"Garments of Reconciliation:" The relationship Between Judaism and Islam in the Artworks of Andi Arnovitz

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Abstract:

This article examines works of Jewish-Israeli and modern-Orthodox artist Andi Arnovitz (b. US, 1959) that relate to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The article utilizes tools that arise from cultural research, in particular the critical view that feminist discourse offers with respect to the concept of multiculturalism. Thus the article makes use of concepts as the "productive look" (Silverman), the "ambivalent text" (Lotman), and "transversal politics" (Yuval-Davis) to provide a platform for understanding the works. The article examines a corpus of artworks that address the "other" in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the emotional relationship towards pull of the land. Works of this kind constitute a significant bulk of Arnovitz's oeuvre. Moreover, the works discussed here will serve as a case in point of modern-Orthodox feminist art's broader occupation with relations between Judaism and Islam and with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In this article, I will show how Arnovitz aims for a "productive look", with her "ambivalent gaze" enabling a fresh look and re-examination of the other from within traditional Jewish frameworks. Arnovitz brings deep humanistic sensitivity to the examination of Jewish-Islamic relations. A thorough examination of this voice reveals a combination of a conservative world and a profound and non-conformist spirit, based on the values of pluralism and humanism.

Andi Arnovitz (b. 1959) immigrated to Israel in 1999 from Atlanta and settled in Jerusalem, after a career in advertising. Arnovitz began learning the art of print-making in the U.S. in 1993. Her move to Israel marked the start of her intensive involvement with print-making at the Jerusalem Print Workshop.

Arnovitz integrates her attraction to textiles, paper, and objects d'art within her print-making. The items of clothing she creates, like her artworks in various media, are never functional; rather, they are metaphors that affect the viewer both intellectually and emotionally, as the impression they make alternates from beauty to pain and back. These artworks address a variety of religious themes; as such, they lend themselves readily to feminist analysis, an approach that has become firmly entrenched in modern Orthodox circles in Israel and elsewhere.

Arnovitz, like many Jewish Orthodox women artists in Israel, makes creative use of various materials and media in much the same way as do artists identified with hegemonic Israeli

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language. Like many religious women artists, Arnovitz is part of the general Israeli art discourse: she is aware of it, conducts a dialogue with it, and actively participates in it. At the same time, while most of her work is firmly rooted in contemporary Israeli artistic creativity, it evokes attitudes, which in fact run counter to prevailing Israeli public opinion and art discourse. These attitudes challenge Judaism – notably, Jewish law (halakha), quite explicitly. This world is foreign to the secular Israeli majority and its art discourse. We are dealing then, with "minor" art that stems from one's inner and cultural world, conscious of its difference, and seeking critical perspective, not assimilation into the mainstream. In fact, if the content of this art often crosses mainstream Orthodox borders, this is due to the simple fact that many religious women no longer subscribe to the confining religious/secular dichotomy. This post-Orthodox trend has spread to Modern Orthodoxy, in Israel and elsewhere.

Moreover, as shown in Jane M. Jacobs's extensive research, the sharp delineations of the past, when each group lived in isolation, have blurred in the postmodern age. In today's world, different cultures mingle in a hybrid world, in an extended, heterogeneous territory. We find integration of all forms of identity – tribal, religious, national, and gender. Instead of "center/periphery," the newer world is marked by interrelated identities. Yet, thematically, Arnovitz's works deal with topics that are largely absent from general Israeli art: the biblical "adulterous woman," the agunah (woman whose husband has left her without granting her a divorce, and his whereabouts are unknown), Lilith, etc. Many of her works deal with problems pertaining to current issues, viewed from a Jewish-halakhic perspective informed by the ancient sources. These sources are put to work so as to point out what is in need of tikkun (repair) in society.

