

Sociology 179: Sociological Perspectives on Israeli Society

Spring 2015, Tu-Th, 11am - 12:30pm, 54 Barrows Hall

Professor Shira Offer

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Office hours: Tuesdays 2-3 pm and by email appointment
444 Barrows Hall

Course Description:

In recent decades, Israeli society has undergone significant demographic, economic, and political transformations that have reshaped its socio-cultural landscape. In this seminar we will discuss how these processes, including the move toward a neoliberal economy, massive immigration from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia, the arrival of migrant workers, and increasing political polarization, have affected Israel's stratification system and institutions. We will focus on several axes of stratification and their intersections, including ethnicity (the Ashkenazi-Mizrahi divide), the status of Palestinian citizens of Israel and other minority groups, social class, and gender. Using insights from various sociological approaches, special attention will be dedicated to the issue of how features and dynamics of Israeli society reflect broader global trends. This seminar is designed for students interested in gaining critical knowledge about contemporary Israeli society and an in-depth understanding of the ethnic, national, religious, and political cleavages that characterize it.

Requirements and Grading:

Class participation (20%)

Research paper - All participants are required to submit a paper (12-15 pp. double-spaced) that deals with a research question of their interest about contemporary Israeli society. Answers to the question should address the relevant literature and be based on empirical data drawn from secondary sources. The research paper will be broken down into several assignments:

1. Approval of topic and research question – All participants are required to meet with me during my office hours and get approval for their research question no later than March 3rd.
2. Memo (2-3 pp) describing the topic, research question, and outline of the paper, including bibliographical references. The memo is due on the class of March 24th (10%)
3. Short class presentation of the research paper during week 14 - April 21st and 23rd (10%)
4. Final research paper. Due Friday May 15th (60%)

Readings and Course Schedule:

All the readings are available through bCourses at
<https://bcourses.berkeley.edu/courses/1292949/>

Week 1 (January 20) – General Introduction

No readings

(January 22) – Background, Demographic & Economic Trends

Semyonov, Moshe and Anastasia Gorodezeisky. 2012. "Israel: An Immigrant Society," pp. 147-163 in *International Perspectives: Integration and Inclusion*, edited by James Frideres and John Biles. Montreal and Kingston: Queen's Policy Studies Series, McGill-Queen's University Press.

Smooha, Sammy. 1997. "Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype." *Israel Studies* 2(2):198-241.

Week 2 (January 27, 29) - Background, Demographic & Economic Trends

Rosenhek, Zeev. 2011. "Dynamics of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Israeli Welfare State," pp. 63-86 in *The Contradictions of Israeli Citizenship: Land, Region, and State*, edited by Guy Ben-Porat and Bryan S. Turner. London, UK: Routledge.

OECD. 2010. *Israel: A Divided Society*. <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/44394444.pdf>

Week 3 (February 3, 5) – Ethnic Cleavage: The Mizrahi-Ashkenazi divide

Smooha, Sammy. 2004. "Jewish Ethnicity in Israel: Symbolic or Real?" pp. 47-80 in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, edited by Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. Brandeis University Press.

Cohen, Yinon, Yitchak Haberfeld, and Tali Kristal. 2007. "Ethnicity and Mixed Ethnicity: Educational Gaps among Israeli-born Jews." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(5): 898-917.

Week 4 (February 10, 11) - Ethnic Cleavage: The Mizrahi-Ashkenazi divide

Cohen, Uri and Nissim Leon. 2008. The new Mizrahi middle class: Ethnic mobility and class Integration. *The Journal of Israeli History* 27(1):51-64.

Sasson-Levy, Orna. 2013. "A Different Kind of Whiteness: Marking and Unmarking of Social Boundaries in the Construction of Hegemonic Ethnicity." *Sociological Forum* 28(1):27-50.

Week 5 (February 17, 19) - Ethnic Cleavage: Immigrants from the former USSR

Remennick, Larissa. *Russian Jews on Three Continents: Identity, Integration and Conflict*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers. Pp. 53-93.

Gorodzeisky, Anastasia and Moshe Semyonov. 2011. "Two Dimensions to Immigrants' Economic Incorporation: Soviet Immigrants in the Israeli Labour Market." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37(7): 1059-1077.

