Becoming Israel: War, Peace, and the Politics of Israel's Identity
POL 345H1 (F)

Professor Emanuel Adler
Fall 2009
Lectures: Tuesday 4:00-7:00
Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00-12:00

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Israelis probably are among the few peoples in the world who, even after several
generations of independent existence, still ask: "who were we?," "who are we?," "who is
we?," "what are we?," "where are we?," and "who will we become?" Attempting to show
why this is so, this course introduces students to Israeli politics, society, institutions and
political practice from the distinctive perspective of the development of Israeli identity
(identities). Special attention will be given to the sources of Israeli identity, the main
players involved in its politics, and the role of regional war and the peace process in its
development and inner conflicts. In particular, the course will trace the construction of
Israeli identity, starting from the early times of Zionism and ending with the
contemporary identity conflicts over the failed Oslo peace process with the Palestinians,
the Palestinian Intifadas, and the wars in Lebanon and Gaza. I will try to show that there
is a direct connection between Zionist constituting ideologies, the nature of Israel's
institutions and society, and the split soul of Israeli identity.

Course requirements: A review paper (20%) on Yael Zerubavel’s book Recovered
Roots (maximum 5 pages), which is due on October 13, 2009; a mid-term paper (35%) on
the origins of Israeli political and social institutions (maximum 10 pages), which is due
on November 17, 2009 and a final exam (45%), at a date to be determined by the Faculty
of Arts and Science. Excluding medical emergencies, no late assignments will be
accepted.

Prerequisite: A course in POL.

Communication: course announcements and information will be posted in the
"Blackboard," at U of T's Portal site:
https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp The "Blackboard" also allows
communication between instructors and students.

We will be happy to receive, and answer to, your personal e-mail messages, as long as
you use e-mail judiciously and sparingly.
**Plagiarism:** Will not be tolerated; all cases of plagiarism will be sent to the Dean's Office for appropriate action. You can access the University of Toronto’s policy on plagiarism at [http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html](http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html). From U of T's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters: “It shall be an offence for a student knowingly: (d) to represent as one's own any idea or expression of an idea or work of another in any academic examination or term test or in connection with any other form of academic work, i.e. to commit plagiarism…. (e) to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.”

**Required Bibliography**

**Books** (Available at U of T Bookstore, for the students who wish to purchase them):


**Recommended:**


Copies of required and recommended books are available on two hours short-term loan in the reserve stacks of Robarts library. Some items can also be found at Robarts as non-circulating periodicals. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (AAPSS) and the American Political Science Review can be accessed on line from the library website. A few items can also be found at the "Trinity College" library located at the Munk Center for International Studies. Three sets of all the required articles and book chapters (except from the required books for purchase), and a folder with some of the recommended readings, will be available at the front desk of the Political Science Department for short-term borrowing.
Course Topics and Readings

I- Introduction

Week 1: "Under Construction": Israeli Identity/Identities

Garfinkle, chapter 1 and 2.

Recommended:


II- Who Were We?

Week 2: Zionism and the Intellectual Origins of Israeli Identity


Recommended:

Hedva Ben-Israel Kidron, "Zionism and European Nationalisms: Comparative Aspects," Israel Studies 8/1 (Spring 2003), 91-104


Week 3: Myths and Reality in the Construction of the Modern State of Israel

Garfinkle, chapter 3.

Zerubavel, 13-36, 39-47, 147-167

Recommended:


Zerubavel, 60-76, 192-213.


III- Who Are We?

**Week 4: The Israeli State, Institutions, and Identity**

Garfinkle, chapter 5.


Recommended:

Tkuma, Episode 1: The Conflict; Episode 2: The Ingathering.


Gideon Doron, "Right as Opposed to Wrong as Opposed to Left: The Spatial Location of the Right Parties on the Israeli Political Map," *Israel Studies* 10/3 (Fall 2005), 29-53.

**Week 5: The Israeli People, Society, Economy, and Identity**

**First Paper Due**

Garfinkle, chapter 4.

