

**THE HISTORY OF THE MODERN STATE OF ISRAEL**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Rothberg International School, Hebrew University of Jerusalem**  
**Dr. David Mendelsson**

The course was offered in 19 class meetings, with each class session two hours. It was designed as a general introductory course for college undergraduates. Chronologically, the course covers Zionist/Israeli history from its origins to 2009. It was offered at the Rothberg International School at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in the spring 2012 semester. Appreciation is extended to Dr. David Mendelsson for his permission to post this syllabus. Choices of lecture topics, lectures, discussions and reading assignments rest with Dr. Mendelsson (The reserves are for Hebrew University students use and are not accessible on this site)

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*Description:* This course will begin with an examination of the Zionist idea; its common denominators and variegated factions. Due consideration will be given to the late-nineteenth century European context in order to appreciate the socio-economic, political and cultural factors that impacted upon the Zionist movement.

The course will explore how competing visions for the Jewish state responded to the realities of Palestine; its local Arab population, Ottoman rulers and existing Jewish population. Following the First World War a new set of circumstances emerged for the Arab and Jewish populations particularly as European powers discussed their respective desiderata for the area. The class will discuss the McMahon-Hussein correspondence, the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration in order to appreciate whether Palestine was "a twice promised land." Following further Jewish migration to Palestine, land purchase and other nation-building activities, the Arabs of Palestine rebelled first in 1920-1, again in 1929 and later initiated a Revolt that spanned three years from 1936-9. The class will examine the various British attempts to restore law and order and placate the ambitions of the Arab national movement whilst at the same time not giving the appearance of abandoning its commitments to the Zionist movement. The course will study the Peel Commission partition plan (1937) and the reactions of the Zionists, Palestinian Arabs and emerging Arab states. Why in 1939 did Britain withdraw from partition and recommend serious limitations on Jewish immigration and land purchase as well as the establishment of a single Palestine state?

The course will discuss Arab and Zionist approaches towards the Allied war effort as well as their respective attitudes towards the future of the territory in a post-war settlement. Following the end of hostilities, the Zionist endeavor for statehood reached a zenith initially by diplomacy and thereafter combined with violence against the Mandate authority. The course explains the various claims as to why the British left Palestine, the recommendations of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine and its majority proposal for the partition of the territory. Students will learn of the first Arab-Israeli war, the refugee crisis and the Rhodes armistice agreements. Students will be introduced to the writings of the New Historians and their critics.

At this half way point the course will turn its attention to internal and external dilemmas that faced and indeed continue to face the Israeli state. The schism surrounding religious – secular relations will be studied both in its manifestation in the early years of statehood as well in ensuing years. The claim that Israel adopted a position of consociational politics in this arena will be examined. A further field of study will be the approach of the hegemonic Labor movement towards the Mizrachi-Oriental immigrations of the 1950s and early 1960s. Expressions of alienation and discrimination will be explored as will the claim that the ethnic gap remains "real" and not only symbolic in contemporary Israel. The course will proceed to examine other competing voices in Israeli society including those of its Arab citizens. It will ask whether existing tensions can be accommodated by a reaffirmation of the Jewish-democratic characterization of the state or whether alternative paradigms might be considered.

The various expressions of the Israel-Arab conflict will be given due consideration as well as the efforts at peace making, particularly those with Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians. The failure of the negotiations at Camp David in 2000 will be addressed as well as the second intifada. It is hoped that there will be sufficient time to ponder the outcomes of the recent war in Gaza and the Israeli national elections of February 2009.

Classes take the form of lectures, discussion based on the assigned readings and one on-site visit.

*Requirements:*

1. Current preparation of bibliography for class discussion.
2. Participation in study outing.
3. Short assignments (two) 30 %.
4. Mid-term paper or exam 35%.
5. Final exam 35%.

