



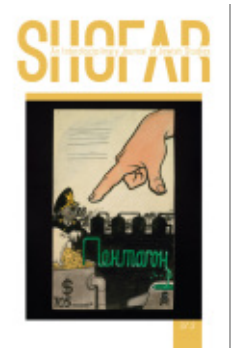
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Mizrahi Jews and Holocaust Survivors in 1950s Israeli
Cinema: A Revised Outlook

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Essay

Mizrahi Jews and Holocaust Survivors in 1950s Israeli Cinema: A Revised Outlook

Liat Steir-Livny

ABSTRACT

The problematic representation of Mizrahi Jews in Israeli films has been extensively researched over the past few decades. The subject was first thoroughly analyzed in Ella Shohat's comprehensive 1989 study, *Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation*. In her book she uses a Marxist approach, claiming that Israeli films express the views of the Ashkenazi hegemony and help preserve its supremacy. Shohat discusses the modes through which an Orientalist dichotomy dominated Eretz-Israeli and Israeli cinema from the outset. In films that portrayed an encounter between Ashkenazi Jews and Mizrahi Jews, the former represented Western values—they were rational, enlightened, and compassionate—while Mizrahi Jews were mainly depicted as primitive, inferior, and violent. Over the years, scholars have pointed to other features in the cinematic representation of Ashkenazi-Mizrahi relations in Israeli Bourekas films, which were dominant from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, but Shohat's preliminary observations regarding an Orientalist dichotomy in the 1950s have become generally accepted in Israeli film studies. This article revisits the perceived Orientalist dichotomy through an analysis of 1950s films that focus on encounters between Mizrahi Jews and Holocaust survivors (Ashkenazi Jews) and their integration into Israeli society. These films include *Tent City [Ir Ha'obalim]* (Leopold Aryeh Lahola, 1951), *Faithful City [Kiryat Ne'emanah]* (Józef Lejtes, 1952), and *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer [Giv'at 24 Eina Ona]* (Thorold Dickinson, 1955). The article claims that in these films Mizrahi Jews are shown as integrating more quickly than Holocaust survivors. Conversely, Holocaust survivors are presented in the films—much like they were in many other cultural realms at that time—as a broken people who ultimately assimilated, albeit with much difficulty.

Keywords: Israeli cinema, Holocaust survivors, Mizrahi Jews, Orientalism

INTRODUCTION

Most of the Jews who immigrated to Israel from Asia and North Africa arrived during the late 1940s and early 1950s, after the founding of the state. From 1948 to 1951, approximately 350,000 Jews arrived from Asia and North Africa (later known as “Mizrahim”), and approximately 350,000 Ashkenazi Holocaust survivors arrived from Europe. There is broad consensus that the Israeli establishment’s attitude toward the Mizrahim was discriminatory, and that their integration into Israeli life was affected by a patronizing approach. Veteran Israelis, mainly Ashkenazim, frequently viewed the Mizrahi newcomers as problematic. Their way of life was perceived as the primitive antithesis to (European) culture; their style of dress, family structure, and language were all considered proof of their “backwardness.” Few distinctions were made between immigrants from different countries, between immigrants from major cities and those from villages, or between intellectuals and the uneducated. These negative perceptions appeared in public discourse, journalism, the educational system, and in some explanatory films.¹

The encounter between native Israelis and Holocaust survivors was problematic in its own right. Information that slowly emerged during and especially after World War II about the destruction of the Jewish community in Europe was cause for solemn mourning within the Yishuv. The shock was mingled with anguish and a desire to help the Holocaust survivors. But at the same time, questions and doubts arose about the response of European Jews during the Holocaust. Along with support in immigration and absorption came questions about the perceived passivity of diasporic Jews in the face of Nazi horrors. Additionally, veteran Israelis wondered how the immigrants had survived while six million Jews had perished. The answers to these questions were sometimes problematic; those who did not fight in the ghetto uprisings or with the partisans were sometimes perceived as submitting to their fate “like lambs to the slaughter,” and were occasionally suspected of having committed “immoral acts” in order to survive. These survivors were described as bedraggled, dysfunctional people who needed to undergo a transformation from “broken” Diaspora Jews to “new Jews.”²

The robust ideology of transformation, which was interwoven into the newborn state, also dominated Israeli filmmaking from the 1940s to 1960. Most fiction films of that era propagated distinctively Zionist ideas.³ They served as an artistic platform for an ideological outlook through which the Zionist establishment sought to display its national achievements. Ella Shohat, in *Israeli Cinema*—one of the first comprehensive studies of Israeli cinema—focuses on representations of Mizrahi Jews and Arabs from the 1930s to the 1980s. She argues that an Orientalist paradigm guided the portrayal of Mizrahi Jews from the 1930s onward. According to her theory, the Jewish-Ashkenazi film establishment created from the outset a clear hierarchy between Ashkenazim, Mizrahim, and Arabs. When encounters between the West and the East are represented, the perceived superiority of the West, in terms of knowledge, power, domination, progress, and so forth, was always preserved. The image of the “inferior” Eastern helped crystallize the notion of enlightened Ashkenazi Jews. Mizrahi Jews were thus Orientalized by Ashkenazi (Western) Jews in order to preserve the latter’s economic, cultural, and political dominance. When discussing Orientalism in 1950s films, Shohat claims that the films portrayed the Mizrahi Jews as the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Ashkenazi elite. Photography and editing emphasized the ethnic division of “mind” (Ashkenazi) and “body” (Mizrahi). Jewish history in Islamic countries was erased in favor of Ashkenazi-European history, which claimed the lion’s share of screen time. According to Shohat, this Orientalist dichotomy continued to accompany the representation of the ethnic conflict in the following decades, especially in the 1960s and 1970s.⁴

Over the years, revisionist notions have emerged regarding representations of Mizrahim, especially in films made in the 1960s and 1970s. These perspectives have focused mainly on the genre referred to as the “Bourekas” films—that is, popular fiction films (primarily comedies) that exploited the ethnic clash in Israel between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim and provided a form of escapism to the Mizrahim viewers. This genre was very successful, especially from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s. While reviewers severely criticized the Bourekas films as infantile

and vulgar, the Israeli audience did not care: Bourekas films attracted hundreds of thousands of viewers to movie theaters.⁵ In studies conducted after Shohat, only a few scholars, such as Yaron Shemer, take up her viewpoint,⁶ whereas the vast majority reject her claims and analyze these films differently. For example, Rami Kimchi states that Bourekas films echoed perceptions from classical Yiddish literature, representing a sense of solidarity and nostalgia rather than an irreverent attitude toward the Mizrahim.⁷ Orly Lubin, Miri Talmon, Nurith Gertz, Yael Munk, and others have pointed to the subversive elements in these films that undermine the Zionist narrative and the ideology of redemption and integration.⁸ Yaron Peleg notes that the Bourekas films recorded a change in the perception of Israeli masculinity, which eventually became associated with Mizrahim more than Ashkenazim.⁹ Judd Ne'eman, and later Michal Pick Hemo and Tali Silberstein, analyze the ways in which the Bourekas films express the struggle of Mizrahi immigrants against discrimination and marginalization.¹⁰ Scholars such as Peleg, Shemer, Raz Yosef, Matan Aharoni, Merav Alush Levron, and others also discuss the changes in the image of the Mizrahim in contemporary Israeli cinema.¹¹ However, Shohat's preliminary observations regarding an Orientalist dichotomy in 1950s Israeli cinema have become the general perception in Israeli film studies.¹²

This article claims that much more complex representations emerge when we revisit films of the 1950s, a decade when eleven fiction films were produced. Only three of these fiction films (*Tent City*, *Faithful City*, and *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*) represent the integration of Holocaust survivors alongside immigrants from Islamic countries. These films constitute the corpus of this article, whose main approach is comparative. In closing, this article also briefly explores the three films that represented interactions between Holocaust survivors and native Israelis and the one other 1950s fiction film that deals solely with Mizrahim.

