FIG Course

The Roots of Zionism: Literatures, Cultures, and Ethics
CJS 356

Instructor: Prof. Rachel F. Brenner
Days and Times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9.55-10.45
575 Van Hise
Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 3.15-4.15 or by appointment
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Course Description: Zionism is considered a major factor in the present-day political reality of the Middle East, especially in the Israeli-Arab conflict. However, the history of Zionism begins in Biblical times with the arrival of Abraham, the patriarch of the three monotheistic traditions, to the Promised Land. Israel’s particular religious, historical, and geographical position turned it into the target of conquests, a land of exiles and destruction, and the object of eternal yearning to return. At the same time, the land bears central significance for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and the city of Jerusalem became a site of holy places for each of the religions. This course will examine the transformation of the spiritual and religious Zionist idea into a modern, secular Jewish national movement which shaped the political and the cultural foundation of the State of Israel. This transformation took place mainly in Europe and was thus influenced by its culture, literature and modern thought. Prof. Claudia Card’s course, Introductory Ethics, the second component of our FIG, will illuminate the moral issues that the rise of the modern Zionist movement has entailed and will allow a better understanding of the complexities of Middle Eastern politics. Zionism has also been instrumental to the fascinating phenomenon of the transformation of ancient Hebrew, the language of the Bible and religious texts into a modern, everyday language which has created a vibrant culture. Modern Hebrew, the third component of the FIG, will give you important insights into Israel’s way of life, its historical and modern foundations and its people’s mentality. The study of the language will enable a better understanding of the Zionist movement and the nature of its relationships with the world.

Requirements

The written assignments are short, but they are frequent and require consistent reading, writing, and critical thinking.

There will be a mid-term exam and a final essay.
The mid-term exam will include the material studied in the first part of the semester. The final (4-5 pp.) essay should draw upon materials studied throughout the semester and show ability to document bibliographical sources.

You will make an oral presentation of 5 minutes focusing on the issue/problem/idea in the course that you have found of particular interest. The presentation will be made toward the end of the semester in preparation for the final essay. The presentation should raise concepts, ideas and facts for questions and discussion.

There will be 7-8 unannounced quizzes based on the assigned readings for the given class. You will be receiving guiding questions for the readings that will help you follow the argument in the text and answer some comprehension questions. Please pay close attention to instructions on the Reading Guidelines sheet – you may be asked to prepare only certain pages from the text.

There will be three short essays (2 pp.). Papers #2 and #3 will be facilitated by the Writing Fellows

**Writing Fellow Essays**
We are fortunate to have Writing Fellows (WF) assigned to this course. Each of you will work with one of them individually outside the classroom on two of your writing assignments to improve your writing skills. Similar programs exist at Brown, Michigan, Harvard, Swarthmore, and Penn.

The WF will work with you on two of the required essays. For each WF essay you submit the first version of the essay. I collect these essays in class. The WF will read your essay carefully within a week, make comments, and have a conference with you the following week to discuss your writing and make suggestion for revision. You will revise the essay and submit within two weeks both the first version and the revised version with a cover page on top explaining the changes.

The first version of the essay is typed double-space, appropriately documented, of quality of what you would turn in for grading. I purposely do not call the text you will be discussing with the WF “a draft;” it will be the best possible version of an essay you could produce on your own. When you hand in the final version, you will write an explanation how you have rewritten the paper with the WF’s comments in mind.
You will attend two public lectures and write a report (1 p.) which will

1. Summarize the thesis of the lecture,

2. Explain the argument of the lecture

3. Present your evaluation of the lecture.

The objective of this assignment is to help you think critically about the way you structure your essays.

Thursday, October 23, 5:00 p.m.
Tobias Lecture: Barbie Zelizer, “The Holocaust in Visual Memory”
Union South (check TITU)

Monday, November 3, 4:00 p.m.
Kutler Lectures: Gary Zola, “He Was Just Like One of Us - Lincoln and American Jewry”
Wisconsin Institutes for Discovery (330 N. Orchard St.)

Please note

--The schedule of the syllabus and the evaluation weights may change.

-- Late arrival to class or absence will be excused only due to illness or family emergency. Please make sure that you are always on time.
-- If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to complete the material and the work you have missed.

-- Any work that is in violation of the UW Code of Honor will be graded as 0 or Fail.
For more information about how to avoid plagiarism and about proper paraphrasing and quoting, see
http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html

-- The use of your laptop should be limited to noting down the main points of the class. Your focus should be on the ongoing discussion and on participation which is a very important component of our study. No other electronic devices are allowed.

-- Extensions on papers, essays, and the exam will not be granted.

-- Please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester about the dates on which you will need relief due to religious observance.
Evaluation (rough):

Oral presentation 10%
Class Participation 15%
Quizzes 10%
Lecture reports 10%
Short papers 20%
Midterm 15%
Final essay 20%

Grading scale:

92-100 A
89-91 AB
83-88 B
80-82 BC
71-79 C
65-70 D
64 and less F

Background Reading
*Michael Berkowitz, Zionist Culture and West European Jewry Before the First World War (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993)
*Martin Buber, On Zion: The History of an Idea (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, the 1997 edition)
*Aviezer Ravitzky, Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993)
* Yosef Salmon, Religion and Zionism: First Encounters (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2002).
*David Sorkin, Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment (Berkeley: California UP, 1966)
Required Texts:


Electronic Reserve [R] A course reader is available at Bob's Copy Shop at 208 North Charter

