



Israel Stories: Page, Stage, and Screen

Dr. Miryam Sivan

Course Number: 702.2152

Semester: Spring

Class Time: TBA

Class Location: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Location: 236, Student Building

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Stories both reflect and mold our world. And all cultures tell stories to themselves and to others because all people tell stories. Narrative is a fundamental human cognitive ability that enables us to process and make meaning from what we see and experience around us. Within its storylines and frames, we move from the concrete to the abstract, weaving together what is seen, what imagined, what feared, desired, what is difficult to comprehend. Whether meant to be read alone, read aloud, performed or watched on stage or screen, stories function as an entertaining and educative means of introducing people to the beliefs, practices, politics, and mores of a group of people. Stories are windows that allow us to peer into, to move into contact with a particular society.

In this course, we will read and watch contemporary stories by Israeli Jewish and Arab writers and film directors. This will allow a more nuanced and multifaceted understanding of Israel's complex history of identity, place, community, and landscape -- and its continual metamorphosis through time. We will read poems, stories, plays, and novels, we will watch films. All these stories will provide us with an opportunity to not only examine literary, aesthetic, and cinematic qualities, but as importantly, will help us gain insight into the contemporary cultural and political contexts in which these works have been created.

Course Requirements (Overview):

- Weekly Reading/Viewing Assignments – posted on Moodle website
- Weekly Writing Assignments on readings/viewings (Transcription Notes)
- Class Participation
- Weekly presentation of artist biographies
- Mid-Term Exam (take home essay questions: 1000 words)
- Term Paper -- BA Essay: 2500 words, no secondary sources – due June 15, 2017
- MA Referat: 3000 words + 2 secondary sources – due June 15, 2017
- BA Seminar research paper: 5000 words – due June 29, 2017
- MA Seminar research paper: 5000 words – due August 15, 2017

Final Grade:

1. Participation & Bios:	5%
2. Transcription Notes:	15%
3. Take-home Midterm:	30%
4. Final Essay:	50%



* For each text read, students will be required to hand in Transcription Notes. This means you are to choose and write out in their entirety three (3) sentences or paragraphs or verses which you consider especially significant to understanding the work being discussed that week in class. After each quote, free-write about what is important and/or significant about the passage. Do these select passages act as a key to unlocking the meaning of the text? Do they cause a personal reaction, emotionally, intellectually?

For movies, send me a paragraph long response along the same lines: personal/cultural/critical thoughts on piece.

These Transcription Notes will not be corrected (for grammar, spelling, etc.) nor will they be graded. But they must be handed in on the day we read the specific text and they constitute 15% of the final grade. Points will be deducted for Notes handed in late or not at all.

Please e-mail the Transcription Notes to me in the body of the mail – not as attachments -- before the start of every class.

*By the second to last day of class (the penultimate week of the semester, May 16, 2017), students are expected to have discussed their thesis statement with me for their final paper. It is mandatory that students receive my approval before they write the full length paper.

*Students who are planning to leave the country immediately after the end of classes are strongly encouraged to hand in their papers before they leave.

Please send me the final papers as attachments, and the file name should be your name. Please CC the International School Office: uhisfinalpapers@gmail.com

*My office hours are on Thursdays between 10-12 in Room 236 in the International School. I may also be available to meet with you at various other times when I am on campus. Speak to me and we'll arrange a place and time.



The Weekly Schedule changes slightly from year to year depending on the number of weeks in the semester and the readings may change according to discretion of lecturer.

Introduction to Course

Week One: General survey of the history of the Hebrew language and the implications of its renaissance as a vernacular language. An overview of themes related to the field of study: the relationship of language and identity; the ways the Bible dialogues with contemporary texts; the waves and schools of Hebrew literary writing in the past 140 years; where we are now; literature, drama, and film.

Read and discuss Yehuda Amichai poems (page)



Hi/stories

Week Two: Yehoshua Sobol, *The Night of the Twentieth* (stage)

In this play, the reader zooms in on a specific night in 1920 during the Third Wave of Aliyah. Some of the foundational ideas and myths, desires and fears of Zionism, then and now, are highlighted.

Week Three: Amos Oz, *Longing* (page)
Yaakov Shapir, "Departures" (page)

Week Four: A.B. Yehoshua, "Facing the Forests" (page)
Eitan Fox, *The Bubble* (screen)

Shoah Stories

Week Five: David Grossman, *Momik* (page)
Nava Semel, "Hat of Glass" (page)

Mizrahi Stories

Week Six: Shimon Ballas, "Iya" (page)
Ephraim Kishon, *The Policeman* (screen)

Women's Stories

Week Seven: Yona Wallach, poems (page)
Amalia Kahana-Carmon, "Nima Sassoon Writes Poems" (page)

MIDTERM HANDED OUT

PTSD Stories

Week Eight: Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir* (screen)

MIDTERM HANDED IN

Arab Stories

Week Nine: Sayed Kashua, *Dancing Arabs* (page)
Mahmud Darwish, poems (page)



Mizrahi Women's Stories

**Week Ten: Ronit Elkabatz & Shlomi Elkabatz, *To Take a Wife* (screen)
Gett (screen)**

Religious Stories

**Week Eleven: Giddi Dar, *Ushpizin* (screen)
Scandar Copti/Yaron Shani, *Ajami* (screen)**

War Stories

**Week Twelve: Yoram Kaniuk, "Vultures" (page)
Etger Keret, "Cocked and Locked" (page)
Taha Muhammed Ali, poems (page)**