

Cinema and the Representation of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Study of Geoffrey Burke “7 Days in Entebbe” and Hany Abu-Assad “Paradise Now”

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Abstract:

Much has been said in recent years about Hollywood and the systematic vilification of Arabs especially after 9/11 events. Yet, few studies could consider the deep-seated prejudice that Hollywood screen inflicted on Palestinians as Zionism as a cultural revivalist movement began to have great pressure worldwide. Hollywood treatment of the Jewish question did not only evince through mere focus on Israel’s present- day issues and concerns, but also revealed through portraying Palestinian revolutionists as terrorists and their objectives under the label “Palestinian terrorism”. Hollywood’s movie “7 Days in Entebbe” draws on a malign experience of many passengers mostly Jews who are held captives by “Palestinian terrorists” in attempt to free forty Palestinians imprisoned in Israel. Hany Abu-Assad “Paradise Now”, on the other hand, depicts the lives of many Palestinians who because of Israeli presence find their life torn between harsh living conditions and the uncertainty of the future. This article tries to expose cinematic representation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as to reveal Hollywood’s narrative of the conflict and the counter narrative exposed by Palestinian cinema.

Keywords: Hollywood; “7 Days in Entebbe”; terrorism; Israeli-Palestinian conflict; Palestinian cinema

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1- Introduction

Though terrorism is not a new phenomenon worldwide, the systematic depiction of terror as global threat and the uncertainties covering the psyche of the terrorists persist only after the 9/11 attacks. The events shook world opinion about terrorism and ways to resist it. As such, it was not a surprise to find different media spectacles along with political pressure groups stipulating an uneven animosity towards everything Arab and Muslim. Hollywood is not an exception. The temperament by which Hollywood screen viewed terror changed over time and in response to circumstances surrounding the American nation security and interests. Here, a reader can notice the shifting dynamics of the depiction of Arabs as terrorists from being supporters and peaceful partners to Americans and American security into sources of threat and a danger that should be eradicated at all expenses. The amount of positive depiction of Arabs and Muslims in pre-19/11 attacks decreased to an astonishing hatred and a negative association of Arabs and Muslims with terror, uncertainty and lack of logic and rational. These all became features of the post 9/11 Hollywood films that rendered the Arabs and Muslims the center of global threat.

The movie “7 Days in Entebbe” is only one example of the realities surrounding Hollywood vilification of Arabs and especially Palestinians. The movie takes a negative stance on the priority of giving equal treatment to both the Israeli and Palestinian questions. Instead, there is a nascent attempt to ignore any validity surrounding the Palestinian cause and surmounted attempts are deployed to show the world the courage, heroism and humanity of the Israeli soldiers against who are called “Palestinian terrorists”. In the meantime, the need to find counter narratives to these false representations was at the hub Palestinian filmmakers concerns. Hany Abu-Assad “Paradise Now”, among many other Palestinian films, tells the roots of Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a Palestinian perspective. This article probes into the history of Hollywood depiction of the Israeli character and the changing nature of these depictions as to justify Israeli cause. The article uses the film “7 Days in Entebbe” as a ground to trace the systematic processes by which Hollywood filmmakers strive to create a culture of threat surrounding Palestinians and the threat they present not only to the Israeli people but also to people of the western world. In addition, the article exposes the reader to the evolution of Palestinian cinema and the portrayal of Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Here, Hany Abu-Assad’s film “Paradise Now” is

used as a case study to see the conflict from a Palestinian perspective. These all add clarity to our understanding to a conflict that has religious as well as political roots.

1.1– “7 Days in Entebbe”: Israeli Character, Hollywood and “Palestinian terrorism”

The history of Hollywood depiction of the Israeli character is replete with systematic processes of portraying the Israeli character based on current circumstances surrounding American politics and security agenda. As such, the change and continuity surrounding these depictions is only a response to American policy that made the Israeli character moving from an outsider into insider images. As the war in terror intensified by the beginning of the 21st century, the American nation found in the new born Israeli claimed nation an ally to justify war on terror and the need to eradicate terrorist threats and presence worldwide. The film “7 Days in Entebbe” is only an example of Hollywood attempts to justify Israeli presence in Palestine at the expense of Palestinian cause.

