

History 113  
**The History of Modern Israel**  
**Winter, 2011**

**Professor David Biale**

One of the most hotly contested subjects in the world today, the century-long struggle between Jews and Arabs requires understanding the conflicting narratives of the various parties to the conflict. In this course, we will listen to these different Jewish and Palestinian voices in the context of Israel's politics and culture, as they have developed since the 1880s. The primary goal of the course is to acquaint students with the people and culture behind the headlines. We will examine such subjects as the rise and fall of utopian Zionism, the development of modern Hebrew culture, the conflict between religious and secular Jews, and the relationships between Mizrahi, Ashkenazi, Russian, Ethiopian and Arab citizens of Israel's multicultural society. The course will create a space where students can discuss the contemporary conflict rationally and on the basis of informed opinion.

**Office Hours and Contact Information:** Mondays and Tuesdays 11:00-Noon in 227 Voorhies. Email: [dbiale@ucdavis.edu](mailto:dbiale@ucdavis.edu). I strongly encourage you to come and speak to me in my office. I also try to be very responsive to emails and urge you to write to me.

**Discussion Section:** I will hold a voluntary discussion section – or group office hours – on Mondays 10:00-11:00 in 228 Voorhies. You can drop in when you wish or attend all sessions.

**Course Website:** Smartsite. All assignments, course announcements, grades, returned assignments, course reader and other resources found here

**Required Texts**

Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History*  
Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel*  
Amos Oz, *A Tale of Love and Darkness*

Reader: available for purchase at Copyland, 231 G Street. The reader will also be posted on the course website on Smartsite. All readings not from the required texts are in the Reader.

**Course Assignments**

All assignments are to be turned via digital-drop off on SmartSite at the time noted. Upload under "Assignments." The final essay is due at the time of the course final. If you are **not** working in Word, save your document as an RTF (rich text format) file.

Any form of citation is acceptable. Since the papers do not require any reading beyond what is assigned for the course, you do not need to add a "works cited" page.

1. Current events journal (20%) – **April 23 at 11:00 pm (starting with the second week of classes – 3 entries) and June 2 at 11:pm (5 entries)**. Note: the two submissions of the journal are weighted equally

You will write one journal entry per week based on the news from Israel/Palestine (see addendum on news sources below). You must examine at least two sources for any story, preferably from different political points of view. Where possible, you should give some historical context to the event. Journal entries should average about 1-2 double-spaced typed page (single-spaced is also OK). Entries should consist of two parts: a summary of the issue reported or the reading and then a paragraph or so of questions and analysis (try to avoid mere statement of opinion). You need to complete the journal entry before class every Thursday for use as the basis for discussions of current issues, which will usually take place that day, unless there is some breaking news. Journals will be collected and graded twice during the quarter (see above). See below for grading criteria. Journals should be done with a partner, although you are not required to do so (see **Hevruta** below)

2. Midterm (30%) – **April 28, 11 pm**

The midterm will be a take-home essay. You will choose one essay question from a number of questions which will be distributed at least a week before the due date.

3. Final (40%) – **June 6, 3:30 pm**

The final will be take-home. You will answer two questions from a longer list of questions which will be distributed in the last week of class.

4. Participation (10%): participation will be graded by means of Clicker Surveys (you are graded for participating in the survey, but not for whether you get the answers to the questions right). You must either purchase or rent a clicker (available at the Bookstore or on-line). You can use a clicker purchased or rented for another class. You can also use your Smartphone, but you will have to pay a fee to iClickerGo (iclickergo.com). The clicker must be registered (see instructions at the end of this syllabus). You must bring the clicker to every class, however, you can drop one clicker grade. For more on clickers and how to register them, see below at the end of this syllabus.

5. Extra credit: there will be a lecture by Shai Hezkany on "Homeland as Exile: Shifting Notions of Identity among Moroccan Jews in Israel, 1948-1959," May 14, noon-1:30 in Social Sciences 2202 (Andrews Room) (2%)

6. Extra-extra-credit: while there is no formal component for engaging in discussions in class and attending the discussion section or office hours, I will take such participation into account in determining your final grade. For example, if you are on the borderline between an A and a B, participation may raise you up to an A-.

**Hevruta (partner learning):** in the Jewish tradition, studying is always done with a partner. We will use this method this quarter. During the first week, you should pick a partner. You will

do the current events journal with your partner (this is not required – you can do the journal alone if you choose). When you turn in the journal, be sure both of your names are on the first page, but only turn it in on Smartsite on **one** of your names. You should consider working with your hevruta on your midterm and final essays by editing each other's work.

