
The Inmate's Two Bodies: Survival and Metamorphosis in a Moroccan Secret Prison

Os dois corpos do recluso: sobrevivência e metamorfose numa prisão secreta marroquina

Les deux corps du détenu: survie et métamorphose dans une prison secrète marocaine

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The Inmate's Two Bodies: Survival and Metamorphosis in a Moroccan Secret Prison*

Tazmamart is not an ordinary prison. It is a system of secret detention that challenges the Foucauldian model and its rationale is best understood outside a universal paradigm of modernity. All rational forms, all the proceedings, the choice of place of detention, the organization of the cells, and the policy of rationing are driven by the will to undo life. The prisoners either die or transmute to survive. This paper reports the experience of one of the survivors who, compared to his fellow inmates, narrates his bodily metamorphosis in confounding and unparalleled terms, with the purpose of grasping his experience of becoming in its intertwining with a theory of becoming. His own metamorphosis, I argue, is concomitant with a radical “revolutionary” act that transfigures the meaning and the relation to confinement and to the world, thereby converting suffering into joy, bodily death into a transcendent corporeality, madness into wisdom, and total seclusion into cosmic amplitude – a universal being.

Keywords: detention of people; political violence; slow death; survival; Tazmamart (Morocco); testimony; torture.

In June 2014, I visited Tazmamart, the infamous Moroccan secret prison. Human memories of terror and a few physical vestiges are all that remains: the foundations of two razed buildings and 33 graves of the unnamed dead who had succumbed to a programmed slow death during 18 years of secret confinement. The prison itself is located on the grounds of a large military facility, surrounded by hills on all sides, which makes for a naturally enclosed area.

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Controlled militarily and insulated geographically, the camp was also isolated socially. The inhabitants of the village still have a living memory of it: “We did not even have the right to pronounce the word ‘Tazmamart’: the name of our village”, one of them told me. “We were living in a continuous fear. We did not know what was in it, we had no right to know, but we have imagined the worst, the horrible”. Beyond the village, this imagination was exacerbated by a well-managed rumor spread throughout the country by those in power. True, Tazmamart was a place of secret detention, but this secrecy was slyly revealed by the apparatuses of the deep state in order to sow terror. Thus, the name of Tazmamart has become the site that best embodies the history of political violence in Morocco, the so-called “Years of Lead” (1956-1999).¹

It was during this period that a group of Moroccan soldiers, following two aborted coup attempts in 1971 and 1972, were arrested, tortured, found guilty, and sentenced to prison terms ranging from 18 months to 20 years. The convicts were placed in a civil Central Prison to serve out their sentences when the unthinkable happened. The prisoners were seized, taken in secret by night and transported blindfolded in trucks like “beasts of burden”² to the desert location of Tazmamart. The systems of modern governmentality had thus worked to carry out an act of personalized royal vengeance.³ The courts performed their function, but the trial was botched. The judges followed a certain formalism while nevertheless expressing their personal vindictiveness towards the accused, who would ultimately be sentenced to prison, ending up at a secret location. Tazmamart was part of an overall system combining various regimes of detention and internment – including psychiatric internment – and practices of surveillance and control. Forced disappearances, torture, assassination, and mass graves were part of this form of governmentality. In this setting, the phases of the Foucauldian genealogy of sentences, their knowledge and techniques were condensed into one another, and especially so the succession of *epistemes* – the power/knowledge model. But it would be wrong to criticize Foucault for something that he did not intend to do, as what is problematic is the extension of the genealogy of modernity by some social scientists to

¹ On different aspects of this violent past, see Slymovics (2005), El Guabli (2014), Loudiy (2014) and Rhani (2018).

² This is an expression which is often used in the survivors’ testimonies, see, e.g., Marzouki (2000). All translations are mine.

³ The execution of some officers involved in one of the coups d’état was conducted without trial in the presence of the sovereign and filmed by television cameras. The media thus brought it inside homes, erasing any demarcation between private and public.



the “rest”, thereby rendering invisible the actions and the words of women and men from the so-called Global South.⁴

Tazmamart is not an ordinary prison. It is, indeed, a system of secret detention that challenges the Foucauldian model, and its rationale is best understood outside a universal paradigm of modernity. All rational forms, all the proceedings, the choice of place of detention, the organization of the cells, the policy of rationing, and the selection of the guards and the Warden were motivated by the desire to undo life. This was achieved by dividing the prisoners into two groups of 29 each, with individuals assigned to two different buildings (Block 1 and Block 2), where they were confined in separate cells. The residents of Block 2 were subjected to appalling conditions, suffering even more torrid summers and more cold and humid winters, exacerbated by its low-lying position where rainwater would collect and stagnate, attracting more insects and causing infections and diseases.⁵ As a result, in Block 2, the mechanisms of degeneration were both more severe and faster. Only four inmates survived. The man whose experience I report here is one of them. I refer to him by the name “Kawni”, for reasons I shall elucidate later. The networks of practices and devices that had regulated the life of both Kawni and his comrades in Tazmamart are the kind that take hold of the body and transform it. The purpose of this article is to question those procedures which are not implemented to discipline, to build a *habitus* or subjectivity, but rather to undo life. The question that arises, then, is how did the inmates redo life, while their lives were decomposing with each passing day?

This energy for survival can be felt in some victims’ testimonies. It emerges, individually and collectively, with the very undermining work that has

⁴ See, for example, Mitchell (1988), Asad (1993) and Fahmy (1997), to consider only the Arab and Islamic parts of this “rest”. For critical analyses of this literature, see Hammoudi (2009) and Dupret (2011). Hammoudi demonstrates how Asad emphasizes the disciplinary implications over the experiential-phenomenological ones, reading anthropological books about ritual and religion through the paradigm of the so-called coalescence of power/knowledge, thereby subsuming the fieldwork encounter under genealogical theory: i.e., models of disciplinary practices found in texts that define blueprints. Similarly, according to Dupret, the problem with the extension of the Foucauldian genealogy of modernity and its power/knowledge paradigm to Islamic societies is twofold: it stems, on the one hand, from its determinist gaze, both retrospective and diachronic, on a period of time, a context and a type of production considered in a very broad way; it is related, on the other hand, to its non-phenomenological account of practices, leaning on documentary sources as a platform for historical generalizations. Dupret shows how Mitchell and Fahmy produce an evolutionary scheme in the sense that they speak of the process as both corporeal and disciplinary, instead of considering it in terms of humanist and progressive reforms.

