Course: Russia in Israel: People, Culture and Ideology

Level and status: 4 credit points B.A. research seminar

Prior requirements: course on academic writing; Introduction to Qualitative methods

Lecturer: Dr. Julia Lerner

Taught: 2009/10, 2010/11

Course description:

The seminar explores the manifestations of Russianness at the Israeli cultural space. These manifestations are embedded in the spheres of art and literature, ideology, politics and everyday life in Israel. The "Russian field" is also found at the cultural dynamics among the Russian immigrants in Israel and in the public discourse about them. We will explore the imported cultural toolkit of the Russian speaking immigrants, its origins as well as its change in context of Israel and post-Soviet condition. The students will choose one of the Russian fields for their own empirical research in the frame of the seminar duties.

Course requirements: students are required to attend the class meetings, prepare and present the requested reading materials, submit their research proposal at the mid of the course, conduct the empirical research and submit the seminar research paper (up to 25 pages).

Grade: participation (10 % of grade), research proposal and presentation at class (20 %), seminar paper (70% of grade)

Course schedule and reading list:

Subject 1: Israel as a Little Russia

Ilana Gomel, The Pilgrim Soul: Being a Russian in Israel. Tel-Aviv: Zmura-Bitan, 2006, (translated into Hebrew)
Baruch Kimmerling, 'Russian Speaking Immigrants', in his Immigrants, Settlers, Natives: The Israeli Society between Cultural Pluralism and Cultural War, Tel-Aviv: Am Oved, 2004, (in Hebrew)
Subject 2: Issues of Religion, Atheism and Spirituality


Leshem, E. (1993). “Jewishness, Jewish way of life and attitudes towards the religion and the state amongst immigrants from the Former Soviet Union” (pp. 36-53) Yearbook "Religion and State". Ha-Kibutz Ha-Meuhad, Tel-Aviv (Hebrew).


Subject 2: Perceptions of Nation/ality, Race and Citizenship


Subject 3: Attitude to Authority and Resistance


Yurchak, Alexei. 2006. Everything was Forever, Until It was No More. Princeton: Prinece顿 University Press. Chapter 2 "Hegemony of Form: Stalin's Univanny Paradigm shift", pp. 36-76 Chapter 7 "Dead Irony"


Subject 4: People of Empire, Inhabitants of Ghetto


Nudelman, Rafael. 1998. "Between the empire and the ghetto". Panim 4: 10-16. (Hebrew)


Subject 5: Masculinity, Femininity, Gender and Sexuality


Subject 6: "Doctors, Musicians and Engineers": Intelligentsia, Education and Identity


