

1968: A Global Perspective

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Michal Raizen-Colman <micra@mail.utexas.edu>
The University of Texas at Austin

From Paris to Al-Quds With Love: An Afterword to 1967 in Eli Amir's *Yasmine*

In the post-war Jerusalem of Eli Amir's novel *Yasmine* (2005), the passage of time with the changing seasons is juxtaposed against a moment seemingly frozen in time—the critical moment of transition in the aftermath of the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Amir inscribes within this moment an ill-fated love story between Nuri—an Iraqi Jew torn between his official duties as advisor on Arab affairs to the Israeli government and his linguistic and cultural self-identification as *ibn arab* (son of the Arab people)—and Yasmine, a young, ideologically-driven Palestinian widow who cuts short her doctoral studies at the Sorbonne and returns to Jerusalem to support her parents. Influenced by the writings of Franz Fanon, Yasmine struggles to see the human being behind the mask of Israeli colonizer that she has placed as a barrier between herself and the man who speaks her language. Basing my talk on the dynamic between Nuri and Yasmine—two youths suspended between seemingly irreconcilable cultural affinities—I will address the manner in which European discourses on colonialism and decolonization influenced a generation of youth in the Middle East. I will raise the question of whether this influence may have foreclosed the possibility of dialogue based on alternatives to the binary logic of ideologies that came to dominate the academic, political, and socio-cultural discourses on the region.