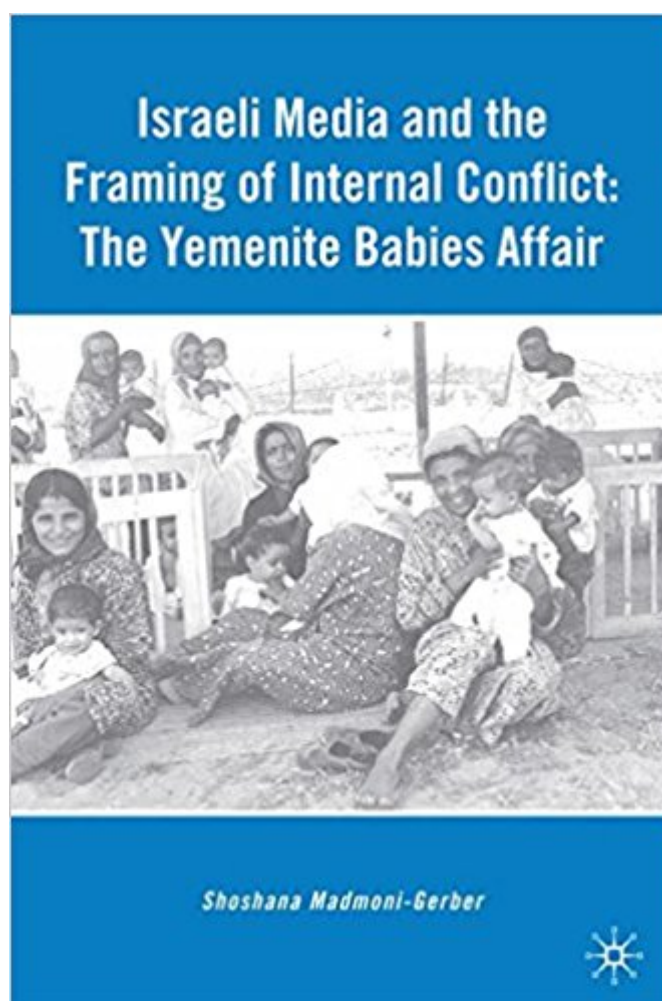


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Israeli Media And The Framing Of Internal Conflict: The Yemenite Babies Affair



Synopsis

A study of the media coverage of the Yemenite Babies Affair - the story of the alleged kidnapping of hundreds of Yemenite babies from their families upon arrival to Israel in the early 1950s.

Examining the role played by the media and by racism, this book is part of a growing trend to expand perspectives within Israeli scholarship.

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Customer Reviews

"In treating this subject, Madoni-Gerber provides an intriguing case study for what has befallen other isolated minorities worldwide when thrust into modern societies. Summing Up: Recommended.

Upper-division undergraduates through faculty." - CHOICE "As a feminist legal realist theorist, I find

[Israeli Media and the Framing of Internal Conflict] to be a pioneering document both academically and symbolically. It challenges three main interrelated and established themes, which I consider to

be central in the process of post-colonialist writing: the academic importance of the substance researched and the methodologies deployed, the symbolic significance of who is writing, and the

notion of resistance." - Claris Harbon, Holy Land Studies "Few books today raise more profoundly disturbing questions about identity, internal orientalism, modes of unofficial censorship, and the

government of Israel than this brave and important book." - Steven C. Caton, Professor of Contemporary Arab Society and Director, Center for Middle East Studies, Harvard University, USA

"This brilliantly written and meticulously researched book explores one of the darkest chapters of those oppressive relations . . . This book belongs on your bookshelf in the small but ever-growing library of Mizrahi (Middle Eastern Jewish) independent and alternative writing on the history of the

