

Lyric, Nation, and Dialogism: Uncovering the Lost Voice of Maxim Ghilan

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Abstract This article introduces, for the first time, the marginalized writings of Israeli-statehood-generation poet Maxim Ghilan (1931–2005), who lived in self-exile in Paris as a result of his political activism. By investigating the relationship between lyric poetry and nationalism, the article introduces Ghilan’s early poetry, followed by a close analysis of his groundbreaking and understudied poem “In Enemy Land,” written upon his return to Israel. Ghilan’s poetry overturns nationalist discourse by revisiting the events of 1948 and evoking the dual notion of return, namely, the Israeli Law of Return and the Palestinian Right of Return. In an effort to contribute to New Lyric Studies, the article offers a new form of lyric reading, the “trans-national lyric,” a hyphenated form of transnationalism used to emphasize crossing over and moving beyond the nation. The trans-national lyric dismantles the lyric speaker’s sovereign position and consequently uncovers the silent—and silenced—dialogic voices that are an inseparable part of the genre. The article concludes with an analysis of lyric address and the ethical role

The seeds of this article were planted in the early stages of my academic journey in the United States. It all began with one conversation with my mentor Ming-Qian Ma, which subsequently changed my research trajectory—and my life. Ma, I cannot thank you enough for encouraging me to focus on my homeland, Israel-Palestine, while relentlessly pushing me to retheorize the lyric. A special thank you to my courageous mentor and friend Jim Holstun for your endless support, as well as your generous comments on earlier versions of this manuscript. I express my deepest gratitude to Yossi Granovski, Maxim Ghilan’s close friend and archivist, for generously providing materials for this research, and as always, to Guy Weiss for keeping our house on solid ground. Finally, this article is based on research conducted at the Mandel Library and the Maxim Ghilan collection at the Beit Ariela Library in Tel Aviv–Jaffa. It was made possible via the generous support of the Mark Diamond Research Fund and the Ruth and Isadore Bob Young Dissertation Fellowship. Unless otherwise noted, all translations to English are my own.

of reading, whereby readers are implicated in the process of forced remembering and historical revision.

Keywords lyric poetry, Maxim Ghilan, 1948, transnationalism, Israel-Palestine

What can the lyric do within and beyond national discourses, particularly in areas of geopolitical conflict? I emphasize the lyric's ability to actively carry out an action, commit to something other than its traditional solipsism, and bring about change because the lyric poem has been confined to the realm of the affective—and not the effective—for too long. Consider Jean-Paul Sartre's *littérature engagée*. In "What Is Literature?" (1948), Sartre marginalizes poetry (not specifically the lyric), claiming that the poet "considers words as a trap to catch a fleeing reality rather than as indicators which throw him out of himself . . . all language is for him the mirror of the world" (Sartre 1988: 30). In "Black Orpheus" (1949), Sartre redeems poetry's seeming lack of engagement with the "world," along with its mimetic qualities, by highlighting the way poets from the Négritude movement evoke cultural expression against colonial rule and appropriate the colonizer's language. By likening "the most authentic revolutionary plan [with] the purest poetry" (Sartre 1988: 330), the latter transforms into a vessel for nationalist and political mobilization and resistance.

Sartre's notion of "committed writing" brings into question the cognizant nature of the lyric poem. Furthermore, his account of the Négritude movement draws our attention to the genre's ability to radically engage with sociopolitical realities. As it remains, the lyric, especially within the Anglo-American tradition, has often been viewed as the literary site of the self, a poetic paradigm that houses a fictional subject. Given the wave of New Lyric Studies¹—which still remains rather Anglophone-centered—it is imperative to consider the lyric's potential outside the Anglo-American canon or, as Jonathan Culler (2009: 886) puts it, "to conceiv[e] of a broad range of possibilities for lyric in many periods and languages [since] a broadly historical [and] transnational conception of lyric enhances critical understanding."

In order to enhance lyric scholarship in other linguistic traditions, this article attends to Israeli lyric poetry and its sociopolitical affiliations in the context of Israeli-Palestinian history, with a particular focus on the life and works of understudied Israeli poet and peace activist Maxim Ghilan (1931 –

1. The rise of new lyric scholarship is often attributed to the publication of "New Lyric Studies," a cluster of essays published in *PMLA* (Yaeger 2008). Recently, Virginia Jackson and Yopie Prins (2014) edited a critical anthology, *The Lyric Theory Reader*, which assembles a breadth of twentieth- and twenty-first-century Anglo-American lyric criticism.

2005) and his groundbreaking poem “In Enemy Land.” Though Ghilan was a contemporary of the Israeli-statehood-generation poets and a well-known political activist outside Israel—he even attempted to advance peace talks with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) at a time when such endeavors were illegal and considered treasonous—his poetry has been marginalized and rendered invisible. Ghilan’s lyric writings exemplify the genre’s commitment to social engagement and a desire to actively immerse in—and even overturn—nationalist discourse.

Ghilan’s significant oeuvre sheds light on the intricate connections between poet and nation and raises questions concerning the lyric’s ethical nature. This article begins with a brief overview of Ghilan’s life and early writings, followed by the historical turning point of the 1980s and 1990s, with the revisionist efforts of the Israeli New Historians and the rise of post-Zionism. My close reading of “In Enemy Land” contributes to new lyric scholarship by offering new methods for investigating the lyric poem and its dialogic attributes, with particular attention to the genre’s most striking and foremost feature: the speaker. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I argue, provokes a radical reorganization of the lyric whereby the speaker dismantles his own sovereign position within the poem and consequently uncovers the silent—and silenced—dialogic voices that are an inseparable part of lyric form. Finally, Ghilan’s lyric unravels the entwined history of Israel-Palestine by evoking the constitutive time period of 1948, which had far-reaching ramifications for Jews and Palestinians and led to the dual notion of return: the Jewish Law of Return and the Palestinian Right of Return. The poem presents an alternative mode of lyric address and invites readers to actively engage with the geopolitical territory of Israel-Palestine. We are asked to rewrite, along with Ghilan’s speaker, contemporary historical and nationalist discourses.