List of Key Books

Hertzberg, Arthur, ed., *The Zionist Idea* (Philadelphia: 1959). [933.609/H 576] (hereafter Hertzberg)

Kaplan, Jonathan, ed., *The Zionist Movement*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem:1983). [933.608/K 17] (hereafter Kaplan I and II)

Laqueur, Walter and Rubin, Barry, eds., *The Israel-Arab Reader*, 7th rev. and updated ed. (Penguin, New York: 2008). [E 327.56(08)/L 317] (hereafter, Laqueur and Rubin)

Morris, Benny, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881-1999* (New York, Knopf, 1999)

Rabinovich, Itamar and Reinhartz, Jehuda, eds., *Israel in the Middle East* (Brandeis, Hanover: 2008). [E 990(029)/R 116] (hereafter Rabinovich and Reinhartz)

Sachar, Howard M., *A History of Israel*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: 1976), vol. 2 (Oxford: 1987). [E 9/S 121] (hereafter Sachar I and II)

### Course Outline

(\* denotes text in the reader)

1. 19<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> February

#### **Introduction: Zionism in its Historical Context and the Common Denominators of the Zionist Idea.**

\*Gideon Shimoni, "Ideological Perspectives," in Moshe Davis, ed., *Zionism in Transition* (New York: 1980): 3-42 [933.632/D 263].

Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea* (Atheneum, New York 1973) pp. 15-100 [E 327.56/ C 678]

Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982). Introduction.

2. 26<sup>th</sup> February

#### **Old Yishuv and New Yishuv/Herzl and the Rise of Political Zionism**

Sachar I, pp. 18-64.

Hertzberg, pp. 204-226 (Herzl).

Yehoshua Kaniel, "The Terms Old Yishuv and New Yishuv," *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 1 (1981): 232-245. [E 1(08)/J 56] and [FB]

3. 28<sup>th</sup> February

#### **Zionism as a Secular Jewish Identity**

\*Hertzberg, (Ahad Ha'am) pp. 256-260, (Berdychevski), 293-295, (Katznelson) 390-395 (Brenner) 307-312, (Pines) 411-414.

\*Anita Shapira, 'The Image of the New Jew in Yishuv Society,' in (ed.) Israel Gutman, *Major Changes within the Jewish People in the Wake of the Holocaust* (Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 1996) pp. 427-441 (933.47 (08) G984)

Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology* (Hanover and London: 1995). [933.609/S 556] pp. 269-305.

4. 4<sup>th</sup> March

#### **The Second Aliyah, the Yishuv during World War I and the Balfour Declaration**

\*Letter from Sir Henry McMahon to the Sharif Hussain, 24.10.1915 Kaplan II, pp. 73-79.

\*Map 1: Ottoman Syria 1517-1918 & Map 2: The Sykes-Picot Agreement, May 1916 in Michael Cohen, *The Origins and Evolution of the Arab-Zionist Conflict* (University of California Press, Berkeley 1987).

\*Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (Jewish Chronicle, London, 1961) The Balfour Declaration and its Drafts.

Sachar I, pp. 65-115.

Meir Verete, "The Balfour Declaration and its Makers," *Middle Eastern Studies* 6 (1970): 48-76. [FB]

5. 6<sup>th</sup> March

### **The Mandate for Palestine and the Churchill Memorandum**

\*The Mandate for Palestine in Kaplan II, pp. 101-109.

\*Churchill Memorandum in Kaplan II, pp. 113-118.

Sachar I, pp. 116-137.

Evyatar Friesel, "Herbert Samuel's Reassessment of Zionism in 1921," *Studies in Zionism* 10 (autumn 1984): 213-235. [FB]

6. 11<sup>th</sup> March

### **Developments 1929-1931 and the Arab Question in Zionism**

\*Passfield White Paper in Kaplan II, pp. 144-155.

\*Kaplan I, pp. pp. 303-307 (Herzl) 307- 311 (Ahad Ha'am) 319-322 (Jabotinsky), 327-333 (Ben Gurion), 333-340 (Buber).

Sachar I, pp. 163-194.

Gabriel Sheffer, "Intentions and Results of British Policy in Palestine: Passfield White Paper," *Middle Eastern Studies* 9 (1973): 43-60. [FB]

Joseph Gorni, *Zionism and the Arabs* (Clarendon, Oxford 1987) (933.651 (A)/ A451)

7. 13<sup>th</sup> March

### **The Partition Plan and the MacDonald White Paper**

\*Selection from the Peel Commission Report in; Kaplan II, pp. 164-182.

\*The MacDonald White Paper in Kaplan II, pp. 193-204.

Cohen, Retreat, pp. 10-49, 66-87.

Morris, Righteous, pp.138-160

Sachar I, pp. 195-226.

