

# ISRAEL, PALESTINE AND THE MAKING OF THE MODERN MIDDLE EAST HS2S007

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**Teaching:** One weekly lecture; one fortnightly seminar

1. Introduction
2. Jerusalem: at the eye of the storm; seminar A: Plans for Palestine
3. Nineteenth-century Palestine
4. Jews in nineteenth-century Europe; seminar B: The Start of Israel
5. Early Zionism
6. Palestine under the British Mandate; seminar C: Israel, Victim or Persecutor?
7. *Independent Directed Study*
8. The Kibbutz: Zionist Ideals; Seminar D: Israel at War
9. Israel, Jews and the Holocaust
10. 1948; Seminar E: Remembering Palestine
11. Film: Death in Gaza
- Christmas**
12. The PLO
13. 1967: Nasser and Palestine; documents due in; Seminar discussion
14. Israel at War
15. A demographic war? Gender and the Conflict: essay seminar
16. Lebanon: the Refugees
17. Gaza: essay seminar
18. *Independent Directed Study*
19. The First Intifada
20. The PLO as Political Authority: essay seminar
21. Radical Islam in Palestine
22. Islam, Gender and Women's Liberation: essay seminar
23. Israeli Society Today
- Easter**
24. Conclusion; Essay due in

**Assessment:**

One 2,000 word document analysis (details below), 40%, due in Tuesday 12 January 2010, week 13

One 3,000 word essay (details below), 60%, due in Tuesday 20 April, Week 24

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

- Has Zionism liberated Jews? Compare and contrast the lives of Jews in the diaspora and in Israel.
- Did Zionism construct a form of socialism in Israel?
- How important was the Holocaust in the creation of the state of Israel?
- Why did the Mandate fail? Was it the fault of the Jews, the Arabs, the British... or some other factor?
- How do you explain the decline of secular nationalism and the rise of radical Islam among Palestinians?
- 'Israel has liberated women, while Palestinian radicals have oppressed them.' Discuss.
- How should 'Jewishness' be defined? Consider racial, religious and civic criteria. Answer with close reference to Israeli history since 1948.
- Analyse the PLO's greatest successes and failures.
- Is the modern Israel effective in integrating minorities? Analyse the experience of two ethnic minorities.

### Document Analysis:

In the fortnightly seminars from weeks 2-11, two documents will be discussed in each seminar. Students will be required to choose a theme which groups together three of these documents, and to analyse these documents in relation to their chosen theme. All document-analyses must also refer, in detail, to at least three texts from the bibliography.

### SEMINAR A: Plans for Palestine

*Questions: Find out who Herzl was. Find out what a 'ghetto' originally was. Find out what 'Zionism' is. What is Herzl's message to Jews living in Europe? How does he define 'Jewishness' - as a race, a religion or a civic status? Does Herzl genuinely represent European Jews in 1896?*

*There is only a limited amount of information concerning Perowne. However: find out what the Mandate was. Consider his attitude to 'nationalism': why is he so sure that 'English' nationalism is superior to Arab or Palestinian nationalism? Are his attitudes typical of the Mandate authorities?*

### Herzl

Let us first settle the point of staying where we are. Can we hope for better days, can we possess our souls in patience, can we wait in pious resignation until the princes and peoples of this earth are more mercifully disposed towards us? I say that we cannot hope for a change in the current of feeling. And why not? Even if we were as near to the hearts of princes as are their other subjects, they could not protect us. They would only feel popular hatred by showing us too much favour. By 'too much', I really mean less than is claimed as a right by every ordinary citizen, or by every race. The nations in whose midst Jews live are all either covertly or openly anti-Semitic.

The common people have not, and indeed cannot have, any historic comprehension. They do not know that the sins of the Middle Ages are now being visited on the nations of Europe. We are what the Ghetto made us. We have attained pre-eminence in finance, because medieval conditions drove us into it. The same process is now being repeated. We are being forced into finance - now it is the stock exchange - by being kept out of other branches of economic activity. Being on the stock exchange, we are consequently exposed afresh to contempt. At the same time we continue to produce an abundance of mediocre intellects who find no outlet, and this endangers our social position as much as does our increasing wealth. Educated Jews without means are now rapidly becoming socialists. Hence we are certain to suffer very severely in the struggle between classes, because we stand in the most exposed position in the camps of both socialists and capitalists.

