

CLASSIFIED HISTORIES: THE ROLE OF ARCHIVES IN SHAPING CONFLICT NARRATIVES

MOVIE SCREENING, FOLLOWED BY A PANEL DISCUSSION

Agenda Item: Erasure



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15 November 2024 - 12h15-14h, followed by aperitif
University of Geneva, UniMail, room M R170

<https://www.unige.ch/gedt/.../classified-histories>



לקבות עכירות Akevot

המכון לחקר הסכסוך הישראלי-פלסטיני
معهد لبحث الصراع الإسرائيلي-الفالسطيني
Institute for Israeli-Palestinian
Conflict Research

GENEVA HERITAGE LAB
MAISON DE L'HISTOIRE
DÉPARTEMENT DE GÉOGRAPHIE ET ENVIRONNEMENT



UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE

Public and private archives, which house official records, testimonies, and other essential materials, serve as crucial repositories of information in conflict and post-conflict societies.

However, the control and access to archives often dictate whether these records serve as tools for fact-based discourse or reinforce dominant, state-sanctioned narratives.

Utilizing archival records recently declassified following Akevot's research, a new Israeli documentary film offers an opportunity to reflect on secrets, erasure, memory and the role of archives in shaping conflict narratives. The screening of the movie "*Agenda Item: Erasure*" will be followed by a panel discussion in which Israeli and Swiss academics and activists will share insights on how conflict and post-conflict societies can use archival material to reclaim control over their collective memory, restore lost or suppressed histories, and foster a more nuanced understanding of the past. The event is co-organized by the Geneva Heritage Lab and Akevot in cooperation with the Department of Geography and Environment, the Maison de l'histoire and the organizers of the Human Rights Week.

Short Introduction

- **Lior Yavne**, Executive Director, Akevot
- **Adam Raz**, Senior Researcher, Akevot

Screening of the film *Agenda Item: Erasure*

35 minutes | Director: Einat Weizman | Production: Akevot Institute

Two months into the war in Gaza, seven political activists got together inside a closed, empty theater in Tel Aviv. Each of them fights the injustices of the state in their own way. They were asked to read from the transcripts of government meetings dating back to 1948, which had been classified until recently and opened for access after a long struggle by Akevot Institute. Viewers watch the activists as they take their first look at documentation that was inaccessible for decades, and together with them, learn about dark aspects of Israeli history.

Discussion

- **Frédéric Giraut**, Professor, Department of Geography and Environment
- **Estelle Sohier**, Professor, Department of Geography and Environment

Moderation: **Peter Bille Larsen**, Senior Researcher, Geneva Heritage Lab



The Akevot Institute for Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Research was founded in 2014 out of a recognition of the unique role archives can play in fostering fact-based discourse and supporting the work of human rights defenders. We make archives a tool for change by researching and exposing mechanisms, processes and events who play a role in the perpetuation of the Conflict. We assist human rights defenders and civil society organizations in accessing archival documentation relevant to their work. We campaign to expand the public's access to government archives to promote transparency and freedom of information.

Lior Yavne

Founder and executive director of Akevot, Lior Yavne is a human rights researcher with expertise in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Before founding Akevot (2014), Yavne was co-founder of leading Israeli human rights group Yesh Din and its first research director (2005-2013). Prior to this Yavne worked for B'Tselem (1999-2003). Yavne holds an LLM in Human Rights Law from Queen's University Belfast (2004) and a BA in Political Science and Journalism from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem (2003).

Adam Raz

Akevot's chief researcher, Raz is an Israeli historian who specializes in political history of the twentieth century (especially Israel-Arab relations and the history of nuclear weapons) and Marxist thought. Among his books: *Loot: How Israel Stole Palestinian Property* (Verso, 2024); *The Road to October 7: Netanyahu, Perpetuation of the Conflict and Israel's Moral Deterioration* (Akevot and Pardes, 2024); *The Military Rule 1948-1966: Document Collection* (Akevot, 2021); *The Kafr Qassim Massacre: A Political Biography* (Carmel, 2018); *Herzl* (Carmel, 2017); *The Struggle for the Bomb* (Carmel, 2015) and others.

Organisation

University of Geneva

Geneva Heritage Lab
Maison de l'Histoire
Department of Geography and Environment

Akevot Institute
