Women in Israel

Esther Carmel-Hakim

Course Number:  
Semester: Spring 2018  
Class Time: 12:00 – 15:00  
Class Location: 273 Student Building

Office Hours: 15:00 - 16:00 by appointment  
Location:  
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Course Description

For several decades historians have been adding female experiences and female accomplishments to our picture of the past. In this course we shall survey this new historical narrative and test the “myth of equality between men and women” in pre-state Israel and in the State of Israel. We will study the lives and status of women in the light of the reality of women’s lives and different types of settlements in the following periods: the end of the Ottoman Empire, the British Mandate and the State of Israel. Students will read, view and discuss a wide variety of primary and secondary texts. We will explore ways in which women acted creatively to affect social change, and the projects and organizations they formed to combat gender prejudice and discrimination. We will one field trips: to Haifa meet with ultra orthodox women, then meet with Arab women and then visit kibbutz Kibbutz Mishmar Haemek, and meet with Kibbutz women.

Course requirements

- Weekly Reading Assignments and Transcription Notes 15%
- Field Trip Report 10%
- Mid-term Paper (3-4-pages): 25%
- Final Exam 50%
- 25% Take home essay questions 25% in class final

Weekly Reading Assignments and Transcription Notes- 15%

For each text read, students will be required to hand in Transcription Notes. This means you are to choose and write out in their entirety two (2) sentences or paragraphs or verses which you consider especially significant to understanding the work being discussed that week in class. After each quote, free-write about what is important and/or significant about the passage. Do these select passages act as a key to unlocking the meaning of the text? Do they cause a personal reaction, emotionally, intellectually?
These Transcription Notes will not be corrected (for grammar, spelling, etc.) nor will they be graded. But they must be handed in on the day we read the specific text and they constitute 15% of the final grade. Points will be deducted for Notes handed in late or not at all. Please e-mail the Transcription Notes to me in the body of the mail – not as attachments -- before the start of every class.

Field Trip Report - 10%
The report should integrate the information we hear on the sites we visit and the people we meet during the field trip, as well as the material we discussed in class with your reflection on it. It should be between two and three pages.

Mid-term Paper (3-4-pages) - 25%
The short paper will be written about a woman or women's organization or projects initiated by women in the pre state and the state period. The paper should be no longer than four pages in length, including endnotes. For this short paper, each student should read a memoir and/or biography and short articles of one woman or women's organization which influenced the history of Zionism, or the evolution of the pre state Israel. You are expected to use secondary source materials, such as scholarly articles from journals and periodicals, to supplement the biographies and/or memoirs you read.

Course Outline and Reading List

Week 1: Introduction: Historical Background for the “Yishuv” 19.2.18
- Maor Anat. Women in Israel
- Movie: The Glass Ceiling

Week 2: Women in the Hebrew Language, in Jewish Culture, and in Israeli Life 26.2.18
- Elior, Rachel, Blessed art Thou, Lord our God, who has not made me a woman, Men and Women: Gender Judaism and Democracy ed. R. Elior, Jerusalem: Van Leer and Urim Publications, 2004: 81-96

Week 3: Women in Zionist Utopias, and Women in the First Wave of Immigration (Aliyah), 1882 –1904 5.3.18


Week 4: Agricultural training for women: an international Jewish women’s project  12.3.18

Week 5: Orthodox Jewish Women  19.3.18
• Yuval-Davis Nira, Bearers of the Collective Women and Religious Legislations in Israel, in Fuchs Esther ed. Israeli Women's Studies, 2005, pp. 121-132
• El-Or Tamar Paradoxes and Social Boundries Ultra-Orthodox Jewish Women and their World in Fuchs Esther ed. Israeli Women's Studies, 2005, pp.133 – 149
• Movie: Praying in Her Own Voice

Week 6: Female and Palestinian in Israel  26.3.18
• Herzog Hanna. Homefront and Battlefront. The Status of Jewish and Palestinian Women in Fuchs Esther ed. Israeli Women's Studies, 2005, pp.208-228
• Hassan, Manar. Growing Up Female and Palestinian in Israel. Swirsky and Safir 66-74.
• Movie: Son of Sulam

Week: 7 Motherhood and Revolution: Women in the Kibbutz  9.4.18

• Amia Lieblich, Women and the Changing Israeli Kibbutz A Preliminary Three Stage Theory, Journal of Israeli History, 2002, pp.63 - 84

• Movie: The Kibbutz

Field Trip: Haifa, Zalafe, Kibbutz Mishmar Haemek  15.4.18
Week 8: Women in the Defense Forces: Hashomer, Hagana, ATS, Palmach, IDF  16.4.18
- Movie: Jasmine's Battalion.

Week 9: Women and Politics 23.4.18

Week 10: Welfare Services Initiative of Jewish Women Organizations 30.4.18

Week 11: Zionist women leaders who immigrated to Israel 7.5.18
- Rebecca Sieff In *The Name of Women, Beit Hatephutzot*, 1990.
- Movie: Rama Lindheim.

Week 12: Sexual Harassment Law in Israel 14.5.18
Week 13: Women and Art in Shulamit Bar Dori Bracha Avigad Batia Lishansky 21.5.18

Week 14 Final Test 27.5.18

There might be changes in the classes and bibliography with notice in advance.