Author(s): Zolkos, Magdalena

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Imprints and Dreamscapes

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A History Open to Shivering Bodies[1]

Magdalena Zolkos

Representing People[2]

The texts and images included in *Diaries of War and Life* offer their readers/viewers representations of *a people*—people in the grip of violence, people experiencing fear, loss and grief, people 'shocked into action'[3] by the violence of war that they witness and endure, and people engaged in acts of resistance and defence. The question of *what kind of political people* Ukrainians have shown themselves to be in the face of the unprovoked invasion by Russia in 2022 has been asked by commentators and analysts alike.[4] Among others, Timothy Snyder in his influential analyses of the war has written and spoken at length about the Ukrainian *demos* that manifests through performative practices of citizenship, which centre on quotidian acts of solidarity, humanitarianism, and popular support for national defence. Referencing Ernest Renan's well-known formulation that 'the existence of a nation [is a] daily plebiscite' (1882/2018), Snyder has suggested that Ukraine's social mobilisation and resistance efforts should be interpreted as *an expression of political preference*—a kind of a 'vote' for national self-determination and political freedom—and thus as grounds for international recognition (Snyder, 2022). From this perspective, civic nationhood is 'not about getting its history in order', as Snyder put it in conversation with Ezra Klein (2022); rather, it consists of practical efforts of 'asserting [one's] own existence day to day' by a 'collectivity [that exists] because it is directed towards [a] future'.

The crux of Snyder's argument is that people emerge through resistance against imperialist and tyrannical power that threatens their political (and physical) existence, and that through their 'earnest struggle'—a phrase

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Snyder borrows from the American abolitionist Fredrick Douglass—they affirm their freedom (Snyder, 2022). The struggle reveals the limits of tyrannical power not simply because it frustrates the military objectives of conquest (though that of course is also the case in Ukraine); rather, it becomes a *political event* insofar as the struggle casts into relief that in spite of all its destructive capacity, the aggressor is unable to quell people's desire for freedom. This imbricates closely with how the French philosopher of visuality Georges Didi-Huberman describes images of people rising in revolt against tyrannical power (2008/2018, 2016b). Through these images, Didi-Huberman argues (2008/2018, p. 64), we are afforded 'signals' or 'glimpses' into the fact that the work of destruction, no matter how horrific and calamitous, remains forever 'unaccomplished' and 'perpetually incomplete'. The relevance of Didi-Huberman's conceptual nexus between freedom struggle and what he calls, following Freud, 'the indestructible character of a desire' (2008/2018, p. 85) in the context contemporary of Ukraine is striking. As Bohdan Shumylovych also suggests in his contribution to this volume (referencing Didi-Huberman), the first-hand accounts of the war found in the diaries, dreams and images are akin to 'fireflies' appearing in the dark of the night. They are 'flashes' and 'intermittent light' that signal life, love and desire that survive the work of destruction, appearing *in spite of* and *against* the catastrophic horizon of war (Didi-Huberman, 2008/2018).[5] Snyder's performative conception of civic nationhood aligns then with Didi-Huberman's notion of uprising as the irrepressible impulse towards freedom expressed by images (and texts) produced in response to war and atrocity. In both accounts, the political people *appear* through acts of resistance against aggression that targets their political, cultural and physical existence (2013/2016a, p. 95).

The testimonies in *Diaries of War and Life* abound in narratives of people's input in the collective struggle against the invasion, and of daily expressions of kindness, generosity and bravery that demonstrate their capacity to withstand hardship and to stand in solidarity with others in these onerous circumstances. In this context, the feminist undertones of many of these narratives are also quite striking. They are visible in stories of 'minor acts' of resistance, many of which centre on care relations, including hospitality and hosting displaced people, sharing food and resources, volunteering and engaging in humanitarian relief efforts, producing camouflage nets, securing medical supplies, assisting foreign journalists, learning self-defence, etc. The relational aspect of these representations is apparent as people are frequently depicted being together and relating to each other; hosting and visiting, in conversations, seeing each other off to safety, welcoming and receiving others, cooking together, sharing food and booze, connecting on social media and in person, embracing, kissing, touching, making love and sheltering each other's bodies.[6] These 'minor