1.1.1– Israeli Character Depiction in Hollywood Films

As terrorism forms the main thematic concern of this article, there is a need to conceptualize the term terrorism before I proceed to give an in-depth description of the portrayal of the Israeli character and its depiction throughout time. Much has been written about terrorism as a term. Yet, studies did not arrive at a conclusive definition of the term. Wight (as cited in Hanan,2016) states that the term terrorism embodies a set of ambiguities that make its definition “difficult to research... (as it) seems to defy definition”. For the purpose of finding a working definition, Wight further introduces four criteria that guide any reader or researcher in the field to properly put an act under the label terrorism. First; Wight insists that terrorism can be in a form of violent political communication that hinders parties from arriving at a peaceful settling of a dispute. Second; terrorism is an act of illegitimate violence targeted at a particular party. Third; terrorism is in most of the cases targets the states actions and socio-political institutions. And lastly; terrorism often results in the loss of lives or killing of persons who are not the recipients of the political message. As an act of violence, terrorism can be viewed as an action that causes threat and the loss of security to the state and its institutions. As terrorism forms the backbone of Hollywood depiction of Jews and Arabs, this section will focus on Jews rather than Arabs to see the shifting dynamics of these depictions from

negative into positive and from sources of violence into holders of peace. No doubt that 9/11 events are a milestone in shaping world opinion about terrorism and minorities residing in the United States. The Jews were not an exception. Their depiction changed over time from being outsiders into the American society into becoming insiders.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed an ever negative depiction of Jews. The history of Jews presence in the United States could be traced to the date 1881. This date signaled the time when Jews faced menacing threat from several Russian Anti-Jewish sects in Russia. This led many Jews, believed to exceed four millions and in a period of around 40 years, to relocate to the United State and began their life as Americans. The fact that these Jews assimilated to the American way of life and the process by which they prove to be well educated and suited to the development the country was undergoing, they were negatively portrayed in Hollywood screen. In films like Cohen's Advertising Scheme (1904) and Jewish Luck (1925), the Jews were seen as unfriendly, untrustworthy and often outsiders to the American community. According Hanan Omary (2016) Jews were seen as "sub-human, avaricious, unrefined, menacing cheat and / or dangerous subversive". Unlike Arabs and Muslims who were often depicted in positive images, the Jews undertook the lowest status in the imagination of Hollywood filmmakers and the American community.

Much change to these negative depictions occurred the time some Jews became part in Hollywood industry. As they were known as the Moguls, personalities like Jesse Lasky and Adolf Zukor stimulated an ever growing attention about the Jews and their place in the American society. Starting from the 1920's on, often sympathetic and insider images took the most of Hollywood depictions. Films like "Old Isaacs" (1908) and "Little Jewess" (1914) presented the Jews in a different status. The focus of the films centered on the Jewish family. Here the focus is on giving a portrayal of the Jewish family as having members who could have exhibited traits of morality, humanity and a distinguished character (Hanan,2016).

The period between 1930 and 1945 witnessed an ever decrease in Jews visibility in Hollywood screen (Hanan,2016). The most important reason for this was that many Jews wanted to assimilate into the American society and thus showed their desire to move from an insider portrayal into insider member to the American society. Another reason owed to

the activities of the House An-American Activities Committee which targeted Communist activities and made of both Jews filmmakers and actors the target of their activities. After World War II, however, Hollywood screen began another phase in Jews depiction on screen. This time the Jews depiction was positive. This was due to the result of the second world war where Jews suffered from Holocaust and its aftermath. Unlike previous negative depictions, the Jews now were seen as tragic victims of the event and the survivors were portrayed as heroes who did their best to save humanity from the evil of communism. To this point Michel Mart (as cited in Hanan,2016), in his article “Tough Guys and American Cold War Policy”, opined that Hollywood change of attitude towards Jews is accompanied by the way American policy views Israel as a nation. American policy encouraged the creation of the state of Israel and starved to strengthen the newborn nation as it was conceived as weak and in need of protection. This indeed made the Jews and Jewish created nation seem to be an insider to the American community and in most of the cases purely Western and not Middle Eastern.

