

“WE NEED A FENCE!” THE SPECTACLE OF BORDER MILITARIZATION IN ISRAEL AND IN THE USA

“Precisamos de uma cerca!” O espetáculo da militarização fronteiriça em Israel e nos EUA

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Abstract. This article presents an analysis of the contemporary phenomenon commonly referred to as the “multiplication of walls”, namely the militarization of borderlands. It considers border enforcement as a policy solution about mobility portrayed as “undesirable”, propounded by politicians, security professionals and citizens’ groups for their own political benefit and interest. The “wall” is thus apprehended through a political spectacle intended for fenced-in citizens. To dissect the wall spectacle, the article resorts to an international comparison in two different geopolitical cases. The comparison specifically focuses on mobilizations in favor of “border/security fences” in Israel from 2001 and Arizona (USA) from 2010. It identifies three analogous political operations led by these actors (problematization of mobility, securitization into a military response and publicization of pro-fence narratives), and thus characterizes the manufacture of border militarization from a bottom-up perspective, while illustrating their national variations.

Keywords: border; militarization; performativity; spectacle; securitization.

Resumo. Este artigo apresenta uma análise do fenômeno contemporâneo comumente chamado de “multiplicação de muros”, ou seja, a militarização das fronteiras. Considera a fiscalização das fronteiras como uma solução política sobre a mobilidade retratada como “indesejável”, proposta por políticos, profissionais de segurança e grupos de cidadãos para seu próprio benefício e interesse político. O “muro” é assim compreendido mediante um espetáculo político destinado a cidadãos cercados. Para analisar o espetáculo do muro, o artigo recorre a uma comparação internacional em dois casos geopolíticos distintos. A comparação se concentra especificamente nas mobilizações em favor de “cercas de fronteira/segurança” em Israel a partir de 2001 e Arizona (EUA) a partir de 2010. Identifica três operações políticas análogas lideradas por esses atores (problematização da mobilidade,

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securitização em uma resposta militar e divulgação de narrativas em favor da barreira), e assim caracteriza a fabricação da militarização fronteiriça de uma perspectiva de baixo para cima, ao mesmo tempo em que ilustra suas variações nacionais.

Palavras-chave: *fronteira; militarização; performatividade; espetáculo; securitização.*

*"It was in 2001, as far as I remember, and that was the beginning and the claim was that the separation, the fence is needed so it was separation and a fence."
(Interview Prior 2012¹)*

*"We need man power on the border and a fence just like Israel is doing. They have fences all around their country."
(Steve Smith in Arizona State Legislature 2011)*

What do Yehiam Prior, an Israeli scholar, and Steve Smith, an elected Republican from Arizona, share in common? They defended and shaped border enforcement in their respective political system and participated in the banalization of the resort to separation walls. Actually, they were involved in sequences of pro-fence² mobilizations, asking their government to militarize the limits of their territories, yet in two different geopolitical contexts. This article apprehends the global phenomenon commonly defined as "walls" through the angle of those that get mobilized in favor of it. It enters into such militarization policies from a bottom-up perspective. It considers border militarization as a political spectacle involving politicians, military and security professionals and citizens' groups with the aim to move their agenda and interest forward. The aim of border militarization is thus more turned towards reassuring fenced-in citizens, than it is towards controlling the mobility of people-on-the move considered as undesirable migrants or potential terrorists. Such perspective highlights that the issue of repeatedly portraying mobility as worrying and panicking is a constant to legitimize border security and political authorities in various contemporary democratic regimes, and this without regard to the underlying realities and evolution of mobility patterns. As the emphasis on Trump's wall hysteria illustrated, this idea is not new in its formulation. However, by resorting to an international comparison from two pro-fence mobilizations in Israel and in Arizona, it dissects the various acts that compose this spectacle.

¹ See the list of interviews at the end of the text.

² In English (Regan Wills, 2016), the common term to designate such policy of border militarization is "wall", especially as it highlights its out-of-sight function. I prefer to use the term "fence" to underline its obstacle function to mobility. In my sense, "fence" designates the military tool that pro-fence mobilizations ask. For them, it is also a synecdoche to summarize the militarization of the territory.

Thus, it offers a processual analysis of border security from local concern about mobility, to partisan debates and controversies to national security enforcement and international and human consequences. In other words, this piece proposes to enter into the manufacture of wall policies to better understand the wall obsession that had inflamed many contemporary societies.