The emerging feminist Jewish art in observant circles has not yet been studied: the present paper is part of a series of studies I have been conducting, aimed at revealing an unknown stream of Israeli art. I will explore the relationship between Judaism and Islam, with special reference to Jewish-Arab cultural relations in Israel. This type of art is an emerging trend among observant feminist artists living within Modern Orthodoxy in Israel.
The present article examines a corpus of artworks that address the "other" in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the emotional relationship towards pull of the land. Works of this kind constitute a significant bulk of Arnovitz's oeuvre. Thus, although we shall regard her work through a very specific lens, this is also an opportunity to gain insights into the artist's overall manipulation of her materials. Moreover, the works discussed here will serve as a case in point of religious feminist art's broader occupation with relations between Judaism and Islam and with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Garments of Reconciliation

In 2004, during the second 'intifada' and the prolonged American presence in Afghanistan, Arnovitz began creating completely unwearable items of clothing – as metaphor for a mother's feelings. The artist explains that the series symbolizes the universal desire of mothers worldwide to protect their children against violence. A child-size garment resembles traditional Afghan dress for children; the vest is adorned with representations of Jewish tradition: verses from the Psalms; Prayer for Travelers; kabbalistic amulets and spells. The piece integrates Jewish ritual and ceremonial objects with ornamentation drawing upon forms and colors from the Muslim world (fig. 1 – See appendix).

The artist; developed this theme while working on Prayer Vest (fig. 2 - See appendix), ostensibly the Jewish answer to the explosive vests worn by Muslim suicide bombers ('shaheed'). The artist's vest is fashioned from faded pages of prayer books she bought in Jerusalem's ultra-Orthodox Me'a She'arim neighborhood. Each page is meticulously rolled up, each scroll then tied with string and adhered to Japanese rice paper to make a vest. Thousands of scrolls, tightly packed in layers, are starkly juxtaposed to the nails and screws, (similarly packed in long rolls,) in suicide bombers' explosive vests.

The artist's use of verses from Psalms is set in opposition to violence and hatred. According to curator Dvora Liss, the verses express hope, generosity, and empathy. Liss points out that for generations, Jews have recited Psalms to entreat God to come to their rescue in their hour of need. Indeed, there is a Jewish tradition of reciting Psalms daily and on specific occasions: praying for the recovery of the sick; asking for a good life; seeking a good match; and
for consolation. The curator further notes that the Psalms have come to be regarded as the very soul of Jewish life.\(^6\) Liss adds:

> Every day groups of Jewish women across the world gather to read Psalms so as to petition God's help for the sick and unfortunate. They divide the Book of Psalms into a set of 24 booklets which are distributed among the women. The women all read together, each from her particular booklet, and the group quickly completes its joint recitation of every chapter of Psalms. All of their readings and emotions combine to form a single, mighty plea on behalf of those suffering spiritual and physical misfortune.\(^7\)

As mentioned above, the piece comprises individual pages from the Psalms and prayer books in scrolls tied together to form a whole. Although each leaf exists in its own right, their cumulative effect is certainly more powerful. Similarly, each woman's prayer has its own unique significance, yet they are all the more powerful when joined together. The vest that Arnovitz has fashioned from hundreds of verses all rolled up and joined together in scrolls creates a strong symbolic defense. The artist does not depend on accepted distinctions, such Muslims as "the bad guys" forming "the axis of evil." Quite the contrary: Arnovitz subverts the stereotypical view of Muslims as a monolithic entity, wholly inimical to Jews as such.\(^8\) 

Prayer Vest is founded upon uncompromising Jewish self-identity; a view which nevertheless overturns the prevailing idea of Muslim militancy, a starting-point for eliciting motherly compassion. The vest as metaphor refuses to iron out complexities.

The series Garments of Reconciliation (fig. 3 – See appendix) shows the artist's desire to provoke dialogue between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians, by their coming together to make the Jewish ritual fringes (tallit qatan, tzitzit). Says Arnovitz:

> I went to the old Arab souk in Jerusalem and borrowed thirty different embroideries from my friend Mazen, a Palestinian. These embroideries are from different tribes and different Palestinian villages. Because they were old and precious, I did not want to cut them up, so I took them to Western Jerusalem to a modern Jewish print shop where they were scanned and digitally printed onto linen. I then returned the original embroideries and took the scanned linen to Ibrahim, another Palestinian who owns a fabric store in the Old Arab Souk. I bought black cotton made in Egypt and he took the cotton and scanned embroideries to a sewing factory in Ramallah where Palestinians sewed them. When these were finished I gave them to a young Jewish Israeli man who tied the tzitzit [ritual Jewish strings that are ties to the corners of some garments] for me. Throughout the entire process the artwork passed from the hands of Jews to Arabs, to Arabs and then Jews and so on.\(^9\)

### Rolling Stones

Several artists have already attempted the impossible combination of clothing and heavy stones, one that plays upon the opposites of hard stone/soft cloth. In the Israeli context, one of the most famous works is a Robe for Self Stoning, by Avraham Ofek (1935-1990; 1980, documentary...
photograph of action), and works by Nelly Agassi (b. 1973), or a tight garment worn by Hila Lulu-Lin (b. 1964; Hevanti, 2002, performance). A wedding dress as religious metaphor is a pervasive motif in art in general and Israeli art; for example, German artist Anselm Kiefer (b. 1954); Israeli artist Belu Simion Fainaru (b. 1959).

