

Yale University / Spring 2017

NELC 155 / MMES 160 / JDST 323 / SOC 155

State and Society in Israel

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Class: Tuesday, Thursday 1:00-2:15

Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday 2:15-3:00 (or by appointment), HGS B-03



This course focuses on major social aspects of modern Israel following the establishment of the state in 1948. We will look at the interaction of the state with heterogeneous Israeli society, in all its diversity and complexity. The main social groups and ideological divisions within Israeli society will be discussed: Jews and Arabs, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi Jews, religion and secularism, newcomers and veterans, right and left, as well as major points of conflict regarding issues of orthodoxy, military service, Holocaust commemoration, civil rights in a Jewish-democratic state, gender issues, and language use in Israel. Changes in Israeli society and in its political map will be analyzed in depth, taking into consideration the impact of immigration waves, demographic data, processes of institutionalization “from above,” grassroots processes of privatization and multiculturalism, as well as the influence of Americanization and globalization on Israeli society. We will examine how these social and political changes have challenged and reshaped traditional models of Israeli Zionist ideology towards post-Zionism and neo-Zionism.

In order to enrich and deepen the learning experience, this course includes different types of materials: academic articles, primary sources, newspapers articles, archival footage, and documentary films. I hope you find the breadth of sources to be interesting, informative, and engaging!

This class is conducted in English. No knowledge of Hebrew is required.

Grading

Attendance, preparation and <i>active</i> participation in class discussion	10%
Participation in two campus events related to Israel	5%
Response papers (2)	10%
Current event: proposal (3%), analysis and presentation (10%)	13%
Midterm exam (in class)	27%
Final Paper: proposal (5%), presentation (5%) paper (25%)	35%

Current event presentation in class (about 10 min.)

Choose a current event in Israel that you have recently read about in an Israeli newspaper. Make sure to choose an article which is not an editorial or an opinion article, but rather a report on an event which employs different perspectives of individuals, groups and institutions presented in the article. Use one of the following newspapers: *Haaretz* [left wing inclination]: www.haaretz.com, *Ynet* [centrist]: www.ynetnews.com, *The Jerusalem Post* [right wing inclination]: www.jpost.com. Dates of presentations will be assigned according to your preference and according to the distribution of topics among students. Please send 2-3 relevant potential articles (email the links) to the instructor a week before your presentation for approval.

Analysis: Provide an outline of about 3 pages (around 1000 words) of analysis for the class in which you give a short summary of the news (including important names, dates, or concepts), and put it in a broader context of this course - based on class readings and external sources you might include as needed. Examine the different perspectives of individuals, groups and institutions presented in the article. Add bibliography and all other sources at the end of your analysis. Other students should participate in discussion following their classmate's presentation.

See online example for such work on V2. [Institutions in the Article and Presentation Questions](#)

Final paper - around 12 pp. min. 3000 words max. 4000 words, due May, 4.

Analyze a major issue, controversy, event, movement etc. that interests you about Israel, and its implications. In this paper, you should demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have acquired in this course, focusing on ideas and concerns that are currently debated in Israel. Address the perspectives of different groups/institutions within Israel on this issue, and the interplay between state and society.

The paper is meant to be a critical, well-informed discussion of the topic under consideration, to broaden your viewpoint, and to help you develop a deeper understanding of Israel. Provide the full bibliography at the end of your work. Bibliography should have at least 5 academic articles. Other sources could be added on top of that (for example: newspaper articles, governmental website etc.) Any visuals / graphs / tables should be added in the appendix.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Mandatory readings marked with (*)

Week 1- Introduction to Modern Israel **(Jan. 17, 19)**

Topics: Modern Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State. Historical background, figures, maps.

Israel story in maps: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/57771430/Israel-s-Story-in-Maps>

*Rebhun, Uzi. 2004. "Major Trends in the Development of Israeli Jews: A Synthesis of the Last Century". In *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*. Uzi Rebhun and Chaim Waxman (eds.) pp.3-19. Hanover: Brandeis University Press.

