

# Knowing the ‘Unknowable’? : Methodological Concerns of Understanding the Holocaust through Testimony

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## Abstract

Academic interventions on the Holocaust have repeatedly pointed out the shortcomings of traditional historical discourses in comprehending the ethico-political and human dimensions of the event and stressed the importance of considering ‘other sources’ – testimonies, memoirs and oral accounts in this regard. The gaps, silences and rambling non-linearity of the narratives could themselves be the object of inquiry but the recurrent, almost haunting insistence of the “unimaginable” and “inconceivable” nature of the event in the survivors’ testimonies presents epistemological and ethical questions worth addressing. This paper attempts to engage with the methodological issues involved in conceptualising the Holocaust through the Testimony. The paper studies the epistemological concerns behind positing the testimony as a conceptual category, in opposition to the Foucaultian notion of the archive in Giorgio Agamben’s *Remnants of Auschwitz* and examines the figure of the Muselmann – the absolute witness who paradoxically is incapable of bearing witness as a product of Nazi biopolitics. Drawing on Agamben’s reading of the Foucaultian notion of ‘biopower’, particularly in the context of totalitarian regimes, the paper asks whether the effect of such a biopolitics is in the ultimate erasure of the boundaries between the human and non-human.

**Keywords:** *Testimony, Archive, Biopower, Muselmann, Witness.*

Primo Levi, a deportee and a survivor of the systematic extermination of Jews by the Nazis writes: ‘Some of my friends, very dear friends of mine, never speak of Auschwitz... Others, on the other hand, speak of it incessantly and I am one of them.’<sup>1</sup> For Levi and many others like him the desire to become a ‘witness’ was the one thing which made them survive. Another survivor, Hermann Langbein says that the sole reason behind not committing suicide as an inmate of the extermination camp was the urge to become a witness. ‘I ... decided I would not take my own life... since I did not want to suppress the witness that I could become.’<sup>2</sup> Much has been written about the inadequacies of traditional discourses of history in understanding the ethico-political and most importantly, the human dimensions of the Holocaust and the need to consider testimonies, oral

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accounts, and other ‘sources’ to comprehend it or at least make an attempt at comprehension.

One way of looking at it would be to invariably study the gaps, the silences, the non-linearity of narratives, the inevitable concerns with ‘truth’. But the lacuna – inherent in the repeated insistence of the survivors on the essentially ‘unimaginable’ or seemingly enigmatic nature of the event poses both epistemological and ethical concerns. The knowledge of the seemingly ‘unknowable’ is imperative not only to understand an event which has already taken place, but to comprehend the structures of power in a totalitarian regime which strives to foreclose access to the ‘knowable’. The epistemological concern is therefore to counteract the totalitarian desire of keeping the Holocaust out of bounds of historical knowledge. While perceiving Auschwitz as something which is essentially ‘unknowable’ and hence incomprehensible would dangerously materialise the Nazi desire, the testimony itself needs to be viewed as a conceptual category – as that which makes possible to convey the impossibility of bearing witness. Testimony, Giorgio Agamben says is a potentiality that is actualised through an impotentiality of speech, an impossibility that is materialised through a possibility of speaking.<sup>3</sup>

Agamben views potentiality, impotentiality, possibility, impossibility as not merely epistemological categories but as ontological operators. These are indispensable weapons used in the biopolitical conflict which informs the technology of living. Potentiality is a significant aspect of Agamben’s thought. Since potentiality, is conceived by Agamben to be forever haunted by impotentiality (the potentiality not to do), such a conception of potentiality is a ‘limit concept.’<sup>4</sup> Limit concepts like *homo sacer*, ‘bare life’ and *Muselmann* designate a threshold between two concepts and in the process interrogate both the concepts. Agamben uses these limit concepts as methodological devices throughout his work to reveal the dissolution of the borders between democracy and totalitarianism in the functioning of the modern biopolitical state – the ‘Camp’ as the hidden paradigm of the political space of modernity.<sup>5</sup>

This paper will engage with the ‘method’ by which this ‘aporia of historical knowledge’<sup>6</sup> can be negotiated, focusing on Agamben’s reading of the Foucaultian notion of biopower; specifically in the context of totalitarian regimes, the methodological issues involved in the positing of

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the notion of testimony in opposition to Foucault's notion of the archive; and consideration of Agamben's use of the methodological device of the limit concept of the *Muselmann*: the 'complete' or 'true' witness marked by the (im)potentiality of bearing witness as the hidden insignia of the modern biopolitical state. By engaging with these methodological issues, the paper seeks to understand whether the methodological devices used by Agamben can lead one to the question of resistance. Far from viewing Agamben's thought as pessimistic, the paper searches for potentialities and possibilities present in his thought which can possibly signal the inadvertent undoing of the seemingly all pervasive modern biopower by its very own technologies and machinations.

