



JEWISH-ARAB RELATIONS

It seems inevitable that the topic of Jewish-Arab relations, such a pressing issue in Israeli society, should make its way into Israeli cinema. What is striking is not that it has been addressed, but rather the sensitive way Israeli artists have explored human and social tensions within the raw political conflict. The open environment allows for and encourages honest discussion from all parts of the political and ideological spectrums.

The two films covered in this unit are very different from each other in many ways. *Channels of Rage* is a documentary recording events over several years, while *The Syrian Bride* is a feature film about the fictional events of one day. *Channels of Rage* deals with the world of two Israeli rap stars, one Israeli and one Palestinian, while *The Syrian Bride* takes place amidst the people and culture of the Druze in the Golan Heights. But the two films share a commitment on the part of Israeli directors to observe the world around them with intelligence and candor, and to recognize that there is no easy solution to the complex problems faced by their country.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

- 1 What can you learn from these two films about Jewish-Arab relations? How is the medium of film uniquely suited to convey this information?
- 2 How do these films make you feel about Israel?
- 3 Do these films make you feel optimistic or pessimistic about the future of Jewish-Arab relations? Why?
- 4 Do you think these same films could have been made by Arabs outside of Israel? Why or why not?