Theodor Herzl, 'The Jewish State' (1896) in Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds), *The Israel-Arab Reader* (Penguin, 2001), p.7

### **Perowne: The Whole Hog**

It is interesting to see the difference that the application of English methods does make. One naturally has qualms about forcing English ideas and institutions on these people, but there is no doubt, that if you are going to do it at all, it is best to go the whole hog. You see that in the case of the scouts: the best troops are the ones that are the most English in dress and ways, just as the best Schools are the ones run most completely on English lines... It is an absolute fact that the [Arab] boys in the schools here find their Arabic poets dull and uninteresting, while they lap down Shakespeare with avidity. By giving them an English education, therefore, one is not really de-nationalising them, because for the most part they have not the remotest idea of what their nationality implies; they have no traditions, and they are likely to find, on the whole, more akin to their own aspirations in Nelson and Cromwell than in Salah el Din and Suleiman the Magnificent. That is a generalisation, but there is truth in it. The difficulty comes, of course, in finding careers for those you educate. There is absolutely no future for them in this little apology of a country. The agricultural basis of Society is hopelessly inadequate, and its only alternative, an industrial one, is impossible. There is, of course, emigration, which is largely resorted to be an increasing number, but what is the good for that for 'Palestine for the Palestinians'? And there are always the Jews waiting to get hold of anything they can.

Stewart Perowne, letter to his father, 26 May 1926, cited in A. J. Sherman, *Mandate Days: British Lives in Palestine, 1918-48* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2001), pp.72-73.

## **SEMINAR B; THE START OF ISRAEL**

*Questions: Rodger was a British war correspondent and photographer who followed the Free French and British armies in the Middle East and Africa. See if you can find out more about him. This passage describes Palestine in spring 1941. Is Rodger a good witness of events?*

*Who was Martha Gellhorn? Is she a good witness of events? What were her political values? What points make her so positive about Israel? Are her observations accurate?*

### **RODGER, Palestine 1941**

'We drove down the hills of Judaea where, now that the flow of Nazi gold had ceased, the Arabs and Jews once again lived quietly side by side, and we crossed the stubble fields of the coastal plain where Arabs were gleaning after the harvest. I think we all appreciated the quiet and peaceful change from turbulent Syria. In the rural districts I doubt if Palestine has changed much since New Testament days, and I frequently noted scenes that might have been torn from the pages of a child's illustrated Bible - a shepherd, with his sheep trailing in a long line behind him; a well in the olive groves round which girls stood balancing tall jars of water on their heads - and one at least of them would be called Rachel; veiled women riding white asses, or perhaps just the square, box-like houses themselves clinging to the steep hillsides overshadowed by tall and graceful cypress trees.

'Such was Palestine in June - an unforgettably lovely land of olive and citrus groves, where the rich red-brown of the hillsides, freckled with the white of limestone rocks, formed a background for the deep green spires of cypress trees and the misty blues of the gums. And as we drove down to Tel Aviv the fleece-flecked sky was blue and infinite.

'Nearer the coast the land became more dry and desolate and presently we drove into the modern city of Tel Aviv, scratched by Zionist thrift and perseverance out of the desert sands. From the Old World simplicity of the hills we descended to the ultra-modern ostentation of Miami beach. There was the sandy foreshore, the concrete esplanade, the long line of sidewalk cafés, backed by the water-front hotels and angular blocks of modern apartment houses. The Gat Rimmon Hotel seemed the most attractive so we checked in there and had ice-cold, dry martinis in the red leather and chromium "American" bar. Luncheon was served in a dining-room open to the wide sweep of the Mediterranean. Each item in the meal was provided by the fruits of collective farms sponsored by the Zionist movement.

'As far as I could see, Palestine had become almost a self-supporting country for, in the fashionably fronted shops of Tel Aviv, everything from

bicycles to cosmetics was marked "Made in Palestine" and there seemed to be a greater selection of goods than there was even in Cairo...