⁵ See the memoirs of some former detainees, e.g., from Block 1: Marzouki (2000), Raïs (2002), Hachad *in* Serhane (2004); from Block 2: Binebine (2009). For a comparative analysis of these survivors’ memoirs, see El Guabli (2014) who gives an important insight into their discursive and practical strategies of resistance and survival.



slowly devastated their lives. It is also active in the dynamics that led a large number of them to madness and death. It expresses itself with vital force in Kawni's experience, who, compared to his fellow prisoners, narrates the alteration of his body in confounding and unparalleled terms. His survival appears as a dilation of theirs, taken to unusual dimensions. In his case, it is appropriate to dissect the word and speak of *sur-vival*: in which one element seeks to avoid the familiar connotations of a life reduced to its vital functions in their most rudimentary state as Kawni's is a form of life that resists being reduced to the "bare life" invoked by Agamben (1998, 2000) and the other refers to that which is over and beyond a life secluded and reduced to its elementary functions – a meaning that the German *über* sums up pertinently.

The Deleuzian concept of "becoming" has recently been taken up by some anthropologists who provide, however, little insight into the process of metamorphosis and even less, it seems, into the conditions under which these mutations occur.⁶ Their ethnographies hardly account for the theory of becoming and its lively embodiments. The point here is not to apply a ready-made theory of becoming to a lived experience of becoming – in other words, to subsume the ethnographic experience under a theory of becoming or its sociopolitical context – but rather to examine their unstable and mutually productive articulation.⁷ In fact, Kawni's survival experience grasps the concept of becoming and transforms it, so that the concept of becoming, like Kawni's becoming, turns out to be an embodied becoming concept as well. Kawni's experience, I argue, propels the concept of becoming towards the Nietzschean *Selbstüberwindung*, articulating a will, a joyful sacrifice of the self, a bodily metamorphosis, and its dilatation into a cosmic ego, *kawni*, in Arabic.

The Problem of Narrative

"I am 100% victim of an injustice. I was teaching in class when they came and arrested us [...]" , says Kawni. He was 24 years old when he was arrested

⁶ Biehl and Lock (2010) convey a conception of becoming the processes and conditions of which are poorly documented. Holbraad (2012) presents transformation and metamorphosis as being grounded in analytic truth. Biehl (2013) speaks of a mutual becoming with his interlocutor, without ethnographically demonstrating how it occurs. The author produces in writing a "reality effect" or an "effect of the concrete". For an analytical critic of textual strategies that produce a reality effect, see Hammoudi (2009).

⁷ Borneman and Hammoudi (2009: 16-17; see also Hammoudi and Borneman, 2009: 260-261) draw our attention to how this relation between theory and fieldwork experience has now stabilized into a kind of "slavish subservience of the anthropologist to particular philosophical schools", referring to "the tendency of anthropologists to deploy their work only as illustrative cases for philosophical trends", no longer producing ethnographies that challenge philosophers and social theorists and their concepts.



with other colleagues at the military school, following the aborted putsch. He was sentenced to three years in prison – a very short period for a presumed plotter against an authoritarian king. This “injustice”, he told me, concerned him at the beginning, but when he was “thrown into prison”, he realized that “ruminating this injustice and its causes is a vicious circle” and that “ruminating the past is another sequestration that would sharpen the feeling of confinement”. Unjust as his detention may have been, he placidly accepts it and transforms its meanings. He holds no anger or resentment: “I have no anger, absolutely not [...]. The king, even him, I don’t blame him”. It seems Kawni immediately realizes what the prison apparatus is engaged in, especially upon witnessing the first deaths shortly after his incarceration. His position is part of his effort to rid his imprisonment of any traumatic burden and of any meaning whatsoever by extracting the “injustice”, “anger”, “resentment”, “ruminating”... Likewise, it seems the decision to “cut” with the past is part of his refusal to testify and to give an account of his 20 years of confinement. Many Tazmamart survivors have written their memoirs. Some of them publicly testified in various forums and media. They recounted in detail the whole history of their ordeal. Yet, Kawni clearly sees no reason for such an action: “Testifying? That beats me. I do not know why people do it”, he says.

In 2013, Kawni and I became friends and he agreed to recount his experiences during informal meetings, without questionnaires or recordings. Our encounters began as reciprocal exchanges on a variety of topics and not unidirectional interviews about his experience as a prisoner and survivor. Wanting to establish a human relationship with the man first, I decided from the outset not to establish a (f)rigid position, one of a researcher interviewing (or questioning) his interlocutor.⁸ Kawni is acutely sensitive and such an attitude would have probably hurt him, reminding him of an interrogation aiming to extract as much information as possible from his tragic experience. For this reason, there were no notes or recordings made during our discussions, with my subsequent train ride back home enabling me to document our discussion, albeit with many ellipses for those gaps in my memory and in a discussion that diverged from the main subject. In later encounters, I would fill in certain voids. Others, never. From my perspective, the purpose is not to fill in these gaps but rather to take them as such, as “lines of flight” that articulate the author-interviewee relationship and Kawni’s relation to his history and memory.

⁸ I use this neologism, evocative both of “rigid” and “frigid” (taken in the sense of freezing and formality without any gender-based sexopolitical meaning) to contest positivist standpoints regarding ethnographic experiences, especially those tackling sensitive issues and involving relationships with vulnerable persons.



Approaching Kawni's experience is a challenge, given how little he says of himself, how long and painful his experience was, and especially the force of what he says in a few words.⁹ His statements are, indeed, rare and laconic, some of them aphoristic. His account is not a testimony, nor is it a memory *stricto sensu*. Kawni narrates generic actions – probably condensed¹⁰ throughout his long journey to death – without any narrative composition with beginning, middle and end. Without any will to inform about and denounce a deadly system, and making it comprehensible.

These narrative fragments, strictly speaking, are not descriptions of lived experiences in their happening: there is no indication of dates or space, except for the cell where he was confined. Therefore, I consider Kawni's words "freeze-frames", which are not necessarily ordered according to chronological sequence and causality and which zoom in on different moments of his mutation. This approach, I argue, also allows the elusion of certain psychiatric visions that see in Kawni's position on the past and testimony a failure of memory, and specifically a dissociative amnesia featuring a memory sequestered in an a-social space becoming, therefore, rebellious against any form of narrative. When necessary, the narratives of other survivors will be recalled to shed light on some aspects of Kawni's peculiar experience as well as on the general context of its unfolding. These testimonies intersect his words and actions in many ways: calm, silence, discretion, sacrifice, mistreatment of the body, otherness and the effort to communicate with the universe.