1. The Rift between Maxim Ghilan and the Israeli Establishment

In a famous 1953 photo of the Likrat circle, a group of five men are seated at a café in Tel Aviv. The man in the middle, touching shoulders with poet Natan Zach, is Maxim Ghilan. Despite Ghilan’s central position in the photo and his association with Likrat,² his place in the Hebrew canon is practically nonexistent. Ghilan was a poet, editor, translator, and peace activist who did eventually receive recognition and was awarded the prestigious Israeli Prime

2. Ghilan’s first poems, translated from Spanish to Hebrew by Moshe Dor, were published in the 1952 collaborative booklet *Shirim Chadashim* (*New Poems*), alongside Zach, Dor, and Ben-Zion Tomer (Ghilan 2014: 41–48).

Minister Prize in 2004 (one year before his death), yet he was shunned by the establishment throughout most of his career, and his poetry has remained understudied. His exclusion from the canon and the statehood generation most likely results from his political activism (which many believed was too radical), and his ties with the PLO forced him to live in self-exile.³ Ghilan was well aware of the price one pays for going against the grain of Israeli consensus, yet he refused to comply with the demands for a nationally “engaged literature.” Ghilan (2014: 139) once stated, “Being a poet is not a profession but a mode of expression. Working towards peace is a national obligation.” Despite the distinction he makes here between poetry and “national obligation,” Ghilan’s lyric poetry undermines the legitimacy of the entire national project.

Maxim Ghilan (née Maxim Goldenhersh) was born in Lille, France, in 1931 and grew up in Spain, where his father worked for the government until his arrest and execution during the Spanish Civil War. In 1944 he immigrated with his mother and sister to Mandatory Palestine and lived in the underserved Tikva neighborhood in Tel Aviv. In the midst of 1948, Ghilan joined the prestate military group Haganah and later became a member of the radical Zionist militia group Lehi.⁴ His subversive political practices and involvement with Lehi led to his imprisonment in 1952. During this time, Ghilan witnessed firsthand how Jewish Holocaust survivors turned into brutal prison guards who abused Arab inmates, and consequently he radically altered his political views and affiliations (Klein 2003).

This extraordinary turning point—from right-wing, pro-Zionist to leftist, pro-peace activist—at a time when the newly established state demanded loyalty from its citizens, can be traced in Ghilan’s early poetry. Ghilan’s first book, *Gader Prutzah* ([1957] 1994) or *Broken Fence*, published in 1957, has traces of the chorus, the “we” of the Hebrew nation embodied in the lyric speaker.⁵ Ghilan, however, draws on the poet-nation matrimony between a representative lyric “I” speaking for, with, and in the name of a collective “we” (see Shoham 2002; Miron 2010; Bar-Yosef 1994; Gluzman 2003), in order to subvert it. Unlike the Hebrew lyric traditions of poetic-prophecy (Chaim Nachman Bialik), collectivism (Natan Alterman), or the poet-soldier (Chaim Guri) before or during the establishment of the state, Ghilan’s speak-

3. The members of the Israeli statehood generation of the 1950s and 1960s include Zach (1930–2020), Dor (1932–2016), Yehuda Amichai (1924–2000), Dahlia Ravikovitch (1936–2005), David Avidan (1934–95), and Aryeh Sivan (1929–2015).

4. Haganah (The Defense) and Lehi (an abbreviation for *Lochamei Cherut Israel* [Fighters for the Freedom of Israel]) were prestate Jewish militia groups that later coalesced into the Israel Defense Forces.

5. The early poems cited in this article appear in Ghilan’s (1994) collected works *Mipui* (*Mapping Up*).

ers, as we see in “Tzav Shichrur” (1957, “Release Order”; Ghilan 1994: 20), are anti-heroic, fighting “blind wars.” In the opening untitled poem of his debut collection, Ghilan writes: “Call me a bully. I was born in the Judea Mountains” (13). He presents a pseudobiographic lyric to demystify the nationalist-heroic ethos and underline its violent rhetoric (hence a “bully” born in Judea).

If the Hebrew lyric represents the nation, then Ghilan’s nuclear poetic-families exemplify its corruption. In “Ben-Bli-Yaal” (1957, “Son of Belial”; Ghilan 1994: 18–19),⁶ dedicated to the state of Israel, Ghilan demystifies the nationalist-heroic ethos and utilizes a broken and torn down family as an allegory for the nascent state. The poem revokes the authority of the masculine father, as the mother marries her brother-in-law, the sister becomes a prostitute, and the son leaves for Paris. Ghilan draws on the biblical law of Yibbum (Levirate marriage, Deut. 25:5–10) and positions himself as an Israeli national subject who refuses to participate in the collectivist militant ethos. The poem, like the debut collection as a whole, serves as a form of self-orphaning, not only in terms of foreshadowing Ghilan’s future self-exile but also as representing a departure from the nation or the national “family.”

Published in 1959, Ghilan’s second book, *Chomot Yericho* (*The Walls of Jericho*), alludes to the Book of Joshua and the Israelites’ occupation of Jericho as they enter biblical Canaan. “Patriotic Poem” (1959), for instance, critiques the demands of the nation and presents a satirical collective voice. Ghilan (1994: 25) exposes the empty pathos of Zionist war hero Joseph Trumpeldor’s well-known claim, “It’s good to die for one’s country,” or “In their death we can live,” which saturates Israeli war culture; he revises the line to: “It is good to live on the edge of an open grave / following our knowledgeable forefathers, a people of the way” (25). Ghilan also begins to disassociate himself from his Likrat collaborators, as evident in “Walls of Jericho” (27–32), which is dedicated to “friends whom [he] had lost,” including Moshe Dor. Three years later, in 1962, he published his third book, *Sahed* (*Witness*). Poems such as “Mashehu” (“Something”; 50), “Ani Rotzeh” (“I Want”; 54), and “Levado, Al Aremat Sfarim” (“All Alone, on a Pile of Books”; 58) showcase Ghilan’s new-found individual voice, which breaks away from the national project even further, as well as his distance from the statehood-generation poets (“Yonatan, Ish Asparta” [“Yonatan, a Spartan Man”], dedicated to Zach; 48). While it may seem as though Ghilan follows Zach’s (1959) quest for anti-collectivist individualism, his lyric speak-

6. *Bli-yaal* translates to “without value” or “worthless” in Hebrew. This expression appears several times in the Hebrew Scriptures and is often associated with wrong-doing or ungodly acts.

ers are politically informed and aim to overturn the nationalist paradigm and its demand for sacrifice. Thus, other poems explicitly critique the aftermath of war and the cyclical violence, including “Masa HaKirilim” (“The Cyrillic Journey”; 1994: 46) and “Mabruk” (“Congratulations” in Arabic; 55). The latter evokes empty dreams, death, war injuries and amputation, and a world fallen apart. In “4 Mechumashim Neged” (“4 Quintains Against”; 77) the speaker recontextualizes Isaiah’s biblical prophecy in post-Independence Israel: like the prophet who speaks out against the sins of his people (Isaiah 62:1), the speaker asks, “For Zion how can I hold my peace?” The speaker feels compelled to speak out against the nationalist injustices he witnesses.