*Rubin, Barry. 2012. *Israel: an Introduction*. New Haven: Yale University Press, pp. 325-336 [chronology], 331-336 [Glossary].

*Shapira, Anita. 2012. *Israel: A History*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press. Maps on pp. 31, 93, 173, 213, 308, 400, 432

Ben-Rafael, Eliezer and Peres Yochanan. 2005. *Is Israel one? Religion, Nationalism and Multiculturalism Confounded*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.

Week 2 - Zionist Ideology: A Jewish and Democratic State **(Jan. 24, 26)**

Topics: What does it mean for Israel to be both Jewish and democratic? Is Israel a homogeneous society? Israeli national symbols and Zionist ideology. Case study: sports, nationalism and politics.

Visual: Flag, emblem, anthem,

Primary sources: Reading from Herzl.

*Herzl, Theodor. *The Jewish State: an Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Problem*. [1896] (1946: English translation). American Zionist Emergency Council. pp. 85-97, 136-152.

*Avineri, Shlomo. 1981. *The Making of Modern Zionism: Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 3-13, 88-100.

*Kaufman, Haim. "Jewish sports in the Diaspora, Yishuv, and Israel: Between nationalism and politics." *israel studies* 10.2 (2005): 147-167.

*Ben Israel, Hedva. 2003. "Zionism and European Nationalism: Some Comparative Aspects". *Israel Studies*, 8 (1): 91-104.

*Mayer, Tamar. 2005. "National Symbols in Jewish Israel." *Contesting The National Narrative: National Symbols, Fractured Identities*.

Penslar, Derek. 2007. *Israel in History: The Jewish State in Contemporary Perspective*. London and NY: Routledge.

Hertzberg, Arthur. 1997. *The Zionist Idea*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America

Week 3 – Socialist Zionism in Practice: The Kibbutz **(Jan. 31, Feb. 2)**

Topics: The different Zionist Ideological branches take many forms. We will look at most prominent 20th century Jewish example of socialist Zionism - the Kibbutz as a revolutionary idea of the new Jewish society and the “new Jew” in the Land of Israel.

*Documentary: *The children of the Sun*. (Ran Tal, 2007, Israel. 70 min).

*Spiro, Melford. 2004. “Utopia and Its Discontents: The Kibbutz and Its Historical Vicissitudes”. *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 106, No. 3, pp. 556-568.

*Shapira, Anita. 2010. “The Kibbutz and the State”. *Jewish Review Book*, Vol. 2.

*Swirsky, Barbara and Safir, Marilyn. 1991. Women of the dream. Pp. 251-269 in theirs: *Calling the equality bluff: Women in Israel*. New York: Pergamon Press, pp.

Almog, Oz. 2000. *Sabra: The creation of the new Jew*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 76-86.

Troen, Ilan. 2003. *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs and Realities in the Century of Jewish Settlement*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 4 – Israel’s Emergence as a State – The Mass Immigration **(Feb. 7, 9)**

Topics: The State of Israel emerges during the 1948 War, the mass immigration (*aliyah*) in the 1950’s, new and old immigrants (*olim*), the transit camp (*maabara*), state and society in war, austerity in Israel (*tzena*).

*Gat, Moshe. 2002. “The IDF and the Mass Immigration of the Early 1950s: Aid to the Immigrant Camps”. *Israel Affairs* 8, (1): 191-210.

*Hacohen, Dvora. 2002. “Mass Immigration and the Demographic Revolution in Israel.” *Israel Affairs* 8, (1): 177-190.

*Rozin, Orit. 2006. “Food, Identity, Nationalism and Nation Building in Israeli Formation Years”. *Israel Studies Forum* 21, (1): 52-80.

*Weingrod, Alex. 1998. "Ehud Barak's apology: Letters from the Israeli press." *Israel Studies* 3.2 : 238-252.

Shenhav, Yehouda. 2006. *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion and Ethnicity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Week 5 – Israel’s Emergence as a State – The 1948 War **(Feb. 14, 16)**

Topics: the 1917 Balfour Declaration, the 1947 Partition Plan and the 1948 War – Israeli and Palestinian narratives.

