

Enrollment on the web to "Israeli History through Film" is open through Hebrew 371-Lec 3 using the call/class number 54162 or Jewish 371-Lec 3, using call/class number 54226

University of Wisconsin, Madison
Department of Hebrew & Semitic Studies
Spring Semester 2009

Israeli History through Film
Dr. Miri Talmon-Bohm
Tuesdays@Thursdays
4:00-5:15 PM
379 Van Hise

Course Description:

The course offers a study of Israeli History as reflected and narrated in Israeli films, 1930-2007. We shall examine different constitutive events and processes in Israeli history as captured on celluloid: the Zionist enterprise, the British Mandate Era and the first decade of the Israeli state (1940-1950), immigration booms in this decade and their social and cultural impact; the conflict in the Middle East and its cinematic narratives; the 1960s- the war of attrition and the 1967 Six Day War on the one hand, the rise of Israeli bourgeoisie and decline of socialist values on the other; the 1970s as a decade of change and transition-socio- political turnover and peace process with Egypt; the 1980s: the war in Lebanon, the decline of collectivist and nationalist symbolic social frameworks such as the *kibbutz* and the Israeli army and the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai peninsula; the 1990s: the peace process, Prime Minister Rabin's assassination, immigration booms from The former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, Millennial anxieties merging with terror in the street of Tel-Aviv; the current decade: the discovery and re-vision of history as a personal, lived experience and "second-generation" points of view.

Israeli History is studied as a dynamic drama, in which the historical, social and cultural contexts impact the lives of individuals, and collective transitions reflect personal rites-of-passage. The cinematic chronicles of Israeli history re-tell it from different vantage points, depending on when the

films are produced, and which chapter in history they choose to re-vision on the screen.

The kind of questions which will guide our study: what time and event in history is being depicted in the film? How does the context of the film's production impact the way history is depicted in it? In what ways is the cinematic rendering of history unique and what can we learn from films as historical-cultural documents? How do changing representations of historical events such as "The (1967) Six Day War" or decades- such as the 1950s- teach us not only about different versions of history, and changing aesthetics of film art- but also about changing trends in collective Israeli memory, agenda and society?

Detailed Syllabus:

1. The Pioneers; the Rise of a Hebrew Culture and the "New (masculine) Jew"; First chapter of the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine-Eretz Israel

1934: This is The Land (Agadati) ; Land of Promise (Judah Lehman); 1960: They Were Ten (Baruch Dienar); 1964: A Hole in the Moon (Uri Zohar); (1987: Unsettled Land (Uri Barbash); 1996: Saint Clara (Ari Folman and Ori Sivan)

2. the Mandate Era and the Rise of Jewish Militant Activism; The Negotiation of the Arab-Jewish Conflict on the eve of the foundation of the state, and after the Holocaust:

Hill Twenty Four Doesn't answer (1955, Thorold Dickinson); Exodus, (1960, Otto Preminger); He Walked through the Fields (1967, Yosef Milo); Hide and Seek (1980, Dan Volman); Rage and Glory (1985, Avi Neshet); Kedma (2002, Amos Gitai); Oh Jerusalem (2006, Elie Chouraqui).

3. The First Decade- the Encounter with the Holocaust Survivors; First Immigration Booms, Austerity and Rationing; The Oppressing Collective and the Crisis in the "Kibbutz"
The Wooden Gun (Ilan Moshenzon, 1979); The Summer of Aviya (Eli Cohen, 1988); Alex in Love (Boaz Dasvidzon, 1985) ; Noa at Seventeen (Yitzhak Yeshurun, 1981).

4. The 1960s- take one: Immigration booms from the Middle East and Asia, and emigration to the USA; the rise of Israeli bourgeoisie and the decline of socialism:

Sallah (Ephraim Kishon 1964); To Take a Wife (Shlomi and Ronit Elkabetz, 2004); Turn Left at the End of the World (Avi Neshet, 2004); Lemon Popsicle (Boaz Davidzon, 1978); Over the Ocean, (Jacob Goldwasser, 1992); 1966 Was a Good Year for Tourism (Amit Goren, 1992).

5. The 1960s- take two: The Six Day War

Kommando Sinai (1968, Raphael Nusbaum); Every Bastard a King (1968, Uri Zohar); Avanti Popolo (1986, Rafi Bukai); Turn Left at the End of the World (2004, Avi Neshet); The Band's Visit (2007, Eran Kolirin).

6. The 1960s- Take Three: The Radical Counter Culture and the War of Attrition- Transformations in Israeli Culture: The New Pacifism, "Non-Sucker" Ethos and Coming of Rock.

Siege (1969, Gilberto Toffano); The Troupe (1978, Avi Neshet); Late Summer Blues (1987, Renen Schorr).

7. The 1970s: the Yom Kippur War, Peace with Egypt, The 1977 Political Turnover.

Atalia (1984, Akiva Tevet); Shuli's Fiance (1997, Doron Tzabari); Made in Israel (2001, Ari Folman).

8. The 1980s: The Withdrawal from Sinai, The War in Lebanon, the Intifada and the Decline of Militarism

One of Ours (1989, Uri Barbash); Cup Final (1991, Eran Riklis); Campfire (2004, Joseph Cedar); Beaufort (2007, Joseph Cedar).

9. The 1990s: The Gulf War, Immigration Booms from Russia and Ethiopia, the Peace Process and Terror in Israeli Streets, Millennial anxieties.

The Siren's Song (1994, Etan Fox); Yana's Friends (1998, Arik Kaplun) Live and Become (2005, Radu Mihaileanu), The Bubble (2006, Ethan Fox).

10. The Re-Vision of History and the Claim for Authenticity: Personal Documentary Films and Second Generation Discourse.

Le Grand Akshan (Ron Goldman, 2003); Out For Love-Be Back Shortly (Dan Katzir, 1996); Another Land (Amit Goren, 1998); Children of the Sun (Ran Tal, 2007); Nadia's Friends (Hanoch Zeevi, 2006).