

# History of Modern Israel

The George Washington University

Spring 2008

History 101.17  
M 2:20-3:35 PM  
Rome 459  
W 3:45-5:00 PM  
Funger 223

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Office Hours: M 4-5, W 10-12, or by appointment

A political, social, and cultural history of modern Israel from the origins of Zionism to the present. Topics will include: Zionism as an ideology and movement; the pre-state Yishuv (Jewish settlement) in Palestine under Ottoman and British control; the Arab-Jewish and Arab-Israeli conflict; 1948 in history and memory; the domestic and international challenges of statehood; the role of religion, ethnicity, territory, gender, and warfare in the construction of Israeli identity; the settlements and the peace process; and recent debates over Zionism within Israeli society and culture.

## Learning Objectives:

Students will aim for the following:

- Greater knowledge of the history of Zionism and the State of Israel.
- Increased sensitivity to the diversity of Zionist ideology and to core tensions in Israeli identity.
- Insight into major trends and controversies in Zionist and Israeli historiography.
- Enhanced ability to examine primary texts closely and contextually, i.e. to read scrupulously and to think and frame questions like a historian.
- Improved aptitude in reading secondary literature critically and efficiently, i.e. distinguishing thesis from supporting evidence, considering alternative explanations for given data, identifying possible authorial biases, skimming, etc.
- Better writing skills.

## Requirements:

- **Attendance and Participation** (10%). This is a lecture course, but there will be periods of virtually every session devoted to Q&A and discussion. You should come to class having done the required readings for that day and prepared to participate. The reading will average around 150 pages per week. Attendance is mandatory. All absences must be excused, and three or more unexcused absences—or repeated lateness to class—will reduce your grade. *Please note that text messaging, sending e-mail, and surfing the Internet are absolutely forbidden during class.*

- **Short Paper** (10%). *One* short paper of 3-5 pages, involving analysis of primary sources, is required of all students. You may choose between three separate assignments, due January 28, February 25, and March 31 respectively. The instructions for each of the assignments can be found on Blackboard. Papers must be submitted at the *beginning* of class the day they are due, as part of the ensuing lecture will be spent clarifying and discussing the texts in question. *No extensions will be offered on these short papers.* If you miss the deadline for the first assignment, your next opportunity to fulfill the short paper requirement will be the second assignment, and so on.
- **Midterm Exam** (20%). This will be administered in class on March 12. It will contain both short-answer questions and one essay.
- **Term Paper** (30%). A term paper of 8-10 pages is required of all students. Whereas the short paper focuses on primary sources, the term paper involves analysis of a particular debate within secondary literature. A few weeks into the course I will distribute a list of approved topics with bibliography. If you are interested in pursuing a different topic you will have to check it out with me first. The term papers will be due Wednesday, April 16, at the beginning of class. I will reduce your grade on the term paper by one-third for every day it is late.
- **Final Exam** (30%). This will be administered in class on the appointed date of the final exam period. It will feature a mix of short-answer and essay questions.
- **Extra Credit.** There will be two main opportunities to receive extra credit in this class:
  1. I will be showing a few Israeli films after hours over the course of the spring semester. Some may be shown in tandem with CLASS 105, “Israeli Society in a Post-National Age—Israeli Film.” A schedule of film screenings will be distributed shortly into the semester. Attendance is not mandatory; however, I will award extra credit to anyone who attends at least 2 films and writes a response paper (2 pages) on at least *1*.
  2. On Monday, January 28, at 4:00 PM in 403 Marvin Center Professor Michael Stanislawski of Columbia University will be giving the Kiev Lecture, the annual flagship lecture in Judaic studies. This year’s talk—“Israel’s Laws on Return and Citizenship: A Reappraisal”—bears directly on the subject matter of our course. Anyone who attends the lecture and submits a 1-page response paper by Wednesday, January 30 will receive extra credit.
- Academic dishonesty, be it plagiarism or cheating on an exam, is a serious university offense. Know from the outset that I will be diligent about prosecuting suspected cases of academic dishonesty. Be sure to familiarize yourselves with the GW Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found at <http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html>.
- Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/>.

## Readings:

The following readings have been placed on reserve at Gelman Library and are available for purchase at the GW Bookstore:

- Itamar Rabinovich & Jehuda Reinharz, *Israel in the Middle East*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Brandeis, 2007) [IME]
- Howard Sachar, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Knopf, 2007)
- Arthur Hertzberg, ed., *The Zionist Idea* (JPS, 1997)
- Uzi Rebhun & Chaim I. Waxman, eds., *Jews in Israel* (Brandeis, 2004)
- Robert Alter, ed., *Modern Hebrew Literature* (Behrman House, 1975) [MHL]

The following readings have been placed on Blackboard under **Electronic Reserve (ER)**: .