'In the course of our journeys to and from the Damascus battlefield, Michie and I had seen a little of the Jewish development of Palestine - barren valleys that, under their irrigation schemes, had been converted into areas of rich cultivation, banana plantations, orange, lemon and grapefruit groves, and fields of wheat had sprung up where, previously, parched thirsty soil could give life to nothing but cactus; and in the rich soil of the hills, vegetable gardens and fruit orchards had been planted. Factories had been built on the outskirts of the towns, and towns themselves, like Tel Aviv, had sprung up as fast as the fabulous mango tree under the hands of an Indian magician.'

*George Rodger, Desert Journey* (London: The Travel Book Club, 1946), pp.107-08.

#### **Martha Gellhorn - Israel, 1956**

[Israel] is apparently a classless society. Everyone dresses alike, in cotton shirts, in cotton dresses, everyone looks very comfortable if far from stylish, and everyone looks very much at home. If you have the price of admission you can go anywhere; and everyone must have the price of admission to something enjoyable, for all pleasure places are crowded and envy seems an unknown emotion. There is an aristocracy, I am told: the workers of the communal farms, the kibbutzniks, who are the poorest members of the State, are considered the top aristocrats. After that there is a small world of early settlers who feel a pride of precedence, but no one minds or notices this private satisfaction. And the intellectual, in Israel, is honoured. On the other hand, first names alone are used, manners are affable pioneer style, no one is really rich, no one is in want, and life is universally hard.

Hard but good, they would say, and all theirs. They look happy, which is perhaps the biggest surprise of all. There are eagle-faced Yemenites licking ice-cream cones, Nordic giants in shorts gobbling shashlik on sticks, young khaki-clad soldiers, male and female, joking on benches besides ruminative old men wearing Orthodox side curls, glamour girls with Hollywood hairdos dancing at an outdoor café where, remotely, old ladies in shawls eat whipped-cream pastries and gossip about grandchildren. They people of Israel come from 62 nations and the first thing they had to do was learn Hebrew so they could talk to each other. (Only the children speak Hebrew with perfect ease.) But here they are, a fantastic mixture, and they have made themselves into something new on the face of the earth.

Martha Gellhorn, 'Weekend in Israel', *The View from the Ground* (London: Granta, 1989), pp.145-46, originally published in *The New Republic*, October 1956.

### **SEMINAR C: ISRAEL: Victim or Persecutor?**

Questions: *Who was Moshe Dayan? What post did he occupy in 1956? What picture does he paint of the Arabs in the countries surrounding Israel? Are his views typical of Israelis? Are they accurate?*

*There is only a limited amount of information available concerning Cooper. Find out where Jordan is. Who are the refugees that she is visiting? Why are they refugees? What are the principal points that shock her about the condition of the refugees? Do you consider her observations to be accurate? What do you consider will be the effects of living this way on the refugees?*

### **Dayan**

[In April 1956, an Egyptian ambush attacked the Israeli kibbutz at Nahal-Oz. Its security officer, Ro'i Rothberg was killed.]

Yesterday at dawn Ro'i was murdered. The quiet of the spring morning blinded him, and he did not see those who sought his life hiding behind the furrow. Let us not today cast blame on the murderers. What can we say against their terrible hatred of us? For eight years now, they have sat in the refugee camps of Gaza, and have watched how, before their very eyes, we have turned their lands and villages, where they and their forefathers previously dwelled, into our home. It is not among the Arabs of Gaza, but in our own midst that we must seek Ro'i's blood. How did we shut our eyes and refuse to look squarely at our fate and see, in all its brutality, the fate of our generation? Can we forget that this group of youngsters, sitting in Nahal-Oz, carries the heavy gates of Gaza on their shoulders?

Beyond the border surges a sea of hatred and revenge; revenge that looks toward the day when the calm will blunt our alertness, the day when we shall listen to the envoys of malign hypocrisy [a reference to those advocating a peace policy] who call upon us to lay down our arms... We are a generation of settlement, and without the steel helmet and the gun's muzzle we will not be able to plant a tree or build a house. Let us not fear to look squarely at the hatred that consumes and fills the lives of Arabs who live around us... That is the fate of our generation. This is our choice - to be ready and armed, tough and harsh - or to let the sword fall from our hands and our lives be cut short.

