

Two iron ladies with rhetoric simplicity Golda Meir's speeches, dialogues and interviews in comparison with their counterparts in Ingrid Bergman's re-enactment in the film *A Woman Called Golda* (1982)

Željko Uvanović

J. J. Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Philosophy
Department of German Studies, Chair of German Literature
Ulica Lorenza Jägera 9, OSIJEK, Croatia

ABSTRACT

*Alan Gibson's television miniseries can be considered an epideictic speech in honor of the charismatic Israeli leader Golda Meir who coupled the Israeli security policy with the advice and financial support of the American Jewry and the US establishment – demonstrating at the same time a verbal rhetoric of utter simplicity and a power of great personality. The reconstructed film script is partly a documentary biography of the politician avoiding delicate private circumstances and a war film pleading for peace. The choice of Ingrid Bergman for the role of Golda Meir produced a significant sympathy potential whereas the actress showed her intention to compensate for not having understood Hitler's threat for the Jews during her German UFA career in 1938. The employed camera techniques, repetition procedures and pathos of actors' performance underlined a strong identification process on the part of the viewers making it impossible to decline the arguments claimed in the film. The rhetorical impact of this production can be defined as a mixture of educational (*docere*) and propagandistic (*movere*) intentions concentrating on the message of peace on the principles of secure Israeli borders and mutual recognition with all Arab states.*

Keywords: Golda Meir, Ingrid Bergman, *A Woman Called Golda*, rhetorical analysis of film, rhetoric of simplicity

1. Introductory remarks: Film rhetoric and orator in film

Even in cases where films do not pick orators and rhetoric communication as their central themes, the phenomenon of film rhetoric cannot be ignored – simply because the film structure itself on all levels has implicitly a rhetoric impact. Moreover, Sergej Eisenstein's film theory and film production are explicit examples of a poetics of ideological propaganda (*agitprop*) in the Soviet Union aiming at a rational (*logos*) and emotional (*pathos*) influence on the audience (cf. Joost, 2008: 158-159). Eisenstein employs all the more Aristotle's notions of compassion, wrath and fear, and stresses the importance of montage procedures leading to a new 'explosion' of meaning (cf. *ibid.*, 166-167). He believes that 'ecstasy' is the culmination of the emotional manipulative force (cf. *ibid.*, 171). But films can insist solely on emotional impact during the production process (cf. Mikunda, 2002) and become 'emotion machines' (cf. Tan, 1996). Rhetoric of literature, films and other culture products seem to increasingly consist mostly of the *movere*-component, at the expense of *docere* and *delectare* dimensions. Kastely (2004) and Till (2008) supply us with newest insights in the problem of the emotional dimension of the rhetoric complex. However, it should be stressed in advance that the emotional dimension of rhetoric analysis still suffers from methodological imperfections and that it is much easier to treat rational topics with rational explanation models than irrational mechanisms in individuals and social interactions.

Further, at the level of stylistic analysis of the film text, one can separate distinctive film figures used by the film director in the *elocutio*-phase of the film production (cf. Clifton 1983). However, one cannot expect to find for example all Lanham's (1991) figures having their counterparts in Clifton's description of film figures. Therefore, it seems that literature has the whole range of figures at its disposal whereas film as a much younger art has still to invent adequate counterparts in its visual medium. When it comes to film rhetoric itself, one can refer either to Kanzog's more painstaking analytical method (2001) or to Blakesley's approach (2003; 2004). Blakesley (2003: 5) claims that film functions "also as a rhetorical appeal to or as an assertion of identity in the audience." Films are "acts that dramatize and interrogate the ways people use language and images to tell stories and foster identification." (*ibid.*, 8) Blakesley (2004: 115) determines the ideological dimension of film rhetoric as well: "How a subject is filmed is an expression of ideology, and to the extent that this agency positions the viewer, the

director, or even characters on screen relative to the filmic content, the film functions rhetorically as an exploitation of that subject's ambiguity." Finally, film rhetoric can serve "as the means of initiating cultural critique and stabilizing cultural pieties" (ibid., 116). Saying in advance, the rhetorical function of the film *A Woman Called Golda* is, among other effects, to stabilize and consolidate a positive culture memory of the world famous political leader, leaving out some critical aspects of Golda Meir's personality as well as of domestic and foreign politics.

In this paper, Golda Meir's speeches (and other kinds of her public addresses) on the one hand, and Ingrid Bergman's rhetoric interpretation of the Israeli leader in the film *A Woman Called Golda* on the other hand are analyzed and interpreted. My approach to the research subject integrates stylistic and communicative analysis of speeches as verbal texts; further a comparative approach and the principles of rhetorical film analysis in a broader sense. In the first step, Golda Meir's personality, political and rhetoric significance are dealt with. The next part of the paper focuses on the famous Chicago speech in 1948 in comparison with its filmic production. In the final part of the paper, six crucial rhetorical moments of Golda Meir are analyzed, interpreted and compared with its filmic variant.