Since the end of the Cold war, more States are militarizing their borderlands. Beyond the build-up of military infrastructures, they implement a *dispositif* (Foucault, 2001) of control with technologies, routines of surveillance and laws to filter what they define as “undesirable” mobility (Bigo, Guild, 2005; Ritaine, 2009). In the field of security studies, border security is defined as legal, expert, technical “solutions” by different actors to political and economic problems (Côté-Boucher *et al.*, 2014). Barriers are considered as sociotechnical devices, concerned with regulating the circulation of humans and trade. The perspective offered in this article is rather to enter into the wall phenomenon by looking at the political spectacle it is also nested in. I focus on the actors that frame and diffuse a pro-fence narrative in their societies and political systems to legitimize border militarization. By doing so, the wall phenomenon is not apprehended through a state perspective, nor by describing modalities of border control, but rather through the manufacturing of such policy. I advocate for a processual view that considers multiple political processes (Basaran *et al.*, 2017) behind the resort to walls from situated places of interactions between pro-fence actors to border militarization. Comparing Israel and the USA in that regard proves that there could be similar bordering processes despite different territoriality, militarization and relations to the borderlands and to the populations being under control.

Beyond military purposes, contemporary fences erected by democratic regimes at their borderlands also act as a tool of reassurance for fenced-in citizens (Weizman, 2007; Andreas, 2009; Cohen, 2012). This scenario is well known among border security scholars (Bissonnette, Vallet, 2020). Building fences at territorial limits is part of a ritual to enact the territorial mythology (Bigo *et al.*, 2009) by describing the borderline to be fenced as an exclusion line (De Genova, 2012), as a limit of State sovereignty only (Brown, 2009). Such border fences policies are thus performative. Abstract notions such as identity, territory, security, and nationalism become embodied in the fencing (Johnson *et al.*, 2011). In that sense, border militarization is made of events, political actions, people, a security and political grammar, security practices which vary according to the political systems in which they are played out. It serves as a meaning-making machine to generate narratives about mobility and therefore to guide perceptions, anxieties and political strategies (Edelman, 1988). Consequently, the spectacle legitimizes political authority in democratic regimes more than it addresses the causes of mobility.

By adopting such a perspective, the challenge of my research is to identify the different acts constituting such spectacle. In order to do so, I compare the ways pro-fence actors perform this show in two different geopolitical contexts, namely Israel/Palestine and the US/Mexico border. The enigma is to understand that despite disputable military efficiency and resistance to control mobility, a consensus over the necessity to shore up territory is existing in the US and Israeli political systems and societies. It motivates political decisions over a long period, as well as popular adhesion measured by polls. How to explain such support over the necessity and imperative to erect fences? How to understand this "We need a fence!?" The demonstration will proceed in two parts. Firstly, it will describe the pro-fence actors on both fields and contextualize their mobilizations, as well as the comparative work. Secondly, I will summarize and compare the three operations they play in their respective political system, namely problematization of mobility, securitization into a military response and publicization of pro-wall narratives by contesting the State.

Fieldwork and comparison

Building fences is not particular to the cases of Israel and the USA. However, these two cases can be considered as a matrix for other more recent border militarization both in terms of technology and in terms of political manufacture. Israel has erected its "security fence" (in Hebrew "*gader ha bitakhon*") in a territory designed unilaterally called "seam zone" (*kav hatefer*) dating from summer 2002. This "fence" was erected (and is still not completed and no longer a debated topic in Israeli politics) in an architectural reshaping of the West Bank under Israeli military occupation (Weizman, 2007). It is also part of a policy since the beginning of the 1990s to separate Israeli and Palestinian populations with the creation of a political autonomy with the Palestinian Authority and then a physical separation accentuated by the violence from Palestinian armed groups during the Second *Intifada* (2000-2005). The fence represents the achievement of separation in the eyes of Israelis, however, it is another tool of occupation for the Palestinians (Simonneau, 2017; Latte-Abdallah, Parizot, 2015). In a different geopolitical context, the US federal government has progressively militarized the borderland with Mexico from the end of the 1970s, in what is officially called "border enforcement", around the construction of "border fences" or "tactical infrastructure" (Dunn, 1996; Maril, 2011). Three different phases of militarization can be isolated: para-militarization of the Border Patrol in the 1980s and first light fencing in urban areas; blockade-type operations in the 1990s; and virtualization of border control to integrate technologies in the 2000s. The hardening of the border is ongoing despite fluctuations in the number of people arrested which serves as the metrics to comment on border security. The militarization of the borderlands depends also on the spectacle organized

around actual building of fences. This is what the Trump administration was playing, like before other similar emphasis on walls by George W. Bush's *Secure Fence Act* of 2006 for instance or by Californian actors in the 1990s and Arizona in the 2010s.

Both militarization processes include similar elements: checkpoints, military tactics, surveillance technology and some similar fences around which the architecture of militarization is deployed. Official narratives to justify the militarization are also similar: the State is responding to exteriorized and dehumanized threats, amalgamated as the "Criminal Transborder Actors" (Andreas, 2003). Such undesirable CTAs are designated in Hebrew as *mistanenim*, *mekhablim*, *falestinim*, *aravim*, and in English as *Illegals*, *aliens*, *undocumented*, *unauthorized*. In Israel, the "fence" prevents "the infiltration of terrorists and criminal elements [...] the illegal entry" (according to the Israeli Ministry of Defense, 2002). In the US, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is justifying the fence in the name of the "protection of our borders from illegal movements of weapons, drugs and human smuggling" (US Customs and border protection, 2015).