acts' of resistance and the communal practices of care are both, in my view, performances of political people (in Snyder's sense) and an expression of 'people rising' in their 'indestructible desire' for freedom (Didi-Huberman, 2016b). At the same time, the relational care perspective also expands the notion of the people emerging in a struggle against invasion and unfreedom in that the diaries and dreams depict people not only *rising* (together), but also *holding* (one another). That relational orientation links the emergence of a political people to social care activities that, following Winnicott (1953), we could identify as 'holding environments' or 'holding spaces' created through quotidian efforts. Enduring war, together, means helping each other bear its burdens. It also means to *bear the unbearable*, bear the trauma of the war's violent imprints and ruins of the psychic and social life.

Nocturnal People

At the same time as the texts and images in *Diaries of War and Life* support and illustrate the notion that political people emerge through quotidian acts of defiance and struggle against invasion—and against conditions of unfreedom—these testimonies also point to the limits and perhaps even blindspots of an analysis that associates people solely with active subjecthood and with what I will call 'the diurnal domain' (cf. Bronfen, 2013). While these texts undoubtedly testify to the ways in which the threat posed by the invasion mobilised and activated the civil society and galvanised people into vigorous and (hyper) energetic modes of being and doing, they also offer glimpses into the 'nocturnal domain'—understood both literally (as that which goes on at night, in dreams, etc.) and as a metaphorical idiom for the dimensions of subjective life that come into visibility when people abstain from action and withdraw from the hustle and bustle of public life under conditions of war. Admittedly, these are often moments when stillness and inactivity are not desired or sought by the subjects voluntarily, but are imposed upon them; the withdrawal from activity can be enforced by the call to shelter (from air raids) and come from a demand put on the bodies to remain still in enclosed spaces. A substantial part of these testimonies consists of nuanced accounts of nocturnal life, including narratives and images of dreams, affects, fears, and desires. Writing of the diaries often goes at night as sleeping is repetitively interrupted by air alarms (see esp. Ihor K., *passim*). The spatial figuration of the 'nocturnal people' is their containment within the underground bomb shelter. It features in the dreams and diaries as a material container of human and animal bodies immobilised within it, waiting for the danger to pass (see e.g. Khrystia M., March 2, p. 51; Stefaniia K., March 11 & April 18, p. 61, 63).[7] Shelter is also a metaphor

of a structure that is simultaneously protective and threatening as in Yelyzaveta B.'s dream when bombing turns the shelter into a mass of debris and transforms its shielding carapace into a tomb (March 06, p. 215).[8]

The 'nocturnal' designates those aspects of subjective life where consciousness loosens its grip on the subject: dreaming, fantasising, or intense affective experiences. Attending to this domain, and of relating it more closely to the political notion of the people, troubles the idealised notion of civicness as a social mobilisation and takes stock of the psycho-social costs of (hyper) activity and excitability induced by the conditions of war. The latter leads to depletion of energy, exhaustion, burnout and fatigue.[9] There is a recurring pendular dynamic in contributions to *Diaries of War and Life* as their characters move between active, diurnal life and its suspension or bracketing by moments of nocturnal withdrawal from activity, stillness and waiting. This peculiar war-time version of the Freudian 'fort-da' game ('now you see me, now you don't')[10] foregrounds a notion of the subject caught up in the oscillating movement between psychic, social and corporeal excitation and activity and the self's withdrawal from the public eye into a space of intense feelings, obsessive thoughts, the unconscious, and enforced stillness, where the traumatic effects on the psyche and the body become apparent (see also Frosh in this volume).