The main thrust of this article is that, although Holocaust survivors are more visible than Mizrahim in 1950s Israeli cinema, the nature of this visibility is such that Holocaust survivors do not come out ahead. The revised analysis of these fiction films shows that Shohat's dichotomous

perception of Orientalism in the 1950s, which has yet to be challenged, is problematic. The films I discuss do not ascribe superiority to all Ashkenazi Jews; rather, these films create a clear distinction between native Israeli Ashkenazim and the newly arrived Holocaust survivors. The native Israelis—who are elsewhere often portrayed as the elite sector of the population—are less the focus of the films I discuss than Holocaust survivors and Mizrahi Jews. In fact, Holocaust survivors are portrayed in much more problematic ways than Mizrahim, contrary to what Shohat suggests. While Jews from Islamic countries are depicted as being able to integrate into the new society relatively quickly, finding their way to its center, Holocaust survivors are portrayed as inflexible, negative, and unable to integrate quickly into Israeli society. The next section of this article analyzes the selected films to show and explain why Mizrahim were represented as more readily Israelized. This article claims that the positive cinematic representations of Mizrahim reflect a complex attitude toward “the East” that appeared in the Jewish Yishuv from its early years. Namely, the perception of Western superiority was complemented by an attraction to “the East,” including a perception that its people were manly, authentic, and connected to the soil.

TENT CITY

Tent City was the initiative of the Israel Motion Picture Studios, which was founded in 1949 by Margot Klausner (1905–1975)—one of the most important women pioneers of the Israeli film industry—and her husband, Yehoshua Brandstatter (1891–1975).¹³ Aryeh Lahola (1918–1968), who among his numerous cultural talents was also a filmmaker, directed the film, and Baruch Dienar (1922–1997), one of the most prominent men in the industry, produced and wrote the screenplay. The thirty-three-minute film contrasts the integration stories of Holocaust survivors and Jews from Islamic countries. In the film, Holocaust survivors are shown in a negative light, while the Mizrahi immigrants are depicted as quickly integrating and inspiring the survivors to embrace Zionist values.

If Israeli Ashkenazim filmmakers wanted to create an Orientalist dichotomy, they needed to represent the absorbing Ashkenazim as prominent positive figures. But in the film, the absorbing Ashkenazim are marginalized and are not represented favorably. In one scene, the Israeli Ashkenazim drive a truck that brings the newcomers to the *Ma'abara* (an immigrant absorption camp), but the Israeli Ashkenazim are not shown. The truck drives over a sandcastle built by a young immigrant girl, and later they hand the immigrants blankets. However, the faces of these veteran Ashkenazim are never shown—only their hands can be seen. Two minor characters, Yitzhak and Miriam (Israeli Ashkenazim who work in the *Ma'abara*), are indeed presented as welcoming figures, but they are not credited with the changes that the immigrants undergo. The building of the state is presented as a joint venture between the new immigrants, which is an extraordinary depiction for the 1950s.¹⁴ In a surprising way that undermines the Zionist narrative, the film—which is one of the key cinematic representations of mass immigration—leaves veteran Israeli Ashkenazim out of the frame and tells the Zionist enterprise through the eyes of a young Iraqi immigrant who has recently moved to the new state. This trend of shifting the focus away from the veteran Israeli Ashkenazim is also found in *Faithful City* and *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*.

The immigrants on the truck are shot from a low angle in order to glorify them, and a religious Yemenite—also an immigrant—dominates the frame by standing in its center. On the soundtrack, which imitates a *Ma'abara* loudspeaker, many names are called out and greetings in several languages are heard, but the Yemeni immigrant is visually foregrounded. This dominance of the “Eastern” perspective is continued when the Yemeni immigrant gets off the truck and Moshe, a young Iraqi newcomer and the film’s protagonist, is revealed behind him. Moshe’s voiceover accompanies the scenes, and viewers experience the stories of integration from his point of view. The use of voiceover and point-of-view often contribute to the viewer’s identification with a specific character (in this case, Moshe), which carries the story and details his/her inner world. Conversely, the Holocaust survivors in the film do not have a voice: their

story is mediated through Moshe's perspective. Moshe speaks a high and figurative language, which conflicts with the stereotype of the ignorant Easterner.

When Moshe and his grandfather, Nissim, arrive at the tent, they meet a family of Holocaust survivors, the Lichtensteins, who had arrived before them. The Lichtenstein family is comprised of a husband, wife, and their son, Egon. Nissim greets the family with a kind smile, but he receives no greeting in return. Instead, Mrs. Lichtenstein looks at them suspiciously. The camera embraces Moshe's perspective by zooming in on the faces of the Lichtensteins, who stare at them, and we hear Moshe's inner monologue: "The people in the tent looked at us, stared as if they were afraid." Nissim offers Mr. Lichtenstein a cigarette as a friendly gesture, but he is refused without a word. Mr. Lichtenstein does not respect him enough to answer and leaves the tent. Furthermore, the film never allows viewers to become familiar enough with the survivors to learn their first names. While the audience is on a first-name basis with the Mizrahi Jews, Moshe and Nissim, the survivors are referred to as "Mr." and "Mrs." Lichtenstein, or sometimes simply "Egon's parents." This artificial detachment discourages identification with the survivors in the film.

In the Bourekas films, Mizrahi Jews were often described as lazy and passive, living at the expense of others, while the Ashkenazi Jews were portrayed as an integral part of the Israeli workforce. *Tent City* portrays the opposite. In one scene, Nissim is working early in the morning, planting a garden near the tent, while Mrs. Lichtenstein sits outside sewing, seemingly inappreciative of his labor. Shortly after, Nissim politely asks her to move a little so he may enlarge the garden area, but she angrily refuses. In an era in which planting the land was one of Zionism's most essential themes, this scene reinforces the differences between the Iraqi immigrant (Nissim), whose actions reflect Zionist values, and the Holocaust survivor (Mrs. Lichtenstein), who does not acknowledge such values.