Speech by Moshe Dayan, May 1956, cited in Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001* (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), pp.287-88

### **Cooper: Jordan, 1953**

[Katy Cooper worked for a voluntary organization taking care of refugees. In July 1953, she visited the village of Zerka in Jordan]

Deafened by the tumult and flagging from the unaccustomed heat, I wandered through the large camp inhabited by between 7,000 and 8,000 refugees. It was reputed to be one of the best in Jordan, and many families had built their own small mud huts, the size dictated by the roofing supplied by UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency). Each had a living room 8 feet by 6 feet, and a kitchen 6 feet by 3 feet: not much space for a family with children. Each hut and a tiny piece of ground was surrounded by a wall. The minute garden within was tightly packed with sunflowers, maize and hollyhocks...

The refugee boys' school was impressive, so much done with so little. The children sang for me. 'What are the words?' I asked the headmaster.

'We who are born the colour of iron, must be strong as iron,' he translated. 'We will train our hands to be hard as steel so that we can return to take back our homeland.'

Most of the refugees looked back, brooding in bitterness on the cruel injustice that had suffered. They remembered only the blessings of their past lives. Even the children, who had been too young to know it, regarded Palestine as the goal of their future hopes and endeavours. People carried the keys of their houses, now in Jewish hands, hung on strings round their necks. They seemed to regard them as proof of ownership and dreamt of the day when they would turn them again in their locks. Five years after the establishment of Israel, the refugees were still unable to accept the fact that the loss of their homes and lands was likely to be permanent.

'When we get back to our country,' they would say, 'you will take coffee with us in our house and then you will see what a garden should look like; the flowers like a carpet and the lovely smell of the blossoms. When you see my garden you don't want to go any other place [sic]. It is not like here where all you can grow is stones.'

I spent only a few weeks in Zerka, but enough to see the impressive work being done. A farm had been started for agricultural workers to run. A blind men had been taught basket-work. A potter had been set up in a tile factory and had more work than he and his assistants could manage. Houses for employed refugees had been built on a repayable loan basis. An embroidery industry had been started and supplementary feeding centres established...

[Cooper also visits Ammann. Many refugees live by the river bed.] It was a real squatters' encampment: no one but a refugee would have ever thought of living in such a place. In winter the huts and tents were washed away by the rising water. In summer it was a veritable hell on earth: cupped in a hollow between mountains, no breeze reached it. The wide flat expanse of pebbles which bordered the narrow course of the river held and reflected the heat. No living thing grew there, no blade of grass, no tree for shade. The encampment sweltered defenceless beneath the glare.

The place was a disorderly jumble of mud-huts, tents and shacks built of old packing cases, bits of tin and sacks. Huddled together they stretched for a couple of miles down the valley. It was difficult to understand why people chose

to live here rather than in the greater comfort of the [refugee] camp. Was the desire for independence such a basic human need that they were prepared to suffer these deprivations and torture for its sake?

Kathy Cooper, *The Uprooted: Agony and Triumph among the Debris of War* (London: Quartet, 1979), pp.140-41,

#### **SEMINAR D: AT THE CHECKPOINT**

Questions: *These two documents concern something apparently very obvious: travel. In the first, an ordinary Israeli soldier re-counts his feelings about checkpoint duty. In last year's module, I told students it was one of the more horrible passages I'd ever read in my life. One student challenged this, and said he couldn't see anything terrible in it: it certainly wasn't racist. What do you think?*

*There is a limited amount of information available concerning Zenatti (and her book is in the LRC). Is she a typical Israeli conscript? What is her impression of the Arab villages? Why does she make reference to Lawrence of Arabia? She says: 'Hey! I'm the same age as you and I think just what you think!'. What do you think of this comment?*

#### **MAKDISI: Checkpoint Soldier**

'I am the Law! I am the Law here! And then you begin to understand that, it makes you feel good. I remember a very specific situation: I was at a checkpoint, a temporary one, a so-called strangulation one, it was a very small checkpoint, very intimate, four soldiers, no commanding officer, no protection worthy of the name, a true moonlighting job, blocking the entrance to a village. From one side a line of cars wanting to get out, and from the other side a line of cars wanting to pass, a huge line, and suddenly you have a mighty force at the tip of your fingers, as if playing a computer game. I stand there like this, pointing at someone, gesturing to you to do this or that, and you do this or that, the car starts, moves towards me, halts besides me. You come here, you go there, like this. You barely move, you make them obey the tip of your finger. It's a mighty feeling. It's something you don't experience elsewhere. You know it's because you have a weapon, you know it's because you're a soldier, you know all this, but it's addictive.'