Centrifugal Voices

As figurations of political people, *Diaries of War and Life* affirms what Didi-Huberman calls the 'double difficulty', or 'double aporia', of representing 'a people' (2013/2016, p. 65). First, that difficulty is due to the fact that any attempts at grounding 'a people' in notions of oneness, coherence and indivisibility, even the people's coming together is the effect of the war is troubled by the irreducible plurality of views, affects, experiences and positions expressed in these diaries. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's discussion of kinship that, when incorporated into imaginaries of democratic togetherness, Arendt describes as a 'perversion of politics' (1993/2005, p. 94),[11] Didi-Huberman argues that the emergence of a political people involves plurality. He writes: '[politics] is interested precisely in […] [those] *men,* whose multiplicity is modulated differently each time, whether it be in conflict or community' (Didi-Huberman, 2013/2016a, p. 65).[12] The second difficulty is that just as politics takes multiplicity and difference as conditions of possibility, the aesthetic field also deals with 'the fact of plurality' (Arendt, 1993/2005, p. 93). There is no singular or total 'image'; in fact, as Didi-Huberman argues, the word 'image' is a misnomer. There are only ever *images* 'whose very multiplicity [resists] synthesis' (Didi-Huberman, 2013/2016a, p. 65).

The political import of *Diaries of War and Life* is most apparent when its contributions do not comply with a uniform image of a unified nation. On numerous occasions the narrative and visual representations at hand resist the collation and homogenisation of peoples' experiences of war into an indivisible totality or 'oneness' of people who are united in their suffering. Instead, by asserting the irreducible *multiplicity* of positions, experiences and views, the diaries, dreams and images depict with unapologetic frankness subjectivities that *diverge from* the dominant representations of the war and of the civic mobilisation in response to it (including the recurrent homogenising and idealising depictions in the West).[13]

An important part of such homogenised and unified representations concerns the domain of effect and emotions where certain ways of *feeling* are anticipated and approved, while others are ill-fitting and marginalised, so as to buttress the dominant representations of collective courage in the face of the war, moral superiority and victimhood. What is striking about the emotional depictions in *Diaries of War and Life* is precisely the extent to which many contributors resist and defy these hegemonic representations and expectations. With this, they refuse to gratify and be disciplined by the 'Western gaze' that exerts pressures on them to comply with these (often contradictory) representations: bravery in the face of war that manifests as an unfaltering will to fight, the outpouring of gratitude and thanks to states granting protection to refugees and offering military and humanitarian help, uncompromised social solidarity, etc. Examples of resisting these representations in the diaries abound, such as Anastasiia B.'s description of seeking protection in Krakow, in which she defies the frame of a grateful refugee and refuses to be reduced to victimised subject position. Characteristically succinct in her depiction of the host society, Anastasiia makes only two observations: she notes the palpable fear among Polish people as potential targets of a future attack and remarks on the quotidian difficulties caused by the influx of refugees, such as strains on the urban infrastructures and failures of the sewage system (March 30, p. 205). Pitting the physical reality of blocked toilets and the lingering stink against the infatuating narratives of Polish-Ukrainian kinship, the text resists discursive idealisation and stops in their tracks those readers who crave gratification for being 'on the right side of history'. Refusing the dominant norms of socially sanctioned behaviour and feelings (what emotions are 'appropriate' to the 'gravity' of war?), other authors also give a strikingly honest and non-idealistic account of a gamut of emotions, narrating ambivalence, annoyance, frustration, disillusionment even revulsion and disgust. They admit being reluctant towards participation in direct combat (Dana K., March 17, p. 229; Bohdan S., March 5, p. 238), frankly record failures of solidarity and support (such as instances of theft at train stations crowded with refugees), at times voice aversion towards humanitarian and

volunteer work, and, on numerous occasions, express desire for revenge (e.g. Dana K., April 3, p. 230). Last but not least, they are unabashed in their representations of some of the Western responses to the war, calling out cases of ignorance, naivety and opportunism.

