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Abstracts

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Humor in Israeli Music videos: from the 80's to 'Arisa'

Dr. Ariel Friedman*

Abstract

Music-videos are characterized by their brevity and numerous technical manipulations which enable them to be a “short joke”, usually based on the principle of incongruity of the video's three languages: the lyrics, the music and the visual image. The analysis presented here is based firstly on a systematic sampling of humorous music-videos from the Israeli Music Channel, and secondly on a survey presented to several audiences on Facebook which asked them to name the music-videos they find to be the funniest.

The findings show that there are three kinds of humor in Israeli music-videos: (1) Physical-technological humor, which is based on the music-video's format itself, a format which enables a creative play with diverse video effects; (2) Post-modern humor: references to popular culture, foreground the construction of the video creation and sometimes the use of parody, carnival, pastiche and even satire in order to deal with local or global social problems; (3) Sexist humiliating humor towards women, which is very prominent in Israeli music videos.

Keywords: Music videos, Humor, Postmodernism, Carnival, 'Arisa', Incongruity Theory, Sexism

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"For the stone shall laugh out from the wall": Ironic, Satirical, and Parodic *Pashkevilim* as a Critical Genre

Dr. Hananel Rosenberg*

Abstract

Pashkevilim, printed wall notices posted around ultra-Orthodox neighborhoods, serve as one of the community's popular communication channels. The *Pashkevilim* mostly deal with controversial intra-community issues and feature a unique style, extremist rhetoric, and vocabulary derived from the Judaic literature. Comical imitations of the genre arose over the years, which circulated in the community and outside of it, in a variety of humorous styles: parodic, satirical, ironic, and comical *Pashkevilim* distributed for advertising purposes. This current study seeks to examine some of these sub-genres, in an attempt to assert their nature, significance, and the insights of this analysis regarding the genre and its place in ultra-Orthodox society. The analysis of the texts shows that the humorous performances express an opposing voice to not only the discourse style and contents, but can be seen as challenging the entire genre, its function, and its social and cultural significance.

Keywords: Pashkevilim; Humor; Parody; Satire; Irony; Ultra-Orthodox Communication

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Shuka Tal's Secretary, the Slander Lawsuit of the Insurance Agency against the Direct Online Insurance Company: Media, Legal and Social Dimensions

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Abstract

This paper describes and analyzes the IDI direct insurance advertising campaign, focusing on the legal prosecution on behalf of the Insurance Agents Association. In the heart of the dispute lies a humorous campaign, broadcast on television from the years 2006-2015. All ads revolved around one character, a fictional agent and secretary of Shuka Tal. In each video, the neurotic secretary struggles to prevent customers from leaving the company in favor of an online direct insurance agency. The secretary, a well-known Israeli comedian, raises absurd and ridiculous arguments the audience accepts the campaign in content while the agents and their families react in a spiteful manner. The latter view the campaign as a violation of dignity, and even libel. The growing bitterness of insurance agents and wide criticism from publicists prompt the Insurance Agencies bureau to press legal charges against the IDI online company for slander.

We discussed the case from three complementary angles: from the media's perspective, we conducted a thematic analysis of all advertisements, identifying the messages of the campaign and their potential impact in light of humor studies and occupational representation research. In addition, we described the public reception of campaign in contrast to that of insurance agents. From a legal standpoint, we gave detailed descriptions of the prosecution and defense procedures debate. The social analysis explains why the discourses are responsible for the enthusiastic reception of the campaign. In other words, the advertiser uses language and context that is directed specifically toward deep narratives in Israeli society. Ultimately, this strategy confirms the acceptance of the campaign and camouflages the offensive nature of the humor involved.

Keywords: Humor, advertisement, occupational representations, slander. Freedom of speech

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The Political Rival as an “Unruly” Woman: Gender Representation of Body, Voice and Space in Israeli TV Satire

Dr. David Levin*

Abstract

Satire is meant to contribute to change of consciousness through the combination of social statement on reality and representation that deliberately distances itself from realism. The present paper sets out to explore the hurdles standing in the way of prime-time TV satirical show to meet this goal. I intend to argue that difficulties stemming from the local culture, which projects on both satire makers and local consumer market, compromise the freedom and audacity required for satire. Analysis of satiric items shows how tightly-connected they are to mythical-linguistic deep structures, like the structures that pitch “masculinity” and “femininity” as an essentialist dichotomy, rather than a spectrum.

This paper shall address items from *Eretz Nehederet* – the most popular satirical show in the Israeli commercial TV channels by using a structural semiotic analysis. In these items, writers and performers try and alert viewers to a potential reality where a violent marginal group threatens to undermine social order, and decry the powerlessness of democratic institutions to stop them. As I shall demonstrate, this critical statement relies on basic hegemonic assumptions concerning gender relations that the show makers act to entrench, though unknowingly. I shall therefore point how important it is, when analyzing satire, to distinguish between the manifest layer – the obvious message – and the semiotic processes and narratives supporting its delivery. This distinction is all the more relevant to the analysis of those media contents where makers are careful not to be overly-offensive to the collective consciousness of their audiences.

Keywords: Satire, gender, body image, Israeliness, paradigmatic and syntactic analysis, Chicago School

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