Saree Makdisi, *Palestine Inside Out: An Everyday Occupation* (New York: Norton, 2008), p.54

#### **Zenatti**

Sunday morning, Beersheva central bus stop. There are two buses to Jerusalem (which I have to go through to get back to the base): the 405, which goes round the territories and takes an hour and forty-five minutes to get there, and the 440 which passes the Judean desert, going through the Palestinian towns of Hebron and Bethlehem. In an hour and twenty-five minutes you're on the outskirts of the Holy City.

The bus which takes this route would be recognisable in a thousand: it's covered in dust and the windows are dotted with star shapes, caused by stones which have lent their names to the Palestinian uprising - the 'war of stones', or Intifada.

I get on the 440 bus knowing that, this time, I won't go to sleep. I've been living in Israel for five years and, like most Israelis apart from soldiers posted there on military service, I've never set foot in the territories. It's high time I knew more about it than what you see on TV.

There are about 20km of desert-like country between Beersheva and the first Palestinian villages. It's silly, but I hadn't realised they were so close. I start seeing little stone houses, often on stilts, among the thorny bushes and the rutted tracks. An incredible proportion of them are unfinished. What's even more amazing is that most of them have been topped with antennae in the shape of ... the Eiffel Tower! They strike me as grotesque and touching. So that's the real Palestinian dream: Paris!

From his beard and his kippa, I can tell he's a Jew who lives in the territories, what the pacifists call a 'colonist'. Does he check the weather forecast before taking the bus?

The villages are spread over several kilometres. No one knows where one place ends and another begins. Poverty, sadness, hatred. I can see all that on the occasional faces that turn to look at the red and white bus. Old men leaning on walking sticks - they look noble somehow, like the beautiful Bedouin in *Lawrence of Arabia*. Children in ill-fitting clothes. Women with heavy figures and tired faces, balancing baskets on their heads. There are some girls in grey uniform coming out of a school and shouting at us - something I'd rather not hear. Ageless Mercedes, donkeys, herds of sheep, olive trees.

I feel like I've crossed a border, but not a geographical one. Where am I? A hundred, two hundred years back?

The bus makes frequent stops, dropping off soldiers going back to their camps and civilians going home. There are only about ten of us left as we approach Hebron, the largest town in Judea. All of the passengers have wisely chosen to sit along the aisle. Except for me. I've got my nose pressed up against the window. I want to see everything.

A violent thudding sound, right beneath my face. I just had time to see a teenage boy twirling his sling. His face was hard and vengeful. He was aiming for me, I'm sure of it. I'm wearing army uniform, I'm the supreme enemy.

I feel like opening the window and shouting at him, 'Hey! I'm the same age as you and I think just what you think!'

But the stones are hailing down on us at the moment. The driver accelerates, going over the legal speed limit, but I'd be surprised if he were stopped for that: the only form of authority in the territories is the Israeli army.

Everyone on the bus is on the floor, including me. We're thrown from left to right to avoid projectiles. The impact of each stone inflicts pain on me as if I'm being hit. I hear an explosion. I can't tell who fired, whether anyone's been killed or wounded. I burst into tears and the other passengers try to reassure me. I don't feel like explaining that I'm not crying because I'm frightened.

Source: Valérie Zenatti, *When I was a Soldier. One Girl's Real Story*, translated by Adriana Hunter, (London, 2005), pp.192-195.

### **Seminar E: Remembering Palestine**

*Questions: Find out more about the Palestinian Heritage Center. Maha Saca is suggesting a type of historical writing: but not with computers and books, but with needles and thread. Does this make sense to you? She emphasizes the role of women in preserving the Palestinian memory: is this therefore an expression of feminist politics?*

*Who is Mourid Barghouti? What are the settlements that he is describing? What picture of Israeli rule is given?*

### **Interview with Maha Saca, Director of the Palestinian Heritage Center**

Monday July 16, 2007, by Jenka Soderberg of International Middle East Media Center

*Q. Can you tell me what is your aim in this Heritage Center?*

The most important thing is to preserve and promote our heritage. And I think, in this situation, this is another struggle, to show that this land belongs to people, this is not "a land without people", through our culture and heritage. The Center has more than 200 postcards showing the historical, archaeological and religious places, and showing the dresses, which are like the identity for every village and town in Palestine.

