

Chronic Trauma, the Sound of Terror, and Current Israeli

Cinema

Raya Morag

Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media, Volume 49, Number 1, Spring 2008, pp. 121-133 (Article)

Published by Wayne State University Press *DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/frm.0.0003* 



➡ For additional information about this article https://muse.jhu.edu/article/252635

# Chronic Trauma, the Sound of Terror, and Current Israeli Cinema

Raya Morag

Since the outbreak of the first Intifada in 1987, and especially during the height of the second Intifada (2002–04), Israeli society experienced chronic trauma. This stemmed from a long series of terrorist attacks perpetrated by Palestinian suicide bombers who acted alone, carrying explosive-packed belts or parcels into crowded urban settings. While an average of three such attacks occurred monthly between October 2000 and November 2004,<sup>1</sup> they were pushed away from the public eye by Israeli public discourse.

This distancing is built into the level of visual imagery allowed by the media. The attack is represented in media reports by familiar iconography (long shots, invisibility of the corpse, etc.). In terms of sound, one can't even speak of representation, but rather of a total absence, the result of a silencing. Even though the blast waves of the explosion are mainly responsible for the traumatic forcefulness of the event, i.e., its visible traces, the volatility of the sound of the blast is consistent with its "silencing" in terms of its representation. The traumatic sound lacks any intimacy with the symbolic. In this sense, when speaking of levels of traumatization, repressing sound seems to be the deepest level. No wonder, then, that Israel's chronic social fantasy regarding terrorist attacks is first and foremost acoustic: every Israeli is familiar with the visual aftermath of attacks, but only the victims have actually heard them. The fantasy, structured around the moment of the blast as a phantom, is powerful precisely because the sound quickly vanishes and is unrepresentable. Like the traumatic event itself, signified by its reverberating *boom*, the sound is conceptualized only later, in its imagined post-effect. From this perspective,

Framework 49, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 121–133. Copyright © 2008Wayne State University Press, Detroit, Michigan 48201-1309. sound symbolizes the unapproachable essence of the traumatic event, and is thus more commensurate to the event than the visual image could ever be.

These memory processes become even more complex when one looks at the overall context; i.e., both the Intifada and the occupation.<sup>2</sup> I believe that the acknowledgment of the terror attacks, and therefore, post-traumatic memory, was retarded because of a combination of conservative political orientation, discourse focused on Jewish victimhood,<sup>3</sup> reluctance to recognize the steep price of occupation, and the hegemonization of victory.

During this period of ongoing trauma, the collective memory of the Israeli imagined community—as manifest in public discourse—forced itself on personal memory<sup>4</sup> and subjugated the latter's single-event character to its own chronicity (which opposes acknowledgment). The result was two modes of memory that have in common not what they share (the trauma of the terror attack), but what they don't share (the acknowledgment of trauma and its conversion to post-traumatic memory). In other words, Israeli reality during those years was one of anti-memory, its structure preventing it from becoming memory. Therefore, any attempt to analyze the trauma must develop tools either outside of memory or beyond it.

Recent humanities-based trauma studies from Caruth<sup>5</sup> to Walker<sup>6</sup> have repeatedly focused on analyzing the single traumatic event (rather than chronic trauma), doing so through conceptualization of memory (and not of anti-memory). Traumatic memory (with obvious characteristics of double telling, a-referentiality, and belatedness)<sup>7</sup> determines the character of traumatic discourse and its limits.

The question is how the reality of "anti-memory" was expressed in Israeli cinema during the second Intifada; i.e., is it possible to present post-chronic trauma outside memory? And further on, will Israeli cinema treat the acoustic phantom, the generator of chronicity? If so, will presentation of the sound as the volatile other of the post-traumatic image assist in mediating a new approach towards the symbolic, the horrific?

# Beyond Memory and into the Time Trap

I suggest, therefore, the term "pre-memory" to describe memory (both personal and collective) that has not yet become part of the belatedness (*Nachträglichkeit*) process. Pre-memory hampers or obstructs belatedness in an attempt to distance its effect, which is the belated response of acknowledgment. This mode comes before the first belated processing of the traumatic experience.

