

PROFESSOR SCOTT B. LASENSKY
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
“ISRAEL: POLITICS AND SOCIETY”
FALL 2006 - GOVERNMENT 477

Co-sponsored by the Department of Government and the Program on Jewish Civilization

Class time: Monday 3:15-4:05, Walsh 403

Office hours: Monday: before/after class by appointment & Tues-Fri: by appointment at USIP

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If there was a connection between geography and the written word, Israel would be a country of continental proportions. A casual survey of your local bookstore, the cable news networks, a university library, or any newspaper will reveal that Americans have a particular fascination with Israel. It is the Jewish State's myriad struggles – with itself, with its neighbors, and with the international system -- that so capture the imagination. It is these various struggles that provide the thematic road-map for this course. Relying on a thematic approach, rather than a historical one, is intended to give students a clearer understanding of the essential forces that shape Israeli politics and society. It is also intended to provide a foundation upon which students can later build a deeper understanding of Israel's past, present and future. Although the content of the course shifts back and forth from foreign policy to domestic politics – from external to internal struggles – it is important to remember that Israel is a case where “foreign” and “domestic” tend to be thoroughly and profoundly intermingled.

We will be reading from a wide selection of sources, including classics of intellectual history, like Shlomo Avineri's *Making of Modern Zionism* (now out of print) and newer, noteworthy works, like Gershom Gorenberg's *The Accidental Empire*. Alan Dowty's *The Jewish State* serves as the primary textbook. Along the way, we will also be reading a wide selection of academic writings, primary sources, news articles and popular essays. Guest lecturers and special visitors may join us at the seminar table throughout the semester. Students are expected to be fully involved in the course – through readings, writing assignments, in-class presentations, and participation in discussions. The course is not designed for spectators.

Course Sections:

- The Struggle with Nationalism and the Modern World (Zionism – 2 parts)
- The Struggle over State-building (Yishuv and Early Statehood)
- The Struggle for Peace and Security (Origins of Israeli Foreign & Defense Policy)
- The Struggle over Identity (Social, Ethnic, Religious and Political Rifts – 2 parts)
- The Struggle between State and People (Israel-Diaspora Relations)
- The Struggle over “State Expansion” (1967, Settlements and “Greater Israel”)
- The Struggle for Effective Political Institutions (State, Law, Party)
- The Struggle between Praetorians and Politicians (the Role of the Military)
- The Struggle over “State Contraction” (Oslo and the Quest for Permanent Borders)
- The Struggle between Welfare State and Free Market (Political Economy)
- Conclusion: The Struggle for the Future of Israel (‘Solidarity’ vs. ‘Peace’; ‘Jewish’ vs. ‘Democratic’: Compatible or Zero-Sum?)

We will do a few activities each time we meet. First, at the beginning of each class students are expected to turn in reading response papers (250-350 words) based on that week's readings. The response papers should: answer one or more of the discussion questions circulated the preceding week; or raise additional questions or critiques about the readings. Toward the beginning of each class, we'll devote some time to discussing current developments in Israel – and link these to the themes examined in the course.

At some class meetings, I will provide a brief background lecture before we spend the bulk of our time on class discussion – which will be initiated each week by a student presentation or debate focused on one of the weekly discussion questions. For the presentations/debates, students are expected to focus on the required readings. However, students should feel free to bring in additional readings, primary sources, documents, and/or audio-visual material. (A schedule will be announced at the beginning of the semester.) The final paper should focus on a controversy or debate associated with one of the sections of the course. The weekly discussion questions can be a guide to potential topics, but students are also free to come up with their own proposal for the assignment. All final projects must be approved by the instructor.

** All writing assignments should follow a uniform format (1.25 inch side margins, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, with uniform citations – parenthetical, footnote or endnote).*

Reading Material:

Required:

1. Avineri, Shlomo. *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*. New York, Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1981.
2. Dowty, Alan. *The Jewish State: A Century Later*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
3. Additional readings – per course syllabus and announcements.
4. Primary sources: most weeks we'll analyze a memoir, speech, official document, etc.
5. Current affairs – Students are required to regularly follow news reports on Israel -- these could include: *Ha'aretz*, *The Jerusalem Post*, *Yediot Aharonot*, *Israel Radio* (English service, caveat aside), *Mideast Mirror*, or *The Jerusalem Report*.

Strongly Recommended

Arian, Asher. *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic*, 2nd Ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2005.

