Preface

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Like many of the introductory texts that have opened issues of *Theory and Criticism* over the years, this preface is being written shortly after the end of a war. This time it was Operation Protective Edge, which began on July 8, 2014, ended in a ceasefire on August 26 of that year, and caused an enormous number of casualties: 2,200 people killed on the Palestinian side (the final number, like the number of combatants and civilians among them, are the subject of controversy); 74 people killed on the Israeli side (67 soldiers and seven civilians).

On the one hand, it seems that the last round of fighting between the Israelis and the Palestinians set a new record of violence. The Palestinians, with their constant barrage of rockets, succeeded in disrupting life in Israel for several long weeks, despite (and some will say, because of) the interceptions by Israel's Iron Dome system. Directing their violence inwards, Hamas forces executed Palestinians suspected of collaboration with Israel. The Israelis used exceptional force – for example, when employing the "Hannibal Directive," in the course of which, in order to thwart the capture of an Israeli soldier, they shot wildly and indiscriminately, demonstratively ignoring the number of casualties. True, Israelis who were suspected of collaborating with the enemy were not executed, but the military campaign was accompanied in Israel by an unprecedented wave of silencing, repression, and exclusion. Every attempt to question the rightness of the cause, or even to identify with the suffering of the Palestinians, was met immediately with violence of various kinds: demonstrators were beaten, workers were dismissed, journalists were persecuted, academics were censured. The intensity of the slanderous responses in the social media only heightened the feeling that the summer of 2014 was darker than any preceding summer.

On the other hand, it is clear that this summer duplicated, recreated, and recycled all the preceding summers (and winters) in the course of which Israel sought to pound, crush, and eliminate the "terror infrastructure" in Gaza. The intensifying violence only emphasized even more the eternal cyclicality. In an essay that appeared

in the online journal *Critical Legal Thinking* on July 11, 2014 (when the number of reported Palestinian casualties was 100), legal scholar Nimer Sultany studied the cyclicality as described in the world press ("Once again Israel is killing Palestinians"; or "Once again Israel has to defend itself again against Palestinians attacks") and pointed out the obligation to decipher what actually lies behind this cycle. According to Sultany, even if it is convenient to interpret the frequent use of "again" and "once again" as a rhetorical gesture or a symptom of despair, we must not content ourselves with this superficial reading: "Once again" connotes the "recursive power dynamic" and the "structural relationship between an occupier and an occupied. It should be a reminder of context rather than an erasure of context."[1]

Work on this issue had begun many months before Operation Protective Edge, but it is not surprising that a large number of the materials in it converse in various ways with the violence of Summer 2014 and provide that very context – political, historical, social, and cultural – that is so crucial for understanding the violence: the role of the Israeli legal system in justifying the occupation and intensifying it; the hidden, but stubborn, presence of the Nakba in the landscape of Palestine/Israel; the ability of the individual to stand up against the hegemonic patriotic mechanism; the wisdom of hindsight among the heads of the security forces; the view from the drone and the power to eliminate – both metaphorically and reality – individuals living under it.

Of all the texts, **Moriel Ram**'s article, "The Political Necrography of the Living Dead: On Theory, Criticism, and Zombies," offers a most timely discussion that links current developments in critical thinking, in popular culture and in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The zombie, Ram reminds us, is no longer an esoteric figure appearing in trivial horror films: since the 1990s it has been the focus of deep theoretical discussions in a long list of disciplines. The article examines the changing status of the zombie, the ways in which it is presented, and the types of criticism that its presence as a political metaphor generates. The thrust of the discussion places the zombie in relation to the post-humanistic concept that assumes that the "human" is created in the constant interaction with what is defined as other and different from it. Ram examines how the post-humanistic status of the zombie is expressed on two different levels. On the first level, the physical presence of the zombie disrupts the normative order that distinguishes between life and death. On

1 Nimer Sultany, "Repetition and Death in the Colony: On the Israeli Attacks on Gaza," *Critical Legal Thinking*, July 11, 2014, http://tinyurl.com/qds8mz7.

the second level, reflection on the nature of the zombie transcends the focus on the individual and deals with crossing the threshold beyond which the existence of society as a whole is placed in doubt. On this level, the discussion of the post-humanistic status of the zombie connects to the theoretical discourse on the "state of emergency." The concluding part of the article focuses on manifestations of the zombie in the Israeli space (for example, in the Hollywood film *World War Z*) as a way of exploring whether the growing fascination with the zombie in recent years has dulled its ability to serve as a tool for critical analysis.

