Margarita Kirilkina

In the beginning of the film Fellow Travelers Yoni, the main character, gets money from German professor Ulrich to start Arab University in Tel-Aviv. Right after he is leaving Ulrich's apartment, somebody comes there and kills professor. Yoni goes back to Tel-Aviv but there he finds out that group of people, with whom he was fighting for Arab's rights in Israel, split: just one person still wants to make university, another members chose violent way. In the end of film Yoni is forced (by police and group members) to contribute professor's money for purchasing guns. Then somebody kills him.

The main theme of the film is contained in a text introduction in the beginning. It says that there is an Arab minority in Israel which demanding cultural autonomy and full civil rights. But sometimes this struggle becomes violent.

Violence in the film comes from two sources: extremist group and secret police who are both opponents of the idea of building Arab University. In the beginning somebody kills professor Ulrich who gives money to Yoni for university and in a minute somebody kills him. In the end of film Yoni gives money to the extremist group and following the same logic in a minute somebody kills him. Nevertheless the director leaves the question: who killed them - police or extremists, open as they are playing the same repressive role in the film. It would be maybe better to ask: who killed them first? - as 2 policemen arguing in the end of film when Yoni is dying: which shot was first and which second.

In here Fellow Travelers is similar to Paratroopers. In both films the protagonist appears in a kind of trap and he becomes a victim of enchanted circle from where there is only one way out - through the death. At the same time in two films we don't know who kills protagonist because that killing is more abstract: not a man kills another man, but a situation. First we have to find who is responsible for those circumstances and just after we could find who is really guilty. And the director leaves us a space to find them by ourselves.

Fellow travelers are people who sympathies or co-operate with a certain political organization not being a direct member of it. In this film Yoni involuntary becomes fellow traveler of extremist group. In the beginning he resists but in the end he is forced to co-operate. The Hebrew title "Silver platter" could refer to the idiom "hand to on a silver platter" as people from the group choses only the easiest ways to get something, without any big efforts - what exactly this idiom means. To change the situation they choses fast violence instead of starting from education which could be longer way but more effective. Also instead of getting money by honest way they prefer to pick them from somebody else. And by that title the director criticize them.