Gorembeg, Gershon. *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Ltd., 2006

Recommended – additional readings

- Ben-Bassat, Avi. *The Israeli Economy, 1985-1998: From Government Intervention to Market Economics*, MIT Press: 2002.
- Brecher, Michael. *The Foreign Policy System of Israel: Setting, Images, Process*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.
- Eban, Abba, *Personal Witness: Israel through My Eyes*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons Publishing, 1992.
- Elon, Amos. *The Israelis: Founders and Sons*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.
- Gilbert, Martin. *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Its History in Maps*, 4th Ed. Jerusalem: Steimatzky Publishing, 1984.
- al-Haj, Majid. *Education, Empowerment, and Control: The Case of the Arabs in Israel*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995.
- Hazon, Yoram. *The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul*, New York: Basic Books, 2000.
- Hertzberg, Arthur. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997.
- Kimmerling, Baruch. *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness: State, Society, and the Military*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001.
- Maoz, Zeev, *Defending the Holy Land: A Critical Analysis of Israel's Security and Foreign Policy*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2006.
- Mazie, Steven, *Israel's Higher Law*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2006.
- Morris, Benny. *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*. New York: Vintage Books, 2001.
- Peri, Yoram. *Generals in the Cabinet Room: How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2006.
- Quandt, William B. *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1967*, Revised Ed. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001.
- Sachar, Howard M. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*. New York: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976; and *A History of Israel, Volume 2: From the Aftermath of the Yom Kippur War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987 (or newer single volume – see library reserve)

Segev, Tom. *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2000.

_____. *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust*. New York, Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1991.

_____. *1949: The First Israelis*. New York: The Free Press, 1986.

Shafir, Gershon and Yoav Peled. *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Shapira, Anita, ed. *Israeli Identity in Transition*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004

Sprinzak, Ehud, *Brother Against Brother: Violence and Extremism in Israeli Politics from Altalena to the Rabin Assassination*. New York: Free Press, 1999.

Sternhell, Zeev. *The Founding Myths of Israel*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998.

Waxman, Dov, *The Pursuit of Peace and the Crisis of Israeli Identity: Defending/Defining the Nation*, New York: Palgrave, 2006.

Course Requirements and Grading

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| • Final paper | 35% |
| • Reading responses | 35% |
| • Class presentations | 15% |
| • Attendance and participation | 15% |

Key Dates:

Monday, September 11	first day of class
Monday, September 18	first reading response due
Monday, September 25	first student presentation/debate
Monday, October 2	re-schedule?
Monday, November 6	deadline for selecting final paper topic
Monday, November 20	deadline for final paper source list
Monday, December 4	final Monday meeting
Friday, December 8	final class meeting
Monday, December 18	final paper due

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

- **The Struggle with Nationalism and the Modern World (Zionism – 2 parts)**

Week 1 – The Origins of Zionism

Required:

- Avineri – intro, Hess, Pinsker, Alkalai/Kalischer
- Dowty – ch. 3
- Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*. New York: Vintage Books, 2001, pp. 3-20 (esp. 14-20)
- Primary Source: Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation* (from Hertzberg reader)

Recommended:

- Avineri, ch. 2, 4, 5, 6
- Herzberg, *The Zionist Idea* (reader)

Week 2 – The Zionist Movement

Required:

- Avineri – Ben Yehuda, Herzl, Ahad Ha'am, Borochoy, Jabotinsky, Kook, Epilogue
- Morris – pp. 20-26, 37-45
- Ian Lustick, "Zionist Ideology and its Discontents: A Research Note," *Israel Studies Forum*, Fall 2003, vol 19:1.1
- Primary Source: Jabotinsky's "Iron Wall" essay

Recommended:

- Herzberg reader.
- Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism," in Michael N. Barnett ed., *Israel In Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*, N.Y., SUNY Press, 1996, pp.227-242.
- Primary Source: Weizman writings (in Hertzberg reader)

- **The Struggle over State-building (Yishuv and Early Statehood)**

Week 3

Required:

- Avineri – Gordon, Ben Gurion
- Morris– pp. 111-120, 135-144
- Ehud Sprinzak, *Brother Against Brother* (1999) chapter 1 "On the brink of civil war."
- Zeev Sternhell, *The Founding Myths of Israel*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998 (hardcover), Epilogue.
- Arthur Herzberg "Original Sin" on Sternhell in NYRB (1998)
- Primary Source: Declaration of Independence (May 14, 2006)

Recommended:

- Sternhell, Introduction and Chapter 1 "The Primacy of the Nation: Aaron David Gordon and the Ethos of Nation-Building"
- Kedar, Nir. "Ben-Gurion's Mamlakhtiyut: Etymological and Theoretical Roots" *Israel Studies*, Volume 7, Number 3, Fall 2002, pp. 1-44.

