ISRAEL: ANTIQUITY IN MODERNITY
JDST 4840/6840 & ANTH 4840

Dr. Sara Abosch
University of Memphis, Fall 2009
Class: Monday & Wednesday 12:40-2:05 Manning Hall 204
Office Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 11:15-12:30, and by appt., Mitchell Hall 422
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Phone: 919-621-0616

Course Description:
This course will explore some of the processes by which the ancient people and nation of Israel, long thought to be a ‘ghost people,’ were given new vitality in the modern world. Topics to be covered include the creation, use, and re-use of ‘myth’, the uses and abuses of history, and religion, as well as the shaping and reshaping of culture, memory, identity, politics, arts, and language. The centrality of the theme of exile and return in Jewish/Israeli existence will also be addressed. Particular attention will be given to seminal events/developments in the creation of modern Israeli identity such as Jerusalem’s changing position in the nation, Bar Kokhba’s Rebellion, the zealots’ stand at Masada, the creation of the ‘New Israeli Man’ (Sabra) and the Holocaust.

Course Objectives:
The aim of this course is to familiarize students with interdisciplinary perspectives on ‘Israel’ and its various meanings through readings, lectures, discussion, and film. No prior knowledge of Jewish or Israeli history is required. Emphasis will be placed upon improving students’ analytical and conceptual skills through discussion, analysis of primary sources, writing, and speaking on topics related to the subject matter. The course paper will allow students to critically explore a topic of interest or author’s perspective in greater depth.

Course Requirements:
We will have several in-class discussions. Where appropriate, original documents or website links will be provided for supplemental reading. Students are expected to have read the assigned materials before each class. Regular attendance and participation count toward the semester grade. The written requirements include weekly reading questions, a critical film review (5-7 pages), a critical review paper (6-8 pages), based on a book or topic of your choosing (subject to my approval), and a final exam. Guidelines for the review papers will be given out in class. The film review will be based on a film or films you choose from the Spielberg Jewish Film Archive (see below for URL).

The final grade will be calculated as follows: weekly questions (10%), critical film review (20%), critical review paper (30%), final exam (30%), and class participation (10%). Late assignments will be penalized. You must hand in all written work to be assigned a grade for the course. Cheating and/or plagiarism will NOT be tolerated and will be grounds for failing the particular assignment and the course.

Attendance: Regular attendance and participation in class and reading discussions count toward the semester grade. More than 2 unexcused absences will affect your course grade. .As a general rule, make-up exams are not given. Students are responsible for any work missed.
**Grading Scale:**

The course grading scale is as follows: A+>98; A=98-94; A-=93-90; B+=89-88; B=87-84; B-=83-80; C+=79-78; C=77-74; C-=73-70; D+=69-68; D=67-64; F=63-0.

Assignments and lecture topics may be modified during the course of the semester as the instructor determines class interests and needs.

**Required Books:**


**Original documents & supplemental material:**

Additional material will sometimes be discussed in lecture. This material will be available online or provided by the instructor. A partial list of internet addresses of use for this course is:

- Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Documents: www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.html
- Israeli News in English: www.haaretz.com or www.jpost.com
- Middle East Media Research Institute, News in translation: memri.org
- Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive: www.spielbergfilmarchive.org.il/

**Class Schedule:**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 31</td>
<td>Initial impressions: Introductory remarks. Creation or re-creation of nation, culture, society, history, language, etc. Reflections on antiquity in modernity and the use of religion and myth. <strong>Class Exercise:</strong> Taking a history—How historical events and group membership shape our lives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2</td>
<td>Historical Jerusalem—Evidence; 19th C. Europe: Emancipation &amp; Its Discontents Cline, 1-36</td>
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<td>September 7</td>
<td><strong>No Class (Labor Day)</strong></td>
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<td>September 9</td>
<td>Exile: Real, Imagined, &amp; Re-imagined Cline, 36-67; Zerubavel, 3-36</td>
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<td>September 14</td>
<td>Herzl &amp; the Maccabees: Religion, Nationalism, Myth and Memory Cline, 68-95; Robert S. Wistrich, “Theodor Herzl: Zionist Icon, Myth-Maker and Social Utopian” in <em>The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory and Trauma</em>, eds. Wistrich and Ohana, selection via e-mail</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>Rebellion, Destruction, Diaspora &amp; Zionist Rebirth</td>
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September 21  
Cline, 96-135; Zerubavel, 48-59