Ghilan’s critique of Zionism carries over to his fourth collection, *Matach* (*Salvo*), published in 1963. In the opening poem, which shares the book’s title, Ghilan criticizes Israeli mandatory military service coupled with nationalist commemorative rituals. The poem paints a dystopian reality whereby Judas Iscariot’s betrayal entwines with the composition of the Israeli national anthem, and ends with Ghilan’s contemplation of exile. One year later, Ghilan copublished the single volume surrealist–avant-garde magazine *Kiltartan* with Meir Wieseltier and Nahum Cohen, and in his subsequent collection of 1962–65, *Shirei Mipnei* (*Mapping Poems*), the lyric space transforms into a refuge, a place removed from the nation, even as the speaker cannot fully detach from it. For instance, “Pizmon” (“Chorus”; 119) is written in a passive collective voice, praying for exile. The speaker presents a sense of disillusionment in the new-found Israeli landscape, which remains inseparable from Arab architecture and culture. “Shir Ahava” (“Love Poem”; 134–35), dedicated to Jaffa, foreshadows Ghilan’s imminent self-exile:

your inability to live here . . .
without ownership and without surrendering . . .
as a true secretion of the intestines
of this thing called nation
called nations, torn to shreds.

These early poems present a yearning for exile, for leaving Zion—in contrast to the historical cry *for* Zion and the Jewish diasporic desire to return to the biblical homeland. Yet, while his poems remained outside the canon, Ghilan’s editorial work drew international attention. In 1967, while he was the editor of *Bul* (*Stamp*) magazine, Ghilan published an article that violated the Israeli censorship law (*New York Times* 1967). He spent four months in prison and, consequently, moved to Paris in 1969. Ghilan’s initial plan to temporarily leave Israel transformed into twenty-four years of self-exile, since his activism put him at risk of imprisonment for treason. This possibility did

not dissuade him from dedicating his creative and political endeavors to advancing Jewish-Palestinian relations and peace. In 1971 he cofounded and edited the periodical *Israel and Palestine Political Report* and began a long-lasting dialogue with members of the PLO following their response to an article he published (Klein 2003). In 1974 he published the critical book *How Israel Lost Its Soul* in English and edited *Bamerchav (In the Space)* from 1978 to 1983. He directed the International Jewish Peace Union, the first Jewish organization to recognize the PLO as a partner in dialogue, and initiated peace negotiations with its representatives, when such endeavors were illegal. These political activities continuously put Ghilan at risk of incarceration upon a possible return to Israel, and it is no surprise that his poetry has been marginalized — actually, rendered invisible.

2. Post-Zionist Discourse and Ghilan's Resistance from Within

While Ghilan's early works mark resistance against the demands of the canon, his complete detachment from the poet-nation alliance reached new heights in the 1990s. In 1993, following the Oslo Peace Accords and with the help of Shulamit Aloni, then-Israeli minister of culture, Ghilan was no longer at risk of imprisonment and returned to Israel. He published his collected works *Mipui (Mapping Up)* (1994) the following year, which includes his previous poetry collections alongside unpublished poems. In 1998 he released a series of interviews titled *Sichot Florentine (Conversations with Florentine)* and also founded and edited the literary journal *Mitan (Cargo)*.

A turning point is traceable in Ghilan's oeuvre upon the publication of *Be'veyit Kores (In a Crumbling House)* in 2002, specifically his understudied lyric poem "In Enemy Land" (9), which I outline below.⁷ First, it is imperative to contextualize Ghilan's later work within the historical landscape of the late 1980s and 1990s, when the Israeli nationalist discourse was radically challenged by the Israeli New Historians. This group of scholars, including Benny Morris, Ilan Pappé, and Avi Shlaim, gained access to then-newly declassified governmental and military archives, and their findings challenged the mythological narratives surrounding the establishment of Israel, including the role of Jewish militia groups in uprooting and expelling the Palestinian natives.⁸

7. This was the last poetry collection published during Ghilan's lifetime. Other texts were published posthumously, including . . . *Ve'Sipurim Acherim (. . . And Other Stories* [2006]), *Bavel Ve'shirim Afelim (Babel and Dark Poems* [2007]), and *Mishulchanu shel Beit Kafe (Lost in Thoughts in a Café* [2014]).

8. Morris's 1988 groundbreaking *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* was one of the first historical studies to counter the Israeli master-narrative that Palestinians (voluntarily) fled during the war. Morris shed light on war crimes committed by Jewish militia forces, including systematic expulsion or what Pappé calls "ethnic cleansing." See also Pappé 2006; Segev 1986.

The new findings propelled a major ideological shift within Israeli academia and public discourse, as Israeli/Zionist historiography was challenged at its very core. This period, called post-Zionism, set out to dismantle previous Zionist “truisms” (see Nimni 2003; Ram 2011; Shohat 2004; Silberstein 1999). As Pappé (2003: 44) explains, post-Zionism is “a cultural view from within Israel which strongly criticized Zionist policy and conduct . . . and envisaged a non-Jewish state in Israel as the best solution for the country’s internal and external predicaments.” Furthermore, the rise of post-Zionism challenged the events of 1948: from a Jewish-Israeli standpoint, this time period marks the War of Independence and the establishment of the state of Israel; for Palestinians, it marks the Nakba (“catastrophe” in Arabic), the systematic displacement and expulsion of over 700,000 indigenous Palestinians during the war. Despite Israeli academic and nongovernmental efforts to raise public awareness through an acknowledgment of the Nakba,⁹ it remains largely invisible—even taboo.¹⁰ The Nakba has been violently erased from Israeli cultural memory vis-à-vis the institutionalization of the War of Liberation narrative.

