



# Toward an Updated Ethnographic Questionnaire on Israeli Time

Sala-Manca

As part of the processes of researching the connection between ethnography and contemporary art (some of which was presented in “The Ethnographic Department” exhibit in the Museum of the Contemporary at the Mamuta Center in Hansen House in 2014), we have composed a questionnaire on the Israeli sound regime.

Similar to a Pavlov experiment, the regime in Israel has succeeded in shaping unique local behavioral patterns, distinguishing between membership groups, evoking emotions, and even creating a new local tradition—all by means of sound.

The place of sound as a central means for the individual’s equilibrium is known to all. The social use of sound as a means for shaping and control is the result of new technologies developed in the past century, and draws inspiration from older traditions of using sound for social policing during military or religious ceremonies.

In issue No. 18 of the online art magazine *Maarav*<sup>1</sup> (What does Public Space do?), we have chosen to distribute the ethnographic questionnaire on “Israeli Time”. Our questionnaire expands or updates the ethnographic questionnaire composed by Sh. An-sky in Eastern Europe a hundred years ago during an ethnographic expedition financed by Baron Günzburg.<sup>2</sup> Members of the expedition headed

<sup>1</sup> <http://maarav.org.il/english/2016/05/02/toward-an-updated-ethnographic-questionnaire-on-israeli-time-sala-manca-group/> (accessed February 2022)

<sup>2</sup> See Nathaniel Deutsch. *The Jewish Dark Continent: Life and Death in the Russian Pale of Settlement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

by An-sky composed a questionnaire comprising 2087 questions pertaining to the life of Jews from birth to death, special customs, local traditions, the cycle of the Jewish year, and more. The expedition's work was terminated with the outbreak of World War I on 28 July 1914.

The following questions expand the questionnaire with ethnographic questions associated with the Israeli sound regime, and we ask readers to become information scientists and provide their testimony in order to expand our understanding of sound policing.

To complete the questionnaire, visit the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/a/digitalartlab.org.il/forms/d/1MHsOGzdLqvBn1z8KOebVmvGr9xZg0iWpM7L5V1l\\_YuQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/a/digitalartlab.org.il/forms/d/1MHsOGzdLqvBn1z8KOebVmvGr9xZg0iWpM7L5V1l_YuQ/viewform)

Thank you for participating,

**Lea Mauas and Diego Rotman**

## Section 5.4 | Israeli Time: Sirens

Name Roshel

Age 42

Place of residence JERUSALEM

Country of Birth USA

1. What is the difference between a Shabbat siren and a genuine alarm, a siren in time of emergency or war?

Shabbat siren indicates that Shabbat is about to start.  
The emergency alert is a continuous sound.

2. How do you feel when you hear the Remembrance Day siren?

A sense of sadness that we are still remembering the death  
of young soldiers. Not to say that we would not need our  
army but some deaths might have been avoided if we lived  
in a different political situation.

3. How do you feel when you hear the Holocaust Remembrance Day siren?

Grateful that we live in a country that makes  
note of what happened and keeps history alive.

4. How do you feel when you hear the Shabbat siren?

Nothing special.

5. How do you feel when you hear a genuine alarm?

A little worried until I know the reason.

6. When was the last time you heard a siren or alarm?

Gulf war

7. What did you do when you heard it?

Turned the TV on to see what was the reason  
and what had to be done -

8. Do you know any stories, jokes, or sayings about sirens or alarms? Tell them.

No, I probably heard but I don't remember.

9. What do you tell your children in cases of a genuine alarm?

When they were young just to relax and sit with each  
other. If they were very young I would hold them

10. What do you tell your children about the Remembrance Day siren?

How do they respond or what questions do they ask?

Most explanations were in school. Use just  
some sage pointing a little clearer if necessary -

11. Do you use any other means to be aware of a particular situation

(Shabbat, Remembrance Day, Holocaust Remembrance Day, war)?

Describe them.

Just Shabbat - It's usually a family night which  
I love -

12. Can you perform the siren?

Ridiculous - No.

13. Do you remember the first time? What are your memories of that time?

I don't think I ever performed as a siren -

14. Do you remember the last time? What are your memories of that time?

No answer

15. What happens to your body (and mind) at the moment a siren is sounded for: (a) Shabbat; (b) Remembrance Day; (c) Holocaust

Remembrance Day; (d) state of emergency or war?

A) happiness and relaxation - B) SAD C) I realize we are in a current situation outside Israel of a resurgence of antisemitism - D) I want to know the reason -

16. If we heard a siren right now, what would you do?

Listen to the radio to try to understand why -

17. What would you do if you were outside? Or in the bathroom?

Outside - look for shelter  
In bathroom - finish what I was doing and go to listen to the radio

18. What does the sound of a siren symbolize for you or remind you of?

Not much -

19. Have you heard similar sounds in other countries? What did you feel?

No -

20. Are you familiar with the myth of Odysseus and his attitude toward the Siren? Provide details.

If I remember correctly, the sirens had a musical sound. Odysseus was able to ignore them and survive -

21. Do you need sirens? If so, which ones? Explain why.

Fire, Police, Ambulance and Emergency



22. How do you differentiate between the different types of alarms/sirens?

According to the sound

23. What are your thoughts on how the various sirens affect: (a)

Palestinians; (b) foreign workers; (c) Israeli Jews; (d) non-Israeli Jews;

(e) foreign tourists; (f) animals; (g) children; (h) politicians; (i) religious

figures; (j) police officers; (k) soldiers.

A) I believe they are also concerned but also fearful that they may be put in a lockdown -  
Foreign workers & tourists are probably confused -

24. Is there a difference in the behavior of men and women with regard to sirens? Explain.

Not in my opinion

25. When the siren is sounded on Remembrance Day, do you stand still? If

there are people who do not stand still, what do you think about them?

I do stand still - I am annoyed about people  
waking me not standing - I'm not putting Palestinians in  
this equation

26. When the siren is sounded on Holocaust Remembrance Day, do you stand still? If there are people who do not stand still, what do you think about them?

As above - I do stand still and feel the same  
as above -

27. On Saturday, when the Shabbat siren is sounded what are your physical actions?

Nothing -

28. What are your physical actions at the sound of a genuine alarm?

An uneasy feel in the pit of my stomach -



יום הזכרון - 8 ש"ח

יום שואה - 10 ש"ח

שבת - 5 ש"ח

זעקת אמת - 12 ש"ח

