



## **On Destruction, Trauma & Cinema**

Editors: Yael Munk and Eyal Sivan



**The Sapir Academic College**



**Pardes Publishing House**

Director of publication: Avner Fainguelerndt

Chief Editor: Eyal Sivan

Publisher: Pardes Publishing House

Iconographies research and editorial coordination: Yodfat Ariela Getz

English Translation: Maya Johnston

Cover Graphic design and Logo: Elyasaf Kowner

Photography: © all rights reserved

Articles : © all rights reserved to the authors and the  
Sapir Academic College



Sapir Academic College

Department of Cinema and Television

Mail Post Ashkelon Cost 79165, Israel

Pardes Publishing House

P.O.Box 45855, Haifa 31458, Israel

[www.pardes.co.il](http://www.pardes.co.il)

ISBN: 978-965-7171-58-5

2007

Printed in Israel

## South Cinema Notebooks

*South Cinema Notebooks* are dedicated to encouraging political, critical writing in the field of cinema. In this second issue, we have chosen to focus on “Destruction, Trauma, Cinema.” The destruction of the past and the frightening visions of future destruction are the two reference points which distinguish the way time and place are perceived in cultural consciousness in Israel-Palestine.

Many years went by before Israeli cinema found the ability – the maturity and responsibility – to face Palestinian destruction (the Nakba), the trauma experienced by Holocaust survivors, the trauma experienced by Jews from the Arab orient and the trauma of Kibbutz education. The films that have dealt with these issues, even if they arrived somewhat late, did eventually appear and uncover stories of pain and injustice, exploitation, evil and more than anything – tangible existential anxiety – which no one dared speak of at the time they were actually taking place. The connection between destruction and ruins, action and consequence, awareness and fear serves as a platform for an extensive intellectual discussion. We chose to dedicate this issue to the subject of destruction due to its importance in general and its importance in Israel in particular, in an attempt to confront some of the ideas it generates and, through it, to stir up the very beginnings of a critical discussion on destruction awareness.

*South Cinema Notebooks*, published by the Film and Television School at Sapir College review, as always, some of the critical reflections on the subject featured in each issue through Israeli and Palestinian cinematic works. This issue includes articles written by Prof. Haim Bresheeth, Dr. Ilan Pappé, Dr. Sami Shalom Chetrit, Dr. Yael Munk, Haim Hanegbi presented along with the rare photography of Tzachi Ostrovsky, Yael Ben-Zvi, Ronit Chacham, Meital Alon-Oleinik, Dr. Udi Adiv, Lin Chalozin-Dovrat, Yael Friedman, a visual work by director Anat Even, Nirit Zarum, Dalya Markovich, Ktzia Alon, Prof. Smadar Lavie, Michal Pick-Hamo, Dr. Eldad Kedem, Dr. Ruchama Marton, Gal Englehard, Dr. Lihi Nagler and Erez Pery. This issue opens with *The Abuse of Memory* written by French-Bulgarian cultural researcher Prof. Tzvetan Todorov published here for the first time in Hebrew

## Table of Contents

Yael Munk and Eyal Sivan	<b>Editorial</b>	<b>5</b>
Tzvetan Todorov	<b>The Abuse of Memory</b>	<b>9</b>
Haim Bresheeth	<b>The Continuity of Trauma and Struggle: Recent Cinematic Representations of the Nakba</b>	<b>25</b>
Sami Shalom Chetrit	<b>Mirror Mirror on the Wall, in this Land, am I the Greatest Victim of Them All? – Comments Following a Journey along Route 181</b>	<b>47</b>
Ilan Pappé	<b>Cinema in the Service of Struggle: Bab Al-Shams</b>	<b>51</b>
Yael Munk	<b>Land, Man, Blood: On Forgiveness (Udi Aloni, 2006)</b>	<b>59</b>
Haim Hanegbi	<b>Villa Dr. Kalibian</b>	<b>67</b>
Yael Ben-Zvi	<b>I, First Person Plural, National Autobiography in Palestinian Documentary Film</b>	<b>71</b>
Meital Alon- Oleinik	<b>Atash—The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Binding of Abraham</b>	<b>81</b>
Ronit Chacham	<b>So that We May Feel Human</b>	<b>89</b>
Udi Adiv	<b>Israeli Cinema after the 1967 War: The “Socratic Perspective”</b>	<b>93</b>
Lin Chalozin- Dovrat	<b>The Deadly Finger Prints of the Catastrophic Horizon: A Study of Avi Mugarbi’s Film Avenge but One of my Two Eyes</b>	<b>105</b>

Yael Freidman	<b>The Camera and the National Ethos: The Representation of the Battle of Jenin in Current Palestinian Cinema</b>	<b>125</b>
Anat Even	<b>A failing attempt to explain destruction: A Piece on the Film Saturday in Jenin Accompanied by Entries from Hebrew Dictionaries</b>	<b>137</b>
Nirit Zarum	<b>Fragmented Identity and Mimicry: Israeli Cinematic Representation of Palestinians and Arab-Jews</b>	<b>141</b>
Dalya Markovich and Ktzia Alon	<b>To Take a Wife: The Mizrahi - the Israeli's Shame</b>	<b>155</b>
Smadar Lavie	<b>Cultural Property Rights and the Formation of the Mizrahi Race as a Trademark: Comments on the Revolving Door between Government and Academe in Israel</b>	<b>161</b>
Michal Pick-Hamo	<b>Around the Campfire</b>	<b>167</b>
Eldad Kedem	<b>Representation, Politics and Ethics in Sweet Mud</b>	<b>175</b>
Ruchama Marton	<b>The 41st Year: Thoughts on the Secret of the Success of 11 Israeli Films</b>	<b>185</b>
Erez Pery	<b>Was Auschwitz Built on the Ruins of Xanadu?!</b>	<b>201</b>
Gal Engelhard	<b>Beyond Memory? An Israeli Women's Reading of German Memory Representation</b>	<b>213</b>
Lihi Nagler	<b>A Witness out of Hell—Trauma Evading History's Framing</b>	<b>225</b>

## Editorial

Yael Munk and Eyal Sivan

"... That world lies in ruins and is no more, and my heart often weeps when I recall it. It was part of my life, my childhood, and it had beauty and intricacy. Not just fear, not just death. Many of us loved the villages we bombed, that world which lies in ruins and is no more. May I conjure it up? It had much beauty of human dwellings rising out of the soil, of scenery, of sound and smell, of customs, of noise and colour and of the silence of sentient villages at night, a silence flickering with the lights of lamps hanging on the line between darkness and light..."

(Haim Guri – Dog Nights – I Am Civil War – 2004)

The idea for this second issue of *South Cinema Notebooks* focusing, this time, on "Destruction, Trauma, Cinema" sprang out of the scenes of destruction in southern Lebanon, the Dahia quarter in the suburbs of Beirut and many structures in the north of Israel in the summer of 2006. For a while, these sights of destruction pushed the story of Gaza's own ongoing destruction away from television screens and the public eye, as it did that of its neighbours, the people of Sderot who, for seven years, have been enduring Qassam missiles.

