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Abstracts

Advance Warnings: The Bleak Vision of *The Liberating Bride*

Gilead Morahg

The thematic association among the various narrative strands of A. B. Yehoshua's *The Liberating Bride* involves a preoccupation with the early detection of signs of an impending breakdown of personal and communal relationships. This preoccupation is pursued by means of an extended analogy between the deep causes of conflict within the Rivlin family and the causes of conflict between Jews and Arabs within Israel and in the territories it occupies. The article focuses on the novel's political perspective and argues that *The Liberating Bride* disputes the tendency to apply the postulates of post-modernist and post-colonial theory to the actualities of personal and political life in Israel. It resists the rejection of essentialist conceptions of national identity and suggests that, much like the Jews, all Arabs share a common cultural root that shapes their internal landscape and determines their relations with the outside world. A dangerously powerful tendril of this common root is the Palestinian conviction of their right to possess the entirety of the Land of Israel and an obsessive dedication of the Arabs on both sides of the Green Line to realizing the Right of Return.

Markus Lehmann – Jewish Orthodoxy under test: The novel *Akiba* and the formation of the second and third generations in Jewish Orthodoxy in Germany during the second half of the 19th century

Dror Eydar

During the year 1881, Dr. Markus Lehmann (1831-1890) published in his weekly *Der Israelit* an historical novel in installments under the name *Akiba*, which presented the life of the great Jewish sage. This paper deals with the novel *Akiba* and through it with the whole literary enterprise of Lehmann, in a way that sheds light upon the Neo-Orthodox discourse in the second half of the 19th century in Germany. The discussion within the novel will be done from an integrative point of view that looks at *Akiba* as a literary junction into which the old Jewish texts about Rabbi Akiba and his period are channeled, including the political and cultural ideas of Lehman's time. The historicism of Lehmann was typical to the German Orthodoxy which coped with religious criticism in contemporary science and philosophy. These trends put religious tradition on a linear continuity of development, a matter that caused religious reformations on one hand, and an objection of the Orthodox Jewry to

the historicization of Judaism. For Markus Lehmann, at the end of that historicization process, there was one option left: Assimilation. For that reason, even if his stories skipped to the far historic past of the Jewish nation, their main core aimed towards the Jewish-German present. Lehmann used the story of R. Akiba's rising to fame as a platform on which the major issues of German Jewry in his time had been placed. Thus he dealt with issues of religion's place in modern life, the relations with non-Jews, Jewish women's status, etc. By these stories Lehmann did not only ask to fill the time of young Jews with 'proper' contents; it was a political act which sought to sprout the next generation of leadership of Orthodox Jewry at the turn of the century, and to some extent reflect the internal atmosphere among the religious leadership of the Orthodox Jewry in Germany.

Hoffman's *Bernhardt* looked at from Near and from Far

Daniel Avitzour

This essay is dedicated to interpreting Yoel Hoffman's lyrical novel *Bernhardt*. It is arranged as "bottom-up" reading, proceeding from language through character and plot all the way to the context of Hoffman's other works. In addition, this essay serves as a sort of "reader's guide" to this supposedly "difficult" work, explicating literary allusions and exploring connections between the main plot, the fictions composed by the main character and the historical background. The results of this effort challenge prevalent opinions on Yoel Hoffman and *Bernhardt*. It is demonstrated that *Bernhardt* is not a collection of loosely related scenes, impressions and thoughts, but a cohesive novel, with significant character development, particular underlying values and relevant historical background.

Her Booklet is Always in My Bag: Poems in Memory of Leah Goldberg

Maayan Harel

The article addresses three cycles of poems written in memory of the poetess Leah Goldberg after her death (by Yehuda Amichai, T. Carmi, and Tuvia Rübner). By reading these poems, I aimed to trace Goldberg's image as a "poet-mother" of several poets of the (1950's). This claim challenges the accepted historiographical descriptions of the rebellion of the Generation of the State's poets in the generation of Alterman-Shlonsky, and focus, instead, on the continuity between Goldberg's poetry and that of the poets of the "Young Guard", as well as what is perceived as "women's poetry" and "men's poetry". This relates, among other things, to the basic modernistic tendency to regard the "Courage for *Hulin*" as a poetic worldview

beginning with Goldberg, as well as to the central role of the gaze and a longing for the "old, European home" embedded deeply in Goldberg's poetry, but which is also clearly presented in the works of such significant "Eretz-Israeli" poets as Yehuda Amichai.

