AHLT 100g: Creating the Zionist Narrative:

Culture in the Service of Ideas

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Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3:30 – 4:50 p.m.  TTH 214
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Course Description:
This course will examine the various cultural media used by the Zionist movement in the first half of the twentieth century in order to mobilise Jewry on behalf of its project: the creation of a Jewish national home in Eretz Yisrael (Palestine). Although a critical dimension of this effort was political in its purpose, our interest will focus on the cultural commitment: the creation of a new Jewish identity centered on the idea of the "New Hebrew." What were the characteristics of this new Jew? What were the key values expressed through this new identity? In what ways did the New Hebrew represent a rebellion and in what ways a continuity with the Jewish past? This course will use literature, film, posters, sacred sites, performative ceremonies, children's games and music as prisms through which to examine this new cultural being. The course will also examine dissenting voices in the Yishuv (pre-state Jewish community in Palestine) and later the State of Israel that rejected the ethos of the New Jew as well as their alternative cultural and ideational positions. The course will conclude with an examination of contemporary Israel; what has happened to the idea of the New Jew as expressed by the Labor Zionist movement? Israel is experiencing a plethora of cultural struggles in which competing voices are attempting to shape the country in their own image.

Course Objectives:
To investigate forms and types of cultural medium as a means to pursue political and social goals
To become familiar with a comparative approach to cultural experience through exploring the Jewish-Zionist project in Palestine during the twentieth century
To explore nonreligious forms of Jewish culture, society, and history
To engage in the interdisciplinary study of ethnic and cultural expressions of Jewish identity
To examine how hegemonic states attempt to maintain control despite the emergence of competing voices and identities
To further develop student skills through engagement with works of literature, philosophy, visual arts, music and film
Required Course books and Reader:
Students should purchase:

The course reader is available through University Readers: www.universityreaders.com

Class Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: Much of our time will be devoted to class discussion. In order to achieve thoughtful and meaningful conversations it will be incumbent on all of us to undertake the necessary preparation by completing the readings as indicated in the syllabus. Please note that participation is an important factor in your final grade; more than two unexcused absences will result in a lowering of that portion of your grade.

Writing Assignments: During the course of the semester there will be four written assignments, 5 pages each, on topics that emerge from class discussions on the reading. The dates when these are due are listed below. A full description of the assignments will be handed out in class.

Examination: A final examination at the end of the semester will cover material found in the readings, discussions, and lectures. The exam will be divided into two parts; section A will involve long essay answers and section B will involve single paragraph answers dealing with key concepts.

Final grades will be determined along the following guidelines:
Participation: 20%
Short papers (four): 10% x 4 = 40%
Written examination: 40%

What Do Grades Mean?
An A requires innovation, inspiration, and a superior execution of all the requirements of an assignment.
A B meets all the requirements of an assignment very well.
A C fulfils the requirements of an assignment satisfactorily.
A D meets the bare minimum requirements of an assignment.
An F indicates that one has not met the bare minimum requirements of an assignment. Plagiarism will result in an F.

A = 90%-100%   B+ = 86%-89%   B = 80%-85%   C+ = 76%-70%   C = 70-75%   D = 60%-69%
Please Note: All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Please do not send email attachments. Please remember that you must complete all course requirements in order to pass this class; failure to finish any of the required assignments or examinations will result in a failing grade.

A note about plagiarism: intentional plagiarism of any source is a violation of intellectual property rights and constitutes a break with the USC academic honor code. Please read and be familiar with the University of Southern California’s definition of and policy regarding plagiarism and cheating as described in the University Student Conduct Code. The first of many pages that outline students’ responsibilities and obligations can be found at http://web-app.usc.edu/scampus/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. A very helpful guide for how to avoid plagiarism is available at http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/ug_plag.htm. Intentional plagiarism of any source and cheating of any variety will result in a failing grade for the course. If you do not understand exactly what kind of writing, quoting, citing, or researching constitutes plagiarism, I am happy to explain both how to recognize and how to avoid it. Please ask.

If you have a disability that requires special arrangements (e.g., note- and/or test-taking), please register with USC’s Office of Disabilities Services and Programs contact me within the first two weeks of class. Every effort will be made to accommodate those with registered disabilities.

