COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY IN MODERN ISRAEL  
Dr. Muli Peleg

What makes human societies cohere and what makes them stay together? On the other hand, what brings about conflict, confrontation and ultimately, breakdown? These are seminal questions that have plagued scholars for years. This course is about processes and dynamics which form, maintain, and solidify a human society. Alternatively, there are always forces which destabilize groups and tear them apart. These opposing orientations of integration and disintegration of societies characterize civilization since its inception.

Through the story of the Israeli society, the students will be familiarized with the motivations, interests, emotions and interactions which drive groups and individuals toward and away from each other. Means and mechanisms of socialization and group cohesion such as history, language, culture, politics, values, conflict and ideology will be introduced as part of the community building and identity construction efforts of the new country. Israel, as a relatively small and newly founded nation, embodies a multitude of the ingredients which might consolidate or bring down a society and hence, it is an ample example for this course.

Readings:
Anderson B. - Imagned Communities (2006)  
Arieli Y. - History and Politics (1992)  
Benhabib S. - Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political (1996).  
Ben Rafael E. and S. Sharot - Ethnicity, Religion and Class in Israeli Society (1991)  
Herzog H. and E. Ben Rafael- Language and Communication in Israel (2000)  
Smooha S. - Israel: Pluralism and Conflict (1979)  
Grading:
There are two exams, a midterm and a final and a written assignment to describe a
socialization mechanism of one’s choice. Accordingly, the final grade will be computed
as follows:

Midterm: 30%
Final Exam: 40%
Assignment: 20%
Attendance and Participation: 10%

Lectures (rudimentary List):
1. Introduction: individual and collective
2. The Jew versus the Kehila; The Israeli versus the Chevre
4. The Israeli society: what type of community?
5. Dynamics and Communication in Community: Consensus Vs. Riots
6. Plenty of rifts: The Israeli society as an immigrants society
7. Politics as Decision making for the Collective: Authority, Leadership, Legitimacy
8. The Israeli political culture: origins and prospects
9. History and Myth: What’s your Story?
10. Right and Left narratives: Massada, Tel-Hai, Altalena and the Rabin assassination
11. Language and Discourse: Is There Anything to Discuss?
13. Culture, Sub-Culture and Counter Culture
14. The Sabre and the Galut: two codes of conduct and meaning
15. Identity, Belonging and Meaning: Who Am I, What Am I
16. A Jew, an Israeli, a Shenkinai, a Kibbutznik, a Settler and a Refusnik walk into a
   bar…
17. Participation, Awareness and Activism: What Makes Them Tick?
18. Protest and activism in Israel
19. Aggressiveness, Violence and indignity: Menu for Breakdown
20. The Season, Reparations from Germany, Peace versus Territories and the rabin
    assassination: Whither Israel?
22. The Israeli Democracy at 60