Collective Memory and Cultural Myths in Contemporary Israel

48877 / SPSI201

Yemima Cohen-Aharoni

July 9 – August 5, 2015
Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 13:30-16:30
45 Academic Hours, 3 Academic Credits

Course Description

This class examines key issues in the society in Israel by inspecting the way in which the past is remembered and commemorated. Collective memory, the ways in which a society uses and talks about the past, always reflects the needs and developments of that society in the present. In Israel, collective memory plays a leading role in the construction of national and group identities. This class will include an in-depth introduction to theories in collective memory as well as examination of the ways in which these theories are exemplified in the Israeli case study. What is the role of memory of the Holocaust today? Way is Yitzhak Rabin so strongly commemorated in Tel Aviv, and so forgotten in Jerusalem? What are the differences and similarities between Israeli and Palestinian commemoration of the 1948 war? How did historical-religious sites in Jerusalem develop into tourist attractions? And what is the role of archaeology in the shaping of ideology? We will address these issues throughout walking tours in Jerusalem, where we will visit the living side of memory and experience the way past is taking shape in the present today.
Course Goals:

a) Introduce the students to basic theories in that field of collective memory.
b) Explore the different dynamics and changes that affect the collective memory in Israel.
c) Visit monuments and museums in Jerusalem and analyze those using theories of collective memory.
d) Discuss the role of collective memory in the shaping of the Israeli identity and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Course Requirements

- **Class attendance**
  
  o It is mandatory for all students to attend classes and participate in class activities. Failure to attend classes will result in a student being denied the right to partake of the final assignment and receive a final grade in a course. Students who have a justified reason to miss class (illness, mourning, etc.) must communicate with their instructors and the Department of Summer Courses and Special Programs, and complete the material that they have missed.
  
  o Students who have missed class due to illness must obtain a signed and stamped sick note from a treating physician and submit it to the Dept. of Summer Courses and Special Programs immediately following their return to class. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.
  
  o The Department reserves the right to refer the issue to an Academic Committee. In some cases, the Academic Committee may decide, in light of the requirements of the course, that it is not possible to make up the missing course work.

- **Class presentation**

  o Students will be required to give a short presentation on a subject of their choice. The presentation will include a short introduction to one case study of collective memory or commemoration and the theoretical questions it is connected to. Students are encouraged to present case studies from their home country or personal experience.
One final essay (approximately 7000 words)

- In the final essay students are requested to analyze a case study of collective memory according to one of the theories presented in the class. Students may discuss one aspect of collective memory in Israel or any other case study they are familiar with. The essay must include theoretical introduction and analysis of specific case study. Towards the end of the course I will devote two hours to explain the structure of the final essay and to give specific instructions to how it should be written.

Earning Graduate Credits for this course:

- Graduate students are expected to inform the Rothberg International School – rissummer@savion.huji.ac.il - of their interest in earning graduate credit for their summer course(s).
- Graduate students must complete a 15-page, double-spaced, seminar paper with bibliography for the course in place of the course's standard final assessment (in most cases, an exam). The topic and bibliography for these papers must be chosen in conjunction and agreement with each course instructor. Students must approach course instructors by the end of the first week of the course and arrange a time to meet and define their paper topic and bibliography.
- The seminar paper must make use of at least five scholarly sources (books or academic articles), in addition to internet resources.
- The graduate seminar papers must be submitted within 2 months following course completion in order for the graduate student to fulfill requirements for this course.

Grading Rubrics

- Participation: 10%
- Class presentation: 20%
- Final Essay: 70%
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Day</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Wed. 22/7</td>
<td><strong>Rivaling narratives: 1948 war in the Palestinian collective memory.</strong> The memory of the 1948 war is an important element of both the Israeli and Palestinian society. <strong>Tour of Lifta with Zochrot Organization.</strong></td>
<td>Yifat Gutman. Pp. 61-74.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mon. 27/7</td>
<td><strong>Remembering and forgetting.</strong></td>
<td>Forty, Adrian. Pp. 1-18</td>
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| 9    | Thu 30/7 | **The memory of the holocaust and the Israeli state. (longe field trips).** Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum is the official state commemoration for the Jews murdered during the Second World War. Yad Vashem reveals the importance of the Holocaust to the construction of the Israeli identity. **Tour to Yad Vashem Museum** | Feldman, J. Pp. 30-55.  
Zerubavel, Yael. Introduction.  
Recommended reading:  
| 10   | Mon 3/8  | **Collective memory and the nation:** **Mount Herzl and the Ammunition Hill memorial site.** From the early years of the Israeli state the memory the fallen soldiers was an important element of the Israeli identity. In Israel the past was harnessed to promote national identity and individual commitment to the collective goal. **Mount Herzl - the Mount of Remembrance.  
Recommended reading:  
Azaryahu, Maoz. Pp. 57-77.  
Sivan, Emmanuel. Pp. 177-204. |
| 11   | Tue. 4/8 | **From memory to commemoration.**                                     | Wagner-Pacifici, Robin and Barry Schwartz. 1991. The Vietnam |
Bibliographic list:

Olick, Jeffrey A. and Joyce Robbins. 1998. “Social Memory Studies: From „Collective Memory” to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices.” 
*Annual Review of Sociology* 98(24): 105-140.


Laleh Khalili, “Places of Memory and Mourning: Palestinian Commemoration in the Refugee Camps of Lebanon” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East - Volume 25, Number 1, 2005*, pp. 30-45.


Sivan, Emmanuel. 1999. “Private Pain and Public Remembrance in Israel.” In War

