

*Guises of Transnationalism in Israel/Palestine:*

*A few notes on 5 Broken Cameras<sup>i</sup>*

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The discussion of Israeli cinema is governed, predominantly, by the perspective of national cinema. The dominant framework of analysis tends to be that of Zionism and, by and large, both in critical writing and exhibition contexts, a very clear dichotomy is maintained between Israeli and Palestinian cinemas and between Israeli cinema and cinemas of the Middle East. Such a governing perspective often excludes or distorts a critical discussion of the transnational in films that emerge both from Israel and Palestine.

The changes brought about by processes of globalisation to the production, circulation and reception of films around the world also shape contemporary cinema in Israel/Palestine to a considerable extent. Throughout the history of Palestinian cinema its production and exhibition contexts were distinctively transnational, while Israel's small-scale national film industry increasingly shifts towards transnational modes of production. The survival and the recent success of Israeli cinema, both internationally and domestically, is largely dependent upon co-production agreements, the involvement of European funders, and the global festival circuit.

Despite this prominent trend, only a few recent publications address Israeli cinema from a transnational perspective.<sup>ii</sup> This short article follows in a similar vein. It offers a critical discussion of the acclaimed documentary *5 Broken Cameras* (Emad Burnat and Guy Davidi, Israel/Palestine/France/Netherlands, 2011), whose joint Palestinian-Israeli direction and transnational context of production, challenge the national boundaries of both Israeli and Palestinian cinemas while, at the same time, problematizing the notion of the transnational.

As several scholars have pointed out, the term 'transnational cinema' requires conceptual clarification.<sup>iii</sup> Marked by multinational authorship, regional organisation, co-production funding mechanism and international distribution, the film easily fits into one of the major strands of what is often understood as transnational cinema.<sup>iv</sup> Scholarly analysis of such films often links contexts of production and exhibition with the films' content. My discussion suggests similar links by illustrating how the film's transnational context of production impinges on its mode of representation.

Beyond that, my analysis is informed by what Hegbee and Lim suggested to call 'critical transnationalism'. Hegbee and Lim call for a critical approach that would move away from a binary opposition of national/transnational. Such approach seeks not to replace the national category with that of the transnational but to critically explore the limitations of both concepts in particular local, regional and international trajectories. For the national "does not cease to exist, but continues to exert the force of its presence even within transnational film-making practices".<sup>v</sup> This is certainly the case in Israel/Palestine, where the national conflict shapes much of the Israeli and Palestinian experience and cultural expression. Moreover, when transnational cinema stretches beyond the boundaries of Europe or the West postcolonial power dynamics often come into play. Much of the analysis of diasporic and postcolonial cinema is often encompassed within the emerging field of transnational cinema.<sup>vi</sup> The Israeli-Palestinian national conflict is an integral part of the wider dynamics of the postcolonial geopolitical structure of the region. Both in the sense that Israel's colonialism is a type of Euro-colonialism and in relation to European and American intervention in the area. Indeed, much of the dynamics of cultural production in Israel/Palestine should be thought of in terms of colonial power and postcolonial effects.

My discussion of *5 Broken Cameras* therefore examines the intersection of the national and the postcolonial within the transnational framework. It questions the postcolonial power dynamics that inform mechanism of European intervention in film production across the region and the role Israel plays within it, as well as the wider effects global exhibition contexts have on film texts that emerge from Israel/Palestine.

Telling the story of five years of non-violent protest in the Palestinian village Bil'in, against the separation wall built by Israel, *5 Broken Cameras* could be defined, to use Daniel Miller's terms, as a 'transnational new documentary'.<sup>vii</sup> According to Miller, these are films that are typified, amongst other things, by being "products of transnational social communities... who are more connected by concerns for civil and human rights than concerns for national sovereignty".<sup>viii</sup> Co-directed by the Palestinian Emad Burnat and the Israeli Guy Davidi, *5 Broken Cameras* was produced within the context of political activism. Both filmmakers took active part in the protests. Burnat as one of the village members, and Davidi, a member in the Anarchists against the Wall movement, as part of the Israeli (and international) activists that supported the protest. While the film is open to several interpretations, I will address this later, its political position in support of civil and human rights is clear. Moreover, in this case, despite the Israeli institutional involvement, all those involved in making the film - Europeans, Palestinians or Israelis - form a kind of transnational social community insofar as they share the same political agenda - to end of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Yet, beyond this shared political agenda, a detailed look at the film's production context reveals complex power dynamics that invite wider questions about the ways Palestinians and Israelis shape their so-called 'national' story in a transnational context.

