

Tufts University
Spring 2011

Dana Blander
Dana.blander@tufts.edu
Office Hours:
Tues./Thurs., 12:00-1:00
Packard Hall 307

PS 139-03: Being Israeli and The Israeli Being

R 1:30 – 4:00 Block 8

In this seminar the students will become acquainted with Israeli history, society and identity. We will follow the history of the state of Israel as well as the Israeli state of mind through an examination of Israeli cinema and literature. In each class we will trace a different thread of the conflictual fabric of the Israeli Identity: being in a continuous state of war, being an immigrant, a soldier, a Palestinian, a religious Jew, a holocaust survivor, a woman, a Kibbutz member and more. Through scenes in movies and the pages of books we will explore the relationship between private and public in the Israeli context. As we shall see, the national history is part of the individual's life story; collective and private identity merge; autobiography and history are interwoven. This investigation of the fusion between the personal and the collective will allow us an insightful view of the milestones of Israeli narratives.

Course Objectives:

- To become familiar with the history of the state of Israel, the Israeli society and the complex matrix of Israeli identities.
- To analyze the different aspects of Israeli identity within the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- To explore Israel as an example of global phenomena, such as democracy under the shadow of war and terror, minority-majority relations, multiculturalism and the status of religion within the state.
- To develop an interdisciplinary mode of thinking that will enable students to use literature, cinema and other forms of art as a means for critical studying of different societies.

Grades

Grades will be determined as follows:

- a) 20%: Two (2) out of four (4) papers (5 pages max) that will summarize in an integrative way the films, novels and the readings on the different subjects we discuss in class. (Dates for submission are: 2/10; 2/24; 3/17; 4/14). (grades scale from 1-10)
- b) 20%: Summary of two of the novels assigned for reading (2-3 pages).
- c) 50% Final paper – 15-20 pages final paper (not including bibliography). You will have to submit outline for the paper by March, 3, 2011. The outline should be up to 3 pages describing the research question, the structure of the paper and suggested bibliographical items. The paper should be submitted by May,5, 2011.
- d) 10% Attendance and active participation in class: Regular attendance and timeliness are important. More than two absences will affect your participation grade. Students arriving late will generally be counted as absent. Participation in class discussions is welcomed and expected. Reading assignments and other tasks (some of the films will be watched by the students out of class through Blackboard or at the Media Center at Tisch Library) are obligatory. During each class I will ask questions about the reading

and watching assignments, and you need to be prepared to answer. (scale 1-10)

Grades Scale

The paper will be given a numerical grade on the following scale:

A+	96-100				
A	93-95	B-	80-82	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	C+	77-79	D	63-66
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62
B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	59 and below

Honesty

The university's policy on academic honesty will be strictly adhered to. *For more information on plagiarism and the proper citing of sources, see:*

<http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingresources/plagiarism.asp>

Schedule of Classes, reading and watching assignments:

(1/20) Introduction: Being Israeli and the Israeli being

Reading:

Gregory S. Mahler (2004). *Politics and Government in Israel – the Maturation of a Modern State*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 13-45.

Israel's Declaration of independence:

http://www.knesset.gov.il/docs/eng/megilat_eng.htm

(1/20 ,1/27) Being at war, being an Enemy: The Israeli-Arab Conflict

Films:

*Cup Final (Eran Riklis, 1991) (108 min.).

*Paradise Now (Hany Abu-Asad, 2005) (91 min.).

***The 50 years war: Israel and the Arabs (Brian Lapping Associates in association with BBC and La Sept/ARTE), 1999 (300 min.).

Avanti Popolo (1986, Rafi Bukai)

Reading:

Mahler Gregory S. and Alden R.W. Mahler (2010). *The Arab-Israeli conflict : an introduction and documentary reader*. London ; New York : Routledge, 2010, pp. 3-33.

Gross, Emanuel. (2004) "The struggle of a democracy against the terror of suicide bombers: ideological and legal aspects." *Wisconsin International Law Journal*, 22, 597.