These "freeze frames" refer, in a way, to the "minor literature" evoked by Deleuze and Guattari (1975).¹¹ "Minor" denotes the revolutionary conditions of any literature within the established and dominant one. Kawni's account is not a fiction. His metamorphosis is not a metaphor, nor is it a symbolization.¹² It is real and actual, yet its factualness lies at the limits of virtual becoming. In his case, I would say, a minor ethnography seems more capable of grasping and articulating, in a concrete way, the experience of

⁹ Kawni knew from the outset that I was doing research on political violence and that my encounters with him were part of this research.

¹⁰ I use the word "condensation" for convenience and without projecting Freud's concept of condensation here. Kawni did not dream of the long life of death he was subjected to. I simply want to say that a work of condensation took place, and it formed his words and his images.

¹¹ Three features characterize this literature: 1) it is what a minority undertakes in a major language by deterritorializing it; 2) in it, everything is political; 3) in it, everything takes a collective value, enunciating another potential community.

¹² Neither is that of Gregor Samsa, the hero of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. In his becoming-insect, there is no resemblance between the two; there is no longer any man or insect, since each deterritorializes the other, in a continuum of reversible intensities (Deleuze and Guattari, 1975).



the human being in limit situations. Moreover, Kawni's experience and his words serve, to a certain extent, to initiate the process of becoming minor for my own anthropology, my becoming the foreigner of my own thought – exiled, prisoner, survivor – a becoming that deterritorializes my own anthropological perspectives about the revered dualities of confinement/liberty, unreason/reason, death/life, as well as my own fears and anxieties regarding the sociopolitical consequences of my research's focus on sensitive topics (i.e. political violence in a context of resilient authoritarianism). On the other hand, my conversations with Kawni allowed me to encounter the theorists with whom I dialogue in this text, so that our relationship takes on a collective value. That is to say, a "collective arrangement of enunciation" which, in return, enables communication with Kawni's own enunciation and experience in order to follow it. Thus, despite its apparent apolitical stance, everything in Kawni's experimentation, and how I myself embody it, is eminently political: radically political and revolutionary, in the sense that it lays down the meaning and the relationship of/to the political differently.

Incarceration as Burial: A Program of Slow Death

"When they buried me in Tazmamart [...]". Tazmamart, Kawni undoubtedly realizes immediately, is not an ordinary prison, nor is it even a place of detention. Having been secretly taken in the dead of night, Kawni, like the others, is technically no longer a prisoner. He, like the others, disappears without a trace. He, like the others, realizes that he is destined to slowly die in confinement. Binebine (2009: 42), one of Kawni's comrades in Block 2, expresses the same feeling of being buried: "I had not yet come to terms with the fact that I was in front of what would now be the tomb of my life: cell number thirteen".¹³ Of the cell where he is "buried", Kawni gives a condensed glimpse: an "iron door"; a "slab made of concrete which serves as a bed"; "a hole that serves as a toilet"; "two very dirty and worn blankets" and "darkness and solitude". The sensation of burial is further amplified by the general conditions of incarceration: insufficient food; "bowls of water where some starches float"; atrocious cold; suffocating heat; foul odors; bugs that swarm; illness; madness and death. For 18 years, Kawni, like the others, has to die from exhaustion, hunger, cold, heat and disease. Without rest, cramped, always bent over and rarely breathing fresh air.

¹³ Hachad evokes the same feeling: "From that day on, we were no longer committed officers and NCOs [non-commissioned officers] condemned by a military court for two failed coups against King Hassan II. We had become the walled off Tazmamart, each one reduced to the number of his cell." (*in* Serhane, 2004: 47).



“It was extremely cold in the winter”, says Kawni. “Every year at least one inmate died of cold and disease [...]”. Indeed, early on, death struck in Block 2: less than one year after the abduction, two inmates died. Binebine (2009: 67-72) gives a moving testimony of one of them.¹⁴ Until his last breath, fellow inmate Chemsî never admitted what was happening to him, “his presence in this tomb”. He “lost his mind” and ceased to cover and feed himself.

He spent long hours sitting on the ground in the cold and solitude of his madness, near, he believed, to his poor mother, whom he saw very close in the darkness of his purgatory. When the guards arrived, they found the food scattered on the ground and him, naked, without cover in the freezing cold of the winter. Benumbed, his limbs frozen, he could not readily go to the door to fetch his food. The guards refused to carry it to him; the food remained there until the next meal. Then they threw the unopened pot, unwashed, which was filled again and placed near the door. Finding his death at breakfast, the guards did not show up later in the morning. At noon, when they brought the meal, they brought a stretcher and took him out.

His death makes the inmates of Block 2 aware of the gravity of the situation. They realize that they are condemned to die in the darkness of their cells, with no help and no resources other than their own ability to endure time. With time, month after month, death becomes a “familiar visitor”.¹⁵ Hachad (*in* Serhane, 2004: 68) intensely describes this gradual inculcation of a “programmed death”. As the days go on, the convicts have understood that “destiny” (i.e., the king) has chosen an end completely different from imprisonment for them:

A death that goes beyond death, since each prisoner has to die several times during his lifetime before disappearing forever, in horrible suffering, abominable, indescribable, but above all inhuman agonies. A death beyond all ordinary death [...]. The death chosen for us is a special death, which goes beyond the boundaries of the imaginable, beyond the limits of the human. Every moment has to be a moment of death. We should die slowly and at any moment, as slowly as possible. ... and go ever farther into the unspeakable things that are not said, but lived in the flesh. (*ibidem*)

¹⁴ The other victim was Mohamed Kinat, who, like Kawni and Chemsî, was sentenced to three years. He died as a result of food poisoning (Binebine, 2009).

¹⁵ Every year or so at least one inmate died. 1977 and 1979 were particularly macabre, as several detainees succumbed (Marzouki, 2000; Binebine, 2009).



