The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Multiple Voices in Israeli Society - 1775

Last update 28-01-2015

HU Credits: *2*

Degree/Cycle: *1st degree (Bachelor) and 2nd degree (Master)*

Responsible Department: *Israel Studies: Society and Politics*

Academic year: *0*

Semester: *2nd Semester*

Teaching Languages: *English*

Campus: *Mt. Scopus*

Course/Module Coordinator: *Dr. Michal Frenkel*

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Coordinator Office Hours: *Tuesday 3-4 PM*

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Michal Frenkel

<u>*Course/Module description:*</u>
This course will discuss Israeli society from a variety of sociological perspectives. Since it is impossible to understand the current state of Israeli society without knowing something about the history from which its many internal and external conflicts and cleavages emerged, we will start with an introduction of Israel's formative years, first under Ottoman, then British rule and the emergence of the Zionist movement. We will then move forward to present the different groups composing Israeli society: Jews from Ashkenazi (Euro-American) origin, Jews from Mizrahi (Middle Eastern-North African) origin; Arab citizens of Israel, various religious groups, women and others, their conflicts and the institutions that hold this complex society together.

Recent academic research has stressed that Israel is a heterogeneous society. Life chances, identity, political attitudes and voting behavior of people who live in Israel and its territories depend on whether they have citizenship or not; live in Israel or not; identify as Arab, Palestinian, Druze, Bedouin, Mizrahi, (or perhaps even Iraqi Jewish or Moroccan Jewish), Ashkenazi, Filipino, Rumanian (Jewish or not), Russian (Jewish or not, immigrant or not); identify as men, women, or transgender; identify as Moslem, Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish; are immigrants or Israeli-born; are fluent in English, French, Arabic, or Hebrew; are ultraorthodox, "mesorati", or secular; are residents of development towns, border towns, kibbutzim, settlements, occupied territories, homogeneous areas like Tel Aviv, heterogeneous central areas like Jerusalem and Haifa, secular areas like Tel Aviv and Haifa or religious areas like Jerusalem and Jewish Hebron; whether their families went through the Holocaust, the Iraqi Farhoud, exodus from the new Israeli state; whether their migrations were followed by poverty, economic stability, or economic improvement; whether their families came from the east European ghettos, the Arabic-speaking countryside, or the large and westernized communities of Warsaw, Baghdad, Odessa or Casablanca; whether they attended an Israeli university, an American one, or none at all; whether they hail from folks who immigrated before or after the establishment of the state, and on and on.

Thus, one problematic in the study of Israeli society has centered around heterogeneity. Scholars have asked such questions as: which groups should be studied as part of Israeli society, how much diversity can a society tolerate without being torn apart from the inside, and what kinds of mechanisms tend to generate loyalty to a state, even under conditions of significant ethnic, lifestyle, and religious differences.

In this course, we review contemporary work on Israeli society, including not just the diversity issues outlined above, but also other questions that have occupied Israeli sociologists.
• Who are the different ethnic, national, class, religious, and immigrant groups that

live in Israel today? What do Israelis mean when they talk about Israel as a Jewish state (is this a national definition, a religious definition)? How much have different groups successfully integrated into Israel, and how much are cleavages between groups deepening? What can this tell us generally about how societies cohere, and the possibilities for multiculturalism worldwide?

• What was the nature of the nationalist project that led to the establishment of the state? On what grounds have Jewish Israelis begun to weaken or strengthen their commitment to Zionism? Which groups of Jews are doing this weakening or strengthening, and why? How important is Zionist ideology to Diaspora Jewish thought and identity? What can we learn about how discourse shapes thought and meanings attached to various actions, and the options people believe they have?

• Jews lived in Moslem countries for centuries before the establishment of the State of Israel. What was their relationship like with their Moslem hosts? How has this history shaped Arab/Israeli relations today? Why do some Jews of Middle Eastern origin call themselves "Arab Jews", while others insist that they are ethnically neutral Jewish Israelis? What does this mean generally for the processes by which ethnic identities are built?

• What is living in Israeli society like for women of different class, ethnic, national, and religious backgrounds? What does this tell us about how participating in a nationalist project shapes women's lives, or, about how gender and ethnicity interact in a globalized society?

Course/Module aims:
  A better understanding of Israeli society and the different cleavages and internal conflicts which characterize this society.
Becoming familiar with the main traditions and paradigms characterizing the sociology of Israeli society (or the societies in Israel).

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:
  Better understand Israeli society. Read texts (general and sociological) about this society with a critical eye, while aware of the different underlying assumptions leading the authors to reach their conclusions, choose their research questions and so on.

Attendance requirements(%):
  100%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: lectures, informed discussions and watching films.