Furthermore, while Moshe is portrayed as pleasant and polite, Egon Lichtenstein is associated with many of the negative stereotypes of Holocaust survivors that are found in 1940s Israeli cinema.¹⁵ For example,

Egon tries violently to snatch Moshe's flute, and when the latter objects, Egon slams him against the tent and flees. Moshe is ultimately portrayed as a kindhearted child who does not hold a grudge, as later in the film he is sympathetic toward Egon: "I saw that Egon injured his leg; apparently he fell down when he chased me. I longed to have peace between us." Moshe later plays his flute for Egon and hands him the instrument, and they laugh together. Nevertheless, this change does not affect Egon's parents or the manner in which they are represented in the film. As the camera moves outside of the tent, it shows the hardworking Nissim watering the garden while Mr. Lichtenstein sits and reads, thus emphasizing the difference between the passive Ashkenazim and the active Mizrahim. Moshe reinforces the problematic representations of survivors when he shares his thoughts with the audience: "I did not particularly like Egon's parents. . . . They never laughed, but Grandfather said that they had suffered greatly in Germany, and that's why they did not laugh." The film, like other films of that era, summarizes the Holocaust with this one superficial reference,¹⁶ preventing viewers from truly identifying with the cold and alienating behavior of the Lichtenstein family.

In another scene, Egon's pants are torn. Moshe sews his friend's pants, as they are afraid of Mrs. Lichtenstein's reaction, and Moshe injures his finger on the rusty needle and is hospitalized. When he returns to the tent after a few days, he discovers "a lot of things have changed [. . .] I think Egon's parents have changed." Egon's father is watering the garden and smiling, and he even moves the sewing machine to allow Nissim to enlarge his garden plot. Moshe reflects: "He too wanted to plant a garden, and Egon's mother did not object at all; she even laughed." In contrast to other films produced in the 1940s, in which the impetus for change came from veteran Israelis, the change in this film is derived from Moshe's sacrifice. The Iraqi immigrants are responsible for the absorption and transformation of survivors into functioning members of Israeli society.

The two families share a Sabbath meal, and Egon's mother lights five candles for both families. This scene, in which the audience hears her recite the blessing, is the first time that her voice is heard at all. However, since this scene is also shown through Moshe's perspective, it reflects his

own memories: “It was just like at home in Baghdad [. . .] when mother was still alive.” Therefore, the film ignores the survivors’ past while the voice-over emphasizes Moshe’s roots and his nostalgia for the past.

The Lichtenstein family eventually leaves the *Ma’abara*, while Moshe and Nissim remain. In a scene that once again reinforces the consistently negative image of Holocaust survivors, a new, European-looking couple arrive. Their inauspicious arrival is marked by the placement of their large trunk on Nissim’s garden, which crushes his flowers. Again, Moshe does not understand why Ashkenazim behave so impolitely, and he concludes that he no longer wants to stay in the *Ma’abara*. This scene also sabotages the linear process of initiation by bringing the film back to its starting point, as the Mizrahi immigrants once again face the hostility of Holocaust survivors and the task of helping them transform. After Moshe and Nissim leave the *Ma’abara*, they are later reunited with the Lichtensteins in a new tent city in the desert. While Shohat argues that Israeli cinema of this era privileges the assimilation of Mizrahi Jews into Western culture,¹⁷ the opposite happens in *Tent City*. As Moshe and Nissim are reunited with the Lichtensteins in the tent city in the desert, the group gathers together to smoke a narghile—a distinctively Middle Eastern custom. For Moshe, it is “just like in Baghdad.”

The superiority of the Mizrahi Jews is also reflected in the fact that Nissim is the de facto Zionist representative: he is always optimistic, sure of the future success of the Zionist enterprise. He leads the way in working the land, creates a cultural melting pot, and spreads an optimistic message of nation-building. Like his grandfather, Moshe also serves as a mouthpiece for the Zionist narrative. He implies that construction symbolizes the cultural melting pot in the new land: “Who built? Jacob from Thessaloniki, who could make hundreds of bricks a day, and Moshe from Cairo, and Gad from Marseille, and Roberto from Rome. Everyone worked hard. Egon’s mother sat all day at the sewing machine, sewing curtains [. . .] each day, I saw fewer tents.”¹⁸ He also suggests that the land is empty aside from the Jewish settlements: “We travelled many places and didn’t meet anyone. Our place is still a desert and we have to build it.” Thus, Moshe erases the Arab population. The camera reinforces his perspective

as it pans over a desert in which the only inhabited places in view are the *Ma'abara* and the new Jewish settlement. Film critic Yehuda Stav makes the point that the film's cameraman—Ya'acov Yunilevitz—imitated scenes from John Ford's famous 1950s Westerns.¹⁹ This cinematic influence of Western culture that appeared in other Zionist films was associated with the Zionist narrative of a “Wild East” (a paraphrase of the “Wild West”),²⁰ a narrative that suggested Zionism would help it to flourish.

At the end of *Tent City*, children can be seen removing the last of the tarpaulins as if grandly unveiling the new houses hidden behind. Moshe is chosen to conclude their achievements with the *Shebecheyanu* blessing.²¹ Thus, from beginning to end the Zionist ideals are spoken, seen, heard, and summarized by the Iraqi newcomers. The biblical significance of Moshe's name turns the Iraqi boy into a representation of the one who leads the previously enslaved Jews into freedom in their homeland, and this time becomes a part of the revival.

The focus on children as protagonists was not new. Child Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Eretz-Israel had been depicted since the 1940s in Eretz-Israeli films. Such children were the preferred subjects because their young age symbolized an opportunity for a change. These films, like the films of the 1950s, depicted some of the problems these children faced, which were documented by the people who dealt with them.²² But the films generalized the children's troublesome characteristics and inserted them into a Zionist narrative of redemption. The problems of children from Islamic countries, which people were aware of during that era,²³ were generally overlooked and are only briefly shown in the next film I discuss, *Faithful City*.

Additionally, the images of the beautiful, pastoral *Ma'abara* in *Tent City* were not realistic, as they ignored the primitive sanitary conditions, the cold, and the rain that often flooded these transient sites.²⁴ Lahola, the director of *Tent City*, who immigrated to Israel from Slovakia in 1949, began his life in Israel in one of the *Mabanot olim* (immigrant transit camps), which predated the *Ma'abarot*. Therefore, he was clearly aware that his film was an embellishment of a harsher reality.²⁵ Author Eli Amir goes so far as to claim Lahola's film is “[a] fantasy which has nothing to do with

reality.”²⁶ Amir, who emigrated from Iraq as a child and lived in a *Ma’abara*, wrote about the appalling conditions and racism in his famous 1983 book, *Scapagoat* [*Tarngol caparot*]. But the fantasy of mass immigration in *Tent City* did not stop the film from being a great success, and, perhaps for some, the fact that it was filmed on location at the Beit Lied (Shvut Am) *Ma’abara* with its actual residents gave the movie its “authentic look.”²⁷

In the fall of 1951, *Tent City* won the Golden Lion award at the Venice Film Festival and first prize at the Boston Film Festival.²⁸ The Israel Motion Picture Studios, Keren Hayesod, and the United Palestine Appeal distributed the film as a propaganda film. The vast correspondence concerning this film attests to its translations into English, French, and Spanish, as well as its global distribution to Europe, the United States, Canada, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and South America.²⁹ In the United States, *Tent City* was broadcast on various television networks, and the mayor of New York City instructed principals to screen the film in the New York City school system. The film was also purchased for screening in schools in France and on French television.³⁰ The reviews, which often praised the film, generally did not discuss its representation of ethnic hierarchies. One film reviewer said, “the story is told and photographed from the viewpoint of the Iraqi boy.”³¹ Critic William Gailmor described both Mizrahim and Ashkenazim as having shed “blood and tears in widely separated cultures,” but Nissim is characterized as the “kindly grandfather” in contrast to Egon’s parents, who “bear deep emotional wounds [. . .] invisible scars of bitterness, resentment, suspicion.”³² Thus, perspectives surrounding mass immigration, the Zionist enterprise as seen through the eyes of an Iraqi immigrant, and the rapid absorption of Mizrahim—unlike the long drawn-out experience of Holocaust survivors—reached hundreds of thousands of viewers.

