Introduction to Contemporary Israeli Society
Summer Course

Instructor: Irit Freedman
Irit freedman is writing her PhD at the faculty of Education, the University of Haifa. Her research interests are the Israeli society, the Japanese society, food, culture, education and gender.

Her current research focuses on cognitive and behavioral aspects related to food in Israeli preschool children.

Her M.A. studies in Anthropology dealt with cultural aspects of food in the Japanese society, for which she spent an extensive period of time as a research student at Hokkaido University, Japan.

Class meets:

Introduction:
This course seeks to unravel the complexity of the Israeli political, social, and cultural aspects and provide tools for understanding the uniqueness of Israeli society and peoples. Students will read and discuss issues such as religion and democracy; ethnicity and nationalism; cultural diversity; gender, media and popular culture. The course introduces Israel’s contemporary society through a holistic approach using lectures, films, and discussions.

Requirement:
Participation

Final Presentation

Topic 1: Pre-State and early stages of nation building
Lesson 1 (13.7): Introduction to the course, Overview of Zionism, Modern history of Eretz Israel/Palestine
Lesson 2 (17.7): The Holocaust and its impact on Israel
In-class viewing of the film “Operation Thunderbolt”
Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3LTfZ1CZ1g&spfreload=10

Topic 2: The Israeli-Palestinian conflict
Lesson 3 (20.7): The Arab-Palestinian minority in Israel
Lesson 4 (24.7): Military and society relations
In-class viewing of the film Waltz with Basir (2008)

Lesson 5 (27.7): Peace and Wars
Topic 3: Religion, ethnicity, and gender
Lesson 6 (31.7): Religious Secular Divide – part 1
In-class viewing of the film “Haredi: The Ultra-Orthodox Community in Israel” (2008-2009)

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGJg1HPPZw

Lesson 7 (3.8): Religious Secular Divide – part 2
Lesson 8 (7.8): Ethnicity divide
In-class viewing of the film “Late Wedding”


Lesson 9: Gender, gender and its relation to religion and ethnicity, Israel as a ‘femilism’ society
Lesson 10: Education in Israel- guest speaker
Lesson 11: Open space discussion
Lesson 12: Conclusions: Is there an Israeli culture?