This quality of psychic honesty of the narratives and photographs extends to their representations of beauty, joy, and pleasure as 'things' that do not disappear during war, though they might 'clash' with some of its representations (see e.g. Dana K., March 14, p. 228; Khrystia M. March 2, p. 51; Anastasiia I., March 9, p. 233). These qualities are perhaps ever more important as they anchor the subject in life-nourishing and life-affirmative experiences and relations with others. A striking case of a critical response to censorship of aesthetics and feelings deemed 'incompatible' with the war situation is in Dana K.'s diary entry from March 14. She records being enraged at a German photographer who edits a sunset image to align it with the dominant iconography of war, thus toning down the photograph's colours for a 'dramatic effect'. 'To my mind [it is] almost the same as lying about the number of victims', Dana K. writes. And she asks: '[w]hy is it necessary to lie about the fact that there is beauty during the war [?]'. To use once more Didi-Huberman's words, the beauty is the sunset forms a 'rend' in the cultural aesthetics of war imagery; a 'suddenly manifested knot of an arborescence of associations or conflictual meanings' (1990/2005, p. 19) that needs to be thereby neutralised or removed. In contrast, the perspectives in *Diaries of War and Life* offer an assortment of dispersed and centrifugal voices that 'pull away' from the singular and unified image of a singular and indivisible 'people'. In his analysis of images from the Ringelblum Archive Didi-Huberman speaks of 'scattered ways of looking' and 'scattered moral perspectives' (2019, pp. 10, 16), making the point that resistance against oppressive power often takes the form of seemingly mundane and disconnected actions and gestures. They articulate political people in spite of (or because of) remaining 'plural, divided by breaches, fissures, conflicts' (2019, p. 38). *Diaries of War and Life* are precisely such representations of heterogeneous, disunified and 'scattered' people, who constitute a political community through relational practices of endurance.

The Trembling Subject

In the previous sections, I have suggested that the contributors to *Diaries of War and Life* articulate 'nocturnal people' by bringing into the field of visibility elements from outside of the ('diurnal') domain of active life, including the narration of secret fears, dread and anxiety; outlining dream-images; painstakingly mapping intense affective experiences. The significance of emotions and effects that can be further illuminated by situating these texts vis-à-vis Pierre Rosanvallon's taxonomy of democratic representation,

which distinguishes between 'opinion-people', 'nation-people' and 'emotion-people' (1998). The 'opinion-people' (*le peuple-opinion*) highlights the effects of verbal articulations of positions and viewpoints for the formation of the democratic subject, and the 'nation-people' (*le peuple-nation*) focuses on cultural and political attributes that form the scaffolding of national identity. In the case of the 'emotion-people' (*le peuple-émotion*) collective political identity is expressed 'in a pathetic mode' (Rosanvallon cited in Didi-Huberman, 2013/2016a, p. 67). Drawing on that taxonomy of representing (and imagining) people, Didi-Huberman (who critiques Rosanvallon for his questioning of the democratic relevance of emotions) proposes that attention to feelings, effects and embodied sensations is key for opening critically the question of *who counts as a historical subject*. It is by paying attention to not only the quotidian, but, I argue, also to the nocturnal that historical subjectivity (and historical experience) can be pluralised beyond the dominant state-centric, masculine discourses of war and nationhood. In this context, the importance of the archive of *Diaries of War and Life* lies in their depiction of how people as (in Arlette Farge's words) 'beings of the flesh' become subjects of history; how they are 'acted upon' by history and, in turn, how they also 'act upon' the self (Farge, 2007, pp. 9–10, cited in Didi-Huberman, 2013/2016a, p. 77). These psycho-social records of war imbricate closely with a theoretical position according to which 'history is not recounted solely through a sequence of human actions but also through entire constellations of passions and emotions felt by the people', which 'opens history' to the presence of 'affected bodies' and 'affective bodies' (Didi-Huberman, 2013/2016a, pp. 77–78).