The goal of the comparison of these two fence policies is to clarify homologies to understand the political fabric of border enforcement. I chose to focus on one determining homology, namely the fact that such militarization policies in Israel and Arizona generate social movements supporting it. This comparison is obtained following the most-different system design: a similar phenomenon (the resort to fences) is taking place in two different geopolitical cases. These two cases present analogies: situation of mobility, situation of violence, economical asymmetry, State constructed by settler-colonialism (Lloyd, Pullido, 2010), unsolved questions about Palestinians and Mexican migrants. I choose to consider these analogies as parameters rather than to consider the political operations by pro-fence actors as the main variable, the decisive homology, in order to dissect the manufacture of wall policies.

In the US, the Trump administration brought the issue of walling the southern border to the top of the federal government's agenda. Trump's stubbornness raises questions on the role of this escalation in an already long-standing border enforcement, and about its specificities compared to previous enforcement moments. However, animating a wall spectacle was not introduced by Trump. In Arizona, between 2010 and 2013, an initiative by some Republican members of Parliament gathered in Phoenix all the different actors to discuss border security matters. Sheriffs, heads of Administration of the State of Arizona in charge of security and transportation, professionals of security, local elected officials, Tea Party associations, chambers of commerce, transborder trade companies, and ranchers, among others met every month in a forum called "Joint Border Security Advisory Committee" (JBSAC) (Arizona

State JBSAC, 2013). In July 2011, some of them launched a private donation campaign titled "Build the border fence" for the State of Arizona to collect money to build a border fence (Build the border fence, 2011). In Arizona, the pro-fence cause is animating different actors both at the borderlands and in Phoenix. This cause is institutionalized in 2010, as "Securing the border" is the leitmotiv of the Republicans, way before Trump.

In Israel, between 2001 and 2004 some associations were created to ask the Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's cabinet to build up a fence with the Palestinians of the West Bank such as Fence for life (*Gader Lehaim*) led by Tel Aviv lawyer Ilan Tsion, *Hipardut*, or *Kav Hatefer Gilo* (Simonneau, 2016a). The pro-fence initiatives sought allies amongst organizations, the military and politicians to gain credibility and reach the government agenda. Two pro-fence coalitions emerged: one from September 2002 linking activists from Fence for life and general Uzi Dayan's initiative in the Public council for a security fence for Israel; another linking the *Hipardut* movement and the Council for Peace and Security (*HaMotsa le Shalom ve leBitahon*). In Israel, the coalition was formed of diverse isolated pro-fence initiatives by association, by local leaders along the Green Line and by victims of terror activities from summer 2001. Progressively, in 2002, they acquired political support. The coalition emerged after that former general Uzi Dayan associated himself with activists from Fence for Life in summer 2002. Together, they organized the pro-fence pressure in the media, in the newly elected Knesset with pro-fence members in 2003 and local forum of mayors along the Green Line. They were active till 2005.

Part of the fieldwork activities sketches the representations these actors ascribed to the fence to understand how they construct the fence as the unique solution to diverse political issues. The research was also organized around the collect of their actions in their political system during two long fieldwork periods (one in Israel in the first semester of 2012 as a Visiting Researcher at the *Centre de Recherche Français de Jérusalem*, one in Arizona in the school year 2012-2013 as a Visiting Fulbright Ph.D. Student at Arizona State University). I conducted on both fields in total 26 interviews in English and partly in Hebrew. I went through their press and online archives listing their actions. I also observed some of their collective actions, more specifically in Arizona such as anti-migrant rallies, as well as the *dispositif* of security in main checkpoints and rural areas. I conceptualize these two movements as two examples of pro-fence advocacy coalition (Sabatier, 2007). I argue that pro-fence coalitions of actors shared similar the same vision of the issue (here over the problematic nature of the mobility of undesirable foreigners inside national territory), its causes and the security solution attached to it.

In concrete terms, pro-fence coalitions of actors deal with three operations. Firstly, they problematize the situation of mobility according to national issues.

They combine different perceptions and experiences of mobility into a shared narrative. In order to look at this process, I focus on the representations of pro-fence actors, as well as the internal dynamics of each coalitions and the causal narrative they defend. Secondly, they code such political issues into a military response by mobilizing a security expertise and referring to specific military tactics. In a nutshell, they securitize (Simonneau, 2018). Indicators to describe such operation consist in the role of professionals of security in the coalition as well as the controversies in the public forum they animate. Thirdly, they diffuse this framing through the collective contestation of governmental choices regarding territorial defense and immigration. They publicize such framing in different public arenas. To describe them, I look at modes of action and public arenas. Thus, pro-fence coalitions of actors construct the frame of interpretation and management of mobility, justifying policies militarizing borderlands. The comparison is about differences and similarities in the way they operate according to national cultural and political frames, as presented in the three following sections.