### Course Policies

1. Assignments must be turned in on time unless I have given you an extension. Late assignments will be grade down 5 points (out of 100 or 0.5 points out of 10 for journals) per day.
2. If you run into any personal difficulties – health, family issues – please inform me **before** an assignment is due.
3. Copying someone else's work without citation is plagiarism, as is turning in work written by someone else. However, I strongly encourage you to work with your hevruta (partner) on editing your papers.

### Course Calendar

Mar. 31: Introduction: The Jewish Question at the End of the Nineteenth Century

April 2: Contested Histories: Israel/Palestine and the Origins of Zionism

Shapira, 3-16, 27-42

Oz, *A Tale*, 1-34, 81-201

Jean-Christophe Attias and Esther Benbassa, *Israel, the Impossible Land*, 1-33

Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine*, 15-37, 78-82

April 7: Competing Ideas for a New Jewish Nation

Shapira, 16-24

Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea* (selections)

Statement by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Shulem ben Schneersohn in Michael Seltzer, *Zionism Reconsidered* (selections)

April 9: The Birth of Palestine: The British Mandate and the Yishuv

Shapira, 67-75, 119-131

Documents from Walter Laqueur, *Israel-Arab Reader*

April 14: The Invention of Modern Hebrew Culture

Shapira, 54-62, 133-151

Oz, *A Tale*, 34-81

Tom Segev, "Culture Wars," *One Palestine, Complete*, 202-223

Shmuel Yosef Agnon, "The Lady and the Peddler"

April 16: Utopian Zionism

Film: *Children of the Sun* (70 min)

Shapira, 42-53, 103-117

*The Plough Woman*, selections

Amos Elon, "Beggars with Dreams" in *The Israelis*, ch. 6

April 21: Utopian Zionism -- the Kibbutz

Guest Lecture: Rachel Biale

April 23: Jewish Immigrants vs. Arab Inhabitants

**First Current Events Journal Due**

Shapira, 75-88

Oz, *A Tale*, 311-334

Tom Segev, "Hebron, 1929" and "Khalil Sakakini Builds a Home," in *One Palestine, Complete*, 314-327, 360-374

Rashid Khalidi, "Elements of Identity I: Peasant Resistance to Zionist Settlement" in *Palestinian Identity*, 89-118

April 28: The Struggle for a Jewish State -- World War II to 1948

**Midterm Due at 11:00 pm**

Shapira, 88-98

Oz, *A Tale*, 284-299

Segev, "Give Me a Country Without Wars," *One Palestine*, 468-486

**Film:** *Al Naqba* (56 min)

April 30: The War of Independence/Al Naqba

Shapira, 155-176

Oz, *A Tale*, 334-385

Benny Morris, "The Origins of the Palestinian Refugee Problem" in *New Perspectives on Israeli History*, 42-55.

Yoav Gelber, "The Israeli-Arab War of 1948: History versus Narratives," in Mordecai Bar-On (eds.), *A Never-Ending Conflict*, 43-68

May 5: Building a State and Ingathering the "Tribes of Israel"

**Film:** *Sallah Shabbati* (110 mins)

Shapira, 179-244

Oz, *A Tale*, 423-446

May 7: *Sallah Shabbati* (cont)

May 12: Political and Cultural Dilemmas of the New State

Shapira, 248-268

A.B. Yehoshua, "Facing the Forests," in Robert Alter, *Modern Hebrew Literature*, 357-392

#### May 14: The Six-Day War -- Causes and Consequences

Shapira, 271-324

Michael Oren, "The Six Day War," in Mordecai Bar-On (ed.), *A Never-Ending Conflict*, 135-146

#### May 19: The Yom Kippur War and the Likud Revolution Messianic Zionism and the Settler Movement

Shapira, 326-355

Amos Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, 27-73, 87-123

#### May 21: Between Peace with Egypt and the First Intifada

Shapira, 357-418

Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, 157-180

#### May 26: Secular versus Religious: What is a Jewish State?

Oz, *In the Land of Israel*, 1-24

#### May 28: Oslo -- the Rise and Fall of the Peace Process

Shapira, 422-466

Edward Said, "A Palestinian Versailles," *Progressive* 57: 12 (December 1993): 22-26

David Bar Illan, "Why a Palestinian State is Still a Mortal Threat," *Commentary* 96:5 (November 1993) 27-31

