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Temporality, nationalism and the territorialisation of public space

Commemorational presences in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv

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Temporality, nationalism and the territorialisation of public space - Commemorational presences in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I investigate how material strategies of commemoration are part of the recategorisation of public space in a series of nationalistic projects in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. I look especially at the different ways in which these commemorative territories are made present, and the specific view of history that these presences entail. The studied cases include for example the transformation of a public square into a 'memorial square' (Rabin Square), of a religious space into a 'space of national significance' (Western Wall Plaza), and of part of an urban district into a 'archaeological excavation' and a 'tourist theme park' (City of David). In the article, I trace and conceptualise five temporal modalities (or temporal perspectives) and discuss their related material designs. Finally, I discuss how studying these modalities can be fertile for exploring how memorials play a part in producing and stabilising different kinds of nationalist affects and sentiments.

In this piece, I look at the territorialisation of public space through commemoration; that is, how memorials or heritage sites are simultaneously used as passive vehicles of remembrance as well as actors that territorialise public space. I do this in order to investigate the different ways in which certain commemorative territories are made present and the specific view of history that these presences entail: instead of different perspectives on space, I am here thus interested in different perspectives on time. Territorialisation through commemoration is per definition multi-temporal, since it always includes the projection of a specific time or moment onto another, but how is this projection effected? What is the nature of this multi-temporality? How is history instrumentalised, visualised and embodied in these places, and how can we conceptualise the different modes or styles of these temporal projections? Commemorative practices are territorial as long as they transform a certain space into a memorial place or a heritage site. The territorial strategy of commemoration may be more or less successful, of course, but the many recent examples of debates on and resistance to different commemoration projects (such as, e.g., the statues on Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia) give us clear indications of their territorial and political potential (Baltes, 2018; Beech & Jordan, 2021; Yeats, 2021).

The use of time in the territorialisation of urban spaces has been discussed in different ways, e.g. through messianic time (Busbridge, 2020), the temporal spatial claims of squares (Kärrholm, 2017) and smaller urban spaces (Lu, 2023), rhythmicity (Prieto de la Fuente, 2018), sound making (Paiva & Cachinho, 2022), and the changing trajectories of domestic space (Paramita, 2022), to mention but a few. In one piece, we (Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2019) have also looked into the different temporalities that might take part in the territorialisation and birth of a specific building type. Building to some extent on that article, this paper will look into the different kind of temporalities that seem to have played a main territorialising role in a series of different nationalistic projects in Israel.

What does it mean to speak of *different* temporalities in this context? Territories do not have expiration dates, and they seldom follow a single temporal logic. A mundane example is the territorialisation of a person as ill. This is a quite clearly territorialised state: the body goes from being healthy to being unwell. An illness may come and go, we might experience and take measure of different signs of its emergence: a headache, a fever, a diagnosis, etc., but there is no absolute temporal border: one cannot pinpoint exactly when one became ill; the definition depends on how one wishes to define it. The state of illness is not governed by a single temporal order. It might involve clock-led routines of taking pills, but it may also involve sudden spikes in fever that follow another logic, or effects related to the cosmic rhythms of seasons or the time of day, etc. In short, various different temporalities or temporal logics might play their part in defining the state or even existence of my illness (cf. Mol & Law, 1994).

A memorial place may have similar stories of multi-temporality; it might be inaugurated, go into slumber, be rejuvenated by new rites,

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undergo a process of de-commemoration, be touristified, be forgotten, etc. The temporal, material and symbolical meaning-making of memorials has, for example, been studied within semiotics, which also has acknowledged the multiplicity of meanings that each monument or memorial might entail (Bellentani & Panico, 2016). This article will, however, not look at specific meaning-making processes or their transformation over time, but in more general way try to discern and pinpoint a series of different strategies or *temporal perspectives* for making a specific historical event and historicity present in space. Commemoration projects frequently seem to be dominated by a specific modality, indicating that a certain temporal logic is used as part of the territorialisation process (like turning a square into a memorial square). I thus look at how some different territorial commemoration projects draw on different logics and conceptions of time, and at how these logics have come to be materialised and designed in different ways. Here, I am interested in how memorial sites are materialised and territorialised through different forms of temporal projections and, how in turn, different material designs might play a part in stabilising a certain perspective on history and memory. How do commemorative projects make another time and memory present, and on which conceptions of temporality does this presence rely? How do the multi-modality and materialisation of these memorial sentiments in turn impact national and nationalistic imaginations?

In this paper, I use Jerusalem and Tel Aviv as cases. These two cities have often been contrasted. Jerusalem has been seen as a national, religious and reactionary city, divided and then allegedly reunited through the occupation of 1967, whereas Tel Aviv has been seen as global, secular and modern city, sharing the history of a settler society, but located within the Armistice border of 1949 (Alfasi & Fenster, 2005; Nitzan-Shiftan, 2007). Both cities have, in different ways, played an important part in the various commemoration projects that have come to play such a crucial role in the nation-building of Israel. These commemoration projects are often related to difficult pasts and presents, and focused on Jewishness (Vintzky-Seroussi, 2002: 49). James E Young describes it thus:

> Like any state, Israel remembers the past according to its national myths and ideals, its current political needs. Unlike that of other states, however, Israel's overarching national ideology and religion – perhaps its greatest 'national resource' – may be memory itself. (Young, 1993: 210).

