

HIS 3397

History of Zionism and the State of Israel

Winter 2016

Professor Pierre Anctil
Department of History, University of Ottawa

Monday, 1:00 to 2:30 p. m.
Wednesday, 11h30 to 13h00 p.m.

Morisset Hall, MRT 221

Office hours Tuesday 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.
or by appointment

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ABSTRACT

This class is an exploration of the emergence of Jewish nationalism in the late nineteenth century, and of Zionism more specifically, as one possible course of action to bring a solution to the long standing problem of Jewish emancipation in Europe. Why and how did this new understanding of Jewish identity appear and what options were presented by different political factions, forming multiple strands of discourse? Of particular importance in this context will be the proposals made by Theodor Herzl and the concrete situation of Jews in the Russian Empire. Once Jewish immigration to Palestine is set into motion in the late nineteenth century, a series of historical events both in Europe and in the Middle East will affect the course of Zionism, such as World War I, the Balfour Declaration, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, European colonialism and the British mandate over Palestine. Of particular importance in this respect as defining moments of World Jewish history are the rise of Nazi Germany, World War II and the Holocaust. Different waves of Jewish immigration from different parts of Europe will also affect the evolution of Zionism in the first half of the twentieth century. As these circumstances unfold, a Jewish state appears in 1948, which radically alters the evolution of Zionism. Students will study the social, economic and geostrategic forces that shaped modern Israel, including various military conflicts and the massive influx of Jews from different countries. Of particular importance will be the Six Day and Yom Kippur wars, the conflict with surrounding Arab states, plus recent attempts at a peaceful solution up to the Oslo accord of 1993. The class will end with an analysis of the basic features of Israeli society at the turn of the century and of its major political institutions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

- Introduce the notion of modernity in history and in particular its impact on peripheral populations and regions, leading to new notions of nationalism, ethnic identity and social advancement.
- Familiarize the students with the dominant aspects of contemporary Jewish history through the study of the Zionist movement in Europe and the Middle East.
- Discuss the emergence of a Jewish State in the context of post-modern nationalism and decolonization, and the consequences of this historical development.
- Develop a better grasp of Israeli history in the period after 1948 and of the evolution of this society in the context of a long standing conflict with the Arab states and the Palestinian population.
- Gain a serious understanding of the political forces at play in the Middle East in the twentieth century with regards to Arab nationalism and the political forces shaping modern Arab countries.
- Approach the major historical events of the twentieth century through the prism of human rights legislation and the protection of cultural minorities.

BREAKDOWN OF MARKS

- Outline of research project for final paper: 20 % (due in class, February 8).
- Mid-term in class exam: 30 % (in class, March 7).
- Final paper: 50 % (due in class, April 11).

The final paper is a personal research project based on primary and secondary sources. Papers should be between 15 and 20 pages, bibliography included, and are due in class on April 5. An outline of the final paper must be submitted in class on February 9, having between 4 and 5 pages, including a list of documentary resources and a bibliography.

REQUIRED READINGS (books in bold available at the University bookstore).

- **Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.**
- **William L. Cleaveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 2013, 580 p.**
- **Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.**

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

- Benjamin Nathan, *Beyond the Pale, the Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia*, Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 2004, 424 p.
- Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea, a Historical Analysis and Reader*, Philadelphia, the Jewish Publication Society, 1997, 648 p.
- Calvin Goldscheider, *Israeli Society in the Twenty-First Century – Immigration, Inequality and Religious Conflict*, Waltham, Mass., Brandeis University Press, 2015, 312 p.

REFERENCE BOOKS TO BE CONSULTED (available at the reserve, Morisset Library). There exists a great number of works and studies on Judaism and Jewish history in the twentieth century. The following titles are suggestions for further readings and for developing a broader knowledge.

On Judaism in general

- H. H. Ben-Sasson, *a History of the Jewish People*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1976, 1170 p.
- Rabbi Hayim Halevy Donin, *To Be a Jew. A Guide to Jewish Observance in Contemporary Life*, New York, Basic Books, 1991, 368 p.
- Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz, dir., *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary Evidence*, 2011, Oxford University Press, 2011, 912 p.
- *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Detroit, Macmillan Reference USA, 2007, on line at Morisset Library, University of Ottawa
- Yosef Yerushalmi, *Zakhor, Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, Seattle, University of Washington Press, 1982, 154 p.
- *The Babylonian Talmud translated into English for the First Time*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2013, 502 p.

