



With The Power of Imagination and Longing On Yehudit Katzir Literary Work

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Abstract

“You will write the novel about my grandmother” – a quote from the will left by Katzir’s mother and which appears in the writer’s last novel **Tzilla** (2013). This will is passed on from mother to daughter upon the publication of the writer’s first short story, **Disneyel**, in the summer of 1988, a story which receives many prizes and praises.

With her novel **Tzilla**, Katzir joins the many other important Israeli writers, who wrote autobiographical novels after first publishing fictional work. In my article I shall describe **Tzilla** as an autobiographical, feminist and political novel, and will follow the poetical course taken by Katzir, which I will claim reflects a tendency in Hebrew Literature that started in the 1990’s and is still evolving: that is the tendency to move away from literary writing which hides autobiographical origins to writing that is open about its being autobiographic, and emphasizes representations of time and location.

I shall deal, in the article, with three of Katzir’s works, published at different times and in different genres: The short story **Disneyel** (1989), the biographical play **Dvora Baron** (2000) and the autobiographical novel **Tzilla** (2014). In surveying these works I will strive to demonstrate the path taken by Katzir, moving from writing that hides its autobiographical origins, to writing that is obvious about its being autobiographical. Of particular interest is the way Katzir’s worked her personal family story, and hid the fact she was doing so, into the play **Dvora Baron**. This play is also very worth examining due to the many ways in which it is different from the rest of Katzir’s writing.