

Department of Sociology & Anthropology, BGU

Course: Anthropology of Museums: Power, Memory and Identity

Elective M.A. Seminar, 4 points

Lecturer: Dr. Jackie Feldman

Taught 2009-10

Description: In the Western world, museums have served as important cultural institutions which mold taste, and shape social hierarchies, national identities and images of the other and ourselves. But they are also conceived of as dusty old assemblages of junk. By reading articles and visiting museums, we will examine visual display, political processes, the policies of curators, and the reactions of (various) communities to the representations in museums. We will thus enrich our knowledge of the survival and development of museums in an increasingly mobile world, and under changing regimes of the senses.

Among the questions to be examined are:

How did the museum come about and what sectors and interests in society does it serve?

How do curators, objects, architecture, texts, guides and visitors interact in the performative arena of the museum?

How are artifacts selected and for what purposes?

What are the media used by museums to tell a story?

What do museums or exhibits on art, archaeology, science, history, ethnography, the military, and commemorations of wars or catastrophes have in common?

How do museums define the borders of in- and out-groups?

How do museums in the Western world reflect power relations and hierarchies of knowledge and taste?

How do changes in power and entitlement in postcolonial society result in new demands on the museum and how do museums react to them?

What interactions take place between museums and other forms of communication, education, collective memory or entertainment?

What is the relation between museums and the academic or financial world?

Why do people visit museums and how do their [preconceptions shape their experience?

What changes are museums undergoing in the age of the expanding internet and the emphasis on multi-sensory experience?

Course requirements:

1. Mandatory participation in classes and in the excursion, reading, and occasional presentation of reading assignments (10%).
2. Presentation of a report on the excursion and a report on one optional article in class (10%).
3. Presentation of 4-5 page seminar paper outline.
4. Presentation of seminar work in progress.
5. 20-25 page seminar paper on a museum or exhibit in Israel (60%).

Bibliography:

- Richard Handler- "An Anthropological Definition of the Museum and its Purpose", *Museum Anthropology* 17(1): 33-36.
- Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997, pp. 1-27.
- Richard Handler, "On the Valuing of Museum Objects", *Museum Anthropology*, 16(1): 21-28.
- Handler and Gable, *Williamsburg*, 50-77.
- Pierre Nora, "Between History and Memory – The Lieux de Memoire", in *Zemanim* 45 (Summer 1993), pp. 2-19 (Hebrew).
- Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1995, Ch1, 2.
- Yehudit Inbar, "On the History and Character of Museums in Israel", in *Museums in Israel*, Yehudit Inbar and Eli Schiller, eds., Ministry of Education and Culture/ Ariel, Jerusalem, 199, pp. 27-37.
- Tamar Katriel, "Let's All Be Halutzim: Objects and Stories in a Museum of Settlement History", in *Key Words*, Haifa university, 1999, Chapter 12.
- Katz, Shaul. 1985. "The Israeli Teacher-Guide; The Emergence and Perpetuation of a Role", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12: 49-72.
- Fine, Elizabeth C. and Jean Haskell Speer. 1985. "Tour Guide Performances as Sight Sacralization", *Annals of Tourism Research*, 12: 73-95.
- Kohl, Philip L. 1998. "Nationalism and Archaeology: On the Construction of Nations and the Reconstructions of the Remote Past", *Annual Review of Anthropology* 27, pp. 223-246.
- Elon, Amos. 1997. "Archaeology as Israeli National Religion", in Silberman, Neil David and David Small, eds., *The Archaeology of Israel: Constructing the Past, Interpreting the Present*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 93-100.
- Bauman, Joel. 2004. "Tourism, the Ideology of Design, and the Nationalized Past in Zipori/Sepphoris, an Israeli National Park", in *Marketing Heritage: Archaeology and the Consumption of the Past*, Yorke Rowan and Uzi Baram, eds, Alta Mira Press.
- Abu el-Haj, Nadia. 1998. "Translating Truths: Nationalism, the Practice of Archaeology and the Remaking of Past and Present in Contemporary Jerusalem", *American Ethnologist* 25(2), pp. 166-188.

- Michael Feige, ed., Introduction, *An Ax to Dig With*, Ben Gurion University Press, Beersheba, 2007, pp. 4-13.
- Dean MacCannell, 1989 (1976). *The Tourist; A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, Schocken: New York, Chapter 2.
- Spencer Crew and James K. Sims, "Locating Authenticity: Fragments of a Dialogue", in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1991, pp. 159-175.
- David Lowenthal, "Identity, Heritage and History", *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton University: Princeton, New Jersey, 1994, pp. 41-57.
- Wang, Ning. 2000. *Tourism and Modernity: A Sociological Analysis*, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Chapter 3.
- Dean MacCannell, 1989 (1976). *The Tourist; A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, Schocken: New York, Chapter 2.
- Spencer Crew and James K. Sims, "Locating Authenticity: Fragments of a Dialogue", in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, *Exhibiting Cultures*, Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, 1991, pp. 159-175.
- David Lowenthal, "Identity, Heritage and History", *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton University: Princeton, New Jersey, 1994, pp. 41-57.
- Wang, Ning. 2000. *Tourism and Modernity: A Sociological Analysis*, Elsevier, Amsterdam, Chapter 3.
-
- Sophia Vackimes, "Of Science in Museums", *Museum Anthropology* 26(1): 3-10.
- Saul Friedlander with Adam Seligman, "Memory of the Shoah in Israel: Symbols, Rituals and Ideological Polarization", in James E. Young, ed., *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*, Prestel: Munich and New York, 1994, pp. 149-158.
- Omer Bartov, "Chambers of Horror: Holocaust Museums in Israel and the United States", *Israel Studies* Volume 2, Number 2, Fall 1997, pp. 66-87.
- Cole, Tim. 2004, "Nativization and Nationalization: A Comparative Landscape Study of Holocaust Museums in Israel, the US and the UK", *Journal of Israeli History* 23/1: 130-145.
- James Young, *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memory and Meaning*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993.

Geoffrey M. White, "Introduction: Public History and National Narrative", *Museum Anthropology* 21(1):3-7;

Geoffrey M. White, "Museum/Memorial/ Shrine: National Narrative in National Spaces", *Museum Anthropology* 21(1): 8-27. Ebron, Paulla A. 2002. "Tourists as Pilgrims" in *Performing Africa*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 189-212.

Anna Laura Jones, "Exploding Canons: The Anthropology of Museums", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 22 (1993): 201-220.

Deborah Golden, "The Museum of the Jewish Diaspora Tells a Story", *The Tourist Image: Myths and Myth Making in Tourism*, Tom Selwyn, ed., John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 1996, pp. 223-250.

Shelly Shenhav-Keller, "Speaking Past – Speaking Future – The Hermeneutic Discourse on the Past in the Diaspora Museum". *Soziologia Israelit* 6(2): 1-15.

Handler and Gable, *Williamsburg*, 125-169.

Vera L. Zolberg, "Museums as Contested Sites of Remembrance: The Enola Gay Affair", in Sharon MacDonald and Gordon Fyfe, *Theorizing Museums*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1995, pp. 67-82.

Clifford, "Museums as Contact Zones" in *Routes Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp.187-219.
