

# Israeli Fiction in Translation

## Jewish Studies 367/ Lit Trans 367

University of Wisconsin- Madison

Fall 2016

Lecture: TuTh 11:00-12:15, Ingraham 120

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Office Hours: TuTh 2:15-3:15 or by appointment

**Course Overview:** Through analysis of eight leading Israeli authors' literary works this course explores major themes pertaining to Israeli society's contemporary character. Surveyed topics include Zionism and post-Zionism; Globalization; Israel as a Jewish and democratic state; the Israeli military's influence on civilian life; terrorism and its effects on national life.

### Learning Goals:

- 1) Students will achieve grounding in Israeli literature through encounter with eight of its leading authors.
- 2) Students will explore important themes that will deepen their understanding of contemporary Israel.
- 3) Students will learn strategies for analyzing literary texts intended to improve their critical thinking.
- 4) Students will learn how to more effectively communicate their analytical insights in writing.

**Attendance, Tardiness, and Preparedness Policy:** Students are expected to attend **every** class and to arrive **on time**. Attendance will be taken. Excessive unexcused absences will lower student grades (four absences or more). In addition, students should **always** bring paper or electronic copies of assigned readings to class for reference and be prepared to discuss them. Such preparedness will be an important component of the participation grade. *Laptops will only be permitted during class discussion of literary texts.*

### Breakdown of Grades (approximate):

*Reading Quizzes: 20%* - While lecture will provide students with possible interpretations and approaches to the assigned literary texts, it is not intended as a substitute for direct encounter with them. Consequently proficiency quizzes will be administered throughout the semester to test student familiarity with assigned readings. Nonetheless such encounter is not always easy. Consequently students will be provided with reading questions or short response prompts to help them

start thinking and preparing for class discussion. To test student preparation reading quizzes, based on the supplied reading questions and an additional deep thought question, will be administered throughout the semester. Quiz administration will take place during class and absent students will not be given the opportunity to retake the quizzes without providing prior notification of tardiness or absence to the professor. The *lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped* (including zeroes for absences or tardiness). *Students may also attend two Center for Jewish Studies (CJS) lectures and write two double-spaced, one-page summary/response papers whose grades will substitute for 2 quiz scores.* Approved lectures will be listed on the CJS website, <<http://jewishstudies.wisc.edu/events/>>. Approximately 19 quizzes and short response papers will be administered/ assigned over the course of the semester.

*Distinctive Feature Papers (500-1000 Words): 2 X 20%* - The aim of these assignments is to give students practice making observations and claims about ideas and arguments embedded in literary texts. These papers allow students to gain analytical traction with a text through construction of focused analyses based on recurring and distinctive textual features. Repeated details, passages, textual features, or moments that the author invites the reader to compare and contrast constitute examples of textual features suitable for such analysis. Every text is laced with numerous echoes and they may include repeated images, phrases, plot points, references, scene structures, or stylistic features. After identifying a distinctive recurrent feature, students will be asked to explore how this recurrent feature serves to illuminate a topic, concept, or literary or aesthetic quality that the text seems to be exploring or commenting upon. Further written and oral instructions, as well as examples of effective assignments, will be provided over the course of the semester. If you have difficulty preparing these assignments, it is recommended that you meet with the instructor or contact **The Writing Center** (<http://writing.wisc.edu/Individual/index.html>) to set up a meeting. *Papers should be proofread prior to submission.* **Distinctive Feature Paper drafts will be due on November 1<sup>st</sup> & December 1<sup>st</sup>. Deadline for submission of final versions will November 15<sup>th</sup> & December 15<sup>th</sup>. Students should submit their initial drafts and the Reverse Outline Peer Review of the draft together with the final version of the paper.** Every twenty-four hour delay in submission will reduce the grade 5%.