Pro-fence operations

First act: Problematizing mobility

In both cases, individual members of the coalitions are experiencing mobility differently according to their trajectories or representations of the borderlands and of the Palestinians or the Mexicans. The common point is that almost all actors associate mobility with violence.

Residents of borderland areas (near the Green Line or close to the US-Mexico borderline) expressed anxieties that their neighborhoods became violent. They referred to anecdotes of violence to illustrate such fears. In Arizona, this is expressed by representatives of the ranchers in the southeastern county of Cochise. Since the early 2000s, this county faces new arrivals of migrants which disturb the relative calm of ranching activities. The Arizona Cattlemen Association, a professional association of farmers, makes clear that the damages to cattle or to the environment caused by groups of migrants and smugglers in the desert area are constituting a risk of “spill-over” of the violence from the Mexican side to the US side, as expressed by Patrick Bray, the vice-president of the association.

Our sole focus is [...] making sure that we are not allowing foreign criminal violence to spill over to America. And it has, there is no question about it: we've had a murdered rancher here in Arizona [...] Our people are on the frontline and the rural areas of our border are unsecured. (interview Bray 2013)

In Israel, local mayors along the Green Line express a sense of anxiety for the population during the Second *Intifada*, not only due to the mobility of

Palestinians on their way to bigger cities, but due to robberies and car thefts smuggled to the Palestinian territories, as detailed by Shahar Ben Ami the mayor of the city of Shoham in central Israel:

In 2002-2003, we had 150 cars were stolen. It was a huge issue. You came in the morning out of your sleep, many of the burglars went into the house when you were asleep and took the keys and went out so sometimes you slept with the keys next to you, and you came in the morning and you did not see the keys. Somebody was in my room. It was very frightening. [...] They were Palestinians. [...] So we suffered from big crime effect, not only terror. (interview Ben Ami 2012)

These experiences are reactivating the character of the "infiltrator", a traditional image of enmity in Israel (Cohen, 2010) to describe entries of Palestinians to perpetrate violent acts inside Israeli inhabited areas that dates back to the 1950s.

Other actors (that could be classified as political entrepreneurs) such as Tel Aviv lawyers from Fence for Life, or vigilantes in Southern Arizona are not natives or living in the borderlands. Though they are dedicated full time to the militarization of the borderlands. They both code the mobility in terms of "invasion", hence a state of war as I will elaborate on below. Especially in Israel, the campaign of suicide bombings by Palestinian groups is experienced as a new moment of collective defense for the Israeli Jews.

Pro-fence politicians propose different examples of politicization to code mobility and violence at the border. Pro-fence Knesset members, such as Ilan Shalgi (from the *Shinui* party), emphasize the necessity to erect the fence as fast as possible against suicide-bombers (interview Shalgi 2012). Avshalom Vilan (from *Meretz*) and Haim Ramon (from Labor) consider the fence as a security necessity but above all as a possible borderline in the aftermath of Oslo bilateral negotiations (interview Vilan 2012). Here is an example of the tensions between the security line and the border-like line in the frame of the failure of Oslo at the beginning of the 2000s (Simonneau, 2016a). In Arizona, Gail Griffin (senator from the Cochise County) is expressing the fear of her constituency. She recalls that she was vocal on this issue since 1999. Other fellow republicans such as Al Melvin (president of the JBSAC) is insisting on the chaotic aspect of border issue (interview Melvin 2013). He wants the restoration of public order at the border.

I've been aware of it since mid-90s and here is the proclamation when I first served [...] People in larger communities away from the border don't see it as we do on the border but the drugs that are coming in though my backyard are ending up in everybody's community in the State of Arizona and in this country. So it's just not a local issue, or a county issue or a state issue, it's a national issue. (interview Griffin 2013)

A country is defined by its borders. The borders have to be secured. They really do. (interview Melvin 2013)

Steve Smith, who is leading the donation campaign, is not a native of the borderlands. Elected from Phoenix suburbs (three hours north of the border), he is from Massachusetts. He situates its commitment on border issues in the incomprehension over the hispanization of US society, what he calls the “Press-2 for Spanish” phenomena (Browne, 2011). Finally, Russ Jones (interview Jones 2013), a border native from California, is more balanced on border security. He is underlying the necessity to fence the border where it is possible but also to balance it with securing trade flows in line with representatives from transborder trade organizations.

Among this diversity of experiences, perceptions and politicization of the mobility, two analogous repertoires of pro-fence meanings amongst the members of each coalition can be identified. The first meaning of the fence is a security justification to restore public order that is perceived as chaotic not only at the borderlands but inside each societies. The issue of protecting the citizens against threats (in one case imminent with Palestinian terrorist acts, in another more diffuse with the threat of activities of cartels inside the US) is a driver to jump in pro-fence activism, as expressed by Ilan Tzion in Israel or by Gail Griffin in Arizona.