On the history of Jews in the Russian Empire and in Europe

- Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics. Socialism, Nationalism & the Russian Jews, 1862-1917*, Cambridge, Eng., Cambridge University Press, 1981, 686 p.
- Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn, dir., *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*, Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008, 320 p.
- Jonathan Frankel, *Crisis, Revolution, and Russian Jews*, Cambridge, Eng., Cambridge University Press, 2009, 324 p.
- Gershon D. Hundert, dir., *The YIVO Encyclopaedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, New Haven, 2008, 2448 p., on line at <http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/>

- Diane K. Roskies, David G. Roskies: *The Shtetl Book: An Introduction To East European Jewish Life And Lore*. Ktav Publishing House, New York, 2007, 300 p.

On the Holocaust

- Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2008, 394 p.
- Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1889-1936 Hubris*, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 2000, 912 p.
- Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936-1945 Nemesis*, New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 2001, 1210 p.
- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945. The Years of Extermination*, New York, Harper Collins, 2009, 512 p.
- Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of European Jews*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2003, 1426 p.
- Lucy Dawidowicz, *The War against the Jews, 1933-1945*, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, Bantam, 1986, 512 p.

On the history of Jews in Palestine and Israel

- Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: a Historical Analysis and Reader*, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1997, 656 p.
- Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*, New York, Vintage, 2001, 800 p.
- Martin Gilbert, *Israel, a History*, New York, Harper Collins, 2008, 785 p.
- Walter Laqueur, *The History of Zionism*, New York, I. B. Tauris Academic, 2003, 672 p.
- Jonathan Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration. The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Toronto, Anchor Canada, 2012, 432 p.
- Jehuda Reinharz and Itamar Babinovitch, *Israel in the Middle East, Documents and Readings on Society, Politics and Foreign Relations, 1948 – Present*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, 422 p.
- S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion; Dreams, Designs and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlements*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2011, 360 p.
- Robert I. Rotberg (ed.) *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict; History's Double Helix*, Bloomington, In., Indiana University Press, Indiana Series on the Middle East, 2006, 296 p.

Personal narratives of the Middle East conflict

- Sari Nusseibeh, *Once upon a Country; a Palestinian Life*, New York, Picador, 2008, 584 p.
- Amos Oz, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*, New York, Harcourt, 2005, 560 p.

COURSE PLAN

WEEK 1 – January 11 and 13 – Jewish emancipation in the Modern World

Course objectives and type of discussions to be had in class during the semester / Research project and participation / Evaluation criteria for the students / Syllabus content / Oral presentation at mid semester and at the end of the course / Religious definition of Judaism, of Jewish identity and of anti-Semitism / Why do we begin with the history of Judaism in France?

WEEK 2 – January 18 and 20 – The emergence of Zionism

Assimilation vs Jewish nationalism / the emergence of the notion of Zionism in Central Europe in the late nineteenth century / Theodor Herzl and the first Zionist Congress of 1897. The various forms of Zionism and how they are linked to broader ideological currents.

Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: a Historical Analysis and Reader*, Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1997, 656 p.

- Please read the texts by Leo Pinsker, Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, p. 178-242.

Hevda Ben-Israel, “Zionism and European Nationalisms: Comparative Aspects” in *Israel Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2003, p. 91-104,

WEEK 3 – January 25 and 27 – The Situation of Jews in the Russian Empire

The situation of Jews in Eastern Europe and in the Russian Empire leading to the first Aliyah of 1881-1903. / The context presiding over a first Jewish migration to the Middle East / The beginnings of Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine / The Mass migration to the Americas and the Birth of North American Jewry.

Benjamin Nathan, *Beyond the Pale, the Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia*, Berkeley, California, University of California Press, 2004, 424 p.

- Please read chapter 4, “Conflict and Community”, p. 123-164, and chapter 5, “The Geography of Jewish Politics”, p. 165-198.

WEEK 4 – February 1st and 3rd – First Jewish Migrations to the Middle East

The Second Aliyah and the Russian Revolution of 1905 and 1917 / The founding of Tel-Aviv in 1909 / Consequences of the First World War / The position of the Great European powers in the Middle East following the Sikes-Picot agreement of 1916 / The Balfour declaration of 1917 / The issue of the revival of the Hebrew language / Kibbutzim and moshavim.

Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.

- Please read “Two Worlds Collide”, “the Jewish Story” and “the Arab Story”, p. 1-71.