8. 18<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> March

### **Developments during World War II/ The Struggle for the State**

\*Biltmore Program in Kaplan II, pp. 55-56.

\*Selections from UN General Assembly Resolution 181 in, Rabinovich and Reinharz, pp. 61-63.

Michael J. Cohen, "Why Britain Left: the end of the Mandate," *The Wiener Library Bulletin* 31 (45/46) (1978): 74-86. [FB]

25<sup>th</sup> March

### **Mid-term Exam**

9. 27<sup>th</sup> March

**The 1948 War and its Aftermath**

\*Benny Morris, "The Origins of the Palestinian Refugee Problem," in Laurence J. Silberstein, ed., *New Perspectives on Israeli History* (New York: 1991): 42-56 [E 320.17/S 582].

\*UN General Assembly Resolution 194, Rabinovich and Reinhartz, pp. 89-92.

Morris, *Righteous*, pp. 191-249.

Efraim Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History* (London, Cass 1997)

Sachar I, pp. 315-353.

10. 15<sup>th</sup> April

**Mass Migration**

\*The Development Town, pp. 158-164, Social and Ethnic Tensions in Wadi Salib pp. 164-167, The Black Panthers pp. 234-237, Rabinovich and Reinhartz.

View Film: The Homecoming (Episode of *Tkuma* TV series)

\*Sammy Smooha, 'Jewish Ethnicity in Israel: Symbolic or Real?' in Rebhun and Waxman, *Jews in Israel: Contemporary Social and Cultural Patterns* (Brandeis University Press, Hanover, 2004) pp. 47-80.

Sachar I, pp. 395-428.

11. 17<sup>th</sup> April

**The Haredim in Israel**

Either:

\*Menachem Friedman, "The Ultra-Orthodox in Israeli Society," in Kyle, Keith and Peters, Joel, eds., *Whither Israel? The Domestic Challenges* (London and New York: 1993). [E 320.9/K 99]. pp. 177-201.

Or:

Samuel Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry* (Shoken, New York, 1992) pp. 11-39.

19<sup>th</sup> April

Site Visit – Field Trip

**Mount Herzl**

\*Maoz Azaryahu. 'Mount Herzl: The Creation of Israel's National Cemetery,' *Israel Studies*, vol. 1 no. 2, summer 1996, 46-74. **(ERESERVE 001219770)**

12. 22<sup>nd</sup> April

**Religion and State**

\*The Status-Quo Agreement, pp. 58-59, The Proclamation of the State of Israel p. 72-74. The Law of Return, p. 102-3, The Debate on a Constitution pp. 96-102, Jewish Religion and Israeli Nationality: The Brother Daniel Case, pp. 172-174. Rabinovich and Reinhartz.

Asher Cohen and Leslie Susser, *Israel and the Politics of Jewish Identity* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, chapter 1

13. 24<sup>th</sup> April

**The Six Day War and its Aftermath**

\*The Khartoum Resolutions in Rabinovich and Reinharz, p.241-2; UN Security Council Resolution 242 in Rabinovich and Reinharz, pp.242-243;

The Palestinian National Covenant in Rabinovich and Reinharz, pp. 243-246.

Michael Oren, 'Did Israel Want the Six Day War, *Azure* Spring 1999, no. 7, 47-86.

Sachar I, pp. 615-666.

14. 29<sup>th</sup> April

**The Yom Kippur War**

\*The Turning Point in the Yom Kippur, pp. 265-269, The Yom Kippur War, pp. 269-276, Agranat Commission pp. 278-284. UN Security Council 338, p.331, Egyptian- Israeli Disengagement, pp. 337-340, Rabinovich and Reinharz.

\*Knesset Election Results 1949-1996 in Asher Arian, *The Second Republic: Politics in Israel* (Chatham House, NJ 1998) p. 208.

Sachar I, pp. 740-787.