FAITHFUL CITY

Faithful City, which takes place in 1947, tells the story of a group of orphaned children—Holocaust survivors and emigrants from Islamic countries—who are sent to live in a youth village in Jerusalem. The production of the

film began in 1950. Moshe Friedman, a well-known figure in Jerusalem and one of the owners of the Edison Cinema Theater in Jerusalem, was the head of the Israeli production company called *Moledet*.³³ He hired Józef Lejtes, a Polish director of Jewish origin, who in 1946 had directed the first fiction film in Eretz-Israel to focus on Holocaust survivors (i.e., *The Great Promise*). Lejtes had been working in England in 1950, and, in addition to directing, he also produced the film. Lejtes asked Ben Barzman, a Canadian journalist, novelist, and screenwriter who lived in London, to write the screenplay. The British actor John Slater played Ezra, a Holocaust survivor who runs the youth village, and the American actor Jamie Smith played Sam, the guide who eventually wins the survivors' trust and turns them from egotistical juvenile delinquents into proud citizens of the new state.³⁴

Ezra is an example of a Holocaust survivor who is rejuvenated in Israel and became a productive citizen, an individual who shoulders the difficult task of educating “wild” Holocaust survivors. Much like the biblical Ezra the Scribe, who led Jews to their homeland and supervised their revival, the character Ezra helps the orphaned children on their way to their Zionist renewal. He symbolizes their future: he is what they will become after their successful Zionist initiation process. Ezra uses a soft, humanistic educational approach, whereas Sam, an American youth counselor and teacher, uses a more direct, tough, and uncompromising approach in his attempts to educate the survivors and turn their chaos into productive living. For example, when the children arrive at the youth village, they refuse to get off the bus. After Arabs attack the bus with stones, the children are afraid of their new environment (which is also surrounded by Arab villages). They go wild on the bus, and, though Ezra tries gently to persuade them to get off, he fails. Sam talks to them harshly, ordering them to get off, and they comply. He is very pleased with himself, as he succeeded where Ezra failed. Nevertheless, Ezra puts an end to Sam's gloating by pointing out that the children are now terrified. “Look what you did,” Ezra scolds. The camera pans over the frightened children sitting in silence, confirming Ezra's perspective: this is not the way to deal with them. Throughout the film Sam learns that to win the hearts of the survivors, he needs to adopt Ezra's approach and be more sensitive.

As shown in contemporary research, Israeli culture in this era (cinema included) did not refer to the persecutions of Jews in Asia or North Africa during World War II. The term “Holocaust survivors” was only descriptive of European Jews.³⁵ The film features Max, the survivors’ “leader,” who displays the nihilistic and aggressive traits he has developed in order to survive. As in other fiction films of the era, he has “imported” these negative traits to Israel, thus threatening the moral Zionist state. Already in the beginning, as the children are on the bus heading to the village, a British policeman who boards the bus discovers stolen items in Max’s suitcase. Viewers are also introduced to Anna, a beautiful young girl who has learned to use her sexuality to survive, a negative stereotype that was prevalent in Israeli culture during this time.³⁶ The process of transformation that the Holocaust survivors undergo in the youth village is long and exhausting, and their problematic characteristics are depicted in detail.

As in other films of the era, here, too, the children display a collection of negative characteristics at the beginning of the film. An undisciplined bunch, they refuse to do agricultural work, demand to be paid for their efforts, play cards, smoke, and deceive each other and their instructors. Max is often violent toward his roommates and even toward Anna, whom he strikes when she refuses to obey his orders. Max steals a gold watch from Sam, and Anna continues to rely on her sexuality and refuses to wear modest khaki clothes or to braid her hair like the other girls. Instead, she dresses and acts far beyond her years, and she flirts with Sam, gazing at him intently and assuring him that their relationship will be “wonderful.” She tells her friends about the method of survival she developed during the Holocaust, including her realization that she could get what she wanted if she stared into men’s eyes. On a trip to Jerusalem, Anna dances in the streets and looks admiringly at the glamorous and seductive poster of a Hollywood actress that says, “My Way.” The next scene shows a drawing of the penetrating eyes, which Anna has painted and hung on the wall of Sam’s room.³⁷ The scenes that portray the problematic behavior and negative images of the survivors are used to emphasize the profound changes that will take place over time. Anna’s sexual behavior and Max’s chaotic violence indicate that the survivors cannot easily

shake off their promiscuous and violent behaviors, even after the war has ended. Instead, their transformation is a long process through which they eventually shed their diasporic identity and become “new Jews.”

The turning points in the lives of Max and Anna occur later in the film, thanks to Sam’s efforts and the confidence he has in the two. In one pivotal scene, in which the shocked Sam has discovered the drawing of the eyes on his wall, he summons Anna to his room. The intimate space encourages Anna to flirt aggressively, but Sam displays integrity and morality, seizing the opportunity to explain that even though she is a very pretty girl, she needs to give herself a chance to be “like all the other girls.” To emphasize the point he gives her a gift—a hair ribbon—with a gentle suggestion that she use it to change her sophisticated and worldly hairstyle to something more befitting the modest Zionist ethos. In this way, Sam hints that she must abandon her individualistic path (i.e., “My Way”) and conform to the norms of her new home. Anna eventually learns to work, dresses in khaki, braids her hair, and contributes to society.³⁸

Max’s turning point occurs when the police catch him attempting to sell the gold watch he stole from Sam. Sam is called to the scene and covers for Max, claiming that he gave him the watch as a gift. This expression of trust leads to a change in Max’s life: he begins to work, develops a connection with Sam, apologizes to Anna, and participates in preparations for the 1948 war. The change, however, is not yet complete, because Max still fears the Arab enemies and is skeptical of the Israelis’ ability to overcome them. By the end of the film, Max is terrified of the bombings and runs away in search of Sam, who has been drafted to fight in the war. During his flight, he encounters an orphaned Arab boy who is wounded and brings him to the youth village with Sam’s help. This scene shows the indolent, frightened, and passive Max transformed into a heroic young man.