A somewhat related argument can be found in Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi's *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory,* where he discusses the crucial importance of memory for Jewish culture and religion, as well as the problem of modern historiography in relation to this long mnemonic tradition (Yerushalmi, 1982). While we do not go into this further here, suffice it to say that memory has come to play a pivotal role in the building of Israel as a nation. There has been much focus on militaristic monuments and commemoration of soldiers and wars, as well as on Holocaust memorials and commemoration of heroes and martyrs (Azaryahu, 2002, p. 29; Adams and Gutel-Klein, 2022: 606 f.). Israel has thus been chosen as a case because it has a rich variety of nationalistic commemoration projects. Here, the focus will be a few major nationalistic projects, and not on commemorative strategies in Israel in general (for Palestinian commemoration practices, see for example Sorek, 2015). It is important to emphasise here that the aim is in no way to assign value or assess these different projects in any manner. Instead, the article looks more tentatively and heuristically into ways in which one can categorise and understand the different kinds of historical projections that are expressed in, and stabilised through, publicly materialised memorials.

1. The temporal gate

As we begin looking at different temporal logics and their associated designs, we will start with one of the most common ways of describing temporal presence: the instant. The instant always looks in two directions, expanding into the future and rewriting the past in a single stroke (Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2019). This double pull of an adamant instant, the 'specious present', has been addressed by philosophers such as William James and Alfred North Whitehead (Stengers, 2011, p. 58 ff.). Inspired by both, Gilles Deleuze points to how this becoming or instant 'pertains to the essence of becoming to move and to pull in both directions at once' (Deleuze, 2004, p. 3). William James describes it like this in his *Principles of Psychology* (1890): 'The practically cognized present is no knife-edge, but a saddleback, with a certain breadth of its own on which we sit perched, and from which we look in two directions into time' (James cited in Stengers, 2011, p. 59). A territorial and temporal strategy drawing on this notion of the present would thus somehow entail the accentuation and materialisation of an instant. It should, of course, be observed that the instant in itself is mute; the instant is an event that happens and passes, and only in hindsight can reason and an idea of what it might or can signify be produced (Stengers, 2011, p. 70 f.). This is exactly where this strategy comes into the picture. We can use the myth of the Roman Temple of Janus for reference and describe this territorial strategy as the implementation of a *temporal gate*. Historically, the gates of Janus were the entrance to the Temple of Janus in the Roman Forum. The gates were open in times of war and closed during times of peace. The opening or closing of the gates thus gives us a before and an after, as well as a point of time on which this change pivots. It is a gate in a spatial sense, but there is also a temporal gate, the moment in which war becomes peace and vice versa. Depending on its position, the gate symbolises wartime or peacetime. New Year's Eve can also be seen as temporal gate strategy in this regard: it is the territorialised moment when we conceptualise (and re-write) the history of the year just gone in the light of the year to come, and vice versa. It looks in two directions, but it is also an autonomous agent, projecting a moment of change both forwards and backwards.

Going on to commemoration, the founding of the national cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem could perhaps be described as the installation of such a temporal gate, forever marking and defining the relationship between a national past and future. Theodor Herzl's remains were taken from his family grave in Doblingen (near Vienna), where he had been buried after his death in 1904, and his reinterment took place on the hill in 1949 as Israel's first state funeral. The timing of this, shortly after the Second World War and just after the establishment of Israel as a state in 1948, is no coincidence, of course. For political Zionists, the Holocaust marked the impossibility of Jewish life in diaspora and the necessity of a Jewish State (Young, 1993, p. 215 f.). This was procured not least through the War of Independence, i.e., the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. The Herzl grave was the first Herzl monument. Previously, Herzl had only been commemorated in toponymical ways, i.e., through street names, etc. (Azaryahu, 1996, p. 50). In that same year, it was also decided that the military cemetery should be located at the slopes of the hill; early on, it was used as a military cemetery and a burial site for soldiers who had died in the War of Independence. The territorialisation of the hill thus involved the moving of the remains of both Herzl and of soldiers and forming a pantheon for the future of the Israeli State. The history and fate of these people was not only rewritten, but literally and symbolically integrated into the terrain of Jerusalem and Mount Herzl, establishing a logic, a foundational myth that in a single stroke rewrote both the history and future of Israel as a nation. Mount Herzl is very much an intentional monument (Riegl, 1982[1903]), marking as well as reterritorializing a before and an after. In this sense, it is a kind of temporal version of 'x marks the spot'; time is thickened in a way that also rewrites and distinguishes between before and after in the light of a specific moment that has been deemed remarkable.

Another example of the establishment of a temporal gate is the conceptualisation and heritagisation of the city of Tel Aviv (Rotbard, 2015). Tel Aviv was named after Nachum Sokolov's Hebrew translation of Theodor Herzl's book *Altneuland* (1902). Sokolov's free translation, meaning 'hill of spring', is taken from a town mentioned in Ezekiel 3:15.

