

Dubnov, Tel-Aviv colloquium, Stanford University, Winter 1010

Winter quarter
History 287 D/ 387 D
Tuesdays 2:15 pm - 4:05 pm
EDUC208

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Tel Aviv: Site, Symbol, City

Instructor: Arie M. Dubnov

Course Description

Dedicated to Tel-Aviv's centenary this colloquium addresses the first Israeli/Hebrew city from a cultural history perspective combining 'high' and 'low' cultural artifacts, examining the symbolic constructions of the city as a site of Hebrew modernism and postmodernism.

Topics include:

- utopian origins of Tel-Aviv in modernist-Zionist texts
- A "Hebrew bohemia": the role of artists, poets and writers in Tel-Aviv's coffee houses
- Is Tel-Aviv indeed the capital of Bauhaus architecture?
- The emergence of pop culture in Tel-Aviv of the late 1960s and 1970s, or: why wasn't there a 1968 Student Revolution in Israel?
- McWorld in Tel-Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem: the effects of contemporary globalization and the reconstruction of Tel-Aviv as symbolic site of Israeli post-nationalism
- Place, site, land and exteritorialization: is Tel-Aviv emblematic example of a Jewish ambivalence towards physical space?

Students will encounter a variety of sources including art, cinema, literature, pop-music and will also make use of the archival materials at Green Library's Eliasaf Robinson Collection.

* Hebrew reading knowledge, although recommended, is not required.

Course Requirements

The course is a colloquium combining undergraduate and graduate students. Requirements differ according to the student's level. There will be *no* mid-term paper in this class. Instead, students are expected to read all the sources and secondary literature in advance and actively participate in class discussion. The assignments of the course are as follows:

- 1) Oral Presentation: each student will be asked to prepare at least one short (7-10 minutes) oral presentation in class (*referatum*). The presentation would center either on the secondary reading, exploring its central theoretical/historical conceptual framework or on the specific works of art/literature that we shall discuss. Presentation will be accompanied by a short (3-4 pages) report summarizing the central arguments of the presentation, and should include a personal critical statement as well.
- 2) Two synthetic movie/music view/listen report: 2 reports, 3-4 pages long (each). See instructions below, sessions VII-VIII
- 3) Final Paper: A 15-25 pages long analytical essay. The essay may frame itself using a specific period, may focus on a specific artistic manifesto or artifact, discuss the oeuvre of an artist/poet/writer or an artistic milieu etc. It is required that the essay will have a short methodological introduction, and place the works in historical context. You are more than welcome to use research methods you may be acquainted with from studying in other disciplines such as literature, art history, communication, cultural studies etc., but the reliance on such methodologies must be manifest.
- 4) *"Agenda Setting": *Each graduate student* will be responsible for "agenda setting" (no more than 5 minutes) at least once during the semester (in weeks in which they are not presenting). This entails summarizing the main points of interest in the readings and proposing interesting questions and points for consideration and further discussion by the class.

Please Note: *Undergrad students are warmly encouraged to experience themselves with this as well, but are not formally obliged to do so as part of the course requirements.*

* Please note that I require that the central themes of 1, 3 & 4 will be discussed and coordinated in advance with the course instructor

Your grades will be determined according to the following 4 criterions:

- i. Class participation 20%
- ii. Movie view reports 20% (10% each)
- iii. Oral presentation 15%
- iv. Final essay 35% or 45% [grad/undergraduate or depending on completion of section v.]
- v. Agenda setting 10%

Course Sessions and Topics

Glossary:

[\$] = Scanned on course website.

[R] = Reserved book, at Green Library's Loan Desk

Session I:

Introduction: The Production of a Modern Jewish/Hebrew Space?

