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

The Struggle for Israeli Identity

This is a tentative syllabus!
Changes to the syllabus might be done in accordance with the class's make-up and previous knowledge

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The object of this course is to provide a basic understanding of modern Israeli politics, culture and identity through lectures, discussions and projects. Among the topics to be explored are: Israel's political system and society; ethnic relations in Israel; the Arab minorities in the Jewish state; is there a unique Israeli culture?; Israeli Occupation and settlement projects; the struggle for Israel's identity. A broad array of genres and modes of expression - not only academic writings, but also literature, popular music, film, documentaries and art - will be incorporated into our discussion.

CLASS SCHEDULE
I. Theoretical and historical considerations
1. Opening remarks: Israel today – the complexity of contemporary Israeli society. Individual and collective identity formation: theoretical underpinnings. Palestine and the Palestinians before Zionism; the Zionist Meta-narrative: basic characteristics of the Zionist meta-narrative – the *New Jew* and the return to the old-new homeland; the Zionist movement; Zionist colonization; the British Mandate period (1917-1948)

2. World War Two – the Holocaust; 1948 -- the establishment of the State of Israel and the Palestinian "catastrophe" (*al Nakba*); A brief survey of Israel's wars, 1948-present; Israel's formative years, 1948-1967 [I]: Civil Religion in Israel and the formation of Israel's core identity, the "*Sabra*"

3. Israel's formative years, 1948-1967 [II], political, social and geographical foundations: Israel's political and municipal systems; the three branches of government; the educational systems; the military; the economy; types of urban and agricultural settlements: kibbutz, moshav, development towns, major cities, the Arab towns and villages; post 1948 Jewish immigration to Israel
[depending on the make-up of the class, this topic can be shortened. In that case, we will quickly move to the next sessions' topic]

II. The great divide

4. The watershed of 1973-1982 and the shattering of the old civil religion and the *New Jew* myth; questioning the accepted meta-narrative - the Postzionist intellectual revolution;
Israel as a Jewish immigrant society: Jewish-ethnic relations – the Mizrahim [I]

III. Israel's history and identity revisited

5. The Mizrahim [II]: the Mizrahim of today; The "Russian" sub-culture and community in Israel; the role of the Holocaust in Israeli identity;

6. 1948 revisited: the debate over the 1948 war, the Palestinian refugees; the presence of the *Nakba* in contemporary Israel

7. The Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel – history, identity; "The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel"

8. Is Israel a colonialist state?: Israel's Occupation and settlements' projects; The messianic component in Israeli identity and politics; *Gush Emunim*; the Ultra-Orthodox (*Haredi*) communities in Israel; Is Israel a Jewish state?

9. Different views of Israel's political regime: Jewish and Democratic, Ethnic Democracy, Ethnocracy. Israeli economy, globalization in Israel; technology and environment in Israel today;

10. The Israeli Diaspora; Israel's social protest movement of summer 2011 ("Occupy Tel Aviv");

11. Culture: Israeli popular music; Israeli film; Israeli literature – their expression of the state's identity and their influence on it

12. Concluding session: presentations of final papers

READINGS

Readings for session #1:
Recommended:
1. *Israel* in Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel
2. *Palestine* in Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_Palestine
3. Alan Dowty, *Israel/Palestine* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2005), pp. 1-68

Readings for session #2:
4. Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 4-10; 84-122
5. Neil Caplan, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict :Contested Histories* (Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 17-38
Recommended:
6. Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 9-34

Readings for session #3:

7. Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Israel's Political Structure,":
   http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFAArchive/2000_2009/2001/6/Political+Structure+and+Elections.htm
8. Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy*, 15:2 (April 2004), 96-109
9. "Miracles and Mirages: A strong economy built on weak fundamentals," *The Economist* (April 3rd 2008)

Readings for session #4:
10. Amnon Rubinstein, "No More Sabras", in his: *From Herzl to Rabin: the Changing Image of Zionism* (New York & London: Holmes & Meier, 2000), pp. 159-182
11. Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debate: Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture* (New York & London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 89-126

Recommended:
12. Ella Shohat, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Jewish Victims", *Social Text*, No. 19/20 (Autumn 1988), pp. 1-35
13. Eli Amir, *Scapegoat* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1987), pp. 9-25, 39-52, 208-218
14. Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), pp. 105-139

