

RS 405

Israeli Cinema in the 21st Century

Igal Bursztyn, Tel Aviv University

Schusterman Visiting Israel Professor

3:40-6:20 Library, room 129 T

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Office hours: T 2:30-3:30 PM, TR 12:45 – 1:45PM

The seminar will study outstanding feature films, documentaries, short dramas and video-works containing a variety of filmic reflections on the Israeli society and its culture(s). The works will be discussed in context of artistic attainments and failures of the earlier Israeli film industry. The seminar will emphasize issues in Israeli film aesthetics and their relation to social and ideological developments in the Israeli society. Writing-emphasis course.

Course Requirements:

Attendance (10%)

Oral Assignments 20%: Each student will deliver a 10 min. oral presentation/critique of a chosen text and film.

Written Assignment 30%: By mid semester (March 2nd) each student will submit a written 4 page review dealing with 4 films and 3 articles of his/her choice.

Final paper 40% (To be delivered on May 6th). 6 page essay on aspects of Israeli Cinema – based on screenings and texts of the course.

The list of films and film sequences mentioned below (in italics) is optional and may change throughout the course.

1. Jan. 19

Kitsch and Art: A Short History of Israeli Cinema

Dark Night, Leonid Prolovsky, 2007, 30'

Sequences from: *1st Film of Palestine* Murray Rosenberg 1911

Sabra, Alexander Ford, 1935

Ha'Avoda (Labor), Helmer Lerski, 1935

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, Thorold Dickinson, Peter Fry, 1955

Sallah Shabati, Efraim Kishon, 1964

Kazablan, Menahem Golan, 1974

Desperado Square, Benny Torati, 2000

Band's Visit, Eran Kolirin, 2007

2. Jan. 26

Everyday Life

Broken Wings, Nir Bergman 2001

Sequences from: *The Illegals* Meir Levin, 1947, *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*, Thorold Dickinson, Peter Fry, 1955, *Summer of Avia*, Eli Cohen, 1988

Reading: Nurit Gertz, 'From Jew to Hebrew: The 'Zionist Narrative' in the Israeli Cinema of the 1940s and 1950s' in **Israel Affairs** 4:3, 1998 pp. 175-199

3. Feb. 2

War Heroics and Anti-heroics.

Beaufort, Yosef Cedar, 2007

Sequences from: *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* (Thorold Dickinson, Peter Fry, 1955)

Reading: Ella Shohat, 'Master Narrative/Counter Readings: The Politics of Israeli Cinema' in Robert Sklar and Charles Musser (ed.) **Resisting Images, Essays on Cinema and History**, Temple University Press, 1990 pp. 251-278

4. Feb. 9

War Traumas on Film

Waltz with Bashir, Arik Fulman, 2008

Sequences from: *The Siege* Gilberto Toffano, 1969, *Kippur* Amos Gitai, 2000, *Avanti Popolo*, Rafi Bukai, 1986

Reading: Nurith Gertz, Ch. 6 & 7 (Parts 'From Reality to fantasy and Dream' and 'New Options') in **Myths in Israeli Culture, Captives of a Dream**, pp. 109-120, 129-134

5. Feb. 16

Hopes and Utopias

The Band's Visit, Eran Kolirin, 2007

Sequences from: *Every Bastard a King*, Uri Zohar, 1968

They Were Ten, Baruch Dinar 1960, *Khirbet Khizeh*, Ram Levi 1978

Reading: Nitzan Ben-Shaul, 'Israeli Persecution Films' in Linda Badley, R. Barton Palmer, Steven Jay Schneider (Editors) **Traditions in World Cinema**, Rutgers University Press, 2006 pp. 160-175

6. Feb. 23

Illusions and Awakenings

Children of the Sun, Ran Tal, 2007

Sequences from: *Wooden Gun* Ilan Moshinson 1978, *Sweet Mud*, Dror Shaul, 2006, *Walk on Water*, Eitan Fuks, 2003

Reading: Judd Ne'eman 'The Jar and the Blade: Fertility Myth and Medieval Romance in Israeli Political Films' in **Proof texts 22** (2002), pp 141-156

Directives for 1st assignment. It has to be submitted on March. 2nd.

7. March 2

Quests for Identity

My Father, My Lord 2006,

Pinhas, Pini Tavger 2006

Sequences from: *I Like Mike*, Peter Frye, 1961, *Ha'Oshpizin*, Gidi Dar & Shuli Rand 2004 *Shkhour*, (Shmuel Hasfari & Hannah Azulai-Hasfari, 1994)

Reading: Stuart Hall 'Cultural Identity and Cinematic ReReading' in R. Stam & T. Miller (ed.) **Film and Theory**, Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp.704-714

1st assignment: submit a written 3-4 page review on the major topics discussed so far.

