

Shachar Pinsker
HJCS 405

The Holocaust in Israeli Culture

Course Description:

This is an advanced course in Hebrew literature and culture, which stresses reading comprehension of texts, as well as writing, discussion, and conversation skills. Thematically the course examines the ways in which Israeli literature and culture has dealt with the Holocaust in stories, poems, plays and films. The central topics are: the difficulties that characterize the representation of the Holocaust; the tension between private memory and collective memory, as well as between documentation and literary innovations, between the experience of survivors and "Second Generation"; the relationship between literary, theatrical and cinematic representation; the issue of gender in Holocaust literature. We will read poems, stories and plays and watch films dealing with these issues. Reading of theoretical background on testimony, trauma, commemoration and representation will accompany the discussion.

Time:

Location:

Office: 4155 Thayer

Office Hours:

Email: spinsker@umich.edu

Electronic Devices Policy: Electronic devices are not allowed to be used in the classroom.

This course adheres to University policies concerning the following topics:

- Plagiarism: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/plagNote.asp>
- Sexual harassment: <http://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-0>
- Discrimination and harassment: <http://spg.umich.edu/policy/201.89-1>
- Disabilities: <http://ssd.umich.edu>

Required Texts:

1. All readings, texts, films and images will be available on the Ctools site. Please print out the reading materials for every class and bring them with you.

Course Requirements and Grading:

- Active Participation: 20%
- Weekly Hebrew written responses to readings: 20%
- Oral Presentation (on texts and topic of your choice in consultation with me): 10%
- Midterm Paper: 20%
- Final Research Paper (on topic and texts from the course in consultation with me): 20%

Schedule of Classes

Week One

Introduction

How to write and represent the Holocaust

Yossl Birshtein, stories

Meir Wieseltir, poems

Dominick LaCapra, "Representing the Holocaust"

Sidra Ezrahi, from *By Words Alone: The Holocaust in Literature*

David Roskies, "What is Holocaust Literature"?

Week Two:

Hebrew writings during and in the aftermath of World War II

Natan Alterman, poems

Aba Kovner, poems

Israel encounters the Holocaust and the survivors after 1948

Experts from Moshe Shamir's play "He Who Walked in the Fields"

Yael S. Feldman, "Whose Story Is It, Anyways? Ideology and Psychology in the Representation of the Shoah in Israeli Literature"

Week Three:

Israel encounters the Holocaust and the survivors after 1948 II

Film "The Wood Gun"

Aharon Meged, "Yad Vashem"

Oz Almog, "The Sabra and the Holocaust"

Holocaust Memory in Israeli Monuments and art during the 1950s

Images of monuments and artwork

James Young, from *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning in Europe, Israel, and America*

Week Four:

The Writings and Voices of Holocaust Survivors in Israel of the 1950s

K. Tzetnik, from "Salamandra"

Omer Bartov, "Kitsch and Sadism in Ka-Tzetnik's Other Planet: Israeli Youth Imagine the Holocaust."

The Writings and Voices of Holocaust Survivors in Israel after the Eichmann Trail

Aharon Appelfeld, "Berta," "On the Way to Myself";

Shachar Pinsker, "The Language that was Lost on the Roads: Discovering Hebrew through Yiddish in Aharon Appelfeld's Fiction"

Week Five:

Representing the Holocaust in Israel after the Eichmann Trail

Dan Pagis, "Poems"

Yehoshua Sobol, "Ghetto"

Yoram Kaniuk, from "Adam, Son of Dog"

Film "Adam Resurrected,"

Gershon Shaked, "Facing the Nightmare: Israeli Literature on the Holocaust,"

Week Six

“Second Generation” Writing and changing Israeli Society

Savion Liebrecht, Stories;

Iris Milner, “A Testimony to ‘The War After’: Remembrance and its Discontent in Second Generation Literature”

David Grossman, from “See Under: Love”

Week Seven:

“Second Generation” in Popular Music, Film and Art

Ya’akov Gilad and Yehuda Poliker, Songs from the album “Ashes and Dust”;

Orna Ben Dor, Film: “Because of That War”

Oren Meyers, “The Soundtrack of Memory: Ashes and Dust and the commemoration of the Holocaust in Israeli popular culture”

Selection of Artwork by Israeli artists

Batya Brutin, “Two Ways: Representations of the Holocaust in Israeli Art”

Week Eight:

The Privatization of Holocaust Memory and Israeli Politics

Etgar Keret, Stories

Film, “Don’t Touch my Holocaust

Yosefa Loshitzky, “Hybrid Victims: Second-Generation Israelis Screen the Holocaust,”

Dalia Ofer, “The Past That Does Not Pass: Israelis and Holocaust Memory”

Conclusion and Students Papers’ presentations