



## **Parallel Narratives: Israel and Palestine Stories**

**Dr. Miryam Sivan**

**Course Number:** 702.2338

**Class Time:** TBD

**Class Location:** TBD

**Office Hours:** TBD

**Location:** Room 236, Student Building

**Email:** msivan33@gmail.com

### **Course Description:**

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 and make contact with a particular society.

In this course, we will read and watch contemporary stories by Israeli Jewish and Palestinian 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: 1500 words)



- **BA Essay:** 2000 words, no secondary sources  
**MA Essay:** 2500 words, 2 secondary sources  
**BA and MA Seminar research paper:** 5000-6000 words, research paper

### **Final Grade:**

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

### **Course Requirements Detailed:**

\***Attendance** is mandatory. The University policy allows for a 20% absentee rate. This breaks down to 3 classes this semester. Any absence over this number will result in a lower final grade and/or a student may be prohibited from handing in the final paper which most likely will result in a failing grade.

\***Lateness** is not acceptable and will be noted. Excessive lateness will have a negative effect on the final grade.

\*Students are expected to come to class prepared. This means they must read the material, as indicated on the accompanying syllabus, and participate in class discussions, and present artist bio on their assigned day.

\***Transcription Notes:** For 20 out of the 27 texts we read or movie we see, students will be required to hand in Transcription Notes. For texts, please 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, write 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 not handed in.

Please upload the Transcription Notes to the Assignment Folders (numbered 1-15) on Moodle.



**\*Final Essay:** By the penultimate week of the semester (**XXX**), students are expected to have discussed (in person or by email) their thesis statement with me for their final paper. It is mandatory that students receive my approval before they write the full-length paper.

**Final Paper Deadlines:**

**Regular BA and MA – TBD**

**BA and MA Seminar – TBD**

\*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 paper as a WORD file and as an attachment to my email. The file name should be your name.**



**Cell phones and electronic devices:** Please make sure your cell phone is turned off, or silenced – no buzz -- during class and put away in your bag -- out of sight (not upside down on your desk or lap). You may use a laptop to take class notes, but please do not surf the internet. If the temptation is too great, then be honest with yourself, and turn off the internet option on your computer. Or bring a paper notebook to class. Take notes the old-fashioned way.



**Academic Honesty:** All work submitted for this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented. The library homepage has a link "Citation Rules" to remind and guide you how to cite according to the MLA guidelines: <http://lib.haifa.ac.il/reference/citations/index.php/mla-heb>

In cases where academic dishonesty has been clearly established, a student will receive a zero for the paper AND fail the course.



## Course Outline and Reading List

**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. Discussion of Palestinian Arabic and the history of literary production in the 20<sup>th</sup> C and until today, including how Arabic and Hebrew have influenced one another in the last 100 years here and the differences and similarities in cultural products created by both communities.

Read and discuss poems one by Yehuda Amichai and one by Taha Muhammed Ali.

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

**Week Three:** **Amos Oz**, *Longing*  
**Yaakov Shaptai**, "Departures"

**Week Four:** **Ghassan Kanafani**, "Return to Haifa"  
**Samih Al-Qasim**, poems

**Week Five:** **A.B. Yehoshua**, "Facing the Forests"  
**Talya Lavie**, *Zero Motivation* (movie)

**Week Six:** **David Grossman**, *Momik*  
**Eli Cohen**, *Summer of Aviya* (movie)

**Week Seven:** **Nava Semel**, "Hat of Glass"  
**Arnon Goldfinger**, *The Flat* (movie)

**Week Eight:** **Shimon Ballas**, "Iya"  
**Amalia Kahana-Carmon**, "Nima Sassoon Writes Poems"

**Week Nine:** **Ronit Elkabatz & Shlomi Elkabatz**, *Gett* (movie)  
**Yona Wallach**, poems

**Week Ten: Maysaloun Hamo, *In Between* (movie)**  
**Zelda, poems**

**Week Eleven: Ari Folman, *Waltz with Bashir* (movie)**  
**Yoram Kaniuk, "The Vultures"**

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

**Week Twelve: Eran Kolirin, *The Band's Visit* (movie)**  
**Rafi Bukai, *Avant Popolo* (movie)**

**Week Thirteen: Scandar Copti/Yaron Shani, *Ajami* (screen)**  
**Rama Boorshtein, *Fill the Void* (screen)**

**Week Fourteen: Dalia Betolin-Sherman, "Circle of Friends"**  
**Dina Rubin, "Monologue of a Life Model"**

*Welcome and Condolences*, Dir. Leonid Prudovsky

<https://ezproxy.haifa.ac.il/login?url=https://he.movie-discovery.com/movie/welcome-and-our-condolences/309>