

## FIG Course

### The Roots of Zionism: Literatures, Cultures, and Ethics Heb 356

**Instructor:** Prof. Rachel F. Brenner

**Days and Times:** Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9.55-10.45

**Office Hours:** Wednesday and Friday, 3.15-4.15 or by appointment

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**Peer Mentor:** Natanya Russek

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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 presenters will distribute the title, the thesis, and two documented entries to the class ahead of time as a basis for 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 summarize the thesis of the lecture, the argumentation of the topic, and your evaluation of the lecture. The objective of this assignment is to help you think critically about the way you structure your essays.

**Professor Stephen J. Whitfield**, Brandeis University

**“The Unity of Prejudice: The Rise and Fall of an Idea”**

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

4:00 p.m.

Wisconsin Idea Room, Education Building (1000 Bascom Mall)

**“Franz Boas: The Intellectual as Anti-Racist”**

Thursday, October 17, 2013

4:00 p.m.

Wisconsin Idea Room, Education Building (1000 Bascom Mall)

**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**

- \*Joyce Antler, "The Dream of a Jewish Homeland," in *The Journey Home: Jewish Women and the American Century* (New York: The Free Press, 1997): 98-136.
- \*Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry Before the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993)
- \*----- *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project 1914-1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- \*Michael Brown, *The Israeli-American Connection: Its Roots in the Yishuv, 1914-1945* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1996)
- \*Martin Buber, *On Zion: The History of an Idea* (Syracuse: Syracuse UP, the 1997 edition)
- \*Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Siege: The Saga of Israel and Zionism* (New York: Simon & Schuster 1986)
- \*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).
- \*Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to Our Time* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1966)
- \*Gershon Shfir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, 1882-1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996)
- \*David Sorkin, *Moses Mendelssohn and the Religious Enlightenment* (Berkeley: California UP, 1966)
- \*Robert Wistrich & David Ohana, *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory and Trauma* (London: Frank Cass, 1995)
- \*Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995)

### **Required Texts:**

Arthur Hertzberg, Ed. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York: Atheneum, 1986). [ZI] Available in the University Bookstore  
Electronic Reserve [R] A course reader is available at Bob's Copy Shop at 616 Avenue

**Students are expected to bring the assigned texts for every class**

## Syllabus

### **I. Biblical Zionism**

Wed. Sept. 4 Introduction  
Historical Outline (R)

Friday, Sept. 6 Rosh Hashanah – no class

Sept. 9 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**

Sept. 11 Prof. Ron Troxel - Guest lecture

### **II. The Period of the Second Temple and the Destruction**

Sept. 13 Martin Goodman, “Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period.” (R)

Sept. 16 Josephus Flavius, “Preface,” *The Wars of the Jews*. (R)

Sept. 18 **Library Tour, 1139 D, College Library**

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

Sept. 20 *Sefer Ha-Agadah* [The Book of Legends] (R)

The Land of Israel: p. 359 – 1, 3, 7; p. 360-364 – 10, 15; p. 362 – 36, 41, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57; p. 369 – 87, 88.

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, 69; p. 391 – 21; p. 392 - 30, 31; p. 393 – 36; p. 394 – 49; 402 – 23, 27.

### **First Essay Due**

### **Second Essay Assignment**

Sept. 23 *Book of the Legends* (continued)

Sept. 25 Yehuda Halevi, Poems (R)

#### IV. Jerusalem in Christianity and Islam

- Sept. 27 Muzammil H. Siddiqi, "Jerusalem: An Islamic Perspective." (R)  
 Ziad Abu-Amr, "The Significance of Jerusalem: A Muslim Perspective."  
 (R)  
 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

- Sept. 30 Ram Ben Shalom, "Medieval Jewry in Christendom." (R)  
 Ora Limor, "A Rejected People." (R)

#### First Version of Essay #2 due

#### VI. Jews in the Modern Period

##### Western Europe: Emancipation.

- Oct. 2 David Sorkin, "Into the Modern World" (Part I) (R)  
 Moses Mendelssohn, "The Right to be Different." (R)  
 Oct. 4 "The Emancipation of the Jews of France;" (R)  
 "Letter of a Citizen to His Fellow Jews;" (R)

#### WF Return Essays and Schedule Conferences

##### Eastern Europe: Haskalah

- Oct. 7 David Sorkin, "Into the Modern World" (Part II) (R)  
 Oct. 9 Into the Modern World - continued  
 Judah Leib Gordon, "Awake My People!" (R)  
 Oct. 11 Prof. Tony Michels - Guest lecture  
 Oct. 14 Howard M. Sachar, "The Rise of Jewish Nationalism" (R)  
 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)**

October 16 summary and review

Oct. 18 **Mid-term exam**

**VI. Modern Zionism**

**Inception**

Oct. 21 Shlomo Avineri, "Zionism as Revolution." (R)  
The Dreyfus Affair (R)

**The Visionary of the Jewish State**

Oct. 23 Hertzberg, "Herzl," (204-231)

**Differing Views**

Oct. 25 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)

**VII. The Settlement in Palestine [Eretz Israel]**

**Ideological Foundations**

Oct. 28 Herzberg, "Berl Katzenelson," 389-395.  
Herzberg, "Aaron David Gordon," 369-383.

**Third Essay Assignment**

Oct. 30 Techiah Liberson, "Those First Years," (R)  
Deborah Dayan, "My Coming to Palestine," (R)  
Judith Edelman, "In the War Years," (R)

**Emerging Political Conflicts**

Nov. 1 Yitzhak Epstein, "The Hidden Question," (R)  
Hertzberg, "Martin Buber: Hebrew Humanism," (451-453; 457-463).  
Martin Buber, *The Land of Two People* (R)

Nov. 4 Field Trip to Milwaukee

### **Revival of Hebrew**

Nov. 6 Shlomo Avineri, “Eliezer Ben Yehuda,” (R)  
Rachel Katzenelson, “From Language to Language (R).

### **The Future State**

Nov. 8 The Balfour Declaration (R)  
Gideon Shimoni, “Christian precursors of modern Zionism”

**No classes on the week of Nov. 11.**

**Meetings with Natanya to discuss final paper and presentation topic**

**Nov. 11 First Version Sent to WF by attachment**

### **The New Jew**

Nov. 18 David Ben-Gurion, “On the Arab Question.” (R)  
Herzberg, “David Ben-Gurion,” (605-619)

**WF Return Essay #3 and Schedule Conferences**

Nov. 20 Haim Hazaz, “The Sermon.” (R)  
Vladimir Jabotinsky, “What the Zionists Want.”(R)  
(R)

**No class on Nov. 22**

### **The New Woman**

Nov. 25 Prof. Nadav Shelef – Guest lecture

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

Nov. 27 Rachel Katzenelson, “A Word to the Legionaries” (R)  
Manya Shochat, “The Collective,” (R)  
“The Worker’s Wife: A Public Trial” (R).

**Oral presentations outlines due**

Nov. 29 **No Class – Thanksgiving**

Dec. 2 Golda Meir, *This is Our Strength* (R)

**Presentations**



Dec. 4                   Henrietta Szold, Biographical Note (R)  
Excerpts from *Letters* (R)

**Presentations**

Dec. 6                   Youth Aliyah (R)  
100 Years of Hadassah. (R)

**Presentations**

Dec. 9                   Poems by Rachel, Esther Raab and Leah Goldberg. (R)

**Presentations**

Dec. 11                  Summary

**Presentations**

**Dec. 17                  Final Essay Due**