The film's transnational production context is linked primarily to Europe. Its production emerged out of *Greenhouse* - a regional, European-funded, documentary training programme and was fully realized through a co-production agreement that included Israeli Television Channel 8, Dutch national television and the French company Algeria Productions.

In addition to co-production agreements between two nation-states (from which Israel, and not Palestine, can currently benefit) recent years have also seen an increase in Western, largely European, support of film production in the area, in the form of aid and development schemes. Against the backdrop of very uneven cinematic infrastructures across the Middle East, much of European intervention in film production in the region

emerged in the mid-2000s, in the wake of the Oslo Accords and shares its political and ideological premises. As Irit Neidhardt noted, the majority of these initiatives took the form of funding schemes and training programmes, and articulated their aims in terms of democratising and professionalising Arab media and film practitioners, and building a dialogue towards peace in the region. Such agenda often resulted in programmes that prioritized Israeli-Palestinian co-operations, which were often perceived by Palestinian filmmakers as imposed and were claimed to mask the imbalanced power structure between the parities.<sup>ix</sup>

The *Greenhouse* project, where *5 Broken Cameras* was developed, is one poignant example. The project defines itself as a development programme for documentary filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa. It aims to promote filmmaking in countries of the region deprived of a cinematic infrastructure, by providing training and mentoring, and by facilitating opportunities to pitch to international funders. In addition it clearly declares a political agenda of promoting cooperation between Arabs and Israelis, as a route to reconciliation.

The programme was conceived in 2005, by David Fisher, the then acting director of Israeli New Fund for Cinema and Television. Under the umbrella of the EU-led scheme MEDIA, the Israeli New Fund partnered with the Ankara Cinema Association (Turkey), The Dutch production company VOF and the Spanish production company Zebra Productions, to form a Euro-Mediterranean initiative. At a later stage, an independent film school in Morocco, ESAV, and Canal France International – CFI joined as partners. Starting operations in 2006, *Greenhosue* is since shaping up as a relatively sizable hub for documentaries in the area.<sup>x</sup> *5 Broken Cameras* is in many ways one of their flagship projects. As stated on the programme’s website:

“It is a true reflection of what the program is all about - promoting cinematic excellence, fostering multicultural dialogue and cooperation, and empowering filmmakers from the Middle East and North Africa to bring their powerful stories and social messages to audiences around the world”.<sup>xi</sup>

There are forms of Eurocentric patronage and self-evident power dynamics underlying a project like *Greenhouse*, which reveal the ideological hegemonies that the transnational context replicates, if not produces anew. The project, set as a Euro-Mediterranean collaboration, reflects the dominant postcolonial power-structure across the region by structurally reproducing the binary opposition of developed/developing countries. The aligning of Israeli (and Turkish) institutions with European countries like Spain, the Netherlands and France, to be the facilitators who 'empower' and 'professionalize' filmmakers from countries defined by the project as deprived, such as Algeria, Jordan, Palestine, Syria or Tunisia, speaks to the European imaginary that occupies much of Israel's self-perception.<sup>xii</sup> Moreover, the underlining premise of the project, that couples financial support to a kind of educational process – in this case cinema professionalization – seems to reinforce the lingering effect of cultural imperialism that still reside in the region. It echoes not only much of Western foreign policy in the region but also the dominant approach within the Israeli film industry towards fostering filmmaking by minority communities, including the Palestinian citizens of Israel.<sup>xiii</sup>

Within such a power structure, it is worth questioning the interventionist approach that projects like *Greenhouse* exercise, both politically and cinematically. Politically, while there is much to be said for the merit of promoting Israeli-Arab dialogue as a route to reconciliation, the framework within which this dialogue is prompted is crucially important. If that framework seems to be replicating the power structure in the area, how fruitful can this dialogue really be? Within the disciplinary discourse of cinema that projects like *Greenhouse* claim to represent, what are the terms, concepts and aesthetics that define 'quality' world films? What are the criteria that constitute the cinematic 'professionalism' it seeks to instill in the deprived filmmakers of the region?

While the film's publicity material seems to suggest it was born out of a spontaneous self-initiated dialogue between the filmmakers, *Greenhouse*, as the framework, had an instrumental role in setting up and shaping the film. The idea to pitch the film was initiated (unofficially) by *Greenhouse* and so was the suggestion to team the two

directors together.<sup>xiv</sup> From the (rather limited) position of a researcher, the story of the production I have managed to piece together points to quite fractious dialogue between the filmmakers, whose vision of the film, and their account of its production, is somewhat different.

