

Israeli Literature and the Time of "post-post-Zionism"

Oded Nir

Vassar College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), [Comparative Literature Commons](#), [Education Commons](#), [European Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), [Other Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Other Film and Media Studies Commons](#), [Reading and Language Commons](#), [Rhetoric and Composition Commons](#), [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), [Television Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

Dedicated to the dissemination of scholarly and professional information, [Purdue University Press](#) selects, develops, and distributes quality resources in several key subject areas for which its parent university is famous, including business, technology, health, veterinary medicine, and other selected disciplines in the humanities and sciences.

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture, the peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access learned journal in the humanities and social sciences, publishes new scholarship following tenets of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Contact: <clcweb@purdue.edu>

Recommended Citation

Nir, Oded. "Israeli Literature and the Time of "post-post-Zionism"." *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 21.2 (2019): <<https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.3577>>

This text has been double-blind peer reviewed by 2+1 experts in the field.

The above text, published by Purdue University Press ©Purdue University, has been downloaded 103 times as of 11/07/19.

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.

This is an Open Access journal. This means that it uses a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. Readers may freely read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of articles. This journal is covered under the [CC BY-NC-ND license](#).

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and CultureISSN 1481-4374 <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb>>
Purdue University Press ©Purdue University

CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture, the peer-reviewed, full-text, and open-access learned journal in the humanities and social sciences, publishes new scholarship following tenets of the discipline of comparative literature and the field of cultural studies designated as "comparative cultural studies." In addition to the publication of articles, the journal publishes review articles of scholarly books and publishes research material in its *Library Series*. Publications in the journal are indexed in the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Chadwyck-Healey), the Arts and Humanities Citation Index (Thomson Reuters ISI), the Humanities Index (Wilson), Humanities International Complete (EBSCO), the International Bibliography of the Modern Language Association of America, and Scopus (Elsevier). The journal is affiliated with the Purdue University Press monograph series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies. Contact: <clcweb@purdue.edu>

Volume 21 Issue 2 (March 2019) Article 10**Oded Nir,****"Israeli Literature and the Time of 'post-post-Zionism'"**<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol20/iss1/10>>

Contents of ***CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 21.2 (2019)***
Thematic Issue ***Materiality and the Time of the Present in Israeli Culture***
Ed. **Oded Nir and Ari Ofengenden**

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol21/iss1/>>

Abstract: In this essay, I argue that contemporary Israeli literature possesses a more "advanced" historical imaginary than that of contemporary "post-post-Zionist" Israeli historiography, and I relate this gap to the neoliberalization of the Israeli economy. I begin by arguing that contemporary literature's historical imaginary marks a departure from its 80s and 90s postmodern predecessors. I show that this departure is evident in contemporary Israeli literature's explicit recognition of an inability to relate subjective experience to larger history. This recognition constitutes a dialectical overcoming of Israeli postmodernism's playful dismantling of the national historical narrative. I then argue that Israeli "post-post-Zionist" historiography constitutes an entry into a postmodern phase, in contrast to literature's departure from postmodernism. Thus, I argue that literature seems to be "ahead" of historiography, in terms of each field's temporal imagination. I conclude this essay by suggesting that one can explain this gap by taking into account the effects of Israeli neoliberalization on each field. While state-supported and owned print industry and presses were privatized early in Israel, the privatization of higher education started later, and is still taking place. I thus suggest that the reason literature seems "ahead" of academic work is a result of the stronger and more immediate coupling of literary institutions with the capitalist market than the more mediated relation between the capitalist market and the academy.

Oded NIR

Israeli Literature and the Time of "post-post-Zionism"

In periodizations of Israeli academic trends, post-Zionism is usually associated with a wider postmodern transformation. From the adoption of poststructuralist textual philosophies, French theory, and postcolonial thought, all the way to what can be seen as Israeli multiculturalism—all are usually aligned with the rise of the post-Zionists (Kaplan 30–35; Silberstein 7–8). There is, however, a problem with this narrative—one that seems initially to be nothing but a small anomaly that can be safely disregarded. If Post-Zionism is to be mainly identified with the work of the "New Historians" (Benny Morris, Ilan Pappé, and others), and with that of sociologists such as Uri Ram and Gershon Shafir, then, as several commentators note, their methodological moorings seem to be decidedly not (or even anti-) postmodern (Myers 345; Feige 205). This seemingly small aberration becomes somewhat more bothersome if we consider another point of difference, namely that Post-Zionism was related to a political project whose teleological valences cannot be denied: the 90s peace process, aimed at a final reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians, accompanied by a host of utopian hopes. Post-Zionism can thus be seen as the intellectual "wing" of the 90s peace-making project—dedicated to reinventing our understanding of Israeli history and culture to support the new political goal. It is precisely for this reason that Adi Ophir—one of the conspicuous philosophical voices of Post Zionism—had no problem pronouncing that "in Israel, a true postmodern culture can never develop, because here there are serious issues, and real evil, and real problems" (Zemach). Thus, rather than being postmodernism's counterpart, post-Zionism can now be seen to be its clear antagonist, considering postmodernism's hostility to teleology, grand narratives, and to intellectual projects that exist to support a goal external to it, as in some version of committed art.

This incongruity between Post-Zionism and postmodernism should not lead us to deny the existence of postmodernism in Israeli culture generally (as Ophir does in the quote above). In the literary realm, postmodernism seems to have taken hold of the literary center in the 80s regardless of Post-Zionism. If Yaakov Shabtai's *Past Continuous* can arguably be seen as the harbinger of Israeli literary postmodernism, the late 80s and 90s surely display a robust postmodern sensibility, including all its by-now familiar characteristics—the dissolution of unified subjectivity, pervasive of interpretive flatness, free-floating affect, incredulity towards metanarratives, and the entire gamut of those once-resistant modernist formal characteristics now absorbed into "cultural" capitalism (Balaban; Bartana; Herzig). The erosion of hegemony characteristic of postmodernism, or the "dissolution and fragmentation of Israeli identity along ethnic, gender, and other lines," (Peleg 262) has of course resulted in the rise of Israeli multiculturalism—each "identity" now constituting its own cultural center (Mendelson-Maoz).