Upon the declaration of the state of Israel, much of Hollywood depiction was sympathetic and supportive to all what is Jewish (Hanan,2016). What is notable about the period was that depictions did not only evince through systematic portrayal of Jews as humane and courage, but it also worked to focus on Israel history as to reveal the main tents of that society and inevitably justify Israeli cause and weaken the Palestinian cause. In addition, by the beginning of the 21st century, Hollywood depiction moved on the same line of thought and intensified its efforts to tell the world the bravery of the Israeli character as opposed to the Middle Eastern or Arab character. Most featured films began a systematic processes of justifying the moral question of the War on Terror especially after the 9/11 events. Here, Hollywood filmmakers attempted to prove the Israeli unquestionable moral superiority over what is known as Palestinian terrorism. The Jewish character is often viewed as a fighter against terrorism, and is shown as shooting and crying against terrorists threats and attacks. This is indeed what the movie “7 Days in Entebbe’ is all about. The movie is only one example of the many attempts to glorify the Jewish cause and de-humanize the Palestinian question and label it under the banner of mere “Palestinian terrorism”.

1.1.2– Hollywood Palestinian Terrorist Discourse: “7 Days in Entebbe”

The film “7 Days in Entebbe” is written by Geoffrey Burke. The storyline is based on a real event that is believed to shake world opinion about terrorism and the humanitarian character of the Israeli soldier. Greatly seen as a milestone in the history of Israel, the film is set in 1976 the time when two Germans and two Palestinian revolutionists hijacked a Jewish airplane in its way from Tel Aviv to France. The Hijackers directed the plane to Entebbe, Uganda, where they joined other extremists, portrayed as members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to demand the release of more than fifty two Palestinian prisoners in Israel. Back in Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli Prime minister; and Shimon Peres, the defense minister, were informed of the hijacking of the plane. Immediately, an order to the chief of the staff of the Israeli Defense Force and Peres of the necessity of taking an immediate action to rescue the hostages. By the beginning of the mission, negotiations resulted in the release of people of other nationalities who numbered about 48 non-Israeli while the rest of the Israeli were kept unreleased. The rescue mission operated in a long and much organized plan that showed the heroism of the Israeli soldier against the fragility and the lack of logic of the extremists. The mission is headed by Yoni Netanyahu who could successfully rescue more than 102 hostages while Yuni along with Bose and Kuhlman lost their life (Geoffrey Burke,2018).

The depiction of the Palestinian character in the “7 Days in Entebbe” is often guided by the discourse of Orientalism (Geoffrey Burke,2018). This discourse attempts to identify the Palestinian character with negative and often abusing traits. It is said that the Palestinian character come under the tyranny of the orient imagery which ignores all positive traits of the Middle Eastern peoples and concentrates on deploying the belief that the Palestinian man is lacking intelligence, eager to provoke violence and is Imbued with Anti-Western Islamic beliefs. “7 Days in Entebbe” attempts to limit the image of the Palestinian character into a terrorist who is prone to violence and eager to create danger at any time and place. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as depicted in the film as a terrorist organization, has a very organized and well-armed and equipped group who are very capable and dangerous foes. This implants the belief that not only these people, but also people of the Middle East are peoples who like violence and this violence becomes ingrained in the mentality of all people of the region. In the film, a group of Palestinian revolutionists is depicted on screen as having hijacked the airplane. The

hijacking of the plane is done in a very violent manner where we see passengers screamed at and the staff of the airline threatened along the way to Entebbe (Goeffrey Burke,2018).

Unlike pre 9/11 depictions of Arabs which surmounted to show Arabs as innocent and not knowing what to do, the film “7 Days in Entebbe” starved to prove the reverse and successfully convinced the viewer that these people have an organized plans and do all these plans on their own accord. The Palestinian terrorist, according to the film, is stated as having no mood to negotiate with the West, and often ready to make suicide the time he feels threatened. Also, these terrorists are strongly indoctrinated by beliefs of hatred and revenge to the extent that they are ready to die anytime circumstances necessitate. As a result, the actions of the Jews are seen as positive especially when it comes to extermination of the Palestinian terrorists. Extermination is also seen as the final and vital to end the savagery of the Palestinian terrorists as they present uncertainty of the future and retardation to human progress and civilization (Goeffrey Burke,2018). Moreover, the film treats the attack as phenomenon and no attempts were made to see the roots of this attack and the motives behind the terrorist’s plans. All what we see is few information about the life of Palestinians in the camps, and emphasis is given to Jews humanitarian appeals and their suffering against Palestinian threats. To this point, the real background behind Israeli–Palestinian conflict is subsidiary to the film while the attacks and its consequences take the most of the film concerns. In all, the film seeks to show Palestinians as ready to take revenge and kill the Jews and exterminate them (Goeffrey Burke,2018).