Khashan, Hilal (2003). "Collective Palestinian Frustration and Suicide Bombings." *Third World Quarterly*, 24 (6), pp. 1049-1067

Eran Halperin, Daniel Bar-Tal, Keren Sharvit, Nimrod Rosler and Amiram Raviv (2010). "Socio-psychological implications for an occupying society: The case of Israel", *Journal of Peace Research*, 47 (1), 59-70.

(2/3) Being An Israeli Arab/A Palestinian: A Citizen?, A Refugee?, An Enemy Within?.

Films:

*Slingshot hip hop (Jackie Reem Salloum, 2009) (94 min.)

***Ajami (Scandar Copti, Yaron Shani, 2009) (120 min.)

Literature:

Poems by Mahmoud Darwish:

I Come From There

http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mahmoud_darwish/poems/7809

I Am There

http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mahmoud_darwish/poems/7813

A Lover From Palestine

http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mahmoud_darwish/poems/7815

Passport

http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/mahmoud_darwish/poems/7811

Grossman, David (1988). *The Yellow Wind*. Ferrar, Straus and Giroux, pp. 5-16.

Reading:

Smootha, Sammy (2004). "Arab-Jewish relation in Israel: A deeply divided society." In: Shapira, Anita (ed.) *Israeli Identity in Transition*. Praeger, pp. 31-67.

Reiter, Yitzhak. "Israel and its Arab Minority." *Israel Studies: An Anthology* (Mitchell G. Bard and David Nachmias (Eds). Jewish Virtual Library Publications.

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/reiter.html>

(2/10) Being A "Tsabar": From The "Old Jew" To The Heroic Pioneer

Films:

*"They Were Ten" (Baruch Dienar, 1961) (105 min.)

****Exodus* (Otto Preminger, 1960) (208 min.)

Novels:

Oz, Amos (2003). *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. Orlando: Harcourt Books.

Almog, Oz. (2000). *The Sabra: the creation of the new Jew*. Berkeley University Press, pp. 1-22, 255-266.

Kabalo, Paula. (2009). "Pioneering discourse and the shaping of an Israeli citizen in the 1950s". *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 15 (2), pp. 82-110.

Kaplan, Eran. (2007) "Amos Oz's *A Tale of Love and Darkness* and the Sabra Myth." *Jewish Social Studies*, 14 (1), 119-143.

(2/17) Being An Immigrant: The "Melting Pot" And Periphery As A Socio-Economic Reality And A State Of Mind.

Films:

***Sallah Shabati (Ephraim Kishon, 1964) (110 min.)

*Yana's Friends (Arik Kaplun, 1998)

#Turn Left at the End of the World (Avi Nesher, 2004) (108 min.)

Reading:

Ya'ar, Ephraim. (2005). "Continuity and Change in Israeli Society: The Test of The Melting Pot." *Israel Studies*, 10(2), 91-128.

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v010/10.2yaar.pdf

Smooha, Sammy (2008). "The Mass Immigrations to Israel: A Comparison of the Failure of the Mizrahi Immigrants of the 1950s with the Success of the Russian Immigrants of the 1990s". *The Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 27 (1), pp. 1-27.

Shohat, Ella. *Israeli Cinema: East /West And The Politics Of Representation*. University of Texas press, 1987, pp. 115-155.

Gershenson, Olga and Dale Hudson (2008). "New Immigrant, old story: Framing Russians on the Israeli screen." *Journal of film and video*, 60 (3-4), 25-41.

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_film_and_video/v060/60.3-4.gershenson.pdf

(2/24) No Class (Substitute Monday's Schedule)

(3/3) Being A Second Generation Victim: The Holocaust Within Us

*The Summer of Aviya (Eli Cohen, 1988) (96 min.)

***Because of that war (Orna Ben-Dor Niv, 1997) (90 min.)

Literature:

Grossman, David (1989). *See Under Love*. Farrar Straus Giroux.

Reading:

Ofer, Dalia. (2009). "[The past that does not past: Israelis and holocaust memories](#)." *Israel Studies*, 14 (1), pp. 1-35.

Laub, Dori (1991). "An event without a witness: Truth, testimony and survival." In: Felman, Shoshana and Dori Laub. *Testimony Crisis Of Witnessing In Literature, Psychoanalysis And History*. Routledge, pp. 75-92.