Fantasies of Loss: Melancholia and Ethnicity in New Israeli-Mizrahi Cinema

Raz Yosef

The migration experience of Mizrahim is based on a structure of mourning and melancholia. When a person leaves his country of birth he has a wide range of things for which to grieve, such as family, language, identity, position in the community and assets. In the Zionist national narrative, Mizrahi mourning over the lost Arab-Jewish identity was forbidden and invisible and led to an ethnic melancholia. Mizrahi melancholia is double: the Mizrahi subject was required to negate and eradicate his Arab identity, but was also forced to re-identify with that loss, because he or she was prevented from fully participating in the Ashkenazi national ideal. These layers of loss were censored, forbidden and silenced in Israeli culture. These losses have been recently afforded cultural visibility through feature films by second-generation Mizrahi directors. In this article, I shall focus on two films: *Cinema Egypt* (Rami Kimchi, 2002) and *Desperado Square* (Benny Toraty, 2001). These films are fantasies of loss through which the second-generation of Mizrahim attempts to "solve" the enigma of the origin of the melancholic identification and the identity of both their parents and themselves. Through the fantasy of cinema, the sons restage their parents' loss, with which they identify, in order to search for a lost desire, to talk of a repressed love, and thus to try and redefine their Mizrahi identity.

Concealment and Exposure

Pnina Shirav

The paper "Concealment and Exposure" discusses three stories written by the Israeli women-writers Ruth Almog, Iris Leal and Lea Eini, at the center of which lurks a dark secret of father-daughter incest. Almog's story was published in 1986, whereas the other two were published more than ten years later. An incest story, by its very definition, is surrounded by various censoring circles: The suppression and shame of the victim herself, the family who often keeps the secret from being publicly exposed, the immediate social environment and sometimes the therapeutic and the juridical circles. The three stories reflect very different narrative and representational techniques of dealing with

the trauma and its verbalization. Almog's story can be characterized by the vagueness and ambiguousness of its narrative voice, leaving open the question, did it or didn't it actually happen, and calling for psychoanalytical reading methods to uncover the suppressed. The latter two stories are both rather blatant: It did, no doubt, take place. Despite this difference, all stories embody the victim's impossibility to retrieve the traumatic memory in a coherent narrative.

Mothers and Daughters – The Forbidden Plot

Shulamith Lev-Aladgem

In this article I discuss two plays by Miriam Kainy: *Babtha* and *The End of the Dreams Season*. In these plays, Kainy presents strong, tough women characters and focuses on the complicated mother-daughter relationship. My intention here is to reveal Kainy's risky and outstanding contribution to the ongoing discourse on mothers and daughters. In the first section of the article I discuss the feminist psychoanalytical theory which strives to undo the problematic conflict between mother and daughter. In the second section I focus on the analysis of Kainy's plays. By employing feminist research tools I seek to lay bare her Marxist interpretation of the mother-daughter plot.

Clouds over the Mediterranean: Israeli Women's Writing in the Shadow of the Female Gothic

Nitza Keren

This essay follows the routes of the Female Gothic in Hebrew Literature, exploring its marks on contemporary Israeli women writers: Amalia Kahana-Carmon, Hanna Bat Shahar and Savyon Liebrecht, thus raising an issue overlooked by local literary criticism. Hanna Bat Shahar's haunted world, as expressed in the collection of stories *To Call the Bats*, is presented in the context of Amalia Kahana-Carmon's unique description of feminine poetics which compares women's writing to the bat's song – indiscernible to the hegemonic ears. Kahana-Carmon's story "Scenes from the House of the Blue-Painted Stairs", with its enchanted attic, serves as another example of feminine poetics, manifesting Elaine Showalter's description of the underground female plots, and so does the story of the girl who is imprisoned in the remote castle *Up in Montifer*. The testimony of the outcast woman who lives in the wilderness, presented in Savyon Liebrecht's story "Festival of the Two Worlds" concludes the essay. Representing the eccentric woman who is excluded from hegemonic society, Liebrecht enables her, along with other female characters occupying her stories, to present their alibi.