2. Introductory remarks about the development and main characteristics of Golda Meir's rhetoric

There are many personal moments in Golda Meir's life which seem to have contributed to the genesis of the Zionist patriotic content and a simple but charismatic style of her political rhetoric. Among the negative elements which provoked and strengthened her Zionist rebellion, one should mention the Christian anti-Semitism (cf. for example Judge, 1992; Dekel, Gaunt, Meir, & Bartal, 2010; Goldstein, 2012;) with the propagandistic accusations of Jews of being 'Christ-killers' in Ukraine to the Arab anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism (cf. Bostom, 2008). Among the positive elements which attracted and enriched her way of making speeches, one should emphasize her innately motivated humanitarian impulses and fund-raising activities, soapbox speeches, appearances at rallies, celebration of Jewish holidays in secular ways, and organization of pro-Jewish protest parades including the mobilization of non-Jews in the USA. She was a 'true believer' of the Poale Zionism and quoted often the wisdom articulated in the following sentence of the sage Hillel, that we hear in the first minutes of the film *A Woman Called Golda* twice (0:05:17-0:05:34 and 0:17:10-0:17:50): "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am for myself only, what am I? And if not now, when?" (cit. in Martin, 1988: 72). What is the meaning of this saying? Golda must have interpreted it in the sense of national individualism of the Jews who must be the first to demand their national rights and to refer to relevant documents of legitimization of such inspirations (be it Theodor Herzl's *The Jewish State*, the *Balfour Declaration*, the League of Nations' *Mandate for Palestine*, the Biltmore Program – or the Bible itself). The second part of Hillel's wisdom concerns the necessity to have supporters for one's political plans, and this means an appropriate rhetoric for gaining like-minded friends – in Golda Meir's strategy, the US Americans would be the constant object of such a friendship gaining politics. The third part expresses the urgency of the right present moment in which the opportunity should be used to one's advantage.

Her belief in the necessity of a national Jewish homeland in Palestine, which was, however, named Eretz Israel in 1948, became eventually her true personal religion. Therefore, all her activities on the way of re-building the Jewish state after almost two millenniums adopted the meaning of redemption for the Jewish nation after the tragic culmination in the Holocaust horror with more than 6 millions of Jewish victims. The removal to Palestine had the meaning of a painful but necessary personal re-birth, where one had to accept Aharon David Gordon's religion of labor, Franz Oppenheimer's equality sociology and collectivistic, utopian kibbutz life style – and even relatively liberal sex life preserving at the same time the marital bonds! The Ukrainian Golda Mabovitz, married to the (East European) American Morris M(e)yerson, later with the Hebraized last name Meir (meaning 'to illuminate'), had many personal advantages for the career of a political orator in Israel: beauty, fluency in American English and Yiddish, mobilization power primarily in the United States (in the winter 1928/1929 she started her life-long propagandistic and fund-raising tours in America), diplomatic skill in dealings with the British – and *mazel* (meaning *kairos*). Further, she was an eager student of the best Israeli political orators at that time, in the first place it was David Remez, then Zalman Rubashov, then Zalman Aranne, one should not forget Berl Katznelson and David Ben-Gurion himself who assigned her most delicate tasks. It seems that she did not have any reasons to be a feminist at all because these men in power supported her own way to power. However, her psychological determinations could not allow many rhetorical improvements – and her voice remained in the

majority of speech cases monotonous. Martin (1988: 182) describes her own political rhetoric the following way: "Golda didn't talk much. Even her speeches were short. There was always the sense of holding back something, and giving you only what was necessary." Martin (ibid., 185-186) characterizes her rhetoric style further in more details as follows:

"Her language was the simplest, almost basic English. Her imagery was emotional, somewhat romantic. She aimed at the heart rather than the head. (...) Her own control was superb, but she had a way of touching tender places in people, making them want to help, making them want to give. Women listened and often cried. Men squirmed and felt guilty and reached for their wallets. Young people often felt impelled to go and see for themselves, to be part of what was happening. She stirred pride. Not hate, not pity, not bitterness, but always ending on an upbeat. She did it so well, without any notes, talking directly to the people, searching their faces, their eyes, that it became a kind of magic."

When it comes to provoking tears, it seems that Golda Meir had in Ingrid Bergman an appropriate incorporation. Leamer (1986: 343) allows us to see the reactions of Harve Bennet, the producer of the film *A Woman Called Golda*, to the rather personal ability of Ingrid Bergman to excite weeping: "Ingrid had a sob in her voice, a way of talking that made one want to cry. It had made him want to cry watching *Casablanca* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. It made him want to cry in the screening room (...)" But now back to Golda Meir. Not everybody perceived and liked this magic and subconscious manipulation of emotions – and concentrated rather, on the other hand, on her poor vocabulary. Abba Eban "thought so little of her that he regularly quipped that she chose to use only 200 words although her vocabulary extended to 500." (Burkitt, 2009: 238) Nevertheless, we are not faced with a sophisticated, powerful verbal nor intellectual rhetoric in this case but with a simple verbal rhetoric of a strong, suggestive personality who had an intense belief in the righteousness of her mission and demonstrated a supreme survival intelligence. Martin describes this wide-spread impression in the following way: "There was something about Golda that caught people – an intensity. She also always had a presence. When she walked into a room, people knew it, felt it. Some people claimed it was a kind of magic." She did not read many books and she did not write much. Martin (1988: 224) reveals even more: "Golda had minimal writing skills, but she had a way of packing considerable emotion into simple words in posters." This unconventional laconic and pictorial rhetoric attitude must have puzzled the British officials, but also her Hebrew compatriots who – which is possibly a consequence of "traditional training in Talmud" (Martin, 1988: 240) – tended to get involved in futile and endless dialectic discussions about all theoretical aspects of a problem. Neither the verbal fluency, nor a rich vocabulary, nor philosophical skills were needed at that moment of the Israeli history, but Golda's American pragmatism: "Her own pragmatic mind had always been oriented toward results and responsibility." (ibid.; cf. Brown, 1992: 38; Brown, 1996: 161-195). She was an example of a positive political selection in the high places of political power in Israel. Ben Gurion "trusted her intuition, her practical mind, her clear vision of right and wrong" (ibid., 268). At the same time, according to Chaim Herzog, "She had a way of stirring up pep in people." (ibid., 295)