Masada & Bar Kokhba: Re-imagined and Rehabilitated (Part I) 
Zerubavel, 96-113; 178-191

September 24  
Bar Kokhba & Masada (Part II): Creating Memories and Civil Religious Ritual 
Zerubavel, 60-76; 114-137

September 28  
**Class Cancelled (Yom Kippur)**

September 30  
Bar Kokhba: Hero or False Messiah? 
Zerubavel, 192-213; Cline 136-163

October 5  
Islam Ascendant and the Crusader Response 
Cline, 164-200

October 7  
From Saladin to the Ottomans—Jerusalem under Muslim Rule; Longing for Zion & National Revival: Modern or Age-Old Phenomenon 
Cline, 201-233; Arie Morganstern, “Dispersion and the Longing for Zion, 1240-1840” in *New Essays on Zionism*, eds. Hazony, Hazony, & Oren, selection via e-mail

October 12  
Onward & Upward to Zion: the Modern Zionists and the British Arrive 
Anita Shapira, “The First and Second Aliyah” in *Land and Power*, by A. Shapira, selection via e-mail; Cline, 235-266; Nurit Gertz, “From Jew to Hebrew: The ‘Zionist Narrative’ in the Israeli Cinema of the 1940s and 1950s” in *In Search of Identity: Jewish Aspects in Israeli Culture*, eds. D. Urian and E. Karsh, selection via e-mail

October 14  
Jewish Settlement: Patterns and Problems 
Troen, 1-41

Critical Film Review of a film chosen from the “virtual cinema” of the Spielberg Jewish Film Archive due today (see class handout)

October 19  
No Class (Fall Break)

October 21  
Troen, 42-62; 85-111

October 26  
Jerusalem: Contested City & Capital City 
Cline, 267-310

October 28  
Arabs & Jews: Parallel Lives?; Tel Aviv: Bourgeois or Workers’ City? 
Troen, 233-280

October 29  
**Class Fieldtrip: Ambassador Reda Mansour, Israeli Consul-General to the Southeastern U.S., 12:30pm, Hillel House, 3581 Midland Avenue**

November 2  
Sabra’tude: Of “New” Men & Mentality 
Oz Almog, “The Elect Son of the Chosen People” in *The Sabra: the Creation of the New Jew*, by O. Almog, selection via e-mail

November 4  
We have seen the ‘other’ and he is our brother…or is he? 
Almog, “Uri of Arabia,” selection via e-mail; Ze’ev Tzahor, “Ben-Gurion’s Mythopoetics” in *The Shaping of Israeli Identity*, selection via e-mail

November 9  
War and Antiquities 
Raz Kletter, “Archaeology and the 1948 War” in *Just Past? The Making of Israeli Archaeology* by R. Kletter, selection via e-mail

November 11  
Of Zion, Zionism & Religious Disunity
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>November 16</td>
<td>Religious Anti-Zionism—Messianism in God’s Time</td>
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<td>Ravitzsky, 1-39</td>
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<td>November 18</td>
<td>Religious Adherence &amp; Religious Diversity</td>
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<td>Ephraim Tabory, “The Israel Reform and Conservative Movements and the Market for Liberal Judaism” both in Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social Patterns, eds. U. Rebhun and C. Waxman, selection via e-mail;</td>
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<td>November 23</td>
<td>Holocaust: Memories, Guilt &amp; Responsibility</td>
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<td>Movie: Walk on Water (Part I); Judith Tydor Baumel, “‘In Everlasting Memory’: Individual and Communal Holocaust Commemoration in Israel”</td>
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<td>in The Shaping of Israeli Identity, selection via e-mail</td>
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<td>November 25</td>
<td>Movie: Walk on Water (Part II)</td>
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<td>November 30</td>
<td>Religious Zionism—Messianism in Modern Times</td>
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<td>Ravitzsky, 79-144</td>
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<td>December 2</td>
<td>The ‘Holy’ in the Holy Land: Haredi Views of Modern Israel</td>
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<td>Ravitzsky, 145-180</td>
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<td>December 7</td>
<td>Ultra-Orthodoxy &amp; the Modern State</td>
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<td>December 9</td>
<td>Course Wrap-up. Review for Final Exam: Bring any questions you may have.</td>
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<td>General essay topics will be given out in class.</td>
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<td>Critical Review Papers due at beginning of class.</td>
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<td>December 16</td>
<td>Final Exam, 8 am-10 am</td>
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