Ram's article, of course, was written before Operation Protective Edge, during which the Israeli media made great use of visual and textual images of zombies. The journalist Avri Gilad, for example, posted on his Facebook page a document that came to be called "the zombies post" (which was received, he said, "from a writer who prefers to remain anonymous"). "Dozens of attack tunnels that terminate within the cities of the south are not terror tunnels. They are infrastructure for land conquest," the post states, adopting the apocalyptic scenario of movies about bloodthirsty zombies tirelessly marching forward in order to illustrate the nature of the threat awaiting Israel. "If we did not surprise ourselves with the sharp response to the kidnapping of the boys, Hamas, when it was convenient, would have sent thousands through the tunnels to conquer cities and military outposts, many thousands of soldiers disguised as IDF soldiers – killing, conquering, and kidnapping."[2] The Israelis' feeling of victimhood, formulated in terms of the eternal and inevitable cyclicality ("Israel is again struggling for its very existence"), is fused in this description with the gushing and irrational cyclicality that characterizes the zombie threat. Palestinian violence is presented as a primeval desire, frenzied and uncompromising, to destroy every living thing – to destroy humanity (that is, Israeliness) itself.

In response to these images, the playwright Amir Nizar Zuabi wrote a lyrical opinion piece that appeared in the daily *Ha'aretz* in which he internalized the identification of the Palestinians with a horde of zombies, the living dead, mute and unconscious – and extended it even further. Resisting the ahistorical interpretation of Gilad's "zombies post," Zuabi's article restores the historical context back into the story – while also presenting it, ironically, as the end of history. "Ten years and seven operations later, the mission is completed," Zuabi wrote.

2 http://tinyurl.com/l77lnpz

> Upper Gaza is totally abandoned. All of Gaza has moved underground. Men, women and children, a great mass of people.
> We dug entire neighborhoods, streets, highways, schools, theaters, hospitals. We dug mirror images of the land above that we abandoned. We gave up on the dream of getting out of the Gaza Strip. On the promises to lift the blockade, to find a solution to the crowdedness and the hunger, and we took action. We, who were attacked from the sky, from the sea, from the fields, who had one-ton bombs dropped on our heads in pointless rounds of killing, have turned our back on life. We, whom the world forgot, decided to pay it back in kind, and forgot it right back.
> Having despaired of the world, of the fear, of the blood, the only refuge left to us was the earth. We buried ourselves alive.[3]

It is the Palestinians' condition as living dead, hiding in the depths of the earth, which allows them to maintain a spark of humanity. Burrowed under Tel Aviv, they hear "the propaganda herds shouting 'Death to Gaza,' 'Death to artists,' 'Death to anyone who doesn't applaud,' 'Death to anyone who doesn't toe the line,' 'Death to life.'" Recalling the wave of violence that swept Israel in Summer 2014 and the loss of compassion and empathy, this description associates the image of the zombie with the glazed-eyed Israelis who, during the war, persecuted any human being perceived as a dissident, and following the end of the operation, sank into total amnesia – until the next time, that is. As I have noted, Moriel Ram concludes his article by wondering whether the growing popularity of the zombie has made it a too-clichéed concept that has lost its critical-subversive potential (suggesting, in other words, that the zombie has become a "zombie category," a term coined by Ulrich Beck in the 1980s). Operation Protective Edge, at least, proves that it is too early to write off the zombie's potential for critique.

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Like the opening article, most of the articles in this issue deal with the fluidity of borders – not only the boundary supposedly separating life from death, but also legal, social, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. Read separately or side by side, the articles deal with the construction of the Israeli/Palestinian space, both in concrete and in imagined terms.

