

Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Ben Gurion University

Course: Travelling Ideas: Study of Knowledge and Cultural Change

Level and status: 2-4 (1 or 2 semesters) credit points, B.A. elective course for 2-3 year students

Prior requirements: None

Lecturer: Dr. Julia Lerner

Taught: 2007/8; 2008/9; 2009/10,

Course description:

The course departs from the perspectives of the anthropology of knowledge and sociology of culture in order to observe historic and contemporary moments in which ideological, religious, scientific, ethnic and national ideas play a central role in cultural transformation. These ideas travel between historical periods, continents and cultures. Along the way, they become domesticated, undergo translation to the local reality and concepts, and sometimes even become empty of their original contents. Simultaneously these ideas change their new environment. We will look for empirical examples of such wandering ideas in Europe and the US, in Russia and in Israel, in the past and in the present. This year, after mapping and learning various theoretical models for explanation of the movement of ideas, we will focus especially on ideas and categories such as “the self”, “the East”, “Race”, and “Civilization”.

Course requirements: students are required to attend 80 % of class meetings, read the requested materials, submit one written assignment, to take mid-course quiz and the final home written exam combining materials of lectures and readings.

Grade: written assignment or presentation at class (20 % of grade), mid-course quiz (20 %), final paper (60% of grade)

Course schedule and reading list:

Only part of the list is mandatory (9-12 items for semester, according to progress in class). During the classes and in the course website it will be explicitly indicated which items are mandatory.

Subject 1: Introduction of historical context and basic analytical models:
“evolution, progress and degeneration”, “diffusion”, “spreading”, “exclusion”, “memetics”, “mimicry”, “adoption”. “translation”

- Boas, Franz. 1924. "Evolution or Diffusion?" *American Anthropologist* 26: 340-344.
Rogers, Everett M. 1983. *Diffusion of Innovations*. New York: The Free Press.
Chapter 1: Elements of Diffusion.
Ross, D. 2001. "Progress: History of Concept". Pp. 12173-12177 in *IESBS*, ed. By N.J. Smelser and P.B. Baltes. Pergamon.

- Dawkins, R. 1976. *The Selfish Gene*. NY: Oxford University Press (selected chapters) (in Hebrew)
- Blackmore, S. 1999. *The Meme Machine*. Oxford University Press. (selected pages) (in Hebrew)
- Said, Eduard. 1983. "Traveling Theory", pp. 226-247 in his *The World, The Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Kahana, Reuven. 1975. "Strategies in the adoption of new values in modernization processes". *MEGAMOT (Tendencies)*, 22, 51-64 (in Hebrew).
- Balkin, J.M. 1998. *Cultural Software: a Theory of Ideology*. New Haven: Yale University Press. "Memetic Evolution".
- Robertson, Ronald (1995): "Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity", in Mike Featherstone et al (eds.): *Global Modernities*, London, Sage. Pp. 25-44.
- Westney, D. Eleanor. 1987. *Imitation and Innovation: The transfer of Western Organizational Patterns to Meiji Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Czarniawska, Barbara and Sevon, Guie (ed.). 1996. *Translating Organizational Change*. Berlin:Walter de Gruyter.
- Cox, Rupert (ed.). 2007. *The Culture of Copying in Japan: Critical and Historical Perspectives*. London: Routledge.

Subject 2: "Etiquette" – Civilization as/in spreading, institutions of civilizational process

- Elgazi, G. 2000. "The rules of the body and social organization: the civilization process of Norbert Elias. *ZMANIM (Times): Quarterly for History*, 70: 60-83 (in Hebrew) (electronic copy in the website). (in Hebrew)
- Elias, Norbert. 2000. "Civilization processes". *ZMANIM (Times)*, 70, 84-89 (in Hebrew) (electronic copy in the website). (in Hebrew)
- Kelly, Catriona. 2001. *Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture and Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Volkov, V. 2000. "The Concept of 'Kulturnost': Notes on the Stalinist civilizing process". Pp. 210-230 in Fitzpatrick, Sh. (ed) 2000. *Stalinism: New Directions*. London: Routledge.

Subject 3: Orientalism, racism, eugenics: cultural ideologies in local translation

- Eyal, Gil. 2005. *Disenchantment of the East*. Tel Aviv: Van Leer Institute and HaKibbutz HaMeuhad. "Introduction", pages 9-21 ****optional**** chapter 5, "the information and the interpreters" (the book is reserved at the library). (in Hebrew)
- Shumski, Demitri. 2005. "Orientalism and Islam-phobia amongst the Russian speaking intelligence in Israel". *Theory and Criticism*, 26, 89-119 (in Hebrew) (copy in the website).
- Hirsh, Dafna. 2008. "Pouring of new blood, healing action and its strengthening": Zionist doctors and mixed marriages". Pp. 160-185 in *Racism in Israel*, eds. Yehuda Shenhav and Yossi Yona. Publishers: Van Lir Institute in Jerusalem and the Unified Kibbutz (in Hebrew).

Subject 4: "The self" and the "soul" between ideologies and cultures

- Mauss, Marcel. 1987 (1938) A category of the human mind: the notion of person; the notion of self. In: *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, and History*. Ed. By Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins and Steven Lukes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Charles. 1987. The Person. In: *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*. Ed. By Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins and Steven Lukes. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ronald, Alan. 1989. *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Towards a Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapter Three: "Psychoanalysis in India and Japan".
- Rolnik, A. 2004. "Oedipus in Palestine: the immigration of psychoanalysis from central Europe to Israel". *Times*, 88: 44-62 (in Hebrew).
- Halfin, Yigal. 2002. "The new man according to Bolshevism: sexology and psychiatry in Soviet Russia". *Times*, 78, pp, 94-106 (in Hebrew).
- Illouz, Eva. 2008. *Saving the Modern Soul: Therapy, Emotions and the Culture of Self-Help*. University of California Press.
- Stearns, Peter. N. 1994. *American Cool Constructing a twenties-century emotional style*. New York: New York University Press.
- Hochschild, Arlie R. 1983. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. University of California Press.
- Bellah, Robert (and others). 1985. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: Harper & Row. Chapter 3: "Finding Oneself".
- Wierzbicka, Anna. 1989. "Soul and Mind: Linguistic Evidence for Ethnopsychology and Cultural History". *American Anthropologist* 91:41-58.
- Kharkhordin, Oleg. 1995. "The Soviet Individual: Genealogy of a Dissimulating Animal". In *Global Modernities*, ed. By M. Featherstone et al. London: Sage.
- Stearns, Peter. N. 1994. *American Cool Constructing a twenties-century emotional style*. New York: New York University Press.
- Katriel, Tamar. 1999. *Key words: Culture and communication patterns in Israel*. Tel Aviv: Haifa University and Zmura Beitan (pp. 206-225, "straightforward style", and pp. 148-167 "the metaphor of consolidation" and also "psycho-talk") (in Hebrew)