The name thus gives the city of Tel Aviv an association to Herzl as well as to virginity and newness, whilst also connecting it to deep history (Azaryahu, 2007, p. 36 f.). An important part of the identity of Tel Aviv was the coining of the concept of the White City. The name caught on after a 1984 exhibition curated by Michael Levin and became an important actor in changing the conception, history and future of Tel Aviv (Rotbard, 2015:7). The name refers to the revival of the Bauhaus International style of architecture, introduced to Tel Aviv by architects fleeing Europe in the 1930s. Another piece of this puzzle, Rotbard suggests, is the artist Dani Karavan, who transformed 'the White City as a *theme* into a well-ordered *ideology*' (Rotbard, 2015: 38, italics original). This was primarily done through his 1977–1988 project White Square, a kind of model of the White City ideal, at Tel Aviv's highest point, on a hill in Edith Wolfson Park. In 1994, Tel Aviv and UNESCO curated the exhibition 'Bauhaus in Tel Aviv', and in 2003 UNESCO listed 'the White City of Tel Aviv' as a World Heritage Site (Azaryahu, 2008, p. 313).

A second epithet of Tel Aviv is that of a city built on dunes; one that experienced 'birth out of the sands' (LeVine, 1998, p. 37). This myth largely stems from a historical photograph of sixty-six families gathered on the white sand dunes for the Achuzat Bayit plot lottery in 1909 (Rotbard, 2015: 48). This moment has been used to set 1909 as the founding year of the city, although several other years would be equally accurate. For example, the official name Tel Aviv was given in 1910, the founding date for Achuzat Bayit is 1906, and a series of earlier Jewish settlements in the area could in fact also be used as founding symbols. The idea of a temporal gate set to 1909 and the myth that it was built on the dunes, the idea of a tabula rasa, hides the fact that it was built mostly on cultivated land and also on confiscated lands, or as Rotbard phrases it: 'Tel Aviv was not born from the dunes at all, but from, in and on top of its Arab neighbour' (Rotbard, 2015: 69).

As we have seen, the materialisation of the temporal gate can often be a distinct point in space and it works with methods of visibilisation, such as a tomb or an artwork on the highest hill of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, respectively.[1] The temporal gate can, however, also be materialised through the marking of a distinct point in time, such as the photograph of the Achuzat Bayit plot lottery. These are materialisations that allow us to perceive and understand what is regarded as reconfigurative moments in time.

2. Places of formal returns

If the instant allows for the rewriting and differentiation of the future and the past (the foundation of something new), the return helps us to measure and tame time. The return gives us the presence of something recognisable, and it is what allows us to weave time together, to count hours and days and to produce schedules. Returns also produce expectations, and in this sense, they are also a prerequisite for a moral time (Brighenti & Kärrholm, 2019). This notion of time has famously, and in a variety of ways, been addressed by philosophers such as Deleuze in his book *Difference and Repetition* (1994), and Lefebvre in *Rhythmanalysis* (2004). The architectural strategy building on this notion of time would be making place for *formal returns*. As mentioned above, the temporal gate is a way of situating, presenting and trying to pinpoint the (ultimately unplaceable) instant and its double pull. In order to enable this strategy to resonate and be sustained over time, we also need a strategy of returns. The *Helkat Gedolei ha-'uma,* a section of the Mount Herzl cemetery dedicated to Israeli state leaders or Zionist leaders predating the State of Israel, was thus already founded in 1952 in order to ensure the prolonged territorialisation of the hill through the constant return of deceased individuals deemed to be of importance to the nation. Furthermore, different recurring ceremonial activities soon became an integrated part of Mount Herzl. The opening ceremony on Israel's Independence Day took place on the plaza around Herzl's tomb in 1950, and it later became an annual tradition, or as Azaryahu puts it: 'a ritual reaffirmation of the original agreement between the nation and the visionary' (2002: 28).

Another reterritorialization through commemoration projects relating to the return can be seen after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin in 1995. This triggered a landslide of toponymic commemoration, with 94 different cases of naming and renaming within the first ten years. The accumulation of commemorations is of course an example of formal returns in itself. One of these was the renaming of Malchei Yisrael Square to Rabin Square shortly after the assassination (Azaryahu, 2012, p. 73). Although the renaming might be seen as an example of a temporal gate, the subsequent design discussions show the importance of keeping Rabin Square an important place of formal (as well as informal) returns. Already at its inauguration in 1947, the square was a place that afforded repeated rituals and crowds of up to 80 000, and this affordance was preserved in the refurbishment of the 1960s (Hatuka & Kallus, 2008). Despite different suggestions and discussions on the design of the square in the early 2000s, including an underground parking lot and amenities aimed at the revitalisation of everyday life, the original form of the rather large and often empty urban void was maintained (Hatuka, 2009). When a memorial at Rabin Square was being discussed, there were initially suggestions for memorials that encouraged debate, a speaker's corner of sorts, but ultimately the result was a subtle plaque in the ground (Franck & Paxson, 2006: 147). Designed by Claude Grundman-Berightman in 1996, the plaque near the stairs where Rabin was shot is located just next to one of the main routes and does not disturb the circulation of pedestrians who pass by it.