The suicide bombers came and more and more and more. And I felt that somehow I could be blamed because I know the solution and I don't do anything about it. So the straw that broke the back of the camel was the Dolphinarium attack first of June 2001 and that time in the evening I said “that's enough”. I need to do something because I know the solution. (interview Tzion 2012)

Ranchers live in fear, their house, and properties and ranches are being broken into. Vehicles are stolen. [...] Drug cartels have taken over portions of our borders. We were scheduling to go on a tour in the Santa Cruz county area, and two days before our tour, it was cancelled because they could not guarantee our safety. So the cartels are in the hills they have... they are watching their products across the border and they are going to protect their products in many cases anything goes as long as they are protecting their product. (interview Griffin 2013)

Secondly, the fence is needed for identity purposes. In the minds of most pro-fence actors, this imperative is betraying an anxiety about demographic changes in Israel-Palestine and in the USA. In Israel, the fence would control the mobility of Arabs in their access to Israel as Ilan Tzion's interview below exemplifies. It is assumed to prevent an Arab demographic threat on the Jewish character of the State. In Arizona, pro-fence actors express fears about the hispanization of the US society as the following extract of interview with Glenn Spencer, the founder of a vigilante group, illustrates. Especially in the Southwest which used to be a Mexican territory before its incorporation into the USA in 1848, this fear is more prominent in a US-Mexican bicultural environment in the borderlands (Vélez-Ibáñez, 1996). According to them, building up a fence is a way to control the number of Latinos allowed to enter the country.

In ten years, there would not be any USA. It will not exist. We will have uprisings. We will have California probably essentially a colony of Mexico. So I believe we are riding through the final hours of the complete destruction of the US. [...] You will give an amnesty to a lot of 11 million people. [...] So you gonna legalize 15 million and three members of family that makes 45 million. (interview Spencer 2013)

Now there are in Israel more than 300 000 Palestinians illegal. Altogether, all the foreigners which are not legal in Israel but also not Jewish are more than 600 000. So of course, this is the real threat to the existence of Israel and to the existence of Jewish people in Israel. And the Palestinians and the Arabs know it well, they now understood that Israel can be eliminated demographically. (interview Tzion 2012)

Finally, the fence is also an element of the *rapport de force* with the State in both cases. It is considered a popular demand facing a reluctant government. In Israel, based on previous experience of citizens' movements attempting to influence centralized military decisions (such as *Arba Imaot*, Sela 2007), the pro-fence movement is contesting Sharon's tactics to combat terrorism. Pro-fence activists rather defend a defensive tactic. Some of them are also criticizing the *Eretz Israel* (Greater Israel) fantasy of Ariel Sharon as a member of Knesset Avshalom Vilan does. In Arizona, asking for a fence is part of a distrust regarding the prerogatives of the Federal government, as mentioned by Gail Griffin. Most pro-fence actors are sharing conservative views about federalism in the US which considers more prerogatives to federated States.

So it is our responsibility at the State level, if the federal level doesn't do their job, then it becomes our job at the state level to protect the citizen that we represent. [...] It's Arizona versus Washington. (interview Griffin 2013)

I said number 1 the security of the people of Israel which are living in the Green Line it's much more important than the holy dream that no way can be fulfilled, and furthermore, I said from a politically point of view, it was exactly what I believed that we have to separate the land into 2 States-solution and I understood that in the long run, the moment that you have a fence meaning that Israeli public and Palestinian public understand that more or less this going to be the border. (interview Vilan 2012)

These two analogous repertoires of justification for the need of a fence constitute the backbone of the causal narratives that the two coalitions base their claims on. In Arizona, "Build the border fence" is such a narrative and it contains most of the elements that Trump's "Build the Wall" refers to (security imperative, xenophobic dimension, political criticism). In Israel on the website of the coalition, the main slogan was "the separation fence is the only way" (*HaGader hafrada haderekh hayerida*) as a way to get rid of the Oslo period attempt to negotiate a bilateral agreement. Today it reflects a disillusion facing the possibility to agree with the Palestinians and thus a support to the status-quo ordered around the separation (Peace Index February, 2019). In both cases, these analogous narratives are widely spread in the political system.

Second act: Securitizing mobility

The pro-fence coalitions pay great importance to military and police expertise. Inside both of them, security experts are central and vocal. They bring security credibility to the pro-fence argumentation. For instance, in Arizona, two sheriffs play that role: Sheriff Arpaio from Phoenix, and Sheriff Paul Babeu from Pinal County (Simonneau, 2018). Both of them are using their security credentials to manage personal political careers since sheriffs are both elected and security professionals. In Israel, the case of the leader of the Public Council for a Security Fence for Israel, Uzi Dayan is telling. Former advisor to the Prime Minister at the National Security Council, he resigned in summer 2002 due to divergence with the chief of staff, Shaul Mofaz, and with Ariel Sharon on anti-terrorism tactics. He then joined the pro-fence activists, bringing them resources and contacts in political and economic spheres. The line between security expertise and political careerism is blurred for these actors, as they use the *mise-en-scène* of their security knowledge to pursue political objectives.