Discussing extreme traumatic events, Marianne Hirsch and Janet Walker define distinct types of remembrance. Hirsch coined the well-known term postmemory to define the identification-related traumatic memory of the post-Holocaust generation as opposed that of the Holocaust generation itself, the victims: Postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through representation, projection, and creation–often based on silence rather than speech, on the invisible rather than the visible . . . It is defined through an identification with the victim or witness of trauma, modulated by the unbridgeable distance that separates the participant from the one born after . . . Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who . . . have grown up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by the powerful stories of the previous generation, shaped by monumental traumatic events that resist understanding and integration.<sup>8</sup>

In order to free herself from the binarism of false memory/true memory and discuss the immanent and inseparable link between fantasy and reality in unrealistic modes of historical memory in cinema, Walker coined the term disremembering:

The process described by psychological literature as that of conjuring mental images and sounds related to past events but altered in certain respects shall be termed "disremembering." Disremembering is not the same as not remembering. It is remembering with a differencr . . . Disremembering can become urgent when events are personally unfathomable or socially unacceptable. Disremembering incest or the Holocaust is a survival strategy par excellence.<sup>9</sup>

Are postmemory and disremembering beyond-memory forms? Are they anti-memory? I believe not. In spite of their disparities, both are involved—in different ways—in the processes of identification, displacement, vicariousness, and belatedness. Neither of the writers is defining a condition of a-memory, but rather a condition in which the memory form is forced upon the person doing the remembering, and is recast as a survival strategy. (Walker says so openly, Hirsch hints at this).

Should pre-memory also be looked upon as a survival strategy? I believe not. Both of the above memory modes facilitate defining pre-memory by opposing it: pre-memory is the polar opposite of these processes. It abrogates identification with the personal memory; rejects metaphoric, metonymic, and displacement relationships in order to separate the modes from one another as much as possible and impose the collective on the personal; and rejects or halts belatedness.

I believe that two factors "transform" belatedness from a process that induces acknowledgment of the event to the obstructiveness of pre-memory. The first is the chronic nature of the trauma, which resulted in the memory of personal events being overcome by the chronicity of the attacks. The second is the subjugating invasiveness of the collective memory.

If pre-memory is essentially the opposite of post-traumatic memory, how should the "opposite" of the temporality of belatedness be defined and how



Waiting for the Attack in Just Not Another Suicide Bombing. Courtesy of Tapuz Comm., Micha Shagrir.

can the temporality of this personal/collective anti-memory be described? Beneath the trauma of terror attacks, the temporal reality of anti-memory is a pathological milieu that has trapped Israeli society between two "possibilities of time" that undermine the approach to time currently accepted in trauma studies ("before and after"). On one hand, pre-memory is the time of the attack, the time that "any minute an attack can happen"; on the other, it is the other time, the interval.

The interpretive parameters of secondary trauma and distance suffering<sup>10</sup> that were adopted consequent to the events of September 11, do not accurately describe the unique Israeli combination of catastrophes that are simultaneously one-time and chronic. The term 9/11 in fact symbolizes its one-time nature, and calls attention to the Israeli antithesis—almost twenty years of continuous trauma—and accordingly, and necessarily, what alters the psychosocial approach to time and the status of traumatic memory for those who experience it.

What characterizes the time trap? First, the two possibilities of time accelerate the presentification of the experience as "new" time: "The significance of the now is . . . in the presentification of both the 'now-no-longer' and the 'now-not-yet.' This is where the now differs from the 'ordinary' conception of time."<sup>11</sup> Both possibilities of time create radical temporality of presentification as part of the survivors' instinct not to give in to premonitions. The accelerated version of presentification is based on two separate systems of time. In one, the arbitrary moment controls the individual/singular. In the second, the time is the interval, seemingly infinite, until the moment of the event. In contrast to the individual moment, the critical moment of temporality, the interval has double significance in three aspects: it is composed of a compressed multiplicity of events, but also acts as a gap; it is infinite, but has the potential to become singular; it is perceived as an a-traumatic break, but has the traumatic potential to take possession of us. The gap between the critical moment and the interval (compression/emptiness, endless/singular, a-traumatic/traumatic) is based on the second characteristic of the time trap, negative circularity.