A public place of formal returns often takes the form of an open space, temporally affording circulation as well as larger crowds. Its design may follow a blank slate logic, but it may also accommodate specific rituals through well-designed and removable (or, at times, less salient) paraphernalia. A temporal equivalent is to leave a day open in the calendar. In Israel, as in other countries, the calendar is actively and strategically used to turn specific dates into vehicles of nationalistic memory (Young, 1993: ch. 10). These memorial days are followed up with ceremonies in schools, public places and in the media (Lomsky-Feder, 2004; Meyers et al., 2009). On *Yom HaZikaron*, the day of remembrance for fallen soldiers, for example, the day starts with a siren at 8 p.m. (the day starts at sunset). Everything stops for 1 min, regardless of place. As with the date of the calendar, we here have a quintessential temporal staging of the formal return.

3. Chronic ruptures

Third, we have presence as an extraordinary, catastrophic and overturning event that, unlike the former two, does not engage in dialogue with its past or future. It implies a chronic, rather than a chronological time; i.e., time as a whirlpool of becoming, a state of exception, a single order suspended from its context. In this sense, it cannot be used like the return to measure a before and an after: it is an abnormal, one-time-only rupture (Brighenti, 2023). This notion of time can thus be associated with the discontinuity of revolts rather than with the strategies of revolutions (Jesi, 2014), or any kind of new and strategic foundation. Walter Benjamin puts it like this: 'What characterizes revolutionary classes at their *moment of action* is the awareness that they are about to make the continuum of history explode' (Benjamin, 2003, p. 395, my italics). In this way it can also be related to the moment that the semiotician Juri Lotman call explosion (Lotman, 2009). For Lotman, the moment of explosion opens up a space of unpredictability and possibility that breaks with any logic of cause and effect (Gherlone, 2022, p. 288). Chronic aspects of temporality are not limited to a grand scale but can also be found in the catastrophes and ruptures of everyday life. Michel de Certeau and Georges Perec, two champions of the quotidian, can both be seen as relating to this temporal aspect in their view on memory as a

[1] This focus on verticality has, as Weizman has also played an important part in other Israeli strategies of territorialisation, for example, in the form of mountain settlements (Weizman, 2012: 130 ff.; Delaney, 2005, p. 141 ff.).

'flash of the occasion' (Sheringham, 2006, p. 275), something that produces an effect in a place where it does not belong, that is not part of the longitudinal logic of that place. Regardless of temporal scale, the catastrophic event disturbs the continuity of a chronological order. In a sense it becomes a catastrophe that never can be tamed or made to disappear.

A strategy building on this conception of time may perhaps be called a *chronic rupture*. Whilst the materialisation of a chronic moment might seem a contradiction in terms, even an overturning event has a materiality to it. The chronic moment is often marked with a one-off rupture of sorts. Nevertheless, and in spite of itself, it lingers on. This notion of time is thus chronic in the way that an illness or a trauma can be chronic. The strategy of the chronic rupture allows for the illness to reappear – not as a return, as it was already there – but as new ruptures and outbreaks. In the history of the Israel as a nation, the creation of the Western Wall Plaza can perhaps be seen as an example of such a strategy, inspired by an overturning event, and the paradoxical way of trying to materialise this event. In 1967, just three days after the Six-Day War, a radical urban transformation project was executed without any official authorization. A group of representatives made the decision on the spot,[2] and Chaim Hertzog, the first military governor of the Occupied Territories, later claimed that after finding a toilet attached to the Wailing Wall and deciding to remove it, they realized that they now had a unique opportunity to 'evacuate the entire area in front of the Wailing Wall' (Hertzog cited in Weizman, 2012: 38). The first boundaries of the plaza were then drawn by the architect of that same group, Arieh Sharon. This resulted in the demolition of the whole Mughrabi (North African) Quarter, making room for an enormous plaza in connection to the Western Wall (Nitzan-Shiftan, 2017, p. 221 ff.; Weizman, 2012: 37 f.). Prior to 1967, the Western Wall had been owned by a Muslim charitable endowment, and Jewish accessibility to the wall had been restricted (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 127). The Western Wall Plaza was the result of an occupation and the subsequent opportunity to commemorate Jewish history and religion and reclaim the Wall, but only by tapping into a moment of exception, and by deleting (or 'eating', to use the verb associated with Cronos, the Titan who ate his children) a part of the city and its history. In a way, the whole notion of 'The Great Western Wall', as it came to be called, also echoes and materialises the rupture between East and West, along with its old connotations of threats of fear and conquest (Haldar, 1994, p. 193 f.). It should, however, be noted that this specific rupture does not hinder the 1967 event from being conceptualized in Israel as an important moment of reunification of the formerly divided city. One can perhaps even argue, as Nitzan-Shiftan does (2007: 96), that 1967 was the year when the foremost place forming a sense of Israeliness changed from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The Western Wall Plaza was given a temporary design by a team headed by the orthodox architect Yosef Scheinberger, with the eastern part, adjacent to the wall, being used for religious activities such as prayers and pilgrimage (with gendered separation); the southern part designated for archaeological digs, and the western part for visitors and nationalistic activities, including new ceremonies such as the oath-taking proceedings of the Israel Defence Forces and the opening ceremony on Israel's Memorial Day for Fallen Soldiers (Cohen-Hattab, 2010:130 f; Nitzan-Shiftan, 2017, p. 242). Scheinberger's temporal design was not a coincidence but a deliberate strategy, with the idea of letting the plaza take shape in stages over several generations (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 131). The design of a chronic rupture (the demolition of an urban block) was induced with the idea of a slow-paced design, aimed to be a place of formal returns. This also included the idea of new designs to come, but as we shall see below, the latter proved very difficult, as the figure of the rupture had already been stabilised.