In contrast to the negative depictions of the Palestinian revolutionists, the Israeli soldier is constantly depicted as an American citizen who works for American safety and progress. This idea of seeing the Jewish nation as part of the American nation is reinforced as a result of the Israeli victory over Arabs in the wars of 1967 and 1973. The victorious Jewish nation is often seen as a partner to American nation victories against terrorism (Goeffrey Burke,2018). In this regard, the Israeli Military Intelligence, as opposed to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, is a body which is symbolic of the American soldier who worked the most for the redemption of the Palestinian terrorists and restore security to the Jewish and American nations. As opposed to the barbaric and often savagery of the Palestinian terrorists who are screened as coming from hostile and violent spaces, the Jewish soldier is screened as living the modern technology. Along all the film, we see the Israeli military as having more technology as opposed to the Palestinian

terrorist who often shows signs of primitiveness and inability to cope with the advances of the Israeli military bodies (Goefrey Burke,2018).

Moreover, there are other signs that reinforce the modernity and humanitarian character of the Israeli soldier. In a talk between the Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Defense Minister Shimon Peres, the Director Geoffrey Bruke shows that Yitzhak Rabin is responsible for peace-keeping, as he insists that his main concern is to save lives of the Israeli citizens and open negotiations with the terrorist as a humanitarian appeal and for keeping good relations with the Arab world (Goefrey Burke,2018). Another image that shows the difference between the Palestinian terrorist and the brave Israeli soldier is the time when commandos Yuni, one of the Isralei military staff, refuses to stay home and insists to his wife that it is his duty to join his comrades and ends his talk with these words, "I fight so that you dance" (Goefrey Burke,2018). Similar to Yuni case, people of other nationalities especially of the West are portrayed as having the same humanitarian appeals. For example, the French airline staff also refuses to leave Entebbe as negotiations result in the release of all people of other nationalities except Jews and insist to remain alongside with the Jews. Like Yuni, the staff insists that they would remain until all Jews become free. For them, this was a matter of ethic and humanity. In another incident, a woman mostly belongs to the Church refuses to leave and asked the terrorists to remain instead on of the Jews. This along other instances reinforce the belief that Western people and civilization are courageous and humane while Palestinians are a danger and threat to humankind. In addition, benevolence of the Israeli character is also evident by the end of the film. The time when the Israeli mission reaches the Entebbe airport, their mission is depicted differently. While Palestinian mission is accompanied by a very terrifying music signifying the threat and danger behind their mental and physical actions, the mission of the Israeli is screened accompanied by a very dynamic and energetic music and group dance as to show the credibility of the Israeli mission and the threat surrounding the Palestinian cause (Goefrey Burke,2018). All these representations are attempts to ignore the Palestinian question and give a boost to the Israeli power and hegemony in the Middle East. Along this atmosphere of hatred and inability to give accurate image of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palestinian cinema arose to provide counter narratives to these abuses by showing the case from a Palestinian perspective. Hany Abu-Assad's "Paradise Now" is a film that presents the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and works to re-shape world opinion

about Palestinian dilemmas as influenced by Israeli incarceration of their liberties and the continued atrocities Palestinians face day to day.

1.2- Hany Abu-Assad's "Paradise Now": Palestinian Character and Cinema and the De-Construction of Hollywood Reel Representation