How can the critical singular moment be described? Beyond Walter Benjamin's theory of shock, how can the negation of continuity be described? As the suspension of consciousness of the passing of time? As the opposite of *durée*? Karl Heinz Bohrer claimed that "suddenness is understood . . . as an expression and a sign of discontinuity and nonidentity, as whatever resists aesthetic integration."<sup>12</sup>

The sudden as an ontological category indicates precisely the watershed point at which the referential and the indexical fractures break away from the traumatic event. Suddenness is the third characteristic of the time trap, and describes both the quality of the one/singular moment of abruptness and the double significance of the interval. The fourth characteristic relates to the lack of anticipation of the unknown, replaced by anticipation of a known unknown (shall we call it uncanny presentification?). Israeli society experienced a change in the perception of the irreversible moment, the arbitrariness in which public space is transformed from a fertile space to a consuming space, the citizen changing instantaneously from a passerby, *flâneur*,<sup>13</sup> to a terror victim. Suddenness is thereby characterized by irreversibility, arbitrariness, and specific bi-temporality (caught between the already-occurred and the yet-to-occur.)

These characteristics raise several questions: Did Israeli cinema during the second Intifada respond to the time trap? Did it succeed in locating the sudden? Is there a style of suddenness?

#### Moments

From 2002 to 2005, the Jerusalem International Film Festival sponsored Moments, a competition for three-minute films. On the cultural level the project was a response to the time trap in which the random moment constructs reality.

The short-short film as a cultural category operates within exceptional time and place. In contrast to the episodic film 11'09~01-September 11 (p. Alain Brigand, FR, 2002), the format is neither a gimmick nor a one-dimensional response to arbitrariness: it provides an exact expression of the intensive time experience that quickly reaches culmination and makes the attack a traumatic event. In contrast to narrative films, however, the Moments films are characterized by how they use audial presentation to deal with the suddennessof terrorist attacks.

The audialization of the trauma does not deal with the moment of the attack itself. Instead, the films use sound to build a sometimes misleadingly familiar representation of "before and after" the trauma: "if" has been added as a Žižek-like return of the repressed from the future. In addition, each of the three possibilities is portrayed as invariably embodying the other two. In all of the films the "before" is also the "after," which is also the "if," as if the attack that has already occurred will re-occur.

The following analysis of four of the films will illustrate four possibilities of representing post-traumatic terrorist attacks through a combination of the short-short format and sound that transcends the time trap.

# Possibility I-The Quiet of the Interval (Waiting for the Attack)

Rak Shelo Yavo Po Ode Pigua/Just Not Another Suicide Bombing (Amit Drori, IL, 2004)

For the entire three minutes, the film depicts passengers on a bus. They are photographed in medium or full close-ups and are all seen observing the activities unfolding on the bus. Only diegetic sounds are heard.

This short film is built on the no-sound of waiting for an attack; that is, on the typical quietude of the time trap in which anticipation of the random moment structures time as an interval that lasts until the very moment of the attack. This momentary silence, Lacan's beneficent punctuation, connotes the horrific antithesis of nothingness–a quiet something, unavoidably present. This quasi-documentary depiction of an April 2004 Jerusalem bus ride as a period of waiting is important for several reasons: First of all, the exterior of the bus is never photographed and the world of the bus becomes a closed one. Second, the waiting emphasizes the interval, the gap, because there is no action. Third, the passengers look into the camera in a way that is almost premonitory, since the camera is placed where a potential terrorist could be standing. They look at the camera without being aware of its presence, just as they cannot be aware of the presence of the invisible terrorist. Vis-à-vis both the camera and the terrorist, the passengers' look is not a gaze, but rather the undirected glance of ordinary bus passengers. Fourth, it is filmed over a long period of time. The camera follows the passengers with long shots, the silence emphasized by the passing time.

The facial shots, lack of action, undirected looks, long takes, diegetic sounds (voices, horns, doors, sirens), and complete lack of dialogue suspend the moment of suddenness; they indicate that the passengers are total strangers and emphasize the arbitrary randomness of their being together on the bus. As a result, the traumatic "before" and "after" are united. In the mute look at the camera and the complacent quietude, there is anticipation not only of the future, but of the past. The inability to see the invisible, so tragic here, becomes in a deep symbolic sense a symptomatic effect that precedes the traumatic cause. This three-minute film catches and represents the time trap of terrorist attacks through the sound of silence and the "look without a gaze."