Students are expected to bring the assigned texts for every class

Syllabus

I. Biblical Zionism

W. Sept. 3 Introduction
Historical Outline (R)

F. Sept. 6 Harry Orlinsky, "The Biblical Concept of Israel: Cornerstone of the Covenant between God and Israel." (R)
Psalms, 137, 126 (R)

First Essay Assignment on Part I and II of the Syllabus

M. Sept. 8 College Library 1139 D, Introduction and Tour

W. Sept. 10 Prof. Ron Troxel's lecture

II. The Period of the Second Temple and the Destruction

F. Sept. 12 Martin Goodman, "Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period." (R)

M. Sept. 15 Josephus Flavius, "Preface," *The Wars of the Jews.* (R)

W. Sept. 17 Summary and review

F. Sept. 19 No class

III. The Land of Israel in the Pre-Modern Period

M. Sept. 22 *Sefer Ha-Agadah* [The Book of Legends] (R)

Mourning over the Destruction: p. 197 – 17, 20; p. 198 – 21, 22, 23, 24; p.199 – 29;
Redemption and the Days of the Messiah: p. 372 – 113, 114; p. 384 –61,
First Essay Due
Second Essay Assignment

W. Sept. 24  
*Book of the Legends* (continued)

F. Sept. 26  
Rosh Hashanah - No class

M. Sept 29  
Yehuda Halevi Poems (R)

IV.  
**Jerusalem in Christianity and Islam**

W. Oct 1  
Muzammil H. Siddiqi, “Jerusalem: An Islamic Perspective.” (R)  
Ziad Abu-Amr, “The Significance of Jerusalem: A Muslim Perspective.” (R)

F. Oct. 3  
Memorandum of the Patriarchs and the Christian Heads of the Communities in Jerusalem on the Significance of Jerusalem for Christians. (R)

V.  
**Jewish European Diaspora in the pre-Modern Period**

M. Oct. 6  
Ram Ben Shalom, “Medieval Jewry in Christendom.” (R)  
Ora Limor, “A Rejected People.” (R)

Due: First Version of Essay #2 for Writing Fellows

VI.  
**Jews in the Modern Period**

*Part I: Western Europe: Emancipation.*

W. Oct. 8  
David Sorkin, “Into the Modern World” (Part I) (R)  
Moses Mendelssohn, “The Right to be Different.” (R)

F. Oct. 10  
“The Emancipation of the Jews of France;” (R)  
“Letter of a Citizen to His Fellow Jews;” (R)

WF Return Essays and Schedule Conferences

*Part II: Eastern Europe: Haskalah*

M. Oct. 13  
Prof. Tony Michels’s Lecture

W. Oct. 15  
David Sorkin, “Into the Modern World” (Part II) (R)
Judah Leib Gordon, “Awake My People!” (R)


M. Oct. 20     Hayyim Nachman Bialik, “The City of Slaughter” (R).
                Hayyim Nachman Bialik, “To the Bird” (R)

Revised version of Essay #2 Due (including the first version, the revised version, and the explanation of the revisions)

W. Oct. 22     summary and review

F. Oct. 24     Mid-term exam

VII. Modern Zionism

The Birth of Modern Zionism

M. Oct. 27     Shlomo Avineri, “Zionism as Revolution.” (R)
                The Dreyfus Affair (R)

W. Oct. 29     Hertzberg, “Herzl,” (204-231)

F. Oct. 31     No class

M. Nov. 3      Herzberg, “Nordau,” (233-241); “Jewry of Muscle,” (R)
                Herzberg, Ahad Ha-Am, “Biography,” 249-251; “The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem,” 262 – 269
                Ahad Ha-Am, “The First Zionist Congress” (R)

W. Nov. 5      Trip to Milwaukee

VIII. The Settlement in Palestine [Eretz Israel]

Ideological Foundations


Third Essay Assignment

Emerging Political Conflicts
W. Nov. 12       Yitzhak Epstein, “The Hidden Question,” (R)

F. Nov. 14       Martin Buber, The Land of Two People (R)

M. Nov. 17       Revival of Hebrew
                 Shlomo Avineri, “Eliezer Ben Yehuda,” (R)
                 Rachel Katzenelson, “From Language to Language (R).

Due: First Version of essay #3 for WF

M. Nov. 19       Christian Zionism
                 The Balfour Declaration (R)
                 Gideon Shimoni, “Christian precursors of modern Zionism”

F. Nov. 21       Prof. Charles Cohen’s lecture

Meetings with Zoe to discuss final paper and presentation
WF Return Essay #3 and Schedule Conferences

M. Nov. 24       The New Jew
                 David Ben-Gurion, “On the Arab Question.” (R)
                 Herzberg, “David Ben-Gurion,” (605-619)

W. Nov. 26       Vladimir Jabotinsky, “What the Zionists Want.” (R)

Revised version of Essay #3 Due

F. Nov. 28       No Class – Thanksgiving

M. Dec. 1         Prof. Nadav Shelef – Guest lecture

The New Jewish Woman

Wed. Dec. 3       Techiah Liberson, “Those First Years,” (R)
                 Deborah Dayan, “My Coming to Palestine,” (R)
                 Judith Edelman, “In the War Years,” (R)
                 Presentations

F. Dec. 5         Golda Meir, This is Our Strength (R)
                 Presentations

M. Dec. 8         Golda Meir (continued)
Henrietta Schold Biographical Note (R)
Excerpts from *Letters* (R)
Presentations

W. Dec. 10  Youth Aliyah (R)

Presentations

F. Dec. 12  Summary
Presentations

Dec. 17  Final Essay Due