In the many months that have gone by since the publication of the previous *South Cinema Notebooks* and while we were hard at work on the current issue, our area of the world has provided scenes of destruction which have gradually become an inextricable part of our daily news, just like the weather.

The world of the Gush Katif settlers lying in ruins, Iraq's continued destruction and the relentless destruction of Bedouin communities in the Negev: these are just some of the scenes that are documented but seem to have no impact.

Destruction has been a cinematic fascination almost since the medium's inception. As early as the days of silent film, ruins (of an orientalist nature) featured as a favoured subject of the seventh art. It was the avid cinema fan, the Fascist despot, Benito Mussolini who, in the 1920's, pointed to the "beauty of the burning Italian villages". Indeed, the cinematic medium used every means at its disposal to bring to the screens the sights of destruction which the 20<sup>th</sup> century amply provided: from the first air raid in 1911 – on Tripoli in Libya – to the documentation of air strikes filmed by pilots from inside war planes. Destruction and the trauma left in its wake are endless sources of visual inspiration. Destruction and ruins which are a result of natural disasters, human crimes, war or urban decay have featured both as subject matter unto themselves and as symbolic devices on the screens.

Roberto Rossellini's film *Germany, Year Zero* was first screened in 1948 at the Locarno film festival. The film begins with a journey over the ruins of Berlin as captured by Rossellini's camera in 1947. The image of Edmund, the blond boy wondering amidst the ruins of his native city has been etched into cinematic memory worldwide as symbolizing the trauma of destruction and loss of the entire western world.

More than 50 years later, Polish director Roman Polanski, shot his film *The Pianist* which recounts the story of Jewish pianist Wladyslaw Szpilman who survives the war against all odds and returns to Warsaw's computer generated "reconstructed" ruins. That same year, Juliano Mer Khamis shot his film, *Arna's Children* amidst the ruins of the Jenin refugee camp. One of the central images in the film is that of 11-year-old 'Alaa Al-Saber, who was filmed in the camp during the first intifada (1990), sitting, lost, on the ruins of his demolished home. The angel of history willed it so that 1948, the year *Germany Year Zero* was screened in Europe, was also the year 'Alaa's grandparents were expelled from their village of Sabrin near Haifa. 'Alaa – the shocked boy who would later become one of the commanders of the armed resistance movement in the Jenin camp and lose his life on the call of duty.

And so, while Israeli military bulldozers destroyed the Jenin refugee camp during "Operation Defensive Shield", Roman Polanski "reconstructed" Warsaw's ruins for his film *The Pianist*. Is it really nothing more than coincidence? There is seemingly no connection between the different films dealing with destruction. Each documents a different moment in history, a moment in which destruction turned the lives of those affected into what political philosopher Giorgio Agamben calls "bare lives." Yet it would be naïve not to see the connection between one episode of destruction and another, between the destruction of European Jewry, as Roman Polanski sought to reconstruct in *The Pianist*, and the destruction of Palestine, metonymically portrayed in the image of the boy sitting on the ruins of his home in the Jenin refugee camp.

The recurring attempts to erase all traces of Arabic culture in Israel – as these are expressed in the lives and culture of Jews from Arab countries – is yet another facet of that same destruction. The trauma of destruction, then, creates a connection between many focal points in the culture and identity of a locality, sometimes so much so that these points become inseparable. This is why the destruction of the past and the frightening visions of future destruction are the two reference points which distinguish the way time and place are perceived in cultural consciousness in Israel-Palestine; or, as Historian Amnon Raz Karkotzkin puts it, "an apocalyptic dimension and a sense of destruction are

ever present in the Israeli experience and may even define it. The slogan ‘Massada shall not fall again’ encompasses the possibility that it shall indeed fall.”

Therefore, the connection between destruction and ruins, action and consequence, awareness and fear serves as a platform for an extensive intellectual discussion, the many aspects of which are beyond the scope of this collection of essays. We chose to dedicate this issue to the subject of destruction due to its importance in general and its importance in Israel in particular, in an attempt to confront some of the ideas it generates and, through it, to stir up the very beginnings of a critical discussion on destruction awareness.

Both our critics and supporters will undoubtedly observe the notable absence of the subject of destruction and apocalypse in its religious context in general and in the Jewish religion in particular. This is a topic for which (local) cinema has yet to find appropriate imagery. Indeed, many years had to go by before Israeli cinema found the ability – the maturity and responsibility – to face Palestinian destruction (the Nakba), the trauma experienced by Holocaust survivors, the trauma experienced by Jews from the Arab orient and the trauma of Kibbutz education. The films that have dealt with these issues, even if they arrived somewhat late, did eventually appear and uncover stories of pain and injustice, exploitation, evil and more than anything – tangible existential anxiety – which no one dared speak of at the time they were actually taking place. Without presuming to cover them all, this issue of *South Cinema Notebooks*, reviews, as always, some of the critical reflections on these issues through Israeli and Palestinian cinematic works.

Due to time and locations constraints this issue is published just a few months after the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the occupation and the 1967 war and just a few months before the two people inhabiting this land will mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nation’s decision to split it. This decision set in motion the war that has led us to where we are today. It was impossible for us to ignore these landmarks in deciding on the order in which the articles were to appear (for the first time) in this issue.

The challenging articles by Prof. Haim Bresheeth, Dr. Ilan Pappé, Dr. Sami Shalom Chetrit and Dr. Yael Munk are dedicated to the representation of the Palestinian Nakba. Yael Ben-Zvi, Ronit Chacham and Meital Alon-Oleinik’s contributions focus on the way Palestinian cinema handles the trauma of destruction. A critical review of the way in which Israeli cinema deals with the 1967 occupation can be found in the articles written by Dr. Udi Adiv, Lin Chalozin-Dovrat and Yael Friedman. Nirit Zarum, Dalya Markovich and Ktzia Alon tackle the way in which the trauma of Mizrahi Jews is reflected. Here we chose to stray from the pure cinematic focus and include an article by Prof.



Smadar Lavie on the question of cultural property rights which, beyond its intellectual quality, may be an idea for a theme for documentary cinema, a theme which has thus far received no attention whatsoever. The question of the trauma suffered by Israeli collectivist society is handled by Michal Pick-Hamo and Dr. Eldad Kedem. The Holocaust is not referred to directly but is handled, unexpectedly maybe, in the articles written by Gal Englehard, Dr. Lihi Nagler and Erez Pery – who write about foreign films.

Indeed, *South Cinema Notebooks* is dedicated mostly to critical political writing on cinema, yet this issue's topic has led us to include a story/memory, by Haim Hanegbi presented along with the rare photography of Tzachi Ostrovsky. In the same spirit, we chose to include a visual work by director Anat Even.