Burnat presented to *Greenhouse* a film project entitled *Phil in Bil'in*, which was based on footage of the protest he shot over the years, partly as a strategy of activism. The film's aim was to document the protest in the village by focusing on a friend and fellow village member whose role in leading the protest was central, and who was subsequently killed by the Israeli army. In the course of the training programme in *Greenhouse*, and under the mentoring of a Dutch mentor and Davidi's position as co-director, the film's concept transformed to be Burnat's personal perspective - looking both at the political protest and on his own family. Burnat became in many ways the protagonist of the film. Davidi's directional role, as well as other aspects of the transnational production context, were rendered invisible within the film's text.

Indeed, the final film tells the story of the political struggle from Burnat's point of view, or more specifically through the gaze of his cameras. The cameras, five of which were broken in the course of the film, in clashes with Israeli soldiers, act as a metaphoric motif which structures the film. So that the film's duration follows the 'life' of each camera, as the events that it witnessed are narrated in voice over by Burnat. The narration is personal, intimate and reflective, and positions at its centre the relationship of Burnat with his youngest boy Gibreel, whose birth in 2005 coincided with the beginning of the protest. Gibreel, through the gaze of the camera and his father's reflections, becomes a symbolic character that channels much of the film's meditations over the harsh realities and prospects for the future.

Burnat was reluctant first to adopt the personal angle. In an interview to the *New York Times* blog *Carperbagger* he said:

"The story was already there, but to put myself at the center of the film, to use my accident, and my house arrest, it was difficult for me. Because when you talk

about yourself, just yourself, you have many pressures from people: why you? There are many people who lose their life, that lose their future. So why should I make myself in the center? But Guy told me, 'If you are in the center of the story, it will be more strong'. I respected that, but this decision was hard to take".<sup>xv</sup>

Burnat's ethical considerations are important. Part of the consequences of a Palestinian society caught up in what seems a perpetual struggle, is that both the suffering and the heavy individual sacrifices made for the sake of the struggle are 'collectivized'. That we all share in the collective suffering is a central notion to the mythology that justifies the struggle and in many ways enables one to endure it. In this context, elevating one's own individual suffering by making it the focus of the film, may not only seem morally and ethically wrong, but may also mask the particular social dynamics in operation.

Davidi articulated the motivation to adopt the personal angle both in terms of political empowerment and artistic merit. As he explained to me in an interview:

"Politically,...this is an interesting choice because it shows that joint (Palestinian and Israeli) actions do not have to be exploitative, as these are often thought of by Palestinians, but that we can have joint works that empower the voice of the occupied... Artistically, this was the only way this story could be told" (my emphasis).<sup>xvi</sup>

The fractious nature of the dialogue between the two filmmakers is revealed most vividly in their disagreement over the construction of the film's voice. Davidi positions himself as the film's storyteller. In an interview with me, as in many interviews in international media, he explained that under his direction additional scenes were filmed, which were carefully and cinematically constructed, and that the film's commentary, that mediates the images for the audience and articulates the film's central message – the need for healing and reconciliation - was written by him. Davidi explains:

"Emad's language is the activist language of the political struggle, I tried to bring another language into it...a more artistic language...the film is not structured as a film that is supposed to show to the world the wrongs in Bil'in, which was how Emad intended it to be and the way he still presents the film all over the world...

but it is structured as some kind of an internal dialogue between Emad and creator, or God if you like...if Emad would have written the texts himself, or if it was written in the spirit of Emad's language, it would have been very different...".<sup>xvii</sup>

Burnat, resisting Davidi's discourse of empowerment, asserted his ownership of the story, and indeed of the film's voice, on numerous occasions. "While the text is written by him" he replied in response to my question "the voice is mine. It came from me, this is my story and my experience of living under the occupation".<sup>xviii</sup>

In view of such different perspectives one might be forgiven for questioning *Greenhouse's* celebration of the film as an achievement of multicultural dialogue and cooperation. More importantly, the intersection of the political and the cinematic here deserves a closer critical look, especially the rendering of the 'personal perspective', within the discourse of empowerment, almost axiomatically as the professional - or artistic - way of telling this story. It seems to point to a kind of regime of preferred aesthetic and mode of representation that has been developing in recent years within the transnational film context, and to which national and regional cinemas are increasingly subjected. As Thomas Elsaesser pointed out "the dynamics of globalization affected not only the type of commodity 'world cinema' represents but also what subject matters and styles prevail".<sup>xix</sup> National conflicts, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict specifically, is one the prominent subject matters of World Cinema and the personal perspective one of its prevailing styles.

