

October 7th casualties and as 'crisis of representation': a transformation in the hegemonic ethos of loss and heroism?

Las víctimas del 7 de octubre y la «crisis de representación»: ¿una transformación en el ethos hegemónico de la pérdida y el heroísmo?

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LÍNEA TEMÁTICA: Formación y recursos en Pedagogía de la muerte para educadores (maestros, profesores, familias, etc.) y profesionales de las ciencias sociales y de la salud.

ABSTRACT: For years representations of Israeli heroism were unequivocally identified with military loss. This 'Heroism discourse' regime was maintained thanks to a range of mechanisms, the main ones being ascription of 'Heroic capital' to all cases of military loss; and a clear distinction between military and non-military losses. Consequently, as long as losses were military in nature, they were attributed with 'heroic capital'. In parallel, however, many cases of heroic losses that did not occur in military contexts did not gain such symbolic capital.

In many ways, which will be discussed, collective memory and public consciousness were ingrained with a recognition and appreciation of military heroism, while preventing in practice the ability to imagine non-military heroic acts. The events of October 7, 2023 forced a Crisis of Representation on the Israeli 'Heroism discourse' regime, exposing audiences to a De-Evaluation in the value of the military institution which failed to prevent Hamas' massacre of Israelis. In parallel, this enabled a newly found Recognition and Re-Positioning of civil heroic acts, thanks to the emerging resourcefulness and initiative of civilians, policemen and policewomen, volunteer organizations and other groups, who saved many Israelis and fought Hamas terrorists.

From this perspective, the events of October 7 disrupted the maintaining principles of the 'Heroism discourse' regime, leading to a 'grassroots' format of reporting, updating and positioning the discourse, as opposed to the former 'top-down' format. A growing number of voluntary initiatives had jointly given rise to new formats of memory and consciousness. These initiatives ceased to respond to a hegemonic model of memory, as can be noted in ceremonies, monuments, commemoration literature and media pieces that commemorate and praise the heroism of civilians (including women, Arabs, senior citizens, and others). Jointly, these means of commemoration express a 'Crisis of Representation' which may lead to a temporary or permanent disruption of heroic representations. By generalization, it is possible that a few decades from now the events

of October 7 would be perceived as transformational within the Israeli bereavement, memory and sacrifice discourse.