Finally, the issue opens with an original Hebrew translation of the article *The Abuse of Memory* by French-Bulgarian cultural researcher Tzvetan Todorov which has been translated into many languages and is published in Hebrew for the first time here. The philosophical text is not directly related to cinema, but reflects on the way in which we review, direct and analyze issues of destruction, among other things in the cinematic context. Todorov's seemingly provocative position connects concepts which are normally separate and autonomous from one another: remembrance, oblivion, testimony, history's lessons and justice. The original text was first presented in 1992 as a lecture in the Auschwitz Foundation in Brussels and therefore its focal point is the Jewish Holocaust. Yet, for Todorov, the Jewish Holocaust is a starting point for a much broader discussion about what he calls the correct and incorrect uses of memory. Todorov criticizes the choice ethnic groups and peoples – including Jews – make to present their disasters as unique, as events that cannot be represented and cannot be analogous to other events. In his provocative essay, Todorov is not downplaying the suffering of the Jewish people during the Holocaust, nor the terrible price it paid in victims, but he does seek to turn the Holocaust into a starting point from which one can draw conclusions about other Holocausts that are or have been perpetrated in other places and other times in history – to shatter the “uniquely unique” conception of the Holocaust and turn it into something through which one can think, something that may serve in an analogy.

This is the spirit with which we sought to shape this issue, that is, the scenes of destruction and the trauma they leave in their wake are not just an apocalyptic vision but belong to the here and now. Cinema, as a critical art in constant dialogue with reality, cannot remain indifferent to them or limit itself only to documenting them. Neither can we.

**Dr. Yael Munk** is an Israeli film researcher at the Open University. Her research focuses on post colonial and gender contexts. She lectures at Sapir College in the Negev.

**Eyal Sivan**, filmmaker, producer, lecturer, essayist and editor was born in Haifa in 1964 and has been living between Europe and Israel since 1985.

Sivan has directed over ten full length political documentaries and produced many others, for which he received a number of prestigious awards. Among other the Cinema du Reel 1987 award. Sivan writes and lectures on the representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, political cinema, the representation of political crimes, memory, trauma etc. In 1990, Sivan won the *Rome Prize*, the most important prize in the arts in France and has consequently spent a year at the Villa Medici in Italy. In 1999, he won the prestigious *Grimme Prize* for television art in Germany. Sivan is an editor and member of the editing board of La Fabrique Publishing house and De L'autre Cote social quarterly magazine. Sivan is writing his PhD at Goldsmiths College in London, he is a lecturer at the Film and Television Department at Sapir College and Reader (Associate Professor) in Media Production at the School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies at the University of East London (UEL).

His films include: *Aqabat Jaber-Passing Through* (1987), *Izkor-Slaves of Memory* (1990), *The Specialist* (1999), *Route 181*, *Fragments of a Journey in Palestine-Israel* (2003) *I Love You All* (2004) *Citizens K* (2007).

## Abstracts

### The Abuse of Memory

Tzvetan Todorov

Tzvetan Todorov, a Bulgarian philosopher and cultural critic, was born in Sofia in 1939. He has been living in France since 1963 and writing on a vast array of literary, historical, philosophical, and cultural themes. Author of over 20 books, he is best known for *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1970), *The Poetics of Prose* (1971), *Introduction to Poetics* (1981), *The Conquest of America* (1982), *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle* (1984), *Facing the Extreme: Moral Life in the Concentration Camps* (1991), *On Human Diversity* (1993), *Voices from the Gulag: Life and Death in Communist Bulgaria* (1999), *Hope and Memory: Reflections on the Twentieth Century* (2000), *Frail Happiness: An Essay on Rousseau* (2001), *Life in Common: An Essay in General Anthropology* (2001), *Fragility of Goodness: Why Bulgaria's Jews Survived the Holocaust* (2001), *Imperfect Garden: The Legacy of Humanism* (2002), *The New World Disorder: Reflections of a European* (2005). Todorov has been a visiting professor at many universities, including Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and the University of California, Berkeley. His honours include the Bronze Medal of the CNRS, the Charles Lévêque Prize of the Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques and the first Maugean Prize of the Académie Française; he is

also an Officer of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Todorov is currently a Director of Research at the CNRS in Paris.

Todorov's greatest contribution to literary theory was his defining of the fantastic, the fantastic uncanny, and the fantastic marvelous. Todorov defines the fantastic as being any event that happens in our world that seems to be supernatural. Upon the occurrence of the event, we must decide whether it was real and has actually taken place or an illusion. Upon choosing whether the event was real or imaginary, Todorov says that we enter into the genres of uncanny and marvelous. In the fantastic uncanny, the event that occurs is actually an illusion of some sort. The "laws of reality" remain intact and also provide a rational explanation for the fantastic event.

"In his early work, Todorov's approach tended to be structuralist, and he was noted for his brilliant analyses of literary texts," said Dominick LaCapra, director of the Society for the Humanities, the Bryce and Edith M. Bowmar Professor in Humanistic Studies and professor of history. "More recently, he has become interested in historical and moral problems, notably ethics in everyday life. He has tried to rehabilitate what he calls 'ordinary virtues' and to criticize the prominence often given to heroic or sublime values."

At the end of the millennium Tzvetan Todorov wrote that it appears that Europeans, and the

French in particular, are trapped in an obsession verging on worship – the obsession of memory. The first and foremost accomplice in this compulsive observance is nostalgia, but it is presented as positive and even imperative. Indeed, we must keep memory alive, but we must also criticize the tendency to sanctify it, a tendency which results in its castration. This extremist concept turns worship into the abuse of memory and diverts us away from both the present and the future. Yet, we must think of the present and the future. The racism, xenophobia and discrimination rampant in our day are not the same as those of the past, in the same way that tomorrow's barbarism will not resemble today's.

The essay *Les abus de la mémoire (The Abuses of Memory)* was first presented at the *History and Memory of Nazi Crimes and Genocides* conference organized by the Auschwitz Foundation in Brussels in 1992. In what has become a classic text, the great scholar Tzvetan Todorov delivers a stern indictment of the contemporary frenzy of commemoration with its parade of rites and myths. This grip on memory, Todorov insists, is not a specialty of totalitarian regimes alone, but is rather the apanage of all those enamored of glory. This denunciation sounds a warning bell against what the author terms “unconditional praise memory.” “The takes of memory,” he adds, “are too great to be left to enthusiasm or anger.”

## **The Continuity of Trauma and Struggle: Recent Cinematic Representations of the Nakba**

By Haim Bresheeth

Haim Bresheeth chaired different film schools in the UK and Israel until 2002. Since January 2002, he has been Chair of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of East London. Bresheeth directed and produced many documentary films, including *A State of Danger* (1988) and published a number of books, including *Cinema and Memory: Dangerous Liaisons*, (Hebrew) 2004, *The Holocaust For Beginners* (1994) and has co-edited *The Gulf War and the New World Order* (1991), *The Conflict and Contemporary Visual Culture in Palestine & Israel*, October 2006, a special issue of *Third Text*.

In recent Palestinian cinema, narratives of loss and trauma centered around the 1948 Nakba (*the great catastrophe*, Arabic) have a strong relationship to the continuing traumas of occupation and oppression by the Israeli forces. The prevalence of Nakba themes in recent Palestinian films, always connected to the second *intifada*, suggests that the Nakba is not a mere memory or trauma of the past; instead, these films seem to point to both a *continuity of pain and trauma*, reaching from the past into the heart of the present, as well as a *continuity of struggle*. The losses of the Nakba, they suggest, fire the continued resistance to Israeli occupation and subjugation. The resolution of trauma is the struggle itself. This paper examines the links between memory, trauma, and identity in the context of the Nakba, arguing that Palestinian film since 1993 has been engaged in a storytelling project that is tied to trauma, reliving it and thus perhaps turning melancholia into mourning work.