I think that this is the time to show that we have been here in this land for more than 5,000 years. The Center also employs more than 100 women who work embroidery. They can increase their income -- I give them the thread, the cloth and the design. We imitate the old design exactly, the design and the color. In this way we keep the identity of the design in any thing we make. We have bags, shawls, runners, cushions. I think this is a very good situation, because this is work that the women can do in their house, between their children, when they have time. Especially because Bethlehem is a closed area, and the people of Bethlehem have depended on tourism for their work. Now, because of the Wall and the situation, there are no tourists. This means no work for anybody...

*Q. Can you speak about the dresses you have here? You mentioned that the dresses represent different regions of historical Palestine? What are those designs?*

I made a map showing Palestine before 1948, showing the dresses for each village and town -- the dress is like the identity of the village or town. Why do I say the dress is like identity? Because every woman writes the story of her village -- what surrounded her, what she thinks about it -- with embroidery on the dress. That's why the dresses are completely different. You can tell where a woman is from by her dress. That is why I made the map, and many pictures and posters showing these designs. We have many special designs -- for every village. Every design is different, it is the identity of every village and town.

*Q. Maybe you can describe that -- how does that indicate a continuous Palestinian cultural identity in this land?*

Like I said, every design is different. I can give you the example of Beer Saba. The bride wears a red color dress, but if she becomes a widow, she changes to a blue colored dress. But if she would like to marry again, she adds some red to the embroidery on her dress.

One of the aims of the Center -- when young people get married, they come to rent the dresses for the day before the wedding, for the henna ceremony. In this way, we connect the old and the new. Also, the young dancers take the old style dress for the *dabke* traditional dances. In this way we preserve our traditions.

Also, we put the old designs on new designs -- like blouses and fashion gowns.

*Q. Prior to the Naqba, it was mostly peasant women who wore these dresses -- non-peasant women scorned the dresses. How did it move from being a peasant dress to representing all sectors of Palestinian society?*

I think after the intifada, we have another struggle, to show that this land belongs to people. That is why we returned to our traditional dresses, and wear them on every occasion.

*Q. How does this challenge the Israeli presentation of what is the state of Israel?*

I think they know they don't own our dresses, our designs. I attended an exhibition in Haifa with the museum of Haifa, and they had dresses from Haifa, showing the dresses as Palestinian dresses, not Israeli. No one from the Jewish side wears our dresses.

But one of our dresses -- my grandmother's dress, from Bethlehem, was featured in the World Book Encyclopedia Vol. 4, page 692, saying that this dress was from Israel. We sent the World Book many letters to tell them this dress was Palestinian, not an Israeli dress.

*Q. What about the refugees?*

The refugees, some carried their dresses with them. I have done some research in Deheishe camp. They remember every detail of their village's dresses -- the wedding dresses, they know the design by heart. But after they were expelled from their villages in historical Palestine, the UNRWA (United Nations Refugee

and Works Agency) paid them to embroider different designs to make them forget their traditional designs. They brought them a catalog of designs from Europe to embroider, and brought the thread, and they could earn money by sewing these new designs. They said if the women forget their dress designs, maybe they will forget their village.

But after the intifada, the people returned back to their traditional designs.

*Q. Do you think that women are the carriers of the cultural tradition, more than the men?*

Yes, of course. The dress of the men, there are just one or two for all over Palestine. But for the women, there is a different design for every village. So yes, the women keep the identity more than the men.

[http://annies-letters.blogspot.com/2007\\_07\\_09\\_archive.html](http://annies-letters.blogspot.com/2007_07_09_archive.html)

### **Mourid Barghouti: Settlements**

[Mourid Barghouti returns to old home in the West Bank in 1997, after thirty years in exile.] Did I really know a great deal about the Palestinian countryside? The car moves on and I continue to look out of the windows to my right and to the left of the driver. What is this Israeli flag? We entered our 'areas' a while ago. These, then, are the settlements.