# Possibility II-The Techno-Sound of the Scanner

Security Groove (Idan Alterman, IL, 2002)<sup>14</sup>

Against the of backdrop of urban Tel Aviv, the film opens with a car-park security guard asking a driver to open his trunk for inspection. From the instant the hood is slammed, pounding music accompanies the security signifiers (bags and cars inspected, zippers opened, bodies scanned, security surcharges rung up). The faces of the public are almost unseen. We see only the faces of the security guards and the security signifiers. The shots are fast and cut by the rhythm of the music. The film follows the inspections, the instructions ("open the trunk"), and the questions ("are you armed?") repeatedly until the last car. Its inspection is accompanied by the ticking of a clock and the Israeli national anthem.

This film, unlike *Another Suicide Bombing*, depicts twenty-four hours and deals with the second aspect of waiting time, the two meanings of compressing events into the single moment of "security." The portrayal of the waiting period is also ambiguous in an additional sense. On one hand are the technical sounds of the security routine–probably a reflexive indication of the habitual naturalization of technical tones liberating the security sounds from the ordinary and bringing them into the domain of the aesthetic. The technomusic is seemingly a part of contemporary musical reconciliation expressing technolust. The technolust and the humor that yield to the rhythm indicate that we are in the domain of a double-faceted defensive illusion: both of security and of cinematic aesthetics. On the other hand, the repetitiveness and redundancy of the ritual of the sound indicate anticipation not of the defensive illusion but of the possible failure of the surveillance culture. The ritual of the sounds is necessitated by the crisis of the senses fostered by the terror.

While visually and audially the film highlights the security system, it invalidates the gaze as a possible source of power and control. The camera is inside the open car trunk or the open bag, and together we observe the security guard—and not the opposite. The "place" of the potential bomb is actually looking at him. In concert with the panoptical question "Are you armed?" the scanner is the main pan-auditory instrument, the auditory correlative of surveillance culture. Its sound, which determines the techno-narrative, emphasizes the loss of the power of the gaze and grants preference to sound. What is hidden from view is discovered by the ear. Absurdly, the denaturalization of the sounds of security reminds us that this also characterizes the time of the terror attack: what is hidden from the eye is discovered by the ear . . .

The urban soundtrack of *Security Groove* ends in an ironic audial dystopia. The national anthem *HaTikva* (*The Hope*), replaces the ritual repetition of the security sounds. Only the anthem is heard, outside its usual context, its national ceremonial nature expropriated.

The techno-political sounds of the period of the second Intifada transform the eternal time of national hope and pride into an eternal time of security. This is not, however, the time of eternity. The failure of the culture of surveillance is revealed in repetition, culminating in the ticking of a bomb heard together with the closing of the hood, and alludes with finality-through the convention of audiality-to the failure of surveillance. In this sense, *Security Groove* returns us to the negative circularity of the time trap.

### Possibility III-The Unheard Modulation of the Corpse

Ringtonim/Ringtones (Dov Gil-Har, IL, 2004)

This film opens with a close-up of a ringing cell phone. The camera views a series of such phones and occasionally returns to show the words displayed on their screens ("Mom," "Dad," "Sarit is looking for you"). The ringtones are heard one after the other and then one on top of another. The frame gradually opens and we see the surroundings-the interior of an incinerated bus. The camera, scanning the empty seats, blood-soaked floor, and scattered school bags is accompanied in the last minute by a live radio broadcast announcing there may be casualties.

Unlike *Security Groove, Ringtones* offers no auditory pleasure. Since a cell phone is always connected to the body-the ear or mouth-the ringtones, as disembodied voices, confirm the absence of the body in the total sense. This is not only the disembodiment of the caller's voice so familiar in contemporary culture, unconnected to total absence since the voice is present and only the body absent. Instead of the voice of the recipient being a representation of its body, we are exposed to a request for modulation that signifies total absence of the body that also includes absence of the voice. The telephone represents the missing body of the dead as a kind of prosthesis. It is expressed very simply-most of the phones are lying on the seats.