The paper examines the work of some leading Palestinian filmmakers, such as Elia Suleiman and Nizar Hassan, and analyses patterns and recurrent themes within this cinema of resistance. The paper establishes some theoretical references, ranging from Freud's work on melancholia to Caruth's work on trauma, and Horsch's, Young's and Zelizer's work on memory. The socio-historical roles and value of such films is examined – the *telling* of the suppressed national narrative, *mourning* over the loss of Palestine, and the process of *social healing*. The paper also looks at the manufactured (prosthetic) memory within Zionist myth making, and examines its role in obliterating and erasing the Palestinian narrative, both internationally and within Palestine.

### **Mirror Mirror on the Wall, in this Land, am I the Greatest Victim of Them All? – Comments Following a Journey along Route 181**

By Sami Shalom Chetrit

Dr. Sami Shalom Chetrit, poet, writer and teacher, teaches at City University in New York and at Sapir College in the Negev. Among his books: *The Ashkenazi Revolution is Dead* published by Bimat Kedem, 1999; *The Mizrahi Struggle in Israel* published by Am Oved/Ofakim Library, 2004; *Songs in Ashdodian* published by Andalus, 2003; and his novel *The Doll's Eye* has recently been published by Hargol-Am Oved (2007).

This article's point of departure is a fierce debate which took place in a class the author teaches at Sapir College, surrounding the documentary road film *Route 181 – Fragments of a Journey in Pal-*

*estine-Israel*, co-directed by Palestinian director Michel Khleifi and Israeli director Eyal Sivan. The article begins with a discussion of a critique of the film as expressed by a student who exclaimed: "this film is anti-Israeli" and "Eyal Sivan is anti-Israeli and you, presenting the film in the class, are anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian." The author claims this response encompasses the entire Israeli occupation complex – a complex through which he attempts to examine who is "anti-Israeli," and whether "anti-Israelis" are necessarily "pro-Palestinian." This is also the path for examining who is "pro-Israeli" and whether being pro-Israeli necessarily entails being anti-Palestinian, and what is that imagined collective "us"?

To try and discuss these complex questions, the article analyzes the "people of the land" as it is portrayed in *Route 181* which was shot along the 1947 partition plan lines of UN Resolution 181. The people's portrait is weaved through an almost endless tapestry of the land's ordinary characters. Together, this tapestry forms an authentic, readily available document which makes a crucial contribution to the new historiography of this land and to the process of our release from the old narrative of the ever righteous victim. *Route 181* joins the critical oral history project taking place in Israel over the past 15 years, along with films by other filmmakers (Avi Mugarbi, Simon Biton and many others) who provide us with the sights and sounds that will never make it into our children's school books.

*Route 181's* potency is that it itself turns into a new document rising out of the collective memory of the people who live here - between the Jor-

dan and the Mediterranean. The film's cinematic maneuver offers a new and refreshing possibility for a shared collective memory. Is this film "anti-Israeli" or "pro-Palestinian"? The film poses a new most urgent and real question – are we for life or against life in this land? *Route 181* seeks to shake us not into taking to the streets and starting a revolution but into taking a deep breath, looking in the mirror and sincerely asking: Mirror, mirror on the wall, in this land, am I the greatest victim of them all? It is not the answer, but the asking of the question that marks the beginning of mutual liberation.

### **Cinema in the Service of Struggle:**

#### ***Bab Al-Shams***

By Ilan Pappé

Ilan Pappé is a senior lecturer at the Department of Political Science, Haifa University and Chair of the Emil Touma Institute for Palestinian Studies in Haifa. He is the author of many books, among them *A History of Modern Palestine* (2005) and *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (2006).

This article examines the film *Bab al-Shams* as both a symbolic and realistic representation of the 1948 Nakbah. The film is based on Elias Khoury's powerful epic, but is a more simplified version of this complex novel. The strength of the movie is in re-enacting scenes from the ethnic cleansing that took place in Palestine in 1948: summery executions, expulsions, arrest without trial and refugee life. This is, in many ways, an answer to Leon Uris' *Exodus*, although it is far more delicate and convincing. As such, it is a poignant contri-

bution to the struggle over memory in Palestine. Adi Adiv was born and raised in Gan Shmuel, a Marxist Kibbutz in Israel. He left the Kibbutz after the 1967 War, during which, as a parachutist, he discovered the Palestinian people. He studied philosophy and economics at Haifa University between 1970 and 1972 and was then tried and sentenced to a long jail term due to his political activity with the Palestinians. In 1985, following his release from jail, he returned to study Middle East Studies at Tel Aviv University, and later on for a PhD at the department of Sociology & Politics at Birkbeck College, at the University of London. Since 1998, Adiv has been teaching politics at the Open University and writing for academic and political publications in Arabic, English and Hebrew, on various aspects of Israeli society and primarily on the issue of Israeli identity and the conflict with the Palestinians.

### **Land, Man, Blood: On Forgiveness**

#### **(Udi Aloni, 2006)**

Yael Munk

Dr. Yael Munk is an Israeli film researcher at the Open University. Her research focuses on post colonial and gender contexts. She lectures at Sapir College in the Negev.

Udi Aloni's debut feature film offers a poignant and fascinating perspective on the injustices perpetrated in the country through the prism of political allegory. The article examines the film's opening and closing sequences as well as the opening and closing motifs as heralding new modes for

representation and discussion of victim-perpetrator relations in a triangle which has yet to receive enough attention: The state of Israel, the Palestinians and Holocaust survivors.

### **Villa Dr. Kalibian**

Haim Hanegbi

Haim Hanegbi, Jerusalem born journalist, member and supporter of the communist party which formed the Israel socialist organization *Matzpen* in late 1962. A descendent of the Bajayo family who were forced out of Spain during the expulsion and inhabited Hebron for generations. His grandfather, Haham Haim Shehadeh Bajayo was the last Rabbi and leader of the city's Sephardic community.

Before the dawn of the millennium, Haim Hanegbi and photographer Tzachi Ostrovsky asked for Faisal Al-Husseini's assistance in documenting the stories of refugees forced out of what became West Jerusalem in 1948. Al-Husseini, a member of Palestinian nobility and Palestinian Authority delegate in charge of Jerusalem, willingly obliged and assisted in locating the houses, identifying the families, collecting the testimonies, establishing trust. The help provided by Al-Husseini and his staff at the Orient House, made it possible to salvage – what little could be salvaged – from the depths of oblivion that which has been forgotten, that which was hoped we would forget.

*Villa Dr. Kalibian* is the story of one family of Jerusalem refugees whose text reads like cinema.