#### June 2: The Past and Future of Jewish Nationalism

##### **Second Current Events Journal Due**

Shapira, 469-475

Gadi Taub, "Israel, Democracy and the Jewish State," *Chronicle of Higher Education* (August 10, 2007)

Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir, "100 Years of Zionism, 50 Years of a Jewish State" *Tikkun* 13:2 (March-April, 1998)

#### June 4: Conclusion

##### **Addendum 1: News Sources**

Every news source has its bias. The best way to get news on a particular event is to sample several sources. The following sources are anything but comprehensive:

New York Times: has the best daily foreign news coverage of any American publication. Subscription required to read full articles on-line. Shortened version available at <http://www.nytimes.com/>

New York Times: reports extensively from Israel and elsewhere in the Middle East

Haaretz: Israel's newspaper of record. Has a left-of-center orientation. Worth reading the op-ed articles. English version can be read on-line: [www.haaretzdaily.com/](http://www.haaretzdaily.com/) (you may need to subscribe).

972mag.com: this is a blog site featuring a variety of bloggers, mostly Jewish, some Palestinian with a human rights and leftwing orientation.

Times of Israel: established in 2012, offers in-depth English language coverage. Does not have a strong partisan bias: [timesofisrael.com](http://timesofisrael.com)

Yediot Aharonot: one of Israel's two mass-circulation daily papers: [ynetnews.com](http://ynetnews.com) translates Hebrew language reporting to English

Jerusalem Post: right-of-center English-language Israeli newspaper. <http://www.jpost.com>

Israel National News (Arutz 7): the voice of the religious settler movement. <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/>

Jewish Daily Forward: [forward.com](http://forward.com). Based in New York, has excellent reporting and commentary from Israel. Orientation is left of center

Al Jazeera: the Arabic news source out of the Persian Gulf. While it has a point of view, it adheres to professional journalistic standards: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/>

Wafa: official Palestinian news service: [english.wafa.ps](http://english.wafa.ps)

Al Qassam: Hamas news source: <http://www.qassam.ps/>

<http://electronicintifada.net/> (A pro-Palestinian website that seems to be located in Chicago)

Additional sites are listed at <http://www.world-newspapers.com/palestine.html>

Bitterlemons: a joint Palestinian-Israeli website with analysis of current issues. Edited by two important figures in the Palestinian and Israeli security establishments. <http://www.bitterlemons.org/>

Enlightening blog of Bernard Avishai. Takes a left-wing – and at times, post-Zionist -- point of view: <http://bernardavishai.blogspot.com/>

**Addendum 2: Grading criteria for essays**

A: clear and comprehensive treatment of the question written in excellent expository style; work demonstrates that the student is thinking in a creative way and is making an original argument; excellent use of written sources and class discussions

B: good summary of the essential points, written in satisfactory style; arguments repeat readings and class discussions

C: only some essential points, but significant gaps; unclear writing; very partial use of readings and class discussions

D: lacking in central issues; incomprehensible writing; little evidence of familiarity with readings and class discussions

#### **Addendum 3: Grading criteria for journals (10 point basis)**

9-10: excellent summary consisting of more than one source with thoughtful analysis of news items

8: adequate summary based on at least one source with little analysis

7: weak summary and/or no analysis

1 point will be deducted for each missing journal entry

#### **Addendum 4**

##### **Clickers**

- When purchasing your remote, be sure to tell the bookstore you are in my class and you are using i>clicker2.
- If you have an older i<clicker without the LCD display, you can use also use it for answering multiple choice questions.
  - Register your clicker using your student ID on this website:  
<http://www.iclicker.com/support/registeryourclicker/>
  - You may also use your Smartphone. Register it at iClickergo.com
- We will be using i>clicker at least once a week and clicker points will make up **10%** of your final grade. Please remember that it is your responsibility to come prepared to participate with a functioning remote every day. However, I do realize that difficult circumstances do arise, and for this reason I will drop the lowest i>clicker session from your total participation grade.
- If you have lost or broken your i>clicker remote, you will have to purchase another one. Please email me with your new Remote ID so that I can manually register your new remote.

- I consider bringing a fellow student's i>clicker to class to be cheating and a violation of the University plagiarism policy. If you are caught with a remote other than your own or have votes in a class that you did not attend, you will forfeit all clicker points and may face additional disciplinary action.
- You should check your grade on gradebook to make sure that your clicker is properly registered. If it is not, please send me your clicker number and I will register you.
- **Further** instructions: See Smartsite for our course under "Resources: Clicker Registration"