3 Amir Nizar Zuabi, "One Day, When We Pop Up from Some Tunnel," *Ha'aretz*, August 4, 2014.

Smadar Ben-Natan's article examines the application of Israeli law to Palestinians in the occupied territories. Although in strict legal terms Israeli law does not apply in the territories, more and more sections of Israeli criminal law have been adopted over the past two decades into military law. The military system presents this adoption of Israeli law as a strategy aimed at preserving the rights of accused Palestinians. In practice, however, by taking the familiar and convenient path of Israeli law that strengthens their connection to the legal system operating on the other side of the Green Line, the military judges in the territories are made blind to the other's perspective and needs: The Israeli law that is applied to accused Palestinians (just like the Hebrew language in which the laws are published and in which the proceedings take place) is not accessible to them and to their lawyers, and so applying it deprives them of the possibility of conducting an effective legal defense. Moreover, as residents of an occupied territory, accused Palestinians and their lawyers are not parties to the creation of the law that applies to them, and thus their rights to self-definition and political-democratic participation are violated. In the name of aspiring to human rights, then, the application of Israeli law becomes a kind of de facto annexation.

Haggai Ram's article is part of an innovative study that examines how the "hashish problem" in Palestine/Israel has been defined since the British Mandatory period and why hashish has been loaded with a variety of meanings that have no real connection to the material itself or to its psychoactive effects. Ram considers the knowledge about cannabis that reached Israel as part of a chain of "wandering theories." Western knowledge about hashish took shape in the colonial encounters with populations in Asia and Africa, for whom consumption of hashish was an inseparable part of their culture; in these encounters hashish was accorded great importance as part of the racialization and marginalization of the native peoples. Later, in every place to which it migrated, this knowledge was adapted to the local social hierarchy. In these new contexts, hashish continued to reinforce the exclusion of populations that consumed it and fixed them in an inferior social class. And thus, from the time that this colonial knowledge about hashish arrived and was absorbed in Mandatory Palestine, it was applied to the main consumers of the substance – first to the Palestinians and the Arabs of the neighboring countries and after 1948 also to Jewish immigrants from Muslim countries. Although there is no evidence that Mizrahi Jews in Israel used hashish excessively, the knowledge served to Orientalize them and confirm their inferiority. Ram's research, which joins recent

critical debates about the role played by psychoactive substances in various societies at various times, is in itself an embodiment of migration (of academic insights) that joins the two migrations discussed in the article (the migration of hashish and the migration of the colonial knowledge about it).

Ori Schwarz discusses transformations in Israel's ethno-class structure, the social boundaries used for exclusion and evaluation of others, and the language available to Israelis for the representation of these boundaries. He argues that in recent decades Israeli society has experienced a classing process: class-based symbolic and social boundaries are increasingly salient at the expense of weakening ethnic boundaries. However, this transformation has not been accompanied by the emergence of discourse on class identity. Under these circumstances, the old ethnic categories are loaded with new layers of meaning, and are increasingly used metaphorically to designate class. Thus, when Israelis use ethnic categories, what they often mean is class. Schwarz shows how the word "Ashkenazi" is frequently used metaphorically to signify middle-class lifestyle and middle-class culture. Consequently, the rising Mizrahi middle-class is constructed as an inherently inauthentic deviation. Therefore, Schwarz argues, "hishtaknezut" (appearing or behaving like an Ashkenazi Jew) is not a pattern of actual "passing," as Orna Sasson-Levi and Avi Shoshana argued in their article in Issue 42 of *Theory and Criticism* – that is, cultural mimicry aimed at assimilation in the unmarked group – but rather the discursive effect of labeling directed at the rising Mizrahi middle-class, based on the assumed incongruence between their class and ethnicity.

Merav Perez's article deals with the phenomenon of avoiding military service (popularly referred to as "evasion"). The common discourse tends to link the unwillingness of Israeli youngsters to serve in the army with individualistic-materialistic views and the market ethos that has permeated the society in recent decades. Perez, who relies on in-depth interviews with dozens of men and women who did not serve in the military (that is, who used military protocols in order to release themselves from their legal obligation to serve in the military), offers a different explanation of the phenomenon. She argues that rather than external rewards, internal feelings – primarily the feelings of mismatch, anxiety, alienation, and absurdity with regard to the military sphere – are the main explanation behind the practice of avoiding military service, an explanation that formulates it as a legitimate action in the eyes of those who carry it out. This justification relies on an emotional and cognitive view that recognizes the right of the individual to

fulfill internal and unique emotion and instinct-driven desires and to act to achieve their own emotional wellbeing when they experience a real threat to it. This view undermines both the mechanisms of normalization and civilianization of the military and the “natural” meanings that it is supposed to take on. At the same time, because this discourse of emotional justification formulates the avoidance as an individual action lacking in political pretension, it does not subvert the common perception that military service in Israel is necessary for defending the existence of the state. It may thus lead to feelings of guilt derived from what is experienced as a gap between the individual need and the collective need.