The Installation Living Here was made from the artist's own shoes, tied to heavy stones that seem to be dragging the shoes along (fig. 4 – See appendix). The use of such a personal item of clothing as shoes, something that conform to the body's contours, is part of extensive artistic treatment of the theme of personal clothing, particularly in Jewish and Israeli art and culture. The artist elaborates:

This artwork expresses my feelings about living in Jerusalem, the core of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I feel that in our shared dialogue with the Palestinians, in everything regarding hope of finding a solution to the conflict, we are all literally dragging our feet; this turns living here into a fatiguing, laden journey. In fact, the way I see it, the burden grows heavier all the time, day by day. We can't lift our feet to move ahead on the journey; we can't make any progress – nor even go backwards, for that matter.  

For the piece entitled Betrothed to the Land, Arnovitz sewed a long silk wedding dress (fig. 5 – See appendix). She sewed small stones that she found in Jerusalem into the folds of the skirt and sleeves. The entire hem of the gown is filled with stones that appear to be dragging the dress down, to the land. Arnovitz: "This artwork engages with the strong pull the land exerts on Jewish and Palestinian women; more than anything else, the work exemplifies the unbearable weight of it all; it's so heavy that we can't even move". While the pull of the land is usually a cause for dispute and violence, Arnovitz applies it here in a sophisticated, metaphorical manner. By doing so, the artist inverts the picture: the very thing that normally is cause for strife becomes here a basis for cooperation of sorts.

Enveloping Womb, Dividing Green Line

Recent years have witnessed a discernible trend among West Bank settlers, an attempt to foster dialogue with Palestinians. These attempts focus strictly on religious issues. The trend is still ongoing, and has not yet been studied — the feminist organization "Kolech – Forum for Religious Women" offers joint encounter groups and courses for Jewish and Muslim women; The late Rabbi Menachem Froman held interfaith discussions with members of Hamas; Nahum Patchnik, poet, born in Kiryat Arba, founded the "Land of Peace" movement; Eliaz Cohen, poet,
from Gush Etzion, founded the "Yerushalom" movement. Elhanan Nir, poet, founded an organization called "Tent of Abraham," which sponsors discussions between sheikhs and rabbis of the Hebron area. Endeavors of this kind often trigger the response that cooperation between the two peoples can never come about by arguing about politics, and certainly not by debating military matters. But change might happen, if we raise our self-awareness through interfaith conversation. These groups claim that only the latter can serve as basis for cooperation and a turn for the better, in politics and society.

Arnovitz does not belong to the settlers' camp. Yet in her works there is a similar call for frank, cooperative dialogue as basis for achieving an end to the conflict, without relinquishing one's own values – political, religious, ideological, and national.

A prime example of this is the series Red Lines/Green Lines: a work in progress since early 2012, which continues the artist's interest in textiles and clothing. Other feminist artists as well are currently showing interest in apparel: they validate this engagement with "women's occupations" such as sewing, weaving, etc., as worthy appropriate object of feminist art.

In this series, Arnovitz embroidered broken red and green lines – the colors of the Palestinian flag. The series picks up themes that are very much in evidence in the artist's entire oeuvre: combining textiles and sewing with joining together and repair. Arnovitz is occupied with categories, delineation, borders, and separations, pervasive subjects in Israeli art. Zionist discourse lends itself easily to taking sides on historical events and borders: the 1949 cease-fire line versus the 1967 "occupation." By contrast, post-Zionism frequently challenges these delineations, as does the emerging discourse of settler circles; and, likewise, the Palestinians. 11