Though Palestinian cinema is considered as a new as compared to Hollywood cinema, Palestinian filmmakers succeeded in producing throughout the twentieth and twenty first centuries films covering different thematic concerns. Central to these themes is questions surrounding the Palestinian cause and their right for a nation state. This section will expose the reader to the realm of Palestinian cinema as to see the evolution and prospects of such form of expression. This background is pre-requisite to understand the thematic appeals of Hany Abu-Assad's film "Paradise Now" and ambiguities surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1.2.1- The Evolution of Palestinian Cinema and the Representation of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Due to the absence of a political nation state for Palestinians, their cinema is said to have lacked a concrete definition. Hamid Dabashi aptly describes Palestinian cinema as "the mutation of that repressed anger into an aestheticized violence—the aesthetic presence of a political absence". As such, it could be said that any film that deals with Palestinian issues could be consider to be under the category of Palestinian cinema. The earliest films in this cinema is said to have been produced by two Palestinian filmmakers, August and Louis Loamier. The two brothers produced Train Station in Jerusalem. The film portrays Palestinian history and people and surmounted to depict the early life of Palestine of the 1896. Suffice to say that Palestinian cinema went through four stages in its development. The first covers the period from 1935 to 1948 where the region was under the British mandate. The period witnessed a high amount of production in newspapers and unfortunately all the films produced disappeared. Between 1948 and 1967, Palestine became under Israeli occupation where there were meagre records of any films. As such this period is known as "Epoch of Silence". The third period saw lively concerns about producing films covering Palestinian issues. Between 1968 and 1980, many films were produced by Syrian, Jordanian and Lebanese filmmakers. These newborn filmmakers produced what is known today as "Cinema of the Palestinian Revolution". This type of cinema centered on the lives of Palestinians in the camps and the effects of losing home

and belonging. In attempt to shed light on different aspects of Palestinian lives, the films probed into the issue of Israeli–Palestinian conflict from political as well as historical perspectives to reveal the roots and consequences of living with the Israeli occupation. The last period covers from 1980 up to present. Known as the Intifadas cinema, the period witnessed nascent attempts to portray the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and to correct misconceptions about present situation surrounding life in Palestine. (Abir Abyad, 2014). The film “Paradise Now” is considered as one of the most important films of the fourth period which not only tries to correct misconceptions about the Palestinian story, but also attempts to tell the world about untold stories about Palestinian past, present and future.

Though Palestinian cinema covered different periods and signaled differing historical moments in Palestinian history, the thematic concerns of all periods provide a detailed account of Palestinian identity and wellbeing as influenced by media in general and Hollywood representation of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict in particular. Edward W. Said (2006) provides a very insightful opinion about the scope and intent of Palestinian cinema. He stated:

Palestinian cinema provides a visual alternative, a visual articulation, a visible incarnation of Palestinian existence in the years since 1948, the year of the destruction of Palestine, and the dispersal and dispossession of the Palestinians; and a way of resisting an imposed identity on Palestinians as terrorists, as violent people, by trying to articulate a counter–narrative and a counter–identity. These films represent a collective identity.

Pertinent to this statement is the fact that the thematic concerns of Palestinian cinema operated at two levels. The first level is a process of telling history from a Palestinian perspective. Films focused on narrating Palestinian history before and after its occupation. The second and the most important theme is a nascent attempts to provide counter discourses to Hollywood as well as media in general which transmitted false images about Palestinians especially by the beginning of the war on terror. The film “Paradise Now” is a film that attempts to re–visit the Israeli–Palestinian conflicts as to reveal the many false interpretation imposed by American media and Hollywood cinema.

1.2.2- “Paradise Now”: A Re-interpretation of the Conflict

Hany Abu-Assad selects Nablus, a city in the West Bank, Palestine as the main setting of his film (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). The story revolves around two Palestinian friends who decide to commit a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv. The audience is exposed to the final twenty hours of the two friend’s lives where we see different characters with different motives in life: Khaled who is very enthusiastic about fulfilling his mission and Said who is shown a bit hesitant among the two friends. Other characters include Suha who is shown the time she returns to Palestine and encounters Khaled and Said and seems to fall in love with Khaled. The multiplicity of these characters serves to give the film a political stance to counter the Zionist narrative of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Hany Abu-Assad,2005).

As a counter discourse to Hollywood narrative of the Palestinian terrorist, Hany Abu-Assad uses the film to defy the image of the Palestinian as a terrorist (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). In an interview, Hany Abu-Assad (as cited Mounir Khoury,2007) states that “my film is about destroying those prevailing perceptions, those images, to build a new perception” about the real motives behind such actions and the reasons surrounding Palestinian reactions to Israeli atrocities and its effects on the psyche of Palestinians. The film opens with Suha at an Israeli checkpoint where we see her documents and luggage suspected. The scene is very significant in showing the peaceful attitude of the Palestinian against the harsh treatment of the Israeli soldiers. Here Hany Abu-Assad intentionally shows Suha wearing clothes with colors of the Palestinian flag in defiance of the Israeli soldier’s color of clothes. As a counter narrative, the film vividly tells the world the effects of these checkpoints on the psyche of Palestinians. The audience can clearly see how the Israeli implanted these checkpoints to limit the liberation of Palestinians and place a burden on their lives (Hany Abu-Assad,2005).