Of course, there is nothing wrong with the personal perspective in and of itself. The subjective documentary, typified by an inscription of the self into the historical and the political world has been one of the most prolific modes of documentary in the post-Vérité era.<sup>xx</sup> Since the 1980s, in the wake of new histories, identity politics and postcolonial critique it has been an important mode of self-representation for filmmakers from various marginalized communities. Much of what is often called New Palestinian Cinema is marked by the personal perspective, as is also the case with many



Israeli documentaries since the 1990s.

Yet, when the prominence of the form produces a kind of uniformity, and when the personal perspective is manufactured by film institutions in order to authenticate a political story for international audiences, does it not run the risk of turning from a case of 'self-representation' to a case of, to use Thomas Elsaesser terms, 'self-othering'? Hagin and Yosef turn to Elsaesser's notion of 'self-othering' to explain the success of some Israeli films in the world markets. While their focus is placed on Israeli Queer cinema their claim concurs with documentaries such as *5 Broken Cameras*. "World cinema", Elsaesser is pointing out, "invariably implies the look from outside and thus conjures up the old anthropological dilemma of the participant observer being presented with the mirror of what the 'native' thinks the other, the observer wants to see".<sup>xxi</sup> Thus, the transnational conditions themselves, in many ways, create a "cinema that 'others' the other, even if the other colludes in the othering".<sup>xxii</sup> Within the documentary form, the political impulse that typified Third Cinemas, or the radicalism of claiming the personal as political that underlined much of feminist cinema, seem to be turning, in the context of a more popular World Cinema, to a kind of folklore of personal stories. Often, as is the case in *5 Broken Cameras*, the effectiveness of the personal perspective in representing a (collective) political story to international audiences is taken by filmmakers as simple truism.

Randall Halle expressed similar concerns about the way notions of 'quality' and 'art' cinema, once emerging from and related to European national cinemas, have been reincarnated within the for-profit transnational network of festivals, in the form of postcolonial politics. Like Elsaesser, Halle suggests that "the coproduction strategy runs the risk of instituting a cycle of Orientalism, offering Euro-American audiences tales that they want to hear".<sup>xxiii</sup> Halle calls attention to a type of transnational co-production which he calls the 'quasi-national'. These are films in which the transnational context of production plays little explicit role in the films' narrative, appearance and texture. In cases of films that involve the 'non-West', Halle argues, the transnational is masked to produce a seemingly national text. These films acquire, in the post-filmic space, an

“ethnographic weight”, when Western institutions of promotion and criticism encourage the reading of the films as “vehicles whereby one gains insight and access to foreign cultures”.<sup>xxiv</sup>

In the case of *5 Broken Cameras* in addition to masking of the transnational context of production in the film’s text already described, in the transnational and national post-filmic space the film was trapped within the confinement of the national conflict. Around the nomination of the film to the Academy Award a familiar battle over the film’s national ‘identity’ erupted, whereby the film was appropriated as Israeli or Palestinian by different parties.<sup>xxv</sup> Many of the film’s critics took issue with the Israeli institutional support the film received, which seemingly disqualified it from truly representing the Palestinian cause. As a collaborative project, *5 Broken Cameras* comes at a time when there is a tendency to favour separation from Israel, as part of an anti-colonial struggle for cultural autonomy, and to some, as part of the campaign for cultural boycott. Such critical debates highlighted the national - Palestinian or Israeli - elements of the films and encouraged the reading of it as a national text.

Moreover, while the professional training that shaped *5 Broken Cameras* into a subjective documentary added layers of construction and narration, which move the filmic text further away from the pro-filmic events, the film was promoted, in several exhibition contexts, as an authentic story; a window on Palestinian reality made by an unprofessional filmmaker, who simply documented the events in his village.