### **I, First Person Plural, National Autobiography in Palestinian Documentary Film**

Yael Ben-Zvi

Yael Ben-Zvi earned an M.A. from the Department of Literature at Tel Aviv University with a thesis on gender in contemporary Palestinian cinema. In recent years she has taught cinema studies at Tel Aviv University and the Open University. She has published a number of articles and delivered several lectures on Palestinian and Israeli cinema. Her short stories have appeared in magazines and a collection is in press. She is also a photographer whose work has been published in architectural periodicals and used in advertisements.

The article considers a genre that seems to be unique to contemporary Palestinian cinema—the national autobiography. This genre combines autobiographical documentation with a cinematic narrative of the national catastrophe. Individuals recount their own story, capturing their surroundings with a shoulder-mounted camera, and function as a metonymic representation of the nation fighting for its liberation.

Films of the national autobiography genre employ a combination of cinematic styles, including documentary, fictional-feature, events, travelogues, etc. The breakdown of borders is not just a matter of style. It also serves as a political act that scrambles the colonial, Zionist, and patriarchal discourse. Alongside the political protest the films are full of irony and self-directed humor, constructing a parody (in Butler's sense) of the hegemonic discourse and of themselves, positioned on the margins of this discourse.

Most of the creators in this genre are women. The national autobiography is a unique develop-

ment of a worldwide trend to create reflexive and subjective documentary films. The discussion of this genre is important for focusing on cinema as preserving the national memory, as a tool for turning the trauma into narrative, and as an artistic, discursive, and political mode of action.

### **Atash—The Destruction of the Second Temple and the Binding of Abraham**

Meital Alon-Oleinik

Meital Alon-Oleinik is a lecturer in Film, Culture and Communication at the Open University, Israel. She has an M.A. in Communication and Journalism from the Hebrew University (graduated with distinction), and a B.A. in Communication and Islam and Middle East Studies. In recent years she has specialized in Palestinian Cinema. Alon-Oleinik has edited *Landscape in Mist: Space and Memory in Palestinian Cinema* by Prof. Nurit Gertz and Mr. George Khleifi. She has developed and teaches an academic course based on this book.

*Atash* (in English: *Thirst*, 2004), Taufiq Abu Waal's first full length fiction film, imposes a new language on Palestinian cinema. Palestinian history, described in Palestinian cinema as a history of trauma, has been traditionally set on three axes—the memory of a lost paradise, mourning over the present and the designated return (Tamari, 1999). Yet, if the lost paradise is not paradise at all, and if there is no desire to undertake the return—neither to the village from which the Abu Shukri family was shamefully expelled nor to the archetypal Palestinian village—then there is a deviation from the three axes around which Palestinian cinema turns.

### **So that We May Feel Human**

Ronit Chacham

Ronit Chacham directed and performed in different genres of theatre including street theatre, community theatre, puppet theatre, children's theatre and performance art; wrote plays and short stories; edited books and journals; taught drama, puppetry, cinema and children's literature; teaches creative writing and writes books for children. Her books and plays have won many awards.

The film *Aatash* (thirst in Arabic) is about the thirst for the most basic human needs: a livelihood and dignity. A Palestinian family, Israeli citizens, living on their own land which had been confiscated by the Israeli army, is leading a life of deprivation and repression inside their state. Unlike many films about Palestinian suppression and occupation, this film deals with the victims and excludes the perpetrators. Though their presence hovers above the ruins inhabited by the protagonists, they are never seen or heard. The Israelis who continue to deprive the family of any means of living, who had turned them into refugees on their own land in 1948, are, for once, not present.

Both visually and thematically, the film powerfully portrays the drama of the struggle for survival autonomy from both the inner constraints of the family, and the outer constraints imposed on its members by the state which excludes them. The two or perhaps three circles of repression—political, social and personal are brilliantly interwoven, through an idiosyncratic language of imagery and sound.



## **Israeli Cinema after the 1967 War: the “Socratic Perspective”**

Udi Adiv

Udi Adiv was born and raised in Gan Shmuel, a Marxist Kibbutz in Israel. He left the Kibbutz after the 1967 War, during which, as a parachutist, he discovered the Palestinian people. He studied philosophy and economics at Haifa University between 1970 and 1972 and was then tried and sentenced to a long jail term due to his political activity with the Palestinians. In 1985, following his release from jail, he returned to study Middle East Studies at Tel Aviv University, and later on for a PhD at the department of Sociology & Politics at Birkbeck College, at the University of London. Since 1998, Adiv has been teaching politics at the Open University and writing for academic and political publications in Arabic, English and Hebrew, on various aspects of Israeli society and primarily on the issue of Israeli identity and the conflict with the Palestinians.

The inclusion of the Palestinians in the new Israeli “mini-empire” following the 1967 War and the occupation of the Palestinian Territories undermined the exclusivist Jewish national identity of Israeli society. The change in Israeli reality led, in its turn, to a change in Israeli consciousness, a change which was clearly expressed in post 1967 Israeli cinema. One can distinguish between two critical approaches: The first and dominant of which derives from the “atomist” post-modernist school which deconstructed the dominant Zionist, nationalistic, unifying ideology. The second is what Adiv terms “the Socratic perspective”, that is, a radical political perspective which not only criticizes the dominant ideology but simultaneously suggests a higher moral and rational polity as the “telos” of the Israeli historical process.

The aim of the article is to examine the added radical value of the first sort of films in light of the

“Socratic perspective”. As a case study of what Jud Ne’eman calls, “the second generation” of Israeli cinema, Adiv examines Asi Dayan’s film *Life According to Agpha*, which he considers as epitomizing the dominant “atomistic” perspective of post 1967 Israeli cinema. The question is whether and how it is possible for an Israeli film to go beyond the “atomistic” portrayal of Israeli existence as it is so poignantly and blatantly expressed by the Tel-Aviv bar experience.

## **The Deadly Finger Prints of the Catastrophic Horizon**

### **A Study of Avi Mugarbi’s Film *venge but One of my Two Eyes***

Lin Chalozin-Dovrat

Lin Chalozin-Dovrat. Born in Israel in 1974. After serving as a video editor in the Israeli Military Education Force, she completed a DEUG degree in Philosophy and Political Science at the Sorbonne University. She returned to Israel after spending a year in Los Angeles, California, working as a producer, director and editor in the indie film industry. The following years were consecrated to teaching languages and developing educational models introducing aesthetic theory to children, through artistic and cinematic practices. Since 2001, Chalozin-Dovrat has been teaching at the Film Department at the Beit Berl Academic College Art School and publishing short pieces of Political Theory in Hebrew, English and French in Israel and abroad. In 2005, she was appointed Public Campaign Manager at B’Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories. She is currently writing her thesis in Cognitive Linguistics at the French Studies Department at Tel-Aviv University.

*Avenge but One of my Two Eyes*, is set in the intersection of two fundamental Zionist narratives: the Massada suicide episode (73 AD.) and the biblical story of Samson. According to Director Avi

Mograbi, the presentation of Israeli Death Culture is his proper response to popular discourse concerning Islam's Death Culture. The film is hence an act of Resistance using a discursive strategy characteristic of a Historical Documentary.

