

Israel's Changing Collective Identity

MW: 9:30am- 10:45am
Meyer Hall, room 157

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Aims of Course and Content

The course focuses on Israel's changing collective identity from the early 1950s when Ben Gurion tried to mold a diverse immigrant population into a homogeneous, modern secular Jewish society to the multi-cultural Israeli society of today. Whereas Ben Gurion excluded the Israeli Arabs and ultra-Orthodox Jews both these groups are fighting today for a place in mainstream Israeli life which they hope to change. The course focuses on the myth of the "Sabra"; the difficult absorption of Jewish immigrants from Arab lands, and their subsequent search for cultural roots and a more assertive political identity; the exclusion of the ultra-Orthodox and Israeli Arabs and their present role in contemporary Israeli society; the messianism of religious Zionism after 1967; and the impact of Ethiopian and Russian immigrants on Israel's collective identity. In addition, attention is given to the impact of globalization and the "Americanization" of Israeli society.

Course Requirements

You are expected to read all assignments before coming to class. All articles can be found on "**Blackboard**" (classes.nyu.edu). You are expected to attend and participate in class discussions. There will be a mid term and final exam. You will have to write one short paper based on one of the topics in the course. More details will follow on the paper and exams.

Grading is as follows:

Participation	10%
Midterm exam	30 %
Paper	20%
Final exam:	40 %

Office hours are MW 11-12am (51 Washington Square South, Room 415 (212 998 3621). You can always contact me via email (lazin@bgu.ac.il) and I will call you back. You are also welcome to visit/consult with me whenever I am in my office.

Reading List

Week 1: Israeli Society - Basic Facts, Major Characteristics and the Political Context

Ashford, Douglas (1978). "The Structural Analysis of Policy or Institutions Really Do Matter," in his book **Comparing Public Policies**, Sage, Beverly Hills, pp.81-98.

Sheffer, Gabriel (1987). "Elite Cartel, Vertical Domination, and Grassroots Discontent in Israel", in Tarrow, S., Katzenstein, P and Graziao, L. (eds.) **Territorial Politics in Industrial Nations**, Praeger, NY.

Week 2+3+4: The Non Religious Jewish Veteran Subculture

Ben-Rafael E. (1982). "The Israeli Edot", in his book: **The Emergence of Ethnicity – Cultural Groups and Social Conflict in Israel**, Greenwood Press, London. England, pp. 3-42.

Almog, O. (2004). "One Middle Class – Three Different Lifestyles: The Israeli Case", **Geography Research Forum** 24 [Special Issue: Spatial and Socio-Economic Aspects], pp. 37-58.

Ben-Ari E. & Bilu Y. (1997). Saints' Sanctuaries in Israeli Development Towns: On a Mechanism of Urban Transformation", in Ben-Ari E. and Bilu Y. (eds.) **Grasping Land – Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience**, State University of New York Press, Albany, pp. 61-85.

Week 5: The Kibbutz Subculture

Ribak R. (2006). "From the Field Phone to the Mobile Phone: a Cultural Biography of the Telephone in Kibbutz Y", **New Media & Society** 8 (4): 551-572.

Week 6: The Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union Subculture

Lazin, Fred A. (2005). "Freedom of Choice and the Committee of Eight" & "The Final Struggle over Soviet Jewish Emigration" in his book **The Struggle for Soviet Jewry in American Politics**, Lexington Books, Laham, MD, pp. 79-128 & pp. 261-291.

Friedgut T. H. (2004). "Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union: Their Influence and Identity", in: Shapira A. (ed.) **Israeli Identity in Transition** (Series on Jewish and Israeli Studies), Leslie Stein, Series Editor, Praeger Press, Westport Connecticut, London, pp. 233-257.

Week 7: The National Religious Jews (the Knitted Kipa) Subculture

Rapoport T. (2000). "The Many Voices of Israeli Youth: Multiple Interpretations of Rabin's Assassination", in Pery Y. (Ed.) **The Assassination of Ytzhak Rabin**, Stanford University Press, Stanford California, pp. 197-227.

Jeff Goldberg (May 31, 2004). "Among the Settlers" in **New Yorker**, pp.

Week 8: The Ultra Orthodox Jews Subculture

Lehmann D. & Siebzeher B. (2006). "Shas as a Social Movement", in their book: **Remaking Israeli Judaism – The Challenge of Shas**, Hurst Company, London, UK, pp. 120-168.

Blumen O. (2002). "Ultra orthodox Jewish Women Go to Work", **Gender, Place and Culture**, 9 (2), 133-151.

Week 9: The Ethiopian Jews Subculture

Lazin, Fred (2005). "Ethnicity and Political Clout: Education Policy to Absorb Ethiopian Immigrants, 1984-1992 in CCAR Journal, Summer 2005, 57-72.

Anteby L. (1999). "Of Names, Amulets and Movies – Some Patterns of Oral, Written and Non-Verbal Negotiation among the Ethiopian Jews in Israel", In: Parfitt T. & Trevisan Semi E. (eds.), **The Beta Israel in Ethiopia and Israel – Studies on Ethiopian Jews**, The Curzon Press, GB, pp. 201-208.

Week 10: The Druze Subculture

Atshe Z. (1995). "The Druze Religion – Historical Background", "Druz in the Land of Israel", in his book: **Druze & Jews in Israel – a Shared Destiny?**, Sussex Academic Press, Brighton, UK, pp. 1-35.

Week 11 + 12: The Israeli Arabs Subculture

Rubinstein A. (2003). **Israeli Arabs and Jews – Dispelling the Myths, Narrowing the Gaps**, The American Jewish Committee, The Dorothy and Julius Koppelman Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations, NY, pp. 1-10.

Koren H. (2003). "The Arab Citizens of the State of Israel: The Arab Media Perspective", in: Bligh A. (Ed.) **the Israeli Palestinians: An Arab Minority in the Jewish State**, Frank Cass, London, Portland OR, pp. 212-226.

Week 13: Becoming Americans, Europeans or Mediterranean's? The Future of Israel's Dominant Culture

Almog, O. (2004). "The Globalization of Israel: Transformations" in: Shapira A. (ed.) **Israeli Identity in Transition** (Series on Jewish and Israeli Studies), Leslie Stein, Series Editor, Praeger Press, Westport Connecticut, London, pp. 233-257.