempts to give subjectivity a national identity, but it cannot subsume all the needs of its inhabitants. Subjectivity is always in excess of what comes to organize it. As a result of this excessive surplus of human desire, Rose advances the idea that the state is a showpiece for latent subjective content that lies beneath. That is, the symptom of statehood is the unconscious desires of the subject that are repressed by the imposition of regulation and which return rather than dissipate. Additionally, the other who forms statehood in contrast and in opposition to the subject perpetuates a cycle of antagonistic trends by its existence as non-relation. Rose argues that the symptom of statehood is the Other, just as the symptom of the subject is always also the Other. The drive of the symptom of statehood is to repress the truth: all formations of statehood point back toward a shared origin.

This is precisely why the creation of unity indicates a traumatic kernel. Unity that sets itself up against the Other must be traumatic because it hides origin in an attempt to control history. No matter how well the subject believes in its fantasy, the shared origin of human beings threatens to break through the protective mechanism making everyone the same despite the construction of difference. Rather than acknowledging that all history is part of a grand narrative, nationalism creates the illusion of perceived differences that help protect people from the anxiety of non-belonging. In this sense, Rose offers a vision of the subject that is bound to the other by being bound to trauma. The futility of trying to escape the relation is what makes her theory important for furthering our understanding of conflict. She lays bare that the proposed two-state

solution confirms that the demarcation of difference is set up against original unity and is destined to fail.

Rose questions the trauma of unity throughout her work and interprets Freud in the same manner as Caruth. Rose argues that on the matter of history, the human subject is bound to the other by a trauma of separation. She and Said investigate the implications of Freud's fragmented relationship to his own Jewishness and suggest that Freud himself, as a Jewish man conflicted about his identity as a social subject, can provide a model for identity in the modern world. Freud's ability to observe the everyday battles the subject wages with other subjects probes beneath civilization's surface and makes his contribution to the Israel/Palestine conflict unprecedented. Rose argues, "Freud—in his vision of a people brought into being by a stranger—offers an advance challenge to what is most intransigent in present-day Israel's relationship both to the Palestinians and to itself" (Rose, 66). Her argument is that Said interprets Freud in order to expose how Israeli legislation *countervenes*, *represses*, and even *cancel*s Freud's carefully maintained opening out of Jewish identity towards its non-Jewish background. Israel thereby represses Moses by repressing the trauma of having been formed out of Arab nationality.

Freud offers deliberate reminders in *Moses and Monotheism* that Judaism's founder, its historical heir, was a non-Jew, and that Judaism begins in the realm of otherness, of Egyptian, non-Jewish monotheism. However, the narrative traditions that have been created and set up against Palestinian history seek to devalue this mutual-origin in favour of assuming a unity out of nothing: Jewishness as original. In fact, Jewish identity ignores that Moses was able to transcend his original identity as Egyptian in order to embrace freedom for a suffering people. He united the Hebrews against their oppressor in an act of sovereignty, as the embodiment of change, evoking the commandment that God would later create: love thy neighbour. Said as well as Slavoj Žižek, Eric Santner and Kenneth Reinhard, the contributors of the book *The Neighbor*, argue that it is precisely this example of transcendence that is required but is missing in modernity.

Based on this reading of Exodus, the creation of nationalism has always led to a foreclosure of bi-cultural, co-determinous identity. Since the Exodus, Jews have told the story of Moses at Passover in order to thank God for leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

The story immediately evokes the threatening representation of the Arab who enslaves the Hebrews against their will. In addition, the term for the Hebrews, that is, Israelites suggests a unity that was not yet in effect. The story sets out to pejoratively ruin the interconnection between Jew and Arab. Additionally, the angel of death, who passes over the Jewish houses at Passover saves all the Jewish sons from death because of a symbol of difference marked on their door: the sacrifice of the lamb's blood. The symbolism of difference is celebrated in the Passover story in order to foreclose on the relationship between Arab and Jew. Passover represents an example in Jewish history that is premised upon being different from Arabs even though an Arab became their leader. The significance of the last moment of the seder, when 'next year in Jerusalem' is evoked, is that God will grant the Israelites a return to Israel in the future. Next year in Jerusalem is a postponed event for a reason. God will not give the Jews their home; it is desired but not achieved. Jews are supposed to live a life of discontent guided by the possibility of transcending discontent at a deferred date. Moreover, when God grants Israel to the Jewish people he does not exempt them from living with the Other. The problem of one's neighbour is always in need of negotiation.

In essence, the very point of the Passover seder is to narrate what is at stake when we forget to see through the commandments. Of the ten commandments, five involve the subject's relationship to the big Other (God), while the other five allude to the subject's responsibility to his fellow neighbour. As a result of the onus of responsibility described in the story of Exodus, we must read the conflict between Israel and Palestine as the Passover story is told, as-yet-unlived, still shaping history, still transforming a limited vision of unity that privileges division. Even though Israel exists today as the homeland for the Jews, the significance of 'next year in Jerusalem' has not been achieved. The phrase implies that next year the commandments will be exemplified in such a way that one's responsibility to God as well as one's neighbour is embraced and sustained. Such a present tense depiction of the conflict that acknowledges what *The Neighbor* defines as simultaneity in the here and now is an aspect of Jewish identity that has been repressed from the Passover seder. The result is that the return of the repressed destines the failure to love thy neighbour. In the words of Jason Sherman, Canadian playwright and author of *Reading Hebron*,

Let's take a good hard look at ourselves for once, and drop the rhetoric and the bullshit and for once, for once leave the Holocaust out of it and say, 'Look, a great injustice has been done, we took another people's land, we have become the oppressor, we have murdered, we have tortured, we have lied, and it is time to DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.' (*Reading Hebron* 30)

Dominick LaCapra takes up the here and now by arguing that recognizing absence rather than loss is productive for understanding conflict. In his work "Reflections on Trauma, Absence, and Loss" he argues that unity is not original (*Whose Freud?*, 178). LaCapra focuses the problem of shared trauma conceived by Freud and Caruth on the distinction between having and losing compared to recognizing pure absence. From his standpoint, unity must be produced and is therefore an absence and not a loss. From his perspective there is no original unity to identification; however, Israel and Palestine engage in a battle of creating a modern nation state that attempts to assert itself as the originator. Nationalism is set up against absence in order to validate presence. The problem that exists between Israel and Palestine is that the subject as well as its state will always be lacking in unity. Just as the subject exists in a state of fragmentation as denoted in Lacan's mirror stage, the state also cannot be whole.

Lacan argues that before the mirror stage, the infant is thought to be an extension of its mother. He argues that the symbolic matrix in which the "I" is precipitated is initially a primordial form and has yet to be objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other (*Écrits*, 76). LaCapra demonstrates that pretending to be the exception to the rule, to be whole rather than part, makes the subject blame its lack of unity on the other when its lack is its own responsibility. LaCapra argues,

in converting absence into loss, one assumes that there was (or at least could be) some original unity, wholeness, security, or identity that others have ruined, polluted, or contaminated and thus made 'us' lose. To regain it, therefore, one must somehow get rid of or eliminate those others—or perhaps that sinful other in oneself. (LaCapra 183)

LaCapra points to a resistance to accepting absence as nothingness, and denotes the opposite tendency in human behaviour: to attribute meaning where there is none. From

his position, the subject must feel anxious as a result of its lack of unity, which Lacan accentuates in the mirror stage as being an absence of totality:

This development is experienced as a temporal dialectic that decisively projects the individual's formation into history: the mirror stage is a drama whose internal pressure pushes precipitously from insufficiency to anticipation—and, for the subject caught up in the lure of spatial identification, turns out fantasies that proceed from a fragmented image of the body what I will call an 'orthopedic' form of its totality—and finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his entire mental development with its rigid structure. (*Écrits* 78)

There is no particular object or specific thing to fear; where there is fear there is only absence. The fear itself is produced by a lack of unity and is reiterated by a shared collectivity that announces the subject's universality. Rather, it's part of the human condition. As LaCapra maintains, the tendency is to blame the other for stealing totality from the subject. LaCapra along with Lacan demonstrates that anxiety—the elusive experience or affect related to absence—is a fear that has no thing (nothing) as its object. Absence in this sense is inherently ambivalent—both anxiety producing and empowering, neither good nor bad.

In the tradition of Freudian psychoanalysis, *Moses and Monotheism*, as well as the works discussed above, do not offer consolation for a lack of peace in the social order but, instead, announce a fissure or split at the heart of human collectivity. Freud offers in the political domain what he declared so often to his patients: “learn to live without consoling fictions, for in the death of such numbing and dangerous fantasies lies your only hope” (Rose, 28). Freeing one's self from the illusion of completeness allows the subject an opportunity for contentment via discontentment. It's the striving after an always deferred totality that frustrates the subject. Courageous living in recognition of our duty toward our neighbour is what brings the work of Freud, Caruth, Rose, Said and LaCapra together. From their collective perspectives, identities are not whole or divided but broken. We share with the other and he or she must live with—not be blamed for—our insufficiencies.

Some questions stem from the literature already devoted to the history of conflict in Israel and Palestine. What if Jewish identity is seen as broken and shared in this

brokenness, rather than divided by victory and defeat? What if being Jewish, be she orthodox or reform, conservative or liberal, means in the depths of her being that there is something in the spirit of her people—though we do not know what it is—which prevents us from following the rest of the world along the beaten path? What if this exceptional unity is being channeled to cause harm to a nation? And, more importantly, what if we can channel election differently? In other words, who will give something in order to bring about a different situation? At present, giving is ignored while people pick and chose elements of history. Perhaps the exceptional quality of Jewish resistance typified by Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* offers a way back toward the miracle of Exodus. The acceptance of shared trauma at the core of the human condition must be reconceived by allowing the fantasy of totality to be worked through.

CHAPTER TWO: Unconscious Disavowal

A Three Part Methodology –

My aim in this section is to bridge the divide between Israeli/Palestine scholarship typified by Falk and Salinas with trauma/history theory exemplified by Caruth and LaCapra. Drawing on the work of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan, I will explore how the unconscious can inform our understanding of such terms as desire, the uncanny, and anxiety. Scholars such as Slavoj Žižek, Eric Santner and Kenneth Reinhard expose a vulnerability of subjective uncertainty in *The Neighbor* that helps explain why the subject is at odds with the Other. The edict to love thy neighbour adds to the confrontation of fear and paranoia at the heart of one's relationship to God and to fellow man. The neighbour relationship helps reveal why there is a lack of humanity at the base of the Israel/Palestine conflict as a defensive strategy against love.

Additionally, the enduring conflict between Israel and Palestine continues to progress based on a struggle for nationalism predicated on land ownership and identity. Not long ago Jews and Arabs lived together in Palestine. They were neighbours existing on the same land, living in peace, bi-nationally. Now they are enemies attempting to 'live in the same house,' as it were, competing for national pride. Obsessed with nation over relation, thinking through nationalism as Benedict Anderson does in *Imagined Communities*, provides evidence of a conflict of cultural systems in Israel which forms national identifications in Palestine. From Teresa Brennan's perspective elaborated in *History After Lacan*, the ego's excesses contribute to a social psychosis. What she implies by this term is that the ego does not want to accept a shared origin with the Other. The ego allows the subject to be protected from admitting what it fears. When Freud argues that the subject is discontent, he is referring to what Brennan describes as not recognizing her very own reason for being that is formed by the disorder of the world (Brennan, 31). Delusion is what makes the truth of discontent hidden from the subject. Delusional discourse is a mark of the times and protects the subject from what aggravates its anxiety. In this sense, delusions protect the subject from its fears by providing it with fantasy, while also contributing to its problems by blocking reality. The ego reduces what exists in its surroundings to what there is to itself. Rather than taking note of the Other

and formulating it into the relation, as Lacan defines the neurotic fantasy, the ego in social psychosis forecloses on the Other, eliminating the distance between one's own experience and the other, achieving a perverted fantasy where the subject engages with its desire without taking the Other into account. Phrased differently, Lacan offers two different structures of fantasy. The neurotic fantasy is represented by a split subject who relates to her desire through the Other: $S \diamond a$.³ The perverse structure is marked by one difference. The subject does not relate to her desire through the Other: $a \diamond S$. The significance of perverse fantasy will be explored in more detail in what follows.

In the interest of exploring how culture influences conflict and vice versa, the film by Udi Aloni entitled *Local Angel* (2003) analyzes the difference between foreclosing on the Other and engaging with the Other that is implicit to Lacan's theorization of fantasy. In his film, the elements of the conflict that are being ignored are reinvented in order to be delineated and to show a perspective that reunites Israelis with Palestinians. The idea put forth in the film is a subject position that not only opens onto the desire of the other, but asks the other in plain terms, "What can I do for you to forgive me?" Aloni evokes the conflict through the lens of Walter Benjamin's angel of history by representing history as a virus. Walter Benjamin writes,

A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing in from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his

³ The symbols here represent a subject who is represented by the grapheme S. The split in the S represents that this subject is conditioned by a rupture of totality that is brought forth by the object cause of its desire. The desire upon which the subject's split is produced, is represented by the grapheme of a lozenge (\diamond) that signifies desire as a force. The a represents the object cause of the subject's desire that issues from the Other, who is represented as A. The small object a is directly connected to the Other. Therefore, as a symbolic equation, the graphemes are read in the following way: the split subject desires a.

back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress. (*Illuminations* 34)

Benjamin cuts at the heart of the conflict in Israel/Palestine and is evoked by Aloni to suggest that progress is an illusion. The film captures the intersection of subjectivity and nationalism. He offers an individual experience of an Israeli who is perplexed by the neighbour dilemma. *Local Angel* is deconstruction that is meant to offer renewal. That is, Aloni's film is an example of transformative thinking in the present tense, evoking the here and now position analyzed in *The Neighbor*. Aloni powerfully captures a personal and political experience of living with one's 'enemy'. By combining poetry, music and images that encapsulate both the beauty and horror of the human condition, Aloni brings together disparate voices and situates a sentimental perspective of the conflict that is all too often ignored in Israel/Palestine scholarship. He provides a lived experience of conflict. The result is a subject position open to dialogue and forgiveness implicit to transformative thinking. The significance of the film is the simplicity of its message. *Local Angel* will be discussed last and will serve as a representation of the will to confront the psychoanalytic aspects of conflict that go beyond social psychosis by reinventing the limits of what is possible.

Situating Desire and the Unconscious -

What if the historic past does not exist in the present except as an act of consciousness?⁴ And what if the past appears in the formation of a distorted memory that allows mind and history to settle into congealed time preventing the opportunity to see what is presently at stake? These and other questions like them are raised poignantly in Jacqueline Rose's book (1996) *States of Fantasy* in which she moves toward confronting the most urgent questions of the social suffering that exists in Israel/Palestine. She lays bare the relationship between being and its nation, exposing a reality behind territory that undercuts the notion of ownership. As she contends, "Territory can be object and source of its own peculiar form of passion" (*States*, 23). She argues that between Israel and

⁴ Yeshayahu Leibowitz, 'Right, Law and Reality' (1976), in *Judaism, Human Values and the Jewish State*, ed. By Eliezer Goldman and Yoram Navon (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1992), 231.