To summarize this introduction to Golda Meir, the main characteristics of her rhetoric are a folksy directness and tough pragmatism combined with her "perfectly pitched amalgam of guilt, motherhood, historical privilege, and ruthless application of conscience" (Burkett, 2009: 225). She used the rhetoric of the aphorism (cf. Morson, 2004) and was famous for her aphoristic expression. Therefore, no wonder that Burkett (2009) introduces seventeen chapters as well as the introduction and conclusion of her book each time with one of her most famous aphorisms, ranging from "One cannot and must not try to erase the past merely because it does not fit the present" to "You ought to thank us, your elders, that we've left you still something to do." She demonstrated sardonic wit and dry humor, sarcasm and bluntness – and eventually gave the impression of an old-fashioned party sheriff and an "aging dinosaur" (ibid., 352). She was a Socialist who could act "like a corporate boss" (ibid., 243), saw many things in black and white, and paid the price of neglecting marriage and family ties with a strange emotional distance. But even Henry Kissinger was "unable to resist her craggy face, seeing in it, he told others, centuries of Jewish suffering." (ibid., 359)

3. Golda Meir's Chicago speech in January 1948

Let us now make a next step in this attempt to compare Golda Meir's real speeches with their film realizations through Ingrid Bergman in Alan Gibson's film *A Woman Called Golda* by focusing first on the most famous, crucial and central speech held in Chicago during the meeting of powerful members of the Council of Jewish

Federations on January 2, 1948. The greatness of her rhetoric achievement should be seen against the background of the fact that her audience in the former Chicago Athletic Club was anti-Zionist and that these 800 rich and cynical Jews decided to listen to her only because Henry Montor described her as "perhaps the most powerful Jewish woman in the world today" (cit. in Martin, 1988: 303) In Golda Meir's bestseller autobiography *My Life* (1989/1975) we find a version on two pages (Meir, 1989: 174-175), in Peggy Mann's biography there is even a shorter version (Mann, 1971: 144-145), in Ralph G. Martin's biography we come across a larger version (Martin, 1988: 304-305), and on the web site *Great Speeches in History* there should be the full, 're-mastered' version, although the fact that Golda Meir did not prepare this speech and did not make a written version aggravates a final, correct reconstruction of the speech. However, if we decide to accept the online-version above as a good foundation for analysis in the present case (it also passes the criterion *lectio difficilior lectio potior*), we can start the rhetorical examination of Meir's core thesis and rhetorical devices utilized in this impromptu speech.

In the introduction part, the patriotic Zionist leader Golda uses memories of her previous visits to the United States as a *captatio benevolentiae*. She links her actual assignment with her past missions dealing with financing the building of kibbutzim and the Jewish immigration to Palestine and consolidates the acquired sympathy with the following sentence: "We always had faith that in the end we would win, that everything we were doing in the country led to the independence of the Jewish people and to a Jewish state." In the next step, she refers to the UN Resolution 181 as an international legal document empowering the Jewish institutions in a part of the West part of the former British Mandate Palestine (the East part of it became Transjordan thanks to Winston Churchill's policy in 1922) to establish a Jewish state according to the UN Partition Plan and warns her audience that the Mufti Haj Amin el-Husseini practically declared war in advance on the still not proclaimed Jewish state. She depicts a situation lacking any peaceful alternative and intensifies her rhetoric struggle to move her audience to identify with the necessity to defend the present achievements and even more to fight for Zionist ideals: "we must fight for Jewish honour and Jewish independence." In the third stage of her speech, Meir glorifies the bravery and excellence of the young generation of Jews in Palestine, ready to sacrifice their lives for the Jewish national state and, in the concrete case, to break the Arab blockade of Jerusalem – made well-known by Élie Chouraqui's film *O Jerusalem* (2006). Meir reports the consequence of enormous human tragedy of the part of the Jews living in Jerusalem, and emphasizes the need to bring the humanitarian convoys there: "These young boys and girls, many in their teens, are bearing the burden of what is happening in the country with a spirit that no words can describe. You see these youngsters in open cars – not armoured cars – in convoys going from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, knowing that every time they start out from Tel Aviv or from Jerusalem there are probably Arabs behind the orange groves or the hills, waiting to ambush the convoy."

Golda suggests that the gigantic bravery of the Jewish youth deserves an unconditional support. She broadens her thesis through her definition that the Jews of Palestine are the "front line" of the world Jewry and therefore she implores the Jews in the United States to give their compatriots in Palestine the "possibility of going on with the struggle." One cannot help but become completely emotionally moved when Meir speaks about recruiting 20,000 volunteers starting from the age of seventeen. She stresses the importance of both increasing the number of soldiers and maintaining them on the front lines. To illustrate the Jewish determination to fight until all Jewish fighters die, if necessary, Meir presents the moving case of the besieged Kfar Etzion: "Some of the finest youngsters we have in the country were in that group, and they were all killed, every one of them. We have a description from an Arab of how they fought to the end for over seven hours against hundreds of Arabs[.] According to this Arab, the last boy killed, with no more ammunition left, died with a stone in his hand."