Jews in modern times" - Sami Shalom Chetrit, Israeli poet and scholar, Queens College, CUNY, USA "Madmoni-Gerber tells a shocking story nobody wants to hear . . . Simultaneously critical and compassionate, Madmoni-Gerber explores the painful border between the personal and the political, between Israel's national story and her family's immigrant experience." - James E. Young, Professor and Chair, Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA "Madmoni-Gerber's lucid book on the Kidnapped Yemeni Babies' Affair is the fruit of scrupulous long-term research and eloquent writing. It is the first full scale book in English on the subject that transgresses the Hebrew-language translation blockade on the Affair. Her analysis of the state of Israel's kidnapping and selling for adoption Yemeni-Jewish babies serve as a major case study to illustrate the intra-Jewish racism characterizing state ideologies, policies, and practices as well as daily life in the state that has declared itself to be homeland for all Jews. Through interviews and archival research, Madmoni-Gerber illuminates the bureaucratic and legal red tapes the state has wrapped around the Jews from the Muslim World and the Middle East who tried to resist this racism by demanding their inalienable rights to parent their children and around the activists who sought to unearth the state's role in the affair. Israelis loyally call their printed and electronic media 'the tribal fire,' and often ignore its embeddedness in the regime. Contextualizing the tools of critical cultural studies Madmoni-Gerber examines the modes in which this media acted in tandem with the regime to conceal and contain the Affair fearing that unearthing its truth would lead to the undoing of the State as a Jewish refuge where all Jews are to be equal. In so doing, Madmoni-Gerber provides the first ever study of Israel's media through the optics of the venerable Subaltern Studies school. This book is a must read for those wishing to gain a deeper understanding of the racial formations of the Palestine/Israel conflict and its inextricable links to Israel's internal racism against non-European Jews of darker hues." - Smadar Lavie, author of *The Poetics of Military Occupation* and co-editor of *Displacement, Diaspora, and Geographies of Identity*

Shoshana Madmoni-Gerber is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication and Journalism at Suffolk University, USA.

Oppression of the Yemenite by Their Ashkenazi Brethren It was at the beginning of the nation state's history that almost the entire Jewish population of Yemen was airlifted to Israel in what was called "operation magic carpet". The story made front page and everyone thought they would live happily ever after. Unfortunately there was a very dark side to this "In gathering of the Exiles" thousands of babies were kidnapped or went missing depending on who you listen to. The Yemenite Jews

complained but no one in the government listened. Today it is still open wound. A wound that will not heal until a proper investigation occurs and the truth is revealed. The obstacle to this revelation is the Israeli government. Yemenite author, Shoshana Madmoni Gerber, has investigated the Israeli government's cover up of this issue through the lenses of scholarly critique and a thorough analysis of how the Israeli government has historically treated the Jews from the Middle East. From the beginning Israel has maintained itself as a European country smack dab in the Middle East. Anything Arabic or Middle Eastern was deemed as primitive and barbaric, that included Middle Eastern Jews. In order to reduce their dependency on local Palestinian labor the Ashkenazi Zionists imported Middle Eastern or Mizrahi Jews over as cheap labor. Once brought over the Mizrahim were doused with DDT and put into tin shacks, while Ashkenazi Jews were given better housing and living conditions. The Yemenites were treated even worse. They were subject to physical abuse, theft of sacred objects and the kidnapping of their children. When they tried to make their voices heard the Israeli press was instrumental in silencing them. The press which is dominated by the government portrays the Mizrahim as primitive and backward. The press created the impression that the Yemenites were unclean and did not care for their children, yet the opposite was true. They did care for their children and when they spoke up and took action against their plight the press and government made them seem like violent separatists bent on destroying national unity. Three inquiries were set up which could only ask questions yielded nothing. This is one of the greatest tragedies in Israel's history. Jews oppressing fellow Jews. A good documentation of Israel's real face one that she tries to hide from the world.

I have been waiting years, no decades for a full length book on Yemenite Jews. It is a pity it had to be published in US rather than in Israel. Among the things I learned were a) the Yemenite Baby Affair was really a Mizrahi baby affair, as one third of the kidnaped babies were non Yemenite b) many Yemenite artefacts were stolen in Israel, such as ancient hand written Bibles and jewelry c) the Israeli press coverage has been complicit in an ongoing coverup that prevents admission and closure of what really happened fifty years ago. The Israeli investigative bodies either did not have or use the right of subpoena. The investigations were stonewalled by individuals who include Shimon Peres and Aharon Barak, among others. Yehuda Hiss, the state pathologist, falsified a genetic test in 1997 contradicting a Hadassah Hospital test showing a 99.9 % certainty of maternity involving an LA woman and her Yemenite mother from whom she was kidnaped almost 60 years ago. Hence the coverup continues. The basic journalist questions of who, when, where, what, why and how, that I learned in ninth grade, never ever appear in the Israeli press accounts of what happened. There

remains no admission of obvious fact, no apology, and continued stonewalling. The many contradictory defenses of potential parties to the crimes (which have never been called such) more or less amount to a confession.

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