[2] According to Nitzan Shiftan, the decision was taken by the Jerusalem mayor and some 'gathered representatives from the national, municipal and military authorities' (2017: 231).

Instead of redefining the place, we can perhaps describe these attempts as relapses. The place seems unable to escape its chronic state.

Returning to Rabin Square, we also see some signs of design ideas that follow a chronic rupture logic. In a proposal for a legislation of the square in 2001, the Israeli Knesset Interior and Environment Committee wrote that:

> Rabin Square is definitely a symbol for the Israeli nation. This is where a Prime Minister was murdered. People come to this place from all over the world. I certainly think that / … /, it is appropriate to legislate another law to preserve the Square as it was on the day of the murder, for everyone. (cited in Hatuka, 2009: 198).

Here, we thus see an attempt at establishing a standstill, or freezing time, a strategy that (in all its impossibility) works well with the idea of the chronic rupture, but that of course failed to manifest itself.

The materialisation of a catastrophic and chronic event seems like a contradiction in terms. In the examples above, however, we have seen the design ideas of the unfinishable and the untouchable as two ways of addressing this problem; the Western Wall Plaza contains both. Both cases can be seen as a way of trying to expand the chronic rupture in time – or even as a way of annihilating time. Another way is trying to challenge the logic of space. Designers of Holocaust commemorations have struggled with how to materialise the notion of a disastrous rupture, and here ideas relating to voids, negative forms and things disappearing have often been utilised (Young, 2008, p. 359 f.). The process of building the Hall of Remembrance (part of Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust) in Jerusalem is a case in point. Starting out in rather complex architectural ideas of spatial divisions during the 1940s, it eventually crystallised in 1961 as a large space with 'nothing but the names of the concentration and death camps, an eternal flame, and a grave of martyrs' ashes' (Bar, 2022, p. 181). Safdie Architects' solution for the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum (2005), cutting deep into the Jerusalem bedrock, might be seen as another attempt to materially manifest the chronic rupture. Although we will not go further into Holocaust memorials here, it could perhaps also be interesting in this regard to reflect briefly on the case of a failure. Azaryahu (2011) has written about the Monument of the Holocaust and National Revival, now on Rabin Square, as a case of commemorative failure. The monument was commissioned in the 1960s and an object of extensive public controversy in the early 1970s, before it was finally put in place in 1975, but without an official inauguration. The monument has the form of an upside-down pyramid, and it was already clear early on that it failed to live up to the commemorative intentions for it. Azaryahu points to its abstract and incomprehensible form as a reason for this. I would argue that an upside-down pyramid is quite weak as a concept in relation to the notion of disruption or catastrophe (otherwise often related to these kind of commemorations). It does not really take the form associated with chronic ruptures, but instead has some of the characteristics of a temporal gate (marking a specific moment/space). Quite logically, one of its main functions subsequently seems to be serving as a reference point for spatial orientation and as a place for meeting up (Azaryahu, 2011, p. 145 f.), i.e., for spatially marking a moment in time.

4. Monohistorical moulds

Fourth, we have the idea of a temporal logic that wants to bind together the past and the future through the present. To make present is here to link. In a way, it is a reversion of instant as discussed above. The instant is rich and excessive and wants to pull its transformative power into the past and the future at the same time, whilst in the same stroke distinguishing itself from the past and the present as well as establishing a sharp differentiation between them. Here, we instead have the idea of a specific past that, coupled with the idea of a specific future, is brought forward to colonise, dominate or even eradicate the present.

In her discussion on messianic time, Rachel Busbridge notes that

there are at least two aspects of waiting seen as related to messianism. First, we have waiting as a passive state in which nothing can be definitely accomplished, and the duration linking the two moments is of no consequence.[3] Waiting denotes a lack, an incompleteness, and this is also why waiting can be so hard to endure. The arrival of the awaited is what gives waiting its meaning (Gasparini, 1995; Schweitzer, 2008). In this sense, waiting is also a blank moment, calling out for meaning (cf. Heterington's notion of the blank figure, Hetherington, 1997). Second, we have a religious Zionist approach, where history can be affected by human will and action, and where waiting is instead seen as active. This version of messianic time argues that Jerusalem must be made Jewish for the Messiah to come (Busbridge, 2020, p. 3 f.). Here, a notion of urgency and pace also comes into the equation, as we never know when redemption will come. This active waiting conveys a feeling of control. To endure the passive void of waiting, we can read history backwards and connect an idealised and fixed future with the history that grounds it, but how does one make this knot? Here, we have a temporal strategy quite common in nationalistic projects, a strategy that we can call *monohistorical moulds* here.