One inevitably thinks here both of the biblical king David in his youth when he managed to kill the superior Goliath – and the Masada defeat. The presented documentation of war reality, the Masada complex and the subconscious image of the victorious biblical David with his stone blend together in Meir's speech to an explosive, dramatic decision field inducing prompt action on behalf of the Jewish defenders. Golda reiterates the readiness of the Palestine Jewry to fall in battles rather than to capitulate and employs again the image of fighters using stones as weapons: "I want to say to you, friends, that the Jewish community in Palestine is going to fight to the very end. If we have arms to fight with, we will fight with those, and if not, we will fight with stones in our hands." This picture of patriotic soldiers in Palestine using stones as weapon must have had an enormous emotional impact on the multimillionaires in the audience who could afford buying best equipment for whatever field of activities. Golda models here a huge tension field built upon these extreme contrasts. It is a kind of a vacuum producing the wanted compassionate opinion formation in favor of the Palestinian Jews. And now we

approach the nucleus of her speech, that is to say her global, comprehensive insight in the justification of the re-birth of a Jewish national state, in other words, her vision of a vital, mutually interdependent interconnectedness, a close intertwined relationships between the Palestinian and the universal world Jewry: "The issue is that if these 700,000 Jews in Palestine can remain alive, then the Jewish people as such is alive and Jewish independence is assured. If these 700,000 people are killed off, then for many centuries, we are through with this dream of a Jewish people and a Jewish homeland." This thought is Meir's life constant which she defended some 25 years later in dialogue with soldiers on the front lines of the Yom Kippur war who asked her: "Golda, is this all worth it?" Her answer was: "If it is just for us, for three million Jews in this country, then your question is legitimate, (...) But if it is for the thirteen or fourteen million Jews, for the whole Jewish people, for the very existence of the Jewish people in history, it has to be worthwhile." (cit. in Burkett, 2009: 339)

Golda suggests here that the Jewish nation worldwide should use the uniquely favorable historical moment of the international support to use defensive force to protect and to finally realize the old dream of rebuilding the Jewish national state. In addition, her own experience of the Christian anti-Semitism in the today Ukraine has shown that being an ethnic (and/or religious) minority in a foreign national state without the possibility to defend oneself with the argument of having one's own national state to which one could go home is a horrible personal nightmare and, potentially, a tragic fate for the whole ethnic community. Why to move from one country to another country staying always a foreigner – and to be for example accused of being the murderer of Christ? This part of her Chicago speech represents the epicenter of her persuasion endeavors, in other words, a culmination of her rhetoric aggression against the riches in the audience. After this climax, Golda returns again to the history. She mentions Arab riots and the Holocaust in Europe. Further, she believes in the spirits and enthusiasm of the Jewish youth, but she insists indirectly on a coalition between the Jewish patriotic zeal and the Jewish money that can buy weapons: "But there is also no doubt that the spirit of our young people is such that no matter how many Arabs invade the country, their spirit will not falter. However, this valiant spirit alone cannot face rifles and machine guns. Rifles and machine guns without spirit are not worth very much, but spirit without arms can in time be broken with the body."

Further, before she names the audience the sum of money needed for the defense against the planned Arab invasion (25 to 30 million USD at that time), she uses pathos as a means of persuasion. She expresses her sorrow for having to leave Palestine for the United States. She shows her pain and compassion with Jewish soldiers exposed to Arab bullets. The distance from the front line of war makes her suffer, but on the other hand she is a rhetoric fighter in the front line of war for the sympathy and material support of the American Jewry, as the following passage shows us:

I have come to the United States, and I hope you will understand me if I say that it is not an easy matter for any of us to leave home at present—to my sorrow I am not in the front line. I am not with my daughter in the Negev or with other sons and daughters in the trenches. But I have a job to do. I have come here to try to impress Jews in the United States with the fact that within a very short period, a couple of weeks, we must have in cash between twenty-five and thirty million dollars.

In the next part of her speech, Golda generates empathy with the fate of Jewish detainees in Cyprus while showing her faith that these people too should and could be integrated into Palestine: "We must now think of preparing means of absorbing them. We know that within the very near future, hundreds of thousands more will be coming in. We must see that our economy is intact." Golda proves to be a good economist in a broader sense of the word: even during war the following motto is valid for her: "Our factories must go on." Furthermore, she emphasizes that "there is no despair in the Yishuv." She repeats – repetition as a rhetoric figure can be very pathetic – her thesis about the excellent state of patriotic moral of the Palestinian Jews and repeats the thesis about the moral obligation of Jews outside of Palestine to help the *yishuv* financially:

Merely with our ten fingers and merely with spirit and sacrifice, we cannot carry on this battle, and the only hinterland that we have is you. The Mufti has the Arab states—not all so enthusiastic about helping him but states with government budgets. [...] We have no government. But we have millions of Jews in the Diaspora, and exactly as we have faith in our youngsters in Palestine I have faith in Jews in the United States; I believe that they will realize the peril of our situation and will do what they have to do.

She summarizes this fact of mutual interdependence in the following concise sentence: "It is blood plus money that is being given in Palestine." Besides the mutual interconnection of two Jewish communities, Golda adds the thesis of mutual exchangeability of the situation and necessary modesty and respect for each other, forming thus a higher level of mutual identification and unification of common interest:

I know that many of you would be as anxious as our people to be on the very front line. I do not doubt that there are many young people among the Jewish community in the United States who would do exactly what our young people are doing in Palestine. We are not a better breed; we are not the best Jews of the Jewish people. It so happened that we are there and you are here. I am certain that if you were in Palestine and we were in the United States, you would be doing what we are doing there, and you would ask us here to do what you will have to do.

In the step before closing her speech, Golda spreads a warrior spirit resembling male rhetoric bravery, or, in other words, one could miss a feminine touch in formulating the uncompromising willpower of the *yishuv*. In addition, the following passage illustrates how she attributes the American Jews the role of a guarantor of victory – because any thought of a defeat is excluded if the financial support is expeditiously donated: "You cannot decide whether we should fight or not. We will. The Jewish community in Palestine will raise no white flag for the Mufti. That decision is taken. Nobody can change it. You can only decide one thing: whether we shall be victorious in this fight or whether the Mufti will be victorious. That decision American Jews can make. It has to be made quickly within hours, within days."