Palestine there is an over-valuation of the object of desire; the object of desire is the claim over the land of Israel. From her perspective,

what we are witnessing, what is being inflated in this historically over-determined instance, is an all-too-familiar process, but one which we barely notice, and this is the way we use our objects in order to legitimate our desires: rather than *desire because we value, we value in order to sanction*, i.e. confer value on, desire. (Rose 26)

The relation between object and instinct which Freud denotes is crucial to understanding Rose's argument. According to Freud, instinct is satisfied by object, not because it knows what it wants, but rather the instinct is indifferent to its object, intent on satisfying itself even if by illusion. "In the normal picture the object—'it is you I desire'—spares us embarrassment; it gives the rationale to a search which is blind, furious in its own self-propelling" (Rose, 26). Rose situates desire as an endless cycle of frustration that cannot be resolved. Desire is not achievable; it is the impossible *par excellence* simply because if it were possible desire would be ruined. Its function serves the subject by being impossible. The possibility of subjectivity is premised on the impossibility of desire. We desire precisely because we never get what we want. By desiring the same object, the same land, no resolution can be achieved. Desire is suspended on account of discontents; unhappiness motivates the subject to desire. Only violent and aggressive outbursts of frustration are produced as a response to the failure to share the same object. Her perspective serves to address a common concern of scholars, the way the past endures in the present, but, more important, she shows how the present is informed by the temporal function of desire in the conflict.

Rose argues that uncertainty characterizes desire because desire functions by what it does not satisfy; by making us think we know what we want, desire eludes our understanding. The state of Israel as a homeland for the Jews is not a fact that was brought about by a messiah who delivered Israel to the Jews. God did not grant Israel to the Jews. This idea is narrated as a possibility in the Torah. At present, Israel is created and sustained by human beings. What Rose explains is that the problems facing Israel's desire are not isolated or expelled. Rather, the issue here is the ramifications of that uncertainty to the being of Israel itself. In other words, the problem of legitimacy that the

creation of the Israeli state was supposed to resolve produces another problem—messianism appears as a symptom, “a way of railing against the constant risk of failed embodiment inherent to the Israeli nation-state” (*States*, 29). However, the land of Israel is not singular or redeemed for all time, because the existence of the Palestinian people undercuts the notion of Israel’s singularity. The acknowledgment of Israel’s uncertainty about its “ontological” status demonstrates that you cannot simply make a virtue of its opposite (certainty) and expect in a world where the trauma of national identification—lack of a nation, yearning to be a nation in the eyes of others—will somehow be corrected by appropriation of land.

In other words, Rose exposes that Israelis doubt their nation state’s symbolic consistency and overcompensate for their doubt with outbursts of love for the significance of their nation. Such outbursts of pride for Israel engender the most hostile and ruthless psychological and political states by inaugurating a campaign of legitimacy. Israel and Palestine represent two contrary equations, which cannot be rectified because of incompatible objects: two incompatible goals that cannot be achieved without renunciations of the other. What brings Israel and Palestine together and acknowledges commonality of experience is often barely acknowledged or spoken in plain terms: There is a trauma of desire being waged as warfare against the other because of incompatible objects of desire.⁵

The problem is not therefore how to get the two sides of the conflict to relate to the trauma of the other, to open different lines of communication, to commit to new forms of diplomacy, or to recognize mutually created and shared narratives. All of those efforts ignore the implication of having the same, enduring conflict over desire. Rather, one must explore the most menacing obstacle: the spaces the two peoples have already taken up inside each other’s heads, operating against each other by aggravating the intractable unconscious determinants involved (*States*, 33). In other words, Israelis need not relate to the desire of the Palestinians, but must understand their mutual history.

⁵ Desire is being used in the Lacanian sense, as the essence of subjectivity. When Lacan talks about desire, it is not any kind of desire he is referring to, but always unconscious desire. This is not because Lacan sees conscious desire as unimportant, but simply because it is unconscious desire that forms the central concern of psychoanalysis. Stemming from Freud, the term implies a constant wish that is not disclosed to the subject but which is directed at the Other. The object which is being referenced is the object cause of desire: *objet petit a*.

It is as though they can see how each influence each other's unconscious actions, but neither can see that they are being attacked in the same manner as they defend themselves. That is to say, they each think that by attacking the other's desire, they will be able to prevent the other from getting what it wants. As a result of being too aware of the motivations that underlie the other's desire, they fail to acknowledge that they are fantasizing about their enemies' desire more than they are protecting their own. By being on the defensive they miss the opportunity of offense. As an example, in erecting the West Bank barrier in 2002 which divides the Palestinian-Arabs and from the Israeli-Jews, Israel responded to the threat of terrorism by imposing a border that reinforces what the Palestinians do not want: less freedom to operate in Israel's territory.

However, by taking away the freedom of Palestinians, they not only influence restrictions on their own freedom (many Jews live in the Judea and Samaria Hills and must pass through the checkpoints), they also create a formal border that pre-exists the Palestinian state that they seek to prevent. In other words, the border facilitates a vision of where a future border could exist in preparation of a two-state system, which will serve to demarcate Israel from Palestine based on a division of land. The necessity of having a checkpoint to prevent terrorists from coming into the land of Israel is facilitated—in fact, there has not been a suicide bomber in Israel since the wall was erected. However, what is achieved by predicting the object of the enemies' desire is that you inevitably constitute your own. That is to say, when Israel decided to predict that Palestinians would continue to kill civilians by suicide bombing, it responded to one problem by creating a new one. What this psychoanalytic reading of the barrier wall reveals is that Israelis would prefer to live in a security prison than in a shared Israeli/Palestinian nation. In other words, rather than conceiving of the Palestinians as equal, the Israelis undertake actions that strip the humanity from them. Their efforts are an attempt to police the land allowing freedom to be changed from a right to an Israeli mandate.

Introducing the Neighbour Injunction -

Søren Kierkegaard develops a claim that the ideal neighbour we wish to love is not a living being, but a person stripped of what makes him most human, life itself. According to this position, "the only good neighbour is a dead neighbour" (*The*

Neighbor, 3). His reasoning centers on our inability to stop distinguishing differences: "In contrast to poets and lovers, whose object of love is distinguished by its particular outstanding qualities, 'to love one's neighbour means equality': 'Forsake all distinctions so that you can love your neighbour'" (*Works of Love*, 75). The logic of loving your neighbour depends upon the neighbour being something it is not—dead—while the onus of responsibility must be repositioned as depending upon self realization: the neighbour is a question for the ego to manage.

The neighbour question cannot be ethically answered until death brings about the disappearance of the distinction which separates you from your neighbour. Loving your neighbour is a question that only disavowal and death answer for the subject: I cannot love you unless you are dead. In this manner of thinking about one's relationship to another, there is a sharp distinction between preference and distinction. Preference is given to the self over the other, while distinction illuminates the function of preference in perpetuating narcissism over collective universality. Phrased differently, it is the difference between one's self and neighbour that stifles the injunction to love thy neighbour. Loving one's self is mutually exclusive to loving one's neighbour.

Relating to one's neighbour conjures up the question of enjoyment. If the best neighbour is the dead neighbour, it is because in death the subject loses its ability to inflict its enjoyment on the other, thereby possessing the desire that was its neighbour's. In death, desire is effaced. The logic of the dead neighbour is premised on ridding the subject of what frustrates its position intersubjectively: "A dead body does not enjoy, so the disturbing threat of the partner's excessive enjoyment is also eliminated" (*The Neighbor*, 3). By killing off our neighbour, we eradicate the burden of living-with our neighbour and celebrate our victory of individuality. By eliminating the other, we assert authority over ourselves as master, privileging our desire over the risk of being harmed by another formation of desire that runs counter to our own. By asserting ourselves as master, we dispossess ourselves of the slave who we refuse to acknowledge as self-same. While in turn, the status of the master is devalued because without a slave there is no possibility of master, just as there is no possibility of subject without other. The dialectic depends on two positions; the killing of the neighbour solidifies individuality but betrays the failure of subjectivity. The interesting effect of the dead neighbour is that to be master

one must subjugate a slave who acts to legitimate the master's desire. Through the dispossession of the slave, the master thereby also dispossesses itself of its object of desire unknowingly. The killing or disavowal of the neighbour is always a failure to achieve desire because of an interrelation that cannot be dispossessed. By willing the neighbour dead, the disavowal is replaced with a false sense of control.

Kenneth Reinhard, Eric L. Santner, and Slavoj Žižek have thought through the encounter with the neighbour in three essays that point to an apex of ethical life in their affirmation of a new political theology. According to their work, the encounter with the neighbour is essential to understanding conflict:

[the neighbour] points to a beyond of the pleasure principle that still guides the classical ethics of happiness. Judaism opens up a tradition in which an alien traumatic kernel forever persists in my neighbour; the neighbour remains an impenetrable, enigmatic presence that, far from serving my project of self-disciplining moderation and prudence, hystericizes me. (*The Neighbor* 4)

The reason that the neighbour has become a problem for the subject is first and foremost a conflict over difference that manifests because of a fantasy. The neighbour hystericizes the subject's discourse because its very existence permits an excess of fear that infiltrates the subject's judgment about its situation of safety. The fantasy of the neighbour as evil and capable of preventing the subject's desire stems not from real events in the present, nor from past encounters, but rather issues forth based on constructed myths of one's past that cannot be assimilated into the ego. The other is always threatening for the subject because of its difference from the subject. The fear is then transformed into a structure of fantasy that is set up by the ego to cope with the other.

From a literary standpoint, Jewish literature denotes a preoccupation with the ethics of neighbour love; from the Talmud to Midrash, Maimonides to Nachmanides, and from Rosenzweig to Levinas, each considers the central problem of one's responsibility to other subjects who inhabit the same land. Responsibility is a subjective problem which religion attempts to mediate with prescriptive measures. The injunction is not to treat your neighbour fairly or in ethical terms, leaving the meaning of the commandment to love thy neighbour on subjective grounds. Rather, the commandment is left ambiguous: to love thy neighbour as yourself is an injunction that assumes in its obligation to the

neighbour, a self-love on which neighbour love depends. In other words, loving your neighbour is objective rather than subjective. However, on account of its ambiguity as a subjective problem to negotiate, its objectivity is thrown into flux. In Judaism as in Christianity, the commandment in Leviticus 19:18 to 'love your neighbour as yourself' is often invoked by religious figures and even by secular groups and yet the injunction can hardly be self-evident. Has God given us an injunction that is enigmatic for a reason?

For those skeptical of their responsibility to love thy neighbour, "the commandment to love the neighbour has seemed far from rational and has, in fact, appeared deeply enigmatic—indeed, as an enigma that calls us to rethink the very nature of subjectivity, responsibility, and community" (*The Neighbor*, 5). We might even say that the imperative is premised on impossibility for a good reason. That is, we cannot definitely exemplify neighbour love and yet it is our failure to see through this commandment that offers the greatest opportunity for human relations. It provides a challenge to our instinctual forces and demands constant revision. Not only that, it assumes that the subject can handle being discontent. If we were not told to love our neighbour perhaps we would not feel obligated. However, as it stands, our superego demands that we enjoy with our neighbour, in conjunction with the people who live with us, and it is that obligation to co-exist and co-enjoy that chafes.⁶ If loving one's neighbour is impossible, than what is the possibility that is raised by this failure?

Perhaps the astonishing simplicity of loving one's neighbour alludes to the golden rule for which we have freed ourselves from responsibility. If the creation of the colloquial phrase, 'treat others as you would like to be treated', is, in fact, a creation of our collective realization that such an act is the exception rather than the rule, we must stage an intervention. Repeating this turn of phrase without acknowledging our failure to see it through simply testifies to our tendency to elevate the impossible and free ourselves from self-criticism. However, the conflict in Israel/Palestine testifies to the need for self-awareness motivated by self-reflection. Perhaps the impossible can be possible if we

⁶ In 1962, Lacan argues that the super ego is none other than the Kantian categorical imperative. The specific imperative involved is the command 'Enjoy!'; the superego is the Other insofar as the Other commands the subject to enjoy. The superego is thus the expression of the imperative to enjoy, which is not the subject's own will but the will of the Other. According to Lacan, the superego is a ferocious figure, which imposes a senseless, destructive, purely oppressive, almost always anti-legal morality on the neurotic subject. The superego is related to the voice, and thus to the invoking drive and to sadomasochism. (Evans, 201)

reposition our responsibility unto our neighbour not as an injunction, but as an opportunity to understand the human condition better. We do not have to love our neighbour, but what is at stake if we do not? There is a human tendency to resist loving the neighbour, a resistance based on fear. If we replace the injunction to love thy neighbour ordained by God with the opposite commandment, to hate, we have actually accomplished something productive. We have disclosed that love and hate are intimately bound together.

As Lacan argues, love and hate are closely tied together and point back to a non-relation that is mimicked in the subject/other dyad. Love is what brings human beings face to face with themselves. Love in this sense is the appearance of non-relation because it brings one being together with another. But as we have already shown, two people committed to a relation are never able to become one, as the love cliché implies. Rather, knowledge of the human being is possible by comparing the non-relation of love with hate, and realizing there is a failure at the core of non-relation. Žižek notes in *Lacan: The Silent Partners* that “hate is, along with love and ignorance, the very passion of the truth, to the extent that it proceeds as non-relation imagined as relation” (*Lacan*, 10). According to Lacan, the truth of the human condition, if we can call knowledge truth, depends upon a discord or a non-relation for it demonstrates failure which runs the join between all forms of human desire. Renata Salecl reinforces the discord between subject and other in her book *(Per)versions of Love and Hate*. She argues that

in hate speech, one encounters the same logic that is found in all forms of violence, which is always aimed at ruining the fantasy scenario that sustains the identity of the person being harmed or even tortured. The target of violence is the unsymbolizable kernel in the other: the object a—the object cause of desire. It is around this object that the subject forms its fantasy, its scenario of provisional wholeness. In hate speech, we are dealing with the attacker’s demand that the victim question this perception of wholeness, his or her sense of identity.
(*Perversions* 120)

Žižek and Salecl both provide examples of the join between love and hate by offering support in subject and other scenarios, that is, conditions of intersubjective behaviour. The reason is that actions are never individual. Relation is constantly at work between

subject and another subject such that the desire of the other is either taken into considerations or disavowed. Either the neurotic structure is at play or the perverse structure replaces it. Moreover, acts of violence are not simply acts of hatred, but are intimately bound to acts of self-love. The significance of this non-relation that is nonetheless a constant is essential to viewing the human condition as a non-relation itself. Intersubjectivity is always a failure of connection. However, it need not be a foreclosure.

The Neighbour Relation -

In the first essay of *The Neighbor*, Kenneth Reinhard argues that Freud and Lacan provide the resources for rethinking political ontology. Reinhard suggests that neurosis and psychosis represent two asymmetrical modes of the failure to love the neighbour: "Whereas the neurotic becomes an autonomous subject of desire in turning away from the impossibility of the command to love the neighbour, the psychotic fails to achieve subjectivity while succeeding in experiencing the other as radically other, loving the neighbour not wisely, but too well" (*The Neighbor*, 7).

A common delusion that is suspended on account of the psychotic structure is the devaluation of the subjective responsibility toward the neighbour. That is, Israelis will often say that they do not hate the Arabs, but that the Arabs hate them. The Israeli perpetuates the illusion that Jewish people are hated, that the opportunity to love was prevented by the neighbour, by the Arab, in order to sustain the fantasy of itself as obeying the commandment to love the neighbour. In other words, the Arab is guilty for hating rather than loving, while the psychotic structure of the Israeli fantasy permits the myth of attempting to love to be suspended in the imaginary.

The context of the political is reducible to the distinction between friend and enemy, a position Reinhard borrows from Carl Schmitt. According to Schmitt,

The political enemy need not be morally evil or aesthetically ugly; he need not appear as an economic competitor, and it may even be advantageous to engage with him in business transactions. But he is, nevertheless, the other, the stranger; and it is sufficient for his nature that he is, in a specially intense way, existentially something different and alien, so that in the extreme case conflicts with him are possible...The friend, enemy and combat concepts receive their real meaning

precisely because they refer to the real possibility of physical killing. War follows from enmity. War is the existential negation of the enemy. (Schmitt, 27-33)

The set operates as either friend or enemy, but never both or neither. According to Schmitt, if the distinction between friend and enemy is effaced, the political will also be dismantled. However, the structural function of Us versus Them that Schmitt proposes in *The Concept of the Political* (1932) is complicated by the status of the exception, a term that blurs the binary distinction between friend and foe and highlights the complexity of the political order. The “Us versus Them” mentality exhibited by the hatred between Israel and Palestine is an example of the friend/enemy distinction in practice. Reinhard’s position is that the exception “implies that the border between the law and lawlessness is permeable and, by extension, that the relationship of interiority (friends) and exteriority (enemies) is unstable” (*The Neighbor*, 11). Reinhard goes against Schmitt’s assertion that the political depends on enemy status, supplying a less extreme account of the social sphere. Calling upon the example of the sovereign’s godlike representation—capable of acting outside the law—Reinhard evokes the friend/enemy exception as the sovereign.