(3/10) Being A "Kibbutznik": The Kibbutz Dream And Its Aftermath

Films:

***Children of the Sun (Ran Tal, 2007)

*Sweet Mud (Dror Shaul, 2007) (97 min.)

Reading:

Bettelheim, Bruno(1969). *The Children Of The Dream*, Macmillan.

Harris, Michael (1999). "The Kibbutz: Uncovering the Utopian Dimension." *Utopian Studies*, 10 (1), pp. 115-127.

Uri Zilbersheid (2007). "The Israeli Kibbutz: From Utopia to Dystopia", *Critique*, Vol. 35 (3), pp. 413-434.

(3/17) Being Religious in the Holy land

Films:

*Haredim: The Ultra-Orthodox Community in Israel (Ron Ofer and Yochay Hakak, 2008-2009)

Reading:

Ben-Rafael Eliezer and Peres Yochanan (2005). *Is Israel one? Religion, nationalism, and multiculturalism confounded*. Brill, pp. 61-85.

Stadler, Nurit (2002). "Is Profane Work an Obstacle to Salvation? The Case of Ultra Orthodox (Haredi) Jews in Contemporary Israel." *Sociology of Religion*, 63 (4), pp. 455-474.

(3/31) Being A Soldier: The Other Side Of Militarism

Films:

***Late Summer Blues (1987, Renen Schorr). (101 min.)

*Waltz with Bashir (Ari Folman, 2009) (87 min.).

Literature:

Grossman, David (2010). *To the End of the Land*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Reading:

Levy, Yagil. (2009). An unbearable price: war casualties and warring democracies." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, vol. 22 (1), pp. 69-82.

Levy, Yagil, Mizrahi, Shlomo. (2008). "Alternative Politics and the Transformation of Society-Military Relations: The Israeli Experience." *Administration & Society*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 25-53.

Levy, Yagil, Edna Lomsky-Feder and Noa Harel (2007). "From Obligatory Militarism to Contractual Militarism – Competing Models of Citizenship", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 12 (1), pp. 127-148.

(4/7) Tisch Media Center: Students will watch "Beaufort")

*Beaufort (Joseph Cedar, 2007) (126 min.)

(4/14) Being A Homosexual In The "Promised Land"

Films:

*Walk on Water (Eitan Fox, 2004) (103 min.)

***Trembling before G-d = Le-fanekha bi-readah (Sandi Simcha Dubowski, 2003)

#Yossi and Jager (Eitan Fox, 2002) (71 min.)

Reading:

Raz, Yosef (2008). Phantasmatic Losses National Traumas, Masculinity, and Primal Scenes in Israeli Cinema—*Walk on Water*. *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 49 (1), 93-105.

Raz, Yosef. (2004). *Beyond Flesh: Queer Masculinities and Nationalism in Israeli Cinema*. Rutgers University Press, pp. 142-171.

(4/21) Being A Woman

Films:

*Nina's Tragedies (Savi Gavison, 2003) (112 min.)

Reading:

Lubin, Orly (1999). "Body and territory: Women in Israeli cinema." *Israeli Studies*, 4 (1), 175-187.

Gertz, Nurit (2003). "Gender and Space in the new Israeli cinema." *Shofar*, 22(1), pp. 110-116.

#Gertz, Nurit. (1996). "Woman-The Image of the 'Other' in Israeli Society." *Literature/Film. Quarterly* 24 (1), pp. 39-46.

(4/28) Being "Normal" In An Abnormal Reality

(Class will be held in Tisch Media Center)

Films:

* Hochmat Habeygale (Ilan Heitner, 2002)

***Out For Love-Be Back Shortly (Dan Katzir, 1996);

#My Michael (Dan Wolman, 1974) (95 min.)

Literature:

Keret, Etgar (2001). *The Bus Driver Who Wanted To Be God*. St. Martin Press.

Reading:

Gutwein, Daniel (2004). "From melting pot to multiculturalism; or, The privatization of Israeli Identity". In: Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition*, Praeger 215-231.

Almog, Oz (2004). "The Globalization of Israel: Transformations", In: Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition*, Praeger, pp. 233-256.

Notice:

*** Films in class.**

***** Films to be watched individually (by blackboard)**

Recommended films.