### **The 'Complete' Witness: A product of Nazi Biopolitics in the Camps?**

What does it mean to bear witness and to what does the survivor have to bear witness to? Elie Wiesel<sup>7</sup> relates how the survivor by the virtue of having survived becomes situated in a privileged position and has to consequently justify her/his survival. Levi repeatedly stresses that the survivors are but an 'anomalous minority' among the multitudes who are 'drowned':

I must repeat: we, the survivors are not the true witnesses... we are those who by their prevarications or abilities or good luck did not touch the bottom. Those who did so... have not returned to tell about ... they are the Muslims, the submerged, the complete witnesses... We speak in their stead, by proxy.<sup>8</sup>

Significantly, it is not mere bodily death which renders them incapable of speaking but their liminal presence in the threshold between life and death, the human and the non-human. The *muselmann* is a word which was used in the camps to designate those prisoners, who had completely surrendered their will to live, leading a death in life existence; he was a 'staggering corpse' with extreme indifference towards his surroundings. The origin of this term is doubted and Agamben locates the possible explanation in the literal meaning of the word "muslim": one who unconditionally submitted to the will of God. This was perhaps the reason behind the *Muselmann* being named so, marked as s/he was by a complete loss of will and extreme fatalism. The *Muselmann* was characterised by a complete lack of interest in earthly matters, sometimes even unperturbed by basic bodily functions. In Levi's writings the figure of the *Muselmann* seems to emerge more as a conceptual category which/who embodies the 'meaning' of the

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extermination camps, than merely being a physical, tangible reality:

... if I could enclose all the evil of our time in one image, I would choose this image...: an emaciated man, with head dropped and shoulder curved, on whose face and in whose eyes not a trace of thought is to be seen.<sup>9</sup>

It is in the liminal figure of these ‘non-men’ or ‘husk-men’, Agamben locates the possibilities of understanding the meaning of Auschwitz in terms of the ultimate devaluation of death in the twentieth century. The *Muselmann*’s death – i.e. the physical moment of ebbing of the signs of life from the body cannot be termed a ‘death’ – as being on the threshold of the living and non-living, the *Muselmann* not only questions the humanity of the human but also the ‘sacredness of death and life.’<sup>10</sup> The *Muselmann* both as a bodily tangible presence and a concept calls into question the traditional ideas about the living and the dead. Agamben refers to Bichat’s<sup>11</sup> distinction between the “organic” and the “animal” life in *Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et sur la mort* while commenting on the peculiar death-in-life existence of the *Muselmann*. The “organic” corresponds to the involuntary bodily functions like blood circulation, digestion, assimilation, respiration etc., whereas the “animal” refers to the interactions with the external world like dreaming –waking. What appeared to Bichat as an enigma is the continuation of organic life even after the cessation of the animal life at the hour of death. Agamben compares the senseless or indifferent survival of the organic functions beyond the extinction of animal life to the condition of the *Muselmann* in the Camps. Building on Bichat’s distinction between the “organic” and the “animal” Agamben makes a chilling comparison between the over-comatose person, the “neomort” kept alive through modern life support systems and the *Muselmann*. Modern biopolitics has worked on the schism between the “organic” and the “animal life” to reveal the nightmarish vision of a vegetative existence – nurtured by the artificial continuation of organic life that indefinitely survives the relational life.

Leading a death-in-life existence, the *Muselmann* seems to be a bundle of bodily processes devoid of life, on the threshold of life and death, human and non-human – a limit concept which calls into question the very concepts of life and death, human and non-human – just like a person resuscitated and kept alive artificially through modern medical technology. It is however in this liminal figure of the *Muselmann* – a product of Nazi biopolitics– is located the possibility of resistance, of being ‘the complete

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witness’ who has the keys not only to the secret contrivance of biopolitics in the Camp but also to the more general (and thereby all the more veiled) functioning of the modern biopolitical state. Agamben’s comprehension of the limit concept of the *Muselmann* as a neomort on life support is based on the crucial factor of “survival” – the ultimate secret of biopower in the twentieth century.