* No prior reading required

Session II:

Utopian or Biblical? The idea of Tel Aviv in Herzl's *Alteneuland*

Readings

1. [R] Herzl, Theodor, *Old New Land*, tr. Levensohn, Lotta (Princeton, N.J.: M. Wiener, 1997).
2. [\$] Lefebvre, Henri, *Writings on Cities*, tr. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996). [excerpts]
3. Gurevitch, Zali, and Aran, Gideon, "The Land of Israel: Myth and Phenomenon," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 10 (1994), 195-210.

OR:

[\$] Gurevitch, Zali, "The Double Site of Israel," in *Grasping Land : Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*, eds. Ben-Ari, Eyal and Bilu, Yoram (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 203-216.

Additional recommended reading:

[\$] Brauch, Julia, Lipphardt, Anna, and Nocke, Alexandra, "Exploring Jewish Space: An Approach," in *Jewish Topographies : Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, eds. Brauch, Julia, Lipphardt, Anna and Nocke, Alexandra (Aldershot, Hampshire, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 1-23.

Session III:

Mythography and reality in Tel Aviv's early days

Readings

1. [R] Azaryahu, Maoz, *Tel Aviv : Mythography of a City* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2007). [excerpts]
2. Helman, Anat, "East or West? Tel-Aviv in the 1920s and 1930s," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 15 (1999), 68-79.
OR
Helman, Anat, "European Jews in the Levant Heat: Climate and Culture in 1920s and 1930s Tel-Aviv," *Journal of Israeli History* 22 (2003), 71-90.
3. [\$] Razi, Tammy "Subversive Youth Cultures in Mandate Tel-Aviv," *Israel Studies* (forthcoming 2010).

Session IV:

An “Eretz-Israeli Genre” of an Orientalist Dream? From Rubin and Guttman, via Brenner, to the *Oriental Fair*

Readings

1. [§+ R]Manor, Dalia, *Art in Zion: The Genesis of National Art in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005), chaps. 7-9 (“Rubin in Palestine”, “A View from Afar”, “Orientalism, Primitivism and Folklore”), pp. 92- 163
2. [R]Dani Karavan, “Tel-Aviv,” in Metsger-Samouck, Nitzah, *Dwelling on the Dunes, Tel Aviv: Modern Movement and Bauhaus Ideals* (Paris & Tel Aviv: Editions de l'éclat, 2004), pp. 13-17. [Catalogue of an exhibition. Highly recommended to browse through.]

Additional recommended reading:

Guttman, Nahum, *City of Sand and Sea/ Une Cité De Sable Et De Mer/ Ir Holot Ve-Yam*, Ed. Shva, Shlomo (Ramat Gan: Masadah, 1979). – trilingual edition [Green Stacks NJ18 .G9745 A4 1979]

Mann, Barbara E., *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005).

Helman, Anat, "Was there anything particularly Jewish about 'The First Hebrew City'?", in *The Art of Being Jewish in Modern Times: Essays on Jews and Aesthetic Culture*, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Jonathan Karp (eds.), (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 116-127.

Session V:

From Apollo’s Statue to “Epistle to the Hebrew Youth,” Or: from the glorious to the accursed Europe?

Readings

1. [§] *Tel-Aviv of the Poets*: Collection of translated excerpts of poems and essays on Tel-Aviv by Natan Alterman, Saul Tchernichowsky, Lea Goldberg, Uri Zvi Greenberg, Yonatan Ratosh, Meir Weiseltier and others. See course website.
2. [§] Hazaz, Haim, "The Sermon [Hadrasha]," in *The Sermon & Other Stories* (New Milford, Conn.: Toby Press, 2005).

Additional recommended reading:

Schlör, Joachim, *Tel Aviv, from Dream to City*, tr. Atkins, Helen (London: Reaktion Books, 1999)

Shaham, Nathan, *The Rosendorf Quartet : A Novel*, tr. Bilu, Dalya (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991).

Shavit, Jacob, *The New Hebrew Nation: A Study in Israeli Heresy and Fantasy* (London ; Totowa, N.J.: Frank Cass, 1987).

