

LAAD80F
**Israel's Struggle for National Identity as Seen Through the Medium
of Israeli Cinema**

Basic Class Information

Hours of Instruction and Classrooms:

- W-F 2:00 – 3:10pm Merrill 130
- Thursdays 6 – 7:45pm Earth & Marine Sciences B214 (movie viewing)

Instructor:

- Tammi Rossman-Benjamin tbenjami@ucsc.edu; 459-4727; Stevenson 274

Course Textbooks and Materials:

- Donna Rosenthal, *The Israelis*, (New York: Free Press, 2003).
- ERes – all other course readings

Class Web-CT Page: <http://ic.ucsc.edu/webct>

Your login name and password are the same as for your UCSC account

ERes Course Page:

- <http://eres.ucsc.edu/eres/coursepass.aspx?cid=3262>
- course password: shalom

Office Hours:

- Thurs. 9 – 11am; by appointment

Class Description

This course will examine through the medium of film Israel's struggle for national identity since its founding as a modern state. Topics include the challenges presented to the creation of a national identity by ethnically diverse immigration, the secular/religious divide and the Arab-Israeli conflict. These challenges will be explored across three broadly-defined periods of Israeli cinematic expression: a) nationalistic propaganda; b) apocalyptic visions and national disintegration; and c) renewed exploration of national values. Each week during the quarter, students will view a film pertaining to a particular struggle for national identity from one of these three periods of Israeli cinema and read materials to help place the film in an appropriate socio-historical context.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend class having read the assigned materials and prepared to participate in class discussions. Students who miss three or more classes during the

quarter will be penalized on their final grade, and excessive absences will be noted on narrative evaluations.

Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated in the class schedule (below). Late work will receive partial credit. Written assignments include:

- Weekly 1 - 2 page movie analysis, which will focus on the following questions:
 1. What socio-historical reality is the film portraying? (use readings, lectures)
 2. What attitudes about national identity are reflected in the film?
 3. How does the filmmaker convey these attitudes cinematically?
- Final paper (5 – 7 pages)

The final grade has the following components:

- Movie analyses 50%
- Final paper 35%
- Class participation 15%

LAAD80F
Spring 2010
CLASS SCHEDULE
(Subject to Change)

* **Week One (3/31- 4/2):** Introduction: Overview of Israeli cinema and social challenges; images of the pre-state nationalist ideal

o **Wednesday (3/31) PLEASE NOTE - NO CLASS (PASSOVER)**

o **Thursday** Film: *The Land of Promise* (1935) and class introduction

o **Friday** Readings for class:

- Ilan Avisar, "The National and the Popular in Israeli Cinema." *Shofar* 24: 125 – 143.
(<http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/shofar/v024/24.1avisar.pdf>)
- Uzi Rebhun, "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews: A Synthesis of the Last Century." *Jews in Israel*, ed. Uri Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman, 3 – 19 (Hanover: Brandeis University Press)

* **Week Two (4/7 - 4/9):** The Challenges of Immigration: Mizrahi immigrants

o **Wednesday** Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapters 5 and 6
- Avraham Shama and Mark Iris, *Immigration Without Integration: Third World Jews in Israel*, (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 35 – 59.

o **Thursday** Film: *Sallah Shabbati* (1964)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Three (4/14 - 4/16):** The Challenges of Immigration: Holocaust survivors

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *Sallah Shabbati*

Readings for class:

- Judd Ne'eman, "The Tragic Sense of Zionism: Shadow Cinema and the Holocaust", *Shofar* 24: 22 - 36.
(<http://muse.jhu.edu/login?uri=/journals/shofar/v024/24.1neeman.html>)
- Hanna Yablonka, *Survivors of the Holocaust: Israel after the War*, (New York: New York University Press, 1977), pp. 9 – 17; pp. 63 – 78.

o **Thursday** Film: *The New Land* (1994)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Four (4/21 - 4/23):** The Challenges of Immigration: Russian immigrants

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *The New Land*

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapter 7
- Elazar Leshem and Moshe Sicron, "The Soviet Immigrant Community in Israel", *Jews in Israel*, 81 – 117.

o **Thursday** Film: *Yana's Friends* (2001)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Five (4/28 - 4/30):** The Arab/Israeli Conflict: Israel's War of Independence

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *Yana's Friends*

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapter 3
- David Ben Gurion, *Memoirs*, (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 63 - 106.
- Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz, Eds., *Israel in the Middle East* (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press), pp. 1 – 7.

o **Thursday** Film: *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* (1955)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Six (5/5 - 5/7)** The Arab/Israeli Conflict: Israeli Jews/Israeli Arabs

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer*

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapter 12
- Calvin Goldscheider, *Israel's Changing Society*, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 61 - 81.

o **Thursday** Film: *Hamsin* (1982)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Seven (5/12 - 5/14):** The Arab/Israeli Conflict: Challenges of terrorism

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *Hamsin*

Readings for class:

- David Horovitz, *Still Life with Bombers*, (New York: Alfred R. Knopf, 2004) pp. 13 – 43; 153 - 166
- "The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas)", (Reprinted from MidEast Web <http://www.mideastweb.org>)

o **Thursday** Film: *No. 17 is Anonymous* (2003)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Eight (5/19 - 5/21) :** The religious/secular divide: Religious tradition/modernity

o **Wednesday (5/19) PLEASE NOTE - NO CLASS (SHAVUOT)**

o **Thursday** Film: *I Love You Rosa* (1972)

Homework due: Analysis of *No. 17 is Anonymous*

o **Friday** Film discussion

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapter 11
- Charles S. Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 1-24.

* **Week Nine (5/26- 6/28):** The religious/secular divide: Ultra-Orthodox/secular

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *I Love You Rosa*

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapters 9 and 16

o **Thursday** Film: *Purple Lawns* (1998)

o **Friday** Film discussion

* **Week Ten (6/2 - 6/4):** The religious/secular divide: National religious/secular

o **Wednesday** Homework due: Analysis of *Purple Lawns*

Readings for class:

- *The Israelis*, chapter 10
- *Civil Religion in Israel*, pp. 185 - 213.

o **Thursday** Film: *Ma'aleh School Compilation II* (2002)

o **Friday** Film discussion and course review

Final Paper due: Wednesday, June 9th by 5pm