The movement of the camera within the bus takes us to the invisible site in public space, inside the charred bus, which seems to be presented as postabject space. As the history of the telephone proves, it has always been associated with death. With that, in this film, which plays havoc with the rules of the telephone-story genre,<sup>15</sup> a change takes place in the threat of the perverse *acousmêtre* described by Chion.<sup>16</sup> In *Ringtones*, the horror is introduced in reverse, since the ringtones replace the potential *acousmêtre* voice, which becomes absent, and in its absence reflects the horror of the unanswered ringing. The *acousmêtre* repeatedly loses the horrific and powerful status usually ascribed to it in cinema. The horror stems from the repetition of the negation of response, which is confirmed by every additional ringtone.

The film ends with narration from four commentators. The last one creates a dramatic narratization of the journalistic story, which retrospectively verbalizes what had not been said. It contradicts ringtones as a recycled symbol of the culture of knock-offs and downloads, which in this nacromedia site consumes and annihilates itself.

#### Possibility IV-Simulation of Postmortem Sound

Shalosh Dakot l'Arba/Three Minutes to Four (Eliav Lilti, IL, 2002)

Some ten speakers (mother and daughter, young couple, old couple, policewoman, two children . . . ) face the camera one after another and describe their upcoming deaths in a terror attack.

This film is based on the nightmare time of an imagined attack at the attack site, a busy Tel Aviv intersection, with the speakers describing their upcoming deaths or injuries. Above all, future time, as it is realized in the words of the characters ("I'll start to run away," "Tomorrow I'll say I don't believe he's gone," "I leave behind a wife and three children"), creates an uncanny feeling. The opening overhead shot reveals the attack site from above; the narration imitates the ticking of a time bomb. After each monologue the camera returns to the same shot of the intersection, but it is clear time is passing and the speakers hasten what the future will bring. For this reason, the last tick-tock is heard together with a visual shot of the same intersection, this time empty of traffic. The moment of suddenness is displayed as a moment of emptiness.

The nightmare time of the imagined attack is not only realized in the perception "if" as in, "if there will be an attack that has already taken place"—this imagined attack not only involves the perception of the "if" in terms of a proleptic traumatic symptom of a repressed that returns from the future. The decision to compress the time into the time "before" four o'clock by describing those minutes after they have transpired is a distinctly political choice.

The film works on two planes. First, as a response to the so-called martyrdom videos of Palestinian suicide bombers. Since it is usually impossible to identify their corpses after an attack, they thus attain permanent visibility *ex post facto*. The corpse of the suicide terrorist again becomes whole and coherent by means of the Palestinian transcendental-religious-national reconstruction: it appears to be a body, not a corpse. As I have argued in other forums, the main power of such video recordings is the re-corporealization of the corpse of the terrorist,<sup>17</sup> which has significance in the struggle for visibility, and concomitant symbolic significance in the struggle over the imaginary lost soil of Palestine. From the Palestinian standpoint, discourse on the lost soil is sometimes conducted via the body that symbolizes it. The recorporealization of the corpse of the terrorist via the video signifies an ongoing claim to the soil. In this struggle for visibility, Palestinian recorporealization stands in complete contrast to the Israeli taboo regarding visibility of the corpse in public discourse. That being the case, *Three Minutes* stakes a claim for visibility of attack victims, for replacing the corpse with a body, which may also be thought of as a claim for legitimacy of the soil, previously accepted in Israeli culture mainly regarding soldiers. The second plane, consequentially, uses the metaphorical postmortem to actualize being in the place of the ultimate other who is not I. Does the cinematic fiction succeed, given the strangeness of the situation of the "I" who has undergone trauma, to present, as a way of working through the trauma, the ability to be in the place of the other? That is, does this film represent not only what the theory of trauma in the last two decades seeks to locate again and again-namely, the I in the place of itself, in the place where the trauma occurred, and was experienced-but also the I in the place of the suicide terrorist? Or are we speaking here of the opposite situation-of the impossibility of the ritual resurrection of the dead?

*Three Minutes* adds to the certainty of the flashback/forward an "if" of a special kind. It is impossible to separate between the I and the other, or between the body-that-underwent-resurrection of the other, and my-body-that-underwent-resurrection, which claims to possess, at least, my post-mortem audiovisual re-presentation.