With this kind of incarceration, it is hard to speak of biopolitics, if not to consider as such the politics that manages life in order to undo it.¹⁶ In this kind of politics, it seems the formation of the ego does not have any relevance; it remains, anyway, inaccessible. Several features distinguish the regime of Tazmamart from the model provided by Foucault (1975) and, as mentioned earlier, its rationale should be grasped elsewhere than in a universal paradigm of modernity. The convicts are locked in a building without possible escape; the guards throw in water and morsels of food and immediately close the cells. The *panopticon* does not imply the visibility of all the angles, but rather the absolute invisibility of the prisoners. The inmates become transparent without being observed. Concurringly, all rational forms, all the proceedings, the choice of place of detention, the organization of the cells, the rationing, the selection of the guards and the director, are animated by the will to undo life. The population of Tazmamart is subject to a program of slow and unavoidable death, administered by a program of weakening, based on the proliferation of pathologies. The inmates either die or transmute to survive.¹⁷

Ascetic Desire

The energy of this transmutation can be grasped, in its radical expression, in Kawni's experience. "When they buried me in Tazmamart, I realized that the real Tazmamart was the life I was leading outside. [...] I found a sense of freedom". Kawni reverses the respective values of life outside prison and life (i.e., burial) in prison. As a result, another life opens for him, life according to a dimension other than the common alternatives: justice/injustice; freedom/detention; life outside/life-death in confinement.

Accordingly, Kawni takes some radical decisions towards his comrades:

It was extremely cold in the winter. Every year at least one inmate died of cold and disease; moreover, every time, fights break out to get his blanket and clothes [...].

¹⁶ It is, rather, a case of a "thanatopolitics" or, to use Mbembé's word (2003), a "necropolitics" whose purpose and devices are deployed not to manage life, but to kill individuals and groups.

¹⁷ Incarceration with this objective is well known, as in the camps of the communist regime in Cambodia, the Soviet gulags, and the Nazi extermination camps. The accounts of survival to these programmed deaths constitute an immense literature. The purpose is not to discuss it to understand survival and what makes it possible, but rather, to analyze the unusual experience of an inmate who has survived, by a singular effort, a confinement designed to cause his slow death. Frankl (1984 [1959]), as former prisoner of the camps and as psychotherapist, embodies both in his lived experience and his thought how the human being, confined in tragic conditions – suffering from hunger, cold and brutality, humiliation, fear, daily expectation of extermination – can survive, rendering suffering and even dying tolerable and meaningful. This capacity to "say yes to life" in spite of tragedy, as we shall see, echoes Kawni's words and experience.



The prisoners were acting as if they were outside, like ordinary people in an ordinary society: frivolities, selfishness and conflict.

Meditating on the reactions of his comrades, Kawni decides “to withdraw and isolate” himself, sharing “with them only some difficult moments”. His cell becomes a *khalwa*. This word is telling. It refers to a cave where the ascetic retires to seek reflection and privation. In his *khalwa*, Kawni experiences “the test of meditation and detachment” and fights “suffering and misfortune”. He then breaks off with the fellow inmates and befriends their deadly enemies, those who make them so vulnerable:

Then I said to myself, why this fear of the cold? Why not reconcile myself to it? I know; the body has its limits. Instead, I decided not to see in the cold an enemy, but a good friend. I took off my clothes. I only kept on shorts. The others thought that I had gone crazy. I did not defend myself. I did not answer them [...]. Only a madman, they said, could confound the friend and the enemy.

Despite the warnings of his comrades and their derision, Kawni undresses and embraces the fatal cold of Tazmamart. According to him, the “body can transcend the limits of tolerance by departing from fear”. The true enemy is not the cold, but the fear of the cold. It is not disease, but the fear of disease. It is not even death, but the fear of death. After his withdrawal, Kawni shares only some difficult moments with the others: “If someone falls ill or if someone dies [...]. If someone falls ill, I take care of him during his illness [...]. If anyone dies, it is me who washes him, wraps him in a sheet and buries him”.¹⁸ The others, he says, are afraid: “They fear illness and death”.

Not only does Kawni isolate himself from the life of his comrades, but he also cuts himself off from his own history: “When you cut off with society [...] when you cut off with your history [...] you enjoy real happiness, you become free. It is a revolution”. He also states, in an aphoristic manner: “And what is a revolution, if not the act of cutting off with the past to free oneself from its burden and regain happiness?”. Kawni has certainly experienced the happiness he evokes. We have evidence of this. Sidqi Abderrahman, a survivor of Block 1, told me: “when [Kawni] was transferred to our Block, he woke up early in the mornings and began to

¹⁸ Kawni most likely refers here to a later period of incarceration, probably in the 1980s, when the guards began to allow some prisoners to leave their cells to help their sick comrades and to bury the dead.



let out *youyous*, like a woman [...]. He sang the songs of women. Powerful voice”.¹⁹ Marzouki (2000: 219) captured one of these moments too:

The very next morning we were awakened by a huge beating Tam-Tam on the door of a cell, accompanied by strident *youyous*... A real festive atmosphere! It was [Kawni] who, in the depths of his new cell at the end of the corridor, continued a practice to which he had become accustomed in the other building.

The powerful voice and the strength of the noise may well surprise us, given Kawni’s advanced physical disability, of which we have many testimonies (Marzouki, 2000; Raïss, 2002). Where does this force, this female voice, this energy, this joy come from? Kawni posits history as the burden that reinforces the feeling of confinement and, therefore, hinders one’s becoming free. He thereby subverts the very meaning of incarceration and its *raison d’être*. The prison is not a place or a space, but a temporality. It is a history that chains up the possibility of becoming: becoming joyful in darkness, becoming free in tight confinement, becoming a woman, becoming timeless. “I reconciled myself with disease and death. Death is the continuity of life. Death before life [...]. Never dies whoever accedes to the *‘ishq’*”.

The word *‘ishq* has a very strong mystical connotation. It refers to the superfluous flow of love that overwhelms the *‘āshiq’s* body and soul to extend beyond, to the whole existence.²⁰ *‘Ishq* is Desire. Yet it is not a desire for someone or something. It is an ascetic and joyful desire that stoically accepts incarceration, suffering and death. Beyond all carceral powers that undo life, Kawni makes of himself, of his body, a desire which is not reduced to a subject (and an organism) over which these powers can be exerted. He desires to make of his condition, of his body, of himself, a new mode of existence: another life. Thus, the question is not how Kawni can resist power (political and carceral) which controls everything, but rather how power can control his desire, which flees everywhere as “lines of flight” and as “movements of deterritorialization” (Deleuze, 2003 [1990], 2006a).²¹ Kawni’s experience is indeed a movement, a becoming that goes beyond

¹⁹ Interview, January 17, 2016. *Youyous* are vocal sounds North African women let out to express emotion and joy at some ceremonies, such as weddings.

²⁰ See in particular Ibn ‘Arabi (2002 [1240]), the 13th century mystic and philosopher. No doubt there are many points of comparison between Kawni’s account and the mystics’ experiences and narratives, including those of hermits. Nonetheless, it is not necessary to take account of them in order to grasp Kawni’s singular experience and its theoretical scope. What is important, in my view, is to study in the future how his experience relates, *in vivo*, the mystical idiom and practice with the philosophical literature.