- Saul Tchernikhovsky, “In Front of a Statue of Apollo,” trans. by Eisig Silberschlag in *Saul Tschernichowsky: Poet of Revolt* (Cornell, 1968), 97-8.
- Ran Aaronsohn, “Settlement in Eretz Israel—A Colonialist Enterprise? ‘Critical’ Scholarship and Historical Geography,” in *Israel Studies* 1 (Fall 1996): 214-29.
- Gershon Shafir, “Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach,” in M.N. Barnett, ed., *Israel in Comparative Perspectives: Challenging the Conventional Wisdom* (SUNY Albany, 1996), 227-244.
- Yaacov Shavit and Shoshana Sitton, *Staging and Stagers in Modern Jewish Palestine: The Creation of Festive Lore in a New Culture, 1882-1948*, trans. Chaya Naor (Wayne State, 2004), 131-64.
- Avraham Shlonsky, “Toil,” trans. by Toni Carmi in Carmi, ed., *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (Penguin, 2006), 534.
- Alan Dowty, “‘A Question that Outweighs All Others’: Yitzhak Epstein and Zionist Recognition of the Arab Issue,” *Israel Studies* 6 (Spring 2001): 34-54.
- Efraim Karsh, “Were the Palestinians Expelled?,” *Commentary* (July/Aug 2000): 29-34.
- Anton Shammas, *Arabesques*, trans. Vivian Eden (University of California, 2001), 113-31.
- Emmanuel Sivan, “Private Pain and Public Remembrance in Israel,” in Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan, eds., *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999), 177-204.
- Ahmad H. Sa’di, “Catastrophe, Memory, and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity,” *Israel Studies* 7.2 (2002): 175-198.
- Henriette Dahan-Kalev, “‘You’re So Pretty—You Don’t Look Moroccan,’” *Israel Studies* 6.1 (2001): 1-14.
- S. Ilan Troen, “The Protocol of Sèvres—British/French/Israeli Collusion Against Egypt, 1956,” *Israel Studies* 1.2 (1996): 122-39.
- Michael Oren, “The Revelations of 1967: New Research on the Six-Day War and Its Lessons for the Contemporary Middle East,” *Israel Studies* 10.2 (2005): 1-14.
- Gideon Aran, “From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion: The Roots of Gush Emunim,” *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* II (1986): 116-43.
- Anton Shammas, “Arab Walls, Reflecting Change,” *Harper’s Magazine* 275 (November, 1987), 30-35.
- Sammy Smooha, “Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype,” *Israel Studies* 2.2 (1997): 198-241.
- As’ad Ghanem, Nadim Rouhana & Oren Yiftachel, “Questioning ‘Ethnic Democracy,’” *Israel Studies* 3.2 (1998): 253-267.

- Ruth Gavison, “A Rejoinder to the ‘Ethnic Democracy’ Debate,” *Israel Studies* 4.1 (1999): 44-72.

The following readings are taken from Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories* (London, 1999) and are available online through Gelman Library as a GW Electronic Book (EBOOK):

- Gershon Shafir, “Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Approach,” in Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories* (London, 1999), 81-96.
- Benny Morris, “The Causes and Character of the Arab Exodus from Palestine,” in Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories* (London, 1999), 193-210.
- Avi Shlaim, “The Debate about 1948,” in Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: Rewriting Histories* (London, 1999), 171-92.

Starred readings are recommended only; nevertheless, several of them will figure prominently in the different topics for the historiography paper.

### **Schedule of Classes:**

M	Jan 14	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Mendele Moykher Sforim, “Shem &amp; Japheth on the Train,” in Alter, <i>MHL</i></p>
W	Jan 16	<p><b>Origins of Jewish Nationalism</b></p> <p>Hertzberg, <i>The Zionist Idea</i>, pp. 103-147 Sachar, Ch. I</p>
M	Jan 21	<p>Martin Luther King Day—NO CLASS</p>
W	Jan 23	<p><b>Emergence of Political Zionism</b></p> <p><i>IME</i>, Docs. 1-3 Hertzberg, pp. 201-230 Sachar, Chs. II-III</p>
M	Jan 28	<p><b>Evolution of Political Zionism. Cultural and Spiritual Zionism.</b></p> <p>Hertzberg, pp. 249-51, 262-9, 291-5, 297-9, 407-8, 411-14, 574-8 Tchernikhovsky, “In Front of a Statue of Apollo” (ER)</p> <p>SHORT PAPER #1 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS</p> <p><b>KIEV LECTURE</b> Michael Stanislawski Nathan J. Miller Professor of Jewish History, Columbia University “<i>Israel’s Laws on Return and Citizenship: A Reappraisal</i>” Monday, January 28, 4:00 PM</p>