Although the marketing or the reception of the film was not identical all over the world, Michael Moore’s endorsement of the film and the debate over it in the US media is a poignant example of the masking processes at operation. Introducing the film at the prestigious festival Doc NYC, Moore presented the film simultaneously as a realistic document of Palestinian life, which he suggested should be used as educational material for every household in the US, and as a work of art. Romanticizing the notion of self-representation, Moore concluded his introduction by stressing the following:

“What makes this film even more amazing [is that] it is not made by a documentary filmmaker. It’s a farmer. So the film you are about to watch is made by a farmer, with no training whatsoever...”<sup>xxvi</sup>

Moore is undoubtedly aware of the constructed nature of the film, of its second author and of Burnat’s training, but he chooses, presumably as an act of political strategy, to mask them. This seems to me an extension of the interventionist approach in the post-filmic space. Such masking and simplification, and indeed Moore’s presentation of Burnat only as ‘a farmer’, produces the cultural distance of the ethnographic gaze and reduces political ingenuity and strategy of activism to a kind of naïvete associated, in Orientalist discourses, with the non-Western other.

In conclusion, what can we infer from the case of *5 Broken Cameras* in relation to transnational cinema that emerges from Israel/Palestine ?

On one level, the arena of world cinema, coupled with European funding mechanism, opened up a transnational sphere in which cinema from Israel and Palestine, if not from the Middle East in general, could be produced and exhibited ‘outside’ of the restrictions of the national space and the confinements of national conflicts. The vision of *Greenhouse*, seeking to create a space for dialogue and cooperation for filmmakers from across the region holds a promise which concurs with a widespread view of transnational cinema as reflecting, or constructing, a space in between cultures, that implies a kind of hybridity and openness transcending essentialist national identities.

Yet, as the case of *5 Broken Cameras* illustrates, the transnational sphere - both in production and exhibition - often carries with it the legacies of colonial power dynamics, cultural hegemonies and national ideologies. Here the potential for a multicultural dialogue has been undermined by a replication of a colonial and neo-colonial power dynamics. The notion of empowerment which was at the base of the *Greenhouse* programme, Davidi’s articulation of his role as the storyteller and the promotion of the film by Moore point to a neo-Orientalist discourse of othering that locks the Palestinian in the position of the subaltern native, and aligns Israel with a

European/Western position of cultural superiority. Thus, the Israeli national force exerts itself here not in the form of occupation of land and military colonialism, which are the film's thematic concerns, but in the form of the European imaginary that informs much its dominant discourse. This kind of Eurocentrism, which typified the Zionist discourse from its onset, lives on in contemporary Israeli neo-liberal discourses of gentrification, professionalization and empowerment both on the right and left of Israeli politics.

Finally, the transnational mode of narration of *5 Broken Cameras* that moulded complex and collective Palestinian/Israeli politics into a familiar Western formula - the journey of one individual towards healing and reconciliation - reflects a process of self-othering in which both Israelis and Palestinians partake. "This self-othering", Elsaesser suggests, "might in fact stand in the way of encountering the otherness of the other".<sup>xxvii</sup> Ultimately, in this case, while the mode of representation rendered the film as a 'universal' story, and accounts for its international success, the film leaves us oblivious to the pressures and social dynamics within the Palestinian society, the complex relationship between political activism and representation and indeed the historical specificities of the situation.

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<sup>ii</sup> See, for example, the analysis of Israeli films in the context of feminist exilic transnational cinema in Yosefa Loshitzky, *Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen* (USA: University of Texas Press, 2001) pp: 85-86. The challenge posed to the boundaries of Israeli cinema by the inclusion of Palestinian films in the revised edition of Ella Shohat, *Israeli Cinema* (London: I B Tauris, 2010). The analysis of Israeli queer cinema in the context of world cinema and the global festival circuit in Boaz Hagin and Raz Yosef 'Festival