- Horowitz, Dan and Moshe Lissak. *Origins of the Israeli Polity: Palestine Under the Mandate*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978 – chapter 8 “The State of Israel and the Political Heritage of the Yishuv”
- Anita Shapira, “Whatever Become of ‘Negating Exile?’” in Shapira ed. *Israeli Identity in Transition*, Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004.
- Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis*. New York: The Free Press.
- **The Struggle for Peace and Security (Origins of Israeli Foreign & Defense Policy)**

Required:

- Brecher, *The Foreign Policy System of Israel*: – pp. 38-46, plus chapters 10-12
- Zeev Maoz (2006), ch. 1 pp. 3-23.
- Primary Source: Golda Meir on “The Arabs” in Brecher, p.308-311

Recommended:

- Maoz book (see above)
- Jeremy Pressman, “A Brief History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict” (2005), a concise narrative – 100 years of conflict in 15 pages! (<http://anacreon.clas.uconn.edu/~pressman/history.pdf>)
- Tom Segev, *The Seventh Million*, ch. 10-11, on Ben-Gurion’s Germany policy and reparations
- Michael Bar-Zohar on “Ben Gurion and the Policy of the Periphery,” (ch. 38) in Reinharz, Rabinovich, eds. *Israel in the Middle East*, New York: Oxford Press, 1984

- **The Struggle over Identity (Social, Ethnic, Religious and Political Rifts – 2 parts)**

Required:

- Dowty: chapters 7-9 “The Communal Split,” “Religion and Politics,” and “Arabs in Israel”
- Asher Arian - on Left-Right divides – p. 413-425 in *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic*
- Mazie ch 2. from *Israel’s Higher Law* – can a “Jewish state” also be a liberal democracy?
- Primary Source: Ka’adan case (Supreme Court decision).

Recommended:

- Shafir and Peled, *Being Israeli* (2002)
- David Gutwein “From Melting Pot to Multiculturalism; or, The Privatization of Israeli Identity,” in Shapira ed. (2004)

Recommended on Israeli Arabs:

- Majid al-Haj *Education, Empowerment and Control: The Case of the Arabs in Israel*, 1995.
- Sammy Smooha “Arab-Jewish Relations in Israel: A Deeply Divided Society,” in Anita Shapira ed. (2004)
- Eli Rekhess, "The Arabs of Israel After Oslo: Localization of the National Struggle" *Israel Studies* - Volume 7, Number 3, Fall 2002, pp. 1-44.
- Ahmad H. Sa'di, Ahmad H. "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity" *Israel Studies* - Volume 7, Number 2, Summer 2002, pp. 175-198.
- Alan Dowty “Consociationalism and the Ethnic Democracy: Israeli Arabs in Comparative Perspective”, *Israel Affairs* 5 (2-3) 1999: 169-182.

- Sammy Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, Vol. 1, Boulder: Westview, 1989.

- **The Struggle between State and People (Israel-Diaspora Relations)**

Required:

- Brecher: pp. 137-144
- Dov Waxman, "The Jewish Dimension of Israeli Foreign Policy," *Israel Studies Forum*, Fall 2003, vol 19:1.1
- Yossi Shain & Barry Bristman, "The Jewish Security Dilemma," *Orbis*, Winter 2002, 47-71.
- Primary Source: Walter Eytan memoir (excerpt) and/or Ben-Gurion-Blaustein correspondence/agreement (1950)

Recommended:

- Scott Lasensky, "Jewish Foreign Policy," paper delivered at the Association of Israel Studies annual meeting (2005).
- Shlomo Avineri, "Ideology and Israel's Foreign Policy," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 37, 1986, pp. 3-13.
- Steve Bayme et. al., "Roundtable on Yossi Beilin's The Death of the American Uncle: A Response," *Israel Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 2000).
- Yossi Beilin, *His Brother's Keeper: Israel and Diaspora Jewry in the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Schocken Books, 2000).
- Efraim Inbar, "Jews, Jewishness, and Israel's Foreign Policy," *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Vol. 2, No. 3-4 (Fall 1990).
- Shmuel Sandler, "Towards a Conceptual Framework of World Jewish Politics: State, Nation and Diaspora in a Jewish Foreign Policy," in *Israel and the Jewish World* (forthcoming)
- Gabriel Sheffer, "Israeli-Diaspora Relations in Comparative Perspectives," in *Israel in Comparative Perspective: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom*, ed. Michael N. Barnett (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996).
- Eli Lederhendler "The Diaspora Factor in Israeli Life," in Anita Shapira ed. (2004)
- Abraham H. Foxman, "Is a 'Second House' the Answer?," *Haaretz*, 14 January 2005 (see related articles on Katsav's proposal published around this time in *The Jerusalem Post*, *Forward* and *Ha'aretz* and the report of the JPPPI)

- **The Struggle over "State Expansion" (1967, Settlements and "Greater Israel")**

Required:

- Gorenberg, Gershon. *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, Ltd., 2006, chapter 2 on "Creating Facts."
- Amos Elon on Gorenberg in NYRB
- Tony Judt, "After Victory," review of Oren's *Six Days of War*, in *The New Republic*, July 25, 2002.
- Ehud Sprinzak, ch. 5 "From Pioneering to Terrorism: Gush Emunim and the Underground"
- Yoram Peri, pp. 166-169
- Primary Source: Sasson report (2005) on "illegal outposts" – excerpts

Recommended:

- Gorenberg book
- Michael Oren's *Six Days of War* (2003).
- Nadav Shelef "From 'Both Banks of the Jordan' to the 'Whole Land of Israel' Ideological Change in Revisionist Zionism," *Israel Studies* 9:1, Spring 2004, p. 125-148.
- Ian Lustick, *For the Land and the Lord*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1988/1994.
- **The Struggle for Effective Political Institutions (State, Law, Party)**

Required:

- Dowty: ch. 1 on "Democracy in Israel," ch. 4 on "Building a Civic State" and ch 6. "Erosion of Ideology"
- Arian: chapter 9 "Govt, Knesset and Judiciary"
- Lasensky Op-Ed in *The Forward* -- 2003
- Additional articles

Recommended:

- Arian, *Politics in Israel* (incl. pp. 224-235 on electoral reform)
- Israel Democracy Institute – various publications
- **The Struggle between Praetorians and Politicians (the Role of the Military) – 1/2 session**

Required:

- Dowty, ch. 5 "The Filter of Security"
- Yoram Peri, *Generals in the Cabinet Room*, – ch. 1, 14, 16
- Haaretz review of Peri (August 2006)
- Peri in *Washington Post* (August 2006)

Recommended:

- Martin van Crevald, *The Sword and the Olive: A Critical History of the Israeli Defense Force*. New York: Public Affairs, 2002.
- Yagil Levy, "How Militarization Drives Political Control of the Military: The Case of Israel," *Political Power and Social Theory* 11 (1997).

The Struggle over State Contraction (Oslo and the Quest for Permanent Borders)

Required:

- Dowty, ch. 10 "The Impact of the West Bank and Gaza"
- Aharon Kleinman, "How Israelis Negotiate," in *How Israelis and Palestinians Negotiate*, Wittes, ed., Washington, DC: USIP Press, 2005.
- Sprinzak, ch. 8 "To Kill a Prime Minister"
- Siegman in NYRB "A Historic Statement" (2001)
- Primary Source: The rise and fall of Oslo: 1. PM Yitzhak Rabin – Oslo/DOP speech at White House (9/13/1993) & Shlomo Ben-Ami post-mortem (2004).

Recommended:

- David Makovsky *Making Peace with the PLO* (Washington Institute for Near East Policy), 1995.
- Quandt, *Peace Process*, part five (emphasis on the American role), Brookings, 2001.
- Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (ed.), *As the Generals See It: The Collapse of the Oslo Process and the Violent Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University); The Leonard Davis Institute for International Studies, Publication No. 95.
- **The Struggle between Welfare State and Free Market (Political Economy)**

Required:

- Arian, ch. 3 on "Political Economy" in *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic*
- Ephraim Kleiman "The Waning of Israeli Etatism," *Israel Studies*, 2:2, Fall 1997, 146-171.
- Shafir and Peled, ch. 9 "Economic liberalization and peacemaking," in *Being Israeli ??*
- Primary source: Netanyahu and/or Fischer speeches

Recommended:

- Yakir Plessner, *The Political Economy of Israel: From Ideology to Stagnation*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1994.
- Avi Ben-Bassat, *The Israeli Economy, 1985-1998: From Government Intervention to Market Economics*, MIT Press: 2002.

- **Conclusion:**

The Struggle for the Future of Israel: ('Solidarity' vs. 'Peace'; 'Jewish' vs. 'Democratic': Compatible or Zero-Sum?)

Required:

- Dov Waxman, "Israel's Dilemma – Unity or Peace," *Israel Affairs*, April 2006 (Vol.12, No.2)
- Steven Mazie in NYTimes (March 2006)
- Gorenberg *Accidental Empire*, epilogue
- Alternative Futures or Polemical Debate? Judt, Elon, et. al. in *New York Review of Books*, 2003.
- Primary Source: NSC Report by General Uzi Dayan – 2002 – excerpts.

Recommended:

- Yoram Hazony, *The Jewish State: The Struggle for Israel's Soul*, New York: Basic Books, 2000 – esp. chapter 2 "The Political Struggle for a Post-Jewish State"
- Yoav Peled and Doron Navot "Ethnic Democracy Revisited: On the State of Democracy in the Jewish State," *Israel Studies Forum* 20:1, 2005, pp. 3-27.