Thus, for example, Orly Castel-Bloom's 80s novel *Where am I?* stages something like the heroine's search for her lost identity, but in a world from which all stable meaning has been systematically robbed. The playfulness with which tropes of national identity are handled in the novel—for example, soldiers turning out to be assassins for hire—does not result in substitute a crumbling national imaginary with some other (Post-Zionist) historical narrative; rather, the playfulness blocks any development of an alternative narrative. Yehoshua Kenaz's *Infiltration* provides a very different example of postmodernism in Israeli literature. *Infiltration's* postmodern-ness (for we should reserve the term "postmodernity" to designate something altogether different, as we will soon see) resides in Kenaz's pastiche of 50s literary forms and contents, particularly those that have to do with military experience. Nathan Shaham's and Yigal Mossinsohn's 1950s representations of military experience (as well as other 50s naturalist literature, such as Yehudit Hendel's *Street of Steps* are here brought back to life in Kenaz's 80s literary work on 50s military experience, without any formal modification that will signal some kind of historical distance, or a set of new social contradictions animating the old ones conjured by Kenaz's narrative. Thus, Israeli postmodernism's explosion of cultural hegemony does not mean a re-institution of an alternative historical narrative, but a wholesale rejection of the possibility of historical narration. And here, of course, lies its difference from the temporality Post-Zionism's historical mission.

We are therefore confronted with puzzling situation—for it seems that the academic project that we usually designate by the name of "Post-Zionism" has in the 90s a temporality very different than that of the literary field. While the latter is thoroughly postmodern, the former is invested in a clearly teleological temporality or "metanarrative" that precludes treating history merely as a repository for representational "styles." I here suggest that we see this disjuncture in terms of what Louis Althusser calls "non-contemporaneity," designating precisely this coexistence of different temporal imaginations in different levels of the superstructure (Althusser and Balibar 137). Seeing the Israeli 90s in this way solves many of the contradictions, tensions, and incongruities between Post-Zionism and cultural

postmodernism, such as those that we have mentioned above. In what follows, it will become clear that we can characterize this difference as more than just the result of the notorious Althusserian "semi-autonomy" of each field. Rather, it will become possible for us to argue that we are confronted with is no less than Williams' well-known triad of residual-hegemonic-emergent (according to which at any moment there exist along each other within a given social formation enclaves of older social forms, the hegemonic formations, and seeds of possible social developments) (Williams 121–27). For now, however, suffice it that we recognize that these two "fields" in the 90s were governed by different, mutually exclusive, temporalities.

What will concern us in this essay is however not this past disjuncture, but its more contemporary development. As multiple writers point out, Post-Zionism as an intellectual project that accompanied 90s peace-making seems to be waning, giving way to what is sometimes called "post-post-Zionism" (Likhovski; Feige 215; Neumann), whose characteristics we will have occasion to explore in what follows. Does this development constitute some kind of corrective to the "gap" that separated culture from historiography in the 90s? Is the temporal imagination of humanities academic writing now completely in line with that of cultural production at large? As we will see below, the answer to this question will have to take us far beyond the realm of subjective attitude to history; rather, it will involve developing a dialectical understanding of the contemporary relation between cultural production and academic writing to Israeli capitalist reality itself. What might seem at this initial stage to not be a very important or interesting question will in this way prove to illuminate the contemporary relation between base and superstructure in Israel.

In order to answer this question, our first step will take us into what I have elsewhere called Israeli literature's new historical imaginary (Nir, "On the Historical"). For, Israeli literature seems to be attempting to leave behind its 80s and 90s postmodernism in the last decade—in what is surely a dialectical *aufhebung* of postmodern historical thinking. In this more recent transformation, the staging of the death of grand narratives so characteristic of postmodernism is recognized as a loss—a sudden absence of the possibility of narrating history, or more precisely of the possibility of relating history to subjective experience. This coming-into-consciousness of a loss of historicity, to adopt Fredric Jameson's terms (Jameson, *Postmodernism*), is everywhere apparent in current Israeli literature. It is precisely this loss that gives rise to new literary attempts to thematize the problem, give form to a search for a new way of relating subjective experience and history. We will not be able to provide here a detailed account of this transformation. Instead, I will try to provide a broader view of its different manifestations in contemporary Israeli literature.

The Return of Utopia

Utopia as a literary genre has not fared well in Israeli literature in general. If Herzl's utopian novel *Altneuland* (and other Zionist utopian text written around the same time) can arguably be seen as influencing Zionist Hebrew writing, the utopian form is almost completely absent from later Israeli literature (the same near-absence can be attributed to science fiction, of which the utopian is a subset, as Darko Suvin claims (Suvin 13))--with the exception of Yehoshua Bar Yossef's little-known nationalist utopian novel *Utopia bekacho lavan* (home-made utopia) and Gabi Nitzan's neoliberal utopian novella *Badulina*. Even if contemporary Israeli literature has not yet produced utopian novels in the strict sense, signs of utopia's return are everywhere apparent. Perhaps the most conspicuous example is Eshkol Nevo's *Neuland*, the inspiration for which is clearly Herzl's utopian novel. Set in the early 1990s, Nevo's novel recounts the travels of Dori and Inbar to south America, in search of Dori's father, an retired military high-ranking officer and successful businessman that disappeared without a trace. Much to their surprise, the father turns out to be running a commune that he established. We quickly learn the commune's purpose: it was established according to 'Herzl's values', Dori's father tells us, and its goal is that the habits formed in it, and the sense of collective agency gained, will somehow help transform Israel itself. "The change," Dori's father says, "cannot come from the inside, so it has to come from the outside, by creating an alternative, the existence of which will bother people and challenge them" (Nevo 495). This change is necessary because of what Dori's father calls an "absence of vision" in Israel, or a lack of future goal: "A state cannot exist only to survive, Dori. The original purpose behind the Establishment of Israel was to have all the Jews come to a country in which they will not be persecuted. But that *was* the goal. Past tense. A nation needs a goal. A nation without a vision is like a family without love, and if there's no love, why keep the family together?" (488). Thus, what the novel tries to do is resist a sense of a lack of futurity, a general feeling of dead-endness, prevalent in early 2000s Israel, as Nevo himself put it in an interview (Herzog). *Neuland* does not end up describing to its readers the structure of the utopian alternative, as utopian novels do. It does, however, try to perform what Louis Marin calls utopian neutralization for its two main characters. Dori and Inbar begin the novel in a state

of despondency and alienation from everything in their lives—a sense of which a search for alternative cannot even begin, and through the novel's slow reconstruction of the contradictions that animate Dori and Inbar's lives, neutralizing the state of despair, as if trying to imagine a negation of the postmodern negation of thinking about radical future alterity.