Statistics are meaningless. Discussions and speeches and proposals and condemnations and reasons and maps for negotiation and the excuses of negotiators and all we have heard and read about the settlements, all this is worth nothing. You have to see them yourself.

Buildings of white stone standing together on a stepped incline. One behind the other in neat rows. Solid where they stand. Some are apartment blocks and some are houses with tiled roofs. This is what the eye sees from a distance.

I wonder what their lives look like on the inside.

Who lives in this settlement? Where were they before they were brought here? Do their kids play football behind those walls? Do their men and women make love behind those windows? Do they make love with their guns strapped to their sides? Do they hang loaded machine guns ready on their bedroom walls?

On television we only ever see them armed.

Are they really afraid of us, or is it we who are afraid?

If you hear a speaker on some platform use the phrase 'dismantling the settlements', then laugh to your heart's content. These are not children's fortresses of Lego and Meccano. These are Israel itself; Israel the idea and the ideology and the geography and the trick and the excuse. It is the place that is ours and that they have made theirs. The settlements are their book, their first form. They are our absence. The settlements are the Palestinian Diaspora itself.

I said to myself that the negotiators of Oslo were ignorant of the true meaning of these settlements, otherwise they would never have signed the Agreement.

You look out of the car window on your right and are surprised to find that the narrow, worn strip that carries you has turned into a wide, smooth elegant road. The asphalt shines, and soon it separates out, rising to a hill with classy buildings, and you realize it leads to a settlement.

After a while you look out to your left and you see another settlement and another good, wide road leading up to it. Then you see a third and a fourth and a tenth, and so on.

Israeli flags rise at the entrances, and the signposts are in Hebrew.

Who built all this?

Mourid Barghouti, *I Saw Ramallah* translated by Ahdaf Soueif (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), pp.28-30

### TEN STEPS TO A GOOD ESSAY

1. Read the Question. You are not being asked to write '20 things you never knew about 1789', you are not even being asked 'what happened in 1789?'. Debate any assumptions implicit in the question; be particularly suspicious of any phrases placed in inverted commas. You are being asked to develop an analysis of events and processes in 1789. Make sure you have something to say.
2. Define terms. Do not assume that everybody will have the same understanding of concepts. If the question concerns, for example, poverty in eighteenth-century France, then you *must* briefly and concisely define what constitutes poverty. *Do not* copy out dictionary definitions: historical research demands that, after consulted other sources, you provide your own specific definition.
3. Give yourself enough time. Always try to begin assignments at least two weeks before the deadline. Always make a rough draft very early on, always re-read it carefully and correct it.
4. Provide clear evidence. Avoid vague generalizations. Do not say 'millions died'. Do not say 'In 1789, people were unhappy'. Provide detailed, precise, accurate information about specific people in specific places. Always provide footnotes for such information.
5. Make sure you read enough. It is difficult to give detailed instructions on this point, but it could be suggested the *minimum* reading for an essay would be: the *whole* of an introductory textbook, the *whole* of a more specialist monograph, and two journal articles or essays in edited collections of essays. **DO NOT** rely on simple web-sites like Wikipedia or Spartacus; **DO NOT** rely on lecture handouts or lecture notes. It is, of course, useful to consult web-sites to get basic introductory information, and you are welcome to cite lecture handouts if these give information

that you cannot get elsewhere. But your essay *must* provide evidence of your own, independent research. Essays which rely mainly on simple websites and/or lecture handouts will automatically be failed.

6. Provide a clear structure for your argument. In general, a chronological structure (1788, 1789, 1790) is a bad idea. Do not 'tell the story'. Try to structure your essay around themes, such as:
  - Positive results, negative results
  - Short term causes, long-term causes
  - Urban reactions, rural reactions
  - Men's experiences, women's experiences
7. Use clear, correct English. Re-read and correct your own work before handing it in. Marks will be deducted for ungrammatical sentences; meaningless sentences; muddled sentences. Marks will be deducted for poor spelling and missing apostrophes. Make sure you understand what words mean before you use them.
8. Make sure you understand the difference between plagiarism, quotation and paraphrase. (See the relevant handout on this.) Avoid long quotations. Never plagiarise.
9. Arrive at a clear conclusion. DO NOT end by saying 'it is impossible to decide.'
10. After the essay: get feedback. Make sure you pick up the marked version of essay; read the comments carefully. If you don't understand the comments, ask the lecturer to explain them.