An interesting phenomenon is developing here as part of the possible responses to the representation of terror attack trauma. This is precisely sound that can not be closely identified with the infantile scene; that does not permit access to language; nor is it associated with phenomenal loss, with the birth of desire, or aspirations to discursive mastery. That is to say, not sound as researchers like Kaja Silverman, Rick Altman, and Mary Ann Doane have described.<sup>18</sup> Not sound from a psychoanalytic context, but from a moral one. Neither pre-linguistic nor extra-linguistic, but sound as political language. The most complex and original use made of sound-as we saw in the last examplebrings us to the moral possibility of taking the place of an other. Sound enables this more than any other textual component. I suggest here a retreat from the so-very-complex theory of sound in the cinema, to its most simple meaning: to be the other through his voice. This does not mean rejection or negation of his voice, but the opposite-an attempt to speak through his lips, which becomes my attempt to speak through my lips. In his name, in my name. In fact, this is an unavoidable result of an act of terror. A terrorist attack is characterized by an intermingling of blood that lasts until the mixed-up body pieces are separated. At that place, that of the unidentified abject, he is given a voice. It seems that as long as it is heard, there will be an option of recovery.

What does the before/after [if] structure discussed earlier in a different regard have to do with the time trap? To answer, I need to briefly outline Laplanche's re-interpretation of Freud's writings on trauma in which he returns to the latter's seduction theory in order to clarify the double significance of *Nachträglichkeit*. In his opinion, even Freud did not fully understand how the two meanings belong to the same concept and how they interact in seduction theory.

We translate *Nachträglichkeit* in French as après-coup, and in English . . . as "afterwardsness" . . . because there are two directions in afterwardsness . . . For instance, I can say, "The terrorists put a bomb in the building, and it exploded *afterwards*." That's the direction of deferred action. And I can also say, "this bridge fell down, and the architect understood *afterwards* that he did not make it right." That's an after-the-event understanding. (Emphases in the original).<sup>19</sup>

According to this observation, Freud created a split in seduction theory between determinist theory, in which the first traumatic event decides the second, and the hermeneutic theory, in which the second event retroactively projects on what has already happened. The importance of this split and the double significance of the concept that Laplanche prefers, and accordingly translates as afterwardsness and not belatedness, are connected by the need for synthesis of the two directions/two meanings. As Caruth argued in the same interview,

So to understand the truly temporal aspect of *Nachträglichkeit*... you have to take into account what is *not* known, both at the beginning, *and* later... Whereas the other two models of afterwardsness imply either knowing later, or maybe implicitly... knowing earlier.<sup>20</sup>

Does the structure of *Three Minutes* create synthesis between the two meanings of trauma as they are perceived in chronic trauma? In this sense, the film is more than a symptom of social trauma. It manages to radically create a structure of immanent dislocation for the traumatic event, understood, according to Laplanche, by examining the temporal structure. It may be that in this sense expression of the traumatic chronicity of the time trap during the second Intifada reveals immanent dislocation to a traumatic event more than a one-time expression of the event would. In any case, Laplanche's rereading of the Freudian claim that all trauma is built around two scenes, suggesting that there is a see-saw effect between the two,<sup>21</sup> enjoys maximum realization within the before/after [if] structure. Laplanche adds that traumatic nightmares are connected more directly to the original traumatic message. In the present case, it may be that this effect–structuring the nightmare as the subject of a short-short film-also influences the strong uncanny feeling of the time trap.

#### The Sound of Terror

An analysis of these four films shows that in one sense the moment of the explosion remains preserved by the audial phantom. That is, the significance of non-expression of suddenness is a result of a certain level of rejection of the terror attack. In another sense, however, the use of suddenness creates a sonorous envelope<sup>22</sup> that is not a reproduction of televisual iconography. Instead of the sound of the explosion, the envelope embraces the quiet (the interval, the waiting); the ringtones (the mechanical-acoustic substitute for the absent body); the scanner (confirmation of a living rather than mechanical body), and the ticking of the time bomb and postmortem narration that projects on the past and merges with it through afterwardsness. The material objects in the terror scenes contribute to this merging because they act as prosthetic objects. That is to say, the scanner, the cell phone, the skeleton of the bus, the imagined time bomb, and the imagined videos are actually, á la Grosz,<sup>23</sup> a concrete expansion of the corpse.

