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Abstracts

“I am Completely Ordinary”: Jewishness, Israeliness, and Whiteness as Identity Anchors in Ethiopian-Israeli Students’ Techniques for Coping with Racism

Shula Mola

This article investigates the mechanisms used by Ethiopian-Israeli students in Israeli high schools to cope with racism. The findings presented are based on semi-structured, in-depth interviews with students that reveal the manner in which they attempt to integrate into Israeli society. The main finding is that in order to cope with racist attitudes toward them, these students make daily attempts—sometimes involving self-alienation and denial of self—to present themselves as completely “ordinary”, by anchoring their narrative in Jewishness, Israeliness, and whiteness. The author main premise is that the chief responsibility for changing the dynamics of exclusion and racism lies with adults, specifically teachers; and thus exposing teachers to how exclusion operates and to the coping techniques developed by students to deal with exclusion would make a significant contribution to the provision of equal and fair opportunities for Ethiopian students in the Israeli school system.

Choosing Homeschooling: Implications and Consequences for Mothers

Avishag Edri and Henriette Dahan-Kalev

In almost all cases where a decision is made to homeschool children, it is the woman who will be the primary caregiver. The purpose of this study is to examine which partner initiated the choice to homeschool and what the implications of this choice are for mothers. The study was conducted by analyzing 27 interviews with mothers of homeschooled children and online forums on this subject. The study findings indicate that in most of the cases, it is the mother who initiates homeschooling, based on a desire to be with the children. However, an analysis of the findings shows that the choice to keep children at home at a younger age, before compulsory education, is sometimes initiated and encouraged by the father. Social expectations, glass ceilings for women, and wage gaps cannot be ignored, as they all serve to reinforce the situation in which mothers are mandated as primary caregivers for children in homeschooling.

***Borat*—Humor and the Epiphany of “the Real” in the Documentary Film Genre**

Rachel Quastel

This article presents a psychoanalytic-political reading of the 2006 movie *Borat*. It focuses on the traumatic sense of alienation the movie engenders in its participants and viewers, and positions the movie as a subversive text in the context of the documentary film genre, especially in light of the post-modern loss of the terms “truth” and “reality” as essential signs. As an alternative to these problematic terms, use is made of Lacan’s “the Real”—which relates to human experiences that cannot be submerged and integrated into the social order—to analyze those moments of alienation in

the film as a metamorphosis of humor into trauma and thus as a transition into the dimension of the Real. This shift enables Borat to undermine the rhetorical mask not only of his interviewees, but also of his viewers, to the point of absurdity and grotesquery, and so to remove the Western-ideological façade of both groups. Through this undermining, the internal rift of the movie's subject—"American culture" and "Western culture"—is revealed, and particularly the gaps between official liberal ideology and the realities of patronization, racism, and violence it conceals. The second section of the article analyzes Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir* (2008) and Henry Joost's and Ariel Schulman's *Catfish* (2010), as examples of other documentary films that afford the viewer the same sense of penetrating the dimension of the Real, that is, what was once known as "reality."

Motherhood as a Cultural Construct: A Jungian Comparative Analysis of Russian and Persian Folktales

Sarit Bar Zaken

This article presents patterns of motherhood as expressions of cultural constructs, as they arise from a comparative analysis of Russian and Persian folktales. The presented thesis offers an understanding of culturally distinctive maternal attributes through a Jungian reading of folktales that was specially developed for the present research. Ten folktales, five Russian and five Persian, were investigated. The analysis included an interpretation of the archetypes, a rereading of the folktales using the study's unique interpretative framing, and an analysis of four aspects representing the mother: the feminine aspect; the introverted masculine aspect; the elementary (accepting) aspect; and the transformative aspect (which drives change). The findings show that the mother figure represented in the Russian folktales is characterized by accentuated femininity, often seen as negative, ruthless, and devoid

of typical maternal attributes. The masculine aspect is characterized by self-centeredness, lacking external displays of affection, critical of the child, and demanding restraint and task achievement. The maternal character operates mainly in a transformative mode, that is, she urges the child to change. By contrast, the Persian tales illustrate the mother figure with accentuated maternity and suppressed femininity, presented in a positive light. The transformative and elementary components are in a state of equilibrium, that is, the mother accepts the child, but also encourages the child to change. The masculine aspect is characterized by moderate selfishness, demonstrative displays of affection, didactics, and child guidance, but at times appears cruel and violent towards the child. This study offers a distinctive interpretation that facilitates understanding of the cross-cultural differences that are associated with motherhood as manifested in folktales. The insights provided can contribute to culturally-sensitive therapy and education.