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## Ruth Schloss: Encountering a Sobering Reality

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**Ruth Schloss(1922-2013), b. Berlin, d. Israel**

### **Golda Meyerson (Meir), May 6, 1948**

It is a dreadful thing to see the dead city. Next to the port I found children, women, the old, waiting for a way to leave. I entered the houses, there were houses where the coffee and pita bread were left on the table. And I could not avoid thinking that this, indeed, had been the picture in many Jewish towns in Europe during World War Two . . .

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**House in Ruins (Palestinian Refugees), 1948**  
Ink on Paper



**Refugees**  
Oil Painting on Canvas

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**Transit Camps, 1956 and 1957**  
Ink on Paper

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## **Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*, 222**

The wave of immigrants that inundated Israel as early as 1948-1949 was dubbed 'a cloudburst.' In the Middle East rain is a blessing, but a cloudburst can also bring devastation. During the heroic illegal immigration struggle, the main Zionist slogan had been 'free immigration.' Now that vision was coming to pass; immigrants were reaching the Jewish state. But it abruptly became clear that despite the intense expectation and the rhetorical anticipations of the arrival of this aliya, no one was actually prepared for the tremendous mass of humanity pouring into the country.

## **Uriel Simon, personal testimony, 1957**

A person rides on a train and sees the landscape of his country, and in it—the ma'abara (transit camp). The ma'abara with its numerous gleaming tin shacks crowded together around the stinking latrines seems like a wound in the flesh. Disheveled children dressed in tatters stand at the roadside and wave to him with their little hands. For a fleeting second their eyes meet, and he sees the glint of their eyes, but he does not raise his hand in reply. He prefers to remain alien and distant, he fears the contact.

## **Reflection Question**

Although she is well deserving of her place in the Israeli artistic canon, Ruth Schloss' work was considered by many curators to be thematically and stylistically deviant and so was not granted her proper place among contemporary Israeli artists. How do you understand the all-too frequent phenomenon of socio-political critique and sensitivity to the suffering of the 'other' leading to marginalization?

## **Zionist Challenge**

Is it possible to hold the narratives of the two German Israeli artists (Yitzchak Danziger & Ruth Schloss), that we explored over consecutive weeks, in the same Zionist hand? How may we understand and reconcile these two perspectives?



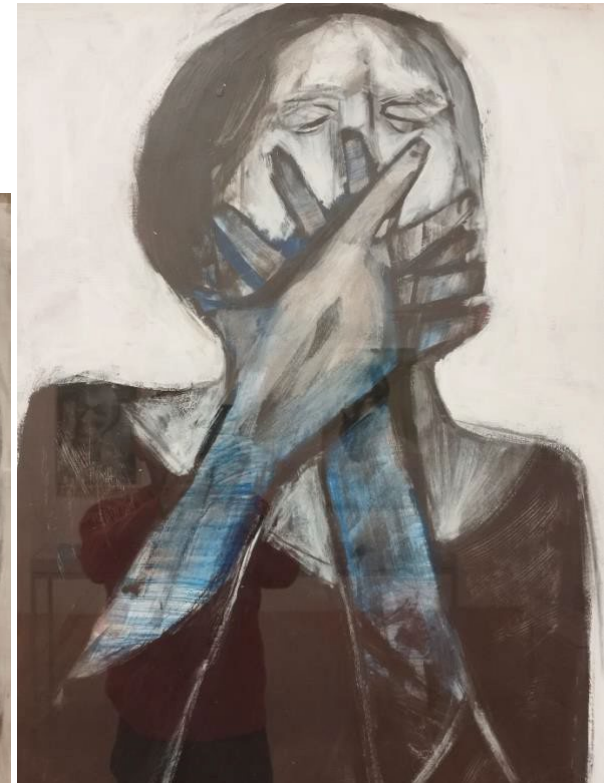
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**Intifada, 1989**



**Wounded, 1990**



**The Scream, 1990**

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**Nimrod, Yitzhak Danziger, 1939**  
Nubian sandstone, 95 x 33 x 33 cm