Now, even if *Neuland* does not mark a complete departure from the postmodern structure of feeling—the blockage of the utopian imagination characteristic of the latter still holding firm—it does signal a kind of shift in consciousness, in which the postmodern celebration death of grand narratives is recognized as a loss of the possibility of relating to history—a now-conscious blockage of futurity to be overcome (a coming into consciousness that is making its appearance in contemporary English literature as well (Nilges). It is precisely in this way that *Neuland*—whatever its ideological solution to the lack of futurity may be—marks something like the possibility of utopia's return to Israeli literature. This reawakening of the utopian thus implies a very different relation to history than that of Israeli postmodernism, in admitting some kind of need for a historical "grand narrative."

Neuland is of course not alone, even if it is the most explicit in its suggestion that the utopian might be returning to the landscape of Israeli literature. Ofir Touche Gafla's novels, *The Day the Music Died* (2005) and *The World of the End* (2004) revolve precisely around the same loss of futurity recognized by Nevo's novel. In both novels, death itself provides something like a way out of an eternal, unchanging, and fully known present: in *The Day the Music Died* Gafla imagines an imaginary country whose citizens all know the exact time and circumstances of their deaths; in *The World of the End*, the death of the protagonists allows for all kinds of searches and wish-fulfillment to take place that were blocked in the living world. Both novels speak directly to the dissolution of older temporalities—those of national time, of the middle-class workday, etc.—into an eternal present, or completely homogeneous time, which is of course theorized by many as precisely the result of neoliberal capitalism's erosion of existing social forms. What Jonathan Crary calls a "24/7" homogenous temporality that is not punctuated by any rhythms or overarching goal (Crary 1–27), or Eric Cazdyn notion of "chronic time," in which the possibilities of both cure and death have been completely abolished, exact precisely this excision of futurity. Or as Cazdyn puts it:

If the possibility of death is removed, if the terminal cannot be even considered or risked, we effectively rule out certain courses of action in the present whose ends cannot be known in advance (precisely because we cannot know if they will end in death or the death of the present system). To remove the possibility of death and settle for the new chronic is to choose the known limits of the present over the unknown freedom of the future. (Cazdyn 6)

Thus, Gafla's bringing back of death itself as a real possibility reignites a utopian impulse or a drive towards complete alterity. It does not matter for our purposes that what is achieved through this re-inclusion of death as an eventuality is nothing else than a more confident return to neoliberal reality. All that matters for our purposes is that the loss of futurity is registered as a problem at all—something completely absent from the postmodern literature of the 80s and 90s. Thus, a utopian imaginary seems to be emerging in Israeli literature after its postmodern banishment.

A Search for Lost History

Another realm in which the distance from postmodernism is registered is in the literary historical imaginary itself, or the way in which literature imagines the Israeli and Zionist past. Two prominent examples for the emergence of a new historical imaginary can be found in the works of Lilach Netanel and Yifat Ashkenazi, which I have discussed in detail elsewhere (Nir, "On the Historical"). In postmodern Israeli literature, the past functions mostly as repository of dead styles to be pastiched (evident for example in Kenaz's writing, that we already mentioned), or narrated from a marginal perspective, as in the Meir Shalev's *The Loves of Judith* (1999 [1994]) or *The Blue Mountain* (1991 [1988]). In contrast, Netanel's *Hamatzav ha'ivri* (the Hebrew condition) and Ashkenazi's *Haide lahadashama* (fulfillment) mark a departure from this approach. Rather than enact the dissolution of the Zionist "metanarrative," these more recent works try to articulate a loss of historicity, or an inability to relate personal experience to historical movement. The irreconcilable clash between detail and history is captured by Netanel's hyper-fragmented narrative, as in the following passage:

In the days after Arlosoroff's death the word grief was on every tongue. In the heavens death throws of blue light were mourning death. Words of lament were written on a piece of paper and then spoken out loud. Beautiful words were these words and they bespoke a new vibrant Hebrew. Meanwhile summer was over and the trees greened and the nights came early and when they came they found the fields awake with heartbeat. To the toolshed a bird came and said "tsa. Tsa." A humble ceremony was held to commemorate Arlosoroff's

death. At night holiday clothes were worn and everyone walked to the dining hall. White shirts flapping in the wind. Tzvi's father was sitting at the end of one of the wooden benches in the dining hall, near a window, wearing his only white shirt. (Netanel 65)

The juxtaposition of Tzvi's father immediate sensual experience to the "big" historical event—the murder of Arlosoroff—serves here to highlight the lack of connection between them.

Now, an individual's non-relation from Zionist history is of course not in itself a departure from the postmodern explosion of metanarratives. What nonetheless distinguishes Netanel's novel from its 80s and 90s predecessors is that this dissolution of metanarratives is suddenly recognized as a loss, as part of a more generalized inability to relate subjective experience to history. It is for this reason that the novel itself is written in three "versions," implying a process of rewriting that fails over and over. The incessant narrative repetition of events, a process that keeps rearranging these events temporally, also betrays some kind of search for lost possibility of historical narration. On the level of content, it is Zvi himself—a historian of Zionism—who expresses this loss most clearly. His inability to write a history of Zionism, his attempt to let the witnesses themselves (among whom are his parents) speak this history, are also used in the novel to express this search for historicity. The "question that freezes in Zvi's face" at the end of the first part, echoing the same "freezing" in Hinda's face in the quote from Brenner that opens that part of the novel (Netanel 9), expresses precisely this sense of historical disorientation.

Ashkenazi's novel presents its readers with different moments in the lives of a group of Israelis who is part of a special state program that replaced the pre-state Zionist settlement vanguard—helping establish and populate rural collectivist settlements (by the 60s, of course, the revolutionary kernel of these settlements has been completely neutralized by their absorption into the state). Narrating the historical trajectory that spans the group's adult lives—from the late 60s to the early 2000s—constitutes in the novel a sincere attempt to generate a national allegory, which is itself of course antagonistic to the postmodern rejection of such allegories (as for example in Kenaz's work (Kenaz 502)). If the hermeneutical search for meaning that lies at the basis of such allegories is ridiculed in Israeli postmodernism (Balaban 43–54), Ashkenazi's return to the allegory insists on what its postmodern critique always missed: that living allegories (as opposed to reified older ones) never simply reiterate what is already known; rather, they constitute a pre-conceptual working-through of a narrative for which we do not yet have a concept or a name, and which only in hindsight will seem like superfluous illustrations of familiar narratives or concepts, as Louis Marin puts it in the context of the "allegorizing" process of utopian novels (Marin 163).