The concept of the Sovereign enables Reinhard to position a fundamental theological question at the fore of a rethinking of politics that hearkens back to Schmitt. If the sovereign embodies a God-like representation, is it better to love or fear God? Our relationship to God serves to demystify if God is to be feared or loved. According to Judaism, in the giving of the law at Sinai, God is neither to be loved nor feared. Love is indistinguishable from fear. To love is to fear. Additionally, God is not a perfect entity but depends upon his subjects. God is not always a strong figure; he has moments of weakness. He needs our help just as we need his. Furthermore, in the Book of Isaiah an important theme is that YHWH is the God of the whole earth. Many gods of the time were believed to be local gods or national gods who could participate in warfare and be defeated by each other. The concern of these gods was the protection of their own particular nations. Isaiah is concerned with worship and ethical behaviour of all his people. Isaiah shows that loving God is a reciprocal relationship.

Therefore, the subject’s relationship to God is the exceptional neighbour relationship *par excellence*. The sovereign exception is brought to life when people can love each other as they love God. The fidelity to the injunction to love God is abundantly

clear in the Torah: “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut. 6:5). In Israel today, the sacred is not limited to the Temple Mount but the state has become a temple. However, at the dome of the rock, the holiest of places in Israel, a mosque has replaced the temple. The mosque provides an example of the bi-cultural importance of God’s subjects and draws our attention to the importance of loving one’s neighbour rather than turning away from God’s decree. We love God as a neighbour, as the one who gives life and who is capable of taking it away.

Turning back to Kierkegaard, we can say that the best neighbour is not a dead one, but instead a representation of God on earth. The problem changes from being a question of the other’s desire to a responsibility to follow God’s law—a shift in categorical terms, the difference being in the service of God. The subject dispossesses its desire in order to embrace the desire of God fully. Loving one’s neighbour is not an injunction to believe in God. Following God’s commandments is an opportunity to assert autonomy over one’s ethical behaviour. When God ordains that his love is a gift, he also materializes fear of reproaching God’s decree to love humankind, thus inextricably weaving love as commandment with the imperative to see it through. God tells humankind to love in order to demonstrate the difficulty in the seemingly simple.

Considering God as a neighbour prompts us to recognize our ethical obligation to those we live beside. Love for the neighbour is figured as a leap of faith. The very existence of the neighbour’s desire must not be foreclosed, but embraced as such. According to Lacan, the neurotic fantasy provides the better way to relate to the other. One must negotiate one’s self through the other as opposed to foreclosing on the other in favour of one’s desire directly. The perverse structure runs counter to collective understanding. The possibility is not easy to facilitate: the neighbour is not an agreeable subject which we can negotiate our servitude with little effort. We must constantly be aware of our responsibility toward this other. Loving God unleashes the collision between autonomy (self) and heteronomy (other) and provides the basis on which to reorganize the hierarchy of relations that exists between and among family, polis, and Ecclesia (*The Neighbor*, 12).

Reinhard insists our duty toward the neighbour is to transgress as the sovereign. The sovereign is a subject who acts with integrity and supremacy over other subjects, as

laid down in the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). According to Teresa Brennan, the reason why the sovereign is not being enacted is because of a social psychosis. She argues that “the ego has more in common with the unconscious characteristics of narcissism; it does not want to know about what Lacan terms ‘truth’. It is a ‘carapace’: a rigid construction harbouring the resistances to self-understanding, the defences against what the subject wants to conceal from itself” (Brennan, *History After Lacan*, 30). In other words, the global psychosis, that is, the failure to see how the ego is implemented with the other is an example of our lack of acknowledgement regarding self. We suffer a psychosis on account of our failure to engage with the Other because it is easier to surrender to delusions. What is significant here is that the ego is a delusional entity by its very operation as a defense against that which runs counter to its vision of narcissism. Brennan cited Lacan on the matter of ego delusion accenting that the ego operates on a lack of knowledge about itself, rather than excess.

The *moi*, the ego, of modern man, as I have indicated elsewhere has taken on its form in the dialectical impasse of the *belle âme* who does not recognize his very own *raison d'être* in the disorder that he denounces in the world. The *belle âme* refers to Hegel's ‘law of the heart and the frenzy of self-conceit’: for Lacan, this is a process whereby the one judges the other. This is a process of projection, which can lead to paranoia, where the ego fears that the other will do to it as it does to the other. (*History* 32)

What Brennan reveals through her analysis of the global psychosis is that we know our motivations too well and suspect that our enemies are like us, rather than different. We project our paranoia onto the other in an attempt to beat them at the pass. The idea of losing to our neighbour is the ultimate self-defeat. We want to win at all costs. Phrased differently, we are first and foremost prevented from neighbour love because of the embarrassment that such a relation engenders. In other words, we do not want to admit to ourselves that we are predictable and that those we wish to ignore share our desire. We are scared of losing to the neighbour because that loss reflects a weakness in our ego. As an example, even though Egypt and Syria were not successful in 1973 when they launched a joint surprise attack against Israel on Yom Kippur, the attack is considered by the Arab nations as a success. The reason it is celebrated even though neither got their

land back is a valuable example of how the goal of war is to shame the enemy. Moreover, the staging of a war on the holiest of days for the Jewish people, on a holiday that signifies a day of atonement, and the celebration of another year of life, was purposefully chosen to make a point. The Israelis refused to give back the land they conquered and they equally would not repent for their actions. By attacking Israelis on their day of atonement, the Arab nations attempted to force Israel to atone. By killing 3,000 Israelis, the Arab nations regained some of their national pride.

When Reinhard proposes a theory of the neighbour he is attempting to rethink the subject's relationship to its enemies. He argues that it is precisely in redemption that we find the possibility of a political theology, a possibility that reorganizes our relationship to the neighbour by mapping out the grey areas between the friend-enemy dyad. His proposition operates under the assumption that the binary of friend and enemy reduces the spectrum of relations the subject can have with its surrounding subjects. By addressing the psychotic tendency to foreclose on possibility, Reinhard attempts to reopen such a closure by simply acknowledging that we can be involved in change. In contrast to opening, the alternatives are the apathy or denial, which lead to suffering.

Examples of Neighbourly Disavowal -

Moises F. Salinas explores the psychology of the Israel and Palestine conflict in his book entitled *Planting Hatred, Sowing Pain*. Salinas provides evidence that the neighbour relationship is being ignored. Salinas interviews Palestinians and Israelis regarding the perception of the conflict as being so different between the two sides that they might as well be talking about two completely separate events. Salinas concludes that "Israelis and Palestinians have developed maladaptive societal beliefs, stereotypes, and prejudices, that, although psychologically helpful to cope with the stressful circumstances of the conflict, they also have the effect of perpetuating it" (Salinas, xxi). Ibrahim and his family were the victims of attacks that included the destruction of their home:

Interviewer: I understand that you were a victim of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and I really appreciate that you are willing to participate because I know how hard and painful it is to talk about it.

Ibrahim: Don't worry, I am used to the pain and the sorrow, and as they say, I almost lost all my feelings.

Interviewer: Can you explain how this painful incident affected you?

Ibrahim: Ahh...it affected me very much both psychologically and in my health. After the incident, I always felt like being strangled, without energy, helpless, and also anxious...sometimes all I can think about is revenge...What do you think is my feeling towards the State of Israel? Only hatred.

Interviewer: As we all know, this conflict has been going on for many years already. Why do you think we have not found a solution for it?

Ibrahim: ...every side wants everything...I don't think the conflict will end because there are many people that will not be satisfied with a solution...the situation will continue until one of the countries disappears.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to add?

Ibrahim: ...What we did, we did out of lack of choices...But at the end everybody wants a life of peace and to live with their families without fear and worries that we will not survive until tomorrow, or that you will lose a dear person every hour. We only live day-by-day and we have no dreams anymore, no expectations, just enough pain for everybody. (Salinas, 82-86)

This interview exemplifies the failure of the neighbour injunction to be sustained as a result of continued frustration. More importantly, Ibrahim betrays a perverse enjoyment

of his family's suffering. It seems that he laments for his family's losses, yet his mourning is marked by a sense of revenge. Ibrahim does not view Israelis as people similar to himself. He makes no mention of the shared suffering each nationality experiences because of war. Rather, he refers to the organization of Jewish people as the State of Israel and portrays his extremism by acknowledging his unrelenting hatred. Likewise, when he is thanked for granting the interview, he claims that he is beyond victim: "I am used to pain and the sorrow, and as they say, I almost lost all my feeling" (Salinas, 82). The interview demonstrates a form of pleasure in the pain of mourning. In the interview Ibrahim is able to reinforce his people's suffering; that is, he is aware of the impact statements like his will have on North American readers. It also reinforces that average people believe that the conflict will not end until one side is eradicated. Perhaps more importantly still, the idea of total victory for one side over the other is also a formation of perverse fantasy in its own right. The all or nothing distinction motivates further war as opposed to thinking through transformative possibilities toward peace. The death of the neighbour that Kierkegaard alluded to earlier is precisely the only means identified by Ibrahim as a possible solution, which, of course, is no solution at all. The narrative produced here testifies to the extremism of the friend/enemy distinction in the injunction toward neighbour love. When Ibrahim asserts that all he feels toward Israel is hatred, we see the tendency for subjects to constitute problems in binaric terms. Ibrahim defines hatred as obvious. That is, if the problem will endure until one side is exterminated, the obvious choice for Ibrahim would be for Israel to be ruined so that Palestine could prosper. Hating Israel makes this option more feasible. Foreclosing on the possibility of viewing Israelis as self-same prevents the ease in facilitating hatred. Additionally, the binary of winner and loser exemplifies that the winner shames the loser. Victory, in this sense, is bound to the ego, while defeat risks denouncing the ego. What Ibrahim also pronounces is his sadness and anger. Ibrahim confirms what Freud says about melancholia in terms of feeling like these. For Freud,

feelings of shame in front of other people...are lacking in the melancholic, or at least they are not prominent in him. One might emphasize the presence in him of an almost opposite trait of insistent communicativeness which finds satisfaction in self-exposure....The analogy with mourning led us to conclude that he had

suffered a loss in regard to an object; what he tells us points to a loss in regard to his ego. ("Mourning" 585)

This is precisely why scholars have focused on the inability to mourn that prevents interrelation between Israel and Palestine. Ibrahim testifies to the exact set of symptoms that are typified by the melancholic. He finds satisfaction in self-exposure when asked by the interviewer if there is anything further he would like to add. Ibrahim goes on at length justifying his people's actions and then opens up to the interviewer: "we have no dreams anymore, no expectations, just enough pain for everybody" (Salinas, 86). The link between the lost object and the ego is particularly important for analyzing the conflict. Ibrahim may have lost his house, but it's the shame of being defamed by Israel that cuts to the heart of his loss. His ego is bruised from being relegated to refugee status, making his ego suffer for not being able to prevent the trauma of defeat from breaking into the foundations of his fantasy. From this standpoint, the inability to mourn is a key psychological factor in the Arab-Israeli conflict not because it marks sadness and pain, but because mourning is replaced by melancholia which indicates a relentless interest to regain the loss sustained by the ego. According to Falk,

The two parties to our tragic conflict have not been able to resign themselves to their historical losses. Some Israeli Jews still wish to rebuild the Third Temple of Yahweh on the site of the mosque of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and restore the glories of the Kingdom of Solomon. Most Palestinian Arabs—and many non-Palestinian Arabs—have not made peace with their loss of Palestine, their status as refugees, the frustration of their national ambitions, and their military defeats by Israel. They seize upon the Yom Kippur War of October 1973 as a symbol of a great Arab victory and of the restoration of Arab honor. Although they publicly aspire to a Palestinian state within the occupied territories, they privately wish to recapture all of Palestine and to do away with the existence of Israel. (*Fratricide*135)

By not mourning their respective losses, both Israel and Palestine exist in a state of melancholia. By obsessing over the construction of a temple and by repeating the victimization of the Jews in the Holocaust, Israelis are protected against facing their responsibility to their neighbour in the present. By disavowing their role in the present,

they blame the Arab for their unhappiness. The object, which is being mourned by Palestine, is being mapped onto Israelis, causing Israelis to have the burden of Palestinian collective melancholia. Likewise, the object, which is being mourned by Israel, is being mapped onto Palestinians, causing Palestinians to have the burden of Israeli collective melancholia.

Furthermore, Julia Kristeva elaborates a distinction between thing and object in relation to melancholia in her book entitled *Black Sun*. She writes,

the depressed narcissist mourns not an Object but the Thing. Let me posit the 'Thing' as the real that does not lend itself to signification, the center of attraction and repulsion,...a dazzling metaphor that suggests an insistence without presence, a light without representation: the Thing is an imagined sun, bright and black at the same time. (*Black* 13)

Kristeva goes on to show that there is a preliminary attachment that transpires between the subject and its object of desire that is motivated by fear: "the depressed person has the impression of having been deprived of an unnameable, supreme good, of something unrepresentable" (*Black*, 13). In other words, the depressed person constructs a paranoid delusion around the object as if it was once better than it will ever be. The melancholic is trapped by an irreplaceable perception of a preobject that is whole. Its completeness serves the bonds of its desire. The Thing for the subject is unnamed. Its essence is unknown. Through primary identification, the subject repairs the loss of the Thing by learning to compensate for its absence and at the same time secures itself to another dimension: the imaginary. Kristeva argues that "those in despair are mystics—adhering to the preobject, not believing in Thou, but mute and steadfast devotees of their own inexpressible container" (*Black*, 14). The significance of Kristeva's assessment of the Thing demonstrates that melancholia brings about a prison of affect where affect itself is the Thing. That is, the experience of the enemy ushers in feelings of hatred. Kristeva defines the absence of the Thing as the reason why the Thing is also hated. The subject wants the Thing to present itself. According to Kristeva, "my necessary Thing is also and absolutely my enemy, my foil, the delightful focus of my hatred...before being an Other, the Thing is the recipient that contains my dejecta...it is a waste with which, in sadness, I merge" (*Black*, 15). Her analysis implies that Israel does not mourn an object but

experiences the loss of the Thing that is mapped onto the enemy. Likewise, Palestine does not mourn an object but experiences the loss of the Thing that Israel comes to represent.

Likewise, Ibrahim suggests that until one subject kills off its neighbour, there will be perpetual dissatisfaction not because the opportunity of neighbour love is foreclosed—it always remains—but because satisfaction is linked to desire and cannot be achieved without eradicating the threat the other substantiates. Satisfaction has a particular meaning in psychoanalysis that is best described by Todd McGowan in his book entitled *The End of Dissatisfaction?* According to McGowan, the problem with enjoyment is that in the imaginary, enjoyment must be subject to the either/or distinction described earlier by Reinhard as the friend enemy problem implicit to neighbour love. He argues that “from the perspective of the imaginary, every relationship is necessarily a violent relationship, a life and death struggle for enjoyment” (McGowan, 20). McGowan goes on to show that the imaginary is where we can truly understand the reason why neighbour love fails:

In the imaginary, there is no possibility for compromise or sharing because of the nature of imaginary enjoyment itself. Here, enjoyment has an either/or quality to it: either I am enjoying or you are—not both of us and not ‘first I’ll enjoy a little then you can.’ It is in such either/or terms that Lacan always describes life in the imaginary order. Here, without language, one cannot come to any agreement or compromise. On the level of the imaginary, in other words, there is no such thing as peaceful coexistence, no possibility for a pact governing the rationing of enjoyment. (*The End* 20)

From this perspective, it becomes clear that subjects lodged in the imaginary believe they are independent and fail to embrace their symbolic bond with other subjects. The dimension of the imaginary pronounces the hostility that the subject directs toward the Other—providing a barrier to the functioning of the neighbour relationship. In other words, the imaginary helps defend the subject from opening unto the possibility of neighbour love and can be seen as the foreclosure on which hate depends.

