

Ethnic and Religious Identities in Israel

Israel is a society that grew largely on the basis of immigrant populations of various backgrounds from Europe, the Middle East, and elsewhere. The immigrants brought with them different languages, cultures, and political ideologies. After the state was established, there was some hope that this would result in a national amalgam, but the immigrants interacted with the veteran population and its institutions, and with one another, in a variety of ways that produced its current multicultural texture. The course will discuss the history of immigration, the various policies of immigrant settlement, the way that the social sciences conceptualized and studies immigration, and the ongoing debates about culture and identity. Special attention will be paid to the interaction between identities defined by ethnicity and those growing out of diverse religious experiences and ideologies, including how emerging differences have made an impact upon and are contested within the Israeli public sphere today.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A mid-term examination (25%)

A class presentation (25%)

A final exam (40%; graduate students will write a paper in lieu of a final exam)

Participation and attendance (10%)

REQUIRED READINGS

Articles and chapters in books (a photocopied Reader is under preparation):

Altman, Y. and G. Mars, 1984. "The Emigration of Soviet Georgian Jews in Israel," *Jewish Journal of Sociology*, 26:34-45.

Aran, Gideon, 1986. "From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim," in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*. Indiana University Press and The Institute for Contemporary Jewry, Vol. II, 116-143.

Bernstein, Deborah, 1984. "Conflict and Protest in Israeli Society: The Case of the Black Panthers of Israel," *Youth and Society* 16(2):129-152.

Bilu, Y. and E. Ben-Ari, 1992. "The Making of Modern Saints: Manufactured Charisma and the Abu-Hatseiras of Israel," *American Ethnologist* 19:29-44.

Cohen, Erik, 1968. "Social Images in an Israeli Development Town," *Human Relations* 21:163-76.

Deshen, Shlomo and Walter P. Zenner, 1982. "Introduction: The Historical Ethnology of Middle Eastern Jews," *Jewish Societies in the Middle East: Community, Culture and Authority*. Washington, DC: University Press of America, pp. 1-34.

Doleve-Gendelman, Tsili, 1987. "The Symbolic Inscription of Zionist Ideology in the Space of Eretz Israel: Why the Native Israeli is called Tsabar." In Harvey E. Goldberg (ed.) *Judaism Viewed from Within and from Without: Anthropological Studies*. Albany: SUNY Press, pp. 257-284.

El-Or, Tamar, 1993. "Are They Like Their Grandmothers? A Paradox of Literacy and Modernity in the Life of Ultraorthodox Jewish Women," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 24:63-82.

Gabriel, Ayala, 1992. "Rage and Grief: Collective Emotions in the Politics of Peace and the Politics of Gender in Israel," *Culture Medicine, and Psychiatry* 16:311-335.

Goldberg, Harvey, 2001. Ethnic and Religious Dilemmas of a Jewish State: A Cultural and Historical Perspective. In Akira Usuki (ed.) *State Formation and Ethnic Relations in the Middle East*. Osaka: Japan Center for Area Studies, National Museum of Ethnology, pp. 47-64.

Levy, Andre, 1997. "To Morocco and Back: Tourism and Pilgrimage among Moroccan-born Israelis. In E. Ben-Ari, E. and Y. Bilu (eds.) *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*. Albany: SUNY Press, pp. 25-46.

Lewis, Arnold, 1985. "Phantom Ethnicity: 'Oriental Jews' in Israel's Society." In Alex Weingrod (ed.) *Studies in Israeli Ethnicity: After the Ingathering*. New York: Gordon and Breach, pp. 133-158.

Sered, Susan, 1992. *Women as Ritual Experts: The Religious Lives of Elderly Jewish Women in Jerusalem*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 2, pp. 34-48.

Zohar, Zvi, 1996. "Traditional Flexibility and Modern Strictness: Two Halakhic Positions on Women's Suffrage." In Harvey E. Goldberg (ed.) *Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries: History and Culture in the Modern Era*. Bloomington and New York: Indiana University Press and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, pp. 119-33.

Book: Eva Etzioni-Halevy, *The Divided People: Can Israel's Breakup be Stopped?* Lanham, Maryland: Lexington, 2002. {cited as EH in CALENDAR-READINGS, below}

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON ISRAELI SOCIETY:

Israel government statistical yearbook: <http://www.cbs.gov.il/> and detailed sites therein
Haaretz daily (English version of Hebrew paper): <http://www.haaretzdaily.com/>
Jerusalem Post (English language daily): <http://www.jpost.com/>

Occasional films will be presented in class

[NOTE: The dates and topics are approximate: some topics may be discussed at greater length, and others may be concentrated. The student is responsible for keeping tabs with the pace of the lectures and readings]

- Sept. 3-5 (1) *Jewish History after emancipation: religious, ethnic and secular identities*; Goldberg, EH chap. 6.
- Sept. 10-12 (2) *Cultural Variation among Jews: Europe, the Middle East and Elsewhere*; Deshen and Zenner
- Sept. 17-19 (3) *Ethnic and Religious Patterns in the pre-state period*; Dolev-Gendelman, Zohar
- Sept. 24-26 (4) *Mass Immigration - through 1967*; Statistics on Immigration from the Statistical Yearbook of the Government of Israel
- Oct. 1-3 (5) *Forms of settlement and subdued identities in the first generation*: Cohen, Sered
- Oct. 8-10 (6) Review and Mid-term exam: October 10.
- Oct. 15-17 (7) *Religion and Identity in the Aftermath of the Six-Day War*; Aran, EH chaps. 1-2
- Oct. 22-24 (8) *Critical Revision in the Study of Israeli society*; Bernstein, Lewis, EH chap. 8
- Oct. 29-31 (9) *Evolving forms of Middle Eastern Religiosity*; Bilu and Ben-Ari, EH chap. 3
- Nov. 5-7 (10) *Developments in the realms between Nationalism and Religion*; El-Or, Gabriel, EH chaps. 4-5, 9
- Nov. 12-14 (11) *Pilgrimage and Travel in Relation to Identity*; Levy, Zerubavel, EH chap. 7
- Nov. 19 & 26 (12) *Immigration from the Soviet Union and its successor states*; Altman and Mars
- Dec. 3-5 (13) Student presentations
- Dec. 10-12 (14) *Liberal forms of Jewish Identity & REVIEW*; EH chaps. 10-11.