Readings for session #5:
15. Ofir Abu, "Citizenship, Identity, and Ethnic Mobilization in Israel: the Mizrahi Democratic Rainbow – Between Universalism and Particularism," Guy Ben-Porat and Bryan S. Turner (eds.), *The Contradictions of Israeli Citizenship: Land, Religion and State* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 111-134
16. David Grossman, *See Under Love* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1989), pp. 51-86
Recommended:
17. Oren Yiftachel and Erez Tzfadia, "Between Periphery and 'Third Space': Identity of Mizrahim in Israel's Development Towns", Adriana Kemp, et al (eds.), *Israelis in Conflict: Hegemonies, Identities and Challenges* (Brighton and Portland: Sussex, 2004), pp. 203-235
18. Theodore H. Friedgut, "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union: Their Influence and Identity", in: Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2004), pp. 185-214.
19. Gulie Ne'eman Arad, "The Shoah as Israel's Political Trope", in: Dash Moore, Deborah and S. Ilan Troen (eds.), *Divergent Jewish Cultures: Israel and America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 192-216.

Readings for session #6:
20. Benny Morris, *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians* (Oxford: Clarendon Press: New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 1-27.
21. Yitzhak Rabin, *The Rabin Memoirs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 383-384 (Appendix A)
22. Ghassan Kanafani, "Returning to Haifa", in his: *Palestine's Children: Returning to Haifa & Other Stories* (boulder, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 149-188
Recommended:

23. Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), pp. 105-139

24. Yoav Gelber, *Palestine 1948: War, Escape and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (Brighton & Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2001), pp. 1-15, 298-302

25. Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. xii-xxii (maps), 473-492, 588-601

Readings for session #7:

26. Azmi Bishara, "Arab Citizens of Palestine: Little to Celebrate", *Tikkun* (Jul/Aug 1998), pp. 14-15

27. Ilan Peleg, Dov Waxman, *Israel's Palestinians: The Conflict Within* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), Chapter 1

28. David Grossman, *Sleeping on a Wire: Conversations with Palestinians in Israel* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993), pp. 80-100

29. The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel:
   http://www.adalah.org/newsletter/eng/dec06/tasawor-mostaqbali.pdf

Recommended:

30. Anton Shammas, *Arabesques* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), pp. 226-263

31. As'ad Ghanem, *The Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel, 1948-2000: A Political Study* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), pp. 11-27, 36-38, 123-135

32. Samir Srouji, "Nazareth: Intersecting Narratives of Modern Architectural Histories", *Third Text*, 20/3-4 (2006), pp. 355-371.

33. Nadim Rouhana and As'ad Ghanem, "The Democratization of a Traditional Minority in an Ethnic Democracy: The Palestinians in Israel", in: Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 223-246

34. Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), pp. 103-123

Readings for session #8:

35. Israeli Settlements: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_settlement

36. Charles Liebman and Yaacov Yadgar, "Israeli Identity: The Jewish Component", in: Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2004), pp. 163-183

37. Neve Gordon, *Israel's Occupation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), pp. 1-22

Recommended:

38. Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society and the Military* (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2001), pp. 112-129

39. Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach", in: Michael N. Barnett (ed.), *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 227-242

40. Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled, *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 137-158.

Readings for session #9:

41. Sammy Smooha, "Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel: A Deeply Divided Society", in: Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2004), pp. 31-69

42. Oren Yiftachel, " 'Ethnocracy': The Politics of Judaizing Israel/Palestine", *Constellations*, Vol. 6:3 (1999), pp. 364-390

43. Ruth Gavison, "Jewish and Democratic? A Rejoinder to the 'Ethnic Democracy' Debate", *Israel Studies* 4.1 (1999) 44-72

44. Uri Ram, *The Globalization of Israel: McWorld in Tel Aviv, Jihad in Jerusalem* (New York & London: Routledge, 2008), 179-205

Readings for session #10:

45. Steven J. Gold, *The Israeli Diaspora* (Routledge, 2002), 1-20

46. Helena Lindholm Schulz, *The Palestinian Diaspora: Formation of Identities and Politics of Homeland* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2003), 44-84

Readings for session #11:

47. Motti Regev and Edwin Seroussi, *Popular Music and National Culture in Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1-14, 236-248

48. David Grossman, *To the End of the Land*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010), excerpts from the book.

