



Yeshiva University  
 THE ZAHAVA AND MOSHAEL STRAUS  
 CENTER FOR TORAH AND WESTERN THOUGHT

## Zionist Political Thought

Department of Political Science, Stern College  
 Spring 2017  
 Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik and Dr. Neil Rogachevsky  
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This course will consider the fundamental ideas and debates underlying modern Zionism and the state of Israel. The course will look at the different intellectual currents of modern Zionism—including Political Zionism, Cultural Zionism, Labor Zionism, Revisionist Zionism, and Religious Zionism—and also chart their impact on modern Israel. Questions to be discussed include: How did Zionists conceive of the relationship between religion and state? What were their views on economics, international relations, and education? The course will focus on works by political thinkers and politicians such as Theodore Herzl, Ahad Ha'am, A.D. Gordon, Ber Borochov, Rav Kook, Vladimir Jabotinsky, David Ben Gurion, and Menachem Begin. The course will conclude with an in-depth study of Israel's Declaration of Independence.

Course goals: This course aims to provide students a detailed grasp of the major currents of Zionist political thought and to allow them to critically engage in debate about the meaning of Zionism within both Judaism and Western thought. The course also aims to strengthen the writing skills and reasoning ability of students.

Text:

Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea*

Requirements: Weekly Response Papers & Presentations 30%  
 Long Essay 30%  
 Final Exam 40%

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations should make an appointment with the Office of

Disability Services, (646) 592-4132, rkohn1@yu.edu, during the first week of class. Once you have been approved for accommodations, please submit your accommodation letter to ensure the successful implementation of those accommodations.

Class Schedule:

Week 1 (Jan. 24 & 26): **Introduction & Sources of Modern Zionism**

Readings: Arthur Hertzberg: Introduction to *The Zionist Idea*

Week 2 (Jan. 31 & Feb. 2): **Jewish Nationhood in Debate:** Moses Hess: "Rome and Jerusalem," Leo Strauss: "Spinoza's Critique of Religion," Buber: "Hebrew Humanism"

Week 3 (Feb. 7 & 9): **Leon Pinsker**

Texts: Pinsker: "Auto-emancipation," Benzion Netanyahu: "Leon Pinsker"

Week 4: (Feb. 14 & 16): **Political Zionism: Theodore Herzl**

Readings: Herzl: "The Jewish State," "Altneuland," Netanyahu: "Theodore Herzl"

Week 5: (Feb. 21 & 23): **Cultural Zionism**

Readings: Ah'ad Ha'am: "The Spiritual Revival," Allan Arkush: "Cultural Zionism Today," Hillel Halkin: "Ah'ad Ha'am and Herzl"

Week 6: (Feb. 28 & March 2): **Labor Zionism and Zionist Economics**

Readings: A.D. Gordon: "Nationalism and Socialism," "The Dream of the Aliyah," Ber Borochov: "The National Question and the Class Struggle"

Week 7: (March 7, No Class March 9): **Revisionist Zionism**

Readings: Vladimir Jabotinsky: "How to Combat anti-Semitism," "The Iron Wall," Benzion Netanyahu: "Vladimir Jabotinsky"

Week 8 (March 14 & 16): **Religious Zionism**

Readings: Rav Kook: "Lights for Rebirth," Yechiel Pines: "Religion is the Source of Jewish Nationalism"

Week 9 (March 21, March 23): **David Ben Gurion**

Readings: Anita Shapira: *David Ben Gurion*, excerpts

Week 10 (March 28 & 30): **The Begin Revolution**

Readings: Menachem Begin: *The Revolt*, excerpts

Week 11 (April 4 & 6): **Menachem Begin's Zionist Legacy**

Readings: Hillel Halkin, Meir Soloveichik et al.: *Menachem Begin's Zionist Legacy*

Week 12 (April 20) & Week 13 (April 25 and 27): **Israel's Declaration of Independence in**

**Comparative Perspective:** Readings: drafts of the Israeli Declaration of Independence, drafts of the American Declaration of Independence, French Declaration of the Rights of Man

Week 14 (May 4, 9): **Conclusion & Review**