**From “Make live” to “Make Survive”**

Drawing on Foucault’s concept of ‘biopower’, Agamben tries to understand the peculiar ways in which power functions in totalitarian regimes, especially in Hitler’s Germany. Foucault sees the transformation of power in the modern age as a shift from the sovereign right to kill to the subtle but all pervasive mechanisms in which power works through the clinic, public healthcare institutions and state surveillance. While sovereignty is characterised as the power to make die and let live,<sup>12</sup> the modern model of power works through a control over bodies, constructing notions of the ‘healthy’ and ‘diseased’ bodies, preservation and protection of life in general through structures of state discipline. It is in this sense that power is productive as it produces and constructs notions of ‘healthy bodies’ and by extension, a healthy bodypolitic. This is what Foucault calls ‘biopower’ which is the governing force of biopolitics: to make live and let die. In the age of letting die death is shorn off its former ‘value’. Given this transformation, how does one conceptualise death in the context of the extermination camps? Also, how does one understand the mechanisms by which death was devalued and degraded in the production of the *Muselmann* who/which challenged the binary between the living and the dead in the extermination camps?

The conceptual difference between the two kinds of power, sovereign and biopower poses a problem when one tries to understand the workings of power in the totalitarian Nazi state. Agamben sees in Hitler’s Germany an intersection of ‘an absolutization of biopower to make live with an equally absolute generalisation of the sovereign power to make die, such that biopolitics coincides with thanatopolitics.’<sup>13</sup> This presents a paradox in the Foucaultian scheme of things in the context of the extermination camps: the power which principally functions to make live wields the power of unconditional death. Foucault’s answer to this paradox lies in the logic of racism. Racism with its inherent structure of opposition and hierarchy, Foucault argues enables biopower to fragment the biological

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domain. This is instrumental in distinguishing ‘different groups inside a population.’<sup>14</sup> Agamben’s development of Foucault’s analysis focuses on how the biopolitical caesuras go on to produce the ultimate ‘product’ of segregation – the *Muselmann*. The biopolitical caesura works by dividing the biological domain into the categories of people and population. The biopolitics of the totalitarian state is thus based on the transformation of a political body into a biological body. The birth, death, health and disease of the population must be subject to the forces of state regulation and control. The biopolitics of Nazi racism is evident in the 1933 legislation on ‘the protection of the hereditary health of German people’. In order to ensure a healthy population all ‘aberrations’ in the form of Jews, Non-Aryans, homosexuals, the mentally unstable needed to be weeded out. The biopolitics of racism works by the creation of caesuras or breaks: segregating the Aryan from the non-Aryan, the Jews from those of mixed ancestry. This is accompanied by a process of systematised degradation until the absolute limit is reached in the *Muselmann*:

Thus the non-Aryan passes into the Jew, the Jew into the deportee, the deportee into the prisoner (Haftling) until the biopolitical caesuras reach their limit in the camp. The limit is the *Muselmann*.<sup>15</sup>

Agamben looks upon Nazi biopolitics as something which not merely constructs the camps as the site of death and extermination but also the site of production of the *Muselmann*. The figure of the *Muselmann*, with its unnerving likeness to the over-comatose person and neomort paves the way for Agamben to introduce a “third formula” between the Foucaultian concepts of make die or make live<sup>16</sup> – “to make survive”. It is through the methodological device of the limit concept of the *Muselmann*, in whom the sheer survival of the “organic” life persists even after the ebbing away of the signs “animal” life that Agamben seeks to decode the covert machinations of modern biopolitics – the hidden power of which dissolves the boundaries between “totalitarian” regimes and parliamentary “democracies”. Survival becomes the touchstone of modern biopolitics – its aim being not only to make live but also make survive. In the functioning of modern medical resuscitation technologies which ensure the production of the neomort in whom/which vegetative life persists infinitely beyond the cessation of animal life, in the *Muselmann* embodying “death- in-life” – there occurs a division between the ‘human and the non-human, the witness and the *Muselmann*.<sup>17</sup> Biopower’s ultimate desire, Agamben cautions is to

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produce “in a human body the absolute separation of the living being and the speaking being, *zoe* and *bios*, the inhuman and the human –*survival*.”<sup>18</sup> (Emphasis mine.)