The article by **Yair Lipshitz** joins various studies dealing with the place of the Song of Songs in Zionist culture. As is well known, poets, lyricists, artists, and choreographers have frequently made pastoral use of the Song of Songs: the city (identified in the biblical original with oppression and violence) is usually absent from the works, whereas Nature is portrayed as a space of physical and erotic freedom, freedom that Zionism itself sought to achieve. In contrast to this familiar interpretation, Lipshitz proposes examining the role of the biblical poem in the theater. The view of the Song of Songs as a pastoral text has specific roots in Western dramaturgy, and thus it has direct connections to the spatial dynamics of the theater. Nevertheless, only very few Hebrew plays in the twentieth century dealt directly with the Song of Songs. Lipshitz demonstrates how these dramatic works (and, in one case, a non-dramatic literary work) employ the Song of Songs in ways that challenge and even subvert its common use in Zionist culture: the theatrical works restore the urban space to the center of the action, bring the city and Nature together in an open conflict, and present the victory of the city. Thus, through the use of the theatrical space, the dramatic works expose some of the paradoxes underlying the formation of Hebrew culture.

Amer Dahamshy and **Liora Bigon** deal with the status of Arabic and Hebrew on road signs in the Galilee. Reading Israeli space as the product of national-establishment constructions, Dahamshy and Bigon see road signs as a powerful tool of the state for instilling cultural, social, and national values in its inhabitants. A methodical survey of various aspects of signage – the placement and organization of Arabic and Hebrew names on the signs, their prominence in the landscape, and the issue of their spelling and transliteration – points to a rhetorical policy operating in two complementary directions. On the one hand, the signs create spatial exclusion of the Palestinian memory, in an attempt to naturalize Palestinian society through

various manipulative means that will lead Palestinians to accept the state's images at the expense of their own rich toponymic corpus and to develop a loose and vague connection to the environment. On the other hand, the signs draw attention to the nature of the Hebrew language and the images connected to it, with the aim of supporting the Zionist project, strengthening Hebrew-speakers' regional awareness, and developing in them a feeling of belonging and spatial appropriation. Nevertheless, as sometimes happens in complex colonial situations, a subversive dimension exists in the field that is manifested, in this case, in graffiti on the existing signage.

In the concluding article **Hannan Hever** finds traces of the Nakba in the writing of Aharon Appelfeld. Appelfeld's work is generally blind to the Palestinian narrative, but in one story that is the focus of the article, "On the Ground Floor," the author presents, seemingly willy-nilly, shreds of memory of the Palestinian trauma alongside the memory of the Holocaust. As in many of Appelfeld's works, the plot centers around migrants who are Holocaust survivors, but this time they are located in a Palestinian house that was destroyed in the 1948 war. Hever argues that Appelfeld's inauguration as a writer of sovereign literature (known as the "generation of the state") imposed a double responsibility on him: on the one hand, he was required to represent, in an Israeli sovereign framework, the trauma of the Jewish victim, but on the other hand, he was required, as an Israeli, to accept responsibility for the trauma of the abuser who brought about the Nakba. The resistance of Appelfeld the migrant and refugee to the mobilization of the Holocaust trauma and the framing of its memory as the exclusive identity of the members of the Jewish nation-state leads him to draw attention, almost reluctantly, to the memory of the Palestinian trauma, without seeing it as a threat to the identity of the Jewish state and the justification of its existence. The memory of the Palestinian trauma, which refuses to disappear, brings us back to the historical context – connoted by "once again," "once more" – that is so essential to the understanding of the violence of Summer 2014.

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At the heart of each issue of *Theory and Criticism* are academic articles that undergo a rigorous peer-review process. This always has been and continues to be the journal's main objective, and the editorial board goes to great lengths to ensure the uncompromising quality of the peer-review process. Over the years, however, alongside these articles, the journal has also published essays – less formal texts that do not necessarily conform to the rigid demands of academe (and therefore cannot,

or are not required to, undergo academic review), but are able, precisely because of that, to break through customary boundaries and introduce original and critical discussions. Complementing the academic articles and the occasional assortments of visual imagery (curated under the title "Portfolio"), the journal introduced (in Issue 27, Fall 2005) a section called "Between Books," which included review essays highlighting various topical and ideological contexts. Over the years the journal has also published other texts – brief responses, debates, reviews of films, performances, or exhibitions – although the distinction between the different categories was sometimes merely formal.