The series includes what looks like a pair of twins separated by the green line, reminiscent of a mother's womb. Although separated, the two "entities" resemble twins in the mother's womb (fig. 6 – See appendix). The pair is fashioned out of small mounds of gravel, raising questions about the regional territorial conflict as well as questions about Israeli construction over the green line, an acute issue incessantly debated in Israeli media. The artist is apparently proposing that we replace power and ownership with ambivalence, by combining historical, cultural, and
ideological models. In this type of discourse, the separation of the two nations (represented by the archetypical twins or brothers) is not blurred into non-existence. Rather, it is distinctly present, yet ultimately the emphasis is on "we are brethren" (Gen.13: 8). In the artist's comments on the piece, she has said that it refers to the current political situation as it continues to brutally hack at the land, randomly, it often seems. As a matter of fact, that is what we are dealing with here – a dispute that throws up gravel: "Despite my identity as an observant, Zionist woman, not for a moment do I believe that everything belongs to us - that would not be productive."

Ambivalence in Arnovitz's work makes itself felt in the image of twins in the womb, evoking the biblical story of the twin brothers who maintained a never-ending feud: Cain and Abel (Genesis, 4: 1-26); Jacob and Esau (Genesis, 24: 19-34); and, most potently, those mythic brothers, Isaac and Ishmael (Genesis, 21: 1-21). The theme has been prominently depicted in Israeli art: for example, in Dani Karavan's Unto thy seed have I given this land (1997, neon and Perspex). In the piece, the name "Abraham" is inscribed at the base of a genealogical tree covered with colored neon lights; Abraham, father of both Isaac and Ishmael. Over the tree is the promise God made to Abraham: "Unto thy seed have I given this land" (Gen. 15:18), charges the work with ironic contemporary significance, for both Isaac and Ishmael are sons of Abraham, yet their descendants are still fighting over the Promised Land.

Moreover, the figures of the biblical brothers, Ishmael and Isaac, have shown empathy and pacific tones towards Jewish-Arab relations. Similarly, Ishmael's mother is shown in American-Jewish art (Hagar and Ishmael appeared in the work of George Segal, b. 1934. The theme of Hagar was depicted in the work of Helène Aylon, b.1931, and Siona Benjamin, b. 1961), in Jewish and Israeli art, past and present, for example: Jacques Lipchitz (1891-1973), and Jacob Steinhardt (1887-1968). In contemporary Israeli art, we may mention Adi Ness (b. 1966), while Hagar and Ishmael have appeared in Palestinian art too.

Arnovitz's work perpetuates this ambivalent, pacific tone. Self-recrimination figures in some Jewish traditions on this matter. Nahmanides, medieval Jewish exegete, criticized Abraham and Sara for banishing Hagar and Ishmael, his words resounding today too: "Sara, the matriarch, sinned by inflicting this [banishment of Hagar], as did Abraham, in permitting it to happen. 'And
God heard her [Hagar's] suffering' – therefore, He let Ishmael become a savage, to cause suffering to Abraham and Sara's seed, by all means of inflicting suffering."16 Today too, the extensive treatment of this theme is marked by ambivalence.17

Arnovitz both draws upon and develops this artistic and intellectual tradition of the mythic brothers theme, constantly at each other's throats. In her work, they have become real twin brothers, before they even emerge from the womb, separated from each other by sharp delineation, by borders, the bond between them repressed, eradicated.

Arnovitz's attempt to locate points of contacts/contexts is informed by her religious perspective, yet her work does not strive to blur discrete identities or divergences. If we examine this in light of the insight of the historian Zohar Maor, who has recently challenged the prevailing system of distinctions that defines messianic and ethnic movements as primordial, anti-rationalist, and anti-liberal mind-sets, while by contrast, moderate peace camps are generally seen as modern, rational, and liberal. Maor claims that in the past, it was precisely the traditional, even messianic, groups, who were the proponents of tolerance and dialogue vis-à-vis other cultures.18 Maor has shown how, in fact, it was moderates and liberals whose peace movements had messianic roots ("B'rit Shalom" [covenant of peace] movement, in the early twentieth century, counting among its members the philosopher Martin Buber, Kabbalah scholar Gershom Scholem, and Judah Leon Magnes, founder of the Hebrew University). Maor claims then, that messianic leanings, for example, of "Gush Emunim" (the settlers' movement) in the 1970s, have led – in the past – to a moderate, pro-peace political line. Moreover, the ambivalence in Arnovitz's work questions prevailing opinion on the local art scene, as well as the sharp divide of right and left-wing. There is no doubt that Arnovitz's artworks, as well as "political" artworks by other religious women artists, are unique on the hegemonic Israeli art scene insofar as it is generally dominated by the left or by post-Zionists.19