In *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Agamben draws upon the ancient Greek distinction<sup>19</sup> between the *zoë* – the unqualified fact of living common to all living beings and *bios* – a particular form of living corresponding to an individual or group (could refer to contemplative life of the philosopher, the life of pleasure and most importantly the political life of the citizen) to argue that the fundamental function of modern biopolitical state is the production of ‘bare life’ – which marks a separation between nature and culture, *zoë* and *bios*. If the *Muselmann* is the ultimate example of the ‘survival’ of ‘bare life’ – a survival seemingly conceived by Nazi biopower to be beyond the possibility of testimony, what are the possibilities/ impossibilities of resistance, of bearing witness to the ‘unwitnessable’, bare life and the function of testimony? Agamben evokes the possibility of resistance in the liminal figure of the *Muselmann* in the last pages of *Homo Sacer*. Reduced to mere bodily functions the *Muselmann* is incapable of distinguishing between the pangs of cold and the ferocity of the SS. The SS is rendered powerless being confronted by the spectre of the ‘bare life’ – the product of its very own biopolitics, who offers a silent resistance by the virtue of failing to differentiate between an order and the feeling of cold, between politics and nature.<sup>20</sup> Agamben’s methodological inquiry concerning testimony itself seems to be hinged on the possibility of resistance as it concerns itself with the (im)potentiality of speaking about the ‘unwitnessable’ bare life.

### **Methodological Issues: Archive Vs Testimony**

Agamben’s methodological approach is based on Foucault’s notion of archaeology and the archive. The testimony and the one who testifies – the witness and the subject position of the one who speaks or rather conveys the impossibility of speaking – are conceptualised keeping in view Foucault’s method of formulation of the theory of statements (*énoncés*). Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* focuses on enunciations – not on sentences or propositions, not on the text of discourse but the linguistic event of its taking place. Enunciation being a pure event of language is therefore not a reference to something said but the sayable which remains unsaid in that moment of ‘pure existence’. Archaeology according to Foucault refers to that domain where discourses and propositions ‘take

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place'. As opposed to the system of sciences and other knowledge systems which produce meaningful sentences 'inside' language, archaeology resides outside language – a position from which the disciplinary discourses can be examined. The archive in the Foucaultian sense is 'the general system of formation and transformation of statements.'<sup>21</sup> It is conceptualised to be situated between possibilities of speaking and what has been already spoken about – those which are uttered and written.

Agamben recognizes the novelty of the Foucaultian method in its rejection of the idea that language takes place through the evocation of a transcendental consciousness or a mythological psychosomatic presence – an "I". The Foucaultian method instead engages itself with how the subject – the "I" can emerge through statements, through the "pure taking place of language."<sup>22</sup> Agamben shows how Foucault conceives enunciation as a threshold between the inside and outside of language and in the process reveals the desubjectification of the subject whereby the subject assumes the status of a "pure position" or "pure function". This inevitably leads one to the Foucaultian notion of the "author" – a concept which is evoked by Agamben in his discussion of the testimony. Agamben's evocation of the Foucaultian notion of the "author" involves a critique of Foucault's archaeological method and this is what leads to his conception of the testimony as opposed to the Foucault's notion of the archive. The critique concerns itself with the ethical implications of Foucault's theory of statements – the consequences of the desubjectification of the author. Agamben's engaging with Foucaultian notion of archive and archaeology seems instrumental in the consideration of two points: 1) The understanding of the notion of the testimony in opposition to that of the archive. 2) The question of the subject position of the one who speaks.

Foucault's critique of the concept of the "author" is based on the very same principles that govern his archaeological method. Agamben points out that Foucault is not merely concerned with the "author's eclipse"<sup>23</sup> or the certification his death like Barthes in his 'Death of the Author' does, but seeks to define the idea of the author as a pure subject function whose necessity is immaterial with respect to the transmission of discourses. Foucault's notion of the archive, his theory of statements is based on a comparable bracketing of the subject which is accompanied with the bracketing of the question "Who is speaking?" Agamben points out the ethical implications of such a desubjectification and this leads him to



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conceptualise the concept of the testimony in opposition to Foucault’s notion of the archive. What is the predicament of the one who occupies the vacant space of the subject, reduced to a mere function, destined to lose himself in the “anonymous murmur of statements”?<sup>24</sup> This seems to be the pivotal question on which the methodological difference between the archive and testimony is posited. This question is a key to Agamben’s methodological approach as it concerns itself not only with the subject position but also with the possibility and impossibility, potentiality and impotentiality inherent in such a subject position.