What is important for our purposes is that the new allegory presented by Ashkenazi's novel is nothing less than an allegory of the rise of Israeli postmodernism itself, or of narrative failure itself, one that pervades every moments of its protagonists (who grow up to be the Israeli elite—from academics to construction and financial moguls, to high-ranking government officials and political figures. Each chapter of the novel is a representation constructed not by the narrator himself, but by the members of the group themselves (the narrator simply collected the documents later and assembled them into the novel). It is in this way that each moment of narrative failure is generated by the group itself, rather than by the narrator. Thus, a failure to mediate between personal experience and historical event, as in the following passage, which narrates Yoav's participation in a mass demonstration usually considered historically significant—protesting against the Israeli military's involvement in the massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982. Yoav also happens to be a military officer in Lebanon. The chapter begins in the following way

Yoav decided to go to the demonstration in *Malkhei Yisrael* plaza (get those commanders over here. Did you think we're not gonna have briefing before the op?). Avshalom told him, we can't be silent about what happened in Sabra and Shatila, and promised that the entire group will be there (the target, a FATAH command center that was rebuilt right under our eyes). Yoav said he'll think about it. Avshalom said, what is there to think, murder is murder is murder. Yoav said, true (our forces: the brigade, artillery. Radio code: greedy. They will cover us only in emergency. We have enough firepower in the brigade even without those artillery pussies). (Ashkenazi 228)

The obvious tension between personal narrative—Yoav's bracketed experiences as an officer in Lebanon—and historical event—the demonstration taking place against the military's actions in Lebanon—is here highlighted formally through the juxtaposition of the two. Again, what is important for our purposes is that the failure to mediate between personal and historical is here a result of the group's self-representation (the authors of this passage are two other group members, according to the narrator). It is in this way that Ashkenazi tries to preset its readers with a sprawling allegory—one that encompasses a pastiche of every conceivable style of Israeli literature—of the rise of narrative failure

itself, which is experienced as a frustrating disability or loss by the narrator himself (Ashkenazi 378–79).

The Soldier as Collective Figure, and the Tel-Aviv Voyeur

Another literary site in which the distance from postmodernism is clearly visible is that unique Israeli genre that I have elsewhere called the genre of soldier's experience—not to be confused with war stories (Nir "Utopian"). Very briefly, we are here dealing with the chasm separating Ron Leshem's novel *Beaufort* and films such as Ari Folman's *Waltz With Bashir* from their postmodern predecessors, such as Shimoni's *A Room* and, again, Kenaz's *Infiltration*. What is important for us is that in both *Beaufort* and *Waltz with Bashir*, a reconciliation of soldier and national history takes place. In *Beaufort*, the officer-protagonist threatens to disobey the imminent order to evacuate the Beaufort outpost, until his conversation with Kaplan, the high-ranking officer who participated in the operation to occupy the outpost; *Waltz with Bashir* stages something like a psychoanalytic process of discovery, in which the soldier's attempt to fight his repression of his participation in the 1982 Lebanon war (which is presented as a hideous reminder of that ultimate trauma, the Holocaust) also allows for some kind of reconciliation with national history (a reconciliation in which the fear that he is implicated in the massacre of Palestinians is contained). These moments of reconciliation are of course absent from Kenaz's and Shimoni's works. We will not be able to discuss here the significance of the imagined reconciliation itself; what should be emphasized is rather than this reconciliation betrays a new recognition of alienation from history as a problem in the first place, as a cause of trouble that has to be contained or resolved through this reconciliation. It is precisely this awareness that is absent from the postmodern predecessors.

The last literary example has to do with what is in many ways the generic antagonist to the soldier as a figure for the nation: if the latter develops out of the what Brenner called "genre" literature (Brenner), the alienated protagonist of the urban spaces (beginning with those of Brenner himself) belong to the "anti-generic" or modernist alternative, one that was always alienated from any collective imaginary. The postmodern descendents of Brenner's anti-heroes are those of Orly Castel-Bloom's and Etgar Keret's 80s and 90s fiction, the majority of which is set to Tel Aviv's urban landscape. Orly Castel Bloom's *Where am I?* Can be used as the paradigmatic example for the playful fragmentation and dissolution of any sense of coherent identity familiar social spaces enacted by the novel's heroine's voyeuristic travels through Tel Aviv, a tendency that is intensified in Keret's 90s work. We can now contrast Castel bloom's postmodern urban voyeur to the much-less playful wanderings of the protagonists of Einat Yakir's *Sand*. The carefree wandering of the 80s is here replaced by extreme precarity of Yakir's protagonists, plagued by poverty, unstable employment, and the cultural alienation that haunts an immigrant community that, in the neoliberal age, was never integrated into existing social structures. The sense of an absent futurity, that as we have seen animates much of the contemporary literature, is here grotesquely captured through the mother's foretelling of the future, for money.

What we should emphasize in conclusion to this quick survey in order to forestall possible misunderstanding is that the dialectical containment of postmodernism in contemporary literary production is no more of an authorial choice than postmodernism itself had been. Rather, this newer development should be seen as simultaneously expressing and attempting to resolve a new set of social contradictions and antagonisms, just as the appearance of postmodernism was itself related to late capitalism, to borrow Jameson's well known formulation (Jameson, *Postmodernism*). To the extent that contemporary literature still betrays a crisis of historicity, as it clearly does, we have not yet left behind the material infrastructure of postmodernism. Yet, that what has constituted its unconscious content--this crisis of historicity--is now consciously perceived, as in the contemporary works we have just described, signals to us that something indeed has changed in superstructural terms. The coming-into-consciousness of the lack of futurity can be seen as what Mathias Nilges has called a new stage within postmodernity—using this term to designate an infrastructural or material period rather than a cultural one (one that we can also characterize in terms of the final moment what Jameson and Žižek call a vanishing mediator—that disappearing of a previous goal or tells, leaving us with its inverted nightmarish realization instead, as Nilges puts it).

If Israeli literature has in some sense left postmodernism behind, what are we to say of its relation to contemporary Israeli historiography, which has itself entered what is usually called a new "post-post-Zionist" phase (Likhovski)? Has the gap that separated literature from post-Zionist writing finally closed as a result of this transformation? We will now have to briefly engage in a comparison of the two—contemporary fiction and historiography—to answer this question. What is vital to keep in mind is that a certain critical distance has to be maintained between our analysis and some of the descriptions of

"post-post-Zionism," who seem at times to fall under the spell of their object too readily, characterizing it in terms of some narrative of progress from older historiography. It is for this reason that we will try here to provide an alternative account of the "post-post-Zionist" writing, based on its comparison with contemporary literature. As we will see, these celebratory evaluations have a moment of truth to them, but one which has very little to do with the celebrated qualities of the new historiography.