From this issue on, all these texts will be included in a single section titled "Essays and Criticism." This title marks the transition into a different stylistic territory – which exists, as I have noted, in that ambiguous space nestled in between academic writing, prose, and critique. It converses with the journal's name but also highlights the complex mutual relations between the various meanings of "criticism," ranging from pure Kantian critique to the everyday, media use of the term. (It also, I can rather playfully add, echoes the title of the distinguished journal *Essays in Criticism* – but this resonance is all but absent from its original Hebrew rendition). And thus, in addition to the central place that we will continue to allocate for review essays of recent books (under the dedicated editorship of Yaniv Ron-El and Ella Glass), the new section will occasionally include critiques that will focus on one or more cultural texts (such as a play, a film, a television series, a book, an exhibition, a performance, or a cultural phenomenon) concerning Israeli society and culture. These cultural texts will serve as the basis for a broader discussion, including theoretical or political distinctions and insights that are relevant to the existence of *Theory and Criticism* as an Israeli platform.

Thus far I have discussed the "criticism" part of the new section's title; but what about the slippery concept of "essay"? In a recent e-mail exchange I had with Yonit Naaman, she provided a wonderful description of the genre, which firmly refuses to be fixed by a single, clear definition. With her permission, I present it here, with slight changes:

> The essay allows greater freedom in certain respects. It is close to the soul and clings less closely to theory. It is closer to literature but does not fit into the category of fiction. It is more biographical but not necessarily less theoretical, and when it is well written it will always express an additional sociological, historical, or literary dimension.

> The essay suffers from lesser academic prestige, whether or not that is justified, but it seems to me that when we seek a text that can affect our gut or change our awareness, a moving essay will always be neck-and-neck or even ahead of articles. Did Freud write articles or essays? Virginia Woolf? Brenner? Bialik? Fanon? Kahanoff?
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> It seems to me that in a gross, binary division, the essay is the feminine twin of the masculine article. The article is organized, coherent, and linear, follows rigid rules, and is written in a clear language and dialect that are familiar to the target audience. The essay, in contrast, does not necessarily start at the beginning and conclude at the end. It is likely to open more than it closes (true, a good article should also leave questions open, but they will always be allocated a defined place, and their very presence is a reflection on the entire article and the way in which the writer seeks to anchor it in the discourse).
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> Nevertheless – and I may seem to be contradicting myself unashamedly, but that is not the case – an essay, too, should be coherent, lay out arguments, even very orderly ones, and be located in the fields of discourse with the aim of influencing it or even changing it. But something in the rules of the game allows it flexibility and disobedience and a multitude of dialects, in an almost cheeky way. It is likely to be clear only to itself. It is the "fog in a pattern" of Yona Wallach, like a musical fantasy.
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> In conclusion, it seems to me that the great significance in publishing essays in *Theory and Criticism* lies first and foremost in the recognition of the importance of this genre and its inclusion in the precincts of academe. Precisely because this journal is not only an academic journal, but seeks to bring to the forefront critical texts, shapers of social and political discourse and awareness, I think that it must be host also to "the other" of theoretical-critical writing.

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Many of the principles that **Yonit Naaman** describes are manifested in her review essay, which opens the "Essays and Criticism" section in this issue and focuses on texts in various genres that together depict the town of Yeruham through the experiences of its inhabitants. Naaman examines the strategies they use to cope with the oppressive and limiting geosocial reality. The leading strategy is turning to religion, in either of two ways: religious "strengthening," which has an element

of subversion against the hegemonic framework that gave rise to the oppression, exclusion, and deprivation; and the idealistic groups of religious activists ("gar'inim") which settle in development towns in an attempt to import religious-Zionist values to them. Alongside these, other possibilities of redemption arise: a secularized redemption, marked by a turn to popular culture and to the medium of television; and an alternative kind of redemption which aims to oppose the determinism imposed by the planners from above.