One way in which such affective history manifests in these texts is through the figure of a *shivering body*. A shivering, trembling body is neither moving nor static. In the diaries, the bodily shiver can come in the absence of means to verbalise an experience: 'I [feel speechless all the time] as if words were tapped from me like blood. I am shivering, freezing and fevering without words' (Yelyzaveta B., March 29, p. 217). Mariana H. writes: 'my hands tremble, and I start confusing words and merging several into one' (February 26, p. 207). The shiver varies in intensity and volatility. It registers on the body war's violence and as such it places the subject within the war's history as part of the political people affected by it. It is both in the present and in relation to the past and future:

> [M]y body is already shaking so much I just can't keep myself on my feet. And I wouldn't say that I was shaking with fear, no. If I was worried, I was most afraid [...] for the future of my country. Everything looked consistent in my head: there will be no country, no future for my people [...]. (Polina S., February 24, p. 88)[14]

The shivering body is not a diurnal subject—active, deliberate, controlling, balanced—but an unstable one, out of control, and, in a way, out of the bounds of their own body. Daryna P. confesses: '[there is] a kind of tremor in my body as if I [was] jerked' (March 16, p. 248), and Anastasiia B. notes: '[my] legs and arms are weak and constantly trembling even when I think I am standing calmly' (March 17, p. 202).

The shiver is a seismograph of the body in a shelter, thus separated from the proximity to the blast. It registers upon the cutaneous surface a quake (a bomb exploding) that happens elsewhere and at a different time. This is conspicuous in Stefaniia K.'s account of a shelter from April 18: '[w]ith somebody whimpering in the background, and with wehaveseenthemissilefromthewindow-itwassobig-therewassomuchsmoke, I felt the abominable creepy shiver in my stomach. The one that used to live in my guts in the first week [of the war]' (p. 63). For Kateryna L., the tremor is a point of connection between bodily interiority and exteriority:

> I can't describe my thoughts at the moment when, already in bed, *I feel the earth tremble from an unknown shock*. And then, having found no signs of obvious danger around, I go back to bed, trying to calm *the heartbeat and tremors in my hands*, knowing that I'm falling asleep in a minefield, where anything can happen overnight. (February 27, p. 80)[15]

The shivering bodies in the Ukrainian war diaries *insist on being seen* as subjects of history in their distinct corporeal and affective experiences that form at the interstices of movement and stillness, but are not identical with either. A quiver, tremble, convulsion, tremor or vibration correspond neither to the representations of bodies in a frenzy of activities and movements nor to figurations of bodies that are immobilised and rendered powerless by shock and grief. Neither uniformly active nor passive, these shivers denote a mode of historical subjectivity that corresponds most closely to the middle voice, combining aspects of both agency and patiency (of acting and being acted upon), but being not reducible to either.[16]

Tryvoga, Enduring War

In the closing section, I want to bring into this discussion the affective modality of *tryvoga,* which seems to me as crucial to the sensorial, emotive, corporeal and 'nocturnal' moments of peoples' emergence in these war records. It is a recurring effect, through which the violence of war is registered by (and on) the body, and that comes close to 'dread' and 'horror', also carries other semantic connotations. The Slavic word *tryvoga* (Ukr. *тривога*) also invokes disquiet, trepidation, fear, anxiety, and a state of alertness and alarm.[17] Numerous diaries and dreams give accounts of

affect or mood. *Tryvoga* is also the title of Eva Alvor's drawing (Image 3, p. 144). It depicts a naked and curled body of a man, grasping with both hands his head in what looks like an agonising gesture of unbearable pain, or perhaps in an attempt to silence overwhelming sounds or thoughts. The man is inscribed within a red figure that contrasts starkly with a protective (womb) structure: the shape has sharp, piercing edges and resembles a menacing bird of prey, a thorny bush, or a laceration caused by a tearing force. The background of the image is a nearly indecipherable handwriting, and the scribbles that invoke all-consuming, obsessive thoughts or tormenting words, and which the subject is unable to silence. What is striking about the image is that its 'containment logic' is reversed: the wound, rather than being depicted as a laceration *on* the skin, encloses the body; the scripted thoughts, rather than being presented as occurring *in* the mind, encompass the body and the wound. Through this reversed logic of containment, the image expresses the corporeal and psychic precarity of people in the face of violence. The affective intensity of dread and horror (*tryvoga*), so palpable in that image, signifies an experience that makes the protective structures (of a bomb shelter, but also those of the body) porous, injurable and destructible. The dynamism of Alvor's image makes the body gripped by *tryvoga* appear not as static (though neither is the figure moving), but, rather, as quivering and trembling.