²¹ See also Seigworth (2011).



the framework of a determining history and politics. His act of breaking with the past is revolutionary, yet it is neither a militant action nor a form of resistance against a regime of confinement or against a power or force of domination. Not only has he never used the words in question, but he has also never expressed any feelings of confrontation, injustice, resentment, or anger. Instead, in his experience, revolution articulates a process of folding in which the force is exerted on itself – the force to cut off with the past, with the inmates’ society and with his own incarcerated-body. Thus, without falling into a reactive role of friction or blockage, which could reproduce power relationships, Kawni’s revolutionary becoming allows him to evade both carceral control and political power.

According to Deleuze (2003 [1990]), the concept of the “fold” implies a process of “subjectivation” when the force is put in a relation to itself and not in a relation to another force, to give the means to survive what would otherwise be unbearable.²² As in Kawni’s experience, this process of “folding” is carried by a desire that emerges from a joyful ascetic movement (Deleuze and Parnet, 1996).²³ It is a will to power which is also a will to die, always seeking to disorganize and to free itself from instincts and habits in order to experience new modes of perception and action. New possibilities of existence. The relation Deleuze establishes between the “fold” and “desire” powerfully echoes the experience of Kawni and his words. Yet the theory does not account for singular and concrete experiences of folding when the subject is really and strictly confronted with death and madness, and the lively creativity that moves forms of life seems to be absent, appearing only as the arrangement of desire in lack (capitalist scarcity, transfers of desire and fantasy). For this reason, I prefer to consider the “fold” as a floating line, toward which individual and collective creations and creativities are oriented in limit-experiences. Kawni seems to have acted in this way, according to a floating line between confinement/liberty, unreason/reason and death/survival, along which his selves are redefined, including the final one: his second-body, which emerges amidst the ruins of the old one, the first-body.

The Awakening of the Other Body

Kawni speaks: “If we remain at the level of the first-body, we feel an atrocious pain, caused by the cold, hunger, lack of sleep, fear, isolation and darkness”. “If we reach the second body, we can no longer feel suffering”.

²² The concept of the fold echoes the Foucauldian process of “subjectivation”, which does not imply a return to the subject but rather the constitution of new modes of existence.

²³ On the Deleuzian concept of desire, see also Holland (2011).



“The first-body is a prison for the second-body”. The body of Kawni, the individual who is condemned, imprisoned and then buried in Tazmamart, is the location of pain and sorrow. It is itself a prison that confines the possibility of becoming, becoming another body able to overturn the conditions of confinement. This becoming second-body is concomitant with the ascetic effort carried by Kawni’s will and desire to isolate himself and to reconcile himself to the enemies of the body (cold, disease and biological death). In Kawni’s words, “the cell was an ideal place for the emergence of the second-body: total obscurity, without a mirror, without contact with the outside world”. For Kawni, darkness and solitude are the occasion for a retreat to “dialogue with” his second-body, which is “gradually awakened [...]”. This awakening is a willingly active operation. “To allow the second-body to unfold and impose itself”, Kawni “must go through trials and combat, must engage in a struggle to weaken the first-body: starving it, exposing it to the cold and keeping it awake”. The second-body, in turn, carries this work of destruction further; he continues: “the second-body, while unfolding and prevailing can get rid of the first-body and throw it away”.

Kawni pushes the conditions of his incarceration to the extreme to ruin his body (his prison), to empty it of its mortifying meanings. From its ruins emerges another body, molting, and which progressively sheds the carapace that enveloped it and breaks free. “When you discover the second-body you escape imprisonment”, says Kawni. The inmate’s words and actions, as mentioned earlier, refer to a process of folding when the force is exerted on itself (ruin, cut off, revolution), internalizing suffering and decomposition with more abundance and desire, and articulating an inner and intimate sense. The second-body subverts, or “deterritorializes”, its bodily organization, the carceral organization, and the latter’s ultimate end: death. It thus embodies a new possibility of life that unfolds beyond Tazmamart’s walls and iron bars, beyond the control of inhuman persecutors, and beyond the deadly system of an authoritarian power.²⁴

Kawni’s second-body refers to a “body-without-organs” (BwO). According to Deleuze (2006b [1964]: 218), the BwO emerges when the body is deprived of any voluntary and organized use of its faculties. Flows occur, invade this body, energize affects and produce another body, but as an intensive outline roused by the waves that provoke its involuntary use. The philosopher gives the example of the spider and its movements,

²⁴ The second-body is biological, but also and inextricably political, for it subverts both the organism’s organization and power’s organization (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980). In other words, unlike the Foucauldian biopower, more concerned with the systems of reterritorializing the body, the second-body, like the body-without-organs, is the very agent of deterritorialization.



the insect receiving only the slightest vibration that travels across its body as an intensive wave, causing it to leap into action. The image of intensive outline is powerfully evocative. Involuntary action, commanded by “the other” (i.e., Kawni’s other) or in consultation with him is comparable to these waves. However, the model of the spider falls short in Kawni’s case. Elsewhere, Deleuze and Guattari (1980: 190) assert that the BwO underlies the organism and its development: a full “intense egg” with absolute contiguity of two sensations without resemblance, but in vicinity; like a zone of blurriness, of indiscernibility, established between two terms, as if they had reached the moment immediately preceding their respective differentiation. One thinks here of what Deleuze (1993) says of Captain Ahab, in pursuit of Moby Dick, the white whale, fleeing into the vicinity where he can no longer be distinguished from the cetacean, both beings becoming human-animal. Certainly this is a becoming non-human of the human, yet the philosopher does not elaborate on this dual identity, subsuming it under a universal energetic machinism.

Kawni says of his second-body that it is a “little animal”.²⁵ Kawni’s becoming second-body is thus a becoming animal. A becoming non-human that echoes his interaction with nature; his detachment from history; his detachment from sociality (and at the same time his commitment to his sick and dying companions); his insensitivity to the cold, to the heat, to hunger, to humiliation, to suffering; his refined sensitivity and his ascetic desire. Twisted like the folded line of force, the second-body articulates a micro-politics of flight animated by an overwhelming desire. Becoming a little animal is thus a mechanism (a device) for digging a den, then a hole in the walls of the prison (and beneath) to escape and vanish into nature. Becoming second-body “is access to *El-Kawn*”, says Kawni. The *Kawn* designates Nature, the Cosmos and the Universal. Binebine (2009: 160) also mentions that Kawni was communicating with “Nature” from his cell and trying to join the “universal being” – as if his body, becoming second-body (a small animal) met Nature in their interlacing, both beings becoming (Merleau-Ponty, 1964).