The turn to religion is the focus of **Tomer Persico**'s essay, which highlights the deep cultural shift taking place in the West: the transformation of religion into ethics and a way of life. This change, triggered by the collapse of the transcendental monotheistic view that has guided the West since the Christianization of the Roman Empire, is a return of sorts to the days of Greece and Rome, on the one hand, and a turn to the cultures of the Far East and India, on the other. The new view of religion, which focuses on "the correct way to live," is typically manifested in contemporary Judaism, and in Israel in particular, in the form of a New Age spirit, and Persico discusses those manifestations, both in secular society and in religious society.

The focus of the works curated by **Yael Messer** and **Gilad Reich** is "The View from Above" – the state's appropriation of the sky, which began in the nineteenth century as part of the European colonial apparatus. The view from the sky made it possible to categorize, organize, and manage geographical spaces while ignoring the local population. Over time, the establishment's use of aerial photography made the view from above a synonym for control, surveillance, and violence. The images presented in this portfolio exemplify how artists, scientists, designers, journalists, architects, and activists have collaborated in recent years in transdisciplinary research and action groups that deconstruct the aerial space from the state's control and from the authoritarian perspective. The images converse with the historical background but also propose alternatives to the way in which aerial images are created, analyzed, and disseminated. Some of the projects tend toward the activist pole, which focuses more on action and less on representation; other projects emphasize the new visuality created by the view from above and explore the connection between this visuality and the aesthetic-ethical language that neutralizes aerial photography's associations with control and surveillance.

Yofi Tirosh writes about Talya Lavie's film *Zero Motivation*. Through humor and sarcasm the film offers a sharp critique of the marginal place of women in the army and the objectification and diminution they experience in the course of their

service. But Tirosh's analysis also focuses on the close connection between sexism and militarism: just as the enemy – that is, the Palestinians – are considered the ultimate "other," so too the women in the army undergo a process of othering which constructs them as a fundamentally different type of human being. From a sexist perspective, this fundamental difference between women and men justifies – even requires – a differential attitude toward women. Opening in Israeli cinemas just as Operation Protective Edge was launched, the film's critical and commercial success adds another, important dimension to its critique of Israeli militarism.

Ruth Preser offers a queer reading of the biblical Book of Ruth. Presser places the story of the relations between the two women, Ruth and Naomi, at the heart of her interpretive text. Her reading weaves in and examines such concepts as migration, exile, choice, loyalty, patriarchy, widowhood, and survival – concepts that remain relevant to women to our day. The fact that the essay was written in Berlin – Presser reminds us that in the Book of Ruth, too, the plot is driven by the cost of living, or the erosion of the ability to live with dignity – adds to the essay's topicality.

Last but not least, **Eyal Amir** reviews two books that deal with the architecture of the kibbutz. Through them he examines the attempts of the kibbutz founders to establish a utopian society and the way in which the planners of the kibbutz interpreted this attempt and implemented it. Amir points out the irony in the fact that kibbutz planning drew great inspiration from an architectural idea that was clearly the product of the capitalist era – the garden city – from which the suburbs, the quintessential bourgeois form of settlement, also developed. Amir places special emphasis on the role of the communal dining room which, he writes, is "the clear 'showcase' of the kibbutz ideology, both internally and externally." If indeed there is a utopian aspect to the phenomenon known as the kibbutz, Amir writes, the communal dining room is undoubtedly its most powerful representation. It is not surprising that in the accursed Summer of 2014 this utopian space became a key location for the zombie legends that so many Israelis dreamed up – legends that described, for example, how Palestinian zombies burst forth from a tunnel that leads from Gaza directly to the heart of the kibbutz dining room.[4] Thus, despite the decline of the kibbutz movement and the privatization of the kibbutzim, the

4 Uri Avnery, for example, related to this scenario when he wrote: "For the population on the Israeli side, the tunnels are a source of dread. The idea that at any time the head of a Hamas fighter may pop up in the middle of a kibbutz dining hall is not amusing." Uri Avnery, "Meeting in a Tunnel," Gush Shalom, August 2, 2014, http://tinyurl.com/mbdpdmw.

communal dining room continues to nourish the collective imagination – this time in a dystopian scenario that was averted (of course, until the next time) only by a last-minute "miracle."

The cyclical return to the zombies reminds us that even if the title of the new section was meant to create a clear division between the two parts of the journal, this boundary – just like the boundaries discussed in many of the texts appearing in this issue – is flexible and fluid. We hope that the essays and critical reviews included in the second part of the journal will continue to maintain a lively dialogue with the academic articles in the first section, and we invite you to participate in this dialogue.