The significance of Ibrahim’s interview is that the substance of Brennan, Reinhard, Freud, Kristeva and McGowan come together to show that the neighbour

injunction does not simply fail but is a failure as a result of the psyche, it is willed to fail. If we pair the notion of global psychosis with the neighbour relation and the hostility of the imaginary as a loss of the Thing, we see that each is informing the other in a network of relations that can be understood. Civilization does not just behave. Society is constructed to behave on account of its instinctual foundations that psychoanalysis announces. Kristeva makes clear that hatred is bound not only to self-love as is the case of narcissistic identification, but premised upon a deep-seated loss and perpetually absent object of mourning.

We can learn from Reinhard, Brennan and McGowan that we are not simply hateful subjects. We are constructed to hate as a response to a perceived threat that is foreboding. We cannot eliminate the existence of the Other; such an event would alter our entire framework of knowledge. But knowing we construct an imaginary figure of the other as enemy, the Other's desire ought to bring us closer to realizing that we are preemptively assert our authority over our desire at the expense of our safety. In other words, recognizing the construction of our enemy relations—which are dependent on our inability to come to terms with our own absence—brings us closer not to an understanding of the enemy, but rather provides access to knowledge about ourselves. We are essentially paranoid subject's who are unaware of the extent of our collective paranoid positions as subject. As a result, the question is not should I love my neighbour. Israel and Palestine provide an example of love. Love is being affirmed. It is not a question. On the contrary, neighbour love depends on asking ourselves a different question: in what ways am I loving my neighbour too well? Insofar as Israel and Palestine focus on hating, love is being reinforced by the interconnectedness of love and hate.

Redemption, in the midst of life -

Citing Rosenzweig, Reinhard views the possibility of redemption, which is a manifestation of sovereignty as being housed in the immanent moment of our here and now. The nearness of the neighbour provides an opportunity. According to Benjamin, our concept of happiness is indissolubly bound up with the image of redemption possible in the here and now ("Theses", 245). The past is explained as a construction produced by

the Angel of History. According to Benjamin, we are faced toward the past where we perceive a chain of events. We only see one single catastrophe that keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage that we hurl in front of our feet, preventing our movement forward. We would like to fix the catastrophe, but something is preventing our action. Instead, this colossal mess propels us into the future, while our gaze is still directed backward. Unknowingly, we call this misrecognition progress, when really all that lies ahead is predicated on what has already happened. Endless repetition marks the Angel of History. The Angel offers a narrative structure on which we can understand the repetition of history. For example, Benjamin argues, "to articulate the past historically does not mean to recognize it 'the way it really was'...It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger" ("Theses", 247). He goes on to argue that every instant is in danger of being ignored, that each passing day is not just another day, but rather the oppressed teach us that we live in a state of emergency, which is not the exception but the rule ("Theses", 248).

Working through the temporality of the moment-to-moment elucidates the possibility of thinking in the present which allows us to face the future head-on. Likewise, living in a state of emergency acknowledges the importance of the sovereign position. The imaginary prevents the present from being an opportunity by foreclosing on the here and now. Reinhard sees the opportunity of theorizing a space between love and hate, between friend and enemy, as an enduring temporality that can be embraced by opening onto a new realization of responsibility made possible by recognizing our indebtedness to co-existence. The choice is not to love or hate, but to open unto a possibility in between extremes, what Santner refers to as the midst of life.

Santner pursues the idea of the here and now further in his book entitled *On the Psychotheology of Everyday Life* where he pairs Freud with Rosenzweig. According to Santner:

the peculiar paradox in all of this is that in our everyday life we are for the most part not open to this presence, to our being in the 'midst of life.' Everyday life includes possibilities of withdrawing from, defending against, its own aliveness to the world, possibilities of, as it were, not really being there, of dying to the Other's presence. The energies that constitute our aliveness to the world are, in

other words, subject to multiple modifications and transformations.
(*Psychotheology* 9)

Santner advocates a subject position that demands being more integrated. In other words, not living melancholically as Freud defines it: marked by significant inhibition and self-reproach ("Mourning", 584). Indeed, the idea that we shirk from an engagement with life in favour of a more isolated everydayness is what Brennan terms a global psychosis. Santner shows that life is always in excess of subjectivity. We cannot absorb all of life and adjust to the possibilities of everyday living completely. As he contends, "If life includes a dimension of 'too much,' then being in the midst of life will of necessity involve a mode of tarrying with this unassumable excess rather than repetitively and compulsively defending against it" (*Psychotheology*, 22). Santner acknowledges Kristeva's argument regarding the Thing. It will by definition remain unnamable and thereby excessive for the subject. In this way, both Santner and Benjamin advocate a subject position that embraces anxiety produced by the Thing rather than trying endlessly to hide from it.

Anxiety and its inevitability become the starting ground on which Santner posits his claims about the opportunity available in the midst of life. He proposes an awareness that can be achieved in ways similar to the psychoanalytic conception of working through. According to Santner, "Freud and Rosenzweig give us the means to think the difference between holding ourselves responsible for *knowing* other minds and accepting responsibility for *acknowledging* other minds in all their insistent and uncanny impenetrability" (*Psychotheology*, 23). That being said, he realizes how common it is for enemies to avoid the nearness of the neighbour in order to perpetuate the status of their difference. However, acknowledging the nearness of the enemy is the first step to seeing past the binary. Seeing past the binary is also the first step toward becoming vulnerable. It is more terrifying to the subject of Reinhard's critique to embrace the idea of friend than it is to use the status of enemy as a formation of protection against fragile trust. In other words, by renouncing the possibility of having a beneficial relationship with one's neighbour, the subject protects its ego from being duped.

Rosenzweig also adheres to a position of subjectivity that is aware of its Thing. He points out, "divine love is nothing but the opening up of possibilities of facing up to—

of in some sense 'countenancing'—that in the subject which is 'more' than the subject, the 'too much' of pressure, the excess of reality that is, in large measure, organized in the fantasies that bind us to social reality" (*Psychotheology*, 71). The problem is that opening toward anxiety is not without its complications. As Slavoj Žižek suggests, "this encounter of the real is always traumatic, there is something at least minimally obscene about it, I cannot simply integrate it into my universe, there is always a gap separating me from it" (*The Abyss of Freedom*, 25). The 'it' to which Žižek refers is precisely the Thing that Kristeva sets out in *Black Sun*. The fear of the Other manifests as a result of not knowing fully what the other is capable of. According to Santner:

...revelation concerns the event of changing direction in one's life, of opening to the possibility of fundamentally new possibilities beyond our 'relational surrender,' our domination by the currency and measure of our predicative being. Revelation is a paradoxical mode of opening to what seems most fatefully 'demonic' about us, what 'sticks out' from our predicative being; it is paradoxical because it involves both an affirmation and a negation of this demonic core. (*Psychotheology* 97)

In other words, we cannot shirk from the revelation that the other is enigmatic and potentially dangerous; we must embrace the other precisely because of its demonic potential. The realization that is brought about by knowledge of the other is precisely that what scares us about the other is equally in us as subject. The demon that we believe lies in the other, the threat it poses to our safety, is a measure of what we wish to deny about ourselves. By limiting our understanding of this shared Thing at the core of fear, we become our worst enemy. By maintaining a paranoid relation to the neighbour, we are disavowing the neighbour on the ground of a demonic quality we ourselves also possess. According to Santner, "The deep sense of psychic rigidity or 'stuckness' that is of interest to psychoanalysis is, we might say, nothing but a persistence of this pulse of meaninglessness yet valid behavior that constitutes our unconscious attachment to as well as defense against the Other's 'exciting' secret or enigma" (Santner, *Psychotheology*, 98). Harkening back to an earlier point, we cannot kill the other who is our neighbour, which means we must embrace its existence because when we hide from its influence we suffer by being controlled. Living in close proximity to one's enemy means learning to handle

the elements in us that labeled our neighbour our enemy. The problem of the neighbour injunction is not a problem of the other, it's a subjective problem bound to the other. The paradox is, then, that revelation is not bringing about something new, but rather is nothing but a clearing away of the old.

What is ultimately illuminated in *The Neighbor* is that we cannot embrace sovereignty in order to commit murder. *Normative* compared to *exceptional* are terms of reference that help situate how neighbour love is not normal but decidedly exceptional. The exception is the encounter rather than the surrender to the other. Hannah Arendt argues that the cultural malaise of loneliness notable in society is a symptom of "the disappearance of the space of the neighbour that for Arendt marks the loss of the political as such" (*The Neighbor*, 26). As already mentioned, Schmitt argues the same point: Without the neighbour the political collapses; without interrelated subjects there is no form on which to suspend a polity. Without the other there is no subject. Likewise, Reinhard suggests that without the sovereign exception the prospect of a political theology dependent on avowed intersubjectivity is stifled. By drawing on the actualization of the impossible at the heart of the commandment to love thy neighbour, we can see that our failed commandment to love serves as an example upon which we can suspend our notion of what is possible between human collectivities. According to this logic, it is our failure that may be our most essential asset.

CHAPTER THREE: Uncanny Nebenmensch

In the first section the histories of the conflict were considered along with a review of the literature. In the second section, the problem of the neighbour and the attendant problems of love/hate, neurotic fantasy/perverse fantasy, melancholia/mourning and the temporal component of the conflict have been set up and explored. The next step is to situate more fully in the third section the spatial dimension—first articulated in reference to Mina Hatoum—that will now be reconsidered through the uncanny and the Nebenmensch.

A Particular Shade of Frightening -

Freud explores the concept of the uncanny, by defining it as a quality of feeling ("Uncanny", 193). He contends that the uncanny is "undoubtedly related to what is frightening—to what arouses dread and horror...it tends to coincide with what causes fear in general" ("The Uncanny", 193). However, not everything that is scary is uncanny. Certain things that are frightening are indeed just that. Other things that evoke the sensibility of the uncanny push the frightening into another domain of experience. There is a personal sense to the impression of the uncanny that makes it difficult to conclude that the feeling has indeed taken place. In fact, the uncanny does not occur, it is rather a recurrence. Like dreams, it is fleeting. One cannot confirm whether the uncanny has been grasped, since its elusive nature resists categorization. Before you can be sure that the uncanny has occurred, it has past or long since been repressed. More importantly, there is no surely uncanny experience. It cannot be evoked or planned. The uncanny is not a certainty. It corresponds to an elusive evocation. Freud provides a definition of the uncanny that refers to properties, sense-impressions and experience which arouse in us the feeling of uncanniness: "The uncanny is that class of the frightening which leads back to what is known of old and long familiar" ("The Uncanny", 195).

The uncanny means, on the one hand, a feeling of what is familiar and agreeable, and on the other hand, what is concealed and kept out of sight. That which is unknown, dark, secretive and mysterious is set up to define its opposite: one's sense of homelessness comes to determine the more coveted sense of home. The uncanny has

been described as supernatural and thereby resonates with the imaginary. It is meant to keep fear at bay through the use of delusions. Fantasy through the imaginary helps the subject cope with material reality that cannot be absorbed. Freud argues that the uncanny underscores that what is material and psychical are two sides of the same coin, so to speak; fantasy is linked with one's perception of reality. Likewise, the structure of fantasy is an imaginary constellation, a network of desire mixed with satisfaction, and depends upon concealing a traumatic kernel that risks breaking into the subject's reality. On a day-to-day basis, the subject encounters its fantasies that shelter it from the trauma of reality. In this sense, the imaginary is where we associate the enigma of the uncanny; it is the most appropriate register to situate something that resists disclosure, since the imaginary is a formation that reveals only part of the picture.

However, Schelling complicates the uncanny by adding that "everything is unheimlich that ought to have remained secret and hidden but has come to light" ("The Uncanny", 200). By reinforcing that the uncanny is an anomalous mistake, in a certain sense, of psychical material that breaks into the imaginary, the uncanny implies an added significance. What ought to be hidden suggests through this turn of phrase that uncanny revelation throws something into flux based on its veracity. Freud likens the uncanny to a seemingly traumatic presence that has come to inflict harm on the subject. For this reason, the uncanny is compared to the register of the real. The Lacanian register of the Real is traumatic, undisclosed, and unrepresentable. Through the structure of fantasy the subject is able to distance the effects of the real. The real is also that which ushers in the affect of anxiety.

Freud adds to his definition of the uncanny by aligning it with two other psychoanalytic concepts: repression and anxiety. Freud argues,

If psychoanalytic theory is correct in maintaining that every affect belonging to an emotional impulse, whatever its kind, is transformed, if it is repressed, into anxiety, then among instances of frightening things there must be one class in which the frightening element can be shown to be something repressed which recurs. This class of frightening things would then constitute the uncanny; and it must be a matter of indifference whether what is uncanny was itself originally frightening or whether it carried some other affect. ("The Uncanny" 217)

Freud explores the etymology of the uncanny not only in German but in foreign languages and comes to the conclusion that as soon as something actually happens which seems to confirm old, discarded beliefs we get a feeling of the uncanny. It is as though the uncanny demonstrates to us that our greatest fears are realizable. Realizing this disclosure makes us stop and wonder at the feeling of this truth procedure. In each attempt at concluding about the uncanny, Freud is pushed to admit he is grappling with a concept that resists his codification. The uncanny resists definition because the experience of the uncanny object produces anxiety because it possesses the ability to be two opposing things at once. Uncanniness is completely subjective.

The uncanny entails thinking of the beginning while complicating the notion of origin. Nicholas Royle explores the significance of Freud's text in his book entitled *The Uncanny*. He argues that the beginning is already haunted by a mystery that dislocates the beginning from its location. He deconstructs Freud's text by asserting that the uncanny involves feelings of uncertainty about the reality of who one is and what is actually being experienced (*Uncanny*, 1). Royle echoes Benjamin's assertion that each passing situation is, in essence, a state of emergency. Knowledge of what is and who one is are under threat of being ignored. The uncanny announces these factors of being to the subject who resists this disclosure. Positioning themselves in the midst of a necessarily uncanny task, Royle and Freud nuance the ways that the uncanny is a disturbance of the proper or ordinary by evoking a dislocation or displacement at the heart of a subjective awareness. The uncanny is a disturbance not only of one's everyday feeling of regularity—through its tendency to exemplify the irregular—but also it disturbs the very idea of personal and private property, places, others, institutions and events. It signifies a strangeness and alienation at the core of human understanding. However, the uncanny is not simply these things.

It can take the form of something familiar. It can enact the feeling of something too familiar, that is, of repetition that obliges the subject to question whether the experience is somehow an aspect of the past that is being relived in the present. It can produce contentment and comfort. Nonetheless, when it evokes the harmonious it strips such things of enjoyment by supplement; feelings of belonging morph into feelings of longing and estrangement. But the divide between these seemingly opposite experiences

are blurred, bleeding into each other, effacing distinction. The uncanny can be something gruesome or terrible, but, and at the very same time, it can also be a matter of something beautiful, even bordering on ecstasy. It suggests that difference is actually a continuation of the same. It disturbs any straightforward sense of what is unrelatable, suggesting that perhaps in the very distinction of terms, the terms are immediately comparable. According to Royle, "The uncanny has to do with a strangeness of framing and borders, an experience of liminality" (*Uncanny*, 2). In this sense, the uncanny is more than what can be said of it in plain terms. It upsets definitions and points toward complications, the beyond of knowledge and understanding.