Agamben draws upon Foucault’s positioning of the archive as suspended between *langue* and *parole* (between the rules of construction of possible utterances and individual acts of speech) to formulate his notion of the testimony. As opposed to the archive which designates a system of relations between the said and the unsaid, the testimony is conceived as a ‘system of relations between the *sayable and unsayable* in every language...’<sup>25</sup> (emphasis mine) Agamben’s theorisation of the testimony is based on a displacement of the site Foucault had constructed for the positioning of the archive. The displacement attempts to establish testimony as a pure possibility, as a potentiality of speech by situating it at the threshold of the inside and outside of *langue* as opposed to the archive which marks the threshold between *langue* and *parole*. This methodological move allows Agamben to address the question of the situation of the subject. Whereas the foundation of the archive is based on the disappearance and bracketing of the subject into the ‘anonymous murmur of statements’ in testimony the vacant space of the subject becomes the pivotal issue. Agamben seeks to locate the subject of testimony in the disjunction between a “possibility and impossibility of speech” and testimony itself as a contingency (to be able not to be) – as bearing within itself the ability not to be. Testimony therefore emerges as a potentiality forever haunted by impotentiality as it comes into being or is realised through the impossibility of speech. Situated at the threshold of potentiality and impotentiality, testimony is the possible site of resistance that may be realised paradoxically through an assertion of the impossibility of speech.

Possibility, Impossibility, Contingency, in Agamben’s work are not merely epistemological concepts but ‘ontological operators’ – these are ‘the devastating weapons used in the biopolitical struggle’<sup>26</sup> that determine

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the technology of the living – “making live” or “letting die”. The weapons are used in the battlefield of subjectivity. It is the subject which is at stake as these ontological operators interact. These are the factors which segregate the ‘living being and the speaking being, the *Muselmann* and the witness.’<sup>27</sup> The witness bears witness to the impossibility of speaking, to the desubjectification of the subject and thereby leads to a possibility of resistance in the articulation of the impossible. It is in the subjectivity which appears as witness that potentiality and impotentiality, possibility and impossibility emerge as inextricable from one another.

Agamben draws attention to the etymological roots of the word author in this context. The Latin word *auctor* originally meant: the person who intervenes for a minor. Among other meanings were ‘he who advises or persuades’ and also ‘the witness’. Testimony is seen essentially as an act of the ‘author’– testifying of the incapacities or insufficiencies of the ‘incapable’ person. If one follows the Foucaultian notion of every author being a co-author, the witness as the author gives completion to the task of an incapable person – the ‘ultimate witness’ who is incapable of bearing witness – the *Muselmann*. Testimony is therefore the point of convergence of the survivor who bears witness and what he bears witness to i.e. the *Muselmann* – the author and his ‘material’.

The paradox presented by Levi – the *Muselmann* being the ‘absolute witness’ embodies what Agamben calls the “dual structure of testimony”. To make sense of this paradox one must understand the essentially fractured nature of the subject of testimony. The witness bears witness to desubjectification of the *Muselmann* and also to the possibilities and impossibilities of speaking. It will however be dangerous to comprehend the ‘impossibility’ or ‘unsayability’ of Auschwitz as something which is non-representable in language or outside the scope of language. That will inadvertently contribute to materialising the Nazi desire of keeping Auschwitz beyond the scope of documentation, beyond the scope of knowledge, giving fulfillment to the SS’s words:

None of you will be left to bear witness, but even if someone were to survive, the world will not believe him... people will say that the events you describe are too monstrous to be believed... We will be the ones to dictate the history of the Lagers.<sup>28</sup>

The function of testimony is therefore to commit to language the impossibility of speaking, to bear witness to the unsayable through the act

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of saying. The aim of testimony is not to account for veracity or provide factually correct information but to go on incessantly recording the essential 'unarchivability' of what needs to be conveyed. Testimony is made possible, brought into being only with the precondition of impossibility of speaking. This is what makes the *Muselmann* and the survivor inextricably attached to one another. The reality of Auschwitz is irrevocably established not through the survivor's testimonies about the ultimate mechanism of death – the gas chamber – but about that which erases the boundaries between the living and the dead, the human and non-human – the *Muselmann*. Agamben seeks to conceptualise this event – the event which occurs with the coming into being of the phrase 'I bear witness for the *Muselmann*' – a phrase asserting the possibility of representing the impossible. This therefore is not merely an illocutive act or an enunciation in the Foucaultian sense but rather a linguistic event of laying claim to a subject position through language. What however seems to come up as a conceptual concern is the rare and (im) possible instance of the *Muselmann* emerging as a speaking subject. It is this figure where the survivor and the *Muselmann* come together that seems to challenge Levi's paradox of the absolute witness incapable of bearing witness.