*Reverse Outline Peer Review Assignment: 2 X 5%* -Reverse outlines are outlines composed after a writing assignment has been completed, and they constitute a useful tool offering students useful feedback for revising and improving papers. We will be employing them as part of a peer review process intended to assist students in improving their writing prior to assignment of a formal grade. Each student will receive a paper of another student and will be asked to create a reverse outline of this paper to assist its author in revision of his/her paper. Composition of a reverse outline will involve the following steps: 1) Number each paragraph in the paper 2) On a separate sheet of paper list the main point (s) of each paragraph 3) Note whether each paragraph is properly focused or whether there

are multiple main ideas competing for control of the paragraph. 4) Note whether each paragraph has a main idea. 5) Note any extraneous ideas in each paragraph that should be deleted or moved to a more appropriate paragraph. 6) Identify the textual repetition upon which the paper is based and note whether it proves sufficient to advance the asserted thesis. 7) Note whether the paper's organization aligns with the provisional thesis advanced by the author, and, if there is a lack of alignment, suggest ways to either revise the thesis or the paper's organization. **Reverse Outline Peer Review Assignments will be due on November 8<sup>th</sup> and December 8<sup>th</sup>.**

*Final: 20%* - **The final exam will be held from 2:45PM to 4:25PM on December 20<sup>th</sup>.** It will have two parts. Students will be asked to identify and discuss the significance of passages drawn from the literary works read over the course of the semester in the first section. Students will be asked to write two short essays comparing and contrasting works read over the course of the semester in the second part.

*Attendance and Participation: 10%* - Class attendance proves integral to student success. Attendance will be taken in lecture. Excessive unexcused absences will lower student grades (four absences or more). Active engagement in class constitutes an important part of the learning process and students will be rewarded for asking meaningful questions and making significant contributions to lecture through their comments. Students will be provided with questions to guide their reading and should, at a minimum, be prepared to respond to these questions if called upon. Listening in lecture only constitutes a starting point to student involvement. **Finally, students observed surfing the web, texting, or talking with fellow students will have their participation grade lowered.**

#### *Grading Scale:*

A= 93-100%  
AB= 88-92%  
B= 83-87%  
BC= 78-82%  
C= 70-77%  
D= 60-69%  
F= 0-59%

#### **Disability Policy:**

Students registered with disabilities at McBurney Disability Resource Center can receive accommodations with presentation of proper documentation. Disabled students should meet with the instructor during office hours or by appointment to arrange these accommodations. **Such meetings should be arranged as early in the semester as possible.**

#### **Code of Academic Integrity:**

All students are expected to conduct their academic work according to university standards. Students should be aware of what constitutes academic integrity and do

their best to act in accordance with it. To learn more on what constitutes academic integrity see < <http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>>.

**Food, Drink, Cell Phone, and Laptop Policy:**

Students are asked to refrain from eating and drinking during class. Cell phones should be turned off before class and *laptops will only be permitted during class discussion of literary texts.*

**Required Texts:**

- Castel-Bloom, Orly. Human Parts. Trans. Dalya Bilu. Jaffrey, New Hampshire: David R. Godine, 2003.
- Kashua, Sayed. Second Person Singular. Trans. Mitch Ginsburg. New York: Grove Press, 2013.
- Oz, Amos. Between Friends. Trans. Sondra Silverston. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2013.
- Yehoshua, A. B. A Woman In Jerusalem. New York: Mariner Books, 2007.

**Reserves and Electronic Reserves:**

Copies of the required texts will be placed on reserve as College Library. The remaining readings will be placed on Learn@UW.

**Class Schedule:**

Introduction (September 6 – September 8)

**September 6** General Introduction

**September 8** 1 Etgar Keret's Contemporary Israel

Reading: Etgar Keret, Suddenly a Knock on the Door:Stories, 3-9, 117-124.

*Quiz 1*

Zionism and Post-Zionism (September 13- September 27)

**September 13** Zionism and Its Discontents in "Uncle Peretz Takes Off" by Yaakov Shabtai

Reading: Yaakov Shabtai, "Uncle Peretz Takes Off," in Six Israeli Novellas, Edited by Gershon Shaked, 122-154.

*Quiz 2*

**September 15** Zionism's Founders and Sons in "The Way of the Wind" by Amos Oz

Reading: Amos Oz, Where the Jackals Howl, and other stories, 39-60.

*Quiz 3*

**September 20** Post-Zionism and Reinterpretation of the Past in Amos Oz's *Between Friends*

Reading: Oz, Between Friends, 1-80.

*Quiz 4*

**September 22** Post-Zionism and Reinterpretation of the Past in Amos Oz's *Between Friends* (Continued)

Reading: Oz, Between Friends, 81-124.

*Quiz 5*

**September 27** Post-Zionism and Reinterpretation of the Past in Amos Oz's *Between Friends* (Conclusions)

Reading: Oz, Between Friends, 125-192.