The historical and political debates partially seeped into the literary arena, though few poets focused on the events of 1948. Historically, Hebrew poetry played a crucial role in the development of Jewish nationalism. During the last two decades of the twentieth century, however, Israeli poetry functioned as a form of resistance literature, which largely responded to the 1967 War, the 1982 Israel-Lebanon War, the rise and fall of the Oslo Accords, the 1995 assassination of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, and the two Palestinian uprisings (*intifadas*) in 1987 and 2000. These poems exhibited a clear rift between poet and nation. The anthology *Be’et Barzel* (Nitzan 2005; translated into English as *With an Iron Pen*: Nitzan and Back 2009) collects dozens of these resistance poems written between the years 1984 and 2004 and marks a crucial event—both politically and aesthetically—in the Israeli literary landscape. The collection includes works by canonical statehood-generation poets Zach, Dor, Dahlia Ravikovitch, Dahlia Sivan, and Yehuda Amichai, as well as poetry by radical writers like Wieseltier, Aharon Shabtai, Yitzhak Laor, and others.

9. The Israeli nongovernmental organization Zochrot, established in 2002, acts “to promote Israeli Jewish society’s acknowledgement of and accountability for the ongoing injustices of the *Nakba*” (Zochrot 2014).

10. In March 2011, the Israeli parliament passed a law that enables the government to reduce or deny funding to any institution that commemorates the Israeli Independence Day as a day of mourning. This “Nakba Law” denies the Palestinian minority in Israel the right to commemorate its past while legislating one authoritative nationalist narrative.

As Israeli poet, editor, and translator Tal Nitzan (2005: 1) writes in the introduction, “Ideological or political poetry in its broad context includes a large range of thematic interests, from straightforward political subjects to poems wherein the ‘I’ itself is a political statement.” While Nitzan narrows the anthology’s conceptual framework by distinguishing between post-1982 protest poetry, which responded solely to the Lebanon War, and works written in the following decades, her statement contains yet another facet: the emphasis on the “I” inadvertently foregrounds the place of the lyric in Israel-Palestine. Nevertheless, few poets responded to an earlier and nationally defining time period, namely, 1948 and the Nakba.¹¹ And it is precisely at this crossroad that I wish to situate Ghilan, one of the most marginalized poets of the Hebrew canon, whose poem “In Enemy Land,” interestingly, opens the English edition of *With an Iron Pen*.

“In Enemy Land” first appeared in *Be’vayit Kores* (Ghilan 2002: 9), a book with a title that stresses the role of writing in times of conflict, while challenging both the literary and political establishments: *bayit* in Hebrew stands for “home” or “house,” as well as “stanza.” Unlike its Italian counterpart, which denotes a room, station, or stopping place, *bayit* also represents the homeland, or Beit Israel (House of Israel).¹² Ghilan therefore contemplates the function of poetry when the *bayit*, or home/stanza/nation, is collapsing. On the back cover of this self-published collection he writes: “While the house of Israel is crumbling down, the landslide cannot bypass literature. Poetry, specifically, falls and remains hanging in an empty space. Corruption, decay, the lack of creativity, artistic distortions, and personal intrigues have transformed Hebrew poetry into a fallow field. Editors and publishers are aggressive critics . . . decid[ing] who enters the circle and who remains left out.” Though Ghilan refers to his own position outside the canon, years of self-exile granted him the necessary distance to examine the literary scene and the destructive ties between poet and nation, and his postexilic poems illustrate resistance from within the boundaries of the nation-state. Space does not permit an extended discussion of the entire book, but it is noteworthy that several poems revolve around notions of “return” and, perhaps, Ghilan’s relocation to Israel, including “Four Red Poems” (13–16). Other poems present explicit anti-nationalist sentiments, such as “A Didactic Poem” (17–19), which cri-

11. While scholars have recently revisited the works of major Hebrew-cum-Israeli writers, with a particular focus on representations of the Jewish-Arab conflict and the 1948 and 1967 wars (Rogani 2006; Hever 2010; Oppenheimer 2003; Tsamir 2006; Eshel, Hever, and Shemtov 2012), few have focused on the Nakba and how it challenges Israeli nationalism.

12. Vered Karti Shemtov (2012) offers a significant explanation of the term and its cultural and historical uses.

tiques Hannah Senesh's famous poem "Blessed Is the Match."¹³ Even poems that appear to be centered on love, such as those in the section "Tel Aviv–Montparnasse Express" (33–47), incorporate references to the homeland ("I Still Love You," 40–41; "A Traditional Poem," 44; "So Much," 45). It is no wonder, then, that the first section of the book is titled "Solar Eclipse or: Homefront" (9–32). In Hebrew, eclipse (*likui meorot*) denotes moral decay, spiritual weakening, or cultural decline.

In the remainder of this article, I closely read Ghilan's "In Enemy Land," which offers one of the most salient examples of the Hebrew lyric's social and political possibilities.¹⁴ Although the poem reads, at first, as a lyric par excellence—it depicts a speaker in solitude, uttering to no one in particular, a disembodied voice of sorts whose specific location is uncertain—and while it possesses many of the lyric's formal features, including the presence of the subject/speaker, lyric address, repetition, and rhyme, this lyric illustrates the genre's ability to radically engage with the political world while undermining the ideological pillars which that world rests upon. It exposes, I contest, the way a collective misconception of the world perpetuates a national ideology that systematically eradicates any and all minority discourse and resistance; it epitomizes the lyric's radical ability to actively engage with the fraught landscape of Israel-Palestine

"In Enemy Land" / בארץ אויב

אני כותב בארץ-האויב
פתקים בצופן, כאילו למהתרת
כותב. אוהב את האויב
כמו בת-ערובה סגורה בעיר קודרת.

אני כותב לי כאן ואז אומרים לי שב
אני כותב לי שם. מיד אומרים לי שוב
קורע את המילים ולא רק הן
קובע תמלילים ללהן חסר-הן.

13. Hannah Senesh (1921–44) belonged to a group of Jewish parachuters who left the British Mandate of Palestine during WWII on a mission to rescue Hungarian Jews from Nazi forces. She was captured and later executed. Senesh became a national heroine and is often remembered for her bravery and faithfulness.

14. Rachel Tzvia Back translated the poem to English under the title "In Enemy Territory" (Nitzan and Back 2009: 13). Upon careful review, the translation seems to adapt Ghilan's poem from *Ba'et Barzel* (2005). Since there are a number of discrepancies between the poems in the Hebrew anthology and Ghilan's *Be'vayit Kores* (2002: 9), where the poem originally appears, I reference the original Hebrew poem and have consequently altered the poem's title. *Eretz* can, indeed, translate to "territory," as well as "country," "world," or "earth." However, a more accurate translation of *eretz* is "land," which alludes to *eretz Israel* (The Land of Israel).