The affective-corporeal modality of tremors or vibrations, which I have identified as a recurring motif in these narratives, is also present in the photographs, for example in the close-up of fingers and toes, and their embodied tension, in Anastasiia Markeliuk's images (Images 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6, pp. 177–179). There is a connection between bodily tremble or tremor and the effect of *tryvoga*. In contrast to the paralysed state of horror embodied as enforced stillness, 'stiffness' or 'petrification' (cf. Cavarero, 2009; Kordela, 2015), *tryvoga* manifests as a 'quasi-movement' of tremor or as *trepidation* (a useful term in this context in that it combines the condition of anxiety and dread with that of tremor or quiver).

Also, *tryvoga* has a temporal dimension, which is lost in the English translation as dread, disquiet, or alarm. It is that of an overpowering experience that is *extended in time*. Its symptomatic situation in the diaries, it seems to me, is that of a prolonged waiting in a bomb shelter, but there are also other moments of 'extended waiting' that the war enforces upon the people in the diaries—queuing for hours to a cash machine or a shop, waiting at a border, waiting in intensified traffic, etc. *Tryvoga* connotes that the dread, fear and alertness that register as bodily tremors are not a momentary occurrence, but a *lasting experience of pain*, which the subject comes to endure.

In concluding this chapter, I want to suggest that enduring or bearing the pain together, or rather *bearing each other in that lasting pain*, there emerges

a situation of reciprocal holding (cf. Frosh, 2015). While the etymology of the word *tryvoga* is contested (see Nilsson, 1999), it has been suggested that it has a shared root with the verb 'to last', 'to stay put', 'to remain' (Ukr. *тривати*, Pl. *trwać*), and is related to the word 'tree' (PIE *deru-* meaning 'to be firm, solid and steadfast' (see 'Tree', n.d.)).[18] That quality endurance as *remaining in place*—as withstanding war—is a key characteristic of representing and imagining people in these archives. Stephen Frosh's theoretical account of endurance as relational ethics (2015) captures this connection between people and togetherness, or being-with and being-towards one another, as an unbearable, shattering experience that lies beyond the subject's control or initiation. Writing in a different context, but one that I think is applicable also here, Frosh suggests that the 'demand for endurance faces us with exposure to something that we cannot avoid; we just have to stay with it until it comes to an end' (2005, p. 171).

Finally, insofar as *tryvoga,* and shivering as its corporeal expressions, connote endurance of a long-lasting and painful experience, they also help understand better the role of the witness in these visual and narrative archives of war. Perhaps what they can help us understand better is the link between ethics and politics in witnessing more broadly. In continental philosophical scholarship on testimony (see Derrida, 2005; Felman & Laub, 1992; Oliver, 2001, 2015), testimonial ethics and politics are closely linked with the subject's (spatial-temporal) proximity to the traumatic event, and to the fact of their survival (even if they narrate is as a 'partial' or 'incomplete' survival, cf. Zolkos, 2010). Their survival subsequently forms a kind of ethical obligation (a call or 'appointment') to speak, listen and give testimony *in the place of* those who have not survived. Derrida (2005) thus argues that the testimonial speech act is a call to be believed that takes the spatial and temporal proximity to the catastrophic event as a condition of its possibility (every witness pleas, according to Derrida, 'believe me, I have been there, believe me, I have seen it'). The voices in the Ukrainian war diaries ask their listeners to critically reflect on how the relationality of endurance is understood in connection to the ethical and political demands of witnessing. 'Proximity' is not synonymous here with propinquitous location. Rather, it connotes the corporeal imprint (tremor, shiver) of intensive affects (*tryvoga*) in the emergence of political people, as both an affirmation of freedom and of relational ethics in the endurance of war.

Notes

1 I take the phrase 'open history' (to human bodies, effects and shivers) from Farge (2007).

2 I am indebted to Bohdan Shumylovych and Chari Larsson for their feedback on the earlier drafts of this chapter, and to Simone Drichel for conversations about ethics of endurance.