Nurit Zarchi – Writing from Childhood's Rooms: From *Outsider* to *The Sad Ambitious Girls of the Province*

Ilana Elkad-Lehman

This paper presents the cradle of the poetic world of Hebrew poet and writer Nurit Zarchi. The methodology is comparative, linking Zarchi's children stories to her stories and essays for adults, and discussing her work as a female writer in relation to feminist writings by Virginia Woolf, Hélène Cixous and Barbara Christian. The paper follows Zarchi's development through her stories and essays, from her first writings to 2007. The main focus of the paper is the woman as an artist. In her early story *Meshosim* ("Palpi"), Zarchi presents a feminine alternative to the male Hebrew Bildungsroman or to the Biblical stories of becoming a prophet. In her work, motherhood does not contradict being an artist. In her novel *Wonderful Tino*, using the myth of Demeter and Persephone, Zarchi views motherhood as a source of a fertile yet dangerous symbiosis. In her stories and essays, Zarchi presents rooms of childhood – real and metaphoric – as the source of her poetic world, with flight as a symbol for her feminine creative freedom. A vital place in these childhood rooms and in the mother-daughter interrelationship is attributed to language, books, and reading. In these rooms, myths and well-known stories are recounted, reconstructed, and rewritten.

"We are all Children in Front of the Absolute": Remarks about *The Unnecessary Thoughts of a Lady* by Nurit Zarchi

Chen Shtrass

In this essay I walk down the path paved by Nurit Zarchi – a poet and an author who wrote many books for adults and for children – in her collection of essays *The Unnecessary Thoughts of a Lady* (1982). Her essays are derived from a starting point of an author who is also a dedicated and enraptured reader. Reading those essays enables an inquiry into the main roots from which Zarchi's poetic world stems, as the childhood modus and the relation between femininity and creation, as well as the continuous conflict between life in, and with, reality and the insubordination against them. I also refer to the questions rising in these essays considering the reading process, ours as much as Zarchi's, and his affinity to the artistic creation.

Michèle Montrelay – Between Psychoanalysis and Feminism: A Forward to "Inquiry into Femininity"; Interview with Prof. Shirley Sharon-Zisser

Dina Haruvi

The article of Michèle Montrelay, "Recherches sur la Féminité" ("Inquiry into Femininity") first published in 1970, reflects the attempts, shared by psychoanalysis and feminism,

to explore and theorize feminine sexuality. Montrelay's point of departure is the two contradictory theories regarding female sexuality – that of Freud and that of Ernest Jones. Montrelay analyzes these theories and brings them together, to suggest a fascinating and innovative synthesis. Her theory has interesting relations with various theories of her famous French contemporaries: Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray – and it is important to read her work in relation to theirs. The Introduction is followed by an interview with Prof. Shirley Sharon-Zisser, which enables us to understand the Lacanian context and the contribution of Montrelay to the discourse on feminine sexuality.

Inquiry into Femininity

Michèle Montrelay

Translated by Noam Baruch, edited by Dina Haruvi.

A Hebrew Translation of Montrelay's Essay – "Recherches sur la Féminité", *Critique* 278 (1970), pp. 574-654 ; *L'ombre et le nom: Sur La Féminité*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1977, pp. 57-81.

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Dr. Dror Eydar is a researcher of Literature and Culture. Eydar has published articles in literature, culture criticism, sociology and politics. Recently, his article, "Knocking on Wisdom's Door': on 'Pirkei Rabbi Akiva' – A forgotten play from the early Haskala period by Mordechai Poper", was published in *Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* (2008). His book *Alterman – Baudelaire; Paris – Tel Aviv: Urbanism and Myth in the Poetry of Nathan Alterman and Charles Baudelaire* was printed in 2003 by Carmel Publishing House. His latest book *The Last of the Lord's Poets: Myth, Ethos and Mysticism in the Literary Works of Yosef Zvi Rimon* was published by Magnes Press, Jerusalem (2009).

Dr. Maayan Harel teaches in the Department of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Her dissertation deals with representations of illness in Modern Hebrew fiction through the works of such authors as Y. H. Brenner, S. Y. Agnon, A. Applefeld and Y. Hendel. She also writes about Modern Hebrew poetry, particularly about the poets of the "Generation of the State". Her article "I Have No Need to Arrive': Journeys in Dahlia Ravikovitch's Poetry" is soon to be published (Hakibbutz Hameuchad press).

Dr. Dina Haruvi is a lecturer at the Tel Aviv University and the Kibbutzim College of Education. She specializes in French Literature and Feminist Theory. She has published numerous papers in French about avant garde and feminism, women and nationalism in Quebec, and mother-daughter relationships in literature. She is the scientific editor of translations of texts by female thinkers such as Kristeva, Irigaray and Cixous, most of whose writings are published by the Resling Publishing House. Dr. Haruvi also participated in the editing of *Learning Feminism: A Reader* (Hakibbutz Hameuchad, Migdarim, 2006), and recently wrote the "Maternity Disease" epilogue to Simone de Beauvoir's book *A Very Easy Death* (Keter, 2008).

