

**COUNTERHISTORY**  
**BEN-ZION TOMER & YEHOSHUA SOBOL**

**I. The Heroic Model**

**A. Hannah Senesh**

memorial vol. pub. by Kibbutz Sedot Yam 1946

part of vast genre of ספרות העזבון

public contest announced by Habimah in 1958

6 plays submitted

Megged's play modeled on George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*

actors met w/her mother beforehand!

heroic death = meaningful death by CHOICE

**B. Palmach Hero**

born from the sea (NB)

strong silent type, etc.

strong male bonding; homoerotic

the collective

essentially Soviet realism in Hebrew garb

**II. Countheroic**

**A. Kastner Trial & Others**

another Hungarian Jew!

July 1944: collaborated w/Eichmann to save lives

withheld info. on Auschwitz to avoid panic

tried in jerusalem 1954

found guilty of selling his soul to the devil

shot in cold blood in 1957

[cf Trial of Michal Weichert]

**B. German Reparations**

cf. opening scene of *Under the Domim Tree* / עץ הדמים טפוס

if this is guilt money, do we accept it?

**C. Eichmann Trial**

as Mintz said: it backfired

meant to showcase Israeli power

instead it showcased the survivors

**D. West Bank occupation & Lebanon War**

Israelis as agressors

### III. Artistic Response

A. Tomer: the burden of guilt

the guilt of the collaborators

the guilt of the silent bystanders, "while 6 million died"

[178] Yoram to Yanek

where was I during the rvolt? rnjoying the sun...the war economy was booming. Like now, only no German reparations

B. Sobol: the vitality of the dead

the Zionists = chief collaborators; exercise of raw power

the Bundists = voice of conscience

### Children of the Shadows as Counterhistory

PLACE: a seaside café; WHY?

liminal space; escape to/from

scene of debauchery/celebration/romance

Sigmund the Sinner meets the Simple Balloon Seller, man of simple faith

TIME: Gets back together w/Nurit

Stalked by his brother-in-law Sigmund

joined by his parents after 14 yrs apart

The Sabra Generation

#### DUBI

a kibbutz jock, so sure of himself

sold out his ideals for a cushy job

[135] psuedo-Canaanite

now works for משרד הקליטה, thanks to his dad

inc. trip to Paris

[but will later help Yoram's parents get to Israel]

[137] sleeps without dreams; at peace w/himself

[140] his זיוו: Prince of the Jezreel Valley

1st-born child of the kibbutz, etc.

[142] does not possess the strength to be weak

#### NURIT

daughter of the Zionist elite

[141] her father met the Teheran Children w/speech

petty bouregois values: even the young need security

have bought a private home in...1955!

[161] angry conversation w/her mother

when aren't you busy  
about to leave on shlihut to S. Africa  
spends most of the play serving coffee

### YORAM-YOSSELE

- captain in War of Independence  
[131] pretends to have forgotten Yiddish  
nicknamed "Hamlet" by Dubi  
Nurit cfs. him to a Chinese doll  
[139] half there / half here  
European past = dark side of the moon  
but also lucky vis-a-vis the "real" survivors  
[133] is it too late to ask forgiveness?  
[140] tried eating from the tree of forgetfulness  
change of name = change of biography  
his memories kept him from being one of the crowd  
[150] sings song of his lost childhood  
[154] awakens from his nightmare to make a clean breast  
born in Goraj; head of a gang of urchins in Samarkand  
abandoned by his parents, he then abandoned his hateful past

THE SHADOW = sin, guilt

- [145] Yoram to Sigmund  
Why do you follow me like a shadow?  
[153] nightmare of the Kapparrah  
[157] Sigmund haunted by the children who were murdered  
[161] Nurit refuses to carry the [Christian] burden of guilt  
[167] Helenka banished from paradise for trying to steal an apple  
[168] Yorma laments his crown of thorns  
[181] a siant = having guilt feelings  
[182] I noticed my shadow. It was gigantic, long, black.  
[184] TOWARD HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

### SIGMUND THE SINNER

I:1 offset against the Balloon Seller