Session VI:

Stage, Ceremony, Carnival and Secular Rituals: *Habima, Maccabiah, Adloyada* (Purim Festival) and Independence Day military parade

*** visiting the Aliasaf Robinson Collection**

NOTE: class will take place at the Barchas Room, a classroom located adjacent to Green Library's Special Collections Reading Room. The meeting will include a short presentation of the Aliasaf Robinson Collection and related archival materials by Zachary M. Baker, The Green Library's Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections. We shall meet 5 mins. before class starts with at the entrance (2nd floor of Green Library, West Wing) Special Collections Reading Room, 2nd floor of the Green Library.

Readings

1. [§] Bakhtin, Mikhail M., *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). - excerpts
2. [R] Shavit, Jacob, and Naor, Chaya, *Staging and Stagers in Modern Jewish Palestine: The Creation of Festive Lore in a New Culture, 1882-1948* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), esp. chaps. 2, 5-7 and Appendixes 4-5
3. Shoham, Hizky, "'a Huge National Assemblage': Tel Aviv as a Pilgrimage Site in Purim Celebrations (1920-1935) " *Journal of Israeli History* 28 (2009), 1-20.

Additional recommended reading:

- Azaryahu, Maoz, "The Independence Day Military Parade: A Political History of a Patriotic Ritual," in *The Military and Militarism in Israeli Society*, eds. Lomsky-Feder, Edna and Ben-Ari, Eyal (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 89-116.
- Liebman, Charles S., and Don-Yehiya, Eliezer, *Civil Religion in Israel : Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).
- Levy, Emanuel, *The Habima, Israel's National Theater, 1917-1977: A Study of Cultural Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).

Session VII:

Gefilte-fish with Kuskus, austerity with indulgence: Tel-Aviv of the 1950s through the lens of Efraim Kishon's films

* ASSIGNMENT A: Watch at least two of the following 3 movies and write a 3-4 pp. synthetic view review:

- a) *Ha-Shoter Azulai*, aka *The policeman* (87 min., 1971)
- b) *Te'alat Blaumilkh*, aka *The Big Dig* (89 min., 1970)
- c) *Sallah Shabati* (110 min., 1964)

* All the above are included in A 5 videodiscs DVD Series entitled "Sirtei Efrayim Kishon [Efraim Kishon's Movies]," ([Israel]: Globus, 2000), located at the Green Library's Media Microtext Collection (Lower Level), call number -MTXT ZDVD 6781 DISCS 1-5

Instructions: The report should not simply summarize the films' plots but analyze them by placing them in their historical context. Try to answer the question what can we learn, if at all, from Kishon's comedies about the dilemmas, perceptions and conflicts of the time? Try to find connection between the secondary readings and the movies. It is highly recommended to read in advance Kishon's biographical sketch on the internet.

Readings

1. [§] Rozin, Orit, "Food, Identity, and Nation-Building in Israel's Formative Years," *Israel Studies* 21 (2006), 52-80.
2. Gertz, Nurith, *Myths in Israeli Culture : Captives of a Dream* (Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2000). – Excerpts
3. Tsur, Yaron, "Carnival fears: Moroccan immigrants and the ethnic problem in the young State of Israel", *Journal of Israeli History* 18,1 (1997) 73-103.

Additional recommended reading:

Shohat, Ella, *Israeli Cinema : East/West and the Politics of Representation* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989).

Session VIII:

1967-77: euphoria and satire, siege and nostalgia

* ASSIGNMENT B: Watch at least two of the following movies and listen to the two following music records and write a 3-4pp. synthetic review analyzing these artifacts using the secondary/theoretical literature. Are these cultural artifacts express what Bar-Tal and Antebi describe as "Siege Mentality" or, alternatively, nostalgia of the kind examined by Boym, or what Mordechai Bar-On describes as the Israelis "political psychology"?