According to Likhovski's exhaustive survey, one of the earliest and most paradigmatic examples of this new phase in academic historical and cultural writing is Tamar Berger's *Dionysus at Dizengof Centre* (Berger). Berger's book presents three moments in the history of a specific place: the piece of land on which today stands a large Tel Aviv mall, Dizengof Center. The first moment tells the story of Palestinian dispossession by Zionist dispossession. The same plot of land becomes later the site on which a working-class neighborhood is built. The second moment of the book narrates the neighborhood's residents' struggle against their evacuation from the land. Finally, the third moment focuses on the construction of the mall itself and urban capitalist development. Now, Likhovski takes Berger's book to be exemplary of the new phase of Israeli historiography in two ways: first, its style seems to be much more influenced by literary writing than the Post-Zionist empiricist methodological moorings. Secondly, and related to the first point, its methodology is that of "micro-history," or one that views history as "local, fragmentary, anecdotal and literary" (Likhovski 10–11). That the literary is here related to the local is an important point to which we will return in what follows. We will begin our analysis of Berger's book by looking at the fragmented and "literary" form of Berger's work, which is evident from the first sentences of the book: "In the middle of the 1946 summer vacation, on the day of the explosion in the King David hotel, Daud Hinawi broke his leg. He was going fast down a hill on his brother Yusef's new bicycle, and lost control where the road curved and flipped over. His left leg was shattered. He's still lame today. For many weeks he sat on a couch that was set in front of the door of the house in Jaffa and looked outside" (Berger 9).

As Feige notes, the literariness is here expressed in juxtaposition of "big" historical events (the explosion at the King David hotel, which housed the administrative offices of the British Mandate over Palestine) to mundane private experience and seemingly unimportant details, which is a conspicuous formal feature of Berger's writing throughout the book (Feige 209).

What should now become clearly visible to us are the striking similarities between this passage and the quote from Lilach Netanel's *The Hebrew Condition* that appeared earlier in this essay. In both cases, the contrasting of mundane details and subjective experience to "big" history highlights a lack of connection or necessary relation between the two spheres. The similarities between Berger's writing and that of Netanel's is not limited to this formal feature. For example, the attempt to, as it were, strip history of some overlaying narrativization, focusing on the little, fragmented, and partial narratives of the witnesses and even the objects themselves, is evident in both Berger's book, according to Feige; but are also evident in the research project headed by Zvi, the protagonist of Netanel's novel—a research project that is supposed to generate a "history that does not coalesce into" a narrative (Netanel 123), reproduced in the novel through the broken speech of the recording of Zvi's parents' testimony at the end of the novel's second part. The tension between these formal features of Berger's work and a post-Zionist agenda is perhaps best expressed in Gadi Algazi's review of *Dionysus*, in which Algazi, who does not hide his disdain for "theory," criticizes precisely this disconnect between detail and larger historical narrativization so prevalent in the book. And, of course, the only larger historical narrative that Algazi is willing to consider as successfully totalizing is that of Zionist colonization (a narrative that clearly becomes mystified in Algazi's own account, since it is clearly impossible to relate the dispossession of Palestinians to Berger's other materials except as some mystic original violence or state of mind that magically contaminates subsequent historical events. As we will see later on, it is rather only the development of capitalism that offers a non-mystified totalizing schema).

Berger's book is not the only "post-post-Zionist" history that shows these localized formal similarities to contemporary Israeli literature. For instance, one of the characteristics of other new historiographic works, according to Likhovski, is what he celebratorily sees as a more "complex" political judgment of certain historical phenomena. For example, discussing Nadav Davidovich's and Shifra Shvats's essay on vaccination campaigns in 50s Israel (Davidovich and Shvarts), Likhovski writes the following:

[they] engage with themes suggested by the older, post-Zionist, approach, but reach more complex conclusions about the past [...] they note the fact that vaccination was a major component of western colonial practices. The link between Zionism and colonialism seems at first glance to place them squarely within the older Post-Zionist approach to history, but for the fact that in this context the colonial project is portrayed as well-intentioned and benign. (11)

Likhovski then goes on to discuss another example—Dafna Hirsch's work on Zionist public health projects during the British mandate years (Hirsch)—in which he again detects an ambivalent position towards the Zionist public health discourse. In Hirsch's own words:

When Hadassah [the health organization, O.N.] made elite ashkenazi women into civilizers of mizrahi women, it contributed to the consolidation of ethnic hierarchies within Jewish society. The civilizing of mizrahi Jews by means of hygiene education, then, was not a simple case of cultural coercion by a Western group; rather, it contributed to constructing ashkenazi identity as 'modern' and 'Western.' At the same time, Hadassah and a handful of other women's organizations were among the few Zionist bodies to regard mizrahi and orthodox communities as part of the national collective. (Hirsch 155)

To Likhovski's celebratory evaluation, we can now add Algazi's critical evaluation of the same "ambivalence," again in Berger's book. One of its clear instances is that the Palestinian owners of the land was himself a capitalist exploiter that never did anything to join the Palestinian struggle. Thus, any immediate political support for them is diminished, in what Algazi sees as simply another instance of failure to weave the personal narrative with a larger colonial one, even if it is not clear how any colonial framework would help the reconcile the conflicting ethico-political commitments of a liberal sensibility that Berger highlights.

We will discuss these moments of political "ambivalence" further below. For, now, however, it will suffice that we simply register that the same effect is generated in contemporary literature as well. It becomes abundantly clear when we compare the passage we quoted from Ashkenazi's *Fulfillment* above with the moments we have been discussing in the new historiographic writing. Even if Hirsch's writing, or that of Davidovich and Shvarts, does not display the same "literary" fragmentation that made Berger's writing strongly similar to that of Netanel, the similarities should be clear. In both cases, what seems to be two oppositional political perspectives are juxtaposed with one another, without any narrative attempt at reconciliation or recoding into a coherent political position: Ashkenazi's Yoav is both "good" and "bad" politically, just like Hirsch's Hadassah.