"Babushkas" with Veil

The Muslim veil (', hijab', 'burka', 'chador') is now widespread in feminist art in the Muslim world, where it often raises acute beauty vs. concealment dilemmas. The hijab in these works is
both symbol of oppression and, often, extreme marker of anti-colonialism. Head-coverings worn by Jewish women have also been the subject of artistic depiction.

"You don't know a thing about me" is intimately connected to Arnovitz's ongoing interest in the policing of women and the covering-up of the female body, within religious contexts. This artwork pursues the theme of otherness, through covering and revealing. At first glance; the series shows the Russian-style dolls, known as "babushkas" or "Matryoshkas" painted black; when the first one is opened, it reveals gaily-colored patterns inside (fig. 7 – See appendix). The practice of wearing a head covering is widespread in the traditional Muslim world, and is found, on a smaller scale, within the Jewish religious world.

In this piece, the uniform impressions created by the solid black exterior perfectly depict the notion that women are expected to follow a model or stereotype: they represent collective, not individual personalities. They lack any personal appearance, only a homogeneous group, solely items making up an un-nuanced homogeneous entity. Unlike previous works by the artist that criticized policing practices, Arnovitz would appear here to be going further. The artist relates that she was intrigued by Jewish women wearing full-body covering, a custom copied from Muslim cultures. A small group of Jewish women in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, has recently taken up the practice, mainly newly-observant women. She adds that their garb often conceals tattoos that are forbidden by Jewish law; many of these fundamentalist women were raised in secular homes. From the anthropological perspective, tattoos are the expression of individualism, even subversion, which reveal hidden personality traits. The shorter veil, by contrast, is perceived as conforming to policing social conventions. In Arnovitz's work, the first doll's black exterior contrasts' starkly with the debunking of accepted borders, when the other dolls that are inside her are revealed. In addition, says the artist, the black hijab worn by Muslim women often covers up sophisticated, sensuous undergarments or colorful layers of clothing. Covering and uncovering in this work does not condone the offensive practice; rather, the work pinpoint complexities and divergences which arise in encounters with the other, although these may not be immediately apparent.
As noted above, covering up the female head and body have drawn feminist criticism in the Muslim world itself, and, occasionally, in Jewish religious art as well. Beyond the routine feminist response condemning patriarchal policing, this criticism denounces denying women's individual expression and their exclusion from public space. Alongside the representation of the forcing of women to don the veil, Arnovitz goes under that covering, so to speak, to recognize the ensuing complexities, with her intercultural, empowering view. This exemplifies the insight that identities do not necessarily fit into one collective mold, even if things seem otherwise at first glance. This leads, in turn, to the "productive look," where women with different national and religious traditions can find similarities between them, not only differences.

**The Feminist Dimension**

Arnovitz is a Jewish Israeli woman who affiliates herself with the observant (neo-Orthodox) stream. In the Israeli-Palestinian context, a complex, empathic view need not be confined to women. However, it does seem that Arnovitz exhibits an open-ended multiplicity, which lends itself also to quintessentially feminist analysis.

As early as the 1970s, women artists had tried to create an empathetic, cooperative setting, as antithesis to the masculine world was characterized by the artist's personal imprint, usually inspired by the myth of the lone artist. Moreover, much literature on feminism has been published in the context of striving for peace and tolerance. For instance, feminist theorist Carol Gilligan, in her ground-breaking *In a Different Voice*, submitted that women have a different moral voice from men. The Jewish-American art historian Matthew Baigell pointed out that Jewish-American art had always shown an affinity with *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). In contemporary art, he adds, this trend is confined mainly to women artists. A non-militant spirit does in fact pervade the feminist approach in its attitudes towards conflicts and their solutions.

In legal matters, for instance, this spirit is quite marked: women promote open dialogue about opinions and interests, so as to arrive at a harmonious solution without casting individuals into one specific mold. In Israeli art, regional approaches of this kind can lead to a different view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A look of this kind would undoubtedly be differentiated
from the political, security-oriented one that prevails in Israel – obviously, a view which is quite distinct from the political-military one.