Visual: The UN Partition Plan for Palestine (November 29, 1947), The Declaration of Independence by David Ben Gurion (May, 14th 1948), the 1948 war in photography.

*Confino, Alon. 2012. “Miracles and Snow in Palestine and Israel: Tantura, a history of 1948”. *Israel Studies* 17 (2): 25-61.

*Azaryahu, Maoz and Golan, Arnon. 2012. “Photography, Memory and Ethnic Cleansing: The Fate of the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, 1948 – John Philips’ Pictorial Record”. *Israel Studies* 17 (2): 62-76.

*Bar-On, Mordechai. 2006. “Conflicting Narratives or Narratives of Conflict: Can the Zionist and Palestinian Narratives of the 1948 War be Bridged?” In Rotberg, Robert (ed.) *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 143-173.

Morris, Benny. 2008. *1948: a history of the first Arab-Israeli war*. New-Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 6 – Arabs / Palestinians in Israel **(Feb. 21,23)**

Topics: A Jewish and democratic state – can they coexist? The situation of Arabs in Israel. Discussion on different models of democracy using international comparisons.
Prose: Excerpts from Sayed Kashua’s *Dancing Arabs*.

*Dowty, Alan. 1999. “Is Israel Democratic? Substance and Semantics in the Ethnic Democracy Debate.” *Israel Studies* 4, (2): 1-15.

*Smootha, Sammy. 2004. “Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel: A Deeply Divided Society.” In *Israeli Identity in Transition*. Anita Shapira (ed.) pp. 31-68. London: Praeger.

*Rekhess, Eli. 2007. “The Evolvement of an Arab–Palestinian National Minority in Israel”. *Israel Studies*, 12(3): 1-28.

Rouhana, Nadim N. 1997. *Palestinian citizens in an ethnic Jewish state: Identities in conflict*. New-Haven: Yale University Press.

Week 7 - Israeli and Palestinian Narratives: the “Other” in Schoolbooks – the Wexler Report **(Feb. 28, March 2)**

Topics: Portrayal of the “Other” in Israeli and Palestinian Schoolbooks: Israeli and Palestinian Schoolbooks online report by Professor Bruce Wexler from Yale University. Full report in Arabic, English and Hebrew 1,500 quotes from the books translated into Arabic, English and Hebrew:

*IsraeliPalestinianSchoolbooks.blogspot.com

*Adwan, Sami, Daniel Bar-Tal, and Bruce E. Wexler. 2014. "Portrayal of the other in Palestinian and Israel schoolbooks: A comparative study." *Political Psychology*, 37 (2):201-217.

*Adwan, Sami, and Dan Bar-On. 2004. "Shared history project: A PRIME example of peace-building under fire." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 17 (3): 513-521.

March 2 – In class Midterm

Week 8 - Heroism and Commemoration in Israel

(March 7, 9)

March 9 – class meets at Bass library L01 (basement level) to watch Holocaust survivors’ Testimonies (the Yale Fortunoff Video Archive). Discussion with Stephen Naron, Archivist.

Topics: Commemoration of the Holocaust and fallen soldiers in Israel. Images of heroism: ancient models (Masada) and contemporary models (Trumpeldor) versus the diasporic model. The Old Jew vs. the New Jew. The security ethos in Israel as part of everyday life’s cultural politics. Case study: Holocaust survivors’ testimonies.

*Zerubavel, Yael. 1994. "The Death of Memory and the Memory of Death: Masada and the Holocaust as Historical Metaphors" *Representations*, 45: 72-100.

*Kaplan, Danny. 2009. The Songs of the Siren: Engineering National Time on Israeli Radio. *Cultural Anthropology* 24, (2) (May): 313-45.

*Brog, Mooli. 2003. “Victims and Victors: Holocaust and Military Commemoration in Israel’s Collective Memory”. *Israel Studies* 8, (3): 65-99.

