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### **Israeli Literature and Culture in Conflict**

A study of modern Hebrew literature in the historical context of Zionism, the establishment of the State of Israel, and the continued Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In addition to reading major Israeli fiction, we will analyze ways in which contemporary sources report news from the Middle East. The course will include screenings of pertinent documentaries and feature films.

#### **Texts:**

Appelfeld, Aharon. *Badenheim 1939* (short story version). Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001.

Friedman, Thomas L. *From Beirut to Jerusalem*. New York: Anchor Books, 1990.

Grossman, David. *The Yellow Wind*. Trans. Haim Watzman. New York: The Noonday Press, 1998.

*Israel: A Traveler's Literary Companion*. Ed. Michael Gluzman and Naomi Seidman. San Francisco: Whereabouts Press, 1996.

*The Jerusalem Anthology: A Literary Guide*. Ed. Reuven Hammer. Philadelphia: JPS, 1995.

*Modern Hebrew Literature*. Ed. Robert Alter. New York: Behrman House, 1975.

Additional requirement: Daily reading of the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* (English Edition) on the web ([www.haaretzdaily.com](http://www.haaretzdaily.com)) and pertinent articles in *The New York Times* ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)). News analyses may also draw from pieces in *The Jerusalem Report* ([www.jrep.com](http://www.jrep.com)), on the CNN website ([cnn.com](http://cnn.com)), or elsewhere.

#### **Schedule:**

14 January--Introductions

FILM: *Hitchhikers*

### **Zionism and Post-Zionism**

16 January

Shlomo Avineri, "The Zionist Legacy and the Future of Israel" (photocopy)

21 January--News Analysis #1 Due

\*Theodor Herzl et al., in *The Jew in the Modern World*, 421-432

FILM: *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*

### Pre-State Literature

23 January

\*Moshe Smilansky, "Latifa"

\*Documents 7, 12, and 13 in *The Israel-Arab Reader*

FILM: *Arab and Jew: Wounded Spirits in a Promised Land*

28 January—ISRAELI ELECTION DAY: News Analysis # 2 Due

Y. H. Brenner, "The Way Out," in *Modern Hebrew Literature*

30 January

Haim Hazaz, "The Sermon," in *Modern Hebrew Literature*

4 February

Agnon's letter to Salman Schocken, in *The Jerusalem Anthology*, pp. 242-255

S. Y. Agnon, "At the Outset of the Day," in *Modern Hebrew Literature*

### A Palestinian Perspective

6 February \*Raja Shehadeh, *Samed*, pp. 16-39

FILM: *Wedding in Galilee*

11 February \*Raja Shehadeh, *Samed* (cont.)

News Analysis #3 Due

FILM: *Wedding in Galilee*

### The 1948 War of Independence and Its Aftermath

13 February \*Benjamin Tammuz, "The Swimming Race"

\**The Jew in the Modern World*, 472-479

18 February *The Jerusalem Anthology*, pp. 259-286

S. Yizhar, "The Prisoner," in *Modern Hebrew Literature*

20 February Amos Oz, "Before His Time," in *Modern Hebrew Literature*

25 February A. B. Yehoshua, "Facing the Forests," in *Modern Hebrew Literature* [PAPER #1 DUE]

FILM: *Late Summer Blues*

27 February News Analysis #4 Due

*The Jerusalem Anthology*, pp. 286-296

FILM: *Late Summer Blues*

4 March \*Ian Lustick, "Israel and the West Bank...," in *Unsettled States, Disputed Lands*

\*Yaron Ezrahi, Introduction to *Rubber Bullets*

### The 1967 War and Its Aftermath

6 March FILM: *Fictitious Marriage*

*S P R I N G   B R E A K*

18 March (Purim)

\*Jacob Buchan, "Sleepwalkers"

### After the Shoah

20 March Yitzchak Laor, "Rachely's Father Who Was an Actor," in *Israel*  
FILM: *The Summer of Avia*

25 March

Aharon Appelfeld, "Badenheim 1939" [PAPER #2 DUE]

FILM: *The Summer of Avia*

### The First Intifada: 1987-93

27 March

Etgar Kerrett, "Cocked and Locked," in *Israel*

1 April

David Grossman, *The Yellow Wind*, chapters 2, 3, 6

3 April

David Grossman, *The Yellow Wind*, chapters 8, 10

8 April

Thomas Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, chapters 11, 13

10 April

\*Danny Rubenstein, "Palestinian Frustration and the Road to Baghdad"

15 April

Thomas Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, chapter 14

### Israel Today

17 April PASSOVER—NO CLASS

22 April [**PAPER #3 DUE on one story from the last three sessions**]

Gafi Amir, “By the Time You’re Twenty-One You’ll Reach the Moon,” in *Israel*

Amos Oz, “Thank God for His Daily Blessings,” in *Israel*

Gadi Taub, “You Never Can Tell,” in *Israel*

24 April

David Ehrlich, “The Store,” in *Israel*

Orly Castel-Bloom, “Someone Else’s Story,” in *Israel*

Yoram Kolerstein, “Idolatry,” in *Israel*

29 April

Yosl Birstein, “The Writer A. M. Fuchs Was Already Old...,” in *Israel*

\*Ronit Matalon, “Little Brother”

NOTE: \* Denotes Photocopied Texts in Course Reader # 1074

**Requirements:** Regular attendance, class participation, group reports about one of the numbered sections above, four analyses of current news from Israel, and three short essays.

**Grading:** Attendance and participation (20%), news analyses (25%), essays (35%), and final examination (20%).

**Goals:** To better understand aspects of Israeli life and literature since 1948, to reach a greater understanding of Zionism and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, to balance our own prior views with other perspectives, and to enter into the current debates over a possible “end to the conflict.”

**News Analyses:** Print out three articles from newspapers during the week and write brief analyses of them. Pay special attention to rhetoric: how does each article present the news, for example, using metaphors or other literary techniques? Is there a clear bias? You may want to contrast the ways different newspapers report the same event.

**Films:** If you miss a film screening, you are required to see it independently. Most films for this course are available for individual or group viewing at Bird Library (Lower Level, from the Media Desk) or at Hillel (in the basement of Hendricks Chapel).

**Attendance:** Your final grade will be adversely affected if you miss more than two classes.

Save these permissible absences for when you really need them!