אני כותב בצער. לפעמים שנאה
 פוקדת את חכי כסעודה עשירת-טעם
 תבשיל של נקמות ושל יראה
 מפני מה שיכול היה להיות כאן. פעם.

אני כותב גם בשמחה ולא דווקא לאיד
 אני כותב כאן בדיוק. כותב כעד.
 מוצג יציג. לא חלק מיריד.
 נוכח-הנפקד. לא אופנתי כעת.

אך גם כשב,
 בהסתכלי היטב סביבי
 בתקוות-שווא,
 אני רואה את האויב בכל. אפילו בי.
 (Ghilan 2002: 9)

From enemy territory I am writing
 coded messages, writing as though
 to the resistance. Like a hostage held
 in a somber city, loving the enemy.

I write here and they say sit *there*—
 I write there and they say *soon*—
 ripping up the words, and not just them,
 setting lyrics to a graceless tune.

I write in sorrow. Sometimes hatred
 descends on my palate as at a feast of riches
 a stew of revenge and reverence
 before what might have been here, once.

I write also in happiness, but not gloating.
 I write with precision, I write as a witness.
 Not part of the fair. Representative exhibit.
 Present-absentee. Most unfashionably.

But also as a returnee,
 looking hard all around
 with vain hope I see
 the enemy everywhere. Even in me.
 (Nitzan and Back 2009: 13)

The poem highlights a complex and ambiguous association between a speaker and an “enemy” land. Its cyclical structure, via the presence of an

enemy in its first and last lines, demands a rereading that subsequently exposes its nationalist attributes. The poem first reads as though the speaker writes from an unidentifiable, hostile territory in order to communicate with his homeland. He professes his affection toward an enemy, leading us to believe he is either a partisan or spy (writing “coded messages”) or a hostage suffering from Stockholm syndrome (“loving the enemy”). The act of writing entwines with loving the enemy, since writing (*kotev*) rhymes perfectly with love (*ohav*) and enemy (*oyev*) (line 3).

The initial reading concerns one of the lyric’s most detectable formal features: rhyme. Following Hegel, who declares “‘what belongs particularly to lyric is the ramified figuration of rhyme,’” Culler (2015: 180–81) explains how the “reigning critical conception” of rhyme is that it “should be thematically productive, suggesting an unexpected connection between the meanings of the two words that rhyme.”¹⁵ Elsewhere Culler (1988: 298) explains how sound patterning can clarify the speaker’s attitude. “In Enemy Land” is saturated with intricate rhyme schemes that often evoke seemingly contradictory meanings.

Rhyme is ever present in the second stanza as the speaker describes how an external force tries to dictate his location and the content of his writing. The speaker wishes to write “here” but is told to “sit” (line 5). He tries to write a name (*shem*)¹⁶ but is told to return (*shuv*; line 6). By using similar Hebrew roots and alliteration, Ghilan affiliates “sit” (*shv*), “name” (*shem*), and “return”/“once again” (*shuv*). The speaker’s inability to write lingers as the act of ripping words apart (*koreah*, “rip”) rhymes with “setting lyrics to a graceless tune” (*koveah*, “set”; lines 7–8). The cacophony produced by the letter *chet* (or *het*) is heightened by the par rhyme “graceless” (*chasar chen*) and “tune” (*lathan*). Interestingly, Ghilan creates a discrepancy between form and content, since the rhythmic patterns and rhymes are nearly perfect (form), despite the speaker’s inability to write (content).

Sound patterns persist in stanzas 3 and 4, where the expression of emotions—another formal element of the lyric—takes the stage. The speaker oscillates between feelings of sorrow, hatred, revenge, reverence, and hap-

15. Culler (2015: 182–83) also notes how “nonsemantic chiming” can present an “alternative view of rhyme,” adding, “There may be local semantic effects but its main effect is iconic rather than semantic: it is self-reflexive and nonsymbolic, signifying the instantiation of poetry but not directly related to verbal meaning.” Yet, although rhyme “can always be dismissed as empty echoing,” he writes, it is “an event whose value is hard to explain or justify but that all readers of poetry have experienced” (184). The function of rhyme, in short, remains inconclusive, and it seems, I would add, that its significance, as with most poetic devices, should be examined in relation to the specific poem in question.

16. It should be noted that there’s a typo in the Hebrew anthology *Be’et Barzel*, whereby an incorrect vowel mistakenly transforms the word *shem* (name) to *shan* (there).

piness (lines 9–11, 13), rhyming hatred (*sinah*) with reverence (*yerah*). These emotions transform into gastronomic delight as the speaker nostalgically laments about “what might have been here, once” (line 12). Notice how “here” might be anywhere, as the speaker writes from an undisclosed location. Ghilan, perhaps, meets our expectations of the disembodied lyric voice “overheard.” These emotions carry over to the fourth stanza, as the speaker claims he is a witness (line 14), but one who remains on the margins (“Not part of the fair. Representative exhibit,” line 15).

Is Ghilan possibly writing about his marginalization from the Hebrew canon (hence his rather sharp self-written blurb about “aggressive critics . . . decid[ing] who enters the circle and who remains left out”)? Or, perhaps, he refers to his own exile and political ties with the PLO (“most unfashionably,” line 16)? We cannot know for certain, but the speaker implies that his exile is coming to an end when he refers to himself as a “returnee” (*shav*; line 17). When read in the context of Ghilan’s biography, he had indeed written this poem after returning to Israel, thereby evoking a literal return from exile. Furthermore, the use of the terms *return* and *returnee* evoke the Jewish Law of Return, which grants all Jews the legal right to immigrate to Israel and obtain automatic citizenship. Ghilan therefore paints a portrait of a (Jewish-Israeli) speaker writing from “enemy land” in the first four stanzas, and we are led to believe that his location is external, that is, not the speaker’s homeland.

However, the insertion of “present-absentee” (line 16) and the very last line of the poem reveal a dramatic shift. Let me begin with the latter: the use of the adverb *even* in the poem’s final lines, “I see / the enemy everywhere. *Even* in me,” (emphasis added), reveals the poem’s ironic *volta*, which is often (though not exclusively) reserved for the sonnet. This poetic device creates a strategic twist by exposing how the speaker himself is also the enemy. Furthermore, “looking” (*behistakli*) rhymes with “around me” (*svivi*) and “within me” (*bi*); the internal world of the speaker (“within me”) now coalesces with the external world of the enemy land (“around me”). Despite the seemingly lyrical focus on the speaker’s inner world, the *volta* (literally the “turn”) demands that we reread “In Enemy Land” in its entirety. We subsequently discover that the “enemy land” from line 1 is the speaker’s homeland and the “enemy” in the poem is, in fact, the speaker.

