Summary: This course tells the biography of Zionism. Uniting social, intellectual, cultural, and political history, it exhibits its subject in panoramic view, presenting Zionism as a national sentiment, a political movement, a state-building enterprise, and a multifocal program for the renaissance of a people, a land, and a language. Comprehensive in chronology as well as in scope, the course traces the progress of Zionism through its entire career: from its first stirrings in the nineteenth century, amid great changes in Europe and the Jewish world, to its fulfillment in 1948, when the state of Israel was proclaimed. Our concentration throughout, as reflected in the course title, is shared between the study of Zionism in conception and in application. For the former, primary sources direct our inquiry, bringing us into unmediated contact with the texts of Zionism’s most influential theoreticians. From there we follow Zionism’s passage from the minds of its conceptualizers into the hands of its implementers, analyzing Zionism as it was enacted on the ground and profiling the prime movers behind its advance. The sum of these many separate inquiries into Zionism is a thorough exposition of the historical forces, personalities, events, and contingencies that combined to convert Jewish nationalism into a Jewish nation-state.

The end of the course will find the attentive student able...

- to understand Zionism as an artifact of its time and place and to explain the circumstances and developments that introduced Zionism into its nineteenth-century European context.
- to explain how Zionism was carried into execution by way of Jewish settlement, agricultural labor, organizational activity, institution-building, and international diplomacy.
- to profile Zionism’s main theoreticians and describe their different conceptions.
- to identify Zionism’s postulates (i.e., its diagnoses of the ills of the Jewish condition) and its pretensions (i.e., its claims to be the antidote to these ills)
● to sketch in broad outline the political history of Palestine and Jewish and Arab associations with the land.
● to describe the reception Zionism found among Palestine’s Arabs and their objections to Zionism
● to understand the origin and early evolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
● to understand the structure, operation, and leadership of Jewish society in Palestine
● to summarize the major events in Palestine in the interwar period and on the eve of Jewish statehood
● to recall the most consequential political documents (e.g., charters, agreements, white papers) in Zionist history.
● to understand Arab dissatisfaction and Jewish disillusionment with the British and two communities’ uprisings in the 1930s and 1940s, respectively
● to understand the relevance of the Holocaust to Zionism and Jewish statehood
● to understand the dynamics between Zionism and the powers that maintained or decided control of Palestine
● to identify the major personalities in the struggle for and against Jewish statehood
● to explain the centrality of 1948 to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

*One distinctive pedagogical feature of the course is its use of cultural history. Each class introduces one cultural artifact, intangible or material, that illustrates the day’s lesson. In considering these works of art, architecture, poetry, literature, and music, we may concretize abstractions, refresh familiar subjects, and reinforce content, impressing it on the memory and deepening our understanding.

**Class and Office Hours:**

Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30-1:45 (Physics and Astronomy Building 1749)
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3 or by appointment (Lu Valle Commons)  
*Office is Bunche 11362*
**Grade Disaggregation:**

I. Preparation, attendance, and participation (10%)
II. Midterm exam (20%), February 6
III. Paper (30%), February 18
IV. Take-home final exam (40%), March 20

**Texts:**

All reading assignments are available on the course website, each posted under its corresponding week.

**Class Schedule and Reading Assignments**

**Week 1: Zion before Zionism, Jewish Nationhood before Jewish Nationalism**

Tuesday, January 7
- Introduction and preliminaries

Thursday, January 9
- Cultural artifact: Arch of Titus (monument); Moshe ibn Ezra, “Children of Exile;” Yehuda Halevi, “My Heart is in the East” (poems)

**Week 2: Zionism’s Nineteenth-Century Context**

Tuesday, January 14


● Cultural artifact: Moritz Oppenheim, *The Return of the Jewish Volunteer from the Wars of Liberation* (painting)

Thursday, January 16


● Cultural artifact: Emily Pauline Johnson, “Give Us Barabbas” (poem)

**Week 3: Zionism’s Theoreticians and Their Ideas: Renewing the Land, the People, the Language**

Tuesday, January 21


● Cultural artifact: Yitzhak Danzinger, “Nimrod” (sculpture); Reuven Rubin, “First Fruits” (painting)
Thursday, January 23

- Cultural artifact: Chaim Nachman Bialik, “HaMatmid,” “In the City of Slaughter” (poems)

**Week 4: Zionist Settlement and the Arabs of Palestine**

Tuesday, January 28

- Cultural artifact: Ibrahim Tuqan, “Dead Hearts” (poem)
Thursday, January 30

- Cultural artifact: Mahmoud Darwish, “I Belong There” (poem)

Week 5: Zionist Institutions and Enterprise in Late Ottoman Palestine

Tuesday, February 4

- Cultural Artifact: Yehuda Amichai, “From the Songs of the Land of Zion and Jerusalem” (poem)

Thursday, February 6

- Cultural artifact: Ephraim Moses Lilien, “Allegorical Wedding” (painting)
- Midterm

Week 6: The Jewish-Arab-British Triangle

Tuesday, February 11

• Cultural artifact: Excerpt from George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda* (novel)

Thursday, February 13

• Cultural artifact: Winston Churchill, “View of Jerusalem” (painting)

**Week 7: Differences Among Jews and Between Jews and Arabs**

Tuesday, February 18

• Hanan Hever, “Yitzhak Shami: Ethnicity as an Unresolved Conflict and the Cultural and Historical Stabilities and Instabilities of Jewish Orientalism,” *Shofar* 24, no. 2 (Winter 2006), 124-139.
• Cultural artifact: Excerpts from Yitzhak Shami, *Hebron Stories* (novella); Avraham Shlonsky, “Facing the Desert” (poem)
• **Paper due**

Thursday, February 20

- Cultural artifact: Excerpts from Uri Zvi Greenberg, “The Book of Denunciation and Faith” (poems)

**Week 8: Zionism and Its Discontents: Arab and British Responses to Zionism in the 1930s**

**Tuesday, February 25**
- Muhammad Mahdi al-Jawahiri, “Bleeding Palestine” (poem)

**Thursday, February 27**
- al-Akhtal as-Saghir, “A Salute to Palestine” (poem)

**Week 9: The Road to Statehood and the First Arab-Israeli War**

**Tuesday, March 3**
• Cultural artifact: Natan Alterman, “Poems of the Plagues of Egypt” (poem)

Thursday, March 5
• T. G. Fraser, "The Partition of Palestine and the Creation of Israel," in The Arab-Israeli Conflict (Palgrave, 2008), 23-49.
• Kenneth Stein, “Forming the Nucleus for a Jewish State: 1882-1947” (Atlanta: Center for Israel Education, 2019), 23-34.
• Cultural artifact: Natan Alterman, “The Silver Platter” (poem)

Week 10: Zionism after Its Realization

Tuesday, March 10
• Ezra Mendelsohn, On Modern Jewish Politics (Oxford University Press, 1993), 3-36, 147-150.
• Cultural artifact: Excerpts from S. Yizhar “Khirbet Khizeh” (novel)

Thursday, March 12
• Issa Khalaf, "The Effect of Socioeconomic Change on Arab Societal Collapse in Mandate Palestine," International Journal of Middle East Studies 29, no. 1 (February 1997), 93-112.
• Cultural artifacts: State of Israel’s emblem, flag, and anthem

**Final exam due via e-mail on March 20 by 5 PM**