Kawni’s words somewhat recall what Kafka (1996 [1915]) writes of the becoming “little-monster” of Samsa. His becoming a bug, while twisting and degrading his body, seems to bring out in him all his greatness and subtle nature: his kindness, his sensitivity, his utter unselfishness,

²⁵ Marzouki (2000: 218) describes Kawni as a “bent over body” with a carapace of filth that walks like an animal: “The third to appear was [Kawni]. Folded on himself, his chest was at a right angle with his legs and his very long hair and beard were hanging so that they could have swept the floor! Dressed in shorts [...], he walked barefoot and his completely disjointed gait made him curiously look like a dinosaur”.



his constant preoccupation with the needs of others, his imaginative and spiritual altitude (Nabokov, 1980). Deleuze and Guattari (1975: 63-76) describe an evocative signification of the becoming animal in Kafka's novels. These becomings, they write, represent an exit (not freedom), a living line of flight (not an attack): an intensive journey even on the spot or in the cage. The animal proposes to the human a means of escape the latter would have never thought of alone. A creative line of flight, which is, however, subsumed under the machinic arrangements – posited as the project and design of becoming animal. Kawni's becoming a small animal shows an exit and draws a floating line he is actually able to move across. Thus, contrary to the universal machinery embodied in fictional sociopolitical arrangements, his own becoming is carried out in the second-body itself as an isolate revolutionary body, a small animal upraised against the established power and its gigantic, mortifying machinery.

The Self and Its Double: A Call for Otherness

Kawni's dual bodily identity is reminiscent of a willing and deliberate process of folding, or of becoming a small animal, which provides the means to survive what would otherwise be unbearable: when life confronts something akin to death and thought faces something akin to madness (Deleuze, 2003 [1990]). Kawni speaks of the encounter between his two bodies as a moment of "almost madness". He says: "darkness and solitude were the occasion for a retreat to dialogue with my second-body, who was gradually awakened; I almost went mad". He almost goes mad, just as he almost died. The "almost" is significant. Yet, Kawni's experience is considered by some psychologists and psychiatrists an instance of dissociation. That is, an originary subject that a post-traumatic disjunction has divided. In fact, a psychologist who was in charge of Tazmamart survivors after their release states that Kawni has experienced a form of "madness" similar to those many prisoners who died in a state of delirium following the direct and brutal contact with death – their comrades' death and their own impending and inescapable death.²⁶ According to Dr. El Hamdaoui, the double sentence, and especially among innocent victims, like Kawni, reinforced the death panic. A plunge into darkness and an inhibition of the life impulse ensue, as the victims participate in their own destruction: "death row syndrome". Two subsequent processes can be distinguished: sequestration of the memory in a virtual existence, as an effective reaction for survival, and intrusive involuntary memory, featuring fixation on ideas, rumination, and the

²⁶ Interview with Dr. El Hamdaoui, in January 2014.



inability to forget. The psychologist finally states that there were more people subject to the second process in Block 2 as compared to Block 1, where the prisoners had apparently better organized themselves.²⁷ However, the psychiatrist Ziou Ziou considers Kawni's experience an "illusionary" reaction to "create another model of the body that enhances resistance or displaces symptoms".²⁸ In other words, this is an "imaginary body"; a more nuanced position, yet it suggests another form of dissociation: that which exists between the real and the imaginary (or illusory).

After having noted certain psychological and psychiatric comments on Kawni's case, my particular aim now is to stress the friction of perspectives between the person who experiences and narrates an uncommon experience and the clinician who interprets it according to a pre-established framework. The purpose here is no longer to argue for the veracity and validity of one perspective or another. Dissociation, or dissociative amnesia, is not necessarily a false description, but it is a psychiatric perspective on an "external subjectivity" whose own perspective and how he/she articulates it should be seriously considered, otherwise, some dimensions of this lived and embodied experience will be totally incomprehensible. Moreover, it is not because an experience is uncommon that it must be explicable by the same structuring narrative: i.e. psychiatric diagnosis. Like the common experiences, which are multiple, the uncommon and peculiar experiences are equally as multiple, as they may elude the medical generalization – which is also a cultural reductionism. Many psychiatric classifications, including dissociative disorders, are constructs, debated and often based on historical, cultural and sociological specificities which are difficult to systematically apply on and extend to various and differed contexts.²⁹ In other words, contrary to some psychiatric interpretations which consider the uncommon experiences as evident signs of unreason, precluding any exploration of the content of dissonant voices and subsequently shrinking the potential

²⁷ In fact, over time, the inmates of Block 1, unlike those in Block 2, also managed to make contact with the outside world, receiving more help from their relatives in the form of money, food, fortifiers, medications and news, particularly the news regarding the international pressure on the kingdom to disclose the fate of the disappeared, which increased their hope of a possible liberation (Marzouki, 2000; Raïss, 2002; Serhane, 2004). Marzouki (2000), Raïss (2002), and Binebine (2009) reported many experiences of "illusions", "deliria", "hallucinations", "paranoia", "rumination", "amnesia", and "spirit possession".

²⁸ Interview with the psychiatrist Abdellah Ziou Ziou, who also was in charge of Tazmamart's survivors after their liberation.

²⁹ According to Hacking (1995: 143), this cultural generalization somehow features a psychiatric imperialism: "Instead of seeing Western dissociative disorders as a local and specific form of trance", psychiatric classification "suggest that trance is a subtype of Western illness, dissociative disorders. Worse, they turn central and meaningful parts of other civilizations into pathologies."



complexity of human experience, this uncommonness is quite experienced by individuals, and even by their communities, as a sign of an embodied wisdom: supernatural aptitude, interaction with nature, intense sensitivity and self-giving (Hacking, 1995; Leudar and Thomas, 2000).³⁰

The fact is that Kawni, with his second-body, does what other detainees could not do with their “delusions” and “verbal hallucinations”, “dissociation”, “rumination”, “deliria”, “amnesia” and “spirit possession” (Marzouki, 2000; Raïss, 2002; Binebine, 2009). His words and experience show no panic of death, no inhibition of the life impulse. It is quite the opposite: “The second-body is a vital impetus, a vital energy [...]”, says Kawni. It is true that he has himself undertaken the destruction of his body, his first-body. It is thus an active and positive destruction, carried by desire, joy, energy and wisdom, thereby stripping confinement, and power more generally, of its deadly significations, while creating a new universe of reference.

