This course explores major themes in Israeli cinema and fiction in the context of the social and historical backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the painful emergence of a new Jewish-Israeli identity in the shadow of the Holocaust and unremitting warfare. Examining in depth a number of Hebrew films, short stories and novels, all in English translation, the course situates them in the evolution of Israeli cinema and fiction, and considers the problems of turning a work of fiction into a film.

No Hebrew is required.

**Books referred to in this syllabus:**


Mishal, Nissim. Those were the Years. Tel-Aviv: Yedioth Ahronoth, 1997.


Penueli, Shemuel & Azriel Ukhmani. Hebrew short stories. (2 volumes), Tel Aviv: Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature, 1966


Syllabus

NB: Throughout the course, refer for background and short assessment of the individual films to Kronish World Cinema: Israel.

1. Introduction: History, film and fiction


Schorr, Renen. ‘40 years film-making in Israel’. Ariel 71-72, 1988, 106-127
Hakak ch. 2. ('The Israeli Cinema: A Brief Survey')
Shaked, Gershon 'Waves and currents in Hebrew fiction in the past 40 years', Modern Hebrew Literature 1, 1988, 4-12.
Hakak ch. 1 ('A Brief History of Modern Hebrew Literature')

Murray, Cinematic Imagination, ch. 1
Turner, Graeme. 'Film Languages' In Graddol & Boyd-Barrett, 119-135.

2. Early Zionist narratives and The Israeli War of Independence:

Films:
They were Ten (1961)
Hill 24 Doesn't Answer (1955)

Fiction:
Smilansky: ‘Squatters Rights’ in Penueli vol. 1, 182-191
Aricha: ‘Night Scene’ in Penueli, vol. 2, 233-244
Tammuz: 'The Swimming Contest' in Abramson, 127-138
Yizhar: ‘The prisoner’ in Alter 291-310

Elon, The Israelis, 106-147

Ne'eman, Judd. The empty tomb in the postmodern pyramid: Israeli cinema in the 1980s and 1990s. In Berlin (read 117-129)
Erens, Pamela. 'Israeli cinema'. Film Comment 17:1, 1981, 60-64

3. Childhood, youth and the shadow of the Holocaust

Films:
Wooden Gun (1979)
Because of that War (1989)

Fiction:
Liebrecht: ‘Morning in the Park with Nannies’ in Abramson, 387-396
Jackont, Amnon. Borrowed time.

Elon, The Israelis, 189-221
Zerubavel, Yael ”The “ Mythological Sabra” and Jewish Past: Trauma, Memory, and
Contested Identities”, Israel Studies 7(2), 2002, 115-144
Yudkin, Leon. ‘Holocaust trauma in the second-generation : the Hebrew fiction of David
Grossman and Savyon Liebrecht’ in Sicher, 170-81.
Avisar, Ilan ”Personal Fears and National Nightmares: The Holocaust Complex in Israeli
Yehuda Poliker's home page at
http://www.nmc-music.co.il/nmc/artists/poliker/yehuda.html

4. The Six Day War:

Film:
Siege (1970)

Friedman, Regine. ‘Between silence and abjection: The film medium and the Israeli war
widow.’ Film Historia 3(1-2), 1993, 79-89

Fiction:
Yehoshua: ”Last Commander” in Abramson, 220-236

Elon, The Israelis, 222-255

5. Arab and Jew

Films:
My Michael (1975)
Hamsin (1983)

Fiction:
Oz: My Michael
Yehoshua: ‘Facing the Forests’. In Alter 353-93
Shammas: Arabesques.

Elon, The Israelis, 256-289
Ne’eman, Judd. The death mask of the moderns: A genealogy of New Sensibility
cinema in Israel. Israel Studies 4:1, 1999, 100-128.
Hakak ch. 8 (‘My Michael’).
6. Demythologizing the national struggle

Film:
Late Summer Blues (1987)
Himmo King of Jerusalem (1987)
Kedma (2002)

Fiction:
Kaniuk: Himmo King of Jerusalem

Hakak, ch. 6 (‘Himmo King of Jerusalem’)
Shapira, Anita. ‘From the Palmach Generation to the Candle Children: Changing Patterns in Israeli Identity’, Partisan Review 67(4), 2000
Fuchs, Esther. Images of Love and War in Contemporary Israeli Fiction,” In Cooper, 268-282.
Mishal, Those were the Years, 151, 154, 159, 161
Loshitzky, Yosefa. ‘The bride of the dead: Phallocentrism and war in Himmo, King of Jerusalem.’ Literature Film Quarterly 21(3), 1993, 218-229

7. War and internal conflict in the 80s and 90s

Film:
Cup Final (1991)
Song of the Siren (1994)
As if Nothing Happened (1999)
Evacuation Order (2001)

Fiction:
Liebrecht: ‘Room on the Roof’ in Diament 231-258

Mishal, Those were the Years, 234-240, 291-2
Wurmser, Meyrav. Escapism and defeat. INTERNET JERUSALEM POST, Apr 20, 2001
Gertz, Nurith. Myths in Israeli Culture, ch.7.
Avisar, Ilan. ‘Israeli cinema and the ending of Zionist ideology’ in Lazin & Mahler, 153-168.