8. March 16

The Gathering of Fugitives

Turn Left at the End of the World, Avi Neshet 2004

Sequences from: *Sallah Shabati*, Efraim Kishon 1964,

Reading: Yosefa Loshitzky, **Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen**, University of Texas Press, 2001, Ch. 4, pp.72-89

9. March 23

Longings for Culture

Desperado Square Benny Torati 2000*Living Room*, Tali Shalom Ezer, 19' 2006Sequences from: *Bar 51* Amos Gutman 1986Reading: Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber 'Kikar Ha-Halomot' in Gonul Dohmez-Colin (ed.), **The Cinema of the North Africa and the Middle East**, London: Wallflower, 2007

10. March 30

Women's Voices

Or, My Treasure, Keren Yedaia, 2004*Arab Snow*, Sigalit Landau 2000*Loss of Control*, Ela Zaharano, 2', 2009Sequences from: *Jacky*, Rachel Esterkin, 30', 1990, *Purity (Tehora)*, Anat Zuria, 2002Reading: Orly Lubin, 'Bodies and Territory: Women in Israeli Cinema', **Israel Studies**, v.4 n.1

11. April 6

Arab Cinema

Thirst, Tawfik Abu Wael, 2004Sequences from: *Checkpoint*, Yoav Shamir, 2003, *Avenge but One of my Two Eyes*, Avi Mugarbi, 2005 *Chronicle of Disappearance*, Elia Suleiman, 1997

Reading: 'Atash Thirst': interview with Tawfik Abu-Wael; Yitzhak Laor, 'No Way Out'

http://www.axiomfilms.co.uk/film_resources/film_39/PressPDF_12.pdf

Interview with Tawfik Abu Wael,

www.euromedcafe.org/newsdetail.asp?lang=ing&documentID=83

14. April 13

Desperate Ironies

Divine Intervention, Elia Suleiman, 2002Sequences from: *Fertile Memory*, Michel Khleifi, 1980, *Three to Four*, Eliav Lilty, (2:30 min.); [From *Moments 2000*], *Security Grove*, Idan Alterman (2:30) [From *Moments 2000*].Reading: Nurit Gertz & George Khleifi, 'The Cinema of Elia Suleiman', Ch.7 in **Palestinian Cinema: Landscape, Trauma, and Memory**. Indiana University Press, 2008

15. April 20

Peace Traumas

Close to Home, Vidi Bilu & Daliah Hager, 2005,Sequences from: *Everlasting Joy* (Igal Bursztyn, 1997)Reading: Raya Morag, 'Chronic Trauma, The Sound of Terror, and Current Israeli Cinema' in **Framework 49, The Journal of Cinema and Media, No. 1, Spring 2008**, pp.121-133

16. April 27

Love

Hymn, Elad Keidan, 34', 2008*Bait*, Mikhal Vinik, 12', 2008Reading: Pablo Utin, *The Israeli Cinema of Disengagement* in Pablo Utin, **Karhonim Be'Eretz Ha'Hamsinin**, Tel Aviv, Resling, 2009, (Hebrew)

May 6

McClung Tower 514, 14:45-15:00 pm

Deliver a 6 page essay on aspects of Israeli Cinema – based on screenings and texts of the course.

Bibliography:

Obligatory Readings

- Nurit Gertz, 'From Jew to Hebrew: The 'Zionist Narrative' in the Israeli Cinema of the 1940s and 1950s' in **Israel Affairs 4:3**, 1998 pp. 175-199
- Ella Shohat, 'Hill 24 Doesn't Answer' in **Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of ReReading**, University of Texas Press, 1989, pp. 58-76
- Nurith Gertz, Ch. 6 & 7, **Myths in Israeli Culture, Captives of a Dream**, pp109-134
- Nitzan Ben-Shaul, 'Israeli Persecution Films' in Linda Badley, R. Barton Palmer, Steven Jay Schneider (Editors) **Traditions in World Cinema**, Rutgers University Press, 2006
- Judd Ne'eman 'The Jar and the Blade: Fertility Myth and Medieval Romance in Israeli Political Films' in **Prooftexts 22** (2002), pp 141-156
- Stuart Hall 'Cultural Identity and Cinematic ReReading' in R. Stam & T. Miller (ed.) **Film and Theory**, Blackwell Publishers, 2000, pp.704-714
- Yosefa Loshitzky, **Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen**, University of Texas Press, 2001, Ch. 4, pp.72-89
- Madmoni-Gerber 'Kikar Ha-Halomot' in Gonul Dohmez-Colin (ed.), **The Cinema of the North Africa and the Middle East**, London: Wallflower, 2007
- Raya Morag, 'Chronic Trauma, The Sound of Terror, and Current Israeli Cinema' in **Framework 49, The Journal of Cinema and Media, No. 1, Spring 2008**, pp.121-133
- Orly Lubin, 'Bodies and Territory: Women in Israeli Cinema', **Israel Studies, vol. 4 no. 1**
- 'Atash Thirst' interview with Taufik Abu-Wael, Yitzhak Laor 'No Way Out' http://www.axiomfilms.co.uk/film_resources/film_39/PressPDF_12.pdf
- Interview with Tawfik Abu Wael, www.euromedcafe.org/newsdetail.asp?lang=ing&documentID=83
- Nurit Gertz & George Khleifi, 'The Cinema of Elia Suleiman', Ch.7 in **Palestinian Cinema: Landscape, Trauma, and Memory**. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008
- Pablo Utin, "The Iceberg Effect: Israel's Cinema of Disengagement" in **Cinema-Scope, Issue 34, Spring 2008**. Pp. 46-49.)

Additional Readings

Ella Shohat, **Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of Representation**, University of Texas Press, 1989

Nurith Gertz, **Myths in Israeli Culture, Captives of a Dream**, Vallentine Mitchell 2000

Yosefa Loshitzky, **Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen**, University of Texas Press, 2001

Ella Shohat, 'Sallah Shabbati' in **Israeli Cinema: East/West and the Politics of ReReading**, University of Texas Press, 1989, pp. 138-155