In presenting the peaceful attitudes of Palestinians and their love for democracy, Hany Abu-Assad uses Khaled as a main agent who seek partnership and democracy. Khaled is shown recording a video about his next mission as a suicide. He states that “Israel views partnership and equality for the Palestinian under the same democratic system as suicide for the Jewish state. Nor will they accept a two-state compromise” (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). This again expresses a political statement against the Israeli and Hollywood filmmakers who claim that Palestinians are taught to hate right from their childhood years. While the film “7 Days in Entebbe” shows the Israeli character as humane and his

presence in the Middle East as peacekeeper for the Israeli and people of the Middle East, Khaled demystifies this myth by telling the reality of the Israeli presence. He (Hany Abu-Assad,2005) states “Israel continues to build settlements, confiscate land, Judaize Jerusalem and carry out ethnic cleansing” which aptly curtails Palestinians liberties. For Khaled, life in Palestine becomes a hell and without dignity. He constantly refers to the motives behind his mission and confirms that he feels the burden of “life imprisonment” caused by the Israeli day to day treatment. To this point, one can say that the concerns of the films are not to show the hardships Palestinians face, but the last hours of those who commit suicide. Hany Abu-Assad provides a good explanation to this point of the psyche of the victim. He (as cited Mounir Khoury,2007) states:

We already know these humiliation stories. . . .We have seen lots of images of what the Occupation does to people. What we don't know is the experience of the last twenty four hours before people blow themselves up. So I wanted to light up that place. I was not interested in lighting places I already know. I didn't want to repeat all those images of how Israelis enter houses and destroy everything. . . .If we do a film that will show these images again, I will be telling a story you already know and it will be a boring film ...I wanted to know before the explosions, not after the explosions.

As such Hany Abu-Assad relies on going deep on the psyche of these individuals much more than portraying the Israeli actions which for him are a continuation and the reasons for the current status of those who commit suicide.

Also evident to the film concerns is the attempts to defy the myth propagated by the Israeli and Hollywood filmmakers about the motives behind these suicide attacks (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). While Hollywood affirms the view that these actions are because of a religious indoctrination, Hany Abu-Assad provides a counter discourse to these abuses by clearly stating that Khaled's actions are a result of a malign experience of the Palestinians with the Israeli occupation. For example, Khaled's father states expresses that resistance is only a reaction to get freedom. He states “death is better than inferiority [and that] whoever fights for freedom can also die for it” (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). Also, suicide as a form of resistance is described as the only thing Palestinians have to resist Israeli occupation. In many instances Khaled expresses this viewpoint. He states “if we had

airplanes, we wouldn't need martyrs". In another instance, Khaled states that "our bodies are all we have left to fight with against the never-ending occupation" (Hany Abu-Assad,2005). This justifies their need to sacrifice their bodies in the name of a stolen dignity and nationhood.

4- Conclusion

This article tries to examine the representations of Israeli-Palestinian conflict as evidenced in Hollywood and Palestinian cinema. The film "7 Days in Entebbe" is a film that goes in the same vein of Hollywood stereotypes of the Arab terrorist in general and the Palestinian terrorist in particular. While the Israeli concerns seem to take the high moral and intellectual background of the film, the Palestinian cause is rarely recognized and attempts are deployed to ignore the historical and political roots of a conflict that stretched centuries ago. Also evident to the film concern is the fact of giving whatever means to protect the Israeli people and nation while neglecting Palestinian having the same means of protection and giving voice to their concerns. On the other hand, the film "Paradise Now" attempts to provide counter narratives to these abuses. As a counter narrative, the film epitomizes the nature of the conflict from a Palestinian perspective. The director defies notions of terrorism attributed to Palestinians by Hollywood cinema filmmakers and challenges existing perceptions about Palestinians as suicide bombers and provokers of danger and threat. In all, it could be stated that these films show the extent by which cinema could be a means to betray as well as correct misconceptions about people and their circumstances.

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