She closes her Chicago speech showing that she is full of self-confidence, maybe typical of professional fundraising officials having various means of influencing people even outside the rhetoric platform, but this time in the tone of requesting the unconditional Jewish unity. However, her final clauses seem to hold an example of pleonasm or tautology, and every individual recipient could comprehend the joint usage of the notion of "resolving to establish" and the notion of "laying the cornerstone" of the Jewish state either as a stylistic mistake in an unprepared speech, as an subconsciously produced semantic redundancy, as a correct rhetoric means of intensification or a proof of a deeper emotional excitement in a extremely difficult situation. The final sentence of the Chicago speech follows here: "I leave the platform without any doubt in my mind or my heart that the decision that will be taken by American Jewry will be the same as that which was taken by the Jewish community in Palestine, so that within a few months from now we will all be able to participate not only in the joy of resolving to establish a Jewish state, but in the joy of laying the cornerstone of the Jewish state." According to Martin (1988: 304) her audience saw "a woman in a simple blue dress, her hair in a bun. [...] She seemed neither overawed nor condescending. She spoke almost without emotion for thirty-five minutes, never raising her voice. The normal din of the dense crowd was absent." This speech tone of prayer-like humbleness and rational objectivity lacking any emotional manipulation, trying only to point to relevant facts, can be traced also in Mrs. Meir's later recorded speeches (e.g. *Peace in the Middle East*, 1957) and interviews (e.g. *Golda Meir Interview on Arab-Israeli Relations and Terrorism*, 1973) available on YouTube.com.

But let us see the reaction of the anti-Zionist audience to this Zionist speech. Martin (1988: 305) reports: "The response was electric. This cynical, sophisticated, partly hostile audience stood up cheering, applauding, crying. More than that, they pledged \$25 million." The voice-over in the film *A Woman Called Golda* tells us that she managed to collect \$50 million after this speech, which is not true. Only after a long fund-raising speech tour across the United States, together with Montor and his team, lasting until the middle of March 1948 she managed to collect the 50th million (cf. Martin, 1988: 306-318). But, what was the essence of Golda Meir's rhetoric charisma among the American Jews? Martin reports (ibid., 305-306) that Meir looked "just like a woman out of the Bible... so plain, so strong, so old-fashioned", "What came through so clearly was her shining spirit, her sense of dedication that pierced like a searchlight," "Golda's fire was a furnace."

Golda Meir's Chicago speech opens the second part of the television miniseries (0:10:10-0:12:19). Ingrid Bergman's re-enactment of the speech is reduced to two minutes only. Let us have a look on the transcript of this shortened television version of the speech being thus focused on the most important issues, omitting Golda Meir's repetitions mentioned above:

Please believe me when I tell you I did not come to the United States only because 700,000 Jews are in danger of being killed. That is not the issue. The issue is that if the Jews of Palestine survive then the Jews of the world survive with them. And their freedom will be assured forever. But, if these 700,000 are wiped off the face of the earth, then there will be no Jewish people as such, and for centuries to come all our hopes and grieves of the Jewish nation, a Jewish homeland will be smashed. My friends, when I say that we need money immediately, I don't mean next week, I mean right now. In less than four months we'll be fighting for our lives, against cannon and arm. It is not for you to decide whether we'll fight. That decision is taken. We will fight. We'll pay for the birth of our nation with blood. That is normal. The best of us will fall, that is certain. There is only one thing for you to decide: whether we'll win or we'll lose.

Ingrid Bergman's film speech represents a condensation of Golda Meir's original speech, but it shows considerable differences, especially in its finale. Instead of a monotonous tone of Meir's speech as known to her contemporaries, the audience in the film (as well as the film viewers) is exposed to a speech full of phonetic means of expression, in their full range, with active and appropriate body language, typical of all Ingrid Bergman's films. Of course, Golda Meir was no actress and had no regular rhetorical education so that the speech performances differ in this aspect. Now, instead of Golda Meir's closing self-confidence already stated above, we can trace Ingrid Bergman's fear of rejection being inscribed in her facial expression and body language. Besides, someone who does not know Golda Meir's biography and her continuous American 'shopping tours' in the spring time ever since 1928 (with exceptions during war years) could think (judging from this film scene only) that she was unknown in the American Jewish circles before 1948. Some film scenes could be considered a proof of the fact that Ingrid Bergman felt remorse for her support of Hitler in 1938 and consequently wanted to make amends. Spoto (2001: 544) reports about Ingrid Bergman's continuous need to express her sorrow due to remembering the Nazi period in Germany during the shooting of the film in Israel. Thus, her re-enactment of Golda Meir left some visible traces of pangs of conscience in some scenes in the film (e.g. confrontation with Jewish children released from concentration camps, who never saw a flower, being detained on Cyprus). However, this guilty conscience transformed gradually to a strengthened, unequivocal pro-Israeli attitude in the course of the shooting. Spoto believed that Ingrid Bergman's problematic biographical circumstances played a significant role in her rhetoric of interpreting Golda Meir. Was Bergman's acting in this film to some degree a performance of a personal self-reeducation (the Germans are known to have the term *Entnazifizierung*)?