Marvin Center Room 403

- W Jan 30 **Under the Ottomans: the Yishuv to 1917**
- IME*, Doc. 6  
Hertzberg, pp. 369-386  
Sachar, Ch. IV  
\*Aaronsohn, “Settlement in Eretz Israel—A Colonialist Enterprise?” (ER)  
\*Shafir, “Zionism & Colonialism: A Comparative Approach” (EBOOK)
- M Feb 4 **The Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate**
- IME*, Docs. 7-10  
Hussein-McMahon Correspondence  
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsourc/History/hussmac1.html>  
Sachar, Ch. V-VI
- W Feb 6 **Building the Jewish “National Home”**
- Sachar, Ch. VII  
Shavit and Sitton, *Staging and Stagers*, pp. 131-64 (ER)  
Avraham Shlonsky, “Toil” (ER)
- M Feb 11 **Arab Nationalism, Zionist and British Responses**
- IME*, Docs. 11-14  
Hertzberg, pp. 450-66  
Alan Dowty, “A Question that Outweighs All Others” (ER)  
Sachar, Chs. VIII-IX
- W Feb 13 **The Holocaust and the Struggle for Statehood**
- IME*, Docs. 15-20  
Sachar, Chs. X-XI  
Hazaz, “The Sermon,” in *MHL*
- M Feb 18 Presidents’ Day—NO CLASS
- W Feb 20 **The Birth of Israel and the 1948 War**
- IME*, Doc. 22, 24, 25, 26, 34, 35  
Sachar, Ch. XII-XIII  
\*Morris, “The Causes and Character of the Arab Exodus, etc.” (EBOOK)  
\*Shlaim, “The Debate about 1948” (EBOOK)  
\*Karsh, “Were the Palestinians Expelled?” (ER)

- M Feb 25 **The 1948 War Remembered**
- S. Yizhar, "The Prisoner," in *MHL*  
 A. Shamma, *Arabesques*, pp. 113-31 (ER)  
 N. Alterman, "Silver Platter"  
<http://www.phy6.org/outreach/poems/alterman.htm>  
 M. Darwish, "My Mother"  
 <<http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Cafe/1324/darwish.htm>>  
 E. Sivan, "Private Pain and Public Remembrances in Israel" (ER)  
 Ahmad Sa'di, "Catastrophe, Memory, and Identity" (ER)
- SHORT PAPER #2 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS
- W Feb 27 **Consolidating a Jewish State (I): Politics and Institutions**
- IME*, Docs. 21, 23, 28, 29, 43; Appendix 3  
 Sachar, Ch. XIV
- M Mar 3 **Consolidating a Jewish State (II): Religion and State**
- IME*, Docs. 27, 48  
 Sachar, pp. 598-614
- W Mar 5 **Mass Immigration (I): the Encounter with Holocaust Survivors**
- IME*, Docs. 30, 31, 46  
 Dalia Ofer, "History, Memory, and Identity," in *Jews in Israel*, 394-417
- M Mar 10 **Mass Immigration (II): the Encounter with Mizrahi Jewries**
- IME*, Docs. 44-45; Appendix 7, 8  
 Sachar, Ch. XV  
 Henriette Dahan-Kalev, "You're So Pretty, etc." (ER)
- W Mar 12 MIDTERM
- M Mar 17 SPRING BREAK
- W Mar 19 SPRING BREAK
- M Mar 24 **The Suez Crisis**
- IME*, Docs. 36-42, 47  
 Sachar, Chs. XVI-XVII  
 S. Ilan Troen, "The Protocol of Sèvres, etc" (ER)

- W Mar 26 **The 1967 War**  
*IME*, Docs. 52-54, 56-60  
Sachar, Ch. XXI  
M. Oren, “The Revelations of 1967” (ER)
- M Mar 31 **The Consequences of 1967: Domestic and International**  
*IME*, Docs. 61-69  
Sachar, Chs. XXII-XXIII  
  