This dramatic twist interweaves with the “present-absentee” (line 16) from the previous stanza and conjures the events of 1948. Ghilan forcefully evokes the Nakba and reinterprets Israeli history and cultural memory by interjecting “present-absentee,” a reference to Palestinians who remained residents of Israel but were not allowed to return to their homes and became “internal refugees.” Return, then, not only materializes in content and form (as readers literally return to the poem’s beginning) but also contextualizes the poem in

the geopolitical territory of Israel-Palestine. Upon a second reading, the hostile and ambiguous *Eretz-Oyev* (Enemy-Land) is revealed to be the speaker's homeland, or *Eretz-Yisrael* (Land-of-Israel).

In addition, *return* functions as a direct reference to the displaced Palestinians and their descendants in exile. Ghilan utilizes his own exile and alludes to the Jewish Law of Return to actually bring to light the Palestinian Right of Return (and we should note the distinction between *law* and *right*); the latter refers to the ongoing struggle of Palestinian refugees who were displaced from their homes during the 1948 war, as well as their descendants, and their demand to return to Israel-Palestine and reclaim the property they were forced to leave behind. The Palestinian Right of Return also includes those who were displaced during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, which marked the beginning of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and remains one of the most contentious issues in Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

The dual Jewish-Palestinian "returns" also manifest in the poem's rhyme scheme and sound patterns, which begin to break down at the end of the fourth stanza: "gloating" (*le'ed*) rhymes with "witness" (*ka'ed*) and is force-rhymed with "now" (*ka'et*) (lines 13–16). "Present-absentee" (*nochach-nifkad*) also ends with the letter *dalet* (d) but does not rhyme with any other word in the stanza (or in the entire poem, for that matter), and return (*shav*, line 17) is connected with hopelessness (*tikvat shav*, line 19). The attempt to create a coherent nationalist discourse of Jewish return after millennia in exile (in our first reading) is impossible when one return manifests at the expense of another (in our rereading). And Ghilan utilizes the separatist rhetoric that permeates Israeli culture, the we/them ethos, so we are led to believe, initially, that the speaker is literally in enemy territory. However, the *volta* overturns our expectations in order to dramatize and completely dismantle the ways in which the Palestinians have been transformed into a hostile "other" or enemy, by pointing to the way the Israeli subject is, according to the poem, the enemy. The poem therefore gives voice to Chana Kronfeld's (2012) forceful argument that unlocking the manifestation of 1948 in Israeli poetry vis-à-vis thematic approaches (only) is limited, especially in regard to the false stance that the statehood-generation poets were apolitical. I join Kronfeld's argument and would add that poetic form, in addition to biblical allusions and figurative devices, contributes to our understanding of the Nakba in Israeli literature.

3. The Dialogic Lyric: Returning to Shared Histories

By calling himself a “returnee,” the speaker simultaneously embodies Israeli and Palestinian national narratives. The dual Law/Right of Return allows Ghilan to conflate the lyric “I” with the national “enemy” and challenge our understanding of the lyric’s most distinct formal feature: the speaker. This duality gives voice to what Mikhail M. Bakhtin calls a “hybrid construction”:

An utterance that belongs, by its grammatical (syntactic) and compositional markers, to a single speaker, but actually contains mixed within it two utterances, two speech manners, two styles, two “languages,” two semantic and axiological belief systems. . . . There is no formal—compositional and syntactic—boundary between these utterances, styles, languages, belief systems. . . . It frequently happens that even one and the same word will belong simultaneously to two languages, two belief systems that intersect in a hybrid construction. (Bakhtin 1981: 304–5)

This might explain how “returnee” (i.e., “the same word” according to Bakhtin) can belong to two different belief systems or worldviews and even, as he suggests, have contradictory meanings. Still, Bakhtin’s dialogism, within the context of Israel-Palestine, erases the power structures that poets like Maxim Ghilan try to make visible. “Hybridity,” I contest, implies that the power relations between these two utterances are rendered equal, and the absence of compositional and syntactic boundaries has grave consequences for the lyric paradigm. Thus, while the presence of dialogism and multiple discourses in poetry has received some critical attention (Eskin 2000; Scanlon 2007; Blevins 2008; Richter 1990; Scanlon and Engbers 2014), many have overlooked the conditions that make it possible. More important, the power relations—or, rather, imbalances—between the voices remain understudied.

I propose that, to hear the otherwise silenced voices embedded within the lyric, the centrality of voice itself (the speaker) must be decentered and destabilized. In other words, it is imperative for the lyric speaker to be aware—and maintain an awareness—of their privileged status. Ghilan’s protest lyric refuses to undermine the speaker’s position from the geopolitical vantage point of the occupying nation. To insist on hybridization means that different nations are amassed together. As Edward Said (2001: 208) suggests, “What is desired . . . is a notion of coexistence that is true to the *differences* between Jew and Palestinian, but true also to the common history of different struggle and unequal survival that links them.” Within this context, then, the speaker voluntarily surrenders his own privileged position by dismantling his own voice and exposing the enemy within himself, without appropriating the Palestinian national voice or speaking on behalf of the Palestinian struggle.

This gesture, I argue, dismantles the sovereignty of the lyric speaker, who has traditionally claimed the lyric poem as exclusively their own. This mode of poetic writing, which I call “trans-national lyric” — hyphenated to emphasize the crossing over and moving beyond the nation — illustrates how the lyric poem can push the nation toward its furthest edges, that is, when the nation no longer selectively remembers certain events of its past and omits or represses others. The nation’s contours are made transparent, so the other voices that are an inseparable part of its ideological makeup are made visible (or audible). Ghilan underlines the theme of return by resisting national “forced forgetting” or the origins of nations and their nonmaterial attributes, that is, the formation of collective memories. The geopolitical territory of Israel-Palestine presents a compelling study since two nations, Jews and Palestinians, not only struggle over the same land but also insist on destroying the collective memory of the other, a gesture that contributes, according to Ilan Gur-Ze’ev and Ilan Pappé (2003: 93), to the formation of national identity. These territorial-memory battles echo Ernest Renan’s ([1882] 1990: 11) famous proclamation that “forgetting . . . is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation, which is why progress in historical studies often constitutes a danger for . . . nationality.” “Indeed,” Renan adds, “historical enquiry brings to light deeds of violence which took place at the origin of all political formations” (11). Renan underlines how national identities necessitate the systematic elimination of counterhistorical narratives. Paul Connerton (1989: 12, 15) calls this process “forced forgetting,” or the way “a state apparatus . . . deprive[s] its citizens of their memory.” I would add that nations create and perpetuate monological discourses by selectively mapping certain events as historical contingencies while simultaneously omitting others; nations, too, remember the same event in radically different ways.

