



VIL NOR 2003, 27:15 minutes, B&W, No dialogues, English titles

Synopsis:

"Vil Nor" in Yiddish means "if only you will it".

This phrase is taken from the Yiddish expression "vil nor- gaon", that can be roughly translated as- even becoming a genius is a question of will.

The genius (Ga'on) of Vilnius (1720-1797), was the main source of inspiration for this video, although none of the scenes is based on, or even related to actual facts.

VIL NOR is the fantastic story of a never-ending journey in black and white, as imagined by Effi & Amir, an Israeli artist duo on a free-will exile.

About:

In the mid 18th century Rabbi Eliyahu (1720-1797), the Gaon (Genius) of Vilnius, left his home and his community and set out on a journey to the Land of Israel. After a while, he returned to Vilnius.

He never reached the Holy Land and never said why.

Although, over the years, there have been various speculations, this episode remains a mystery.

Vil Nor was made as a personal interpretation to the gap which historic documentations have failed to fill. Its roots are located both in the past and in the present- and therefore- out of time.

As Israelis who are now experiencing a self-imposed free-will exile, we find this historic episode with the questions it arises, regarding the possibility of the Zionist dream and price, which is involved in abandoning the essence of Jewish exiled existence, of an extreme relevance.

Titles:

0. In the mid 18th century, Rabi Eliyahu, The Gaon (genius) of Vilnius, left his home and his community and set out on a journey to the land of Israel. After a while other he returned to Vilnius.

He never reached the holy land and never and never said why.

Although, over the years, there have been various speculations, this episode remains a mystery.

1. There once lived in Vilnius a great scholar. Enclosed in his room, he spent all his time deep in learning. Day and night he was sitting by the open book, and nothing in the whole world could divert his mind from studying, his only passion.

2. During the day, he would draw the windows shut and learn by candlelight. And at night he would not surrender to sleep and never turned from his study.

3. For fear lest sleep might snare him in its tentacles, he immersed his feet in a bowl full of icy water.

4. Until one night...

5. No doubt was left in his mind, and he decided to set forth, that very night, to the Land of Israel.

6. And on he went...

7. The sand dragged him down, snuffed out his soul. And he was only looking at the sand and at the (corpses)/ carcasses of the dead weeds in the sand, and he felt that the vapour of the sand, which was rolling under his feet, was penetrating his skin and entering the soles of his feet and from there rising and spreading through all his limbs and penetrating his brain, so that he cannot think other than sand-thoughts or thoughts that have some belonging to sand. And the remaining thoughts, those which escaped, are fleeing his soul like flying birds, and he has not the strength to bring them back to their nest.

And the thoughts of sand are hard and draining.

No doubt there is a sea here in the distance, waters without an end, as the sand was not created but to serve as a border to the sea... And the grains of sand are round like the mourners' eggs, like human fate...

And similarly, other sand-thoughts peck at his brain. And the nature of thoughts is like the nature of sand. Each thought rolls on its own, with no adhesion and no sense of belonging. And the thoughts do not copulate and do not beget.

But they are fewer than the grains of sand, and they alternate and wander in his mind heavily and lazily, and because they are so few, they frequently repeat and eventually they cling to one another and become persistent...

And he was just a step away from madness.

As every thought, when it clings to the mind and persists, is madness...

8. At last...

Credits

This video is an independent / no budget production of Effi & Amir

Script, Camera, Editing, Special effects ad props: Effi & Amir

Actor: Amir

Directing and make up: Effi

Models and green screen: Effi & Amir

Sound: Amir

The text "sand-thoughts" is taken from I.L. Peretz (Collection of Chassidic Stories)