

Shelly Zer-Zion, Ph.D.  
The Department of Theatre  
Dr. Reuven Hecht school of the Arts  
[szzer-zion@univ.haifa.ac.il](mailto:szzer-zion@univ.haifa.ac.il)

## **Nationalism, Ethnicity and Gender in Israeli Performance and Films**

### **Description**

This course aims to explore outstanding Israeli theatre productions and films dated from the 1930's onwards that exhibit the richness and complexity of Israeli identities – on the stage and screen and in society. The theatrical and cinematic productions addressed by the course are all engaged in the reality in which they were created and actively participated in the cultural articulation of the tensions between national, ethnic, and gender identities in Israeli culture. The course will introduce key artists in the film and theatre scenes, and will discuss how their poetic choices shaped their works' cultural meaning and ideological implications. Special attention will be given to the medial dialogue between theatre performances and movies. The flow between stage and screen challenged the poetics of each medium and constructed actors and acting styles into cultural icons.

### **Selected Topics**

- The Hebrew theatre of Mandatory Palestine between Diaspora and Zionism.
- *He Walked through the Fields* by Moshe Shamir's: comparative analysis of performance and film
- Sieged femininity between war and distress: Gila Almagor in A.B. Yehoshua's *A Night in May* and Gilberto Tofano's *Siege*.
- Celebrating Ethnicity and submitting to the melting pot: "Burekas" movies and musicals
- The political theatre and film of the 1980: Yehoshua Sobol's *The Palestinian Girl* and Uri Barabash's *Behind the Bars*.
- Hanoch Levin and the formation of a theatrical myth
- The memory of the Holocaust as a simulacrum: Dudi Maayan's *Arbeit Macht Frei in toyland Europa* and Asher Telalim's *Don't Touch my Holocaust*.
- Gender, feminism, and politics in Mizrahi Theatre in Israel
- The Jewish/Israeli-Palestinian entanglement and spaces for artistic observation and intervention.

### **Selected Bibliography**

- Abramson, Glenda. *Drama and Ideology in Modern Israel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Abramson, Glenda. *Modern Hebrew Drama*. London: Widenfeld and Nicolson, 1979.

- Gershenson, Olga. *Gesher: Russian Theater in Israel – a Study of Cultural Colonization*. New York: Peter Lang, 2005.
- Gertz, Nurith. “The Early Israeli Cinema as Silencer of Memory”, *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 24.1 (2005): 67-80
- Hever, Hannan. “The ‘Other’ will arrive tomorrow”. *Contemporary Theater Review* 3/2 (1995): 91-106
- Levy, Shimon. *Here, There and Everywhere: Notions of Comparative Space in Canadian and Israeli Drama*. Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1996.
- Lipshitz, Yair. “Biblical Shakespeare: King Lear as Job on the Hebrew Stage.” *New Theatre Quarterly* 31/4 (2015): 359-371.
- Loshitzky, Yosefa. *Identity Politics on the Israeli Screen*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001.
- Lubin, Orli, “Body and Territory: Women in Israeli Cinema”, *Israel Studies* 4/1 (1999): 175-187.
- “Muhamad Barki Interviewed by Linda Ben-Zvi”. *Theater in Israel*, Linda Ben-Zvi ed. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994: 393-398.
- Naaman, Dorit. “Orientalism as Alterity in Israeli Cinema”. *Cinema Journal* 40/4 (2001): 36-54
- Rokem, Freddie. “Narratives of Armed Conflict and Terrorism in the Theatre: Tragedy and History in Hanoch Levin's Murder”. *Theatre Journal* 54/4 (2002): 555-573.
- Rokem, Freddie. *Performing history: theatrical representations of the past in contemporary theatre*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000.
- Rokem, Freddie. “Yehoshua Sobol – between History and the Arts: A study of Ghetto and Shooting Magda (The Palestinian Woman)”, *Theater in Israel*, Linda Ben-Zvi ed. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1994. 201-226.
- Rutlinger-Reiner, Reina. “My Aim Is to Get Higher and Higher’: Worship Onstage”. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 10 (2006): 10-28.
- Shem-Tov, Naphtali. *Acco Festival: Between Celebration and Cofrontation*. Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2016
- Shohat, Ella. *Israeli Cinema: East / West and the Politics of Representation*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.
- Urian, Dan. *The Arab in Israeli Drama and Theatre*. Trans. Naomi Paz. London and New York: Routledge, (1997), 2013.
- Urian, Dan. *The Judaic Nature of Israeli Theatre: A Search for Identity*. Trans. Naomi Paz. London and New York: Routledge, (2000), 2013.

- Yerushalmi, Dorit, "From a Transient to a Resident: The Acco Festival of Alternative Israeli Theatre, 2001–2004". *TDR: The Drama Review* 51/4 (2007): 47-67.
- Yerushalmi, Dorit. "The theatrical ammunition of the 1967 war". *Journal of Israeli History* 28/2 (2009): 195-212.
- Yosef, Raz. *Beyond Flesh: Queer Masculinities and Nationalism in Israeli Cinema*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 2004.
- Zer-Zion, Shelly and Kühne, Jan. "The German Archive of the Hebrew Habima: Bureaucracy and Identity." *Naharaim: Zeitschrift für deutsch - jüdische Literatur und Kulturgeschichte* 7/1-2 (2013): 239-259.
- Zer-Zion, Shelly. "Hard to Be a Jew in Mandatory Tel Aviv: Relocating the Eastern European Jewish Experience." *Jewish Social Studies* 24/1 (2018): 75-99.