In comparison to Holocaust survivors, the integration of orphans from Islamic countries is faster and much less problematic. At first, the orphans from Islamic countries are also subject to the negative stereotypes that were common in Israeli culture at that time. For example,

Jean, a Moroccan immigrant, is initially represented as an insolent child (on the bus, for instance, he calls Max a “Nazi”), and the other Moroccan children are seen playing cards with the survivors. But it is Max, the Holocaust survivor, and not Jean who cheats. In one scene, Jean steals a knife (for protection), and Sam finds it and snatches it out of his hands. Likely referring to a horrible punishment he received in Morocco, Jean claims, “Nobody will burn my feet again.” Sam replies, “Is this all you Moroccans know?” This scene references a stereotype employed in 1950s Israel called the *Maroko sakin* (meaning “Moroccan knife”), which implied that all Moroccan immigrants were violent criminals. Showing he is fully aware of such stereotypes, Jean screams at Sam: “That’s all you know ‘Moroccans, Moroccans’; you’ve hated me from the very first.” Sam does not understand right away. “Don’t you remember?” Jean says, “When Wili and I fought he called me a Moroccan and I called him a Nazi, you yelled at me, but you didn’t do anything to him. Did you? Did you?” Jean is right. In the scene upon their arrival, when both of them fought, Sam hit Jean to the ground and scolded only him. Sam grabs Jean and admits, “Maybe you are right. I don’t know how it happened.” Jean does not let go and teaches his guide a lesson in stereotypes: “You are just like all the others. You are all the same.” Sam bows his head in sadness and leaves the room. “I’m sorry Jean, I’m sorry,” he says as he departs. In a social climate filled with stereotypes about North African and especially Moroccan immigrants,³⁹ this is a groundbreaking scene that holds a mirror to the faces of the Israelis, forcing them to admit their Orientalist perceptions and repent. The one who goes through an initiation process here is not Jean, but Sam, the guide. The scene indicates that the difficulties involved in the rehabilitation of Moroccan children are not solely the children’s fault—the Israelis are consumed with stereotypes toward them.

Additionally, much less screen time is given to the difficulties of the Moroccan children in *Faithful City*, which gives the impression that their difficulties are less problematic and that their (cinematic) rehabilitation takes place much faster. In the film, Jean and his friends adapt to the new place and begin to help work the land. The superiority of the Mizrahi

Jews over the Holocaust survivors is also illustrated when Tamar, an Israeli counselor, breaks up a fight between Max and Jean, as she later muses, “Jean will heal fast, but Max will not.”

Faithful City was released on April 7, 1952. It was screened successfully at the Venice Film Festival in 1952,⁴⁰ and *Forum Film* distributed it in Europe.⁴¹ The film premiered in New York, then in Hollywood, and it was later distributed by RKO Pictures.⁴² In a *New York Times* review, one critic wrote that the film deserved full credit, referring to it as a “picturesque and often compelling drama.”⁴³ Another critic called it “occasionally slow moving,” but overall “dramatic and feelingly portrayed,” praising the acting of the amateur children by noting they gave “first-rate performances.”⁴⁴ According to film scholars Nathan and Ya’acov Gross as well as Yehuda Stav, most film critics saw the film as naïve and even cheap propaganda.⁴⁵ The critics did not discuss the representation of the Mizrahim, and instead took the negative image of the Holocaust survivors for granted. For example, one critic referred to the survivors as “frightened, [and] emotionally disturbed,” and discussed “the tremendous task and responsibility of a group of adults to accustom the children [Holocaust survivors] to a mode of normal living which they have never experienced.”⁴⁶

HILL 24 DOESN'T ANSWER

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer tells the story of four people sent to defend Hill 24 on the eve of the UN's declaration of a cease-fire in the 1948 war. The film focuses on the pasts of three of the main characters before they came to defend Hill 24. One of the protagonists is James Finnegan, an Irishman who had served in the British Mandate police force. After falling in love with a fighter named Miriam Mizrahi, he volunteers to fight for Israel. The second is an American, Alan Goodman, who came to Israel as a tourist at the beginning of the 1948 war, and who later becomes convinced of the morality of the Zionist struggle. The third character is David Amram, who, during the war, captured an Egyptian officer who turns out to be a former Nazi. The fourth fighter to join them is Esther Hadassi, a nurse of Yemeni ancestry. Following three central sequences

that recount the men's histories, the film returns to the present, where UN soldiers and Israeli and Jordanian representatives have arrived at the hill and find the fighters dead. The Israeli flag, which they find rolled in Hadassi's hands, persuades the UN soldiers to determine that Hill 24 belongs to Israel. The film ends with scenes filmed from a helicopter depicting the flourishing country of Israel, accompanied by a title that proclaims, "The Beginning."⁴⁷

Thorold Dickinson (1903–1984), who directed the film, was the chair of the British Film Academy. When Margot Klausner approached him with the script, he first agreed to consult and later agreed to direct it, even helping with the fundraising.⁴⁸ The screenplay was based on a story by Zvi Kolitz (1912–2002), which integrated some of the writer's own experiences. He wrote the script with director Peter Frye (1914–1991) and coproduced it with Jack Padwa. Kolitz immigrated to Eretz-Israel in 1940. He was a member of the revisionist movement, a soldier in the British Army, an official emissary of the World Zionist Congress, and a member of the Irgun underground movement. Because of his political activity, he was arrested at one point by British authorities and jailed. When the Mandate ended, he fought in the 1948 war. After the war, he was a member of the Israeli literary and cultural sphere, and he later moved to the United States. In 1953, he founded the *Zik Or* production company with Padwa, both of whom helped to raise part of the funds.⁴⁹

In her book *Israeli Cinema*, Shohat rightfully claims that *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* presumes to represent Israel's struggle for independence from an objective standpoint by employing four points of view, yet all of the four characters are Zionists. She also correctly refers to the fact that, unlike the three men, Hadassi—one of the four fighters on Hill 24—is not granted her own sequence. Hadassi receives very little screen time and her past remains unclear. It is only with her death for the State of Israel that her story and history begin. According to Shohat, the film illustrates the way in which Zionist Eurocentrism either superseded the history of Mizrahi Jews or subordinated them to the memory of European Jewry. In the context of the 1950s, the implicit interpretation of the creation of

a unified Jewish national identity was the fusion of Mizrahi Jews into the hegemonic Ashkenazic ideology and culture. This assumed that there was only one official Jewish history—the European one.⁵⁰

A reexamination of *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* reveals that the history of Jews in Islamic countries is indeed never mentioned; however, Holocaust survivors are marginalized within the film. Additionally, the representation of Mizrahi Jews is positive, while the perception of the Jews in Europe under the Nazi regime is problematic and judgmental.

Similar to many cinematic productions of the 1940s, *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* briefly deals with the Holocaust; as in many other cultural products of that era, the film focuses more on the lesson of Zionism than the events themselves.⁵¹ In the sequence that describes Finnegan's enlistment in the IDF, Miriam Mizrahi speaks of a history of pogroms and persecution, and she mentions the refugees living in Europe and seeking sanctuary. During Goodman's encounter with a rabbi, he asserts that he hates God for abandoning the millions of Jews slaughtered in Europe.⁵² These brief references to the Holocaust are characteristic of other Israeli films since the aftermath of World War II. In films such as *The Great Promise* (Józef Lejtes, 1947), *My Father's House* (Herbert Klein, 1947), and *Adamah* (Helmar Lerski, 1948), the Holocaust is mentioned briefly in the dialogue or through visual symbols (e.g., a number tattooed on a person's arm). In other words, the Holocaust is not directly discussed, but instead "floats" over the film as a formative trauma. It is used as an additional justification for the rights of the Jews to their own state and not as a historical event nor as a central topic within the films.⁵³

Another way *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* uses the Holocaust as a political tool is by creating an equivalence between Nazis and Arabs. This equation was not unique to this film, as it appeared in various cultural texts during the era.⁵⁴ The Nazi-Arab equation is first apparent in the second sequence, in which Goodman talks to Arabs in a pool in Jerusalem. The Arab explains to him that this is a war for life and death, that the Arabs will push the Jews into the sea (likely referring to another extermination). In order to illustrate their goals, the Arab pushes Goodman into the pool.

The third sequence, which depicts David Amram, continues this equation along with a judgmental view of the European Jews who faced the Nazis. This scene epitomizes the “old Jew” as the antithesis of the “new Jew.” The sequence describes Amram’s struggle with an Egyptian officer he captures in the Negev desert. It is not clear whether Amram is a *sabra* (a native Israeli) or a Holocaust survivor who was transformed in Eretz-Israel. Nevertheless, his behavior during his encounter with the Nazi reflects bravery and morality, as, although the Egyptian tries to kill him, Amram does not resort to violence and instead treats the officer’s wounds. In the process of treating his injuries, Amram discovers a swastika tattooed on the officer’s body. It is revealed that the Egyptian is a former SS officer who has joined the Egyptian army. The creation of this link between Nazis and Arabs is meant to clarify to the Western viewer that the Arabs are enemies of the entire West and not just of Israel. Additionally, it provides the Jewish viewer with a sense of settling the scores: the Nazi is confronted with a Jew who can defeat him. The discovery that the Arab officer is a former Nazi also makes it unnecessary for the film to address the motives and rights of the Arabs in Israel, since the soldier—who later delivers a Nazi-inspired monologue—represents the Arab soldiers.⁵⁵

Fearful that Amram is about to kill him, the officer begins babbling, begging for his life, trying to justify his evil past, and claiming that no one could defy Hitler. When Amram does not respond, the officer attempts to appeal to the Jewish sense of justice, morality, and history. Amram’s silence in the face of the Nazi’s desperate speech, combined with the low angle of photography, empowers him. Eventually the Nazi’s appeal turns into vitriol, as he reminds Amram that he is a Nazi officer while Amram is a “filthy Jew,” goading Amram by suggesting that he take his gun and shoot himself. The camera, which is focused on the confident, laughing Amram, makes a quick loop and Amram reappears, this time dressed as a Jew during Nazi rule, in traditional garb with a yellow badge, standing frightened and bent as the Nazi snarls. Another loop of the camera and the confident Israeli Amram has returned, laughing at the Nazi, while the Nazi collapses and dies after saluting and exclaiming, “Heil Hitler.”

After his death, Amram hears noises outside of his hiding place. He runs outside to discover Israeli planes dominating the Negev sky. Here, too, as in *Faithful City*, a small personal victory intertwines with victory on a national scale.

The Zionist transformation of Holocaust survivors is also reflected in the minor character Berger, a member of the underground who helps illegal immigrants to reach Eretz-Israel and fights the British during the Mandate period. Many 1940s and 1950s films began with the immigration of Holocaust survivors to Eretz-Israel, thus giving the impression that all Holocaust survivors were Zionists (a notion that is not historically correct).⁵⁶ *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* also begins with a scene of illegal immigration, whose purpose is to strengthen the Zionist message of the Holocaust: after this trauma, Jews will do everything in their power to reach the Promised Land.

The Mizrahi Jews in the film are represented as positive and impressive fighters, individuals who do not need to undergo a transformation like the Holocaust survivors. Esther Hadassi, for instance, carries the symbolic meaning of a Jewish queen who saved the Jewish people, as the Zionist Hadassi will save the hill. Although she does not receive a sequence of her own, she is represented as fierce and dedicated to the cause, as a brave heroine. Hadassi, while initially a marginal figure, is ultimately the one who, through her death, brings about Israeli victory. It is only because of the Israeli flag she grasps in her dead hand that UN soldiers declare that the hill belongs to Israel.

Miriam Mizrahi, another Mizrahi heroine, also has a central role in the film. She is an attractive, dark-haired young woman who plays a large part in Finnegan's Zionist transformation. Mizrahi, whose family name reveals her ethnic origin, becomes the mouthpiece for the central Zionist messages of the film. Paraphrasing the biblical Miriam, who in her own way enabled the salvation of the Jews, she teaches the Irishman (and the viewers) about the history of persecution. Miriam reminds Finnegan and the viewers that Holocaust survivors are still waiting in European displaced persons camps with nowhere to go. Shohat is correct in claiming that the Jewish past is an Ashkenazi past, but she ignores the fact that

Miriam Mizrahi is portrayed as a mainstream Israeli character—a fighter in the ranks of the Haganah. Like Hadassi, Miriam is a powerful woman who is not intimidated by the British police and dedicates herself to the Zionist cause.

When the British police investigate Mizrahi, the audience learns that she is a fourth-generation *sabra*, a member of a Sephardic community that resided in the land long before the Zionist immigration. Thus, her origin serves as another political claim over the country; namely, that the Jews have always lived in the land. Moreover, her ethnic roots are highlighted as she flees the city to be with the Druze and appears at home with their lifestyle and music, which is depicted as an advantage. Therefore, her “Eastern” origin defines her as completely rooted in the land and in Middle Eastern cultures. These connections only strengthen her positive image as an “authentic native.” Therefore, Mizrahi and Hadassi each play a part in the national pantheon and symbolize the vital role that Mizrahi Jews had in the struggle for the state.

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer won the Tribute award at the Cannes Film Festival,⁵⁷ and it was screened in movie theaters in various major cities (Paris for fifteen weeks and New York City for six months).⁵⁸ The reviews in the United States were generally positive. For example, Will Leonard at the *Chicago Daily Tribune* stated the film was an “exciting adventure,” though he also noted that the film had “heavy nationalistic overtones,” “high-pressure patriotism,” and “dramatic clichés.” According to him, the parallel stories have an “uneven effect,” but the film has “moments of power and poignancy.”⁵⁹ Another critic claimed that the film’s principals “speak with restraint and conviction” and that the film is “often moving.”⁶⁰ Israeli journalists followed the production with excitement.⁶¹ After the screening, the reviews in Israel were mixed.⁶² As with the other two films discussed in this article, none of the critics in Israel or abroad addressed the ethnic issues. Miriam Mizrahi was called “a Jewish girl in Palestine,” an “Israeli girl,” or an “Israeli Sabra.” Esther Hadassi was referred to as “a Yemenite girl,” and David Amram is simply called “an Israeli.”⁶³ Over the years, the film has become an iconic part of Israeli culture and is referenced in other cultural texts.⁶⁴

Why were Mizrahim portrayed as more readily Israelized than Holocaust survivors? There are several potential explanations. The first has to do with the ambivalent stereotypes embedded within Orientalist perceptions of Arabs and Muslims in Hebrew and Israeli culture. Scholar Itamar Even-Zohar notes that Arabs and Bedouins who were othered were also considered worthy of imitation because of their familiarity with the soil and nature, as well as their agricultural skills. Jewish pioneer farmers imitated their customs, clothes, and behavior.⁶⁵ Arieh Saposnik claims that Europe's interest in "the Orient" was far more diverse and nuanced than a hierarchical dichotomy between East and West. Zionism's call for a Jewish return to "the East" was rooted in part in the broader European fascination with "the Orient" that characterized much of Europe's artistic, cultural, and political discourse. But unlike Western countries, for Zionists the East also implied a return to their roots. In the new society in Eretz-Israel, a perceived Western cultural superiority was intertwined with a yearning for "Oriental origins," which were romanticized as authentic, youthful, and vigorous. This fascination was expressed in various cultural arenas, including rituals, art, music, and other forms of creative expression. In the 1940s and 1950s, Israel turned more toward the Western world, but the interplay between Western and Eastern cultural orientations continued.⁶⁶

The other explanation for why Mizrahim were more readily associated with Israel is related to the Zionist need to reconstruct a new manhood in Eretz-Israel. Yaron Peleg argues that some of the traits of the "new Jew" that Zionists aimed to create in Eretz-Israel included overt masculinity and aggression, which was likely a reaction to the European stereotypes of "puny" Jews. Therefore, the Mizrahim's acculturation in Israel involved an appreciation of their masculinity.⁶⁷ Whereas Israeli discourse in that era characterized Holocaust survivors in terms of their vulnerability and victimhood, the Mizrahim were not feminized like Holocaust survivors were. The Mizrahim were seen as more "appropriate" for the image of the "new Jew" because of their stereotypical traits (i.e., masculinity and aggression). Though Mizrahim shouldered their share of negative stereotypes, they were not perceived as weak or psychologically damaged.

They were seen as more suitable than Holocaust survivors for agricultural settlements and work in difficult areas.⁶⁸

The notion that Mizrahim stereotypes were closer to the image of the “new Jew” than the effeminate image of Holocaust survivors is further emphasized by the narrative structure of other films in the 1950s. Many films that featured Holocaust survivors continued to represent a transformation narrative in which humiliated Jews learned bravery, and highlighted the difficulty survivors had integrating because of their perceived problematic mentality. For example, *Out of Evil* [*Mikella lebraba*] (Joseph Krungold, 1950) tells the Zionist story of punishment and transformation. In this film, Ya’acov and Hava come to Eretz-Israel as pioneers in the 1930s, but they give up and return to Europe, where they are ultimately murdered in the Holocaust. Their son, Joseph, immigrates to Eretz-Israel after World War II, and, unlike his parents, he is able to transform from a Diaspora Jew to a “new Jew,” and he fights in the 1948 war.⁶⁹ In *Yonatan and Tali* (Henry Schneider, 1953), a woman Holocaust survivor is released from a mental institution and gives up her two children, Yonatan and Tali, for adoption to a family of native Israeli farmers who will raise them to be “proper” Israelis. In *The Pillar of Fire* [*Amud bae’sb*] (Larry Frisch, 1959), a Holocaust survivor fails to fight in the 1948 war and falls in a battle.⁷⁰

The only other fiction film that was produced in the 1950s and focuses on Mizrahim is *No Homeland* [*Be’ein Moloedet*], which created a very compelling Zionist portrait of the Yemenite Jews. The director, Nouri Haviv, owned a cinema studio in Bagdad before fleeing to Iran to become one of the pillars of the Iranian film industry in the 1940s. He immigrated to Israel in 1954 and established cinema studios in Herzliya. In 1956 he released his first Israeli film, *No Homeland*, which was groundbreaking for being the first Israeli film in color and because it was the first Israeli film that dealt entirely with emigration from Islamic countries.

One is not likely to find negative stereotypes in *No Homeland*. Haviv stated that he made this film because it bothered him that there was no cinematic representation of the hardship of the non-Western Jews, the pogroms they experienced, and the turmoil they went through to reach

Eretz-Israel. Haviv focused on emigration from Yemen in the 1920s—a topic that had been elided in the Zionist narrative—chose the famous Yemeni singer Shoshana Damari to star in the film, and stressed the Zionist aspirations and struggles of the Yemenite Jews on their arduous trek to the Holy Land through the desert. *No Homeland* features Yemenites, and Ashkenazim are not part of the narrative. Though Ashkenazim appear for a brief moment at the end of the film as they help the immigrants escape Arab rioters, they are not given names.

Journalist Arie Hashavia, who followed the production, states that it generated such excitement in Israel that for a whole year before the film was released journalists monitored the production and published long reports. Perry Faraj, another Iraqi immigrant who documented the production on camera, captured many film stills from the set. The film's premiere at the Ron movie theater in Jerusalem was one of the most exciting moments in the Israeli film industry in the 1950s. Politicians, ambassadors, and Israel's elite attended. It screened successfully in Israel and in the United States.⁷¹

In conclusion, a reexamination of the 1950s fiction films that portrayed the encounter between Ashkenazi Holocaust survivors and Mizrahi Jews reveals a complex expression of interethnic perceptions. Holocaust survivors are depicted as requiring a radical transformation and as inferior to Mizrahi Jews. The latter are represented as better resources for the new country. Revisiting these films shows that the perception that Israeli fiction cinema in its first decades reflected an Orientalist dichotomy and Ashkenazi superiority is mistaken. In the 1950s, Israeli culture did not speak in one Orientalist voice, and alongside the racism and clear dichotomization of East and West, high-profile fiction films presented a much more complicated, nuanced, and positive picture of Mizrahim.

NOTES

1. For example, see Svirsky, *Not Backwards*; Kimmerling, *The End of the Ashkenazi Hegemony*; Shalom Chetrit, *The Mizrahi Struggle*, 61–118; Hever et al., *Mizrahim in Israel*; Rozin, “Terms of Aversion,” 195–238. Also see the documentary

- series *The Ancestral Sin* (David Deri, Reshet, 2017) and the documentaries *Roots in the Homeland* (Ze'ev Rav-Nof, 1951) and *The Lachish Story* (Baruch Dienar, 1956).
2. Porat, *The Smoke-Scented Morning Coffee*, 379–96; Yablonka, “Conflicting Identities,” 301–17; Shapira, “Private Memory and Public Memory,” 103–86; Segev, *The Seventh Million*, 101–69.
 3. Only a few fiction films of that era discussed daily matters. For example, *A Tale of a Taxi* (Larry Frisch, 1959).
 4. Shohat, *Israeli Cinema*, 68–122.
 5. Shohat, *Israeli Cinema*, 123–81.
 6. Shemer, “Trajectories of Mizrahi Cinema,” 120–21.
 7. Kimchi, *Bourekas Films*, 40–49.
 8. Lubin, “From the Margins to the Center,” 141–49; Talmon, *Israeli Graffiti*, 216; Gertz and Munk, *Revisiting Israeli Cinema*, 40–49.
 9. Peleg, “Marking a New Holy Community,” 68.
 10. Pick Hemo, *Wounded Homeland*, 142–46; Ne’eman, “The Moderns,” 9–32; Silberstein, *That’s the Way*, 75–76; Kimchi, *Bourekas Films*, 49–57.
 11. For example: Peleg, “From Black to White,” 122–45; Shemer, *Identity, Place, and Subversion*; Yosef, *Beyond Flesh*, 84–117; Aharoni, “Communal Mizrahi Israeli Cinema,” 129–54; Alush Levron, “The Politics of Ethnic Melancholy,” 169–83.
 12. See endnotes 6–10.
 13. Stav, “There Were Films—Tent City”; Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 199.
 14. Only from the late 1970s onward was a critical tone voiced in cinema on the absence of the establishment from the integration process. See Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 42–77; Steir-Livny, *Two Faces in the Mirror*, 96–204.
 15. Steir-Livny, *Two Faces in the Mirror*, 57–61; Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 18–37; Avisar, “The Holocaust in Israeli Cinema,” 152–53.
 16. Steir-Livny, *Two Faces in the Mirror*, 57–61; Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 18–37; Avisar, “The Holocaust in Israeli Cinema,” 152–53.
 17. Shohat, *Israeli Cinema*, 68–122.
 18. Zimmerman, *Don’t Touch My Holocaust*, 177–78.
 19. Stav, “There Were Films—Tent City.”
 20. Gertz and Munk, *Revisiting Israeli Cinema*, 64–65.

