



Course Title: “Identity, Protest and Hope in Israeli Visual Culture and Cinema”

Seminar

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Course no.

Fall Semester: October 14th, 2018 – January 13th, 2019

Dan David Bld. # 102

4 credits seminar

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 16.00-18.00

Office hours: Dan David Bld. # 102 after class, on T. and Th. 18:00-19:30 (by appointment or drop-in)

Course Description

This seminar will focus on the core themes that define modern Israeli identity. The course is meant for a diverse body of international students from different backgrounds and academic disciplines. International students who come for a period of study in Israel deal with significant questions about their own identity and their connection to Israel. We will discuss what identity means from national, group and individual points of view. This multidisciplinary course offers a kaleidoscope of topics such as the history of Israel, Zionism, the legacy of the Holocaust, immigration and societal challenges of a multi-ethnic country, The IDF, war and conflict, Arabs and Palestinians, religions, gender, and the rebirth of the Hebrew language. These topics significantly informed the evolution of an idiosyncratic narrative of Israeli identity.

As a result of the biblical prohibition against creating “graven images” one of the Ten Commandments, Jewish culture was traditionally connected with the literary arts for thousands of years. The emergence of Zionism, the history and legacy of the Holocaust and the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948 created a new vision and representation of Israel. A unique and sometimes contradictory self-image emerged, deeply rooted in both religion and secular ideologies, as well as in the historical, political and ethnic experiences of the country’s inhabitants.

We will utilize images as a language and a tool to appreciate the complexity and spectrum of Israel’s narrative. Visualization is an exceptional medium that allows us to better understand complex and conceptual aspects of a national and individual identity. Israeli self-perception and expression are represented in different artistic mediums such as fine art and photography, cinema, television, animation, graphic novels, social media as well as YouTube. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the multiple groups in Israel, their identity, perceptions of themselves, their history as well as their future goals and aspirations.

Course Objectives

- Learn about Israeli society and its culture.

- Understand and analyze Israel's diverse groups and their perceptions of themselves.
- Understand Israeli mentality.

Learning Skills

- Differentiate between thematic and formalist critique.
- Summarize and contextualize information in order to narrow it down to support one's conclusion.
- Obtain accurate information, analyzing and interpreting it.

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Assessment

Students will receive grades in points (up to 100 points)

100 – 60
Fail 59

Grading Course Assignments:

1. Attendance	10%
2. Participation in class discussions and demonstrating knowledge of assigned readings	10%
3. Students' presentations in class (max 15 minutes)	15%
4. Midterm critique paper (6 th week)	30%
5. Final Term Papers and Final Seminar Papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final Term Papers ('Referat') are due by February 13th, 2019 - Final Seminar Papers are due by May 5th, 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All students: Please submit a hard copy in class on the last day of the course ○ In addition, deliver another hard copy to Gilman, office # 360A by the deadline. 	35%

Assignments:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory and is considered an assignment. Attendance will be taken. Students are permitted a maximum of three unexcused

absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

2. **Participation:**

- A. Participate in class discussions. That includes contributing to class discussions, taking part in group work in class, and demonstrating knowledge of readings assigned per session.
- B. Read and prepared all required texts. Students are highly encouraged to read recommended reading as well.

3. **Students' presentations in class:** This project aims to help international students familiarize themselves with the local culture and achieve a better comprehension of modern Israeli society and its social fabric. Students are offered a unique opportunity to meet and document the oral history and personal accounts of local Israeli and Palestinian artists, musicians, screenwriters, movie creators, etc.

A. Each student will pair up with a fellow student and find an individual willing to be interviewed. They will schedule a meeting with the interviewee and prepare a list of relevant questions. Students are requested to ask interviewees about their artistic exploration of self and its outcome.

B. Each pair will summarize the interview in writing and present it as a PowerPoint Presentation (list of pairs, topics and dates will be finalized in class). Students are requested to conclude their presentations by conceptualizing the interview, locating it in time and place, explaining its relevance and importance.

C. The following will be required of each pair (max. 15-20 minutes presentation):

- 1. A video of the interview, (assuming interviewee agrees).
- 2. Images of the creative works made by the interviewee.
- 3. Details of artwork: Creator, Title, Year, Material, Exhibition and Curator. In the case of movie: Title, Director and Screenwriter, Year, Length, Producer, Song, and Composer.
- 4. Detailed description of Artwork by the students, ideally more than an artist's bio.
- 5. Concluding sentence: how your choice of theme relates to the topic of the course that is 'Israeli Identity'?

(For an example of this check UCLA Mapping Jewish Los Angeles: <http://www.mappingjewishla.org/student-exhibitions>).

4. **Midterm critique paper:** submit a critique paper of Kozłowska's article:

"Who Am I? Mizrahi Discourse on Identity in Contemporary Israel," *Hemispheres*, Vol. 29, No. 1(2014): 47-61.

Start with a detailed title of the article (see instructions). Due: 6TH week.

Write a short synopsis of the article, i.e. a one-page summary of the article's important themes. (Do not omit what you find less interesting.)

Find the main subject of the article and explain why you believe it is the main theme of the article.

What is/are the most important question/s of the article?

What is the researcher's thesis/hypothesis/assumption?

How does the researcher try to prove her thesis?

What are the faults of the article?

What did you learn from the article?

Summary/conclusion:

1. Concluding sentence: how your choice of theme relates to the topic of the course that is 'Israeli Identity'?
2. Add your opinion of the article with an *evidence-base* argument.

The paper should be a maximum of 1.5-space 12-point fonts, 5 printed pages, excluding a front page with your name, student ID and contact information as well as the topic of your paper. No references are requested.

Clear language, copyediting, no repetitions, proper grammar, spelling, and standard one-inch margins all around. Print your paper and submit it on the last day of class. Do not email your papers (More instructions will be given in class).

Papers have only one submission date. No make-up dates or late submissions. If a student has a valid reason to request a special (earlier or later) date – he/she should send a written request no less than a few days in advance to the Liberal Arts office.

5. Final Paper: choice of seminar paper or a term paper (“Referat”):

Third-year students can take this course as a research seminar. Final seminar papers should be submitted until May 5th, 2019.

Seminar papers should be between 6000 and 7000 words (1.5-space; title page and bibliography).

Please deliver your hard copy to Gilman, office # 360A by the deadline.

Second- and third-year students can take the course as an elective (elective course).

Term papers should be submitted until February 13th, 2019.

Term papers (“Referat”) differ from seminar papers only in their scope and length but require the same research skills.

Term papers should be between 3000 and 3500 words (1.5-space; title page and bibliography).

Please deliver your hard copy to Gilman, office # 360A by the deadline.

For all Students. Final Project:

- Students choose a topic that is relevant to some aspects of artistic exploration of self, group identity (gender, ethnic, political, etc.) or national identity. For choosing a topic, please consult with me.
- Start your paper with an introduction: first paragraph of your paper should define the problem your paper addresses, i.e. what is the topic of your paper and what is your thesis/argument.
- Body Paragraphs: this is where you explain your thesis/argument and base it on 2 scholarly resources for a ‘Referat’; 3 for a research seminar.
- Support all your arguments: These should be previous academic studies; do not use Wikipedia or other non-academic citations such as newspapers or magazines. Use the instructions at the end of the syllabus.
- Conclusion: Summarize the topic, how you proved your thesis and what you conclude from that.
- Clear language, copyediting, no repetitions, proper grammar, spelling.

Course Schedule:

First Week: Tuesday and Thursday, October 16th and 18th, 2018

1st Class: Introduction: what are the Goals of the course?

Building rapport in class; Instructor explains the course syllabus, assignments, etc.

Recommended reading: Rosenthal, Donna. *The Israelis*

2nd Class:

At the beginning of the course submit one 1.5-space page reflection

Instructions: Students write a list of class presentations including presenters' names, dates and chosen topics, and depicting topics for interviews and papers.

Second Week: TT Oct. 23rd and 25th, 2018

3rd Class: What is an identity, and what is yours?

The role of visual culture in representing individual and collective identity in world art: an overview.

Recommended reading: Rosenthal Donna. *The Israelis*.

4th Class: "Thou Shall not make a graven image"

The paradox of Judaism and art.

Third Week: TT, Oct. 30th and November 1st 2018

5th Class: No class on Tuesday, October 30th, 2018 (Local Elections)

6th Class: Creating a collective identity and the Jewish *Sabra*.

Required reading: Talmon Miri and Peleg Yaron.

Fourth Week: TT, Nov. 6th and 8th, 2018

7th Class: Creating a collective Identity – continues:

Screening excerpts from the "Children of the Sun" (Helmar Lerski, 1939) and the "Children of the Sun" (Ran Tal, 2007).

Recommended reading: Zerubavel, Yael.

8th Class: Methodology: how to write a critique.

Recommended reading: Halamish, Aviva. "The Kibbutz at 100.

Fifth Week: TT, Nov. 13th and 15th, 2018

9th Class: Methodology: Formalist versus thematic analysis.

10th Class: Imaging the unimaginable: Depictions of the Holocaust in Israeli visual culture.

Sixth Week: TT, Nov. 20th and 22nd, 2018

11th Class: The Legacy of the Holocaust in Israel – continues.

12th Class: The changing ethnic fabric of Israel and its representations in culture.

A. Multi-cultural society: Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews.

B. Students submit Mid-term Critique on Nov. 22.

Seventh Week: TT, Nov. 27th and 29th, 2018

13th Class: Screening the animation movie: 'Waltz with Bashir' by Ari Folman (2008).

Requested reading: Hakim, Hillel.

14th Class: Class discussion: "Waltz with Bashir." The article by Hillel Hakim.

Eighth Week: TT, December 4th and 6th, 2018

15th Class: IDF Female Soldiers.

16th Class: Bedouins and Druze Soldiers.

Requested reading: Goldscheider, ps. 62-81.

Ninth Week: TTI, Dec. 11th and 13th, 2018

The Mizrahim and art.

18th Class: *Ars Poetica* and the art of appropriation

Requested reading: Goldscheider, Calvin 134-154.

Tenth Week: TT, Dec. 18th and 20th, 2018

19th Class: Screening *The Band's Visit* (Eran Riklis, 2007).

Homework: summarize the movie and what you learned from it. Bring the summary to our next meeting.

20th Class: Post-screening discussion: Mizrahi Israelis and Arabs.

Requested reading: Goldscheider, Calvin Goldscheider, Calvin 134-154.

Eleventh Week: TT, Dec. 25th and 27th, 2018

21st Class: Jewish Ethiopians and Reggae Music.

Requested reading: Shabtay Malka.

22nd Class: Gender and Judaism: breaking Taboos.

Twelfth Week: TT, January 1st and 3rd, 2019

23rd Class: Screening the documentary film *Black Bus* by Anat Zuria (2009)

24th Class: *Black Bus* as a social protest - class discussion.

Thirteen Week: TT, Jan. 8th and 10th, 2018

Class 25th: LGBTQ

Recommended reading: Ritchie Jason.

Last Class:

At the end of the course submit one 1.5-space page reflection

The Hebrew Language as an embodiment of a national identity

Wrap up discussion of this course.

This schedule is tentative and may change as the course progresses.

Academic conduct

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirements

- All of you are expected to arrive in class on time and to avoid leaving the class during lectures, discussions, and other activities.
- Students can bring their smart phones, tablets and laptops to class because we use them to conduct in-class research. Please show respect to your fellow students by turning off or silencing phones during class time.

Students' Academic Progress

- Students are welcome to submit printed drafts for review and discussion during my office hours. Please submit drafts until one week before a paper's due date.
- Students are encouraged to ask the instructor about their academic progress so far.

Classroom Etiquette

- Food is allowed in class.
- Silence your cellular phones.

Required Bibliography

Goldscheider, Calvin. *Israeli Society in the 21st Century*, Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2015, pp. 62-81, 134-153.

Hakim, Hillel. "The 'Waltz with Bashir' Two-Step." *Commentary*, vol. 127, no., 3, March 2009, pp. 46-51.

Kozłowska, Magdalena. "Who Am I? Mizrahi Discourse on Identity in Contemporary Israel." *Hemispheres*, vol. 29, no., 1, 2014, pp. 47-61.

Shabtay, Malka. "'RaGap': Music and identity among young Ethiopians in Israel." *Critical Arts*, vol. 17, 2009, pp. 1-2, 93-105
(DOI: [10.1080/02560240385310071](https://doi.org/10.1080/02560240385310071))

Talmon Miri and Peleg Yaron. "Introduction." *Israeli Cinema: Identities in Motion*. Ed. Miri Talmon and Yaron Peleg, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011, pp. IX-XVII.

Recommended Bibliography

Abramson, Macabith. "The 'New Psyche': A Model of Different Femininity in Film: Viviane Amsalem, Heroine of the Trilogy by Ronit and Shlomi Elkabetz." *Jewish Film & New Media*, vol. 4, no., 1, Spring 2016, pp. 43-67.

Goodman, Susan. Ed. *Dateline Israel: New Photography and Video Art*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.

Halamish, Aviva. "The Kibbutz at 100." Online lecture:
(https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/blog.umd.edu/dist/b/504/files/2018/02/Halamish_-_The-Kibbutz-position-paper-2n6rw6b.pdf)

Ritchie, Jason. "Pink Washing, Homoantagonism, and Israel–Palestine: The Conceits of Queer Theory and the Politics of the Ordinary," *Antipode*, vol. 47, no., 3, 2015, pp. 616-634.

Rosenthal, Donna. *The Israelis: Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land*. NY: Free Press, 2003.

Zerubavel, Yael. "The 'Mythological Sabra' and Jewish Past: Trauma, Memory, and Contested Identities," *Israel Studies*, vol. 7, no., 2, Summer, 2002, pp. 115-144.

For more resources, please check: Brandeis University,
Massachusetts:<https://israelresources.brandeis.edu/topics>

How to write a Critique

Definition:

Critique is a short paper (1-2 pages) that gives a critical assessment of a book, an article, a film, etc.

General Instructions before writing a Critique:

1. Read the book/article, watch the movie, and annotate as you go along
2. Understand what is the author's main point, statement, or thesis
3. Divide the book/article/film into sections of thoughts
4. Write a summary of each thought in your own words

Writing the Critique:

Introduction:

1. Scholar's/author's/director's name, complete title of the work: title of journal/book/film, volume number, date, month and page numbers
2. State what is the main thesis or idea of the work
3. The author's purpose
4. The author's method and approach

Body of Paragraphs:

- Please follow the questions and explain your conclusion(s) by stating your reasons
1. Give the main purpose and significant points of the book/article/film
 2. Is the purpose of the work made clear in its introduction?
 3. Do you find errors and misprints in the text?
 4. Did the author overemphasize or underemphasize ideas?
 5. Should some of the sections be expanded, condensed or omitted?
 6. Is the objective of the project important?

7. Was the author successful in making his/her point?
8. Did the author build a logical argument?
9. Do you think the article/book has enough valid information or is it outdated?
10. Would you recommend that article/book/film to a friend?

Conclusion:

- Students state whether they agree or not with the author
 - Explain your conclusion(s) by stating your reasons
 - Ending with a general opinion of the article/book/film
- Ask the following questions to review and evaluate your critique before submitting your paper:
- *Is my critique objective? Are there any repetitions in my work? Do I make myself clear? Does my critique have: introduction, body of paragraphs and conclusion?*

MLA Formatting and Style Guide

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4917D9E21FA6EDFF&feature=plcp>