At some level, the uncanny is bound up with fantasies that seem unlikely but allude to some kernel of truth that people are unwilling to admit about themselves. The compulsion to return to an inorganic state, a desire (perhaps unconsciously) to die, that is, a drive toward the final destination suggests what it might be like to avoid the difficulty of the everyday. The uncanny points to a "beyond" of experience. Ultimately, the uncanny is an unsettling of time and space, rendering perception a mere carapace to what lurks beneath 'reality'.

The uncanny brings together the interstices of philosophy and politics by demonstrating that these disparate discourses share an ordinary commonality. Both are part of Being. In the twentieth century, Heidegger was most intensively interested in the notion that what is ordinary for *Dasein* is actually not ordinary at all, but is extraordinarily uncanny. Heidegger argues in *Being and Time* that the fundamental character of our being is marked by its unsettled, unhomey, being-in-the-world, a being feels the effects of its existence as being uncanny. Being is ontologically uncanny. For Heidegger, the experience of living-with others exacerbates the unavoidable regularity of feeling discontent as a result of uncanniness. The possibility of there being harmony is prevented by the constancy of the uncanny. In other words, the uncanny is unsettling as opposed to tranquil. From Heidegger's perspective, its presence is not supernatural. On the contrary, the uncanny is precisely natural, organic. No one can renounce the uncanny; it makes itself known nonetheless. For Heidegger being in the world is a matter of suffering from the uncanny necessarily; suffering through the uncanny allows *Dasein* to come up against anxiety: In anxiety, one feels uncanny, that is, one is uncanny to one's self. Uncanniness

is a condition of being. He asserts that the not-at-home feeling is a primordial feeling sustained for the entirety of existence (*Being and Time*, 233). In essence, the uncanny is figured and described by Freud and Royle as a silent shadow that influences our internal conversations.

One of the evocations of the uncanny is to think of its negation. This tendency comes from the definition of the uncanny as linked to what is contrary to it. What is deemed homely comes to inform what is at odds with home: homelessness. In this sense, the uncanny informs us of a discontent that appears where contentment is sought. Society itself is uncanny due to the very construction of disparity that exists between class and gender. Underneath the social veil is the reality of all being: we are all ontologically the same. Society is uncanny because this commonality is repressed. It returns in moments where the human condition reminds us of our unity. The turn from being complete to lacking, settled to unsettled, canny to uncanny, home to homeless marks an important foundation of the uncanny as a concept of non-relation. Likewise, interrelation based on such uncanny principles is at once rendered unfamiliar to us when we realize we cannot know ourselves. Being interrelated to our uncanny double is not really an interrelation; such a position is a non-relation. We are terrified of our double, not happily involved with its spectral presence. We fail to see our own position in the dealings we have with others because such a revelation is uncanny.

The desire for peace and security are often pronounced as being fundamental to the happiness and contentment of civilization. Freud himself argued that contentment is bound to give rise not to satisfaction but its lingering opposite: frustration. Likewise, thoughts that are at peace, that is, conducive to what can be known, run counter to thoughts that are antagonizing, that is, thoughts that accent what cannot be known. However, Kierkegaard maintained that when we believe ourselves to have control of what unsettles our sense of anxiety, we are not functioning well but are deluding ourselves to an ever-present despair that is merely being repressed. When we are happy, we merely leave behind that which would ruin our contentment if we chose to acknowledge it. As Freud has amply pointed out, that peculiar formation of repression that attempts to protect the subject from what scares it is unassimilated in the psyche. It is

repressed. And it will return. The formation of uncanny events brings to light a reality behind fear: we fear having to handle our own discontented subject position.

Being at peace or engaging in peaceful meditation points to the aporia of peace itself. Being is precisely not at peace or destined for peace. As Heidegger demonstrates in *Introduction to Metaphysics* the strange is meant "as the supreme limit and link of man's being, the essence of the being thus defined should from the first be seen in its crucial aspect" (*Metaphysics*, 150). Heidegger goes on to argue that beings are cast out of security by the *unheimliche*:

the unhomely prevents us from making ourselves at home and therein it is overpowering. But man is the strangest of all, not only because he passes his life amid the strange understood in this sense but because he departs from his customary, familiar limits, because he is the violent one, who, tending toward the strange in the sense of the overpowering, surpasses the limit of the familiar...to be the strangest of all is the basic trait of the human essence, within which all other traits must find their place. (*Metaphysics* 151)

We can say that for Heidegger, unequivocally, uncanniness is a condition of being. Uncanniness is an aspect of the ontological trauma of Dasein. The historical trauma elaborated in the work of Caruth shares with ontology as defined by Heidegger the same production of uncanniness. That is, if we read Caruth in light of Heidegger, the history of Jewish origin has an uncanny double in the Arab, a strange partner it wishes to deny. It is unsettling. Through repression it disposes of this traumatic kernel only for it to return. Historical trauma as well as ontological existence is fundamentally susceptible to the uncanny in the same way. What ought to remain hidden seems always to surface. Ontology and history correspond to a similar structure of uncanniness.

Loss as Absence -

According to LaCapra, the difference between absence and loss or structural and historical trauma cannot and should not be collapsed. He avers that

to account for current conflicts or discontents by means of questionable opposition between the lost, unified past and the skeptical, conflictual present

runs the risk of inviting underspecified, if not distorted, views of the past and over-simplified interpretations of the present. (*Writing History* 84)

LaCapra is accusing Žižek of a dubious conflation between all things traumatic and the manifestations of the Lacanian real. His criticism hinges on Žižek's assertion that events such as the Holocaust resist being represented. Events like the Holocaust point toward the real of our civilization. The real in this sense is being evoked as the ultimate trauma of society. Civilization battles the circularity of the traumatic kernel of being itself. Such a kernel is likened to the uncanny as an anxiety producing affect. Elsewhere, LaCapra says that Žižek "runs the risk of an equally reductive hypostatization and leveling of problems" (*History, Theory, Trauma*, 206). From LaCapra's vantage point, structural trauma related to absence may not be cured but only lived with in various ways. He takes exception to Žižek for making all historical and ontological traumas the same. Additionally, LaCapra posits:

one may even argue that it is ethically and politically dubious to believe that one can overcome or transcend structural trauma or constitutive absence to achieve full intactness, wholeness of communal identity and that attempts at transcendence or salvation may lead to the demonization and scapegoating of those on whom unavoidable anxiety is projected. (*Writing History, Writing Trauma* 84-5)

LaCapra argues that the Lacanian notion of lack conflates the ontological lack constitutive of the symbolic order with the particular event of traumatic experience. For example, LaCapra misunderstands that aligning ontological and experienced traumas does not mean that they are identical. However, the subject's ontological trauma of incompleteness leads it to handle itself in relation to its enemies in particular ways. The holocaust, for example, demonstrates that National Socialism attempted to cope with its own failures by mapping its lack onto the Jew as scapegoat. It confused, to use LaCapra's own terminology, absence for lack. Germany was never wholly complete and its vision for the future was premised upon a wish. The Jews did not ruin Germany's successes with their presence. Rather, the absence of a highly integrated economy produced the environment where blaming the Jews became acceptable. That is, the Jews were the other who were thought to be responsible for Germany's lack. Particular traumatic experiences

are not legitimized as being necessary as a result of symbolic lack; rather, the ontological absence of completeness merely explains why such things happen. It could easily be the case that events like the Holocaust are prevented by knowledge of ontological lack. Žižek responds to LaCapra's criticisms in the following way:

Against this misunderstanding, one should emphasize that the quasi-transcendental lack and particular traumas are linked in a negative way: far from being just the last link in the continuous chain of traumatic encounters that reaches back to the "symbolic castration," catastrophes like the holocaust are contingent (and, as such, avoidable) events which occur as the final result of the endeavours to OBFUSCATE the quasi-transcendental constitutive lack. (<http://www.lacan.com/Žižek-love.htm>)

According to Žižek, aligning ontological and experiential trauma is not a dubious assertion. From my perspective, symbolic castration is precisely the knowledge about trauma that is resisted out of fear. Rather than admitting one's own lack as one's own responsibility, it is easier to blame the other. Confronting constitutive lack allows the subject to re-position its awareness of its own evil intentions by suggesting that inhumane behaviour is predictable—and preventable—while not the result of the other. The significance of Žižek's critical dialogue with LaCapra is that when we ignore constitutive lack or attempt to turn absence of totality into a sense of completeness premised on blaming the other for our missing parts, we fail to engage with what aligns all human beings together: absence and not loss.

LaCapra and Žižek point toward the difficulty of understanding structures of negative relation. One does not exist in peace or in trauma. Israel cannot be analyzed as either in a condition of peace or in a condition of war. The reality of everyday life in Israel is neither one nor the other. Being is marked instead by the trauma of Being itself. Peace, therefore, is what is being repressed in Israel/Palestine. Peace, in effect, is uncanny because of the inescapable ordinariness of trauma that prevents the actualization of peace. Additionally, trauma is also being repressed in Israel/Palestine. The purpose of looking at peace and trauma as a negative relation is to assert that trauma and peace are not occurring in isolation, but rather inform and depend on each other. Allowing for the trauma of being to emerge is the first step toward a peace process. Therefore, my

contention is not that peace and trauma are identical or that we ought to universalize peace or trauma in the Israel/Palestine conflict. The uncanny is a philosophically significant indication of disquiet at the heart of what it means to be human.

Understanding this sense of disharmony offers a way to see the interconnectedness of peace through the acceptance of trauma. It offers a way to rephrase in different terms how Freud helps us understand what is ignored about our human condition. Freud uses the concept of the uncanny to reconsider what is knowledge and what aspects of knowledge we repress. When we are resistant to knowledge, we disregard that having a peaceful human conditions depends on accepting and living with an aspect of everyday discontent. Psychoanalysis provides a theoretical basis for understanding. It sets itself up against knowledge by showing the subject what it does not want to know, which thereby achieves a different sort of knowledge by its negative relation to popular understanding. That is to say, peace and trauma are comparable to the non-relation between unhomely and homely in the concept of the uncanny. To understand what Freud means by the uncanny, we need to juxtapose to seemingly opposite concepts: home and the unsettling idea of being not at home, unhomely to the surroundings we take for granted. In comparison, peace defines trauma by demonstrating that to achieve peace requires juxtaposing the concept of trauma with peace in order to ascertain that one cannot be achieved without attending to the other. In this sense, trauma defines what it means to achieve peace. Peace is not identical to trauma, while trauma is not identical with peace.

My perspective is that one cannot have peace without trauma first. However, the idea that peace is traumatic runs counter to our regular understanding. This non-relation can be noted in love and hate, between subject and other, and between Israeli and Palestinian. We elevate binaries in order to make sense of oppositional structures that ignore the possibility of interrelated structures of negative relation. We seek to divide concepts into opposites before we are willing to see interconnections. From my perspective, one cannot achieve peace without sustaining discontent, its essential co-determiner, which can be brought about by acknowledging subjective trauma. When we learn to be at peace with trauma then we achieve peace by accident. Likewise, when we admit to the complexity of peace as a concept, we come closer to actualizing our

subjective role in thinking through the goals we have for human interrelation. One cannot sustain an awareness of trauma without embracing the possibility of peace as that which is the synthesis of trauma.

It is not well-accepted news that being is marked by trauma and that peace is only possible through recognizing something terrifying. People prefer to engage in delusional talks about peace, peace talks, peace processes, failed peace, the prospect of peace, as if the possibility of peace is prevented by some ulterior factor. No one ever wants to engage in self-criticism because it is easier to project. In the same vein, discussing the utopia of peace is preferred to the sublimity of realizing that peace is traumatic. What this denotes is a tendency to construct ideas like peace processes that are rendered uncanny by constant failure. Failed peace actualization points toward the trauma preventing its substantiation. According to Freud, "in every instance the delusional idea is maintained with the same energy with which another, intolerably distressing, idea is warded off from the ego. They love their delusions as they love themselves. That is the secret" (Freud, "Letter to Fleiss 1885," 110). In this quotation, we see how delusion acts to protect the psychotic from a truth underneath the deception. Freud's insight, when applied to the Israel/Palestine conflict, demonstrates that the striving for peace, that is, talking about peace in the Middle East off handedly, is delusional insofar as the subject refuses to recognize the more distressing element of the non-relation: trauma is the possibility of peace.

Evoking peace means understanding trauma and then coming to terms with the reality of non-relation that exist between the concepts. That is, elevating peace allows trauma to prevent peace by foreclosing on the conditions required to sustain peace as a real possibility; instead of peace, the result is failed peace and perpetuated trauma. As Freud and Caruth have indicated in their respective work the uncanniness of habitual life depends on a structure of non-relation that is pervasive. To engage in delusional behaviour is to disavow the uncanniness and to ignore what it is attempting to communicate.

The uncanny that Freud defines is not what we often think about when the word is evoked. It has to do with a sense of ourselves that breaks into perception and informs us of that which was supposed to remain hidden. We have internal mechanisms that attempt

to keep the knowledge the uncanny exposes away from our perception. It informs us of aspects of our being that structure our everyday life, but are rarely announced to us or realized as existing at all. However, precisely because of the elusivity of the uncanny, we realize that there are aspects of our behaviour that control us. We do not want to admit that in order to get closer to peace we have to accept our history as a history marked by trauma and the tendency to resist its influence. We resist thinking through what it would mean to live unsatisfied, discontented by the reality of our subjective suffering. We prefer to exist in a social psychosis that protects us from the flux of undisclosedness. The uncanny is a subjective revelation of subjectivity itself. It provides an opportunity to see into the very depths of what is not recognized because what is disclosed is not satisfactory to the image of being we seek to perpetuate. It reveals our helplessness and we are shamed by its disclosure.

Phrased differently, it is the foreignness of the uncanny which offers a new way of thinking about ethics and politics that acknowledges imperfectability. Julia Kristeva suggests that Freud's uncanny teaches us one important lesson: how to detect foreignness in ourselves (*Strangers to Ourselves*, 191). What prevents us from admitting to ourselves that we are uncanny beings is the fear associated with giving up our fantasy of completeness. The uncanny announces phenomena that signal our inability to not know. We want to know everything and this is our failure. This disclosure runs counter to our ego that permits us to think we know everything. Exploring the idea that there is something in us more than we realize, Freud's text mimics the undisclosed formation of knowledge that the uncanny announces to us. His texts are never fully understood because the concepts he articulates are not relational to our understanding, but rather pose obstacles to our framework of knowledge.

"The Uncanny" is a valuable example of the way the structure of Freud's language reveals complexities in the phenomena he articulates. He demonstrates the significance of non-relation as a key to conflict by offering the uncanny as a way into understanding the motivation of dispossession. He suggests that what is peculiarly frightening may be a source of possibility. From Freud's perspective, full disclosure, if we can even talk about such a thing, is akin to homeliness, while the failure of revelation reveals the effect of the uncanny as a structure of undisclosedness. As an example, Freud

weaves personal narratives into his text, stating he has limited exposure to uncanny impressions; stating he is somehow removed from his theory. He tries to convince us that he is not simply talking from experience, but then he reveals the truth. He wants us to believe he is using the science of psychoanalysis to make substantiated claims. However, he narrates his own experiences into the text as the only way to demonstrate the undemonstrability of uncanny phenomenon. Kristeva suggests that,

With Freud indeed, foreignness, an uncanny one, creeps into the tranquility of reason itself, and, without being restricted to madness, beauty, or faith anymore than to ethnicity or race, irrigates our very speaking-being, estranged by other logics, including the heterogeneity of biology...Henceforth, we know that we are foreigners to ourselves, and it is with the help of that sole support that we can attempt to live with others. (*Strangers* 170)

In this way, she reinforces the paradoxical turn exhibited in the discourse of psychoanalysis by alluding to understanding through confusion. That is, admitting to our peculiarity without being shamed by its disclosure, brings us closer to recognizing the other as intrinsic to our being; accepting this revelation is not a weakness. Revelation through accepting the other as part of the self is redemption according to Santner, Reinhard and Žižek. This sort of recognition and acceptance of what is terrifying can open new possibilities of interrelation through accepting the inevitability of discontents. Uncanny phenomenon is a demonstration of this inadvertent foreignness.