Week 6 (February 24, 26) - Ethnic Cleavage: Immigrants from the former USSR

Raijman, Rebeca and Yanina Pinsky. 2012. "Religion, Ethnicity and Identity: Former Soviet Union Christian immigrants in Israel." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 20 (2): 280-303.

Ben Rafael, Eliezer. 2007. "Mizrahi and Russian Challenges to Israel's Dominant Culture: Divergences and Convergences." *Israel Studies* 12(3):68-91.

Week 7 (March 3, 5) - Ethnic Cleavage: Ethiopian immigrants

Kaplan, Steven and Hagar Salomon. 2004. "Ethiopian Jews in Israel: A Part of the People or Apart from the People?" pp. 118-148 in *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns*, edited by Uzi Rebhun and Chaim I. Waxman. Brandeis University Press.

Offer, Shira. 2007. "The Ethiopian Community in Israel: Segregation and the Creation of a Racial Cleavage." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(3): 461-480.

Week 8 (March 10, 12) –Ethnic Cleavage: Ethiopian immigrants

Ben-Eliezer, U. 2008. Multicultural society and everyday cultural racism: Second generation of Ethiopian Jews in Israel's: 'Crisis of Modernization'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, 935–961.

Amit, Karin. 2011. "Social integration and identity of immigrants from the FSU, Western countries and Ethiopia in Israel." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(7):1287-1310

Week 9 (March 17, 19) – Religious Cleavage: The Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) Community

Ben Rafael, Eliezer. 2008. "Religiosity. The Faces of Religiosity in Israel: Cleavages or Continuum?" *Israel Studies* 13(3):89-113.

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

Week 10 (March 24, 26) – National Cleavage: Palestinian Citizens of Israel

Lewin-Epstein, Noah, and Moshe Semyonov. 1994. "Sheltered Labor Markets, Public Sector Employment, and Socioeconomic Returns of Arabs in Israel" *American Journal of Sociology* 100(3): 622-651.

Sa'di Ahmad and Noah Lewin-Epstein. 2001. "Minority Labour Force Participation in the Post Fordist Era: The Case of Arabs in Israel." *Work, Employment and Society* 15(4):781-802.

Week 11 (March 30, April 2) - National Cleavage: Palestinian Citizens of Israel

Yonay, Yuval and Vered Kraus. 2013. "Ethnicity, Gender, and Exclusion: Which Occupations Are Open to Israeli Palestinian Women?" pp. 87-109 in *Palestinians in the Israeli Labor Market: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, edited by Nabil Khattab and Sami Miaari. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Yiftachel, Oren. 2003. "Bedouin-Arabs and the Israeli Settler State: Land Policies and Indigenous Resistance," pp. 21-47 in *The Future of Indigenous Peoples: Strategies for Survival and Development*, edited by Duane Champagne and Ismael Abu-Saad. UCLA American Indian Studies Center.

Week 12 (April 7, 9) - National Cleavage: Labor Migrants

Raijman, Rebeca. 2012. "Foreigners and Outsiders: Exclusionist Attitudes towards Labor Migrants in Israel." *International Migration* 51 (1):136-151.

Kemp, Adriana, Rebeca Raijman, Julia Resnik and Silvina Schammah-Gesser. 2000. "Contesting the Limits of Political Participation: Latinos and Black African Migrant Workers in Israel". *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23 (1):94-119.

Week 13 (April 14, 16) – Gender Cleavage

Ekert-Jaffe, Olivia, and Haya Stier. 2009. "Normative or Economic Behavior? Fertility and Women's Employment in Israel." *Social Science Research* 38(3): 644-655.

Orna Sasson-Levy. 2007. "Contradictory Consequences of Mandatory Conscription: The Case of Women Secretaries in the Israeli Military." *Gender & Society* 21(4): 481-507.

Remennick, Larissa. 2008. "Contested Motherhood in the Ethnic State: Voices from an Israeli Postpartum Ward." *Ethnicities* 8(2): 199-226.

Week 14 (April 21, 23) - Class Presentations

Week 15 (April 28, 30) – Summary

Raijman, Rebecca. 2010. "Citizenship Status, Ethno-National Origin and Entitlement to Rights: Majority Attitudes towards Minorities and Immigrants in Israel". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36 (1):87-106.

Mizrachi, Nissim and Hanna Herzog, H. 2012. "Participatory Destigmatization Strategies among Palestinian Citizens of Israel, Ethiopian Jews and Mizrahi Jews in Israel." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 35(3):418-435.