These security experts are putting the fence at the center of the militarization process. They consider it as the key component of the security *dispositif* to control mobility. They base this certainty on previous examples of fencing. In Israel, Uzi Dayan is promoting the fencing around Gaza built up in 1995. According to him, it successfully prevented “infiltrations”. He minors the fact that other strategies of violence have been used by the Palestinian groups from Gaza. Above all, Uzi Dayan is suggesting that the fence is an important tactic at the level of the patrols. It is favored by officers in the field because it “draws a line of responsibility” on each segment of the route for possible “infiltrations” (interview Dayan 2012). This is, according to him, an important argument he mobilizes in his discussions with the army chief of staff from 2001. In Arizona, Paul Babeu for instance is basing his trust in fencing most of the border on his experience as an engineer in the National Guard deployed in Yuma in 2006 (Operation Jumpstart). He is recalling that the fence is an important tool to help the Border Patrol monitor the border in certain flat areas such as Yuma (southwest Arizona) (Simonneau, 2018). He also underlines the fact that the border fencing in California played a crucial role in displacing the mobility of migrants, thus getting rid of them in this area.

By insisting on the possibility and utility to erect fences, these security experts are positioning themselves in strategic debates where the use of this kind of military tool is debated. Actually, the resort to fences appears to be marginal for security experts who put more emphasis on other technology of surveillance and controls. It is especially the case in some military forums, where these debates are observable. In Israel, at the end of each year the participants

at Herzliya conferences³ are debating on the security challenges for the State of Israel. They gather national and international security experts, military and politicians. In December 2000 and 2001, almost nobody was talking about the fence, but rather discussing a possibility of an offensive reoccupation of Palestinian cities to dismantle terror groups. In December 2002, once the government and the army decided to launch the first phase of the barrier project, the fence is justified publicly. Thus, the main debate concerns offensive versus defensive tactics against terrorism. Uzi Dayan in this debate was on the side of the defense. The army was reluctant initially to support the fence project as it appears like a political one of drawing a border with the Palestinians (Arieli, 2010). In Arizona, the Border Security Expo of Phoenix is gathering annually security experts, technology companies and representatives from the Department of Homeland Security and the Border Patrol⁴. In 2013, most of the discussions focused on the use of "virtual" technologies (towers, radars, cameras, sensors, drones) to scan borderlands and help the Border Patrol catching migrants. The fencing is not even discussed. The tactic privileged by the Border Patrol is to patrol not directly at the border, but from a distance thanks to these technologies. In the USA, the militarization of the border constitutes a laboratory since the 1980s, accelerated after 9-11, to test new technology of control in a collaboration between federal agencies in charge of homeland security, the military and private companies (Maril, 2011). It is also important to remember that the main strategy to manage mobility is not only border security enforcement but also "interior enforcement" to arrest and deport unauthorized migrants out of the US (Meissner *et al.*, 2013). As we are now discussing the issue of funding the Trump wall project in 2019, these debates about the technological aspect of it are crucial and are constructed along these lines (Birnbaum, 2019). It is also important to measure the role of security professional and border agencies in advocating for a fence according to their organizational interests (Payan, 2018) and independently from the consideration of the dropping numbers of unauthorized crossings⁵.

The role of security experts in these two coalitions is not only to securitize mobility around certain types of security measures. They also represent the

³ I consulted the archives of these annual conferences on March 2012 onsite and online. They were accessible in the section "Previous conferences" on the website of Herzliya conference <<http://www.herzliyaconference.org/eng/?CategoryID=31&ArticleID=1892>>. Accessed on: 03.2014.

⁴ Border Security Expo. 2015, "About us", <www.bordersecurityexpo.com/index.php>. Accessed on: 04.2015.

⁵ According to statistics by CBP – Customs and border protection, the number of apprehensions is stabilized at the border since 2008 economic crisis around 400 000 people per year far from more than 1 million in 2000. Locally statistics diverge and can spike. Most statistics attest a decline in number of apprehensions and a negative net migration between the US and Mexico in 2015. US CBP 2019. "Stats and Summaries" <<https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/media-resources/stats#>>. Accessed on: 02.2020.