Thus, if the nation formulates a narrative of itself by concealing and erasing other competing voices, then its entire discourse relies on this erasure, for if the oppressed voices suddenly become audible the nation’s entire grounds will collapse and might cease to exist in its current form. “In Enemy Land” exhibits this fragile yet transformative possibility by destabilizing the centrality of the speaker, an act that radically alters the lyric paradigm. Once the speaker stops self-governing the poem (by stating that he sees the enemy in himself), the silent — and silenced — history of Palestinian displacement emerges. And since Hebrew poetry historically entwines with the national project, dismantling the self also disrupts the sovereignty and exclusivity of the nation. Ghilan brings the illusion of self/nation singularity to the surface and demonstrates how it was, from the very beginning, actually accompanied by other voices and narratives.

As such, the poem offers a unique lyric framework as it encapsulates the nationalist aspirations of two peoples, Jews and Palestinians, who claim one land, which is analogous to the “trans-national lyric” as housing two subjects that occupy one shared poetic space. The lyric, which has been traditionally reserved for one speaker, now incorporates two voices, two histories, and two forms of remembrance. By placing the two events of 1948—which are actually one and the same—alongside the notion of return, Ghilan implies that Israeli independence emerged as a result of Palestinian displacement. He reverts back to the foundational events that gave birth to the Israeli nation-state and challenges the nation’s legitimacy as a sovereign and exclusionary political entity. The poem creates a space of solidarity, whereby “crossing over” and “beyond” nationalism—the *trans* of *trans-nationalism*—now enables Palestinian history to emerge. Ghilan’s lyric, therefore, becomes a site of protest and historical re-vision, and the initial reading of “In Enemy Land” bears resemblance to historiography.¹⁷ The speaker constantly reminds us that he is writing throughout the first four stanzas. In the last stanza, however, there is no indication that the speaker writes, and instead, he explains how he *sees* (the enemy in himself). Rereading the poem produces a mode of rewriting—or, rather, an attempt to *unwrite* Israeli (exclusionary) nationalist discourse and history—and allows readers to see the national apparatus in its entirety.

4. Lyric Address, Protest Poetry, and the Role of Readers

In “Apostrophe” Culler (1977: 61–62) explains how “to apostrophize is to will a state of affairs, to attempt to call [them] into being,” adding how “the power of poetry [is] to make something happen.” More recently, in *Theory of the Lyric* Culler (2015: 186) revises his initial claim that apostrophe merely constitutes the speaker and instead introduces the notion of a “triangulated address—address to the reader by means of address to something or someone else.” He explains how “we encounter lyrics in the form of written texts to which readers give voice” (187). For Culler, “lyric is not mimesis and can work, in very different historical circumstances, to generate a community that it addresses, to assert social values, to participate in a restructuring of the sensuous and

17. Shira Wolosky (2001) dispels the bifurcation between theory and history in lyric scholarship. In her reading of Paul Celan’s poetry, she explains how lyric language “serves as a figure for historicity . . . as the dimension of temporal change and material relationship, transformations and deformations, erasures and constructions. It does so in its compositional structure” (664–65). Though she focuses on Celan, Wolosky’s analysis can be applied to my reading of Ghilan, as she illustrates how the lyric poem “embraces history—its events and its conditions—as the sphere of, and also the challenge to, meaning” (666).

affective domain of life” (330).¹⁸ Mutlu Konuk Blasing (2007: 30), echoing Theodor Adorno’s ([1957] 1991) claim that the lyric has both a personal and social function, argues that the lyric becomes an event of the subject, since the latter articulates intention through language via the reader. According to Blasing, the lyric poem, devoid of a temporal mode, obtains a present temporality when the reader “performs” the poem through the active engagement of reading.

Ghilan’s poem presents an alternative mode of lyric address that functions on two levels: the first involves the poem itself, and the second, its audience. As a protest poem, “In Enemy Land” certainly attempts to “will a state of affairs.” It becomes a form of response and responsibility, a return to the nation’s violent birth, to the moment it destroyed the collective memory of the “other.” But lyric address, as I have demonstrated, refuses to constitute a speaker (Culler) or become “an event of the subject” (Blasing). In fact, it overturns Blasing’s (2007: 13) assertion that “poetic language remembers the history that constitutes a speaking subject in a given language.” Ghilan’s Israeli lyric, actually, has the potential to become the very site that dismantles this history. When rereading the poem, we understand how writing—now rewriting—does “make something happen” by exposing the systematic erasure of counternational and historical narratives. In contrast to Blasing, this process reveals how the speaking subject resists their own historical making via language.

Readers are also invited, via the poem’s cyclical structure, to deconstruct the Israeli national narrative through its negation of Palestinian history. We participate in the lyric’s social engagement by disrupting the lyric’s present temporality and returning to the past (1948) while reconstructing its violent repercussions. By unraveling the Palestinian Nakba and rewriting nationalist discourse, the poem asks readers to “act” upon historical writing and collective memory. The protest lyric leads, and hopefully motivates, the reader to “see” and perhaps act in ways that will shift the power imbalance. As Mara Scanlon (2007: 9) explains in another context, a dialogue occurs “between the reader and the text that results in an ethical responsibility for the reader as she responds to the poem.”¹⁹ She gives voice to Michael Eskin’s (2000: 382) significant rereading of Bakhtinian dialogism, whereby he argues, “Poetry—and not novelistic discourse—can be thrown into relief as the ethically and sociopolitically exemplary mode of speech in Bakhtin’s writings.” Eskin brings forth the notion that poetry “sets a task before the poet, namely, the

18. See Culler 2015: chap. 7, “Lyric and Society” (296–348).

19. Scanlon (2007: 9) attends to the formal features of Robert Hayden’s understudied lyric poem “Night, Death, Mississippi.”