To sum up, the film version of the Chicago speech shows a theater dramaturgy. The suspense of uncertainty (having manifold roots of genesis) produces abruptly a great enthusiasm on part of the audience in the film which accepts to support (as always had been done until then – and as always has been done since then) the self-defense of the Palestinian Jews and the Zionist project of the State of Israel as a legal homeland of the Jewish nation with large amounts of money. The film rhetoric of the Chicago speech scene is based on the deductive montage (cf. Joost, 2008: 153), that is to say zooming in of individual takes approaching the speaker from panorama shots to a position combining a sector with several audience members and a half-close-up. The final approaching frontal shot leads to the identification of the audience members and the film viewers with the focal character and causes compassion as well as sympathy with the speaker's message.

4. Golda Meir's rhetoric of cooperation, right to self-defense, security and peace treaties

In this part of the paper, we focus on several Golda Meir's speeches which can be considered crucial in her political career. The first one precedes the Chicago speech. It is the speech made in the night after the acceptance of the UN Partition Plans for Palestine. Originally having been made at the balcony of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem on November 29, 1947, the film version was re-designed as a radio address. Ingrid Bergman's pose before the microphone is here typical – and this constellation of a speaker in front of microphones and against the background of politically significant sceneries (with gradually rising magnificence of the Knesset scenery) is going to be repeated in subsequent speech scenes. Let us see what constitutes the essence of Meir's message to the Palestinian Arabs. Below is the film transcript of the speech:

As of midnight local time we have the right to be a state. On the behalf of the Jewish Agency I want to say something to our Arab neighbors. You fought your battle against us in the United Nations. The majority of the countries in the world believed this is how we should be. It is not what you wanted, it is not what we wanted, it's a compromise. But, now I say to you: a Jewish state can be a great benefit to everyone in the Middle East. We

hold out our hand to you. Let's live together in friendship and in peace. (*A Woman Called Golda*, Part One, 1:14:55-1:15:55; a text version in Martin, 1988: 291; Meir, 1989: 172)

Golda Meir expresses her belief that in a democracy there is a rule of majority of votes and a rule of compromise. In addition, she proposes peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs in the Jewish part of Palestine as well between the Jews and Arabs in the wider context. Half a year later, the same message was sent in the Declaration on the Establishment of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948:

WE APPEAL—in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months—to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East. (cit. in Mahler / Mahler, 2010: 107-108)

Golda Meir's second speech here analyzed was held at the United Nations on March 1, 1957. After announcing plans for Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai and the Gaza strip – despite the anticipation of a new war against the State of Israel, which started in 1967 – she envisions the Middle East without enmity and without arms race consuming large amounts of money that could have been invested in infrastructural and economic projects combating affliction and destitution. Here is the speech transcript from the film:

Now, may I have a few words to the neighbors of Israel? Can we from now on, all of us, turn over a new leaf? Can we act like sisters and brothers should? Instead of fighting each other, can we fight poverty, disease, illiteracy? Hatred has never made one child in your country happier (...). Isn't it possible that we put all our efforts, energies into one single purpose: the betterment of all our lands and all our people through the blessings of peace? (*A Woman Called Golda*, Part Two, 0:30:40-0:32:30; a text version as a self-quote in the speech *Attainment of Peace*, 1970; a version in Mann, 1971: 196)

The third important speech was held in Madison Square Garden after the 1967 war (cf. Mann, 1971: 226-227), but in the film it is used in a compressed form as a voice-over by Golda herself during the scene of a cordial meeting with Israeli soldiers embracing her at the Western Wall after the liberation / occupation / annexation of the 'disputed' parts of Jerusalem in June 1967. Burkett (2009: 224) reveals the details as follows:

Not recognizing Golda but seeking female comfort, several soldiers threw themselves into her embrace. The antithesis of a romantic, Golda was never one to indulge nostalgia. She didn't pray or weep over the reunification of the ancient city, then; she flew to the United States to raise money for a national treasury getting dangerously empty.

"Again, we won a war – a third in a very short history of independence," Golda told the the crowd of 18,000 at a rally in Madison Square Garden two days later. "A wonderful people these Israelis! They win wars every ten years whatever the odds. And they have done it again. Fantastic! Now that they have won this round, let them go back where they came from so that Syrian gunners on the Golan Heights can again shoot into the kibbutzim, so that Jordanian Legionnaires on the towers of the Old City can again shell at will, so that the Gaza Strip can again be a nest for terrorists, so that the Sinai Desert can again become the staging ground for Nasser's divisions. ... Is there anybody who can honestly bid the Israelis to go home before a real peace? Is there anyone who dares us to begin training our ten-year-olds for the next war?"
The crowd swelled in a chant, "NO, NO, NO!"

The rhetorical importance of the film version lies in the argument that there will be no withdrawal to any pre-war position before establishing true security borders and concluding any kind of obliging peace treaties with Arab nations. As a 'mother of Israel', she would not like to sacrifice her children in permanently repeating 10-year periods. Her Jewish image of children is neither the image of cannon fodder, nor of martyrs, nor of suicide bombers. And she is firmly convinced that "Peace will come when the Arabs will love their children more than they hate us." (Syrkin, 1973: 242) If the Arabs do not change their upbringing philosophy and their education

systems and if they do not abolish and eradicate anti-Semitism, it is very probable that peace will never come. The transcript of the voice-over in the film follows below:

Now I remember thinking we have defensible borders again. Is there anyone who would dare tell us to give them up again? Without a real guarantee of peace? And go home and start preparing our nine- and ten-year-olds for the next war? No, no, not this time. (*A Woman Called Golda*, Part Two, 0:53:17-0:53:56)

The fourth example of a crucial speech with its filmic translation is an excerpt from Golda Meir's speech *The Attainment of Peace* held in the Knesset on May 26, 1970. It seems that the film version is kind of a summary of freely paraphrased passages from this speech:

Some of our friends in other countries have expressed concern that Israel by maintaining strong armed forces may become militaristic. I can only answer that I am not in favor of a nice, liberal and anti-militaristic – and dead Jewish people. On the other hand, the victories that we have won never intoxicated us. They never made us forget our great hope, our great desire which is for peace. A peace, that means good neighborly relations with the Arab people, is fundamental for the Jewish renaissance. With all my heart I pledge that this government will make any effort in its power to bring about a true and enduring peace. (*A Woman Called Golda*, Part Two, 0:58:05-0:59:07)

The Israeli political strategy has, metaphorically speaking, two wings: primarily, due to the experience with the Arab neighbors, a strong army, and secondarily, a spectrum of economic and other means of securing well-being and cooperation in mutual respect. In Golda's opinion, there are no reasons for fear of a strong defensive Israeli. Strong defense forces are not synonymous with militarism.

The fifth case to be mentioned is Golda Meir's demand for the unconditional cooperation with the political establishment of the USA and with the Jews of America. In a speech to her ministers in the cabinet, she defended her viewpoint that the renunciation of the pre-emptive strike in the Yom Kippur war as well as the retreat from retaliation against enemy armies at the end of the war were correct. The address represents Golda Meir's confirmation of the strategic Israeli-American alliance. Here are the details of the speech:

"There is only one country to which we can turn and sometimes we have to give in to it – even when we know we shouldn't," Golda lectured the ministers who were balking. "But it is the only real friend we have and very powerful one. We don't have to say yes to everything. But there is nothing to be ashamed of when a small country like Israel, in this situation, has to give in sometimes to the United States." (Burkett, 2009: 336)

In the film version, Golda Meir's lecture to the government members is translated into a short dialogue with representatives of lower classes of the Israeli society. Below, we can follow the transcript of Meir's dialogue with a soldier:

Soldier: Every one of us was in the fighting. We say our friends dying next to us. We have the right to ask just when we had the enemy on the run why did you agree to that cease-fire?
Golda Meir: I wanted to hold out for a true negotiated peace this time. I have spent my life pleading for peace. We are a very small country with a great and powerful friend. Sometimes we have to give in to that friend. Even when we don't want to. (*A Woman Called Golda*, Part Two, 1:22:53-1:23:26)

Anwar el Sadat's visit to Jerusalem on November 19-20, 1977, when the Egyptian president abandoned the Arab policy of avoiding direct contacts with representatives of the State of Israel (and thus de-escalated the dysfunctional rhetoric between them; cf. Heisey, 1970) is the sixth situation having considerable rhetorical significance in the film. Despite her being a former Prime Minister, Golda is invited to the ceremony and her visit to her Milwaukee primary school, where the framework film story of the meeting and talking with pupils takes place creating the explicit didactic rhetorical situation within the film itself, is abruptly finished. The reason why Mr. Meir has to meet with the Egyptian president is the fact that she many times invited him to direct meetings and negotiations during her political career, however, without success. In the film, we are faced with a completely informal version of Golda Meir who ignores the great political show and uses small talk and humor in contacts with Anwar el Sadat. Meir shows her sense of informality, human closeness and concern for the well-being of the family. The visual rhetoric of the scene suggests the real possibility of a normal, peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Arabs willing to secure a better future for their children and grandchildren.

Burkett (2009: 376) reveals us details from her interview with Yitzhak Rabin who overheard the repartee between President Sadat and Mrs. Meir as follows:

"Sadat smiled, clearly tickled. Taking Golda's hand, he said softly, "Madam, for many, many years I wanted to meet you."

Golda returned his graciousness. "Mr. President, so have I waited a long time to meet you. Why didn't you come earlier?"

Sadat paused for a moment and replied, "The time was not yet ripe."

Ingrid Bergman's Golda puts in the film version the following question: "What took you so long?" However, Sadat remains in the film without a response. When a politician is silent, this might mean that there are too many factors to be mentioned – and that it proves to be wiser not to disclose them. Golda Meir's pacifistic endeavors during her political career did not have a pacifistic counterpart among relevant Arab leaders. However, this is an objective that should be achieved by the generations to come.

5. Conclusion

Golda Meir's life rhetoric was characterized by simple American survival pragmatism, the sage Hillel's wisdom and the obsession with defensive efficiency based on the strong alliance between the State of Israel and the United States of America. Her primary concern was the security of existence of her nation as the only functioning democracy in the Middle East, the nation that needs its older brothers in the American Jews. Therefore, we can talk about the rhetoric of building strong mutual identification primarily for security reasons. Besides the extremely difficult geopolitical situation, the following Jewish proverb might help us to understand and illustrate this practical security-first thinking: "When the coop is secure, the geese will grow fatter." (Kogos, 1990: 109) Self-evidently, the Arab political rhetoric in the Middle East has had some other priorities – unfortunately among other things even the policy of sending own children to suicide bombing operations, which should be prevented in the future by all means. The rhetoric analysis of Meir's speeches shows a paradoxical mixture of monotonous tone, poor vocabulary disabling any more sophisticated rhetoric analysis, laconic and pictorial style, tendency to aphorism, pathos, humble appearance, a sob in her voice provoking tears and emotional conversions, a very suggestive personality with a spontaneous charisma and silent emotional rhetoric of old-fashioned, motherly authority. She was a rhetorically ingenious blend of Zionism and fears coming from the Masada complex – in the end searching for peace and co-existence with the neighboring Arab nations.