Using both the City of David and the Temple Mount as examples, Busbridge shows how political and not least religious Zionist versions of messianic time have been used as territorial technology for Israeli colonisation. City of David is a national park and excavation site just south of the Old City in Silwan, an urban district in East Jerusalem. The City of David project focuses on the biblical period and the early history of Jerusalem, ignoring any other finds, mixing 'religious nationalism with theme-park tourism' (Greenberg, 2009, p. 36). According to Busbridge, it manipulates time, hiding 1800 years of history in order to claim space as Jewish (Busbridge, 2020, p. 5 f). A mythical future and a mythical past are thus used to eradicate a Palestinian then, now, and future. In fact, Silwan has a long history of Arab inhabitation, one of the oldest in Jerusalem (Pullan & Gwiazda, 2009, p. 31, see also Shilo & Collins-Kreiner, 2019), but this history is bracketed off as inconsequential. Pullan and Gwiazda express it thus:

> While Silwan had been able to withstand one hundred and fifty years of archaeological excavations, carried out by international and local interests, far right heritage stewardship combined with a concerted urban design strategy only needed a fraction of this time to threaten its very existence as a Palestinian neighbourhood. (Pullan & Gwiazda, 2009: 37)

They also note the name of the visitor film: 'Where it all began … and still continues' (p. 33), and in these words we do indeed have a quintessential formulation of the monohistorical mould.

The monohistorical mould builds on the idea of a well-defined historical value and singularises an historical ideal. Alois Riegl describes historical value as something that 'singles out one moment in the development continuum of the past and places it before our eye as if it belonged to the present' (1982[1903]: 38). The idea of an archeologically inspired architecture is also related to this. Louis Kahn, an important actor and architect in the reconfiguration of the Old City of Jerusalem after the Six-Day War, already argued in favour of archaeology as the basis for architectural design and construction. Kahn's design for the Hurva Synagogue and a pilgrimage pathway in the Jewish Quarter also borrowed its form from the ruins (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 132 f.). For the Israeli nationalist project, exposing and building on biblical archaeology rather than any other archaeological or historical strata has also been seen as a way of justifying Jewish ownership (Weizman, 2012: 39 ff.). Moshe Safdie, who was one of Kahn's pupils, also advocated the use of an archeologically inspired architecture. In his plan for the Western Wall Plaza in 1973, Safdie suggested a monumental square with the exposure of a Herodian street 9 m under the ground, and a series of terraces mediating the height up towards the Jewish Quarter, giving the plaza the form of an abstracted amphitheatre (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 137). The design is made in an architectural style inspired by a biblical past combined with the use of a modern prefabricated element technology. Safdie's suggestion was met with different criticism, for example, against the finalised design and the fact that the Plaza was no longer open to change. There were also concerns that Safdie's design did not bring an appropriate sense of lack or devastation to the place, thus working against the logic of the chronic rupture. Finally, there was criticism relating to the theatrical form and exposure of the orthodox as a spectacle. The architect David Cassuto even likened it to a zoo, where Orthodox Jews are standing below for the secular to watch. In short, the plan was subject to much discussion, and although it was officially approved in May 1977, the project was effectively laid to rest by the Minister of Religion (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 139 f., Nitzan-Shiftan, 2017, p. 269).

The monohistorical mould is strongly related to the logic of the western cultural heritage tradition, where a certain point in time is at once both frozen and lifted as an ideal to which the built environment (of a certain place) should aspire. This ideology famously goes back to Viollet-le-Duc and the nineteenth century idea of preservation as the aspiration of a single and clear historical ideal, an idea that Riegl has described as the 'complete amalgamation of newness-value and historical value' (Riegl, 1982[1903]: 44). The design of a monohistorical mould is thus often materialised as the idealised interpretation of a specific past that simultaneously tries to set the table for a specific future. Through actively losing information, it denies multiple histories in order to produce what Lotman called a monolithic truth (Lotman in Gherlone, 2022, p. 29). It can thus use archaeological inspiration whilst also including idealised versions of historical styles that have never before existed as such. It can also work by mimicking and reappropriating historical rituals.