task of answerability, thereby announcing its existential, ethical, and socio-political significance” (387), which, he explains, becomes “a potentially subversive and counterhegemonic force” (388).²⁰

Nevertheless, as Culler (2015: 304) repeatedly states in *Theory of the Lyric*, “No one doubts that lyrics often have explicit social or political themes and are the vehicle of protest as well as praise, though the question of their social effects is hard to determine.” He points to the utilitarian function of literature and questions its ability to effectively create change. Culler convincingly raises the difficulties involved in measuring the efficacy of literature, yet he also notes how “the relations between lyric and society are constructed retrospectively, by those who experience the history that these lyrical practices help create and who thus register the effects of these poems or explicitly reconstruct one of the histories to which they contribute. . . . [There is an] unpredictability of their historical efficacy” (301).²¹ I would add that political protest manifests in a multitude of ways, and altering nationalist discourse and collective memory, which is the goal of Ghilan’s poem, is far more complex than, say, attending a political rally (though it is a significant act of solidarity). The lyric resists the ephemeral qualities of the latter. Ghilan’s poem offers an alternative way of thinking about lyric engagement and political protest, one that refuses to merely mirror reality (Sartre); rather, the poem penetrates to the core of the nation-state and the way it perpetuates a specific discourse of “rights,” one that completely omits its own historical making, while violating the rights of others. Readers, by way of engaging with the lyric, participate in the process of undoing/revealing historical injustice.

I opened this article by asking, What can the lyric do within and beyond national discourses, particularly in areas of geopolitical conflict? Ghilan’s trans-national lyric, as I have shown, becomes a juncture that enables the lyric poem to radically unwrite nationalist discourse while transforming the genre into a dynamic performative space for both speaker and reader, who now, together, respond to concrete social and historical issues.²² This is not to

20. As Scanlon (2007: 9) explains, Bakhtin’s notion of “answerability” refers to the ways in which the reader is ethically responsible for understanding the relation between art and life and, in turn, “using, responding to, actively rejecting, nuancing, meditating on, and/or applying the lessons of art to daily living.”

21. Culler (2015: 301) adds, “One of the things that lyrics may do is project a distinction between the immediate historical, communicative situation and the level at which the work operates in its generality of address and its openness to being articulated by readers who will be differently situated (situated in part by the history of these works themselves).”

22. This process resembles what Antonio Gramsci ([1947] 1999: 323–24) calls “good sense,” or the way one consciously and critically works out “one’s own conception of the world” and takes an active part in creating history, as well as Bakhtin’s idea of “internally persuasive discourse” (Bakhtin 1981: 342).

suggest that poetry, in and of itself, can alter political and social realities—though poetry has, historically, played a significant role in national mobilization (Harlow 1987, esp. 31–74).²³ Rather, in Culler’s (2009: 886) words, apostrophe “works to constitute a poetic speaker taking up an active relationship to a world or element of the world constructed as addressee, an addressee which is often asked to respond in some way, as if the burden of this apostrophic event were [to] make something happen.” Almost two centuries before, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe ([1827] 2014: 20) asked, “What would be the use of poets, if they only repeated the record of the historian?” and replied, “The poet must go further, and give us if possible something higher and better.”

Goethe’s indirect call for engaged poetry points to the intricate relation between literature and history, to poetry’s ability to offer new historical insights. Within the postcolonial realm, especially, literature has functioned as an instrument for anti- and postcolonial movements, as an avenue of resistance, communality, and solidarity, a tool for ultimately resisting a history imposed by the colonizer. When reading Ghilan’s poetry, readers can no longer ignore the process of forced remembering, as we now share the speaker’s obligation to reinterpret the past. We now reenact a fissure, a disruption, of forced historical continuity, since we have been exposed to the silenced narratives of the oppressed. The lyric demands that we become politically and ethically informed—and transforms into “engaged literature.”

The lyric, then, also poses the question of engaged scholarship. The lyric reading I have offered in this article, the trans-national lyric, might pose a serious challenge to the recent transnational turn in literary studies and focus on world literatures (Damrosch 2003, 2008; Ramazani 2009; Appadurai 1993).²⁴ While scholars in recent years have attempted to eradicate the national model entirely, little effort has been made to prove the nation’s obsolescence, and, in fact, stressing movement across national lines paradoxically perpetuates them; physical boundaries must remain intact in order for texts to be circulated across them. Transnationalism is not a feasible solution in areas of conflict, like Israel-Palestine, where striving for liberation remains a continuous battle. The current theoretical paradigms, and their aim to become a type of “global village” or worldly site, risk appropriating ongoing

23. A number of examples include the writings of William Butler Yeats, Anna Akhmatova, Aimé Césaire, Louise Bennett-Coverley, Léopold Senghor, Rabindranath Tagore, Adam Mickiewicz, Mahmoud Darwish, Pablo Neruda, and Derek Walcott.

24. My critique concerns transnational and world literature models that obliterate the nation altogether. This is not to suggest that there is a unified consensus concerning the crisis in Israel-Palestine. At the 2016 Modern Language Association conference, for instance, scholars made serious efforts to engage with the conflict (Mitchell 2016).

struggles for liberation and rendering them obsolete. After all, one needs, first and foremost, a home, a nation, before crossing its borders.

I propose a hyphenated *trans-national* lyric model that divorces *trans* from *nationalism* and emphasizes a desire to cross over and move beyond the nation as an exclusionary entity.²⁵ This paradigm presents a form of nation bending, a transitional marker between anti-nationalism and post-nationalism. It underlines the goal of moving away from nation-bound contexts and opens up a liminal space that reminds us how the birth of one nation necessitates the violent destruction of another, how one's war of independence is another's catastrophe. And if, as Connerton (1989) suggests, social memory and nationalism are reinforced and perpetuated via commemorative acts, then "In Enemy Land" displays the possibility of disrupting this cyclical pattern. We readers are now left to decide what course of action we must take. That is, we can look, as Ghilan suggests, "hard all around" and question our own role in rewriting and producing social effects.

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25. My hyphenated "trans-national" model stands in contrast with Jahan Ramazani's (2009) study of transnational poetics, *A Transnational Poetics*. Ramazani provides a broad theoretical position that explores "poetic connection[s] and dialogue[s] across political and geographic borders [and] cross-cultural and cross-national exchanges, influences, and confluences in poetry" (x–xi). His rhetoric of transnationalism is reminiscent of Arjun Appadurai's (1993: 411) famous call "to think ourselves beyond the nation."

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