Course/Module Content:
  Week 1 - Introduction - The Course's point of view and Israeli society's Timeline

Week 2 - Palestine Before Zionism - Arabs, Jews and the Ottoman Empire

Week 3: The Zionist Movement and the Emergence of a Jewish Israeli Identity (the Sabra)

Week 4: The British Rule and the Institutionalization of a Pre-state Jewish Apparatuses (the Yishuv)

Week 5: The Roots and Evolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict

Week 6: The Quest for an Homogenous Israeli Society - the Melting Pot Policy and Its Social Consequences

Week 7: The Jewish Ethnic Cleavage - The Ashkenazi-Mizrachi inequality and identity politics

Week 8: Arab-Palestinians Citizens of Israel: Inequality and the Struggle to Create a Distinct Palestinian Israeli (or Arab-Israeli) Identity.

Week 9: Religious Identities in a Jewish State - Haredi, National-Religious, Traditionals and Seculars, and their Struggle over the Nature of Israeli Society

Week 10: Femininity and Masculinity

Week 11: Towards a Multicultural Society? The 1990's Immigrants: Russians, Ethiopians and Guest Workers

Week 13: Globalization and the Transformation of Israeli Society

Week 14: Current Dilemmas in Israeli Society - Students' Choice and Up-to-date Issues

Required Reading:
Week 1: Introduction - The Course's point of view and Israeli society's Timeline

Israel is, and has always been, a "hot" subject to study. While I encourage debate and discussions in class, I want these discussions to be theoretically and empirically informed. It is also important to know that our (mine and yours) perspectives on Israel are grounded in our general political views and understanding of the world, and that we respect the opinions of all classmates, even if we disagree with them. It is especially important for me to know what do you already know about Israel. Have you ever visited the country? studied a course on the topic? and so on. We will start our course by introducing ourselves and our perspectives on Israel.
Israel is also a borderless society. Its geographical and historical borders are under constant political and theoretical debates. When did Israeli society emerge? what groups are part of this society and which aren't? To start knowing the country and the society under examination in our course, I'll present some of the debates about Israel's history (a possible timeline) and geography (maps).

Week 2: Palestine Before Zionism - Arabs, Jews and the Ottoman Empire

Krämer, G. 2008. A history of Palestine, from the Ottoman conquest to the founding of the state of Israel. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. Ch. 1, "Names and Borders" pp. 1-2; Ch. 5, "Evolving Nationalism" pp. 101-127; Chapter 6, "Land Without People," pp. 128-138.

Week 3: The Zionist Movement and the Emergence of a Jewish Israeli Identity (the Sabra)

Maor, M. 2009. The History of Zionism. In M. Bard, & D. Nachmias (Eds.), Israel Studies Anthology: ttp://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/maor.pdf.

Almog, O. 2000. Chapter 1, "Idealistic Euphoria" pp. 23-72 in The Sabra : the creation of the new Jew. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Week 4: The British Rule and the Institutionalization of a Pre-state Jewish Apparatuses (the Yishuv)

From my perspective today's Israeli society and its institutional structure as well as the roots of the Israeli-Arab conflict are rooted in the British Mandate era (1919-1948). During this period, most political and social institutions were established and under the British rule the war between the Zionist and Arab military

forces had begun. It is therefore important to understand the relations between the British authorities, the Jews and the Arabs of Palestine. Tom Segev's book is not a dry historical analysis, but an opportunity to look at this history from the point of view of the people who lived this history.

Segev, T. 2000. One Palestine, complete: Jews and Arabs under the British mandate. London: Little, Brown. Ch. 2 "A contract with Jewry" pp. 33-56; Part III "Resolutions" pp. 447-520.

Eisenstadt, S. N. 1967. "The institutional pattern of the Yishuv" and Part 2 Ch. 7. "Social organization and stratification." In his: Israeli society. New York,, Basic Books.

Shalev, Michael. 1996. "The Labor Movement in Israel: Ideology and Political Economy." Pp. 131-61 in The Social History of Labor in the Middle East, edited by E. J. Goldberg. Boulder CO: Westview.

Week 5: The Roots and Evolution of the Israeli-Arab conflict

Bickerton, I. J., & Klausner, C. L. 2002. A concise history of the Arab-Israeli conflict (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. Ch. 2-3.

Shafir, G. 1989. Land, labor, and the origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, 1882-1914. Cambridge England ; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Section 2: Israeli Society Today - Its Different Groups and Social Issues

Israeli sociology today tends to analyze Israel as a culture plagued by cleavage and inequality or as a mosaic of cultures and identity groups whose struggles and negotiations are shaping and reshaping Israeliness and the country's cultural, economic and political destiny. In the second part of our course, we will present some of the most prominent groups in Israel, their disagreements and competing visions of Israeli future.

Week 6: The Quest for an Homogenous Israeli Society - the Melting Pot Policy and Its Social Consequences

Almog, O. 2000. The Sabra : the creation of the new Jew. Berkeley: University of California Press. Ch. 2, 4, 5.

Semyonov, Moshe and Noah Lewin-Epstein (Eds.). 2004. "Introduction," pp.1-17. In Stratification in Israel: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Week 7: The Jewish Ethnic Cleavage - The Ashkenazi-Mizrachi inequality and identity politics

Khazzoom, A. (2003). "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel." American Sociological Review 68(4): 481-510.