3 The phrase is used by Will Harris in Kaminsky, 2019.
4 That question recurs, partly, by way of resisting the denial of the independent existence of Ukrainian people in Russian war propaganda (e.g. Vladislav Surkov's claim that 'there is no such thing as Ukraine' (quoted in Düden, 2020)).
5 For a discussion of 'in spite of all' in Didi-Huberman's philosophy see Gustafsson, 2023.
6 This is not to idealise familial and other relations in the diaries. Friends, family, neighbours and strangers encountered in the shared spaces of the underground shelters are frequently depicted as sources of major frustration, resentment or anger (see e.g. Oksana V.'s diary, p. 85–86).
7 On 'waiting time' see Baraitser, 2017 and Salisbury and Baraitser, 2020, though the inertia of bodies in a bomb shelter is quite different from experiences of waiting in the mental health context.
8 The sound companion of the figure of underground shelter is the siren announcing an air alarm. It features as a strikingly ambiguous occurrence in the diaries; while for some it incites panic and anxiety (Daryna P., March 3, p. 245), a forceful awakening (Annamaria T., March 3, p. 244), and indexes an approaching threat (Anastasiia B., March 10, p. 199-200); it appeals to Mariana H.'s sister for whom it resembles 'the singing of whales, [their] way to confess love and establish mutual communication' (March 12, p. 209).
9 Mental and physical weariness are an important and recurring motif in many of the diaries as people report being tired of 'strong emotions' (Olha K., March 14, p. 46) and 'everyday overload' (Yelyzaveta B., April 7, p. 218), but often without any specific reason. Exhaustion can function as an all-pervasive state: 'I can't find the strength to work well, to read [and] study texts, or just fiction, to read anything that is not a news feed for the day. I have no power to respond to friends from abroad or elsewhere. I'm just really tired' (Olha K., March 27, p. 48). 'I'm so unnaturally tired – I am just a body', writes Stefaniia K. (April 5, p. 62). Fatigue signifies a profound systemic disorganisation of the self due to the stress and trauma of war (cf. Hunt, 2010, pp. 6–12).
10 An example of the 'fort-da' game in the diaries is found in Oksana D.'s excerpt (May 7, p. 96) where she identifies the switching on and off city lights (so as to obscure urban centres' location at night) with a 'fort-da' rhythm of 'now you see me, now you don't': 'Where is Ukraine?/*turns off the light*/There is no Ukraine/*turns on the lights*/Here is Ukraine!/*turns off the lights*/[…]'.
11 Arendt identifies kinship as the governing principle of a family, which she calls 'shelter and a mighty fortress in an inhospitable, alien world' (1993/2005, p. 94, modified); a depiction with which surely psychoanalysis and feminist criticism alike would have a quarrel with. The representations of family in *Diaries of War and Life* highlight the capacity of familial relations to be both a source of care and meaningful connections with others and to reverberate and amplify the violence of war (see e.g. Oksana V., March 20, 22 and 27, p. 86).
12 Emphasis in the original.
13 I thank Chari Larsson for this observation.
14 In personal communication, Bohdan Shumylovych has noted the future-oriented and anticipatory aspect of a shiver as a 'foreboding' or 'foreknowledge' of violence: 'the body […] quivers in anticipation of violence, but once [the fighting] begins, the tremor subsides'.
15 Emphasis mine.
16 In *Margins of Philosophy* Derrida outlines the concept of *la différance* by invoking its comparison to the middle voice, of which he says that it is 'an operation that is not an operation'; the middle voice refers to what is unexplainable as either passion or agency, but, rather, a 'nontransivity' that

is repressed by the binary opposition of active and passive voice (1972/1982, pp. 9, 189).

17 In Oksana D.'s diary (p. 94), she calls her emergency bag, prepared for when she needs to evacuate to the bomb shelter, tryvozhna sumka, an 'alarm backpack' (also 'alarmed').

18 Quite a few drawings and dreams in *Diaries of War and Life* depict forests and trees, referencing (in my reading) questions of withstanding and enduring violence, as well as renewal and repair, and which cut across the arboreal and human register.

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