Avenge presents the two narratives, depicts the way they operate in contemporary Israel, and draws on images of the occupation as an illustration of its thesis. The illustrative procedure – characteristic of the sub-genre convention – is recruited to the task of proposing a refined tissue of intricate metaphors. This new representation of past events comments on the topoi's historical role in constructing present reality, while challenging the local collective norm. As a result, the cyclical spatio-temporal logic of the Catastrophic Horizon in which Israelis and Palestinians are trapped is allegedly answered by an alternative metaphoric paradigm, presented as a Resistance act on its own right.

However, close examination of the metaphoric mechanism in Avenge, raises concerns regarding the dialectics between the Resistance act in question and Oppression. Linguistic text analysis, isolating schemes of metaphoric procedures responsible for textual cohesion, suggests that the practice of resistance not only has difficulty overpowering the regime it wishes to overthrow, but practically follows its vector. In that sense, the physical vector of the textual mechanism flirts with the political action depicted in the film: the dynamic leading from obedience through abstention to depression is shared by both corporal and textual political movement.

The last scene in which narrator and activist

filmmaker collide, features a heated argument with soldiers patrolling along the Separation Barrier. In the background, Palestinian children trying to make it home from school are waiting at the locked gate the soldiers refuse to open. Inasmuch as both protagonist-narrator and implied spectator see documentation as a valuable Resistance practice, Avenge may be a key to the physical logic of the 40 year old Hebrew anti-Occupation Movement, a key which may hopefully assist us – those interested in resisting Oppression – in opening the gate ourselves.

### **The Camera and the National Ethos: The Representation of the Battle of Jenin in Current Palestinian Cinema**

Yael Freidman

Yael Freidman is a graduate of the Tel-Aviv University department of Political Science, and holds a Master's degree in Documentary Cinema from Goldsmiths College, University of London. She is currently finishing her PhD on the cinema of Palestinian citizens in Israel at Westminster University in London.

This article examines three Palestinian documentaries – *Jenin, Jenin* (Mohammad Bakri, 2003), *Invasion* (Nizar Hassan, 2003) and *Arna's Children* (Juliano Mer-Hamis, 2003) – that were produced in the aftermath of the 'Battle of Jenin' that took place in the Jenin refugee camp during the military operation entitled 'defence shield' in April 2002.

While Israeli public discourse on the films focused largely on their indexical value, reducing

its reading mainly to the debate about the alleged massacre, this article offers to see them as 'works of mourning' (Renov, 2004). This approach sees the films as 'sites' through which dynamic processes of identity formation as well as cultural, political and social transformations are mediated and shaped under specific conditions of production and distribution. The films' mode of representation reveals the ways in which they incorporate the events in Jenin into the Palestinian historical narrative within a framework of perpetual repetition of the formative trauma of the Nakba. Through the representation of the events, the three directors, each in his own way, reinforce the national ethos of resistance and struggle - this time carried out by the third generation of the Nakba.

The emergence of these films by Palestinian directors, who are Israeli citizens, at this particular historical moment, reflects the shifts in identity positions of Palestinians in Israel since the beginning of the *Al-Aksa* intifada and the events of October 2000. It also represents the pressing need to strategically articulate these shifting positions in the public sphere.

## **A failing attempt to explain destruction: A Piece on the Film *Saturday in Jenin* Accompanied by Entries from Hebrew Dictionaries**

Anat Even

Anat Even studied cinema and art at UCLA and has been working as an independent filmmaker since 1992. Among her films: *Preliminaries* (2005), *Saturday in Jenin* (2002), *Detained* (2001), *Compromise* (1996), *Avram's Grocery Store* (1996), *Positivos* (1995), *Duda* (1994). Her films were screened in festivals and art exhibitions and broadcast on TV stations around the world and have won many prizes. Even teaches cinema at the Film & Television Department at Sapir College. She won the Art of Cinema Prize of the Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004.

I went to film the ruins of the Jenin Refugee Camp right after the battles of operation "Defensive Shield" ended. "We made them a football field" said a reserve soldier, one of the operators of the D9s who destroyed many houses in the camp.

This is the destruction of their third house. The first one took place during the "Independence" War in the spring of 1948, the second during the "Six Day" War in the summer of 1967 and the third during operation "Defensive Shield" in the spring of 2002.

My camera focuses on the ruins of the camp, the neighbourhood, the houses. My gaze is turned inwards, toward me, toward us, toward the darkness.

## **Fragmented Identity and Mimicry: Israeli Cinematic Representation of Palestinians and Arab-Jews**

Nirit Zarum

Nirit Zarum is a literature and culture researcher. She holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Hebrew Literature, and an M.A. in Comparative Literature from Tel-Aviv University. Her Master's thesis – "*The Mizrahi Woman in Dan Bnaya-Seri's Writings: The Representation of a Fragmented Mizrahi Subject*" deals with the representation of the Mizrahi subject from three different perspectives: queer, feminist and post-colonial. Her research areas are: ethnicity, gender studies and nationality as representing identity in literature and film in Israel.

Zarum is a Literature lecturer and has taught two advance Literature courses at the Open University: *The Canaanite Group: Literature and Ideology* and *The Fictional World: Mimesis or Artifice*. She is currently a PhD student at the Department of Cinema Studies at New York University.

The article *Fragmented Identity and Mimicry: Israeli Cinematic Representation of Palestinians and Arab-Jews* is her first publication.

Zionism's uprooting of the "Mizrahim" (Arab Jews) from their Arab roots has caused the particular cinematic and literary representation of the Mizrahi existence by this group's own members to be largely based on mimicry and to express a longing for an Arabic culture which, until now, has been associated with Palestinian identity. This mimicry was made possible because Palestinian identity had not yet been incorporated into the definition of Israeli-ness and therefore had not yet been castrated by it.

The establishment of this specific identity imitates the link proposed by the Ashkenazi-Zionist culture with regards to the two cultures, however, simultaneously, subverts it and gives it new meaning. In the Zionist representation, the link between Mizrahi identity and Arab identity has become

synonymous with ignorance and underdevelopment. A perfect example of this would be Amos Gitai's *Kadosh* where the link between Arab and Mizrahi existence is indicated through the oppression of women. Unlike Gitai's film, the novels of Dan Bnaya-Seri and the films of Benny Torati (as well as other Mizrahi creators) offer an imitation of the dominant Zionist-Ashkenazi discourse which has to be interpreted as an authentic and brave examination of the relationship between two Arab ways of being – the symbolically castrated Mizrahi existence and the proud Palestinian existence, in spite of its being deprived of its land.

## **To Take a Wife: The Mizrahi - the Israeli's Shame**

Dalya Markovich and Ktzia Alon

Dalia Markowitz is a researcher and curator. Her PhD thesis focused on ethnicity, education and class at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She has co-edited the publication *Eastbound* (Hebrew) with Ktzia Alon. Her exhibition C.T is soon to be presented at the Kibbutz Gallery.

Ktzia Alon is a lecturer at the Hebrew Literature Department at the Hebrew University and the Beit Berl Academic College.

