Israeli Cinema and the Culture of Modern Israel
Tel Aviv University International
Fall Semester 2019

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Course description:
The course deals with the history and chronology of Israeli cinema, starting with early 1930s Zionist films up to the present. It analyses the ideological aspects of Israeli cinema – the way it established Zionist myths and then deconstructed them. It deals with the unique thematic and aesthetics of Israeli cinema – in fact, we will question what is Israeli cinema – and with its characteristic ‘genres’. And finally it focuses on the importance and contribution of some of Israel’s most prominent filmmakers (Ephraim Kishon, Menachem Golan, Uri Zohar and Assi Dayan among others), and the way Israeli cinema reflects Israeli culture. The course will be accompanied with screenings of excerpts and full length feature films and close reading of selected bibliography.

Course requirements:
The students are expected to attend classes and screenings, participate in class discussions (10%), submit a mid-term paper (30%), and final in-class exam (60%).

Attendance is mandatory. Students who have more than three absences will be excluded from the course.

Mandatory reading materials appear on the Moodle course site.

Eating is strictly prohibited in class during lectures and screenings.

Grading points:
Attendance and participation – 10%
Mid-term assignment – 30%
Final in-class exam – 60%
Weekly schedule and reading assignments

First week – Introduction
Israel culture and Israeli cinema in the first decade of the 21st century
Screening: *The Band's Visit* (Eran Kolirin, 2007)
Short film: *Anthem* (Elad Keidan, 2008)

Second Week – Zionist Myths and their Manifestation in Early Israeli Cinema
The 1950s and 1960s – the National-Heroic cinema
Screening: *Sallah Shabati* (Ephraim Kishon, 1964)
Excerpts: *He Walked Through the Fields* (Joseph Milo, 1967)
*Every Bastard A King* (Uri Zohar, 1968)

Third Week – Popular Israeli Cinema
Popular Israeli cinema (the ideology of the melting pot)
Screening: *The Troupe* (Avi Nesher, 1978)

Fourth Week – Family Portrayals
The "absent father" motif in new Israeli cinema
Excerpts: *Sweet Mud* (Dror Shaul, 2006), *Broken Wings* (Nir Bergman, 2002)

Fifth Week – the Blade and the Vessel
Images of masculinity and femininity in Israeli cinema – militarism in Israeli society
Screening: *Zero Motivation* (Talya Lavie, 2014)
*Visiting Hours* (Maya Dreifuss, 2005)
Sixth Week – He’s got the Wrong Part
Images of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the 1980s
Screening: *Bethlehem* (Yuval Adler, 2013)
*Dark Night* (Leonid Prudovsky, 2005)
Excerpt: *Avanti Popolo* (Rafi Bukai, 1986)

SUBMISSION OF MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT

Seventh Week – Due to That War
Holocaust and survivors – from repression to recognition
Screening: *Walk on Water* (Eytan Fox, 2004)
Excerpts: *Wooden Gun* (Ilan Moshenzon, 1979)
*Summer of Aviya* (Eli Cohen, 1988)

Eighth Week – 1990s and Beyond
Images of Judaism in Current Israeli Cinema
Screening: *Fill the Void* (Rama Burshtein, 2012)
Excerpts: *The Holly Guests* (Gidi Dar, 2004)
Reading: Chyutin, Dan, "Negotiating Judaism in Contemporary Israeli Cinema: The Spiritual Style of *My Father, My Lord*" in Miri Talmon and Yaron Peleg (eds.) *Israeli Cinema: Identities in Motion*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011, pp. 201-212

Ninth Week – Return to Lebanon: Trauma and Redemption in Current Israeli War Films
Screening: *Waltz with Bashir* (Ari Folman, 2008)
Excerpt: *Lebanon* (Shmuel Maoz, 2009)

**Tenth Week – Multiculturalism**

Screening: *Sh'Chur* (Shmuel Hasfari, 1994)

*Home* (David Ofek, 1994)


**LAST WEEK: FINAL IN-CLASS EXAM**