Please turn off all pagers, cell phones, wireless PDAs and other electronic communication devices before class. When any of your electronic devices (including your cell phone) rings or buzzes or lights up or vibrates, you disturb the class, your classmates, your instructor and the environment of mutually beneficial learning. In addition, you take valuable time away from our class discussion and community. Accordingly, in order to foster a positive environment for learning, please limit your computer activity to note taking or the reading of documents. As you know, it is a privilege to use laptops in the classroom setting; please do not abuse Wi-Fi access.

Course topics and reading:
Articles marked with an * appear in the reader
Articles marked + appear on Blackboard

Tuesday August 24th and Thursday August 26th
Introduction: The Zionist Idea in Historical Context

Tuesday 31st August and Thursday 2nd September
Competing models of the New Jew
Ahad Ha’am. ‘Flesh and Spirit,’ & ‘On Nationalism and Religion,’ in Hertzberg, pp. 256-262.

++First assignment to be distributed on Thursday 2\textsuperscript{nd} September and to be submitted by Tuesday 14\textsuperscript{th} September.++

Tuesday 7\textsuperscript{th} September and Tuesday 14\textsuperscript{th} September (9\textsuperscript{th} September Jewish New Year: No class)

Literature:
*Moshe Shamir, With His Own Hands (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1970),
pp. 1-53.
* __________ , Modern Hebrew Fiction (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000)

Thursday 16\textsuperscript{th} September and Tuesday 21\textsuperscript{st} September

Poetry:
*Avraham Shlonsky, 'Toil,' in ed. Stanley Burnshaw et al., The Modern Hebrew Poem Itself, pp. 74-76.

++Second assignment to be distributed on Tuesday 21\textsuperscript{st} September and submitted by Tuesday 5\textsuperscript{th} October++
Thursday 23rd September: No class: Sukkot

Tuesday 28th September and Tuesday 5th October
Film:

Land of Promise 1935
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRMstBUPeMU&feature=channel
Spielberg Archives, The Hebrew University.

"Avodah" (Palestine, 1935, 50 minutes, B & W; English and Hebrew; director: Helmar Lerski);
"Land of Promise" (Palestine, 57 minutes, B&W; English and Hebrew, director: Juda Leman

Thursday 7th October
Art:
+Dalia Manor, 'Biblical Zionism in Bezalel Art,' Israel Studies Vol. 6, 1, spring 2001, pp. 55-75

Tuesday 12th October
The Trek/Hike:

Thursday 14th October
Zionist Conceptions of History
*Gershom Gorenberg, 'History through a Keyhole,' The Jerusalem Report April 3, 1997 p. 59
Tuesday 19\(^{th}\) October  
**Sacred sites:**  
**Tel-Hai:**  

**Thursday 21\(^{st}\) October**  
**Masada:**  
+Yael Zerubavel, ‘The Death of Memory and the Memory of Death: Masada and the Holocaust as Historical Metaphors,’ *Representations* 45, winter 1994, 72-100.  
*Benjamin Kedar, 'Masada the Myth and the Complex,' *Jerusalem Quarterly* 24, summer 1982, 57-63.

++Third assignment to be distributed on Thursday 21\(^{st}\) October and submitted by Tuesday 2\(^{nd}\) November.++

**Tuesday 26\(^{th}\) October & Thursday 28\(^{th}\) October**  
**Performatve Ceremonies and the Statist Construction of Calendar**  

View Memorial Day and Independence Day ceremonies


**Tuesday 2\(^{nd}\) November**  
**Childrens’ games**  
"A Trip Across the Country: Games from Mr. Barlevy's store," (Tel-Aviv: Eretz Yisrael Museum, 1999)

**Thursday 4\(^{th}\) November & Tuesday 9\(^{th}\) November**  
**Music:**  
Listen and read lyrics of selected early pre-state Israeli music.


**Thursday 11th November**

**The Inside Outsiders: The Mizrahiim**


++Fourth assignment to be distributed on Thursday 11th November and submitted by Tuesday 23rd November++

View Film Sallah Shabbati
View Section of Film: Tkuma; The Ingathering 1998

**Tuesday 16th November & Thursday 18th November**

**The Inside Outsiders: The Haredim**


**Tuesday 23rd November**

**Outside – Insiders: The Arabs of Israel**


**Thursday 25th November Thanksgiving Recess**

**Tuesday 30th November & Thursday 2nd December**

**Whatever Happened to the Labor Zionist Hegemony?**


**Final Examination:** Tuesday Dec. 14th, 2:00-4:00pm