### **PLAGIARISM, PARAPHRASE AND QUOTATION**

An important aspect of essay-writing is making use of published sources. You need to be aware that there are some acceptable ways and some unacceptable ways of doing this. The following examples illustrate this.

#### **A. PARAPHRASE**

Following the Liberation of France in 1944, many people were given prison sentences for their collaboration with the Nazi Occupiers. Herbert Lottman calculates that over six thousand people suffered such penalties.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Note**

*A footnote is given, identifying clearly the exact source of the information, including title and page number. The name of the original author is also given. Such writing is perfectly acceptable.*

#### **B. QUOTATION**

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert R. Lottman, *The People's Anger: Justice and Revenge in Post-Liberation France* (London: Hutchinson, 1986), p.148

Following the Liberation of France in 1944, many people were given prison sentences for their collaboration with the Nazi Occupiers. ` The best available statistics give the figure of 6,053 sentences handed down by the Paris Court of Justice.<sup>2</sup>

**Note**

*A footnote has been given. Inverted commas indicate the beginning and end of the quotation. This second form is acceptable, but it is clumsy. The two sentences do not match perfectly: often quotations are written in a different style to the rest of the essay.*

**C. PLAGIARISM**

Following the Liberation of France in 1944, many people were given prison sentences for their collaboration with the Nazi Occupiers. The best available statistics give the figure of 6,053 sentences handed down by the Paris Court of Justice.

**Note**

*There are no inverted commas and no footnotes in this passage: nothing to show that the text has been taken from another source. This is the equivalent of theft, and may result not only in the essay being failed, but in the student failing the whole module.*

**Conclusions**

- Always state clearly from where you are drawing information. Normally you will need to do this for each paragraph. This applies to *all* information, whether statistics, quotations, anecdotes, song lyrics, pictures, etc.
- Do not copy out passages, word-for-word.
- Only quote when it is absolutely essential.

**HOW TO TREAT DOCUMENTS**

or

**SO WHAT?\***

Your task is to analyse *an important aspect* of each document, not to attempt to explain the whole document. The best way to do this is to bring information and/or ideas from outside the document, and use this to evaluate something within the document.

Always ask yourself each of the following questions. In some cases, you will not be able to answer them. In the other cases the answer will be simply dull. However, at some point, you should find that some of these questions lead

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<sup>2</sup> Herbert R. Lottman, *The People's Anger: Justice and Revenge in Post-Liberation France* (London: Hutchinson, 1986), p.148.

you into raising interesting points about the document. Think about and expand the interesting bits, using them to create a single coherent argument.

1. Who is the author? So what?\*
  2. When was the document written?
    - a) precise date (eg 21 March 1818) - So what?
    - b) long-term date (eg early nineteenth century) - So what?
  3. What medium is being used? (eye-witness account, after-the-event analysis, speech, philosophical treatise, etc.) - So what?
  4. Who is the intended audience? - So what?
  5. What is the most interesting/important aspect of the document? (NB do not automatically start your analysis by looking at the first lines. Often you will find that the most important/interesting sections might well be half-way through the document. Start your analysis at the most interesting point.)
- `So what?' in this context means: how does this point help you understand the document?

#### Writing analyses

DO NOT write out full answers to all five of the questions set above. Consider carefully what you think to be the most interesting and / or important point in the document. Start your analysis here, and draw in other material IF it seems relevant. Aim to make one point, and to make it well.

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NB: Many LRC journals are available in the electronic form though the 'FindIt' service on the Blackboard web-site. They include *Nations and Nationalism*, *Journal of Contemporary History* and *European History Quarterly*. Ask the Librarians for further advice.

#### Key Textbook:

G. Harms and T. Ferry, *The Palestine – Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction*

#### Supplementary Texts:

M. Barghouti, *I Saw Ramallah*

V. Zenatti, *When I was a soldier: One girl's real story*

#### Introductions

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### Useful Websites

[www.kibbutz.org.il//eng](http://www.kibbutz.org.il//eng) (useful articles on the Kibbutz movement)

<http://www.merip.org/> (pro-PLO web-site; includes some useful analytic essays)

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