Weeks 9-10 – March break

Week 11 – The Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

(March 28, 30)

Topics: The IDF as a major state institution and its relationship with social actors. The Israeli reserve system as a “nation in uniform.” A state constantly at war, and a constant “state of war” within Israeli society. Women, Haredim and conscientious objectors as different groups in society that challenge the armed forces and bring about gradual change in the way the IDF operates in Israel.

*Documentary: Company Jasmine. 2000. Yael Katzir, Israel (52 min.)

*Sasson-Levy, Orna. 2003. "Feminism and Military Gender Practices: Israeli Women Soldiers in 'Masculine' Roles". *Sociological Inquiry*, 73 (3): 440-465.

*Helman, Sara. 2002. "Militarism and the Construction of the Life-World of Israeli Males: The Case of the Reserves System." In *The Military and Militarism in Israeli Society*. Edna, Lomsly-Feder and Eyal Ben-Ari (eds.) pp. 191-221. Albany: SUNY.

Kanaaneh, Rhoda. 2008. *Surrounded: Palestinian soldiers in the Israeli military*. Stanford University Press.

Week 12 - State and Religion in Israel

(April 4, 6)

Topics: "State and Church" (or rather: "State and Synagogue") in Israel.

The split between religion and secularism in Israel. Case study: The Pride parade in Jerusalem results in a clash between the LGBT community and the Haredim, both groups demanding their rights from the state.

*Documentary: Pride (Igal Hecht and Lior Cohen, Israel 2006, 45 min).

*Stadler, Nurit and Ben-Ari, Eyal. 2003. "Other-Worldly Soldiers? Ultra-Orthodox Views of Military Service in Contemporary Israel." *Israel Affairs* 9, (4):17-48.

* Kama, Amit. 2000. "From Terra Incognita to Terra Firma: The Logbook of the Voyage of Gay Men's Community into the Israeli Public Sphere. *Journal of Homosexuality* 38, (4): 133-162.

The Guttman report, 2009: A Portrait of Israeli Jews

https://en.idi.org.il/media/5439/guttmanavichaireport2012_engfinal.pdf

Week 13 – Israeli High-Tech and Globalization

(April 13, no class on April 11, Passover)

Topics: Israel is considered to be a high-tech empire in the global world and has an innovative and prospering economy. How can a young nation in a constant state of war and with no natural resources achieve these accomplishments?

*Senor, Dan and Singer, Saul. 2009. *Start-Up Nation : The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle*. New York : Twelve, pp. 1-20, 103-120.

*Almog, Oz. 2004. "The Globalization of Israel". In *Israeli Identity in Transition*. Anita Shapira (ed.) pp. 233-256. London: Praeger.

Week 14 - Contested Zionism: Demographic and Ideological Changes (April 18, 20)

Topics: Russian and Ethiopian immigrants and foreign workers in Israel. Latest immigrant groups to Israel change Israeli demography and challenge the concept of *aliyah*. The Israeli social mosaic and ideology is changed and challenged: neo-Zionism, post-Zionism in Israel.

*Documentary: Strangers No More (Karen Goodman, Israel, 2010).

*Horowitz, Tamar. 2005. "The Integration of Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union." *Israel Affairs* 11, (1): 117-136.

*Elias, Nelly and Kemp Adriana. 2010. "The New Second Generation: Non-Jewish *Olim*, Black Jews and Children of Migrant Workers in Israel". *Israel Studies* 15 (1): 73-94.

*Newman, David. 2005." From Hitnachelut to Hitnatkut: The Impact of Gush Emunim and the Settlement Movement on Israeli Politics and Society" *Israel Studies*, 10(3): 192-224.

*Ram, Uri. 2004. "The State of Nation: Contemporary Challenges to Zionism in Israel." In *Israelis in Conflict: Hegemonies, Identities, and Challenges*. Kemp, A. Newman, D. Ram, U. and Yiftachel, O. (eds.) pp. 305-320. Sussex Academic Press.

Week 15 – Students’ in-class presentations (April 25, 27)

Topics: Final papers presentation, class discussion and farewell party on Thursday!

Have a productive semester!