The film *To Take a Wife* presents a short compressed story which outlines the portrait of the lower classes in 1970's Haifa, Israel, through the use of intimate life snippets. Over the course of three days – Thursday to Saturday – Vivian and Eliyahu battle each other in their tiny, crowded tenement apartment where they live with their four children. The painful weekend displays the destruction of Vivian and Eliyahu's own family, but it also represents an-

other, metaphoric destruction – that of the Mizrahi family. This destruction moves along several axes: gender, tradition and class.

This article points out the various destructive cycles which are presented in the film and analyzes the interpretive mechanisms with which the film itself was destroyed by Israeli criticism. The harsh criticism unleashed at the film brought to light the immense gap between theoretical discourse and the demands of the public and critics. The film's destruction signifies that the longing for the European is still a major force in contemporary Israeli existence.

### **Cultural Property Rights and the Formation of the Mizrahi Race as a Trademark: Comments on the Revolving Door between Government and Academe in Israel** Smadar Lavie

Professor Smadar Lavie's main field of inquiry is the racial formations of Zionism. In 1999 she was forced to leave her University of California professorship and move to Tel Aviv due to a familial tragedy. By the end of 2005, Israel returned her Israeli passport, and she then regained her freedom of travel and employment outside the country after seven years of confinement under the orders of the Ramat Gan Family Court. Her *Poetics of Military Occupation* became a classic shortly after its 1990 publication. The book she co-edited with Prof. Ted Swedenburg, *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity* (1996) was one of the first to usher the cross-cultural conceptualization of transnational racinated borderzones.

This essay explores the racial formation of Israel's Eurocentered "intellectual property" [IP] settlers' regime through the interplay between the Zionist appropriation of Arab-Jewish "traditional knowl-

edge" [TK] and folklore and the proliferation of Ashkenazi (European Jewish) academic careers. Critical studies on the structure and meaning of Israeli academe have revealed that it is mainly deployed by the Ashkenazi liberal-progressive hegemony as an arm of governance over Mizrahim (Jews who immigrated to Israel mainly from the Arab World) and Palestinians.

Salvaging Mizrahi cultures, the Israeli academe-regime has established a financial monopoly over the materiality of exotic Judaica discourse not only in scholarly knowledge production but also in the expert trade of intellectual, cultural and real properties. When it comes to protecting Mizrahi TK and folklore, the recommendations issued by the World Intellectual Property Organization after the 2002 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) forum, which interrelate IP and TK have yet to arrive here from Oman. As has Israel's compliance with the 1886 Berne Convention, or the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property, or the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property – when these treaties are scrutinized through the optics of collective Mizrahi IP.

Lavie defines her essay as very preliminary – a collection of ruminations stemming out of her archival research into the Yemeni-Jewish scriptures and ornaments affair of the 1950s, its brief surfacing into the Israeli public sphere in the mid 1980s, and the possibilities for post-TRIPS Mizrahi activism against the appropriation and commodification of Mizrahi identity in light of the

current postcolonial reshapings of the notion of authorship, and the repatriation of cultural properties from the Eurocenter back to communities of color.

## **Around the Campfire**

Michal Pick-Hamo

Michal Pick-Hamo is a Beit Zvi film graduate. She holds a B.A. in Philosophy and Film from Tel-Aviv University, an M.A. in Cultural Studies and Media from the Hebrew University and is currently a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Arts at Tel-Aviv University. Her research topic (under the supervision of Dr. Nizan Ben-Shaul) is *Post Traumatic Dialectics and Dissociative Rhetoric in Israeli Film*. She currently teaches at the Open University.

Michal Pick-Hamo directed a number of short fiction films and documentaries and has published articles on representation and identity in Israeli film in various publications

At face value, *Campfire* reveals the conservative patriarchal structure which characterizes the national religious Zionist public in Israel. This article points out how the film uses stereotypical ethnic and gender representations and conservative narrative maneuvers to signify manifest and concealed tensions. These tensions are expressed by converting romantic passion to physical violence and solidarity to mutual humiliation. The two levels, constantly feeding off each other, impose a sense of moral paralysis and existential impotence.

The film's heroes, both Mizrahi and Ashkenazi, are presented as objects directed by repressed traumatic memories which block their ability to identify themselves as individual autonomous subjects

or experience the richness of existence. This situation leads to confusion in which personal traumas are perceived as external events and collective traumas are perceived as personal events.

## **Representation, Politics and Ethics in *Sweet Mud***

Eldad Kedem

Dr. Eldad Kedem teaches cinema at the Open University and has also taught in the past in the television and cinema program at the Tel Aviv University. He holds a PhD from the Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis.

The essay by Eldad Kedem focuses on a recent film about the Kibbutz, *Adama Meshugaat (Sweet Mud)*. Kedem suggests a historical, generic and ideological mapping for this film in relation to Kibbutz films of earlier decades, as well as in relation to various trends in current Israeli cinema. Both spectators and critics took this film as exemplifying the repression of the individual by the collective, an image of a broken society, and a demystification of Kibbutz life, norms, values and ideals. Inspired by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Kedem's essay points at the micro-politics and rhizomatic aspects of the film. Thus, the essay tries to explore a way out from both representation and genre paradigms.

## The 41<sup>st</sup> Year: Thoughts on the Secret of the Success of 11 Israeli Films

Ruchama Marton

Dr. Ruchama Marton is a psychiatrist, feminist and human rights activist, founder and President of Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, 1988. Dr. Marton's numerous articles on psychiatry, human rights and political-psychiatric analysis appeared in many professional journals and as chapters in books. Among her publications is *Torture: Human Rights, Medical Ethics and the Case of Israel* (1995) Zed Books, co-edited by Neve Gordon. Dr. Marton is the recipient of several peace and human rights awards, including the Emil Grünzweig Award for Human Rights, presented by the Association for Civil Rights, Israel, and the Jonathan Mann Award for Global Health and Human Rights, 2002. She is one of 1000 women nominated for the 1000 Women Nobel Peace Prize 2005. Dr. Marton is the writer of the screenplays: *Fellow Travelers*, Full Feature Hebrew Film, 1984 (Two young men, one Israeli and one Palestinian attempt to establish an Arabic university in Israel); *The Night the King was Born*, Short Hebrew Film. 1983 (Two Israeli army officers force Palestinians in the West Bank to sell their land); *Paratroopers*, Full Feature Hebrew Film, 1977 (A young Israeli drafted into the army fails to live up to his commander's expectations).

This diary chronicles a critical analytic viewing of eleven worldwide acclaimed Israeli documentary and fiction films<sup>1</sup> which have also been box office successes. Dr. Marton focuses on examining how Israeli cinema deals with the forty-year-long occupation and asks why and how these films have been so successful, how they achieved it and what can be revealed by analyzing the secret of their success.

1 Beaufort (2007), Close to Home (2005), The Bubble (2006), Walk on Water (2004), The Syrian Bride (2004), Turn Left at the End of the World (2004), One Shot (2004), My Land Zion (2004), My Terrorist (2002), Checkpoint (2001-2003).

Marton views these films from a psychoanalytic perspective and reaches the conclusion that their creators, whether consciously or not, identify collective protection mechanisms against pain and disorientation and avoid challenging them.

