

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
The Ben-Gurion Institute for the Study of Israel & Zionism

The Israeli Right

Dr. Maya Mark

This course delves into the Israeli right's worldview, tracing its ideological and political evolution from the state's establishment through to the pivotal political shift in 1977. We will explore the right's positions, struggles, and development within Israel, with a particular emphasis on its stance regarding democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Through a detailed analysis of the Israeli right's responses to key historical events, the course will shed light on the foundational principles that have shaped its outlook.

Key topics include the debate over adopting a constitution for Israel, responses to emergencies, dynamics of majority-minority relations, and episodes of political violence. This comprehensive examination aims to trace the shifts and developments in the Israeli right's worldview over the years, focusing on the ongoing tension between its adherence to democratic and liberal values versus its commitment to national and Jewish values.

By analyzing the Israeli right's civic perspective - a central theme of this course - participants will gain a deeper understanding of the significant historical, ideological, and political transformations that have unfolded in Israel since its inception.

Course Requirements

- Attendance and contribution to the discussion (10%)
- Summary Analysis (30%)

Each student will present in class a topic of their choice. The presentation must be based on prior reading – you may choose an item from the course reading list, or any academic article or book related to the class topic.

The assignment aims to summarize your chosen topic for your classmates and demonstrate that you have carefully read and considered the readings with a critical eye. The class presentations are an opportunity to share candid impressions, questions, and thoughts that you find interesting, puzzling, or contradictory, as well as an opportunity to engage with the class, provide your perspective, present additional information through research, reframe the discussion in some new way and push your thinking further.

- Take-home assignment (60%)

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Reading list

Introduction

Yehi'am Weitz, "The Road to the Upheaval: A Capsule History of the Herut Movement, 1948-1977", *Israel Studies* 10.3 (2005): 54-68

The Revisionist Movement

Gruweis-Kovalsky, Ofira. "The Revisionist Movement and the British Mandate for Palestine." *Israel Studies* 26.3 (2021): 179-195

The Argument over a Constitution for Israel

Maya Mark, "The road not taken: Menachem Begin's position on the forming of a democratic regime for Israel" *Israel Studies Review*, 36(2) 107-123 (2021)

Nir Kedar, "Ben-Gurion's Opposition To a Written Constitution". *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, 12(1), 1-16 (2013)

The reparation Agreement Between Israel and Germany and the struggle against it

Tovy, J., "Talking after Auschwitz? The public-political struggle in Israel over the negotiation of a reparations agreement with West Germany, 1951-1952. *Holocaust Studies*, 23(4), 483-504 (2017)

The Military Government & other struggles

Maya Mark, "Son of Arabia, son of Nazareth, and my son': Herut's stand on the imposition of the military government, 1948-1966", *Middle Eastern Studies* 58: 668 - 680 (2022)

The 1967 war and its aftermath

Amir Goldstein, Menachem Begin and Gahal during the Waiting Period, *Israel Affairs* 23, 4 (2017), 669-689

Arye Naor, "'A Simple Historical Truth': Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip in Menachem Begin's ideology" *Israel Affairs* 21.3 (2015): 462-481.

The 1977 Upheaval

Amir Goldstein, Half-heartedly: Menachem Begin and The Establishment of the Likud party, *Middle Eastern Studies*, 53,6 (2017), 915 - 933.