The film *A Woman Called Golda* represents a praise portrait with many 'photoshop' improvements focusing primarily on the didactic function of presenting the Israeli truth in the conflict with the Arabs. It has a strong emotional impact and does not miss elements of entertainment. Self-evidently, the film medium employs means of condensation of messages and speeches producing thus their laconic conversion in the economy of the multi-layered film language. The explicit rhetoric framework of the film is a didactic situation: Every film scene from the past is essentially to be understood as Meir's lessons to primary school pupils. When it comes to Ingrid Bergman's performance rhetoric, one must point out that it differs from Golda Meir's own rhetoric style. Bergman's voice is characterized by a complexity of phonetic and facial expression as well as by a more spontaneous body language. Her total identification with Meir seems to be additionally based on the need for remorseful compensation for her partly pro-Nazi past and neglect to foresee consequences of Nazi Germany policy leading to the Holocaust.

References

- Bennett, H. [Executive Producer], Corman, G. [Producer], Guthrie, L. [Producer], Hall, M. [Associate Producer], & Gibson, A. [Director]. (1982) *A Woman Called Golda* [Motion picture]. USA: Paramount Television.
- Blakesley, D. (2003). Introduction: The rhetoric of film and film studies. In D. Blakesley. (Ed.), *The terministic screen. Rhetorical perspectives on film* (pp. 1-16). Carbondale, Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.

- Blakesley, D. (2004). Defining film rhetoric. The case of Hitchcock's *Vertigo*. In Ch. A. Hill, & M. Helmers (Eds.). *Defining visual rhetoric* (pp. 111-133). Mahwah, London: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bostom, A. G. (Ed.). (2008). *The legacy of Islamic anti-Semitism. From sacred texts to solemn history*. Foreword by Ibn Warraq, Amherst: Prometheus Books.
- Brown, M. (1992). The American element in the rise of Golda Meir 1906-1929. *Jewish History*, Vol 6, 1-2, pp. 35-50.
- Brown, M. (1996). *The Israeli-American connection. Its roots in the yishuv, 1914-1945*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Burkett, E. (2009). *Golda*. New York et al.: Harper Perennial.
- Clifton, N. R. (1983). *The figure in film*. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Press.
- Dekel-Ch., J., Gaunt, D., Meir, N. M., & Bartal, I. (Eds.). (2010). *Anti-Jewish violence. Rethinking the pogrom in the East European history*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Educational Video Group, Inc. [EVGINC]. (2009, October 13) *Golda Meir: Peace in the Middle East* [Video file]. Retrieved from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wET_StZgPk8
- Goldstein, Ph. (Ed.). (2012). *A convenient hatred. The history of anti-Semitism*. Foreword by Sir Harold Evans. Brookline: Facing History and Ourselves.
- Heisey, D. R. (1970). The rhetoric of the Arab-Israeli conflict. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56:1, pp. 12-21.
- Joost, G. (2008). *Bild-Sprache. Die audio-visuelle Rhetorik des Films*. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.
- Judge, E. H. (1992). *Easter in Kishinev. Anatomy of a pogrom*. New York, London: New York University Press.
- Kanzog, K. (2001). *Grundkurs Filmrhetorik*. München: diskurs film Verlag Schaudig & Leidig.
- Kastely, J. L. (2004). Rhetoric and emotion. In W. Jost, & W. Olmsted (Eds.), *A companion to rhetoric and rhetorical criticism* (pp. 221-237). Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.
- Kogos, F. (1993). *1001 Yiddish proverbs*. New York: Carol Publishing Group.
- Lanham, R. A. (1991). *A handlist of rhetorical terms*. Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Leamer, L. (1986). *As time goes by. The life of Ingrid Bergman*. New York et al.: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Mahler, G. S., & Mahler, A. R. W. (2010). *The Arab-Israeli conflict. An introduction and documentary reader*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Mann, P. (1971). *Golda. The life of Israel's prime minister*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.
- Martin, R. G. (1988). *Golda Meir. The romantic years*. New York: Charles Scribener's sons.
- Meir, Golda: Attainment of peace. [http://www.thespeeches.com/golda_meir3.html]
- Meir, Golda: Chicago speech. [http://www.thespeeches.com/golda_meir2.html]
- Meir, G. (1989). *My life. The autobiography of Golda Meir*. London: Futura publications.

- Meir, Golda: Peace in the Middle East. [http://www.speeches-usa.com/Transcripts/025_meir.htm]
- Mikunda, Ch. (2002). *Kino spüren. Strategien der emotionalen Filmgestaltung*. Wien: WUV-Univ.-Verl.
- Morson, G. S. (2004). The rhetoric of the aphorism. In W. Jost, W., & W. Olmsted (Eds.). *A companion to rhetoric and rhetorical criticism* (pp. 248-265). Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing.
- Spoto, D. (2001). *"Ich bin immer ich selbst geblieben." Ingrid Bergman*. German translation by Jobst-Christian Rojahn. München: List. [American original 1997 with the title *Notorious*]
- Syrkin, M. (Ed.). (1973). *A land of our own. An oral autobiography*. New York: Putnam.
- Tan, E. S. (1996). *Emotion and the structure of narrative film. Film as an emotion machine*. Mahwah: Erlbaum.
- The Film Archive [thefilmarchived]. (2011, November 26). *Golda Meir: Interview on Arab-Israeli Relations and Terrorism* [Video file]. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvoYVR0LMFA>
- Till, D. (2008). Rhetorik des Affekts (Pathos). In U. Fix, A. Gardt, & J. Knappe, J. (Eds.). *Rhetorik und Stylistik. Rhetoric and stylistics. Ein international Handbuch historischer und systematischer Forschung. An interational handbook of historical and systematic research* (pp. 646-669). Vol. 1. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter.