



SYLLABUS

347 HEB/ SLC/JST iCourse

Modern Israeli Literature in Translation

WELCOME

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Course description:

The Modern Hebrew, or Israeli Hebrew, is relatively a young language. It started at the end of the 19th century in Europe, as part of the Enlightenment movement, and today it is the language of the State of Israel. As such, Modern Hebrew is the pillar of a vibrant culture: written, spoken, sung, used for slogans, and even cursing. It is used for all the natural uses of a language. During this short period Modern Hebrew developed literature with unique local characteristics, as well as, universal ideas. Some of the authors gained international recognition, just to mention a few: Agnon, who is considered one of the fathers of Hebrew literature in the modern era, who received in 1966 a Nobel Prize for his writings, or David Grossman, Meir Shalev, Amos Oz, whose books are translated to many languages.

The readings in the course will include books of the authors Eli Amir, Meir Shalev, and Batya Gur. In the course we will examine the books against their social and historical backdrop. Some of the subjects will cover the building of the state, love and war, immigration to a new society, femininity and manhood - gender representation in society, the shade of the Holocaust, social cultural diversity of Europeans, Easterners, and the Kibbutz. Israel is a Jewish state; through the books the course will look at how diverse social and cultural lifestyles have different Jewish religious expressions. With this, we will examine the tensions, from the early days of the country, between the religious sectors and the secular sectors of the Israeli society.

We will relate to the topics through different literature genres, a murder mystery, an autobiography, and a love story.

Course objectives:

To introduce the students to a different culture literature, in general, and to present Israeli literature as a world literature, in particular.

To provide students with an historical approach to the development of Modern Hebrew literature.

To reflect on the social and historical events and values of the periods depicted and embodied in the books.

To write a variety of pieces that focuses on the critical analysis of literature and includes expository analytical and argumentative essays.

To improve students' critical reading and thinking skills.

Students Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able:

- To be familiar with the literature of a different culture, in general, and Israeli literature, in particular, and to express the difference both in speaking and in writing.
- To elucidate an historical approach to the development of Modern Hebrew literature.
- To reflect on the social and historical events and values of the periods depicted and embodied in the books.
- To be capable of producing a variety of written expression which focus on the critical analysis of literature and include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays.
- To read and think critically about modern literature, in originally English texts and those in translation.

Announcements:

Students are responsible for reading all messages posted in the "Announcements" section of Blackboard. The "Announcements" section will contain messages from the instructor to the class as a whole, instructions for assignments, and any updates to the schedule. Be sure to check the "Announcements" section regularly.

Course guidance and requirements:

The course is built of four units. Under the title of the unit, there are the components of that unit. The first unit is an introduction to Modern Hebrew literature and a historical background to the course's books. Each one of the other three units is dedicated to one of the three books that we will read, analyze, and discuss. Each unit has a folder, which can be found in '**Course Content**', whose link is on the left hand column. The book's folders will be available to you according to the time designated to each book.

The first two books, *Scapegoat* and *A Pigeon and a Boy*, are divided into weekly sections. Before you start reading each section, read my comments on it. Each section has its own folder, inside of the book's folder. I have gathered concepts, terminology, and historical or cultural background, that I believe is needed to understand the chapters in depth. The folder for each section also has the questions and/or assignment for the weekly reading. To post your answers and assignments, you need to click on the title above the questions/assignment. When you open the assignment link, you will need to attach your document with your answers and/or assignment, and submit it.

Course assignments:

Questions: the books *Scapegoat* and *A Pigeon and a Boy* are divided into weekly readings. *Scapegoat* is divided into 4 weekly reading portions, and *A Pigeon and a Boy* is divided into 6 weekly portions. For each weekly reading portion there are questions to answer, usually by Thursday.

Discussion board is an important tool in this course. It is a place to reflect on the reading and connect with the other students, therefore, each week you will have a part A and part B posting. The two parts are in the same forum.

Part A of Discussion Board is where you will post your thoughts, feelings, or refer to your unanswered question(s), about the week's reading. It should be at least 250 words.

Part B is a response to another student's discussion posting. It should be 2 to 3 sentences, which should provide enough substance to the discussion. *You can agree with a fellow student as long as you add something of your own to the discussion; and you can also disagree with a fellow student and argue a different point of view, but this must be done respectfully and politely as would be expected in any classroom discussion.*

Final Essay: at the end of each book, you will have about a week to write an essay on an assigned topic, before moving onto the next book. I highly suggest that you go over the topic of the essay before you start reading each book. As you are reading the book, annotate events and quotations, which will be useful to you when you come to write the essay. Each essay should be a minimum of 4 full pages following the MLA guidelines for writing papers, works cited, etc.

The third book, *Beth Lehem Road Murder*, is a suspense detective story. There are about three weeks assigned for you to read it, as a whole. Note, there are also assignments regarding this book. You will find their due dates on the timetable.

Quizzes: They are mandatory. You must complete them in order to continue with further assignments.

Due dates are the last day you can turn in assignments and quizzes, so you can submit them earlier than the due dates, but not later.

Instructor expectations:

This is a distance learning course but not a self-paced course. Assignments have regular due dates. Due to the structure of the course, students are responsible for completion of all coursework and posting them by the end of their due dates.

Assignments are due before 11.59 p.m. of its respective due date.

Late work – Work is considered late if it is not turned in by midnight (Arizona time) on the day it is due. Late work will NOT be accepted. The due dates for the assignments are clearly outlined and will be upheld. Please start early and don't allow yourself to get behind. You are responsible for keeping up in this course.

Required books:

- Amir, Eli, *Scapegoat*, 1987 [ISBN-13: 978-0297792024]
- Shalev, Meir, *A Pigeon and a boy*, 2006 [ISBN: 978-0805212143]
- Gur, Batya, *Bethlehem Road Murder*, 2001 [ISBN-13: 978-0060195731]

Grading policy:

The overall grade for the course will be calculated on a point system.

1. Introductory to Hebrew Literature assignment:	100 points
2. 3 Final Essays:	450 points
3. Quizzes:	160 points
4. Questions	440 points
5. Discussion & responses:	330 <u>points</u>
	1480 points

Grading scale:

A+	≥97.0%	B-	80.0 - <83.0%
A	93.0 - <97.0%	C+	77.0 - <80.0%
A-	90.0 - <93.0%	C	70.0 - <77.0%
B+	87.0 - <90.0%	D	60.0 - <70.0%
B	83.0 - <87.0%	E	<60.0%

Honor's Contract

The course offers Honor's Contract. If you are interested, contact me so we can discuss a topic.

Suggested secondary sources:

Readings are useful for bolstering understanding of the primary material and as resources for the writing assignments.

1. Charles Liebman and Bernard Susser: "Judaism and Jewishness in the Jewish State," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 555 (Jan. 1998), pp. 15-25
2. Dowty Alan, *The Jewish State a Century Later*, chapter 8, London : University of California Press, 1998 [ISBN-13: 978-0520209411]
3. Elon, Amos, *The Israelis: Founders And Sons*, Penguin, 1981
4. Feinberg Anat, "Modern Hebrew Fiction," *Israel at 60: Retrospective & Renewal*, *Modern Hebrew Literature*, 5, Fall 2009.
5. Feldman Yael S., *No Room of Their Own: Gender and Nation in Israeli Women's Fiction*, Columbia University Press, 1999
6. Gershon Shaked, Afterword to Gila Ramras-Rauch, *Facing the Holocaust*, Philadelphia : Jewish Publication Society, c1985
7. Gertz Nurit, "Historical Memory: Israeli Cinema and Literature in the 1980s and 1990s", *Critical Essays on Israeli Society, Religion, and Government*, eds. Avrukh Kevin & Zenner Walter, pp. 200-226, State University of New York Press, New York.
8. Gluzman Michael, 1991, "The Exclusion of Women from Hebrew Literary History", in *Prooftexts*, 11, No. 3, pp. 259-278
9. Hirschberg Peter, "Israel's Ethnic Underclass," *The Jerusalem Report* June 12, 1997, pp. 12-18
10. Mintz Alan, ed. *Reading Hebrew Literature* (Brandeis UP, 2003)
11. Norich Anita, "Jewish Literatures and Feminist Criticism" in Naomi Sokoloff, Anne Lapidus Lerner & Anita Norich eds., *Gender and Text in Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature* (JTSA, 1992), pp. 1-15
12. Patterson David, "Moving Centers in Modern Hebrew Literature," in Glenda Abramson and Tudor Parfitt, Eds., *the Great Transition: The Recovery of the Lost Centers of Modern Hebrew Literature* (Rowman & Allenheld, 1985), pp. 1-10
13. Rossetto, Piera. "Space of Transit, Place of Memory: Ma'abarah and Literary Landscapes of Arab Jews." *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History, Journal of Fondazione CDEC*. 11 4, 2012. <http://www.quest-cdecjournal.it/focus.php?id=315>
14. Shaked Gershon, *Modern Hebrew Literature*, trans. Yael Lotan, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2000. ISBN: 0253337119
15. Shiffman Smadar, "Orly Castel-Bloom and Yoel Hoffmann: On Israeli Postmodern Prose Fiction," *Hebrew Studies Journal*, 2009.
<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Orly+Castel-Bloom+and+Yoel+Hoffmann%3A+on+Israeli+postmodern+prose...-a0219003799>

16. Shohat, Ella, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of its Jewish victims," in McClintock, Mufti and Shohat (eds.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation and Postcolonial Perspectives* (Minneapolis, 1997) pp. 39-68

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>.

Copyrighted Material:

I would like to state that the course content, are copyrighted material and students may not copy or download (See ACD 304-06, "Commercial Note Taking Services" for more information).

Changes to Syllabus:

The instructor reserves the right to change any part of the syllabus. If any changes are made a message will be posted in the "Announcements" section of Blackboard.

I hope that by the end of the course you will be familiar with Israeli historical background to different literary genres. This presents new dimensions to relevant and known issues. The three authors that we will meet in the course wrote other books, and of course, there are many other talented Israeli authors. I hope that the course will open your appetite to seek and read more Israeli books.

At the end of the syllabus and also on a separate document on Blackboard, you will find the course time table with its assignments, their points, and due dates.

If you have any questions or hesitations, I encourage you to write to me and ask.

I wish us all an interesting and challenging course,

Morah Shemer

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