5. Amalgamation of times

Finally, we have the idea of a non-linear contemporality, and the notion that the present is always already riddled with different temporalities. In *We Have Never Been Modern* (1993), Latour suggests that rather than a flow, the present is a conglomerate of different times. Time is a provisional result of multiple connections and entities, each of different and uncertain durations and ages. Times do not sort the world for us, but it is through the sorting that we make times (Latour, 1993, p. 74 f.). Relatedly, Brighenti has characterised Elias Canetti as having a continuist understanding of history that opposes a single, linear conception (Brighenti, 2023: 159). This suggests that existence is not a single state of affairs, but the simultaneous prolongation of many processes of transformations and regroupings. This notion of time translates into a temporal strategy that allows for a multitude of different temporalities and moments to come to light at once, a strategy that, like the practice of *spolia*, allows for contemporality through an assembled form. In fact, we see this in form-taking processes all the time. All places are multitemporal, and hiding or eliminating this takes time. An example is the famously rich flora of the Colosseum in Rome. Studied by botanists for centuries (Caneva et al., 2003), and sometimes weeded out, it is a reoccurring reminder of all of the foreign and domestic animals that have roamed the building over thousand/s of years.

The temporal strategy that corresponds to the continuist notion of time is the material amalgamation of times. An example here could be the 'living memorial' commemorating the death of Yitzakh Rabin at Malchei Yisrael Square (later Rabin Square) in the first months after his assassination. Mira Engler (Engler, 1999) has described this, detailing the spontaneous commemorations that took place on the square in the first months and included an assemblage of different objects marking the place of the murder, as well as the use of all available surfaces for

[3] Busbridge attributes this to Gershom Scholem's view on Jewish messianism, but it should be pointed out that Scholem acknowledges different attitudes to waiting within Jewish messianism, including a more active one 'pressing for the end' (Scholem, 1971, p. 15).

images, pasted notes and graffiti. Even the Holocaust Memorial, placed on the square in 1975, was used as a canvas for texts and images. Although almost all of the traces of the more spontaneous commemorations were later removed, some of the graffiti was preserved and framed, acknowledging and documenting the public trauma and mourning in the first few months after the murder (Engler, 1999, p. 9; Hatuka, 2009, p. 204). Rabin Square has at least three different vehicles of commemoration, then: one relating to the Holocaust, one to Yitzhak Rabin, and one to the public mourning following his assassination. Adding to that, one might also argue that we have the square itself, marking a continuing tradition of affording large crowds that goes back to the late 1940s. In a sense, the naming of Rabin Square refers, of course, to a specific moment in history – the time of the assassination – but the material strategy does not. There is no singular moment when the commemoration design of the square is defined; instead, it can be seen as an assemblage of different commemorations.

Returning to the Western Wall Plaza, Safdie's former mentor Louis Kahn criticised Safdie's proposal for subordinating the entire area to a unified design and stated that 'Safdie's comprehensive synthesis of different periods and themes divested this ruptured site of its power' (Kahn as paraphrased by Nitzan-Shiftan, 2017, p. 260). Another critique came from the American-Japanese sculptor Isamu Nooguchi, who criticised Safdie's proposal for being built on a single history and for not allowing the present to take its own form (Nitzan-Shiftan, 2017, p. 262). Noguchi had offered his own suggestion for the Western Wall Plaza already in 1968. In it, the square is divided into two plazas, one on top of the other: a lower plaza containing excavated elements from the past, and an upper present-day level. Mediating the two plazas is a large stone stele which also would ensure that praying people would be less exposed. The stone also served to make the wall more prominent through a contrast effect. Noguchi also wanted the stone to 'symbolise the continuous existence of the Jewish nation from its beginnings, through various periods of its history, and into the future' (Cohen-Hattab, 2016, p. 133). The idea of covering the wall, in a way reminiscent of the pre-1967 situation, aligns with a number of other proposals. In Saáida Mandel's design, the wall would only appear as one comes closer to it after a turn (2016: 136), and in Pereg's plan, an entrance platform gives access to the archaeological site, the prayer zone and the national zone, working spatially with a kind of collage technique of different zones.

The materialisation of an amalgamation of times can be related to collage techniques, routes that bind different places together, or the development of boundary objects, i.e., objects that can hold a series of different roles and thus be used in different ways by different groups without breaking or being dominated by any of these uses (Star & Griesemer, 1989). It could also make additions through new and different stories, for example, through a multiplicity of differently arranged guided tours of the same place (Strömbom, 2019). Different processes of de-commemoration could sometimes also be seen as adding to this temporal eclecticism (see Adams & Guttel-Klein, 2022).

6. Temporality, nationalism and the territorialisation of public space: Concluding discussion

For Karen Barad, 'time has a history' (2007: 180); time is not innocent but rather produced and sedimented. How time develops and becomes sedimented depends on the entities and interactions that produce it. There is thus no single force of time to move all of us. In a sense, all relationships have a motion that is produced in relation to other things, or as Barad puts it: 'Temporality is constituted through the world's iterative intra-activity' (Barad, 2007, p. 180). Following such a relational perspective, I see time here as produced through the interaction of persisting forces. A 'general time' must be seen as an abstraction and composed by a plenitude of different situated motions and interactions. Presence is the way in which we take part in this plenitude of intra-activity and cognize a more unified temporal motion. Interaction is crucial for the passing of time. Through repeated relations with the world, moving from presence to presence, one can understand how things take time and gain a sense of how different durables around us, such as seasons, bloom times, etc., unfold. It is by being present that we can conceptualise and experience time from a multitude of interactions (of different durability), or as the German philosopher Philipp Mainländer put it:

