



HARUN FAROCKI

A Retrospective

Goethe Institutes of the United States and Canada

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE



When I was in school during the Adenauer era, nobody was interested in culture or social issues. Back then, if a doctor had three sons, all of them would study medicine and make money that way. Later, under Brandt, only one of the doctor's sons would become a physician, the second son would become a social worker and the third an artist. As the son of a doctor, I adopted the "Nouvelle Vague," which emerged at the end of the Fifties. My teachers were against the cinema and my fellow pupils were against culture and social issues—with the "Nouvelle Vague" I had something against both of them. Today, culture—including the culture of the teachers—comes mostly from the spirit of playing hooky from school. Just as things got better under Brandt with culture and social issues, I fell into a deep hole. I kept myself going with the smallest jobs for television while a biography was being published on one of my fellow students from film school. When I look at the films I made between 1967 and 1970, I ask myself where all that stuff went. In 1977, I produced a film without money and had to work a lot of jobs to pay off my debts—that's how I learned to make money. It has been the case since 1979 that I have had debts equivalent to the value of Europe's best-selling automobile, but there was always the prospect of more work. Films for television, which I thought I was producing only to make money, were sometimes better than films I thought I was making only for their own sake. I still can't believe that I was able to raise two daughters with that money. Even Godard made more money from the production of his films than from their screenings. He was already a role model thirty years ago: He could deal with both intellect and money—he used both of them for his productions. Today, he represents someone who thinks in terms of film.

Harun Farocki