Acknowledgments

This book originated while I was a faculty associate of the Ethics and the Professions Program in Harvard University in 1998–99. The program provided me with financial support as well as a most encouraging and congenial environment. I am grateful to director Dennis Thompson for suggesting that I expand my interest in Holocaust trials to investigate the broader notion of political trials, and to my fellow associates for discussing the initial ideas for the book.

Since then, many individuals and institutions helped in completing this book. I wish to thank the Minerva Center for Human Rights, the Cegla Center, and Tel Aviv University for their generous financial support; the libraries and archives of Tel Aviv University, in particular the Law Library, the Wiener Collection, Sourasky Library, the Nathan Alterman Archive, and the Israel Defense Forces archive. All provided a helpful hand in digesting the often dusty and dispersed materials.

I wish to thank my friends and colleagues in the Faculty of Law at Tel Aviv University, in particular Daphne Barak-Erez, José Brunner, Chaim Gans, Hanoch Dagan, Eyal Gross, Ron Harris, Assaf Likhovski, Asher Maoz, and Menachem Mautner for discussing the various chapters with me and offering helpful comments. Special thanks go to my dean Ariel Porat and vice dean Omri Yadlin, who provided me with a free semester to finish working on the book.

Bruce Ackerman, Morton Horowitz, Duncan Kennedy, Anthony Kronman, Mark Osiel, and Dennis Thompson all read drafts of chapters and discussed them with me, as did my students in the seminars on “Holocaust and the Law” and “Political Trials,” and the participants in the workshop on “Law and History” at Tel Aviv Faculty of Law. Special thanks go to Martha Minow and Jennifer Nedelsky, whose example was always with me when struggling with the manuscript, and who offered their critical reading, good advice, and their warm friendship throughout these years. Both believed in this book even
before the first chapter was written. I also wish to thank Jeremy Shine, my first editor at the University of Michigan Press, and Jim Reische, the editor with whom I finished the manuscript. In addition, the detailed and most pertinent comments of Don Herzog, the reviewer for the University of Michigan Press, have helped to make this a better book than it would otherwise have been.

I am grateful to my various research assistants who helped me at different stages of writing: Ori Aharonson, Yael Broide, Ori Herstein, Ofer Sitbon, and Gal Weingold. Doreen Lustig provided me not only with research assistance but also with vast technical help in the final stages of the project.

Philippa Shimrat provided expert editorial advice and perceptive reading of the manuscript in its various stages. Philippa accompanied me on this journey from the very beginning and her advice and balanced criticism helped make this project come true. My deep thanks go to Analu Verbin whose contribution to this book is evidenced on each page. Initially, a research assistant, Analu edited, commented, inspired, and with her friendship has shown me what miracles can happen if we only believe.

I am also grateful to the following persons and institutions for inviting me to present earlier versions of material in this book: Ariella Gross, University of Southern California; Richard Bernstein, The New School for Social Research; Jennifer Nedelsky and David Dyzenhaus, University of Toronto Law School; Michael Marrus and Janice Stein, Munk Center for International Studies, University of Toronto; Catherine Franke, Center for the Study of Law and Culture, Columbia University; Phil Thomas, Cardiff University; Christopher Tomlins, American Bar Foundation.

This book is the fruit of friendship no less than it is the fruit of research and thinking. My dear friend Pnina Lahav, who engendered the idea of this book when she first learned of my interest in the Eichmann trial, has generously given me her good advice, reading each of the chapters and always finding new horizons to explore. My friends Hagi Kenaan and Ariel Meirav have offered me their time, wisdom, comments, and love in so many ways, that I cannot imagine this book being written without them. And finally, my dearest friend, Vered Lev-Kenaan, was always there for me, never tiring of hearing yet another thought about Hannah Arendt. Her will, conviction, and love were the materials from which this book has been created.
Finally I would like to thank my family for their patience and love, for having to hear about this book at so many Friday dinners, and for accepting my always being in a hurry to try and finish another paragraph. My deepest thanks go to my beloved mother, Tamar Bilsky, who has made this book into a reality in countless ways, always wanting to give much more than I knew how to take. Her love, faith, and the freshness of her thinking always accompanied me in my writing, in places close and far away.

My daughter Ruth-Clio was born just as I submitted the complete manuscript to the University of Michigan Press for review. She has made the abstract terms, natality, narrativity, and plurality into a living reality. Giving birth to my child and to this book simultaneously symbolizes, maybe more than anything else, my belief in the future of this country and its people.

Tel Aviv, May 2004

Portions of this book have appeared in substantially different form in the following publications.


Parts of chapters 3 and 6 appeared as “In a Different Voice: Nathan Alterman and Hannah Arendt on the Kastner and Eichmann Trials,” Theoretical Inquiries in Law 1 (2) (July 2000): 509–47.

Chapter 5 appeared as “When Actor and Spectator Meet in the Courtroom: Reflections on Hannah Arendt’s Concept of Judgment,” History and Memory 8 (2) (fall-winter 1996): 137–73.

A small portion of chapter 8 appeared as “Law and Politics: The Trial of Yigal Amir” (in Hebrew), Plilim 8 (December 1999): 13–75.