



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

Sde Boker Campus

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**Office hours:** Beer Sheva, Main Campus Room 620, Building 72 – Monday 12:00 – 13:00; Sde Boker Campus – Tuesday 12:30-14:00

**Seminar Description:**

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The course will examine the changing perceptions of Israel from 1947 up to date, as seen from the perspective of various Jewish Diasporas. Focusing on the transition between pre- and post-statehood, the students will explore the complex interconnection between the Diaspora concept of Jewish sovereignty and the changing status of Diaspora Jews within their non-Jewish surroundings. While examining these issues through the lens of American Jewry, as the largest Diaspora community, the course will discuss additional Jewish Diasporas, mainly those in Europe and South America.

**Course Objectives:**

The aim of this course is to acquaint the students with the variety of perspectives of Israel and its role within Diaspora Jewish discourse.

**Method of Teaching:**

The seminar is based on the introduction of a variety of primary and secondary texts dealing with Diaspora perspective of Israel and Jewish sovereignty. Throughout the course the students will each be assigned two entries from the reading list, and to present them in class. At the end of the course, students will be required to submit a written paper on Diaspora perception of Israel and of its role within current Jewish discourse. In the Final Paper the students will have to demonstrate their ability to acutely define a relevant research question, to survey the available primary and secondary materials, and to discuss the main questions and issues necessary for the analysis of these texts.

## **Course Requirements**

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Compulsory Attendance: **YES**

Pre-requisites: **NONE**

## **Structure of Final Course Grad**

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1. Two Class-Presentations	30% (15% each)
2. Final Paper	<u>70%</u>
	100%

## **Course Schedule Layout:**

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### **Week 1: March 13, 2012**

**Weekly subject title:** Israel's Foundation as an Ideological Crisis within Diaspora Zionism

Reading: Mordecai Kaplan, *A New Zionism*, New York: The Herzl Press, 1954.

### **Weeks 2-3: March 20, 2012; March 27, 2012**

**Weekly subject title:** Diaspora-Homeland Relations – A Theoretical Framework

Reading:

- a. Khachig Toloyan, "Beyond the Homeland: From Exilic Nationalism to Diasporic Transnationalism", *The Call of the Homeland, Diaspora Nationalism Past and Present* (Allon Gal, Athena S. Leoussi and Anthony D. Smith, eds.) Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010, pp. 27-46.
- b. William Safran, ""The Jewish Diaspora in a Comparative and Theoretical Perspective", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005).
- c. Gabriel Sheffer, "Is the Jewish Diaspora Unique, Reflection on the Diaspora's Current Situation", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005)
- d. Uzi Rabhun, Contemporary Jewish Diaspora in Global Context: Human Development Correlates of Population Trends, *Israel Studies*, Vol 10, no. 1 (Spring 2005)

### **Week 4: April 3, 2012**

**Weekly subject title:** The Role of Israel within American Zionist Discourse.

Reading:

- a. a. Ofer Shiff, *Abba Hillel Silver The Defeated Zionist*, Syracuse University Press (to be published)

### **Weeks 5-6:: April 17, 2012**

**Weekly subject title:** Failed Attempts to Decenter National Life

Readings: Noam Pianko, *Zionism, the Roads not Taken*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010

### **Weeks 7-8: April 24, 2012; May 1, 2012**

**Weekly subject title:** Engagement or Interference – Israel Becomes an Ideological and Political Challenge

Reading:

- a. Stevene Bayme, "A Response to Yossi Beilin's The Death of the American Uncle", *Israel Studies* Vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring 2000)
- b. Chaim I. Waxman, Toward an Inclusive Definition of Jewishness: Remarks on Yossi Beilin's The Death of the American Uncle, *Israel Studies* Vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring 2000)
- c. Peter Beinart, "The Failure of the American Jewish Establishment", *The New York Review of Books*, June 10, 2010.

### **Week 9: May 6, 2012**

#### **Weekly subject title:** Post 1948 European Jewry

Readings:

- a. Sergio Della Pergola, "Jews in Europe: Demographic Trends, Contexts and Outlooks", *A Road to Nowhere? Jewish Experienced in Unifying Europe* (Julius H. Schoeps and Olaf Glockner eds), Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2010, pp. 3-34
- b. Gabriel Sheffer, "The European Jewish Diaspora: The Third Pillar of World Jewry?" *A Road to Nowhere? Jewish Experienced in Unifying Europe*, pp. 35-44

### **Week 10: May 15, 2012**

#### **Weekly subject title:** Anglo Jewry and the State of Israel

Readings: Natan Aridan, "Anglo Jewry and the State of Israel: defining the Relationship, 1948-1956", *Israel Studies*, Volume 10, no. 1, (Spring, 2005).

### **Week 11: May 22, 2012**

#### **Weekly subject title:** Latin America Jewry

Readings:

- a. Sergio Della Pergola, "Jewish Autonomy and Dependency: Latin America in Global Perspective", *Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism – Latin America in the Jewish World* (Judith Bokser Liwerant, Eliezer Ben –Refael, Yossi Gorny, and Ruanan Rein, eds), Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2008, pp. 47-80
- b. Judith Bokser Liwerant, "Latin American Jewish Identities: Past and Present Challenges. The Mexican Case in a Comparative Perspective", *Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism – Latin America in the Jewish World*, pp. 81-105

### **Weeks 12-13: May 29, 2012; June 5, 2012**

#### **Weekly subject title:** Images and Vision of Israel

Reading:

- a. David Ellenson, "Envisioning Israel in the Liturgies of North American Liberal Judaism", *Envisioning Israel, The Changing Ideal and Images of North American Jews* (Allon Gel, ed.), Jerusalem and Detroit : The Magnes Press and Wayne State University Press, 1996, pp. 117-148
- b. Barry Chazan, "Through a Glass Darkly: Israel in the Mirror of American Jewish Education", *Beyond Survival and Philanthropy* (Allon Gal and Alfred Gottschalk, eds), Cincinnati: Hebrew Union Press, 2000, pp. 123-130
- c. Efraim Sicher, "The Image of Israel and Postcolonial Discourse in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century: A View from Britain", *Israel Studies*, Vol. 16, no. 1 (Spring 2011)

### **Week 14: June 12, 2012**

#### **Weekly subject title:** Homeland and Diaspora Jewish Experiences

Reading: Charles S. Liebman and Steven M. Cohen, *Two Worlds of Judaism – The Israeli and American Experiences*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990.