The sound continues to preserve the terror as chronic trauma and represent the time trap. As a consequence, and in contradiction to the ideological orientations of victory, three-minute cinema converts the cinematic scopic drive into an auditoric drive in a reality where the hyper-surveillance of the camera has lost all value. This is not the prominent invisibility of terror representations in the public sphere, which serves conservative purposes, but a declaration of the loss of the power of the gaze within the culture of surveillance after the terror. Amidst a reality in which the panoptic look has lost its power, the sound brings us closer to the event and offers the opportunity to conceptualize and internalize it.

Israeli short-short cinema brings us closer than any other representation in the public sphere to the repressed-terrible and to the place of the other. Doing so through sound, short-short cinema responds to the perception of time as cultural and culture-dependent. The short-short films of Moments prove that only the cinematic psycho-acoustics of terror attacks afford us the opportunity to get past the time trap.

Raya Morag is an assistant professor of cinema studies at the Department of Communication & Journalism, the Hebrew University, Israel. Her research and publications deal with trauma discourse and feminist-corporeal theory. Her book Defeated Masculinity: Post-Traumatic Cinema in the Aftermath of War is forthcoming (P.I.E.-Peter Lang).

#### Notes

My thanks to the Levi Eshkol Institute for Social, Economic and Political Research in Israel, the Hebrew University, for funding this research.

- 1. During the first Intifada (December 1987 to December 1989) 271 Israeli citizens were killed by Palestinians. During the second Intifada (September 2000 to July 2006) 696 were killed. http://www.btselem.org and http://www1.idf.il/dover/site.
- 2. Raya Morag, "The Living Body and the Corpse: Israeli Documentary Cinema and the Intifadah," Journal of Film & Video (forthcoming).
- 3. Idith Zertal, *Death and the Nation: History, Memory, Politics* (Or-Yehuda, Israel: Dvir, 2002, in Hebrew).
- 4. Hal Foster, "Death in America," October 75 (Winter 1996): 46-48.
- 5. Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
- 6. Janet Walker, *Trauma Cinema: Documenting Incest and the Holocaust* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
- 7. Caruth, Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History, 7, 11, 17.
- 8. Marianne Hirsch, "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory," *Yale Journal of Criticism* 14, no. 1 (2001): esp. 9–12.
- 9. Walker, Trauma Cinema, 17-19.
- Barbie Zelizer and Stuart Allan, Journalism after September 11 (London: Routledge 2003); Lilie Chouliaraki, "Watching 11 September: The Politics of Pity," Discourse & Society 15, no. 203 (2004): 185–198.
- 11. Martin Heiddeger quoted in Karl Heinz Bohrer, *Suddenness: On the Moment of Aesthetic Appearance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994): 49, 65n45.
- 12. Bohrer, Suddenness: On the Moment of Aesthetic Appearance, vii.
- 13. Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life, and Other Essays* (New York: Phaidon, 1964), 5.
- Security Groove, 2 min., 51 sec., http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lFQnMo 0C83Q (accessed October 14, 2007).
- 15. Ned Schantz, "Telephonic Film," Film Quarterly 56, no. 4 (Summer 2003): 23-35.
- 16. Michel Chion, The Voice in Cinema (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
- 17. Morag, "The Living Body and the Corpse: Israeli Documentary Cinema and the *Intifadah*."
- Rick Altman, ed., Sound Theory, Sound Practice (New York: Routledge, 1992); Kaja Silverman, The Acoustic Mirror: The Female Voice in Psychoanalysis and Cinema (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Mary Ann Doane, "The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space," Yale French Studies 60 (1980): 33–50.
- Cathy Caruth, "An Interview with Jean Laplanche," *Postmodern Culture* 11, no. 2 (2001): 7.
- 20. Caruth, "An Interview with Jean Laplanche," 8.
- 21. Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1970), 41.
- 22. Doane, "The Voice in the Cinema: The Articulation of Body and Space," 44.
- Elizabeth Grosz, *Time Travels: Feminism, Nature, Power* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 131–152.