Marzouki (2000) does not speak of delirium when referring to Kawni. Binebine’s book, *Tazmamort*, a text of great literary and human quality, which Kawni once told me he particularly appreciates, does not mention any scene of this kind. Binebine, who is without a doubt the most attentive and sensitive witness to his fellow inmate’s experience, does not try to circumnavigate Kawni and his “other”:

Taciturn, he spent his time praying, practicing yoga, or “communicating with nature”, as he said. He was fond of culture, he listened with passion to the novels I told, followed attentively my courses of philosophy (at the reasonable level which is mine) and especially theology lessons. [Kawni] listened attentively, filtered what interested him and avoided any challenge. He was the first to put yoga on the set. We did not know much about it, but everyone contributed. Apart from yoga, he also distinguished himself by his detachment from the world, inspired by Hindu stories [...]. He often mistreated his body to better control it. [...]. In a superior act of detachment, [Kawni] decides to give us the radio. Such an act was inconceivable at Tazmamart, especially in our building. (Binebine, 2009: 160)

According to Binebine (*ibidem*: 156-159), Kawni had a gold ring which had gone undetected. A guard noticed the ring on one occasion when talking

³⁰ Leudar and Thomas (2000) have comprehensively analyzed Socrates’s case (see also their refreshing analysis of Schreber’s case). In their view, unlike psychiatry, which retrospectively interprets Socrates’s ability to “hear voices” and “verbal hallucinations” as the signs of unreason, his contemporaries considered them as the sign of a supernatural experience. The philosopher was granted this privilege for he had the force to resist mundane passions – which makes the soul more perceptive – and higher intelligence guiding a gifted soul.



to him, standing near his cell. The guards generally talked with the most discreet convicts: “One of those was [Kawni]”. The conversation between the two shows that Kawni was in full possession of his faculties. He managed to convince this guard that if the ring had miraculously escaped detection, it was because God had intended it for the guard himself. Kawni offered him the ring, without asking for recompense yet the latter insisted on giving something in return, and Kawni suggested a little radio, which he indeed received. However, the guard was spotted, and fearing denunciation by another guard, returned to search for the radio. He went into the wrong cell, found nothing, and inflicted a severe punishment on its occupant, a fact that hastened this man’s death. After this event, [Kawni], who was incredibly sensitive, refused to keep the offending radio. He gave it away, as he had given away his ring, his clothes, his blankets, his time to heal the sick and to bury the dead, his body, his first-body, in a gentle and radical act of renunciation and detachment from this world, the world of confinement and decomposition.

Another witness, Raïss (2002: 323-324), narrates a contact with Kawni, when the latter was moved from Block 2 to Block 1:

The case of [Kawni] was very strange. He refused to shave his beard and cut his long, grimy hair, and insisted on keeping his shirt and khaki shorts even in winter. He loved to walk barefoot to feel the pain, and to practice “YOGA”. He did it selflessly. [...] I asked him:

– Listen [Kawni], you’re friendly, extremely polite and very educated, but what I do not like is your carelessness. Look, all your comrades are wearing pants, jackets and sandals. So shave your beard, and cut your hair. He answered me with downcast eyes and with an air full of regret:

– You’re right Raïss, but unfortunately the other refused.

Another comrade explained to me that he was referring to the “jnoun” who lived with him in the same cell, who ordered him to stay as he is, so they could bequeath to him the wisdom of the Buddhists.

Both accounts testify that Kawni’s life in confinement articulates hybrid wisdom, arising from different influences. Kawni, it seems, carried out his metamorphosis with inculcated and inherited knowledge and practices: i.e., tradition. Those who are familiar with Islamic culture will easily recognize Sufi vocabulary in some of his words (i.e. *kehalwa*, ‘*ishq*, ruin of the body). Can we still speak of a cultural idiom? Yes, but only if we take into consideration both Kawni’s cultural ecumenism and his own inventions and concede that something akin to cultural mutation is occurring with



the image of his bodily metamorphosis. It is important here to state what Kawni spoke of his relationship to religion. First, the Sufism he refers to is not “that of appearances and institutions”. Secondly, according to him *dīn* (the religion at large) is “a universal system” or a “universal detachment”, beyond the “confessional boundaries”. Religion thus refers to a universal undetermined by a specific confession or affiliation. In contrast, *tadayyun*, religiosity, is the “ethnic”, or cultural, expression of this universal – “habits” and “conditioning”, such as “bodily manifestations” – that is to say, habitus and disciplines.

Kawni, like many others, experienced some forms of piety in Tazmamart: learning and reciting the Quran, prayers, including the prayers of death, and theology lessons. In addition, he also became instructed in the ways of Hinduism and even Buddhism, and he practiced yoga. His experience and words embody an idiom embedded in Islamic tradition but – this is hardly surprising – very open to other wisdoms, including philosophy.³¹ This is, without a doubt, a call to cultural and existential otherness, which some detainees could only understand in terms of contact with familiar spirits (*jnoun* or *jinn*). Yet, this local interpretation itself draws from other sources, as it is the *jinn* who taught Kawni Buddhism.

Regarding Kawni’s metamorphosis, psychiatric knowledge and common cultural knowledge suggest a heteronomy, or a self that is becoming of another nature alien to himself. In fact, this is not the case since Kawni communicates and interacts with nature itself. Kawni’s subjectivity, as mentioned earlier, reveals itself in disjunctions and always on a floating line. There is no dissociation (or dissociative amnesia), nor is there a spirit possession. Rather, Kawni’s dual subjectivity is a becoming that transmutes the very meanings of traumatic prison conditions.³² Kawni’s experience suggests a leap into the unknown, a mutation of the body and the soul through the transformation of the body, a technique of the self that eludes the instillation of death by carceral techniques, articulating a “will to power” that joyfully receives suffering and death. His metamorphosis embodies a surpassing of the self and its condition, a self-surpassing which spreads to a universal dimension.

³¹ Notions such as “discursive tradition”, “disciplines” and “economy of pleasure” do not account for these phenomena. On these notions, see, e.g., Asad (1993, 2009).

³² In his case, we can rather speak of “schizoanalysis” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980), which refers to the identification of the trajectory of the symptoms to see if they can serve as indicators of new universes of references capable of acquiring a consistency sufficient for turning a situation upside down. See also Smith (2011).