15. 1<sup>st</sup> May

**Gush Emunim: The Settler Voice.**

\*David Newman. 'From *Hitnachlut* to *Hitnatkut*: The Impact of Gush Emunim and the Settlement Movement on Israeli Politics and Society,' *Israel Studies* vol. 10, 3, fall 2005, 192-224. **(ERESERVE 001361207)**

\*Selected Texts on Gush Emunim compiled from Aviezer Ravitzky. *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1997) pp. 79-144. **(E296.124/R256)**

Gershon Gorenberg. *The Accidental Empire* (Henry Holt, NY 2006). **(E982.2/G666)**

Lilly Weissbrod. *Israeli Identity: In Search of a Successor to the Pioneer, Tsabar and Settler* (Cass, London, 2002) pp. 106-140. **(E933.015/W432)**

16. 6<sup>th</sup> May

**From Peace Treaty with Egypt to First Intifada**

\*Gush Emunim, Opinion Paper, January 1978, pp. 305-307. Peace Now, Platform, 1980, pp. 312-4, Asher Arian, The Elections of 1981, pp. 315-330.

\*Camp David Accords, September 17, 1978, pp. 376-383, Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt, March 26, 1979, pp. 383-5. Hamas, The Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement, pp. 430-437. Rabinovich and Reinharz

Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago, 1997): 79-144

17. 8<sup>th</sup> May

**Peace Process and Current Crisis**

\*Yithak Rabin, speech to the Knesset on the 1992 Elections, Rabinovich and Reinharz pp. 446-450, Shamgar Commission, Report on Yitzhak Rabin's Assassination pp. 456-459.

\*Laqueur and Rubin, 6th ed., 413-425 (Israel-PLO Declaration of Principles) 443-455, (Israel-PLO: Cairo Agreement - "Oslo I").

\*Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip ("Oslo II").

Rabinovich and Reinharz, pp. 502-505.

Amendment to the Palestine National Charter, 506-7

Israel and Palestinian Authority: Hebron Accords (January 15, 1997), pp. 522-523.

Israel and Palestinian Authority: The Wye River Memorandum (October 23, 1998). pp. 507-513

Rabinovich and Reinharz,

US President Bill Clinton: The Clinton Plan (December 23, 2000), pp. 562-564. Rabinovich and Reinharz, pp. 518-521

18. 13<sup>th</sup> May

### **Arabs in Israel**

\*From "Israeli Arabs" to "Israel's Palestinian Citizens," pp. 183-187. Orr Commission; Report on Clashes between the Security Forces and Israeli Citizens in October 2000, pp. 479-484, Rabinovich and Reinharz

\*Eli Rekhes, "The Evolvement of an Arab-Palestinian National Minority in Israel," *Israel Studies* vol. 12, 3, Fall 2007, 1-28.

\*Ahmed Tibi, "My Independence Day" *The Jerusalem Report* (Israel at 50), May 1998, p. 17.

As'ad Ghanem, *The Palestinian Arab Minority in Israel 1948-2000* (SUNY, New York 2001).

The National Committee for the Heads of the Arab Local Authorities in Israel, *The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel* (2006) <http://www.adalah.org/newsletter/eng/dec06/tasawor-mostaqbali.pdf>

19. 15<sup>th</sup> May

### **A Changing Israel**

\*Baruch Kimmerling. 'Between Hegemony and Dormant *Kulturkampf* in Israel,' in Eds. Dan Urian and Ephraim Karsh, *In Search of Identity: Jewish Aspects in Israeli Culture* (Cass, London 1999), pp.49-72. (E320.5/U76).

\*Yagil Levy, Military-Society Relations: The Demise of the "People's Army," in Guy Ben-Porat et al., *Israel since 1980* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008) pp. 117-144.

Oz Almog, 'The Sabra Genome in the Israeli Mentality,' *Tikkun* May 2008

20. 20<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> May

### **Current Debate: Jewish State, Democratic State**

\*Tony Judt, 'Israel: the Alternative,' *New York Review of Books*, 50: 16 (October 23, 2003)

\*Leon Wieseltier, 'Israel, Palestine and the Return of the Bi-National Fantasy,' *The New Republic* 27 October 2003

\*Alexander Yakobson and Amnon Rubinstein, *Israel and the Family of Nations* (Schocken, Tel-Aviv 2003) Hebrew (See Appendix: Selected Constitutions of Democratic States) pp. 427-451. Benny Morris, *One State, Two States; Resolving the Israel/Palestine Conflict* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009).

Sammy Smootha, 'Ethnic Democracy: Israel as an Archetype,' *Israel Studies* 2, 2 Fall 1997 198-241.

29<sup>th</sup> May

### **Review**

3<sup>rd</sup> June

### **Final Exam**