One last similarity between the new historiography and contemporary literature that we should briefly mention is its interest in subjective experience itself—which is even in this abstract formulation something of a turn to the literary, whose proper realm has always been the personal (at least within capitalist society and its separation of the private from the public spheres). As an example, we can simply recall Berger's tendency to incorporate subjective experience into her narrative, juxtaposing it to larger historical events. Another example is Orit Rozin's work on the rise of individualism in 50s Israel (*The Rise*). The theme of Rozin's book is in no way unique: the rise of individualism was heatedly debated in the 50s themselves, as Rozin reminds us. What is unique about Rozin's work is that individualism is not here some evil that has to be uprooted by state intervention, as in the eyes of the national hegemonic ideology of the 50s; nor is it a value to be promoted and celebrated by the market and its proponents, as it is for the Israeli neoliberals of the 90s. Rather, the cause of the rise of individualism for Rozin is subjective response to a given situation of seemingly—the response of seemingly unimportant citizens of the new state rather than that of official, "history making," institution, party, or group (as in the previous two perspectives). Thus, for instance, the first part of Rozin's book understands individualism as a result of housewives' resistance to the "austerity" regime—one that is of course very different than neoliberal austerity—imposed by the Israeli state (3–62). The necessity of state-imposed rationing of consumption is not here taken to be itself an object of debate, but rather as a given condition under which housewives operated. What Rozin therefore opens up is the possibility of seeing the housewives as accidental historical agents, an account made possible by focusing on their subjective responses to objective external conditions. The state is here imagined as that which sets objective conditions, rather than as a collective project—50s austerity for the citizens is an external condition to be reckoned with, rather than something that the citizens themselves legislate and manage for their own benefit.

At this stage it therefore seems that "Post-Post-Zionist" historiography is indeed very similar to contemporary Israeli fiction in terms of its historical imaginary. It is here, however, that we should emphasize the importance of seeing localized formal similarities within the larger workings of their texts. In other words, we must be careful of seeing this or that localized formal characteristic as immediately related to this or that periodizing concept—modernist, postmodernist, or other—without taking into account how the more localized (or immediately visible) formal characteristics function in their texts. In our case, what will now become clear is the actual chasm separating the new historiography from its contemporary literature. In the latter, as we have seen, the various "postmodern" formal characteristics are included in a larger textual apparatus whose overall effect is to re-problematize postmodernism itself, or to recognize in it a loss. For example, In Netanel's novel, as we noted, the postmodern

juxtaposition of subjective experience and "big" history is part of the text's affecting of a very conscious search for historicity, or relation between the two spheres. Similarly, in Ashkenazi's novel, the postmodern failure to make meaning is itself historically allegorized, becoming the mark of a specific generation that has to somehow be resisted.

In contrast with the literary realm, in the "post-post-Zionist" historical texts that we have briefly surveyed, no such reframing of postmodern effects exists. In other words, we will now see that the new historiography constitutes a full postmodernization of the historiographical field—in contrast with the critical distance from postmodern historical imaginary that is emerging in the literary realm. First, we can now reframe both positive and negative evaluation of the political conclusions of the newer histories. For, Likhovski's claim to the "complexity" of the political conclusions of these new studies seems to simply mean that they always lead the reader to a political aporia—to a situation in which no political knowledge is generated at all since it seems caught between two opposing impulses. That Hadassah is simultaneously a positive political force and a negative one in the conclusion of Hirsch's study (255) is one example; that Berger's Palestinian family is one whose cause is not particularly appealing to a liberal leftists sensibility is another. These aporias of the new historical texts constitute of course nothing but what is by now the familiar postmodern failure of metanarratives—enacting an escape or mismatch between the particular case and the more abstract narrative into which it used to fit.

What, then, drives Likhovski and others to characterize this failure to generate knowledge as actually possessing greater "complexity"? What seems to be happening here, according to the celebratory accounts, is that whenever we try to narrate the events in a more abstract way, certain "facts" come to light which contradict this attempt, as if making us refine our narrative endlessly. Thus, we are faced here with Borges-like paradox in which the map of the territory ends up being as large and detailed as the territory itself: no narrative would capture these histories, except somehow them in themselves. This impossibility of narrating the events beyond some initial or primordial contradictoriness is precisely what Feige celebrates as some resistance of space to its temporary human "naming" in Berger's work: "the Arabs that were related to that piece of land did not represent a wider struggle, and the Jewish residents of the neighborhood were not Zionist pioneers [...] the place never 'belonged,' and therefore it is never 'redeemed,' and any attempt to relate to a realization of some vision is bound to fail" (Feige 218). And Feige takes his celebratory articulation of the philosophical moorings of Berger's book one step further:

When Dizengof's [Foucauldian] archaeological dig, or that of Tel Aviv, becomes a main reference point, space becomes the main protagonist and is released from the clutches of history. Space preexists the time that turned it into "place." In Berger's book, space is empty in the symbolic sense of the word: It is a stage for events, occurrences that accumulate on it without rhyme or reason, but it remains itself, a meaningless space that does not belong to any of its occupiers and to any of its deported. (Feige 218–22)

What we have here is of course a perfect articulation of that theoretical postmodern nominalism (Jameson, *The Political* 181–260)—a suspicion of abstraction or narrativization itself which becomes the ultimate horizon of any drive towards "complexity," or aporia, as in Berger's more "literary" style or in the aporetic conclusions of Hirsch's work or that of Davidovich and Shvarts. As Feige's quote here demonstrates, the frozen dialectical "movement" immanent in this philosophical elaboration leads us surprisingly to a familiar philosophical terrain: Feige's empty space that precedes its human determinations turns out to be no other than the Kantian *ding-an-sich*—that remainder of the object that preexists consciousness's meaning-endowing capacity—and which forever stays out of our epistemological reach. It is of course in the writing of Georg Lukács that we have the fullest articulation of the necessary relation between the mute Kantian object and the reification of the consciousness of the Bourgeoisie under capitalism (Lukács 110–48). What lay behind the drive towards detail—that greater "complexity"—is thus nothing more than a narrative or interpretive failure, one that as Fredric Jameson argues becomes the unconscious horizon of all thought under postmodernism.