Becoming Universal

“Access to the second-body is access to the universal (*El-Kawn*)”, says Kawni. Binebine (2009: 160), in the passage quoted before, mentions how his fellow inmate was “communicating with nature”. He also wrote that Kawni “made numerous attempts to communicate from his cell with what he called *El-Kawn*, literally ‘everything that exists’ and in my opinion ‘the universal being’”. The author rightly writes that his fellow inmate joins the universal being. Kawni’s metamorphosis is thus an impulse that propels him to a universal dimension. That is to say, the second-body is a body that expands to the dimensions of a cosmic ego. To what does this cosmic ego refer? How can one reach the universal from total isolation?

Remember that Kawni acts his suffering out in a positive way. The self-destruction of his first-body and the emergence of the second-body refer to both a will and a struggle, not only against his physical body but also against the hold of nostalgia and resentment. Hence, Kawni evades the condition of a subject – of a corporeal, historical, social and even cultural belonging – on which the vagaries of a power, and a political determination more specifically, could be exercised, thereby overturning the prison machinery and its ultimate ends: madness and death.³³

Kawni’s experience, and what he said about it, intersects significantly with the Nietzschean *Selbstüberwindung* and the cosmic propensity it implies. The *Selbstüberwindung* is both a struggle and a bodily metamorphosis, for the body is the immediate and concrete illustration of the self-overcoming and hence the witness of becoming. Therefore, the body asserts itself as a dynamic subjectivity which, while transcending itself, interprets the surrounding world and composes other possibilities of life. From this perspective, the spirit is only the culmination of the process by which the body overcomes itself to become an another-body, as a self which expands to the dimensions of a cosmic ego, articulating the richness of the personality: an inner profusion, eagerness, instinctive pleasure, great sacrifice, self-sacrifice, and great love (Nietzsche, 2015 [1886], 1968 [1901]; Garnier, 1966, 2004 [1982]).

Just as in Kawni’s experience, self-destruction in situations of suffering and vulnerability – which must be distinguished from the act of turning

³³ The story of the prisoner Darrell Standing, narrated by Jack London (1987 [1915]), is very interesting to compare with Kawni’s experience, especially regarding the method by which the former achieved “death in life”, to become a “temporary master of time and space”, to vault “the prison walls to rove among the stars”, thereby disclosing “the ultimate secret of the universe”. The comparison between the two experiments certainly deserves a more in-depth critical analysis. It is the subject of an in progress separate study.



against oneself – does not denote an instinct of survival, or a mere will-to-live. It is affirmation, not negation. Creation, not preservation. Joy, not resentment or revenge. Liberation, not nostalgia. In other words, the profound meaning of the tragic is coextensive with the *Selbstüberwindung*. It cannot be reduced to a “medical formula” or to a “moral solution” to suffering (Deleuze, 2014: 26). Rather, it expresses a will to power, a joyful and voluptuous principle of consumption and absolute anxiety that disturbs existence and prevents it from closing in on itself; tirelessly opening up creative possibilities for the becoming-other, other possibilities of life (Nietzsche, 2015 [1886], 2006 [1883-1891]; Garnier, 1966).

To be able to connect with such an underground reality inhabited by suffering and decomposition, Nietzsche certainly faced the painful line that separates reason from madness and life from death. However, the philosopher does not describe the subsequent processes and mechanisms of self-destruction and bodily metamorphosis. And where the philosopher foresees an *Übermensch*, a superhuman (or over-human) confined in rivalry and confrontation with the divine and its avatars – transcendence, religion, asceticism – Kawni experiences himself as a small animal who, moved by an ascetic desire, becomes, and while becoming, transfigures the very meaning of the relation to the divine, to the world, and to the human condition. Besides, while the superhuman remains imprisoned in his greatness and in the madness of greatness, the little animal suggests an exit and a flight to vanish into nature, into the cosmos. The revolution, which is concomitant with Kawni’s metamorphosis, designates a process of turning a situation upside down: power into desire, suffering into joy, imprisonment into a vital impulse, corporeal death into a transcendent corporeality, madness into wisdom, cultural belonging into universal amplitude. A universal being – Kawni.

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Os dois corpos do recluso: sobrevivência e metamorfose numa prisão secreta marroquina

Tazmamart não é uma prisão comum. É um sistema de detenção secreta que desafia o modelo foucaultiano e a lógica que lhe está subjacente é melhor compreendida fora de um paradigma universal da modernidade. Todas as formas racionais, todos os procedimentos, a escolha do local de detenção, a organização das celas e a política de racionamento são conduzidas pela vontade de desfazer a vida. Os reclusos ou morrem ou transmutam para sobreviver. Este artigo relata a experiência de um dos sobreviventes que, em comparação com seus companheiros de prisão, narra a sua metamorfose corporal em termos

Les deux corps du détenu: survie et métamorphose dans une prison secrète marocaine

Tazmamart n'est pas une prison ordinaire. Il s'agit d'un système de détention secrète qui défie le modèle de Foucault et la logique qui lui est sous-jacente est mieux comprise en dehors d'un paradigme universel de la modernité. Toutes les formes rationnelles, tous les procédés, le choix du lieu de détention, l'organisation des cellules et la politique de rationnement sont dictés par la volonté de défaire la vie. Les détenus meurent ou transmutent pour survivre. Cet article rapporte l'expérience de l'un des survivants qui, en comparaison à ses compagnons de détention, décrit sa métamorphose corporelle en termes confondants et sans



desconcertantes e sem paralelo, com o objetivo de apreender a sua experiência do devir na sua própria interligação com uma teoria do devir. A sua própria metamorfose, argumento, é concomitante a um ato radical “revolucionário”, que transfigura o significado e a relação com o confinamento e com o mundo, convertendo assim o sofrimento em alegria, a morte corporal em corporalidade transcendente, a loucura em sabedoria e o isolamento total em amplitude cósmica – um ser universal. **Palavras-chave:** detenção de pessoas; morte lenta; sobrevivência; Tazmamart (Marrocos); testemunho; tortura; violência política.

parallèle, dans le but de saisir son expérience de devenir dans son propre entrelacement avec une théorie de devenir. Je soutiens que sa propre métamorphose est concomitante à un acte radical “révolutionnaire”, qui transfigure la signification et le rapport au confinement et au monde, convertissant ainsi la souffrance en joie, la mort corporelle en une corporalité transcendante, la folie en sagesse et l’isolement total en amplitude cosmique – un être universel.

Mots-clés: détention de personnes; mort lente; survie; Tazmamart (Maroc); témoignage; torture; violence politique.