pro-fence coalitions and animate controversies with other actors involved in border security policies. These other actors are defending and politicizing other framings about mobility and territory. They also promote different measures to manage mobile populations or at least discuss modalities of securing the territory. In Israel, pro-fence actors faced two sorts of anti-wall actors: on one side the anti-occupation associations especially Anarchists against the Wall or NGOs defending Palestinians' rights who opposed the fence (Feinstein, 2009) and whom they confront at the Supreme Court on rulings about the route; on the other side, they discuss with pro-Palestinian State NGOs such as the Council for Peace and Security that wants to draw the route as close as possible to the Green Line in order to secure a potential Palestinian State. Finally, they also face the settler movement who thanks to its representative at the Knesset pushes for delaying the budget allocated to the fence. In Arizona, pro-fence actors confront themselves with transborder trade actors such as business owners and chambers of commerce. It is the case in the JBSAC forum where some of them express the need for fluidity at border crossings for commercial reasons emphasizing delays to cross the border at Ports of Entry and traffic jams⁶. More marginally, they also face NGOs defending environmental issues (such as the Sierra Club) and some democrats like Terry Goddard (2012), as well as humanitarian groups involved in the borderlands such as No More Deaths or Humane Borders (Doty 2006). The confrontation between pro-fence actors and border trade and humanitarian actors takes place in public arenas such as the Courts, in the Parliament and in the media. Their confrontation is structuring the public debate about immigration and border policy more generally.

Third act: Calling the State to intervene

Pro-fence coalitions publicize pro-fence narratives in their political systems. They diffuse the problematization of the presence and entries of foreigners in national territories. They diffuse the idea that the fence and the militarization is the only solution to address them. The diffusion process is taking place in a public confrontation of the State policies in terms of defense and immigration. The force of pro-fence actors lies in the accusation of non-protection of the citizens they address to their governments. Such contestation of the State decisions can be rather considered as a call for action addressed to the State. It takes place in three analogous arenas: parliament (the Knesset in Israel, the

⁶ This concern with maintaining border security to levels that allow a certain fluidity in circulation of goods and consumers is today clearly expressed by Border trade lobbying group such as the Border Plex Alliance in Texas or the Arizona Mexico Commission in Arizona, especially when they face threats from Donald Trump to shut down the border for security reasons on March 2019. See: CBS News 2019. "McConnell warns of border shutdown impact" <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/mcconnell-warns-of-economic-impact-if-trump-closes-the-border/?fbclid=IwAR1MvEXr5e1batXFQaOewVF-RDBqoJrOhe_nKGlchIBI-hRIBh3r_4FHkKw>. Accessed on: 02.04.2019.

Arizona Parliament), judiciary (the Supreme Court in Israel, the federal court system in the US) and the medias (especially TV medias). A comparison of the repertoires of actions of the pro-fence coalitions reveals that the diffusion relies on lobbying, legal and judiciary actions by pro-fence actors to access decision-makers as well as symbolic actions in search of media attention to target public opinions.

In Israel, pro-fence activists in 2001 and 2002 develop grassroots activities such as protests and the distribution of flyers to convince people to support their cause. These actions do not happen the same way due to the main differences between a federal regime and a centralized State even though some similarities are evident, especially regarding media strategies. In Arizona, the Build the Border Fence initiative launched in 2011 appeared after a decade of anti-migrant legislation by Republican lawmakers who control the Parliament. The State is considered by the GOP as a laboratory regarding immigration and border security (GOP, 2012). The State of Arizona, beginning with Governor Jan Brewer is using the communication tools of the State to generate support to the idea that the border should be more secured – eventually with fencing. Different pro-fence actors such as the Arizona Cattlemen Association, Sheriff Paul Babeu and Senator McCain (2010) elaborate security plans that they try to get endorsed by federal officials and representatives in exchange for support for reelection. Governor Jan Brewer dedicates a Political Action Committee PAC on border security issues (Jan PAC, 2010). Sheriff Paul Babeu advised Mitt Romney and John McCain on border issue (interview Babeu 2013). The Arizona members of Parliament regularly promote aggressive anti-migrants bills such as SB 1070 or anti-DACA restriction (Doty, 2009). They also mobilized the judiciary capacities of the State to defend these laws when attacked by NGOs defending migrants' rights, or the Federal Department of Justice. This court saga lasting years represents sequences for pro-fence actors to diffuse their message and describe themselves as protectors of the border against a reluctant federal government. Before Trump, the pro-fence cause was thus institutionalized due to its support by the Republican Party both at the Federated States and national levels.

In Israel, the decision-making process in terms of defense is more centralized and less opened. The pro-fence actors attacked the government first in the Knesset in 2003 where they put pressure on the government publicly through questions at the plenum directed at the ministers to get a schedule for the building of the fence and in the Defense Budget committee against representatives who did not want to allocate money (interview Vilan 2012). Local mayor and president of Regional Councils mobilize their lobbying capacities at the level of the Ministries and the Army to obtain decisions regarding the fence in their sector. Finally, pro-fence activists attack the State responsibility

to protect citizens in the Supreme Court. Lawyers from Fence for Life firstly attacked, with Uzi Dayan's support, the government for not taking decision on the fence in 2002, in vain (Reinfeld, 2003). Then once the fence was decided, they supported lawyers from the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Defense to defend the security rationale of the fence against attacks on the route by NGOs defending Palestinians' rights⁷.