Readings for session #12:
Recommended:

49. Roger Petersen, *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 17-39

50. Stephen Van Evera, "Memory and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Time for New Narratives," *Draft Paper* (August 2003)

Additional Recommended Bibliography

1. Books
    1. Neil Caplan, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict :Contested Histories* (Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2010)
    2. Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *The Transformation of Israeli Society: An Essay in Interpretation* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1985)
    3. Steven J. Gold, *The Israeli Diaspora* (Routledge, 2002)
    4. Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *Trouble in Utopia: The Overburdened Polity of Israel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989)
    5. Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006)
    6. Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press,1997)
    7. Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society and the Military* (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 2001)
    8. Ilan Pappe (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999)
    9. Derek J. Penslar, *Israel in History: the Jewish State in Comparative Perspective* (London & New York: Routledge, 2007)

10. Amnon Rubinstein and Alexander Yakobson, *Israel and the family of nations : the Jewish nation-state and human rights* (London ; New York : Routledge, 2009)
11. Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled, *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002)
12. Anita Shapira (ed.), *Israeli Identity in Transition* (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2004)
13. Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Boston & New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010)
14. S. Ilan Troen and Noah Lucas (eds.), *Israel: The First Decade of Independence* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995)
15. On the Israeli diaspora see *Shofar* 16.2 (1998) - a special issue called "Israel and America"

2. Scholarly Journals
    1. Israel Studies
    2. Journal of Palestine Studies
    3. Journal of Israeli History
    4. International Journal for Middle Eastern Studies
    5. Israel Affairs
    6. Azure

3. Websites
    i. Israeli newspapers and news sites: http://www.world-newspapers.com/israel.html
    ii. Palestinian newspapers and news sites: http://www.world-newspapers.com/palestine.html
    iii. Haaretz – www.haaretz.com
    iv. Al Jazeera - http://english.aljazeera.net/
    v. The Jerusalem Post -- http://www.jpost.com
    vi. Ma'ariv -- www.nrg.co.il/online/HP_0.html
    vii. Al Arabiya - http://www.alarabiya.net/english/
    viii. Ynet -- www.ynetnews.com/home/0,7340,L-3083,00.html
    ix. Adalah -- www.adalah.org/eng/index.php
    x. The Debka Files -- http://www.debka.com/
    xi. Hebrew University's Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive -- http://w3.castup.net/spielberg/ (The Archive has over 10,000 titles, with over 400 films currently available for viewing online in full for free)
    xii. Zochrot (Remembering) [*Zochrot ["Remembering"] is a group of Israeli citizens working to raise awareness of the Nakba, the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948*]: http://www.zochrot.org/index.php?lang=english
    xiii. Palestine remembered: http://www.palestineremembered.com/
    xiv. Israel Defense Forces - http://dover.idf.il/IDF/English/
    xv. Hamas - http://www.palestine-info.co.uk/en/
    xvi. WikiProject Palestine: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Palestine
    xvii. WikiProject Israel: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Israel
    xviii. CIA World Factbook -- The West Bank and the Gaza Strip: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/we.html#; https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gz.html

     xix.   CIA World Factbook – Israel:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/is.html

Learning Goals:
By the end of the course, you should be able to:
- Define and describe major events in the history of modern Israel
- Define and describe Israel's political regime (political parties, municipal and regional administration, etc.)
- Define, describe and appraise the major analytical terms used in our course
- Integrate course data into a coherent narrative(s) of current Israeli identity(ies)

Grading and Assignments:
- Attendance is mandatory
- Readings' assignments – [30%]
- Class participation and classroom presentations [30%]
- Final paper [45%]

Cell phones and laptops policy:
Cell phones: Use of cell phones in class (for talking, texting, reading/writing email, or any other purpose) is prohibited. Kindly keep your cell phones turned off and stowed away in class. However, if you need to leave your cell phone on because of an ongoing emergency situation, please speak to me at the start of class.
Laptops: Kindly keep your laptop turned off and stowed away in class. Using laptop computers in class is distracting to me and other students, in part because the temptation to take "just a second" to check email or web updates is hard to resist.

Possible topics for classroom presentations
- Israel's political system
- Israel's educational systems
- Israeli military
- Globalization and Israel
- Israel's municipal and regional systems
- The postzionism debate
- The Israeli economy
- Israel's settlement projects and colonialism
- How Jewish is the Jewish State?
- The Holocaust in Israeli identity
- The Israeli Diaspora
- Jewish-ethnic groups in Israel
- The Ultra-Orthodox sub-culture in Israel
- Civil society in Israel [NGOs, etc.]
- The Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel
- 'Ethnic democracy' versus 'ethnocracy'
- 'Jewish and democratic' versus 'a state for all its citizens'
- Israeli popular music as a reflection of the country's identity
- Israeli literature and Israeli identity
- Israel and the Jewish-Diaspora relations
- The development of Israel's culinary as an expression of its identity

- The Israeli-Palestinian ethnic and national conflict in comparative perspective:
    Cyprus
    Sri Lanka
    Former Yugoslavia
    South Africa
    Northern Ireland
    French Algeria
    Former Soviet Union
    The Balkans
    Africa