Shenhav, Y. A. (2006). "introduction" to his The Arab Jews : a postcolonial reading of nationalism, religion, and ethnicity. Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press.

Cohen, Yinon, Yitchak Haberfeld and Tali Kristal. 2007. "Ethnic Gaps in Higher Education among Israeli-Born Jews". Ethnic and Racial Studies 30, 5: 896-917.

Week 8: Arab-Palestinians Citizens of Israel: Inequality and the Struggle to Create a Distinct Palestinian Israeli (or Arab-Israeli) Identity.

Nadim Rouhana, Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State. Yale, 1997. Pages 3-23

Reiter, Y. 2009. Israel and its Arab Minority. In M. Bard, & D. Nachmias (Eds.), Israel Studies Anthology: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/isdf/text/reiter.pdf

Sa'ar, Amalia. 1998. "Carefully on the margins: Christian-Palestinians in Haifa between
nation and state." American Ethnologist. Vol. 25(2): 214-239.

Sa'ar, A. 2001. Lonely in your firm grip: women in Israeli-Palestinian families. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 7(4): 723-739.

Week 9: Religious Identities in a Jewish State - Haredi, National-Religious, Traditionals and Seculars, and their Struggle over the Nature of Israeli Society

The religious-secular cleavage is one of the most burning and highly debated issues in Israel. It is a core issue in shaping Jewish-Israeli identity, everyday lives of men and women in Israel, and the relations between Israel and the global Jewish Diaspora.

Cohen, A., & Susser, B. 2000. " Religion and the state of Israel" Ch. 1 in their Israel and
the politics of Jewish identity : the secular-religious impasse. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Stadler, N., E. Lomsky-Feder, et al. (2008). "Fundamentalism's encounters with citizenship: the Haredim in Israel." *Citizenship Studies* 12(3): 215-231.

Fogiel-Bijaoui, S. 2003. Why Won't There be Civil Marriage any Time Soon in Israel? OR: Personal Law—the Silenced Issue of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 6(28-34).

Week 10: Femininity and Masculinity

Herzog, Hanna. 2004. "Women in Israeli Society". In *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, edited by Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. Hanover, NH: Brandies University Press, published by University Press of New England. Pp. 195-220.

Berkovitch, Nitza. 1997. "Motherhood as a National Mission: the Construction of Womanhood in the Legal Discourse in Israel." *Women's Studies International Forum*, 20(5):605-619.

Kaplan, D. (2006). David, Jonathan and Other Soldiers: The Hegemonic Scripts for Male Bonding. *The men we loved : male friendship and nationalism in Israeli culture.* New York, Berghahn Books: 98-120.

Week 11: Towards a Multicultural Society? The 1990's Immigrants: Russians, Ethiopians and Guest Workers

Remennick, Larissa. 2002. "Transnational Community in the Making: Russian-Jewish Immigrants of the 1990s in Israel". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28, 3: 315-530.

Kaplan Steven and Hagar Salamon. 2004. "Ethiopian Jews in Israel: A Part of the People or Apart from the People?". In *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, edited by Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. Hanover and London: University Press of America. Pp. 118-148.

Ben-Eliezer, Uri. 2004. "Becoming a Black Jew: Cultural Racism and Anti-Racism in Contemporary Israel". *Social Identities* 10, 2: 245-266.

Kemp, A., Raijman, R., Resnik, J., & Gesser, S. S. 2000. Contesting the Limits of Political Participation: Latinos and Black African Migrant Workers in Israel. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23(1): 94-119.

Section 3: The Transformation of Israeli Society(?): Globalization, the Peace Process and other Dilemmas

Globalization (some say Americanization) has transformed the Israeli economy and society. In our final meetings we will try to understand to what extent Israel's unique institutional environment still holds despite the growing pressures to accept global standards and international (political, geopolitical and economic) resolutions. Students are welcome to pose questions and suggest issues that they are interested to peruse and I will try my best to find up-to-date literature on these issues and open them up for discussion.

Week 12: Globalization and the Transformation of Israeli Society

Shalev, M. 1999. Have Globalization and Liberalization "Normalized" Israel's Political Economy? Israel Affairs.

Ram, U. 2007. The globalization of Israel : McWorld in Tel Aviv, jihad in Jerusalem. New York, NY: Routledge. Ch.

Week 13: Current Dilemmas in Israeli Society - Students' Choice and Up-to-date Issues

Israel is a VERY dynamic society. Towards the end of our course you will have the opportunity to raise issues and question regarding Israeli society that you find interesting and important. I will provide the relevant and most updated readings and we will use our knowledge of Israeli society to analyze the selected issue.

 Additional Reading Material:
  See course website for full syllabus.

 Course/Module evaluation:
 End of year written/oral examination 0 %
 Presentation 0 %
 Participation in Tutorials 10 %
 Project work 60 %
 Assignments 30 %
 Reports 0 %
 Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %
Other 0 %

<u>*Additional information:*</u>
changes may be applied. final version would be posted on the course website.