SHORT PAPER #3 DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS
- W Apr 2 **The Yom Kippur War and Its Aftermath**  
*IME*, Docs. 70-77, 86-99  
Sachar, Chs. XXIV-XXV
- M Apr 7 **Zionism, Orthodoxy, and the Territories**  
Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, pp. 416-31  
*IME*, Docs. 80-81, 119  
G. Aran, “From Religious Zionism to Zionist Religion” (ER)
- W Apr 9 **The Begin Era**  
*IME*, Docs. 79, 84-85, 100-109  
Sachar, Chs. XXVI-XXX
- M Apr 14 **From the Intifada to Oslo**  
*IME*, Docs. 117, 118, 120, 132-133  
Sachar, Chs. XXXIII-XXXIV
- W Apr 16 **After Oslo**  
*IME*, Docs. 134-155  
Sachar, Chs. XXV-XLI (*skim*)  
  
HISTORIOGRAPHY PAPER DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS
- M Apr 21 Passover—NO CLASS
- W Apr 23 **Ethnicity & Israeliness: Mizrahim, Ashkenazim, Russians, Ethiopians**

*IME*, Docs. 64, 82, 113, 114, 124  
Rebhun and Waxman, *Jews in Israel*, Chs. 3-5

M Apr 28

### **Gender in Israel**

*IME*, Docs. 78, 121  
Herzog, "Women in Israeli Society," in *Jews in Israel*, Ch. 8

T Apr 29

### **Israeli Arabs or Palestinians in Israel?**

*IME*, Docs. 51, 126, 130  
Shammas, "Arab Walls, Reflecting Change" (ER)  
Yuchtman-Yaar, et al., "The Cleavage, etc.," in *Jews in Israel*, Ch. 15

W Apr 30

### **Israel at 60: Jewish State and/or Democratic State?**

"Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty" (1992)  
[http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3\\_eng.htm](http://www.knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/basic3_eng.htm)  
*IME*, Docs. 111-112, 122, 125, 131  
Rebhun and Waxman, *Jews in Israel*, Chs. 10, 20  
Tony Judt, "Israel: The Alternative," *New York Review of Books* 50:16  
(October 23, 2003)  
<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/16671>  
L. Wieseltier, "Israel, Palestine, and the Return of the Binational Fantasy;  
What is Not to be Done," *The New Republic*, October 27, 2003  
[http://www.travelbrochuregraphics.com/extra/what\\_is\\_not\\_to\\_be\\_done.htm](http://www.travelbrochuregraphics.com/extra/what_is_not_to_be_done.htm)

Emergency Preparedness and Response at The George Washington University

## **Syllabus Information for Your Students**

### **To Report an Emergency or Suspicious Activity**

Call the University Police Department at 202-994-6111 (Foggy Bottom) or 202-242-6111 (Mount Vernon).

### **Shelter in Place**

Although it is unlikely that we will ever need to shelter in place, it is helpful to know what to do just in case. No matter where you are, the basic steps of shelter in place will generally remain the same.

- If you are inside, stay where you are unless the building you are in is affected. If it is affected, you should evacuate. If you are outdoors, proceed into the closest building or follow instructions from emergency personnel on the scene.

- Locate an interior room to shelter inside. If possible, it should be above ground level and have the fewest number of windows. If sheltering in a room with windows, move away from the windows. If there is a large group of people inside a particular building, several rooms may be necessary.
- Shut and lock all windows (tighter seal) and close exterior doors.
- Turn off air conditioners, heaters, and fans. Close vents to ventilation systems as you are able. (University staff will turn off ventilation as quickly as possible).
- Make a list of the people with you and ask someone to call the list in to UPD so they know where you are sheltering. If only students are present, one of the students should call in the list.
- Await further instructions. If possible, visit Campus Advisories for incident updates (<http://CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu>) or call the GW Information Line 202-994-5050.
- Make yourself comfortable and look after one other. You will get word as soon as it is safe to come out.

## **Evacuation**

An evacuation will be considered if the building we are in is affected or we must move to a location of greater safety. We will always evacuate if the fire alarm sounds. In the event of an evacuation, please gather your personal belongings quickly (purse, keys, GWorld card, etc.) and proceed to the nearest exit. **(INSERT TWO WAYS OUT OF THE BUILDING HERE)**. Do not use the elevator. Once you have evacuated the building, proceed to our primary rendezvous location **(INSERT PRIMARY INDOOR RENDEZVOUS LOCATION HERE)**. In the event that this location is unavailable, we will meet at **(INSERT SECONDARY INDOOR RENDEZVOUS LOCATION HERE)**.

## **Alert DC**

Alert DC provides free notification by e-mail or text message during an emergency. Visit Campus Advisories for a link and instructions on how to sign up for alerts pertaining to GW.

## **Emergency Information**

Additional emergency information may be obtained by visiting the Campus Advisories webpage (<http://CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu>) or calling the GW Information Line at 202-994-5050.