Dr. Nitza Keren is a literary and cultural scholar and tutors the course "Metamorphosis: Myth and Creative Processes" at the Wingate Institute School of Supplementary Studies. She also coaches writing workshops at the Teachers' Organization. Her book, *Like a*

Sheet in the Hand of the Embroideress – Women Writers and the Hegemonic Text, based on a dissertation in Gender Studies (Bar-Ilan University, 2004), was recently published in the "Interpretation and Culture" series of Bar-Ilan University Press.

Dr. Shulmith Lev-Aladgem is a senior lecturer, researcher and practitioner at the Theater Department of Tel-Aviv University. She is also a trained actress who uses her acting experience in both her research and teaching. Lev-Aladgem's main interests include acting theories, performance and cultural studies and their connection to community-based theatre, educational drama, drama therapy and feminist theatre. Her research on these subjects has been published in numerous leading periodicals in the US, Europe and Israel. Her book: *Standing Front Stage: Resistance, Celebration and Subversion in Community-Based Theatre*, was published by Haifa University Press.

Prof. Gilead Morahg is a Professor of Hebrew Literature at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Executive Vice President of the National Association of Professors of Hebrew.

Prof. Shirley Sharon-Zisser is a Lacanian psychoanalyst and Chair of the English Department at Tel Aviv University. She is a teacher of the Freudian Field, teaching at the "Lacanian Network", a Clinical Section operating under the auspices of the Department of Psychoanalysis at The University of Paris-8 founded by Jacques Lacan. She is editor of *Makhbar-Ot*, the Journal of the Lacanian Network, and a member of the editorial board of *Et Lacan*, the Journal of the GIEP, the Israeli group of the New Lacanian School. She is a member of the GIEP, the New Lacanian School (NLS), and the AMP (World Association of Psychoanalysis). Her research deals with psychoanalysis as articulated in theories of language and many of her writings are influenced by the developments of Michèle Montrelay, especially concerning the relationship between forms of language, psychic formations and female sexuality.

Dr. Pnina Shirav based her book *Non-Innocent Writing* (Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1998) on her doctoral thesis which deals with discursive positions in the fiction of central Israeli women writers: Yehudit Hendel, Amalia Kahana-Carmon and Ruth Almog. She has also published various papers on the subject, such as "Blood is Ink" (*Will You Listen to My Voice*, Yael Azmon (ed.), Van Leer and Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2001). Until recently she worked as the supervisor of literary studies for high schools at the Curriculum Department of the Ministry of Education.

Chen Shtrass is a doctoral student at the Department of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, where she also teaches. She recently submitted her MA thesis on Initiation and Liminality in Novels about the Kibbutz at the time of the third Aliyah. She is an editorial board member and coordinator of the journal *Mikan*.

Dr. Raz Yosef is an associate professor of cinema studies in The Film and Television Department at Tel Aviv University. He is the author of *Beyond Flesh: Queer Masculinities and Nationalism in Israeli Cinema* (Rutgers, 2004), *To Know a Man: Sexuality, Masculinity and Ethnicity in Israeli Cinema* (Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 2010) and *The Politics of Loss and Trauma in Contemporary Israeli Cinema* (Routledge, forthcoming). His works on gender, sexuality and ethnicity in Israeli visual culture has appeared in *GLQ*, *Third Text*, *Shofar*, *Framework*, *Camera Obscura* and *Cinema Journal*.

Nurit Zarchi is a poet and a writer who has published over 100 books of poetry and prose for adults, children and youth and a collection of essays. Among her books are *Wild Plantations*, *Woman Brought Woman*, *The Garden of the Brain*, *Hypnodrom Hotel*, *The Ceiling Flew* and *The Soul is Africa* (poetry); *Wonderful Tino*, *The Mask Maker*, *Games of Loneliness*, *The floor is shaking* and *The Sad Ambitious Girls of the Province* (prose); *The Tiger Under the Bed*, *Queen Truffle* and *King Ruffle*, *A Thousand Chariots* and *Colour Crown Ketchup Love* (poetry for children); *Outsider*, *Don't Banish Nanny*, *Tanina*, *Antenna*, *The Bearer of the Paper Crown*, *If You Can't Say It Politely Don't Say It At All*, *Wolfinea Momi Bloom*, *Amory Catches Up and Fly*, *Bathnymph* and *See You at the South Pole* (prose for children and youth); *The Unnecessary Thoughts of a Lady* (essays). Her books have been translated into various languages. She has won many awards for her creative work, including the Bialik Prize, the Ze'ev Prize, the Education Minister's Prize for Lifetime Achievement and the Amichai Prize for poetry. She teaches creative writing in literature departments of numerous universities.