Preventing pain from the Israeli Zionist public and western public in general can be achieved in a number of ways. The following are shared by all films examined: denial, splitting, projection, identification of basic assumptions, "as if" personalities", fear and guilt:

- The occupation and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are either absent from the films or appear as uncontested axioms.
- The two sides of the conflict are presented as two opposing "beings" – an Israeli-Zionist being representing "good," "desirable values" and human emotion, and a Palestinian (or other Arab) representing the opposite.
- The self is also split into good and evil essences. Evil is projected outward onto and into the "evil" side and thus both cleanses and serves to "tar" the evil, other side.
- The basic assumptions of the Jewish-Zionist collective are never put forward for examination or refutation. Viewers automatically sympathize and identify with the film's heroes and message.
- The empty, bored soul is represented in the films through female rather than male soldiers. Through them and at their expense the general disorder can be portrayed without disrupting the mainstream.
- The more a film denies Israeli political reality—the more it professes to be a pseudo pro-

test film - the more it reaches the hearts of Israeli and western viewers.

- The events represented in the films are decontextualized, thus serving the Zionist-Pioneering-Settlement-State hegemonic discourse.
- Fear, as a marker of humanness, is absent when it comes to Palestinians' experiences - yet another way of marking the Israeli as human and the Arab as some sort of flawed human.

Marton claims that all eleven movies contain an element of propaganda which shows how beautiful, brave and critical "we" are, yet, there is no real criticism in them. The "protest" excuse under which the creators hide is baseless. All is "as if", a false pretence, devoid of any inner truth.

The secret to these films' success is that they do indeed take on some guilt, they do regret, confess, display some of the ugly sides etc. Only, they do so very moderately in a manner which does not reverse the moral picture. The self is not entirely cleansed, but lives quite happily, more happily, with a certain amount of filth, with a stain, and so, paradoxically - it is purified. The guilt is partial, soft. It mostly helps in that it is easier and more pleasant to feel a little guilt than great pain.

This tactic, which is shared by all films, is intended to provide the mainstream the goods it expects, which is, essentially, not stirring up questions which might deeply disturb or cause pain for the Jewish-Zionist public in Israel, a public which dialogues with the secular, western white public in the rest of the world. This is the secret of their success.

## Was Auschwitz Built on the Ruins of Xanadu?!

By Erez Pery

Erez Pery is a film scholar and filmmaker. He graduated with honors from the Film and Television Department at Sapir College and his award winning film, *For an Imperfect Cinema* (2004) was screened at several festivals. He is a lecturer at the Film and Television Department at Sapir College, and, as of 2007, serves as Program Director of the Cinema South Festival. He publishes film and literary criticism and is currently writing his M.A. thesis in the Cultural Studies program at the Hebrew University.

Alain Resnais' film *Nuit et Brouillard* opens with a crane shot in which the camera slowly dives into the Auschwitz extermination camp as it appeared in 1955. This scene echoes the opening shot of another film made almost 15 years earlier- *Citizen Kane*. The opening scene of Orson Wells' 1941 film is almost identical to that of *Nuit et Brouillard*; the camera advances in a crane shot above the fence that surrounds Xanadu, the sumptuous estate of the film's hero, Charles Foster Kane. Deciphering the inter-text allows for a wide and comprehensive process of interpretation revealing latent levels of the text whose discovery brings to light a new dimension of Resnais' film. In Pery's view, Resnais created, with the help of the *Citizen Kane* inter-text, an indictment against Cinema, which played a substantial role in the Western culture that made the Holocaust possible. Aware of the provocative nature of the above statement, Pery outlines, in this essay, the claim that Auschwitz was built, first and foremost, on the ruins of Xanadu.



## **Beyond Memory? An Israeli Women's Reading of German Memory Representation**

By Gal Engelhard

Gal Engelhard is a PhD candidate at Haifa University. His area of focus is cultural memory representations and their interaction within Israeli and German society.

This article deals with the film critique discourse surrounding the Israeli reception of three German films between 1979 and 1982, as it unfolded in Israeli women's journalism. The three films, *Die Ehe der Maria Braun* (*The Marriage of Maria Braun*) (Reiner Fassbinder, 1979), *Die Blechtrommel* (*The Tin Drum*) (Volker Schlöndorff, 1979) and *Das Boot* (*Submarine*) (Wolfgang Petersen, 1981), deal with the German memory of WWII and its consequences in different ways. The films belong to the wave of "new West German film," which underwent a canonization process both in Germany and in the western world during the late 1970's.

Israeli film critique did not confront German texts dealing with German memories only for the sake of familiarizing itself with post WWII German culture and with West Germans in the late 1970's and early 1980's. The critique used these texts to try and raise the remains of the Holocaust trauma; that is, to connect between a Jewish-Israeli "here" and "there." As a result, it approached these texts through and positioned them in a mediatory traumatic memory site - Israeli post-memory discourse. It turned the German texts into mediatory, replicated, suspended, repetitive and failed memory representations of the Israeli trauma site.

## **A Witness out of Hell—Trauma Evading History's Framing**

By Lihi Nagler

Lihi Nagler holds a PhD from Tel-Aviv University. Her dissertation focused on the *Doppelgänger* motif in German cinema between 1913 and 1935 and its possible grounding in the *Kinodebatte* of the 1910's. Her research interests include German cinema, early cinema, Eastern European cinemas, hybrid cultures, and the image of the Jew in European cinema and visual culture. She recently held a post-doctorate fellowship at Harvard University and now teaches at the Film and Television departments of Tel-Aviv University and Sapir Academic College.

In recent numerous researches, courses and publications on the Holocaust do not purport to suggest a way of presenting "historical truth", but have rather been concerned with questions such as primary and secondary memory, witnessing and testimonies and their problematic and ambivalent relationships with the different past events to which they refer.

In this article, Lihi Neglar examines a 1960's film which poses various questions regarding the Europeans' *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (confronting/mastering the past) during that period but refuses to present clear answers. The examination is carried out in light of Adorno's 1959 seminal essay, *What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean* (*Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit*).

The film *Zeugin aus der Hölle* (*Witness out of Hell*) (1965-7) is a rare West German/Yugoslavian co-production. It deals specifically with women's memories and trauma and is heavily inspired by the Auschwitz trial that took place in Frankfurt

between 1963 and 1965, though this specific legal procedure is not mentioned in it. The protagonist in the film, Lea Weiss, is called to testify against the person who abused her at Auschwitz. She is forced to confront her problematic and yet to be fully revealed past as a prisoner in the camp, in the context of West-Germany's Wirtschaftswunder (the economic miracle) of the 1960's. Neglar claims that *Witness out of Hell* acknowledges the limits of representation by making these very limits a conscious and self-reflexive notion. The film

presents the difficulty, which Freud recognized as early as 1899, in pointing at something as *authentic* or *genuine memory*. It reveals, in different ways, the lack of authenticity of memory and the fact that memories are pieced from traces of denial, repression, fantasies, projection and evasion, all mediated through representation. If memories are indeed mediated through representation, could one find a better medium to bring them to the surface?