In the present case – the art world emerging from within the Jewish-religious world, an open, complex look such as has been presented here is found almost exclusively in art created by women. The complex look which I have found in Arnovitz's work, as well as in that of other religious women artists, can be explained in several ways, using different conceptual models in contemporary feminist theories. For example, Carol Gilligan emphasizes that the female voice differs from the male mainstream, due not to initial biological traits but rather because women have different life-experiences. French feminism has expressed this more radically, with its propensity to highlight the uniqueness of the female voice. Luce Irigaray, psychoanalyst and cultural scholar, claims that, due to inherently different biological givens, women's life experiences are different and more nuanced.

The male/female dichotomy as discussed above can be linked to jurisprudence, in the approach put forth by feminist theorist Robin West. West claims that men and women differ in their basic attitude to life: men are driven by a subjective, separation-oriented nature, or differentiation; women are driven by a sense of connectedness.

As we have noted, feminist art by religious women strives for a non-power based dialogue, on equal footing, with the other, as dos feminism in general. In addition, we propose here to analyze Arnovitz's work through a specific explanation drawing upon the religious milieu. I refer to the dramatic changes taking place regarding women's roles, in the Neo-Orthodox community, in recent years. In traditional Judaism, women are excluded from the study of Torah. At most, they were permitted to learn something about the specific commandments for women. In recent years, the study of ethics, or Jewish thought, has also been permitted, in a non-critical manner. Recently, there has been a dramatic turning point: Neo-Orthodox women began studying Jewish texts hitherto accessible to men only (chiefly the Talmud). This new development is still ongoing. Broadly speaking, it may be observed that this kind of study is marked by intellectual originality of a kind not found in the rigid yeshiva model.
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of study for men. Much of the outcome of this kind of women's study is original, introducing critical, research-based methodologies to traditional texts. These changes have also yielded a burst of literary-midrashic creativity, liturgical poetry, and supplications – genres penned nearly exclusively by women. I would submit that this fresh, original approach can be discerned in the works discussed above. There is no doubt that the re-examination of Jewish space through this original outburst is making a significant mark in Torah study as well as in Jewish art by observant artists, mainly women. Art produced by religious women is marked by originality that is not necessarily subject to prevailing opinions or to mainstream Zionist-religious discourse.

Arnovitz explicitly affiliates herself with religious society and with the Israeli-Zionist world. The artworks created by Arnovitz and by other women artists in this world challenge fixed prevailing delineations of left and right in Israel. These boundaries lead to hypocrisy of the kind maintaining that self-identity and a robust Zionist and religious ideological stance lead inevitably to confrontational, fundamentalist approaches For example, Israeli art historian and curator Gideon Ofir claimed that creativity among right wing people is, by definition, essentially based on non-humanistic and anti-avant-garde perceptions, and, therefore, there is no chance it could develop into “good art” (in the modern meaning of the term). These stereotypical assumptions are often based on theoretical observations that have become the bon ton of hegemonic intellectual discourse, and they are implemented as undoubted truth. Similarly, Gilad Meltzer, head of theoretical studies at the school of arts in Beit Berl College wrote: “The question is not why right-wing artists and religious artists are not welcomed by the establishment and included in the discourse, but why most of them make bad art.” Furthermore, in hegemonic discourse, the religious world is considered non-modern, and its artistic disability is presented as deterministic and bound by tradition. Writer Yoram Kaniuk, for example, claims that there cannot be worthy contemporary poetry because poetry requires an authentic expression of an experience coming from inner freedom, and any expression that has a religious side will always be recruited and artificial.

Furthermore, this perception is often embedded in the hegemonic writing of the local art world, to which is added a trend that attributes to its creators and its canonical objects, meaning,
secular left-wing people, a monopoly on critical curiosity, humanism and complexity, while seeing the artwork of the religious or right-wing other as one that solely wishes to reaffirm and repeat traditional Jewish forms or ideas.\textsuperscript{38}

By contrast, Arnovitz aims for a productive look, with her ambivalent gaze enabling a fresh look and re-examination of the other, from within traditional Jewish frameworks. Arnovitz brings deep humanistic sensitivity to here examination of Jewish-Islamic relations. As we have showed in this article, a thorough examination of this voice reveals a combination of a conservative world and a profound and non-conformist spirit, based on the values of pluralism and humanism.

