

**Massive Childhood Trauma in Film: *Our Children (Undzere Kinder)*.**

**Poland 1948 68 Minutes B&W Yiddish with New English Subtitles**

This was the IPA (and Brazilian) premiere of the last Yiddish language movie produced in post-war Poland, **Undzere Kinder (*Our Children*)**, featuring the comedians Dzigal and Shumacher. Part stylish expressionist docu-drama, part melancholic comedy, it is the account of a group of Jewish child survivors, played by children residents of the Helanowek orphanage who retell their ordeal to the great distress of the however well-intentioned adult world. The film is emblematic for many issues we are faced with when confronted with timeless, unspeakable and unrepresentable horror, our world after Auschwitz, within the confines of the consulting room, and without. *Undzere Kinder*, part of a handful of early post-Shoah movies, was first to confront the issue of whether remembering the mass murder of one's people, as opposed to repressing these memories, is therapeutic. Further, by its nature as artistic creation, the film questions whether the Shoah can be the subject of artistic re-presentation.

A theme that was explored together from a psychoanalytically informed perspective was the transgenerational impact of the Shoah. How will children such as those depicted in the movie who experienced the ultimate separation from their parents, their culture, even their language raise their own children? How will they experience normative separations such as their children's individuation etc. And, similarly to the adults in the movie who flee the orphanage, that 'House of Nightmares' the next morning, who want and yet, do not want to know the recent past, how do we as psychoanalysts treating victims of massive trauma deal with the continuous threat of being overwhelmed by that which is overwhelming?

The film met with great interest by an audience from all continents and backgrounds and stimulated an engaged and meaningful debate leading to much enthusiasm for continuing the discussion at the next IPA, as well as the interim.