It is here that we can start presenting Feige's determination about Berger's book—that it is actually the harbinger of the full articulation of postmodernism in Israeli historiography (Feige 205–09)—as actually articulating the direction in which the field as a whole is moving. And, as the aporetic horizon of all our examples of recent historiography demonstrated, we should stress that one need not possess a "literary" style, or even use French theory to be postmodern (nor, as we have repeatedly claimed, does being postmodern depend in any way on personal preference or choice). Another example for this postmodernization can be found in the drive towards "micro history," or the seemingly unimportant realms of subjective experience and the everyday. These are, to remind ourselves, the central

methodological underpinnings of Rozin's work on the rise of individualism in 1950s Israel. Or as Rozin puts it:

The purpose of this book is not only to provide a comprehensive description of some of the changes that took place in this period, but to portray them, as much as possible, from the perspective of their contemporaries themselves, and in this way become familiar with their sensations and feelings, their expectations and disappointments. The attitudes of those living through the 50s, the way in which they viewed the society in which they lived and their place within it, how they felt about the state and what they thought about it, about their lives, their pasts and futures, their way of handling history's challenges—these are the foundation of any understanding of the transformations that took place in these fateful years. (*Khovat* 14)

What thus becomes crucial for understanding history is subjective experience of a given historical situation. Thus, for example, Rozin's first chapter focuses on the growing frustration of housewives with the austerity regime of the 50s, which in turn brings about the rise of individualism. The important point for our purposes is that 50s austerity is not here seen as an evil of planned statist capitalism, as the neoliberals would have it; nor is it seen as part of a national effort in which "we" are all exerting our agency. Rather, when previously-ignored subjective experience becomes the central site of inquiry, state policy itself (austerity) becomes a necessity, something to which the subject must respond but that is completely alien to subjective agency. It is for this reason that Rozin presents the austerity measures at the first chapter as an inevitability or something that could not have been avoided (*Khovat* 21–23), thus removing it immediately from how historical agency is articulated (and that in some ways disturbingly echoes neoliberalism's logic of "no alternative" today, which we will not be able to address here). As was the case with the historiographical works we discussed earlier, the interpretive horizon of Rozin's book is a postmodernist one: while the subjective realm becomes intelligible and lucidly rational—in marked difference from both Zionist and Post-Zionist accounts—the "big" historical stage remains out of reach of the subjects' agency.

We can now finally argue that "post-post-Zionist" historiography denotes the full postmodernization of Israeli historiography, one from which the teleological valences of its 90s (post-Zionist) predecessors are absent. We should emphasize once again that postmodernism is not a stylistic authorial choice that can be consciously avoided or upheld. Rather, it is a cultural logic, a basic cultural condition to which any specific contemporary text constitutes a response and an attempt to resolve its underlying contradictions, as Fredric Jameson argues (Jameson, *Postmodernism*). We are therefore faced with the same strange "gap" in historical thinking that we detected in the beginning of this paper between Israeli literature and historiography. Literature seems to be "ahead" of historiography, in the sense that while the latter is only now entering postmodernism, the former is already struggling to exit it. Why, then, does this peculiar gap—or Althusserian non-contemporaneity—exist? Should not the two fields at the same moment express the same historical sensibility, proving to be part of the same Foucauldian *episteme* or the same *Zeitgeist*? And maybe more importantly—why should we care? Are not these matters the result of some arbitrarily mutating fashion, a completely random taking-up or abandoning of historical sensibilities that we should not care about?

What we can now assert is that even if the gap itself is of little interest, its explanation will lead us very quickly and surprisingly into the heart of contemporary Israeli capitalism and its effects on knowledge production. For, what we can now assert is that the gap between literature's historical imaginary and that of historiographical contemporary is a result of the uneven neoliberal privatization of different parts of the Israeli welfare-state. The beginning of neoliberal privatization as a whole is usually traced to the mid-80s in Israel (Michael Shalev 127; Bichler and Nitzan). Yet, the dismantling of different branches of the welfare-state did not take place at the same time. If the publishing industry (and the communications sector as a whole) was privatized relatively early (Kaplan 33–34)—in the late 80s and early 90s—that of public academia started happening later and is still taking place. The commodification of higher education and research, the establishment of private colleges, and the state's slow defunding of public universities proves to be a much slower project than that of the privatization of the publishing industry and television broadcasting. Thus, while the Israeli publishing industry, and therefore novelists too, have been feeling neoliberalism's unmediated pressures since the late 80s, the Israeli academia has until relatively recently been shielded from the effects of the privatization of higher education.

It is therefore the duration and degree of unmediated exposure to market forces that creates the perceived delay between Israeli literature and historiography. We can now finally see the two as belonging to the same synchronic totality despite the contradiction between them. Literature is "ahead" of historiography in the sense that it has to confront the contradictions of neoliberal capitalism in a far less mediated manner than academic studies. In terms of William's residual-hegemonic-emergent triad

that we mentioned earlier, the literary can be said to directly express the tensions of the hegemonic formation of the mode of production, while historiography only expresses these indirectly, being a residual part of a system that is fast evaporating, that of the welfare-state. The erosion of the rationale of having an academic system that is at least partly protected from market forces—the complete eclipse of the collective project that was the welfare-state—is indicative precisely of this residual status, which makes academic research that is not related to the market in immediacy seem irrational or useless, becoming something like an ornament—which is always the vestige of older function, as Adorno reminds us (Adorno).

The gap separating literature from historiography, whose cause is the development of neoliberal capitalism itself, is therefore one that is actually an inversion of the newness or lateness implied by the awkward name "post-post-Zionism." therefore denotes what is actually an entry into a retrograde historical imaginary, that of postmodernism. Even if the literary is found at the other end of this postmodernism—recognizing its onset as a loss of historicity that has to be addressed and "solved" in the works themselves—it still reflects the condition of postmodernity, a term that we should reserve to denote the material conditions or infrastructure of global capitalism. It is to the literary realm that we should look for the emergence of new Israeli (or perhaps global) collective imaginaries, ones that will require a rewriting of Zionist history in a way that would no longer be post-Zionist or "post-post-Zionist," which is to say, postmodern. For the institutional study of history to "catch up" with the literary would mean a renewal of some collective project, one that would remake these institutions according to its goals, saving them from the oblivion to which the demise of the welfare-state has doomed them.

Works Cited

- Adorno, Theodor. "Functionalism Today." *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, edited by Neil Leach, Routledge, 1997, pp. 4–18.
- Algazi, Gadi. "Bein Adam Lemakom" (between person and place). *Ha'aretz*, 6 Apr. 1999, <http://www.tau.ac.il/~algazi/texts/berger.htm>.
- Althusser, Louis, and Etienne Balibar. *Reading Capital*. Pantheon, 1970.
- Ashkenazi, Yiftach. *Haide lahagshama* (fullfilmnet). Khargol, Modan, 2014.
- Balaban, Avraham. *Gal akher basiporet ha'ivrit* (another wave in Hebrew literature). Keter, 1995.
- Bar Yossef, Yehoshua. *Utopia Bekachol-Lavan* (home-made utopia). Sifriyat Ma'ariv, 1990.
- Bartana, Ortsion. *Shmonim: sifrut yisra'elit ba'asor ha'akharon* (eighty: Hebrew literature in the last decade). Agudat hasofrim ha'iryim be'israel, 1993.
- Berger, Tamar. *Dionisus Basenter* (Dionysus in the center). Hakibutz Hame'ukhad, 1998.
- Bichler, Shimshon, and Paul Nitzan. *The Global Political Economy of Israel*. Pluto Press, 2002.
- Brenner, C. Y. "Hajaner Ha'erezt-Yisraeli ve'avizaryhu (the Palestine Genre and Its Functions)." *Hapoel Hatzair*, July 1911.
- Cazdyn, Eric. *The Already Dead: The New Time of Politics, Culture, and Illness*. Duke University Press, 2012.
- Crary, Johnathan. *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep*. Verso, 2013.
- Davidovich, Nadav, and Shifra Shvarts. "Health and Hegemony: Preventative Medicine, Immigrants, and the Israeli Melting Pot." *Israel Studies*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2004, pp. 150–79.
- Feige, Michael. "'Ze Sipur Al Hamakom Veze Hamakom': Dionysus Basenter Vemabat Nosaf Al Hahistoriographiya Ha'yisraelit" (this is a story about the place and this is the place). *Teoria Ubikoret*, vol. 26, 2005, pp. 201–34.
- Folman, Ari. *Vals Im Bashir* (waltz with bashir). 2008.
- Handel, Yudit. *Street of Steps*. Translated by Rachel Katz and David Segal, Herzl Press, 1963.
- Herzig, Hannah. *Hakol ha'omer: ani: megamot basiporet hayisraelit shel shnot hashmonim* (The Voice Saying: I: Trends in Israeli Prose Fiction in the 1980s). Open University Press, 1998.
- Herzog, Omri. "Neuland Me'et Eshkol Nevo" (Neuland by Eshkol Nevo). *Ha'aretz*, 6 June 2011, <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1177186>.
- Hirsch, Dafna. "'Interpreters of Occident to the Awakening Orient': The Jewish Public Health Nurse in Mandate Palestine." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2008, pp. 227–55.
- Jameson, Fredric. *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. Verso, 1991.
- . *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*. Cornell University Press, 1981.
- Kaplan, Eran. *Beyond Post-Zionism*. State University of New York, 2015.
- Kenaz, Yehoshua. *Infiltration*. Steerforth Press, 2003.
- Leshem, Ron. *Beaufort*. Random House, 2008.
- Likhovski, Assaf. "Post-Post-Zionist Historiography." *Israel Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, Summer 2010, pp. 1–23.
- Lukács, Georg. *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*. MIT Press, 1971.
- Marin, Louis. *Utopics: Spatial Play*. Macmillan; humanities Press, 1984.
- Mendelson Maoz, Adia. *Multiculturalism in Israel: Literary Perspectives*. Purdue University Press, 2014.
- Myers, David N. "Bein Israel La'amim" (between Israel and the Peoples). *Zion*, vol. 74, 2009, pp. 339–51.

- Netanel, Lilach. *Hamatzav ha'ivri* (The hebrew condition). Bavel, 2008.
- Neumann, Boaz. "Hatzionim Hakhadashim" (the new Zionists). *Yediot Ahronot*, 24 Nov. 2006, p. 27.
- Nevo, Eshkol. *Neuland*. Kineret, Zmora Bitan, Dvir, 2011.
- Nilges, Mathias. "The Presence of Postmodernism in Contemporary American Literature." *American Literary History*, vol. 27, no. 1, 2015, pp. 186-97.
- Nir, Oded. "On the Historical Imaginary of Contemporary Israeli Fiction, or, the Aftermath of Postmodernism in Novels by Lilach Netanel and Yiftach Ashkenazi." *Prooftexts*, vol. 37, no. 1, 2018, pp. 156-182.
- . "Utopian Tremors, or, The Enigmatic Restlessness of the Literary Israeli Soldier." *Criticism*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2018, pp. 385-408.
- Nitzan, Gabi. *Badulina*. Yediot Ahronot: Sifrei Hemed, 1999.
- Peleg, Yaron. "Israeli Identity in a Post-Zionist Age." *Arguing the Modern Jewish Canon: Essays on Literature and Culture in Honor of Ruth R. Wisse*, edited by Justin Cammy et al., Harvard UP, 2008, pp. 661-73.
- Rozin, Orit. *Khovat Ha'ahava Hakasha: Yakhid Vekolektiv Beyisrael Beshnot Hakhamishim*. Am Oved, 2008.
- . *The Rise of the Individual in 1950s Israel: A Challenge to Collectivism*. Breindeis University Press, 2011.
- Shabtai, Yaakov. *Past Continuous*. Jewish Publication Society of America, 1985.
- Shalev, Meir. *The Blue Mountain*. HarperCollins, 1991.
- . *The Loves of Judith*. Ecco Press, 1999.
- Shalev, Michael. "Have Globalization and Liberalization 'Normalized' Israel's Political Economy?" *Israel Affairs*, vol. 5, no. 2-3, 1998, pp. 121-55.
- Shimoni, Gideon. *Kheder* (A Room). Am Oved, 1999.
- Silberstein, Lawrence. *The Postzionism Debates*. Routledge, 1999.
- Suvin, Darko. *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*. Yale UP, 1979.
- Williams, Raymod. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford UP, 1977.
- Yakir, Einat. *Yeme Khol [Sand]*. Keter, 2012.
- Zemach, Adi. "Hapost-Modernizm: Rav-Si'akh" (postmodrnism: a conversation). *Iton 77*, vol. 138-139, 1991, pp. 25-36.

Author's profile: Oded Nir is Visiting Assistant Professor of Hebrew at Vassar College. His first book, *Signatures of Struggle*, which presents a Marxist reading of Israel literary history, was published in October 2018 by SUNY Press. His essays on Marxist theory ad Israeli culture have appeared in several venues, including *Criticism*, *Prooftexts*, and *Rethinking Marxism*. E-mail: <oded.nir@gmail.com>