- Exoticism: The Israeli Queer Film in a Global Context', *GLQ: A Journal for Lesbian and Gay Studies* Vol 18, No. 1 (2011), pp. 161-178. For a discussion on the tension between the transnational and the national in Palestinian cinema see Livia, Alexander, 'Is There a Palestinian Cinema: The National and the Transnational in Palestinian Film Production', in Rebecca Stein and Ted Swedenburg (eds.) *Palestine, Israel and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005), pp.150-174.
- iii See for example: Mette Hjort, 'On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism' in Natasa Durovicova and Kathleen Newman (eds) *World Cinema Transnational Perspectives*, (New York: Routledge, 2010); Deborah, Shaw, 'Deconstructing and Reconstructing "Transnational Cinema"', in S. Dennison (ed) *Contemporary Hispanic Cinema: Interrogating Transnationalism in Spanish and Latin American Film* (Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2013); Will Higbee and Song Hwee Lim, 'Concepts of transnational cinema: towards a critical transnationalism in film studies', *Transnational Cinemas*, Vol 1, No. 1 (2010); Chris Berry, "What is Transnational Cinema: thinking from the Chinese situation" *Transnational Cinemas*, Vol 1, No. 2 (2010). pp. 111-127.
- iv See: Shaw, 2013.
- v Higbee and Lim, 201, P.10. See also: Andrew Higson, 'The Limiting Imagination of National Cinema' in Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden (eds.) *Transnational Cinema: The Film Reader*, (London: Routledge, 2006); Elizabeth Ezra and Terry Rowden 'General Introduction: What is Transnational Cinema', *Ibid*, p. 3-4.
- vi See: Will Higbee, 'Locating the Postcolonial in transnational cinema: the place of Algerian émigré directors in contemporary French film', *Modern and Contemporary France*, Vol. 15, No. 1(2007). pp. 51-64.
- vii See: Daniel, Miller "Transnational collaborations for art and impact in new documentary cinema", *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media*, eJump Cut, No. 54. p. 2 (Fall 2012).
- viii *Ibid*. One of the examples of Miller's analysis is *Budrus* (Julia Bacha, 2009) which topic is similar to that of *5 Broken Cameras*. The film tells the story of the non-violent protest against Israel separation wall in the village Budrus.
- ix See: Irit, Neidhardt, 'Co-Producing the Memory. Cinema Production between Europe and the Middle East', *Global Media Journal (German Edition)*, Vol. 1, No.1, (Spring 2011) (online edition: [www.globalmediajournal.de](http://www.globalmediajournal.de)). pp.4-5.
- x Greenhouse was thus far awarded about 3 million Euros, by three separate grants from the EU, most recently Euromed Audiovisual . Additional support has been received from Canal France International, the Cyprus Ministry of Culture, and a Cypriot independent documentary organization. 85 film projects have so far participated in the programme, 19 of which have been already completed, and more than 100 young filmmakers participated in training workshops. See: <http://www.ghfilmcentre.org>.
- xi *Ibid*.
- xii For an analysis of Israel's European imaginary and its manifestation in Israeli cinema see Shohat, 2010.
- xiii For a discussion of funding policies of films by Palestinian citizens in Israel and of the discourse of Palestinian cinema within the Israeli film industry see: Yael Friedman, *Palestinian cinema in Israel: negotiating conflicting discourses*. Unpub. Ph.D. thesis. (London: University of Westminster, 2010).
- xiv Guy Davidi, *Skype* interview, 17 June 2013. Sigal Yehuda, *Skype* interview, 10 April 2013.
- xv Larry Rohter "A Documentary About a Palestinian Village Sets Off a Dispute" *The Carpetbagger: the Award Season Blog of the New York Times*, February 13, 2013. <http://carpetbagger.blogs.nytimes.com> (retrieved, 4 August 2013).
- xvi Guy Davidi, *Skype* interview, 17 June 2013.
- xvii *Ibid*. See also interview with Larry Rohter *Carpetbagger*.
- xviii Email correspondence, 8 August 2013. See also Thomas, White "Seven Years, '5 Broken Cameras': Documenting the Occupation" online article, February, [www.Documentary.org](http://www.Documentary.org), (retrieved 6 August 2013).
- xix See: Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005) p. 509.

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<sup>xx</sup> See: Michael Renov, *The Subject of Documentary* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004). pp. 176-177.

<sup>xxi</sup> Elsaesser, 2005 p. 510.

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Halle, Randall "Offering tales they want to hear: Transnational European Film Funding and Neo-Orientalism" in Rosalind Galt and Karl Schoonover (eds.) *Global Art Cinema: New Theories and Histories* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) p. 304.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid. p. 316.

<sup>xxv</sup> Official Israel, and Zionist press around the world, were quick to appropriate it as an Israeli film. Palestinian media, including the valued independent online news-site *Ma'an* reported it as "Palestinian Documentary". Al Jazeera's headlines read "a Palestinian and Israeli films compete on the Oscar, and many reports quoted Burnat, who, in response to Israeli claim of the film as Israeli said: "this is 100% Palestinian film". The controversy arose despite the fact that the award, unlike the Oscar's Best Foreign Language Award, is not tied to a national category, and film is not required to represent a nation state.

<sup>xxvi</sup> See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ge8VFQbO3Uo>. Last retrieved 19.8.2013

<sup>xxvii</sup> Elsaesser, 2005, p. 509.