

Humor Mekuvvan: Research Journal in Humor Studies
Issue 3 - January 2014

Abstracts

*Following are abstracts in English
to the articles of
Humor Mekuvvan – Issue no. 3 (January 2014)*

*>Please press here<
for abstract
of the Hebrew version.*

Holocaust Humor: Satirical Sketches in "*Eretz Nehederet*"

Liat Steir-Livny*

Abstract

For many years, Israeli culture recoiled from dealing with the Holocaust in humorous or satiric texts. Traditionally, the perception was that a humoristic approach would threaten the sanctity of its memory, or would evoke feelings of disrespect towards the subject, hurt the survivors' feelings. From the 1980's onward, the official agents of Holocaust memory continued to use those tones, but in tandem a new unofficial path of remembrance began taking shape. It is an alternative and subversive path, which seeks to remember, but differently. Texts which integrate the Holocaust and humor are a major aspect of this new memory. This paper analyses the representations of the Holocaust in satirical sketches in "*Eretz Nehederet*" ("Wonderful Country," Channel 2, Keshet, 2003-2013). It uncovers how artists, who are second and third generation to the Holocaust, use this combination as a rhetorical strategy, which reveals a new intellectual, ideological and aesthetic point of view on the collective memory of the Holocaust and estranges traditional discourses of the Holocaust in Israeli culture.

Keywords: Holocaust, Humor, Satire, Second Generation Holocaust survivors, Third Generation Holocaust survivors, Collective memory.

* Dr. Liat Steir-Livny, The Open University & Sapir Academic College, Israel

Enjoyment Opposers In Cinema and Theatre Comedy

Arie Sover*

Abstract

In this research I am trying to define a new concept which I shall call **Enjoyment Opposer**, referring to verbal or visual content incorporated into comic situations which offend or disturb the viewer's enjoyment.

The widely accepted claim towards humor in general and cinema or theater comedy in particular is that if the situation, the scene or the movie is funny, then it is also enjoyable.

In my research I challenge this assumption and try to prove that not all that is funny in cinema comedy, or in humor in general, generates complete enjoyment. There are comic situations that are only partially enjoyable and at times, even cause embarrassment to the point of adversely affecting our enjoyment. It is these types of comic situations that I term **Enjoyment Opposers** since they operate contrary to the function for which they were intended, that is to cause the viewer to laugh and enjoy. It has to be noted that **Enjoyment Opposers** are both culture-dependent and contingent upon the viewer's personality structure. Therefore, what one person perceives as an **Enjoyment Opposer** might be understood differently by another. The research findings reveal various types of **Enjoyment Opposers** in relation to prohibitions and taboos, such as the environment, religion, sex and verbal obscenities. In my research I focus mainly on comedy film although the results are also relevant to theater and all types of various comic shows.

Key Words: comedy, cinema, theater, humor, Laughter, enjoyment.

* Dr. Arie Sover, senior lecturer at the Ashkelon Academic College, and The Open University in Israel; Editor in Chief, Israeli Journal of Humor Research; Chair. Israeli Society for Humor Studies | ariesover@gmail.com

Gentle Humor and Camouflaged Satire in Talmudic Stories

Isaiah Ben-Pazi*

Abstract

Traditional readings of Talmudic stories tend to ignore humoristic aspects especially if they serve to criticize the world of the sages. From the point of view of the traditional reader, the humor and satire in these writings are always pointed at a world outside that of the sages. Through in an analysis of one of these stories, the article offers an opposing view, one in which the narrators of the Talmud did not hesitate to use satirical devices and humor as a means to criticize their own world, the world of the sages themselves. But these narrators, who saw themselves as an inseparable part of the Talmudic scholarly world, did not want or were not able to offer their criticism in a frank and open manner but instead sought to present it by subterfuge, using gentle humor and camouflaging the satire. In order to enable readers to see the extent of the irony and the satire in these stories, the author draws attention to the different veiled references that the narrators embedded into this text.

Key Words: Humor; Satire; Talmudic stories; Traditional readings; Criticism

* Dr Isaiah Ben-Pazi is a lecturer in the Department of Jewish Creative Thought in the Ashkelon College and in the Department for Basic Studies in Judaism in Bar Ilan University.

Comic Effects as Stylistic Aspects of Meir Shalev Journalistic Writing

Dr. Doly Levi*

Abstract

Comic effects were examined from the following aspect: Paradox (using the contrasting language), Grotesque language that presents an idea beyond the boundaries of reasonability and Litotes that devalue the object of criticism. The innocent description, the created absurdity and the exaggeration attract the reader's attention, creates an incongruence that also serves the comic humoristic dimension bordering the ironic.

The innocent texts describe common reality to the writer and the readers, but actually it surprises them because the descriptions take them to unexpected places. The readers have to use their cognitive abilities to decipher the hints of humor and understand the hidden motives in the text. In this way Shalev makes them smile.

Key Words: Paradox, Grotesque, Exaggeration, Humor, Irony

* Dr. Doly Levi, Levinsky College of Education; The Open University

The Use of Humor in Written Israeli Advertisements

Irit Zeevi* | Arie Sover**

Abstract

The following study examines the use of humor in written Israeli advertisements during the last two decades. The advertisements' design and messages are based on the target audience's key values and norms during different times and in different situations (Lemish, 2000; Weimann, 2000; Zeevi, 2010). Hence, advertisements sell more than products; they also reflect changes and explain dominant areas in any society (Jhally, 1995; Zeevi, 2010). The wish to decode humor is based on the assumption that despite being a universal phenomenon, it is cast into the patterns of the society in which it was created, and touches its life, beliefs and anxieties. Humor is created in the gap between the expected and reality, challenging the recipient's cognitive abilities to solve it (Berger, 2013; Davies, 2012; Sover, 2013). The solution provides the recipient with pleasure and satisfaction and may become connected in his mind with purchase of the product. The purpose of this study is to examine linguistic and visual signs in advertisements creating humor in order to describe humor as an instrument in the advertising genre and its functions. This area has not yet been examined comprehensively in Israel.

Keywords: Advertising, Humor, Linguistic signs, Visual signs, Israeli society.

* Dr. Irit Zeevi, is head of Hebrew language Department in Oranim Academic College and a lecturer in the Department of Communication, Emek Yezreel Academic College | Iritzee@gmail.com

** Dr. Arie Sover, senior lecturer at the Ashkelon Academic College, and The Open University in Israel; Editor in Chief, Israeli Journal of Humor Research; Chair, Israeli Society for Humor Studies | ariesover@gmail.com