> In cognizant beings, the point of present stands above the individual point of movement. The point of the individual movement stands next to the points of all other individual movements, i.e., all individual movements form a general movement of uniform succession (Mainländer, 1876: 15, my translation).[4]

Time is thus produced in a specific and entangled context of relationships. It passes and sediments, but the present of living entities continues to move, and so does their version of pasts and futures. In this sense, time does not just pass, but it also always remains and returns (Latour, 1993, p. 69). This is why we need to be cautious about how history is made present. Following our description of time, this presence is always an abstracted, fragmented, situated, manipulated, transformed and rudimentary version of the moment it wants to represent. In other words, the way that history stays alive is always in a series of more or less polished strings and pieces. The memorial represents a preservation of a certain impression of history, but what fragment is re-presented and how? A memorial does not only represent a moment, of course, but also comes with a historicity, proposing (at least implicitly) a certain way of understanding this piece of history. A historical picture is always accompanied by a specific kind of historical perspective or way of projection (Erwin Panofsky already pointed to this in relation to space in *Die Perspective als 'symbolische Form'* in 1924-5). The question is not merely what history is materialised, but also which perspective on history this materialisation entails, and to what purpose this history is put.

The examples above demonstrate that the ways in which history is conceptualized and materialised and made present in commemorations are neither innocent nor uniform. They give us a historical moment, but they also manifest different ways of understanding what history is and can be – a historical style of projection. Different commemorations work with different material strategies of making history present, some trying to obscure all other stories but their own, others more willingly acknowledging the richness of different memories and histories associated to a certain place. If a specific commemoration project involves an attempt at territorialisation (producing a memorial plaque at Rabin Square or a national cemetery at Mount Herzl) and a more or less homogenic temporal presence, the places where these projects land are always more complex. As we saw in the examples, most places draw on several different temporal logics or modalities, establishing their effects through a series of relations between material and commemorative agents. Rabin Square, for example, can be seen as a place of formal returns, and as a place (to a certain extent) constituted by an amalgamation of times. It is, however, not a very good example of a temporal gate, a monohistorical mould or a chronic rupture (the 'failure' of the Holocaust monument, and the discarded idea of freezing the place, were used as examples here). Different modalities can co-exist to strengthen, dominate or contradict each other in different ways. By addressing the temporal and material multitude of commemorative presents, we can learn something about how these play a part in the territorialisation and instrumentalization of history at a certain place, i.e., if they play a part in homogenising the territorial association of that place, or if they instead contribute to the territorial complexity of that place, that is, if they

[4] The German original reads: ‚Ueber dem Punkte der Bewegung des Einzelnen steht, bei erkennenden Wesen, der Punkt der Gegenwart. Der Punkt der Einzel-Bewegung steht neben den Punkten aller anderen Einzelbewegungen, d.h. sämmtliche Einzelbewegungen bilden eine allgemeine Bewegung von gleichmäßiger Succession.'

suggest a kaleidoscope of different pasts. Just as museums and history books, the urban places around us play an important part in forming our view of history and the ways in which history should and can play a part in the present.

The modalisation of different presences can be used for comparing the commemoration strategies of different places or, indeed, of different cities. The rivalry between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv is a well-known one, and there seems to be a division of labour of sorts when it comes to the role that the two different cities play in representing the nation of Israel. An example is the gathering of right wing and orthodox groups at Zion Square in Jerusalem, whilst left wing and secular groups tend to gather at Rabin Square (David et al., 2018). Rather unsurprisingly, the focus on nationalistic memorials is stronger in Jerusalem. Azaryahu has pointed out that the nationalisation of the Western Wall Plaza (from the late 1960s and onward), e.g., through nationalistic ceremonies, has not resulted in a secularization of that place, rather it has helped to infuse 'the patriotic ceremonies performed there with religious meanings.' (Azaryahu, 2002, p. 31). Different memorial spaces and heritage sites are thus linked and feed into each other in different ways. Looking at the different temporal modalities mentioned, we saw how a temporal gate was used for the (first and ongoing) birth of the nation in Jerusalem, and for the birth of a city in Tel Aviv. In the case of Tel Aviv, often mentioned as the first Hebrew city (Azaryahu, 2007), the city, at least initially, became a symbol for the nation. In the case of Jerusalem however, projects aim at symbolising the nation in the city. There also appears to be a stronger tendency of homogenisation in the national memorials in Jerusalem. For example, the strategy of monohistorical mould seems to be strong in Jerusalem, not least in the areas that were occupied in 1967. It is interesting to note that Rabin Square, which is a fairly new square as far as urban squares go, still has been open for an amalgamation of time. The Western Wall Plaza, on the other hand, where an amalgamation of time would seem inevitable, has worked more with other temporal modalities: as a place of formal return, chronic rupture and, like in Safdie's officially approved although still shelved plan, even as the idea of a monohistorical mould. I suggest that the mapping of different modes of temporal projections can facilitate the study of how urban materialities and memorials nurture different temporal cultures, affecting urban as well as national imaginaries and practices. Temporal perspectives are not innocent, but play active part in the territorialisation of both space and history.

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