*Quiz 6*

The Israeli Military Experience (September 29- October 13)

**September 29** Compromised Morality and the Experience of War in S. Yizhar "The Prisoner"

Reading: Robert Alter, Ed. Modern Hebrew Literature, 291-312.

*Quiz 7*

**October 4** CLASS CANCELLED ROSH HASHANAH

**October 6** Israel's Creation and its Aftermath in Natan Shacham's "They Were Seven"

Reading: Isaac Halevy-Levin, Ed. Israel Argosy (6), 171-188.

*Quiz 8*

**October 11** The Military and Peacetime Trauma in Gadi Taub's "You Can Never Tell"

Reading: Zisi Stavi, Ed. 50 Stories From Israel, 699-721.

*Quiz 9*

**October 13** The Military Experience and Israeli Cinema

Screening: Waltz with Bashir. Dir. Ari Folman. 2008. Sony Pictures, 2009.

*Short Response Paper in lieu of Quiz*

**October 18** CLASS CANCELLED SUKKOT

Globalization and the Terrorist Age (October 20- November 17)

**October 20** Orly Castel-Bloom's Human Parts – An Effort to Make Sense During the Second Intifada

Reading: Orly Castel-Bloom, Human Parts, 1-122.

*Quiz 10*

**October 25** CLASS CANCELLED SHMINI ATZERET

**October 27** Human Parts – An Effort to Make Sense During the Second Intifada (Continued)

Reading: Orly Castel-Bloom, Human Parts, 123-249.

*Quiz 11*

**November 1** Human Parts – An Effort to Make Sense During the Second Intifada (Concluded)

**November 1** **DISTINCTIVE FEATURE PAPER #1 DRAFT DUE**

**November 3** Globalization, Terrorism, and the Rediscovery of Self in A. B. Yehoshua's A Woman in Jerusalem

Reading: A. B. Yehoshua, A Woman in Jerusalem, 1-115.

*Quiz 12*

**November 8** Globalization, Terrorism, and the Rediscovery of Self in A Woman in Jerusalem (Continued)

**November 8** **REVERSE OUTLINE PEER REVIEW ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE**

**November 10** Globalization, Terrorism, and the Rediscovery of Self in A Woman in Jerusalem (Continued)

Reading: A. B. Yehoshua, A Woman in Jerusalem, 116-237.

*Quiz 13*

**November 15** Globalization, Terrorism, and the Rediscovery of Self in A Woman in Jerusalem (Concluded)

**November 15** **DISTINCTIVE FEATURE PAPER #1 FINAL VERSION DUE**

Israelis, Palestinians and Israeli Palestinians (November 17-December 10)

**November 17** The Palestinian as Metaphor in A. B. Yehoshua's "Facing the Forests"

Reading: Robert Alter, Ed. Modern Hebrew Literature, 357-392.

*Quiz 15*

**November 22** The Palestinian as Metaphor in "Facing the Forests" (Continued)

**November 24** – NO CLASS THANKSGIVING

**November 29** More Than Metaphors: Flesh and Blood Palestinian Israelis in Sayed Kashua's Second Person Plural

Reading: Sayed Kashua, Second Person Plural, 1-120.

*Quiz 16*

**December 1** More Than Metaphors: Flesh and Blood Palestinian Israelis in Second Person Plural (Continued)

**December 1 DISTINCTIVE FEATURE PAPER #2 DRAFT DUE**

**December 6** More Than Metaphors: Flesh and Blood Palestinian Israelis in Second Person Plural (Continued)

Reading: Sayed Kashua, Second Person Plural, 121-240.

*Quiz 17*

**December 8** More Than Metaphors: Flesh and Blood Palestinian Israelis in Second Person Plural (Continued)

**December 8 REVERSE OUTLINE PEER REVIEW ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE**

**December 13** More Than Metaphors: Flesh and Blood Palestinian Israelis in Second Person Plural (Conclusions)

Reading: Sayed Kashua, Second Person Plural, 241-346.

*Quiz 18*

Conclusions (December 15)

**December 15** Conclusions; Final Review

**December 15 DISTINCTIVE FEATURE PAPER #2 FINAL VERSION DUE**

**December 20 FINAL 2:45-4:45PM**