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"To Be Free in Our Country": Fighting the *Kulturkampf* With Tzerie Meretz

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Israeli society is deeply divided along religious-secular lines in a manner characteristic of *kulturkampf*. This dissertation discusses the role of the Meretz political party in this struggle, building on ethnographic research carried out with the youth sections of the party in 1999 and 2000 and subsequent peace activism. The history and nature of the Jewish *kulturkampf* are charted and described, as is the development of the secular Jewish identity community. Interview excerpts are used to elucidate the understandings and experience of culture war and Jewish identification from the standpoint of committed secular activists. Finally, predictions are made for the future trajectory of the *kulturkampf*.



Figure 1: A RATZ sticker with Herzl in the background:
 "A Halakhic State- The State is Gone!"

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Table of Contents

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Illustrations	viii
 <u>Chapter 1: Introduction</u>	 1
Why Meretz?	2
Why Study the Israeli <i>Kulturkampf</i>	5
Surrender and Activism as Ethnographic Practice	8
The Problem of Identity	13
Sleeping My Way to the Top	18
An Overview of the Dissertation	19
 <u>Chapter 2: The History of the Jewish <i>Kulturkampf</i></u>	 22
Part 1: The <i>Haskala</i>	22
Social and Economic Change and the Birth of the Secular Jew	22
The Jewish Enlightenment	24
Parry and Riposte: The Spinozan Excommunication	26
Berlin: Revival to Reformation	28
Moses Mendelssohn	28
The Late <i>Haskala</i> : The Development of Secular Anti-Clericalism	31
Russia: Fracture, Reform and Exodus	34
Part 2: The Zionist Movement	38
Back to the Future: Imagining a Hebrew People	38
Universalism or Particularism?	41
The <i>Halutz</i>	42
Labour-Zionist Cultural Production	44
Statism	45
Revolution and Dissensus: The Fracturing of Israeli Civil Religion	47
Conclusion	50

<u>Chapter 3: The Israeli Kulturkampf</u>	51
Defining the Israeli Kulturkampf	51
Denying the <i>Kulturkampf</i>	55
Activists On the <i>Kulturkampf</i>	58
Whose Status Quo?	61
Religious Coercion	63
Keeping Kosher Coercion	65
From Cyprus With Love: Religious Marriage and the Sundering of <i>Am Israel</i>	69
'Shabbat: My Free Day'	75
The Haredi Draft Exemption	84
The Home Front: Fighting for Towns and Neighbourhoods	88
<i>Ba'alei Teshuvah</i> : A Threat to Secular Israel?	93
Barak's Civil Reform Package	96
Conclusion	97
 <u>Chapter 4: An Occupied Identity</u>	 99
1967: New Zion	100
The National-Religious	101
Gush Emunim ('Bloc of the Faithful')	104
Judeo-Nazi: Kahane and <i>Kulturkampf</i>	109
Transferring Democracy: Secular-Ultra-Nationalism and the Jewish Citizen	112
The Peace Movement	114
Yitzhak on the Altar	119
Oslo: Incitement and Regicide	120
Where were you when you were needed?	122
Re-Imagining Rabin: The Canonisation of a Secular Saint	125
The Palestinians: Constructing Alterity	131
Attitudes to the Occupation and Peace Process	136
Fighting for Votes in the Territories	140

<u>Chapter 5: Jewish Identity Politics</u>	143
In Search of the Secular Jew	143
National Identity and Secular Israel	146
Secular Living Secular Jewish Identity	151
Israeli Identity	160
Who is a Jew?	166
Conclusion	175
 <u>Chapter 6: Secular-Jewish Socialisation</u>	 176
A Response to the Guttman Report	176
The Little Tradition: <i>Hag</i> and Family as the Seat of Jewish Identity	179
Passover	182
Reclaiming <i>Pessach</i> in Jerusalem	189
Yom Kippur	193
Spirituality, God and Religion	197
Socialising Children into Jewish Identity	202
Family Politics	206
The Educated Jew	210
 <u>Chapter 7: Postzionism, the Army and the <i>Shoa</i></u>	 215
Will the Real Postzionist Please Stand Up?	215
The Mutiny Against Collectivism	219
What is Zionism	221
Definition Problems	221
Postzionist Tendencies	222
Zion as Safe-Haven	225
Zionism as Nation-Building	227
Zionist Symbols	231
Negation of the <i>Galut</i>	234
The Army	240
The Holocaust	248
Holocaust Day	253

<u>Chapter 8: Meretz as Identity Community</u>	257
Genealogy	257
Ideology	262
The Peace Process	262
Bring on the Culture War	265
Civil and Human Rights	267
Implementing Rights Reform: Meretz' Basic Laws	270
Meretz Reds	273
The Public Housing Law: A Socialist or Elitist Party?	278
Flower Children	282
Self-Criticism or Self-Evisceration?	285
Is Meretz Corrupt?	287
Meretz and Jewish Identity Politics	292
 <u>Chapter 9: Shas v Meretz</u>	 297
Imbuing Hatred	300
"Rak Lo Shas": Meretz and Shas in Coalition 1999-2000	304
Meretz and Deri	310
The Education <i>Kulturkampf</i>	312
Is Meretz Anti-Religious?	319
 <u>Chapter 10: Conclusion</u>	 326
A Summation	326
Meretz' Future	329
<i>Kulturkampf</i> Prognostications	330
 Appendices	 333
Glossary	339
Bibliography	348

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: A RATZ sticker with Herzl in the background: "A <i>Halakhic</i> State- The State is Gone!"	ii
Figure 2: A typical intersection.	12
Figure 3: Meretz protesting <i>haredi</i> efforts to close a bridge leading into Bnei B'rak.	75
Figure 4: A Meretz protest against <i>haredi</i> efforts to close Bar Ilan St.	80
Figure 5: A bumper sticker: "Shabbat: My free day, Meretz".	81
Figure 6: One protestor pulls another away from the car that tried to run over demonstrators at the Yovel rally.	90
Figure 7: A Meretz activist argues with a Chabad proselytiser outside a secular school. "A child for a child".	93
Figure 8: "Israel will not become Iran".	94
Figure 9: Meretz & Peace Now protest at a Tel Aviv meeting of <i>haredi</i> and settler rabbis hosted by Chabad.	99
Figure 10: Tzerie Meretz Rabin Day Sticker, "Peace".	125
Figure 11: A Tzerie Stand at Rabin Day	128
Figure 12: At Yonatan's Trailer.	141
Figure 13: The Ashdod march gets underway.	279

- Figure 14: An Ashdod Sephardi Housing tenant waves the Meretz flag. 280
- Figure 15: Sarid shown kissing *haredi* ass at the decisive Meretz Council meeting. 305
- Figure 16: Anti-Shas sticker from post-election 1999 showing *Shas* hand sign. "Shas in the government, Get Him Out" (aping words of ●vadia Yosef targeted at a secular journalist. 310