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**Endnotes:**


2 Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "minor literature" refers to literature written by a member of the minority in the majority (or the colonizers') language – like Kafka, a Czech Jew who wrote in German. Giving expression to a sense of estrangement from the mainstream, minor practices offer nonconformist perspectives in opposition to it. "Minor art", likewise, is a complex hybrid combining a minor consciousness of Self and that of the mainstream collective. See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.)

3 Jane M. Jacobs, *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City* (London: Routledge, 1996.)


5 Andi Arnovitz in a conversation with the author, 2012.

6 Dvora Liss, "Tear/repair," in *Tear/repair: Andi Arnovitz* [catalogue, Brandeis University and Yeshiva University museum, New York], ed. Tzachi Mezuman (Jerusalem, 2010), 6. (Hebrew and English)

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid, 7.

10 Ibid.
11 Yehouda Shenhav, The Time of the Green Line: Towards a Jewish Political Thought (Tel Aviv: Am-Oved Publishers, 2010.) (Hebrew)
16 Nahmanides' commentary on the Pentateuch, Gen. 16:6 (Hebrew).
17 Uriel Simon, "Seek Peace and Pursue It": Topical Issues in the Light of The Bible the Bible in the Light of Topical Issues (Tel Aviv: Yediot Ahronot, 2002), 54–57 (Hebrew).
19 Dana Arieli-Horowitz, Creators in Overburden: Rabin Assassination, Art and Politics (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2005.)
21 David sperber, Fringes: Jewish Art as an Israeli Periphery (Jerusalem: Bar-Ilan University, The Leiber Center for Jewish Art Exhibitions, 2010), 97–102 (Hebrew).
22 Andi Arnovitz in a conversation with the author, 2012.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Base on Lacan’s ideas, Kaja Silverman describes the productive look as one that allows the viewer to transform and make her own that which would have been violently rejected, while also recognizing as other that which may have previously been seen as me. The productive look, Silverman explains, incorporates into the viewer's memories aspects that are not his, allowing the viewer to participate in the other's desires, struggles and suffering; to experience their pain and past reverberating in his present. See Kaja Silverman, The Threshold of the Visible World (London and New York: Routlege, 1996).
26 Despite its aspiration of finding variety and multiplicity, Nira Yuval-Davis, a scholar of gender and culture claims that social pluralism in fact highlights differences among ethnic and religious groups, instead of what they

27 Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).


35 See Gideon Ofrat, "Can Right Wing Art Exist Here," *New Directions* 9 (2003): 139–150 (Hebrew). It was also published under the same name in Gideon Ofrat, *Washington Crossing the Jordan River* (Jerusalem: Zionist Library, 2008), 191-201. (Hebrew)

36 Gilad Melzer, "Where are the Margins?," *Haaretz*, may 9, 2010. (Hebrew)


Appendix:

fig. 1
Andi Arnovitz, *Vest for a Child In These Times*, 2009, monoprint and xerox lithography, threads, 28 x 18-5/16 in. (71 x 46.5 cm). Yeshiva University Museum, New York
fig. 4

Andi Arnovitz, *Living Here*, 2012, Boots, leather, cords and found stones, 7-7/16 x 34-1/4 x 7-7/16 in. (20 x 87 x 20 cm). Collection of the artist, Jerusalem
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fig. 5

Andi Arnovitz, *Betrothed to the Land*, 2011, silk, thread and stones, 63 x 61-13/16 x 39-3/8 in. (160 x 157 x 100 cm). Collection of the artist, Jerusalem
fig. 6

Andi Arnovitz, *red lines/green lines*, 2012, silk, cotton/polyester fabric, embroidery threads and stones, hand painted embroidery hoops, 4-5/16 In. in diameter (11 cm. in diameter), Collection of the artist, Jerusalem
fig. 7

Andi Arnovitz, *you don't know a thing about me*, 2012, paint, paper-mache, ready-made wooden dolls largest doll is 3-1/8 x 5-15/16 in. (8 x 15 cm). Smallest doll is 9/16 x 19/16 (1.5 x 4 cm). Collection of the artist, Jerusalem