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## **From an onomastic perspective: Cultural consolidation in the Jewish sector in Israel**

Israel was established as a melting pot society, and over the years a unique Israeli culture has developed. Consequently, according to Moyal and Ro'I (2014), today many Israelis define themselves primarily as Israelis rather than as Jews. This finding can be explained by the central role of the Zionist movement (Ben-Israel, 2004) in accordance with the national model suggested by Hroch (1985). According to Weitman (1988), the first names given to Jewish newborns can often distinguish the national identity of their parents. My analysis encompassed the six thousand most prevalent first names given to Jewish newborns in Israel between 1948 and 2007 and a similar number of rare first names. In addition, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 45 parents to gain meaningful insights about their perspectives as reflected in their choice of names. The first names were divided into four groups according to origin: traditional names used in the Diaspora, names taken mainly from the Bible that were reinstated during the political development of the Zionist movement, new names generated from spoken Hebrew, and finally names adopted from foreign languages with no Hebrew meaning. The results point to three main onomastic periods: From 1948 through 1960, parents gave traditional names that were common in the Diaspora. Between 1960 and 1980, Israelis generally chose names that were reinstated from the Bible and new names influenced by the cultural consolidation process. Since the beginning of the 1980s, Israeli onomastics took over, though naming has also been influenced by western onomastics resulting from globalization in Israel.

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