Video recordings

a) *Matzor*, aka *Siege*, dir. Tofano, Gilberto (100 mins., 1969)
GREEN MEDIA-MTXT ZVC 8178

b) *Metzizim*, aka *Peeping Toms* dir. Zohar, Uri (90 mins., 1972)
GREEN MEDIA-MTXT ZVC 14195

c) *Le'an Ne'elam Daniel Wax?* aka *But Where Is Daniel Wax?*, dir. Heffner, Avram (94 mins, 1972)
GREEN MEDIA-MTXT ZVC 8171

d) *Blues Lahofesh Hagadol*, aka *Late Summer Blues*, dir. Schorr, Ronen (101 mins., 1987)
GREEN MEDIA-MTXT ZVC 8584 [*Available only in VHS format]

Sound recordings:

- a. Arik Einstein, *Poozy* (Phonokol Records, 1969)
- b. Arik Einstein, *Eretz Yisrael Hayeshana veHatova (Good Old Land of Israel)* (Phonokol Records, 1973)

Readings

1. [§] Boym, Svetlana, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), introduction.
2. [§] Bar-Tal, Daniel, and Antebi, Dikla, "Siege Mentality in Israel," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 16 (1992), 251-275.
OR:
3. [§] Bar-On, Mordechai, "Trends in the Political Psychology of Israeli Jews, 1967-86," *Journal of Palestinian Studies* 17 (1987), 21-36.
4. [§] Feige, Michael, "Peace Now and the Legitimation Crisis of 'Civil Militarism'," *Israel Studies* 3 (1998), 85-111.

Additional recommended reading:

Segev, Tom, *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007).

Swirski, Shlomo, "The Price of Occupation: The Cost of the Occupation to Israeli Society," *Palestine-Israel Journal* 12 (2005), 110-120. [available online: <http://www.pij.org/details.php?id=335>]

Hall-Cathala, David, *The Peace Movement in Israel, 1967-87* (Basingstoke: Macmillan in association with St Antony's College, Oxford, 1990).

Kolakowski, Leszek, *Main Currents of Marxism : Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution*. 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 1104-1124 (classic intro. to the question what is New Left in general).

Session IX:

Past Continuous [Zikhron Devarim]

Readings

1. [R] Shabtai, Yaakov, *Past Continuous*, tr. Dalya Bilyu (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1985).

Session X:

Conclusion: Indeed a White City?

Readings

1. [§] Rotbard, Sharon, *White City, Black City: Architecture and War in Tel Aviv and Jaffa* (Tel-Aviv: Babel (Manuscript - Uncorrected draft of the English translation), 2005 [English translation forthcoming 2010]).
2. Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered, "'Jerusalem Assassinated Rabin and Tel Aviv Commemorated Him': Rabin Memorials and the Discourse of National Identity in Israel," *City & Society* 10 (1998), 183-203.
3. [R] Ram, Uri, *The Globalization of Israel: Mcworld in Tel Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008). [-excerpts]
4. Gutwein, Daniel, "From Melting Pot to Multiculturalism: Or, the Privatization of Israeli Identity," in *Israeli Identity in Transition*, ed. Shapira, Anita (Westport Conn.: Praeger, 2004), 215-231.

Additional recommended reading:

Gonen, Amiram, *Between City and Suburb: Urban Residential Patterns and Processes in Israel* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1995), Chap. 11 ("Recent Ethnic Residential Patterns, pp.154-170)

Ezrahi, Yaron, "Globalization and Its Impact on Israel," in *Critical Issues in Israeli Society*, ed. Dowty, Alan (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004), 151-166.

Sharkansky, Ira, "A Critical Look at Israel's Economic and Social Gaps," in *Critical Issues in Israeli Society* (op. cit), 129-150.

Yacobi, Haim, ed. *Constructing a Sense of Place : Architecture and the Zionist Discourse* (Aldershot ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004).

For the turn from memory to space see in particular Confino, Alon, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *American Historical Review* 105 (1997), 1386-1403. AND Withers, Charles W. J., "Place and the 'Spatial Turn' in Geography and in History," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 70 (2009), 637-658.