21. A traditional Jewish prayer to commemorate special occasions (translation: “Bless the Lord who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion”).
22. Segev, *The Seventh Million*; Yablonka, *Survivors of the Holocaust*.
23. For example, Naor, *Olim and Ma’abarot*; Alfi and Eliav, *From Both Sides of the Ma’abara*; Rozin, “Terms of Aversion.”
24. See Naor, *Olim and Ma’abarot*; Alfi and Eliav, *From Both Sides of the Ma’abara*; Rozin, “Terms of Aversion”; *Ma’abarot* (Dina Zvi-Riklis, 4 Episodes, Kan 11, Ta’agid hashidur haisraeli, 2019).
25. Porat, “Lahola—the Man with Thousand Talents.”
26. Amir in: Stav, “There Were Films—Tent City.”
27. Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 204.
28. Margot Klausner to Ellis Radinsky, June 1, 1952, KHB/5234, Central Zionist Archive.
29. KHB//5233, Central Zionist Archive; KHB/5234, Central Zionist Archive; “Tent City,” United Israel Appeal Report, no date, no author, Tel-Aviv Cinematheque Collection.
30. Emmy Herrmann, Keren Hayesod to Margot Klausner, Israel Motion Pictures Studios, April 17, 1952, KHB/5234, Central Zionist Archive; “Tent City Print Presented to Schools,” United Palestine Appeal Report, June 1951, KHB/5234, Central Zionist Archive; Stav, “There Were Films—Tent City”; Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 199.
31. Stav, “There Were Films—Tent City.”
32. Gailmor, “Human Welfare.”
33. “Moldet” translates to “homeland”; Stav, “There Were Films—Faithful City.”
34. Stav, “There Were Films—Faithful City.”
35. Stav, “There Were Films—Faithful City.”
36. Levenkron, “Death and the Maidens,” 15–44; Steir-Livny, “The Threefold Exile,” 497–520.
37. Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 21.
38. Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 36; Feldstein, “Here We Film War,” 251–69.
39. Regarding the numerous negative stereotypes on immigrants from Islamic countries, see Note 1. The specific clashes of the Moroccan immigrants with the Israelis are discussed in Cohen, *The Moroccans*.

40. I. Av Razi to Shapira, October 3, 1952, ISA-MOIN-MOIN-000qtlh, Israel State Archives.
41. Forum Film to Moshe Perlman, the Prime Minister office, October 31, 1958, ISA-PMO-PMO-000vqh8, Israel State Archives. <http://www.archives.gov.il/archives/#/Archive/0b07170680014dab/File/0b07170680e9d4d7>.
42. Stav, "There Were Films—Faithful City."
43. "Movie Review—The Faithful City (1952) At the Park Avenue," *The New York Times*, April 8, 1952, 35.
44. "Faithful City," *Weekly Variety*, no author, April 2, 1952, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Margaret Herrick Library.
45. Stav, "There Were Films—Faithful City"; Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 203.
46. "Faithful City," Margaret Herrick Library.
47. Gertz and Munk, *Revisiting Israeli Cinema*, 22–23; Talmon, *Israeli Graffiti*, 216; Cohen, "From Hill to Hill," 43–58; Feldstein, "Here We Film War"; Silberstein, *That's the Way*, 72–83.
48. Rapoport, "A Feature Film"; Rapoport, "Hill 24 Doesn't Answer."
49. Myrna, "Zvi Kolitz"; Goldman "Zvi Kolitz"; Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 213–14.
50. Shohat, *Israeli Cinema*, 68–86.
51. Steir-Livny, "Near and Far," 168–80.
52. This sequence resembles a short story called "Yosl Rakover Talks to God" that Kolitz wrote in 1946 for a Jewish newspaper in Buenos Aires. In the story, a Jew in the Warsaw ghetto talks about belief in God in the face of Jewish destruction. The story was translated into many languages without the name of the author and thus for many years was mistakenly considered to be the genuine testimony of a Jew in the Warsaw ghetto in 1943. It was officially attributed to Kolitz in 1968. See: Oliver, "Zvi Kolitz"; Goldman, "Zvi Kolitz."
53. Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 18–37.
54. Steir-Livny, "From Victims to Aggressors," 123–36.
55. Shohat, *Israeli Cinema*, 68–86.
56. Gertz, *A Different Choir*, 18–37; Steir-Livny, *Two Faces in the Mirror*, 7–50.
57. Myrna, "Zvi Kolitz."

58. Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 215.
59. Leonard, "Israel Made Film."
60. "Israeli 'Hill 24 Doesn't Answer' at World."
61. Sharik, "What's New in Cinema"; Smadar, "Hill 24 Doesn't Answer."
62. Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 213–15; Rav-Nof, "Hill 24 Doesn't Answer"; Sharir, "Hill 24—Yes and No."
63. "Israeli 'Hill 24 Doesn't Answer' at World"; Will, "Israel Made Film"; Sharir, "Better and Worse"; Brown, "Capital Battle on Film."
64. See the song: "Stocktaking" (lyrics by Yossi Banai; melody by Naomi Shemer). The iconic Israeli film *Halfon Hill Doesn't Answer* (Assi Dayan, 1976) is a parody (in its title and content) of *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*.
65. Zohar, "The Groth and Crystallization," 165–89.
66. Saposnik, "Europe and its Orients," 1105–23.
67. Peleg, "From Black to White."
68. Picard, "A Train from Kazablanka," 593–96. There are other researchers and activists who claim that immigrants from Islamic countries were sent to the periphery as a result of pure racism; namely to live in places no one else wanted to be, which thus doomed them to a life in the lower echelons of Israeli society. See, for example, Shalom Chetrit, *The Mizrahi Struggle*, and the long list of interviewees in Deri, *The Ancestral Sin*.
69. Ne'eman, "Out of Evil," 57–66.
70. Steir-Livny, *Two Faces in the Mirror*, 65–68.
71. Gross and Gross, *The Hebrew Film*, 207–8; Anderman, "Why was the First Israeli Film Banned"; Stav, "There Were Films—No Homeland."

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