The dread of ayin ha'ra (the evil eye)-

One of the most uncanny and wide-spread forms of superstition is the dread of the evil eye. As Freud puts it, "whoever possesses something that is at once valuable and fragile is afraid of other people's envy, in so far as he projects on to them the envy he would have felt in their place" ("The Uncanny", 216). Teresa Brennan proposed a similar idea when she argued that the ego's era is marked by fear of the other being capable of doing harm. She proposed that global psychosis is a result of our failure to engage with the Other. According to Brennan, the ego is a delusional mechanism as a result of its defensive strategy to perceive threats as actual. It believes that the evil intentions that it contemplates toward others are equally being thought about by its neighbour in an

attempt to do harm. In this sense, psychosis is not an abnormality of the mind. The subject suffers from the delusions on an everyday basis. To a certain degree, the paranoia of psychosis is acute.

According to Freud, the evil eye is a look that is believed by many cultures to be able to cause injury or bad luck to the person at whom it is directed. Freud refers to the evil eye in order to acknowledge that the uncanny is an impression that harkens back to animistic conceptions of the universe that endure in the present through preserving certain residues and traces of our connectedness to the omnipotence of our thoughts. That is, our thoughts are marked by unlimited and powerful authority that makes it possible for us to believe that our thoughts are wellfounded. Freud's turn toward superstition is intended to implicate the uncanny in other notions of superstition that integrates the effect of having unlimited ideas about the evil embodied in the other. However, the example of the evil eye also serves to demystify a process of projection. The effect of the evil eye is paranoia, where the ego fears that the other will do as it wishes to do to the other. Freud states that, "What is feared is thus a secret intention of doing harm, and certain signs are taken to mean that that intention has the necessary power at its command" ("The Uncanny", 216). He believes that each person has not completely distanced themselves from believing in the possibility of magical forces in nature. Further, examples like the evil eye confirm that people have always encountered the uncanny and have attempted to find their own ways to fend it off. In attempting to "fend off the manifest prohibitions of reality" the subject falls deeper into a psychosis perpetuated by its unrestricted narcissism ("The Uncanny", 217).

In Israel, the evil eye is everywhere. It is represented in their culture at every market and at every gift store. In Jewish tradition, fish are considered to be immune to the evil eye, so their images are often found on hamsa amulets that are thought to offer protection and blessing on the home. A red thread is also said to protect babies against the evil eye, and according to folkloric custom it is placed on the pillow upon which a newborn baby is presented for the first time at a viewing by family and friends. It is customary to wind a red string around the tomb of the great Matriarch, Rachel, located near Bethlehem, in the West Bank, as an effective protection against the evil eye. What is most interesting about the evil eye is that many cultures share in this supernatural conceit.

Greece, Rome, India, Turkey, Bangladesh, Iran, Egypt, Brazil and the United States, to name only some countries, the evil eye is customary in folklore. The evil eye is a source of wonder on account of its inexplicable uncanniness and our inability to reason it away. The evil gaze of the other is not only feared, but constructed into a myth of potential harm. Protective talismans and cures are created to help protect the subject from its uncanny effects. What the evil eye suggests is that civilization prefers to elaborate the unexplainable using myths and supernatural propaganda that blame the other for its suffering, rather than turn our gaze upon ourselves.

"Welcome Home!" –

I left for Israel on May 3, 2009. I was twenty-six, and traveling to Israel for the first time. When I reached customs in the Ben Gurion airport, I stood in line until I reached the customs official who said to me: Welcome Home. I couldn't quite process being at home yet away from Canada. I felt a strange feeling of being a bit fearful and yet excited about having another home. If I was at home in Israel, in what way did this second home influence my original home? How does having a home in Israel influence my first apartment in London or my parent's home in Waterloo, where I grew up? At once my early childhood became inextricably linked to my current life.

It was as though I traversed homes during my trip from London, Ontario to Tel Aviv, Israel. I had experienced homely constancy even though I had journeyed across the earth's surface into a foreign land. How could it be possible that I flew over 9000 kilometers and remained at home? The only thought that made sense of this bizarre impression was that my home was double. The only possible answer is that I as well as all other Jewish people living across the world have a home in Israel.

What responsibility did I have to Israel? My thinking only led me further into a labyrinth of questions I couldn't answer. I felt as though Israel had all of a sudden come to light. It had taken on a new level of meaning. I knew the law of return afforded me the opportunity to immigrate to Israel. But I am Canadian. My homeland in Israel had always seemed secret and hidden, now it became material and intimate.

All my other experiences in airports across the world have usually been standard: form a queue, show passport, answer formal questions and proceed out of the airport as

soon as possible. In Israel, I was asked about my education and questioned about my interest in Israel. I was asked whether I had formal Jewish education and if both my parents were Jewish: if I had siblings; how many; what do they do for a living; are they married. The woman I spoke with seemed genuinely interested in getting to know me. She looked directly into my eyes as she asked "what's the last holiday you celebrated?" She told me she was a secular Jew. It made me feel more comfortable with my answers. After a few minutes, perhaps 10, I received my Israel stamp.

What occurred at the airport provides us with an example of what it means to experience something uncanny, *unheimlich*. According to Freud, "when we proceed to review the things, persons, impressions, events, and situations which are able to arouse in us a feeling of the uncanny in a particularly forcible and definite form, the first requirement is obviously to select a suitable example to start on" ("The Uncanny", 201). What is frightening to the subject experiencing the uncanny is not easily understood. I felt disoriented. I wondered why am I being told this? What is it meant to address? What is it meant to avoid?

Thinking through the conception of the uncanny as a fear of the gaze sets up an interesting question: Is Israel in a state of uncanniness? What would it mean to exist in a state of fright? If the uncanny is a feeling of strange familiarity, what is strange in Israel and what is familiar? What is the implication of giving a people a homeland when the historical experience has been to be homeless? What happens to a nation when their homeland is rendered homeless? Does the conflict in Israel/Palestine share a peculiar structure with the uncanny? Insofar as to write about either is to lose one's bearings, to find oneself immersed in the maddening logic of the supplement, to engage with a hydra, my response is yes (*Uncanny*, 8). There is indeed a commonality between Israel/Palestine and the uncanny: A persistent or multifaceted problem that cannot be eradicated by a single effort.

As Royle notes, "Freud's essay is, perhaps above all, a teaching. It teaches us about psychoanalysis and Freud, about the uncanny and ourselves" (*Uncanny*, 7). Above all, Freud's "Uncanny" teaches us that the uncanny is a way of thinking through that which has no clear end point. Freud himself admits that the uncanny is something that one does not know one's way about in ("The Uncanny", 194). Thinking about the conflict

in Israel/Palestine must begin with strange confusion. It is not a question of giving oneself up to a sense of aimlessness, but rather of trying to follow a path as carefully and critically as possible, uncertain nevertheless of where it began or appears to end (*Uncanny*, 8). Psychoanalysis is uncanny because it lays bare hidden forces. It brings to light things that perhaps should have remained hidden—or, rather, should come to light and supercede repression. It makes the self, desire, memory, trauma all uncomfortably, even frighteningly, unfamiliar. For this reason, thinking through the uncanny in the Israel/Palestine conflict begins with the psychoanalytic subject and its uncanny double: the *nebenmensch*.

The Subject of the Uncanny -

The psychoanalytic subject is primarily an ethical rather than psychological category, constituted by the weight of reality first encountered as the neighbour. Unlike the subject's beginning familial relations, the neighbour acts as the first other that co-exists with the subject but is not in its family. The neighbour acts as an alert to the multiple inhabitants of the world the infant is not previously acquainted with, which explains why Freud claims, "it is in relation to a fellow human-being that a human-being first learns to cognize"—the subject learns to think in relation to its perception of the neighboring human being who is called the *Nebenmensch* (*Neighbor*, 30). This fellow creature is a figure of the subject in close proximity to itself. It stands between the subject and its primary maternal object producing an uncanny complex of perceptions through which subjective reality divides the representable world of cognition and the unassimilatable world of the real. Freud calls the representable the object and the unassimilatable *das Ding*. Both are contentious facets of perception. The representable and the inassimilatable are fundamental to the functioning of the encounter with neighbour and Freud's theory of the uncanny. According to Reinhard, the neighbour allows the subject to materialize:

The thing materializes the constitutive ambiguity of the primal object, the trauma of its uncertain disposition between excessive presence and radical absence. Lacan describes the encounter with the *Nebenmensch* as a mode of mediation; the Thing is that part of the other that is 'mute', but the neighbour speaks and thus

forms a template for the subject's emergence; 'It is through the intermediary of the Nebenmensch as speaking subject that everything that has to do with the thought processes is able to take shape in the subjectivity of the subject'. The subject accumulates as the retraversed paths of associative representations that both draw toward and away from the Thing encysted in the Nebenmensch, standing between the subject and the void left by the inevitable withdrawal of maternal succor. (*Neighbor* 31)

The Nebenmensch supplies an external representation on which the subject suspends its own understanding of itself. This uncanny double supplies a spatial proximity that aligns subject with other in a structure of non-relation. In this sense, the neighbour of the subject informs the politics of subjectivity by inaugurating an unavoidable uncanny experience. That is, through the other as Nebenmensch the unhomeliness of home, or what we might call the other centered subject, supplies a condition of discontents.

Thinking about the Nebenmensch through Freud, we see that the encounter with the Nebenmensch is ambivalent. At first the neighbour we relate to is helpful—we do not immediately hate him/her. It becomes difficult for us to understand the Nebenmensch because it is not disclosed to us fully. The other offers us a stasis of confusion. We also realize the neighbour is as we are, 'like' the self, a symbolic network; just as we are beings the subject realizes when meeting its Nebenmensch that it is similar, same, uncannily identical with the self. At this moment, the subject realizes that it is dangerous. But as Freud reminds us, "whoever possesses something that is at once valuable and fragile is afraid of other people's envy, in so far as he projects on to them the envy he would have felt in their place" ("The Uncanny", 216). Having invoked this phrase before, I can now explore its implications in a different context. This quotation suggests that value is a form of paranoiac knowledge created by the subject. The subject then fears that the object it values is coveted by its neighbour. However, it is precisely this construction of fear that allows the subject to value and enjoy its object. If no one wanted its object then it would be valueless. Envy is not a perception of the other's interest in the subject or its object, but indicates that the subject herself values what the other wants. The subject does not know what it wants. It knows it wants to prevent the other from having it. That is, her object is more valuable to her when she believes she is exceptional for

possessing it. This also provides an example of the subject's realization and disavowal of commonality between itself and its enemy. At the heart of envy is the belief that the other wants what the subject is unsure it values. In other words, we value in order to sanction because without sanctioning there is no value. Envy indicates that subject and other are conditioned by competitive similarity, serving the subject for life. The other is a person in relation to judge oneself by. According to Reinhard,

...insofar as the Nebenmensch is always this person, always embodied in a particular person who fills the arbitrary place of the neighbour, it materializes an uncanniness with the social relationship, an enjoyment that resists sympathetic identification and 'understanding,' linking the self and other instead in a bond of mutual aggression. (*Neighbor* 32)

The subject and the other take on a battle of aggressive instincts. The relation with the Nebenmensch is also where the production of judgment and memory are situated, allowing the production of memory to illuminate some formations of subjectivity that exist in the political. "In the act of *judgment*, the subject experiences the Nebenmensch with the sundering intensity of its ambivalent love for the primal object. In *memory*, the subject turns affect onto itself, incorporating the alterity of the Nebenmensch through specular identification" (*Neighbor*, 32). Reinhard's argument is that the neighbour phenomenon that transpired between subject and other requires the reality principle that makes the physical world cognizable for the subject; however, the reality principle functions to isolate the subject from reality, meanwhile the aspects of reality that the principle hides leaks through as the real of life. The real of life is the trauma of the neighbour, which confirms the position of the subject as endless crisis over matter, "in which disequilibrium and non-self-identity are no longer the exception but have become the norm" (*Neighbor*, 34). Taking his argument further, Reinhard positions the unconscious as the locality of emergency that allows the subject a position of self-sovereignty, "a decision that will determine and legitimate the specific forms in which it will live" (*Neighbor*, 34).

Self-sovereignty is likened to the encounter with the other that Santner advocates in the midst of life and is what is truly self-defining in subjectivity. Reinhard argues that thinking that the Nebenmensch is threatening is a paranoid delusion that results in a

failure of judgment. Delusion of the threat of the other has taken the place of the neighbour. According to Reinhard's position, "when the paranoiac breaks faith with the neighbour and refuses to encounter the Thing, the resulting delusions and hallucinations which swarm in the place of the missing mediator represent a failure of judgment" (*Neighbor*, 35). The *Nebenmensch* is feared because it requires the subject to judge itself contributing to a paranoid representation of the other that is a projection of itself. Paranoia relieves the burden of being critical of self by projecting onto the other. As a result, the responsibility of judging itself is curtailed. However, the fear is not assimilated with the neighbour and instead is cast as immediately threatening. 'I must hate my neighbour because he wishes me dead'. The mantra 'Arabs hate us, we don't hate them' repeated by Israelis serves to legitimate the responsibility of the other as the subject who hates and disavows the commandment to love they neighbour, while the subject internalizes its guilt because it knows it shirks from its responsibility. As an example, not only do Israelis group together all Arabs as threatening to their safety, their understanding of the Palestinian threat is marked by extreme paranoia. In an interview with Ana, a young student who is not particularly involved with any political group, who lives in Tel Aviv, the disavowal of the neighbour and Ana's sense of paranoia is profound:

Interviewer: What do you think will happen now that (radical Islamic Movement) Hamas was elected?

Ana: We have to wait and see. They are terrorists. It is the nature, their nature is to kill...The Hamas are in the business of murdering us. It is us or them. Their flag is a flag with the state of Israel in it. Their flag is green and over it is the State of Israel. Like it is their territory! They will never be content with what we'll give them. Maybe what we will give them as the result of peace will allow them to purchase more weapons and develop themselves militarily. Also because we would not have control there, it will give them just more weapons so later they can try to control all of the country...we cannot solve anything with them because they are Arabs. I don't like Arabs, I don't trust them. I think that by their nature they don't want peace with us.

Interviewer: Don't you think that if they have their own country all the problems will be solved?

Ana: No, because they would not be interested in peace. They will want to continue the war....That is their message: war and not peace...There are no choices, so we either give them the country and they can live here, or we don't give them the country and it will be ours and we will fight them over it. So there is no middle ground solution. They are not willing to have a middle ground solution...They are murderers, there is no partner for peace, only a partner for war.

Ana denotes how it is possible to continue to hide from answerability even when asked directly about one's personal views of the conflict. She also reveals that the *Nebemensch* functions in the Israel/Palestine conflict as a threat to personal safety. The other is figured as the real threat to peace, the initiator of future trauma. She forecloses on the possibility that her neighbour wants peace and confirms that Palestinians prefer the trauma of war. What is revealed by her assessment is that Ana believes that Palestinian people are completely different from her. She wants peace and they want war. Ana's all or nothing understanding of the conflict suggests that she cannot feel comfortable existing in flux; she refuses to recognize the possibility that she is wrong. She wants to make the positions black and white. Her logic demonstrates a disavowal of the possibility of sharing land. She argues at a different point in the interview that Israel should not return any lands because land should not belong to terrorists. She degrades Palestinians of the very essence that they share: their status as human beings.