WEEK 5 – February 8 and 10 – The Great Transformation

- **Submission: outline of personal project for final paper, in class, 4 to 5 pages.**

The Peace treaties and the end of Ottoman rule in Palestine / The interwar years and European colonialism in the Middle East / The British mandate / The emergence of a Jewish society in Palestine / The reaction of the Arab population to increased Jewish immigration / The governance of the yishuv.

William L. Cleaveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 2013, 580 p.

- Please read Part 2, “The Beginnings of the Era of Transformation”, p. 53-136.

WEEK 6 – RECESS – February 15 to 20

WEEK 7 – February 22 to 24 – The Destruction of European Jewry

The situation of Jews in Europe in the interwar period / The third, fourth and fifth aliyot / The Rise of Nazi Germany and the Second World War / The contributions of German and Polish Jewries to the Zionist project before and during the war / Aliyah Beth and clandestine immigration / The Holocaust and its consequences on Zionism.

Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.

- Please read Part II 1918-1948 “State-in-the-Making”, p. 67-132.

WEEK 8 – February 29 and March 2nd – The Birth of the State of Israel

The end of World War II and massive immigration from Europe / The UN partition plan and the position of the world powers / The conditions surrounding the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 and the figure of Ben-Gurion / The 1948 War of Independence and its legacy / the Nakba / The political parties in Israel.

Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.

- Please read part III, 1948-67 “Nation Building”, p. 155-222.

William L. Cleaveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 2013, 580 p.

- Please read Part 3, “The Struggle for Independence”, p. 179-251.

WEEK 9 – March 7 and 9 – Internal Struggles

- **Mid-term exam in class, March 7
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

Israeli Society 1949-1967 / The Arab refugee problem / The Suez crisis of 1956 / The economic development of Israel and the Zionist ideological narrative of the Labor party / Socialism and the Histadrut / Secular Zionism vs Religious Zionism / Relations of Israeli society with the Arab world / International relations.

Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.

- Please read Part III “Nation Building”, p. 222-294.

WEEK 10 – March 14 and 16 – Wars and Peace Treaties

The Six Day war of 1967 and the Yom Kippur war of 1973 / UN resolution 242 / Geo-strategic considerations following the 1979 peace treaty with Egypt / Soviet Russia and the United States in the Middle East / Decolonisation in Africa and Asia / Demographic trends.

Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.

- Please read Part IV 1967-1977 “A Decade of War”, p. 295-356.

Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.

- Please read “The Re-Emergence of the Palestinians” p. 113-137.

WEEK 11 – March 21 and 23 -

Israeli society 1973-1993 / Rise of Palestinian nationalism and PLO strategies at state building / Administering the West Bank / Rise of the Likud and the Lebanese war of 1982 / The first intifada / The Israeli legal and parliamentary systems.

Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.

- Please read p. 137-149.

William L. Cleaveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, Boulder, Co., Westview Press, 2013, 580 p.

- Please read Part 6, “Challenges to the Existing Order”, p. 439-486.

WEEK 12 – March 28 and 30 – The Near Peace

The Oslo Accords of 1993 and the 2000 Camp David Summit / the Second intifada / Social and Economic characteristics of Israel and the Palestine Authority at the turn of the present century / Demographic trends / The multiple segments of Israeli society / The political divisions within Palestinian society.

Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.

- Please read “The First Glance at Peace” and “The Fourth Stage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict”, p. 149-220.

WEEK 13 – April 4 and 6 – Prospects for peace

The situation since the half failure of the peace accords / The cost of the impasse in Israel and in the Palestinian Territory / The future of the Two State solution / Jewish settlements and Jewish colonization / The realignment of the Arab Middle East since the so-called Arab Spring / Political extremism

Alan Dowty, *Israel / Palestine*, Cambridge, UK, Polity, 2012, 280 p.

- Please read “The Impasse that Remains” and “The Perfect Conflict”, p. 220-266

Anita Shapira, *Israel, a History*, Waltham, Brandeis University Press, 2012, 528 p.

- Please read Part V, 1977-2000, “Peace, War and Indecision”, p. 357-468.

WEEK 14 – April 11 – The Recent Evolution of Israeli Society

Ethnic Diversity in Israel, Jewish and Arab / the Effects of Constant Immigration on Israeli Society / Urbanization and Residential Patterns / Religiosity and Secularization / Social Inequality and Gender Roles / Education and Economic Progress.

- **Submission of final research project in class, 15 to 20 pages.**

Calvin Goldscheider, *Israeli Society in the Twenty-First Century – Immigration, Inequality and Religious Conflict*, Waltham, Mass., Brandeis University Press, 2015, 312 p.

- Please read p. 82-176.