Eliezer Ben-Rafael, “Mizrahi and Russian Challenges to Israel’s Dominant Culture: Divergences and Convergences,” *Israel Studies* 12/3 (Fall 2007).


Recommended:

Tkuma, Episode 3: The People's Army; Episode 5: Israel's Economic Revolution


Sergio Della Pergola, "Demography in Israel at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century," in Rehun and Waxman, Jews in Israel, 20-44.

Gabriel Ben-Dor and Ami Pedahzur, "Civil-Military Relations in Israel at the Outset of the Twenty-first Century," in Rehun and Waxman, Jews in Israel, 331-344.


Ephraim Ya'ar, "Continuity and Change in Israeli Society: The Test of the Melting Pot," Israel Studies 10/2 (Summer 2005), 91-128.


IV- Who Is "We?"

Week 6: "Jerusalem" and "Tel-Aviv:" The Split Soul of Israeli Identity


Recommended:

Ezrahi, chapter 1.

Week 7: "Kulturkampf:" The Secular Religious Divide and Israeli Democracy


Recommended:

Tkuma, Episode 4: Whose State? Whose Religion?


Week 8: "Post-Zionism," the "New Historians," and Israeli Identity

Silberstein, chapters 2, 3, and 4.

Recommended:

Yoram Hazony, *The Jewish State: Struggle for Israel's Soul* (New York: Basic, 2000), chapters 1 and 2.
Shlomo Aronson, "The Post-Zionist Discourse and Critique of Israel: A Traditional Zionist Perspective," Israel Studies 8/1 (Spring 2003), 105-129.


Silberstein, chapter 5.


Some examples of the "new historians" writings:


V- What Are We?

Week 9: The Israeli Palestinians and Israeli Democracy


Recommended:


Dan Rabinowitz, Overlooking Nazareth: The Ethnography of Exclusion in Galilee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), chapters 2 and 5.


Mahmud Kayyal, "A Hesitant Dialogue with 'the Other': The Interactions of Arab Intellectuals with the Israeli Culture," Israel Studies 11/2 (summer 2006), 54-74.


**Week 10: War, Peace and Israeli Identity**

**Second Paper Due**

Garfinkle, 199-228, 245-278, 289-296.


Recommended:

Tkuma, Episode 6: Future Peace, Next War.

Dov Waxman, “From Controversy to Consensus: Cultural Conflict and the Israeli Debate over Territorial Withdrawal,” *Israel Studies* 13/2 (Summer 2008), 73-96


David Menashri, "Iran, Israel and the Middle East Conflict," *Israel Affairs* 11/4 (October 2005), 717-736.

Michael Barnett, "Culture, Strategy and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Road to Oslo," *European Journal of International Relations* 5/1 (March 1999), 5-36.


**VI- Where Are We?**

*Week 11 (cont.): War, Peace and Israeli Identity and the Politics of Israel's Regional Identity*

Ezrahi, chapter 9.


Recommended:

Ezrahi, chapters 6 and 8.


Joel Peters, *Pathways to Peace: The Multilateral Arab-Israeli Peace Talks* (London:
VII-  Who Will We Become?

Week 12: The Alternative Paths of Israeli Identity/Identities

Ezrahi, chapter 11.


Recommended:


http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/objects/pages/PrintArticleEn.jhtml?itemNo=745748

Additional Bibliography

Books


Hermann, Tamar and Ephraim Yuchtman-Yaar (eds.) (1997) *Israeli Society and the Challenge of Transition to Co-existence.* Tel Aviv: The Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research, Tel Aviv University.


**Most Relevant Journals**

*Ethnic and Racial Studies*

*History and Memory*

*International Journal of Middle East Studies*

*Israel Affairs*
Israel Studies

Israel Studies Forum

The Jerusalem Quarterly

Middle East Journal

Philosophy and Social Criticism

Newspapers and Magazines


Jerusalem Post (Internet) www.jpost.com

Jerusalem Report (Internet) www.jrep.com

Israel21c (Internet) www.israel21c.org

Relevant Israeli Films at the Robarts Library

"HaHesder"

"Kippur"

"Sallah Shabbati"

"Hakayitz Shel Avia"

"Promises"