Part of the problem is that difference between Israelis and Palestinians is structured by religion. Freud argues that a new way of thinking of religion is offered in the impression of the uncanny. According to Royle, "one of the unstated assumptions of Freud's essay is that the uncanny is to be theorized in non-religious terms" (*Uncanny*, 20). From his perspective, religion brings answers to the flux that the uncanny requires; it covers over the void in subjectivity by making the other a figure of God who declares a

clear message. The uncanny, on the other hand, announces the void and asks that we cope with its sublimity; there is no clear impression, only confused and interrelated occurrences. According to Rosenzweig, Judaism makes the subject accountable for its role in the world toward the other. The subject is supposed to be able to handle the anxiety of the *Nebenmensch* encounter by following scriptural teachings. Judaism unlike Christianity is an uncanny religion. There are answers to questions that produce traumatic knowledge. As Žižek points out in an interview regarding *Local Angel*,

Christianity is caught in an economy of exchange—that Christ's redemption is buying us off from sin—he paid the price. This notion of redemption and grace is catastrophe, because it involves a trick: apparently it's a liberation, but one in which we are forever indebted to Christ. This is for me the ultimate superego nightmare. (*Local Angel* 27)

He goes on to say that the Jewish ethical imperative is to practice religion through social interaction with other people: "there is no shortcut to God, he is actualized in our dealings with other people...God is here in concrete social space, not up there" (*Local Angel*, 28). Phrased in a different way, Rosenzweig views Jewish difference as opening unto the excesses of spirituality. He argues, "Jewish difference is fundamentally a difference in the structure of desire, in the relation to the void around which desire orbits. That the object of Jewish desire—the land of its longing, for example—are deemed 'holy,' means that desire is infinitized" (*Psychotheology*, 110). In other words, in Judaism the exceptional is always privileged. The miracle of having a Jewish state comprised one of the central tenants in the Torah for thousands of years. That is, the excess of God is valued not for what is actualized but on account of what is possible. By being selected by God, Jewish subjectivity asserts the possibility of miracles that help disclose that the neighbour relation is volatile. From Rosenzweig's perspective, the Jewish man is always "somehow a survivor, an inner something, whose exterior was seized by the current world and carried off while he himself, what is left of him, remains standing on the shore. Something within him is waiting" (*Psychotheology*, 114). The description of Jewishness suggests an uncanny subject within the subject waiting to be freed from fantasy and delusion.

According to Reinhard, Judaism's relation to the other is uncanny, an internal formation of a secret that threatens to disturb from within. The secret that ought to have remained hidden is that the neighbour also shares a space within us, within our cognition about what it means to be-with. Being with-ourselves is akin to being-with our neighbour. The failure to meet our obligation only serves to worsen our delusion that our neighbour is our enemy. Ana knows she should love her neighbour and feels bad that she harbors vicious hatred against Palestinians. She generates more delusions in order to convince herself that she is not responsible, that she has not done the wrong thing. She affirms that her neighbour is uncanny: familiar and terrifying.

Freud confirms that when the subject is scared it protects itself by hiding behind a veil of fantasy that protects it from suffering—yet, suffering endures because fantasy cannot control anxiety. What we can conclude from Freud is that there is an unbearable proximity to the other that is the basis of failed community relations. In refusing to tolerate the proximity of the *Nebenmensch*, the paranoid literalizes the other as enemy. Reinhard concludes that the neighbour provides the subject with a decision rather than an answer to its structure as either hysteric or obsessional. Therefore, two potential options for the subject dictate mental functioning. Either it will become a neurotic and repress the *Nebenmensch* existing in psychical reality at the expense of material reality or it will become psychotic and foreclose on the *Nebenmensch* in an effort to deny its existence entirely. In both cases the subject disavows the neighbour in attempt to sustain itself in certainty. Recall that earlier Reinhard claimed that the neurotic is an autonomous subject while the psychotic fails to achieve subjectivity. The significance of conceiving of the *Nebenmensch* in psychoanalytic terms allows us to reimagine a subject position confronted with its own subjectivity. Therefore, the neighbour relation is uncanny because it brings to light the confrontation of the subject with itself.

For Santner and Reinhard, the neighbour gives way to our inability to shake off a feeling of the uncanny. From their perspectives the uncanny exposes “our thrownness—our *Geworfenheit*—[which] pertains not simply to the fact that we can never fully grasp the reality into which we are born (we are forever deprived of the God's-eye view of it), but rather that reality is never fully identical with itself, is fissured by lack” (*Neighbor*, 87). Benjamin argues that “every present day is determined by the images that are

synchronic with it: each 'now' is the now of a particular recognizability" (*Neighbor*, 88). *The Neighbor* urges us to see the opportunity within this statement. According to Santner's interpretation of Benjamin, "It is precisely such an eventful synchronicity that constitutes what Benjamin portrays as an awakening to a new kind of answerability in ethical and political life" (*Neighbor*, 88). In other words, existing within the uncanny impression offers a perspective on the other that gives way to a new horizon of peace through discontents.

What Santner calls postsecular thinking depends on rethinking our claim to existence: rather than asserting "That's me—I am what I am" we must say "Here I am—I am unsure of myself," which allows us to see past artificial fear of being something in opposition with our neighbour. We are urged by Santner to confront our objectal leftover, our *das Ding* or what Kristeva calls our elusive desire, by persisting as subjects who can intervene in their own fantasy. Santner rethinks concepts such as creation, revelation and redemption in order to plug into what we would rather not accept about our duty toward fellow man. Miracles have been possible since the creation of the subject and endure as a possibility in our current day. When we free ourselves from following blindly our instinct and allow psychological knowledge to influence ourselves we allow for the signifying stress of our subjectivity to be revealed to us. We need to stop wasting our energy protecting ourselves from the neighbour, resisting the uncanny, and channel our abilities into securing our future relations. The possibility of peace is dependent on avowing discontents, allowing for the unknown and the traumatic.

Santner articulates an archive of individual and collective symptoms that he believes if acknowledged allow for a release of the semiotic weight our actions produce in the everyday sphere of responding to our neighbour. The encounter with the neighbour is ultimately traumatic because of our over proximity to the mysterious desire of the other. The object of desire is too present. What is revealed by our tendency to fear the other is not knowing how to act in accordance with our duty to the other. The responsibility to this other is not our decision but an act of essentiality; the being of the subject depends on attempting to refuse one's duty to the desire of the Other. The big Other is our fantasy of power and authority embodied in one threat that if we can act by

neighbourly-love we can unfold this signifying stress incorporated in the fabric of co-existentiality.

When we face our duty to our neighbour we do not encounter elements in their ultimate reality, but rather, to use a Lacanian locution, the "Real" of each element, the specific way in which our access to knowledge is voided (*Neighbor*, 95). Voided knowledge still functions for the subject as any knowledge does, thus we cannot differentiate what is knowledge and what is non-knowledge about our perception. What is actual and what is fictional to our senses, is what produces us as subjects. The real is our biggest foe because we cannot escape; it pertains to the constitutional dimension of trauma that takes shape around our lack. It breaks in on us and we must learn to allow its trauma. The real trauma of subjectivity is what makes us more than just a piece of the world, more than a link in the great chain of being, our ability to recognize our function. According to Santner, "Only by way of anxiety in the face of our own, ultimately unknowable mortality" are we distinctly human beings (*Neighbor*, 132). What Santner is pointing toward by accenting our drive unto death, our status as being toward death and/or subjects beyond the pleasure principle, is an example of how death is supreme to the pleasure principle. To go beyond the pleasure principle is explicitly to allow for the intrusion of a vital force, that of death, to forever foreclose satisfaction, which spells out our condition as a human being. We are driven according to this logic by "an always idiosyncratic series of enigmatic signifiers pertaining to the desire of the "big Others" in our lives (*Neighbor*, 98). Our biggest responsibility is our ability to handle this confusion in our relation to the other who is also our neighbour.

Defining Lacanian Anxiety -

Considered from a Lacanian position, anxiety is a lack of separation from the mother and is likened to the register of the Real. A lack of separation is a surplus of exposure that is terrifying. Unlike fear, anxiety is not directed at a particular object, but is a way of sustaining desire when an object is missing. For Lacan, desire is a remedy for anxiety, something easier to bear than anxiety itself (Evans, 11). When Lacan talks about desire, it is not any kind of desire he is referring to, but always unconscious desire (Evans, 36). Anxiety is experienced in consciousness, while desire is formed

unconsciously as a response to anxiety. By desiring we quell the nervousness that anxiety causes for us as subject. We become subjects when we handle anxiety. For example, desire provides a disguise from anxiety by allowing us to engage in fantasy, which can be located in our speech. Although the truth about desire is present to some degree in all speech, speech can never articulate the *whole* truth about desire; whenever speech attempts to articulate desire, there is always a leftover, a surplus, which exceeds speech. The surplus of desire is a result of the unconscious, which accents how the operation of anxiety and desire always share elusive and enigmatic qualities. We stage ourselves in a drama dependent on the scene: a psychic locality where we position our self as main player in an attempt to replace those enigmas by representations we trust. To use Žižek and LaCapra's terms, we replace our ontological lack with our subjective desire; we take absence and achieve the semblance of presence.

In this sense, when we desire we are in the midst of covering up the constitutional object with which anxiety operates. Lacanian psychoanalysis is premised upon a specified project of object relations: "object-relations theory can be contrasted with ego-psychology on account of its focus on objects rather than on the drives in themselves. This focus on objects means that object-relations theory pays more attention to the intersubjective constitution of the psyche, in contrast to the more atomistic approach of ego-psychology" (Evans, 124). Lacan criticizes object-relations theory on one main point. According to his perspective, the object is never capable of satisfying the subject, which is a result of the symbolic dimension of desire. It enables us in the first place to form the structure of fantasy on which our subjectivity depends. For Lacan, our subjectivity depends on the operation of something insatiable. We endure a life that is only possible because, in essence, our reason for living is to attempt the impossible. We desire so that we can challenge our helplessness, even when desiring causes us, in the end, to remain helpless once again.

The structure of fantasy, because of its dependence on anxiety, accents our lack of lack in our subjective fantasy. Rather than seeing our void, we see its cover. Anxiety is likened to excess rather than privation because it gives us something rather than taking something away. It is an addition to our being that pronounces our lack; therefore, it is a surplus of knowledge. For the fantasy to be renewed and continue to function as a veil

over our constitutional void, something needs to keep us attached to our fantasy. It is precisely subjective being as opposed to ontological being that begins when a trauma of the Real cannot be ignored. The Real interacts with the Imaginary and Symbolic and causes a powerful fear. Anxiety channels its object from the real. The consequence is that living in trauma is the everyday. The function of anxiety is permanent and varied in intensity.

Anxiety becomes more pronounced when desire fails us. When our desire fails, that is, when we are not satisfied by what we thought we wanted, we see through the fantasy that perpetuates our desire. These glimpses of our desire announce our anxiety because the protective veil of desire becomes transparent. It is always stronger than the structure of our fantasy, which means that it prevails over fantasy. The concept of anxiety is a constant force that we experience in flux. The intensity of our awareness to anxiety can shift, even though its presence in our subjectivity remains constant. Through our subjective composition we encounter an object that mediates our anxiety in the formation of something much better: illusion. Also referred to as subjective identification, the subject is constituted in an operation. Roberto Harari in his book entitled *Lacan's Seminar on Anxiety*, claims that desire mediates between subjectivity and anxiety (*Lacan's Seminar*, 36). A void of subjectivity predates anxiety; with anxiety comes subjectivity. Anxiety is constitutional insofar as our subjectivity is received based on the articulation of desire that becomes our engendered by a remainder. But as Lacan makes clear, the desiring subject or the barred subject (\$) is barred because our desire is always the desire of A, that is, the Other, and not our own (*Lacan's Seminar*, 37). From this perspective, "the desire of the barred subject is barred in reference to what causes it: the object a (*Lacan's Seminar*, 37).

According to Lacan in *L'Angoisse*, the big Other designates radical alterity, an other-ness which transcends the illusory otherness of the imaginary because it cannot be assimilated through identification. Lacan equates this radical alterity with language and the law, and hence the big Other is inscribed in the order of the symbolic. Indeed, the big Other is the symbolic insofar as it is particularised for each subject. The Other is thus both another subject, in his radical alterity and unassimilable uniqueness, and also the symbolic order which mediates the relationship with that other subject.

The subject in its everyday position does not realize its desire is dependent on some virtual Other, but instead operates unknowingly in its own fantasy.⁷ Desire facilitates security from anxiety by protecting the subject from the Other. In other words, it is very significant that the average person is not aware of the fact that a forever-deferring object conditions what it wants. This is an unsettling conclusion for some. The presence of the Other is made manifest by the object *a* which comes to inflict a lack on the subject constituting the subject as split (S changed to \$ because of A as a result of S's relation to *a*). Object *a*, or what Lacan calls *objet petit a*, is the little other that is the other which isn't another at all, since it is essentially coupled with the ego. The little object is how we handle the radical alterity of the Other. We attempt to negotiate the Other by way of the *a*.

In the seminars of 1962–3 and of 1964, Lacan argues that *objet petit a* is defined as the leftover, the remainder left behind by the introduction of the symbolic in the real (Evans, 125). Additionally, the subject becomes split by the Other and the split subject realizes its insufficiency through the castration inaugurated by A, which helps accentuate the role of the Other in reference to castration.⁸ Anxiety is the first factor that mediates between desire and *jouissance*. According to Lacan, desire is not an affect, which means that to feel satisfaction or dissatisfaction something must be subjectively constructed as a response to the stimulus of desire. Lacan defines *jouissance* as a term for enjoyment: “the term *jouissance* thus nicely expresses the paradoxical satisfaction that the subject derives from his symptom, or, to put it another way, the suffering that he derives from his own satisfaction” (Evans, 92). The subject comes into being through its relation to desire and *jouissance*. In this sense, the Other exists before the subject in order to position the subject's reason for developing into subject: *jouissance*.

⁷ Just as the subject is lacking, the Other is also lacking. The subject shares a void with the alterity of the Other which it cannot identify with. As a result, the castration complex is formed when the child discovers that this Other is not complete, that there is a lack in the Other. In other words, there is always a signifier missing from the treasury of signifiers constituted by the Other. The castrated Other makes the castration of the subject possible, and finalizes that the Big Other is always a barred Other.

⁸ In Roberto Harari's book *Lacan's Seminar on Anxiety*, a chapter entitled “Not... Without an object. The graph of Anxiety” represents Harari's own attempt at schematizing the function of object *a*. It serves the purpose of magnifying the components of subjectivity and the ways in which castration is figured as the closest representation of its relation to the Big Other. It offers a clear presentation of the scene in which the subject becomes subject in relation to the structural determinants of its anxiety. The determinants can be broken down into the following parts: \$, desire, anxiety, *jouissance*, object *a*, A and castration.