The materiality of the fence talks to the representations of citizens. Pro-fence actors know it and they use such materiality in media events. In both cases, they create internet websites (Fence for Life, 2002; Arizona State JBSAC, 2013) to document the situations at the borderlands and the advancement of the building up. In Arizona, it is the case of vigilantes groups at the border who document the mobility of migrants thanks to cameras in the desert (Simonneau, 2016b). American Border Patrol, a group of vigilantes, is also photographing the border to document progress in border militarization and fencing (American Border Patrol, 2009). These images are used by the JBSAC and the media when talking about border issues. In Israel, Fence for Life created a website in 2002 (Fence for life, 2002). They put some photos of tours on the ground and denounced the slowness of the building-up and the lack of commitment of the Government despite its emergency discourse. Such accusations were quoted in summer 2002 by *Maariv*⁸ for instance and forced the ministry to justify the advancement of the project. In both cases, activists are also organizing events around mock fences to attract media attention and political support. Progressively, some pro-fence actors become media icons such as Paul Babeu and Steve Smith in Arizona, Ilan Tzion and Uzi Dayan in Israel. They are part of how the media construct pro-fence speech nationally. Fox News in the US and Channel 2 in Israel thus amplify the criticism towards the government by not questioning the fence project. Fox News describes border issues as a "border battle" that only a fence can fix (Fox News, 2011). Channel 2 is using the fence issue to attack Ariel Sharon and his lack of strategy regarding terrorism in times of suicide-bombings (Hagader Youtube channel, 2002). Both pro-fence actors and the media are constructing spectacles for non-protection (Peri, 2004; Dor, 2005; Doty, 2009; Chavez, 2013).

Concluding remarks: beyond the cases

The walled territory is not only a place to control mobility but also a stage for a political performance. State and non-State actors in interaction with them, play the scenario of closing national territory. This performance is designed

⁷ According to my reconstitution of the legal actions of the association Fence for life based on their online archives (Fence for Life, 2002).

⁸ On August 5, 2002, *Maariv* titled in Hebrew "The Forum for the fence: less than 40 meters of separation fence erected", my translation from the archives of Fence for life, 2002.

for fenced-in citizens. Such spectacle is thus part of a performative ritual of maintaining the territorial limit as a line of exclusion. It is played in various contexts. Such spectacle repeats itself according to cultural and national frames, different from one place to another but with common characteristics that the international comparison, presented here, identifies. Border militarization as a spectacle is made of these elements to ultimately legitimate State authority to control its territory and propel the security, political and xenophobic agenda of some actors. Comparing both fencing policies in two different geopolitical contexts also suggests a way to dissect such policy. It opens avenues for theorizing border militarization in democratic regimes. The analysis should rely on the processes presented above and on political operations that constitute it. It should not only isolate analysis on certain type of actors, nor on political cultures, nor on geopolitical contexts, or the relations between separated entities. The scheme I propose in this paper relies on processes of problematization of mobility, of situations of violence happening at the borderlands or related to migration, of securitization of mobilities, of intervention and constitution of a military expertise, of publicization of the use of fences (by contesting the State, by the media, by lobbying). Consequently, border militarization policies appear multi-dimensional. Their implementation is not hegemonic, nor exceptional, nor from top-down, nor imperative. They are the product of individual activities, symbolic and militaristic construction of bordering and real practices of exclusion and violence. They are anchored in economic, political and cultural frames. They are competing with the process of borderland integration either economically or ideologically. Alternatives to address mobility and to frame situations of mobility and relations to foreigners are constantly object of controversies.

List of interviews

Arizona:

Paul Babeu – Pinal county sheriff, 7th march 2013, Florence (Arizona)

Patrick Bray – Arizona Cattlemen Association, Vice-President, 9th April 2013, Phoenix

Gail Griffin – republican senator, 5th march 2013, Phoenix

Russ Jones – republican representative, 26th march 2013, San Luis

Al Melvin – republican senator, 11th february 2013, Phoenix

Glenn Spencer – American Border Patrol, 28th January 2013, Sierra Vista.

Israel:

Shahar Ben Ami – Mayor of Shoham, May 2nd 2012, Tel Aviv

Uzi Dayan – General, president of the Council for the fence, 22nd april 2012, Tel Aviv

Yehiam Prior - Hipardut leader, 18th march 2012, Rehovot
 Ilan Shalgi – Member of Knesset for Shinui, April 4th 2012, by phone
 Ilan Tzion – Fence for Life, lawyer, March 20th 2012, Ramat Gan
 Avshalom Vilan – Member of Knesset for Meretz, March 27th 2012, Tel Aviv.

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