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
491 Van Hise
Office Hours: Friday, 3.15-4.15 or by appointment
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E-Mail: brenner@wisc.edu
Phone: 608 262 6102

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.

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.).

Special events

You are required to attend the following events and write a report (1 p.) which will
1. Summarize the thesis of the event,
2. Explain the argument of the event
3. Present your evaluation of the event.

“Dancing in Jaffa,” Hillel, March 3 at 7:00
“Broken Branches, Hillel, March 10 at 7:00
April 20: Weinstein-Minkoff Lecture with Prof. Ami Pedahzur
4 pm, Memorial Union

This is a course requirement, so make sure that you put the dates of the events in your calendars to avoid conflicts.

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)
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).
*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 616 Avenue

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

**Syllabus**

I. **Biblical Zionism**

**Jan. 21**
Introduction  
Historical Outline (R)

**Jan. 23**
Harry Orlinsky, “The Biblical Concept of Israel: Cornerstone of the Covenant between God and Israel.” (R)  
Psalms, 137, 126 (R)

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

**Jan. 26**
Martin Goodman, “Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period.” (R)

**Jan. 28**
Josephus Flavius, “Preface,” The Wars of the Jews. (R)

III. **The Land of Israel in the Pre-Modern Period**
Jan. 30  
Sefer Ha-Agadah [The Book of Legends] (R)


Feb. 2  
Mourning over the Destruction: p. 197 – 17, 20; p. 198 – 21, 22, 23, 24; p.199 – 29;

Feb. 4  

Feb. 6  
Yehuda Halevi, Poems (R)

First Essay Due

IV. Jerusalem in Christianity and Islam

Feb. 9  
Muzammil H. Siddiqi, “Jerusalem: An Islamic Perspective.” (R)  
Ziad Abu-Amr, “The Significance of Jerusalem: A Muslim Perspective.” (R)

Feb. 11  
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

Feb. 13  
Ram Ben Shalom, “Medieval Jewry in Christendom.” (R)

Feb. 16  
Ora Limor, “A Rejected People.” (R)

VI. Jews in the Modern Period

Western Europe: Emancipation.

Feb. 18  
David Sorkin, “Into the Modern World” (Part I) (R)

Moses Mendelssohn, “The Right to be Different.” (R)

Feb. 20  
“The Emancipation of the Jews of France;” (R)

“Letter of a Citizen to His Fellow Jews;” (R)
Eastern Europe: Haskalah

Feb. 23    David Sorkin, “Into the Modern World” (Part II) (R)

Feb. 25    Into the Modern World - continued
            Judah Leib Gordon, “Awake My People!” (R)

Feb. 27    Howard M. Sachar, “The Rise of Jewish Nationalism” (R)

March 2    Hayyim Nachman Bialik, “The City of Slaughter” (R).
            Hayyim Nachman Bialik, “To the Bird” (R)

Essay #2 Due

March 4    summary and review

March 6    Mid-term exam

VI. Modern Zionism

Inception

March 9    Shlomo Avineri, “Zionism as Revolution.” (R)
            The Dreyfus Affair (R)

            The Visionary of the Jewish State

March 11   Hertzberg, “Herzl,” (204-231)

Differing Views

March 13   Herzberg, “Nordau,” (233-241); “Jewry of Muscle,” (R)

March 16   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


March 23  
Techiah Liberson, “Those First Years,” (R)
Deborah Dayan, “My Coming to Palestine,” (R)
Judith Edelman, “In the War Years,” (R)

Emerging Political Conflicts

March 25  
Yitzhak Epstein, “The Hidden Question,” (R)

March 27  
Martin Buber, The Land of Two People (R)

SPRING RECESS

Revival of Hebrew

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

The Future State

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

The New Jew

April 10  
David Ben-Gurion, “On the Arab Question.” (R)
Herzberg, “David Ben-Gurion,” (605-619)

April 13  
Vladimir Jabotinsky, “What the Zionists Want.”(R)

Essay #3 Due

April 15  
Summary and Review

The New Woman

April 17  
Rachel Katzenelson, “A Word to the Legionaries” (R)

April 20  
Manya Shochat, “The Collective,” (R)
“The Worker’s Wife: A Public Trial” (R).

April 22  
Golda Meir, This is Our Strength (R)
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>Golda Meir (cont)</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>Henrietta Szold, Biographical Note (R)</td>
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<td>Excerpts from <em>Letters</em> (R)</td>
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<td>April 29</td>
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<td>May 1</td>
<td>Youth Aliyah (R)</td>
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<td>100 Years of Hadassah. (R)</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>Poems by Rachel, Esther Raab and Leah Goldberg. (R)</td>
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