Lacan means that, unlike phobias, anxiety is not without an object, he means that the affect of anxiety is different from all other objects. It remains impossible to be symbolized because of its location in the Real. According to Lacan, there is no possibility of symbolizing in the Real. It is a void of representation that is cut by the symbolic. In order precisely to describe the Real, we cannot even use words. The Real is unimaginable. On account of its undisclosedness, it supports the idea that we are in some sense not really in reality but composed of reality. The Real suggests that from a certain perspective we are not represented. Given this unrepresentable register, we cannot say that the object of anxiety is *a*; the object of anxiety cannot be symbolized; *a* is the object cause of desire and not the object of anxiety. However, the object of anxiety is *a* not actually but virtually; *a* cannot appear as a symbol in the Real. Lacan cannot schematize the object of anxiety unless evoking the inability to schematize that would, in the end, be its most appropriate presentation. In other words, there would not be anxiety if we could present the object of anxiety by *a*, but because the object of anxiety is located in the Real, it comes to produce us as subject in response to the void of knowledge it supplies. Rather than us producing anxiety, it pre-exists the ontic.⁹

Due to the fact that we exist in a realm produced by all three registers (Real, Symbolic and Imaginary), in order to talk about anxiety, Lacan calls upon *a* to represent its non-representability as a function of desire. Thus, the object of anxiety is *objet petit a* and anxiety is conditioned when something other than *objet a* takes on the semblance of desire. This helps explain what Lacan means when he says anxiety is not a lack, which is a cause of desire, but a surplus of lack, a lack of a lack. That is, an uncanny presence. Nonetheless, in its place is the relation between the subject and its desire. Rather than lacking the *a*, anxiety announces its presence to the subject who does not want to be responsible for it. Dodging anxiety becomes the job of subjectivity.

⁹ Following the idea that the ontological is pre-subjective, Lacan's concept of the Real supplies one of the ways we can link the ontological with the ontic. That is, because the Real enacts the subject via an object of anxiety, it pre-dates the subject and yet remains with the subject after its spontaneous creation. If there is a register able to join the divide between ontological and ontic, it is the register of trauma in the Real.

Uncanny Spaces in Local Angel -

Udi Aloni produces a subjective as well as an objective investigation of the political conflict in Israel/Palestine. His assessment is a complex construction that is very clear. We can approach Israel/Palestine from a perspective of consciousness and miss its implications as war. On the other hand, we can approach the conflict from a perspective of war and miss its influence on consciousness. The solution is also clear. Both are bound to each other. Aloni ushers in a new condition to peace that I have attempted to set up in earlier sections. The real condition of peace is dependent on a renewed understanding of universality.

Films generally do not have universal applications. The agenda of films dealing with the conflict is either for or against one side or the other. For example, Toronto based artist-film maker B.H. Yael's *Palestine Trilogy* depicts activists who have been forgotten by the mainstream media. The film explores the historical and current repercussions of Israel's colonial occupation by acting as a window to the terror and pain of displacement. By acknowledging the nakbah and filming footage of Deir Yassin, the film portrays a particularized application. Even its title betrays its loyalties.

Local Angel provides an example of film making as a transcendence of difference. It searches for a way to restore all the agents involved to a symbol of peace for everyone. It is not about the Palestinians or the Israelis, but evokes the prospect of an imaginary third, which awaits the preposition for a new peace. Aloni argues in his film that a new peace can be created through the subject itself, that is, through realizing what constitutes subjectivity. He articulates a subjective position from a point of view that engages with its social order, interrogates its lived experiences, and responds to dissatisfaction with a commentary on the importance of knowledge. The result is an awareness of people living the same life.

Through subjectivity neither victory nor defeat is evoked. He does not suggest a compromise. Instead, he constructs in his film a new place. It is a proposal to humanity, to universal humanity, for a new spiritual place. His film is not abstract. Its concrete new vision is informing us of death, violence and the impossible, and offering another way.

The new place that Aloni envisions is a construction of weakness, not logic or power. We must realize our vulnerability rather than exalt the glory of God. Aloni makes

us question what our role is in building a new place of humanity. He suggests that we must abandon classical forms of action such as fighting and war, but he also resists the pacifist position. He provides an expansive vision through the evocation of art, singers, and love which are immanent to a new conception of possibility. By evoking the culture of Israel and Palestine, Aloni brings together the vision of peace that is shared. It is celebrated as a possibility, but foreclosed from actualizing because of fear. He points to the gap itself between peace and trauma as a position of knowledge and offers it as the means for a new vision.

Žižek views the film in Hegelian terms. The truth of relating to an other always involves a self-relation (*Local Angel*, 24). From his perspective, "if the tendency of treating the Palestinians the way the Zionist establishment is treating them continues, the ultimate victim will be Jewish identity itself" (*Local Angel*, 25). Žižek views the film as articulating a faceless subject. There is an ethical encounter with the other that is failing because the other is seen to possess a face that looks back in anger. But the subjective position Aloni constructs in the film is devoid of anger. Devoid, that is, of subjective difference. The subject is faceless. At the beginning of the film, Aloni presents a drummer with a bag covering his face. All we see is a subject, beating mercilessly on drums. The image suggests a person who cannot be easily channeled into one stereotype or another. The subjective presence conveys a message that is subtle. Aloni repeatedly depicts Israelis and Palestinians in the streets in order to show how difficult it is to know an Arab from a Jew. As spectators, we feel unable to know for certain if we are viewing one or the other. The subtlety is that the flux of difference is thrown into disarray.

The problem is that we have invented the face that uncannily discloses an obstacle to revelation. The traits of the face are terrifying, foreclosing on the possibility that the face-to-face provides: the face-to-face is an ethical encounter of sameness. We are prevented from encountering the other because we forget that between each subject and its neighbour, there is a third being: a transitive being that is the essence of possibility. Such a third is undefined, neither subject nor other. We ought to think through the merit of God being the third. God who needs to be understood differently, a God who needs our help. In other words, from a Christian perspective, the film supports the idea that we now need to do His work. From Žižek's perspective, if we can reconcile our lack as an

absence and project this understanding on God, that is, to admit to God and to ourselves that we are lacking in our understanding of how to relate to each other, the result can be an ethical encounter with our weak God that is not about one face to another, in the tradition of Levinas.¹⁰ Rather, it is precisely admitting to not knowing that facilitates the possibility of relating better to the Other.

The very difficulty of the conflict is exposed as the difficulty of thinking through the site for the possible event of emancipatory breakthrough. For example, Aloni meets with Arafat and asks him to forgive Israel. He says, "What would it take for the Palestinian people to forgive Israel?" Later in the film, Aloni says that he does not mean to ask forgiveness on behalf of Israel. Rather, he wants to stage the actual event of possibility that currently does not exist. The final message the film leaves its audience with is not peace. He proposes, in a certain sense, a hypothetical circumstance that is traumatic. By staging his meeting with Arafat as a normal everyday encounter, Aloni implicitly evokes the importance of existing in the midst of life discussed by the authors of *The Neighbor*. In other words, Aloni himself faces the trauma of his neighbour that is implicit to existing in the midst of life by allowing the uncanny strangeness of Arafat's unsettling presence to be transcended by his own bravery. When he meets with Arafat, accompanied by his mother, who is a leader in human rights movements that open dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli women, there is no sense of animosity, only the confirmation of shared values. *Local Angel* represents neighbourly avowal by evoking the uncanny situation of meeting with one's enemy. The action of asking forgiveness is meant to unsettle Aloni's audience, to explore why such a bold move is deemed bold in

¹⁰ The relation with the other is a separation where there is no formation or production possible of a totality. There is also not an equality between me and the other, but rather the converse is true: "the relation between me and the other commences in the inequality of terms, transcendent to one another, where alterity does not determine the other in a formal sense" (*Totality and Infinity*, 251). The alterity of the other is not a result of its identity—but, rather, alterity is what makes possible the constitution of the other as separate from the subject. Within the relation between me and the Other, there is a blindness that results from its constitution, that is, from the primordial multiplicity. Here my understanding of Levinas evokes an image of two faces forming a space between them, where the multiplicity is the concomitant constitution of both sides of the face to face. The space between the face to face is the problem; it engenders a discontent where a connection is possible. Levinas argues the face to face is imperfect in its symmetry (251). The problem with the face to face that Žižek is referring to is the blindness is actualizing in a vision that sees the face of the other. What we require is a vision of the Levinasian face-to-face that is faceless, that is, possesses no traits and transcends the gap. The primordial multiplicity is multiple singularities, not an exterior form of being. Acknowledging the gap between multiplicity aligns such a gap with the failure of the face-to-face. The importance of the primordial multiplicity is that it, as an effect of the event of the other, learns to be transitive.

the first place. He uses himself as an Israeli and Arafat as a representation of Palestine in order to suggest that the possibility of peace between warring nations hangs in the balance of a dialogue. *Local Angel* advocates embracing fear and provides a filmic event that encapsulates courage. In conclusion, Aloni demonstrates in his film that sustaining discontents is the site in which the event of emancipatory possibility can be found.

Conclusion – Surrender

Israel and Palestine need to surrender. In a conflict marked endlessly by refusal, each side engages in reprisal. To make peace requires sustaining a relationship with the other that is traumatic, but need not lead to violence. Scholarship indicates that striving toward peace as a solution to the conflict presents only illusions of progress. On the other hand, by analyzing trauma we find what Israelis and Palestinians say they want above all else. Through understanding trauma we find peace. Peace making requires interrogating disagreement and separating delusion from truth. Delusion constitutes war.

The conflict demonstrates that trauma produces inconsistent histories. Both Israelis and Palestinians need a homeland. However, out of fear, a sticking point serves to protect each side from actually getting what they want. Israelis and Palestinians claim they want peaceful existence. However, Peace cannot be a goal. Peace is a result dependent on a process. According to Jewish belief, the messiah will bring about peace on earth. Until such time, Israelis and Palestinians wait, as though the miracle of the messiah cannot be influenced by their own collective actions. The process of peace requires sustaining the discontents of trauma that each side is reluctant to admit. Currently, fighting has allowed each side to protect themselves from recognizing their enemy as their neighbour. What has transpired between Israelis and Palestinians is that they have learned to hate each other as a way to love themselves.

When a Jew pledges allegiance to Israel simply because he/she believes in the importance of the state of Israel, he/she forecloses on the Palestinian people. What we require is a subject position that commits to the undisputed importance of Israel as a homeland for the Jews without agreeing with Israel's policies. One can support the state of Israel by being critical of the treatment of Palestinians. What we need to work against is the tendency to think there is a reality to the conflict that prevents the theoretical from

intervening. We must resist saying to ourselves that in practical terms the crisis between Israel and Palestine is determined to endure. We cannot be satisfied by the idea that nothing can be done. There is no real reality to the conflict. It is an active and changing conflict that is interpreted in order to confirm or deny a reading of the events that comprise the conflict. There are only the Jews and Arabs who have constructed a social problem that enacts aggression and rivalry. Marked by the consistency of suffering and victimization on both sides, Jews and Palestinians share mutual identities that neither will acknowledge as shared. My intention has been to show that such rivalry is not caused by an enemy, but is sustained by a trauma. Such a traumatic encounter is not an element of history, but is precisely the trauma of the Other encountered everyday.

The conflict is aggressive because fear spurs it on endlessly. The implications of fear suggest that pride and shame haunt the construction of identity. Neither side can admit that history has brought them together and that they have failed to live peacefully. We cannot continue to point the finger at the Arabs for not accepting the division of land in 1948. What needs to be done involves sustaining a position that is not defined by extremism or Zionism, or any other term. Instead, the future approach to the conflict must be mutual avowal that can take place by resisting demarcating difference. If a solution is to be reached, the first step must be to learn about the other. My research suggests that neither side wants to bare the responsibility of risking being shamed by the other side, which stifles the opportunity for peace. The other causes a deeply felt antagonism that protects the subject from opening onto the other, while also causes the subject an intense sense of vulnerability. That is, to surrender would require both sides to put down its guard, to surrender. It would mean acting counter to its better judgment. Palestinians would have to trust that Israel could be its protector too.

What if we started thinking about the Middle East at a new level and what if the first step toward peace is through psychoanalysis? We can achieve an awareness of our obstacles and responsibilities in this conflict as a collectivity. As Edward Said aptly observes, we need a new sense of ourselves in modernity. If you allow your resistances to remain, you block out knowledge that you are an oppressor of possibility. Discrediting theoretical concept is a form of resistance to knowledge predicated by repression of fear. What is being repressed in Israel/Palestine is the way of the Other.

Accepting the difficulty that the other engenders, we fear our relation to the Other, but such a relation need not be feared. We resist the possibility of transcending our position because such transcendence requires the subject to be vulnerable. If we do not allow for this knowledge, we repress reality to such a degree that it haunts our social order. What is being repressed in Israel and Palestine is the uncanny presence of the other that needs to share space. The uncanny allows us to position Israel and Palestine in a symbiotic relationship where one informs the other. Since the beginning of the conflict, the uncanny presence of the other has been resisted rather than accepted. The existence of the conflict suggests there is something we are not understanding about ourselves.

I believe that Jews and Palestinians have been brought together throughout history for a reason. Jews and Palestinians are implicated in each other's narrative legacies such that we must learn to channel instinct in more productive ways. Antagonism is not something to change, but rather the hostility one feels toward its neighbour must be accepted for its value as knowledge of who we are. The human subject is fearful and paranoid and is capable of transcending both.

When we think of Israeli or Palestinian fear, we think of that intractable element of aggression that is exemplified in all areas of the conflict. Psychoanalysis points to the Other for this reason. When we admit to ourselves that Peace in the Middle East is impossible, we are spared from admitting our fear of the other. When we acknowledge the impossible, we don't think possibility through. What would it mean for the conflict between Israel and Palestine to continue, indefinitely? The idea of endless war in the Middle East is often evoked. It signals the very tendency we need to resist. Instead, thinking through the meaning and origins of the conflict will push us further toward intervening in a conflict with no end in sight.

We refuse to admit to ourselves that we can transcend. Transcendence is surrendering to your role, which is a responsibility unto the other. Our neighbourly commitment can be achieved if we sustain the discontent of our trauma. It can be achieved by coming to terms with discontent and by resisting delusion. By embracing the incomplete rather than striving for perfection, we can move closer toward peace.

What needs to change in Israel is not easily put into words. Israel and Palestine must be thought about differently. The university is meant to produce awareness about

knowledge not only about the possible, but the way we can control the impossible. *The Neighbor* proposes that miracles are possible, that redemption is possible. For this reason, I recognize Israel as a miracle and allow its presence to prove the possibility of redemption. I am not suggesting that we wait for a miracle to happen that will somehow bring peace between Israel and Palestine. Such an event would be the coming of the messiah. Rather, I urge people to start becoming aware of individual traumas of resistance.

Thinking back to the historical legacy of Jews and Arabs in Egypt, we see that history tries to communicate with us in the present. At Passover, the Exodus story is recounted because it teaches about the promise of a homeland and the miracle of freedom. We look toward the past for direction in the future as we observe the Passover seder as a reminder of our struggles. Currently, the state of Israel inspires us to believe in the possibility of redemption simply by its existence. The creation of Israel as a homeland for the Jews has been recounted by Jewish people for thousands of years. Today, the existence of Israel reminds us of two things: the volatile position of Israel, but more importantly, the importance of creating a sustainable Jewish state that is not responsible for the suffering of anyone. If there is a message in the land of Israel it is to have faith in redemption and to believe in miracles.

Lastly, my work is inspired by the bravery of Udi Aloni. He and his mother and their respective acts geared toward the greater humanitarian good, have lead me to express my views. In regard to *Local Angel*, the dialogue we need in Israel is with the past and ourselves. That is why Aloni entitles his film *Local Angel*. We must become the angels of history that we wish to be. When we celebrate Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, we connect with people of the past, who celebrated holy days of atonement and mourned their losses. Today and in the future, Jewish people as well as Palestinian people need to accept the other as a symptom. Instead of trying to kill the other on account of their paranoid fear, the land of Palestine must be reconceived as a real homeland. Currently, Israel exists as a state; however, its status as a real place of safety is constantly in jeopardy. Rather than blaming the Arabs for failed peace, Israel and the Jewish people throughout the world have a duty to the land. The future of Jewish identity hangs in the

balance of accepting a great gift: The greatest gift to the Jewish people will be transcending trauma in the name of peace.

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