**'I was a *Muselmann*': Beyond mere Survival?**

Agamben draws attention to a study by Zdzislaw Ryn and Stanislaw Klodzinski on the *Muselmann* which has a section titled 'I was a *Muselmann*'. These are testimonies of deportees who were identified as *Muselmann* in the camps and had survived. The *Muselmann*'s testimony in the first person can be seen as the ultimate possibility of literally rendering the 'impossible' possible. The *Muselmann* as the speaking subject seems to contradict Levi's presumption that the absolute witness is incapable of speaking for himself/herself. Agamben however is reluctant to conceptualise the speaking *Muselmann* as a contradiction to Levi's premise. The expression 'I was a *Muselmann*' is rather seen as reaching the most extreme formulation of Levi's paradox. Agamben does not quite clarify how this can be understood but ends *The Remnants of Auschwitz* with excerpts from the testimonies of the deportees who had identified themselves as the *Muselmann*. A close reading of these excerpts however, seem to be helpful in understanding why Agamben sees the phrase 'I was a *Muselmann*', not as a contradiction but a complete verification of Levi's paradox. These testimonies are rife with iterations of unimaginability, of

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the near impossibility of rendering in language the predicament of the *Muselmann* forced to lead a death-in-life existence in the extermination camps. ('Whoever has not himself been a *Muselmann* for a while cannot imagine the depth of the transformations that men underwent' – Karol Talik).<sup>29</sup> It is in the incessant reiteration of the essentially 'unarchivable'; of the 'unsayable' by one who is assumed to be inherently incapable of speech that Levi's paradox finds an absolute substantiation. Agamben's treatment of the testimony as a conceptual category further opens up the possibilities of exploring the subject position that can be reclaimed in the event of the utterance 'I was a *Muselmann*'.

The phrase 'I was a *Muselmann*' seems to bear the potential of a re-conceptualisation of the epistemological and ontological operators like Potentiality, Impotentiality, Contingency, Possibility and Impossibility. It is that linguistic event when resistance comes into being through enunciation – the impossible materialising through the (im)possible act of speaking by one who is seemingly incapable of speaking. The phrase 'I was a *Muselmann*' also directs towards a possibility of reconfiguring the limit concept of the *Muselmann*. If the *Muselmann* is conceptualised by Agamben as a hidden symbol of modern biopolitics– as a threshold existence between life and death, like the neomort attached to life support devices, a mere survival of physiological processes beyond animal life and most significantly a product of biopower – what are the possibilities inherent in 'I was a *Muselmann*' to offer resistance and facilitate the undoing of the very biopolitical machinations which produced it? Agamben's methodological approach with its focus on modal categories like Potentiality, Impotentiality, Possibility and Impossibility opens up possibilities of finding possible answers to this question.

### Endnotes :

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 2002), p.16.

<sup>2</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.15.

<sup>3</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 146.

<sup>4</sup> For a reading of Agamben's concept of Potentiality see the Introduction to *Giorgio Agamben: Legal, Political and Philosophical Perspectives* ed. Tom Frost (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 1-10.

<sup>5</sup> Agamben, *Homo Sacer : Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (California: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 123

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- <sup>6</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.12.
- <sup>7</sup> For Wiesel's opinions on the survivor bearing witness see Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.33.
- <sup>8</sup> Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Random House, 1989), p.83.
- <sup>9</sup> Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*, trans. Stuart Woolf (New York: A Touchstone Book, 1986), p. 90.
- <sup>10</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.81.
- <sup>11</sup> See Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, pp. 151-155.
- <sup>12</sup> For Foucault's concept of the transformation in the nature of power from the sovereign right to kill to the modern disciplinary institutions of governmentality, see Michel Foucault, *Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the College de France 1975-76*, Eds. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana (New York: Picador, 2003) and Michel Foucault: *The History of Sexuality: Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).
- <sup>13</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.83.
- <sup>14</sup> Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, p. 227.
- <sup>15</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.85.
- <sup>16</sup> See Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, pp. 155-156.
- <sup>17</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 156.
- <sup>18</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 156
- <sup>19</sup> See the Introduction to Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, pp. 1-14.
- <sup>20</sup> See Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 185.
- <sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 130.
- <sup>22</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.140.
- <sup>23</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 141.
- <sup>24</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 145.
- <sup>25</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.145.
- <sup>26</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 147.
- <sup>27</sup> Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 147.
- <sup>28</sup> Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*, pp.11-12.
- <sup>29</sup> Quoted in Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p.167.