

“Zionist and Israeli political leadership: idealism, realism and pragmatism”
HIST 385-004 (cross-listings: JS371-001; MESAS370-008; POLS385-009)
Undergraduate
Spring 2015 - Ziv Rubinovitz

[View Syllabus](#)

The course will discuss the political leadership of the State of Israel as an introduction into Israel's political system. The course will begin with the pre-state (Yishuv) era and then will analyze the leadership since 1948. The analysis will highlight the ideational, realist and pragmatic aspects of Israel's leadership throughout its existence. It will

discuss the prime ministers and other leading figures, as well as their personal impact and leadership in Israel's history, both in the foreign affairs and security arenas as well as the domestic arena. It will deal with the major events in Israel's history – the establishment of the state, war and peace, domestic political affairs, government-military relations, and dealing with economic and social developments.

It is impossible to discuss or teach all of the figures who influenced Israel throughout its history. Hence, the main stream of the course will focus on the prime ministers of Israel and their deeds in power, but we will also discuss other significant figures who had important roles in Israel's history.

Requirements

1. Attending class and participating in discussions (10%). You are expected to attend all classes. However, if you cannot attend, please notify me, preferably in advance, and provide applicable justification.
2. A brief presentation in class (5-7 minutes), followed by a 2-3 pages paper. This will be an individual assignment coordinated in advance with the instructor. The presentation and paper will be about political figures that we will discuss and will open our class discussions (20%).
3. A 50-minutes Midterm exam will be in class on Monday, March 4 (25%). Please note that the exam will take 50 minutes of the class.
4. Final exam on Tuesday, May 5, 2015, 11:30 am – 2:00 pm in the regular classroom (45%).

Note: The Emory University Honor Code applies in this course.

Topics

1. **Introduction (1): (Political) leadership**
2. **Introduction (2): Varieties within Zionism**
3. **Leaders of the Zionist Movement**
4. **Pre-state leadership in Eretz Israel/Palestine and abroad**
5. **Introduction (3): the Israeli political system**
6. **David Ben-Gurion**
7. **Moshe Sharett**

8. **Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir (and Yigal Allon and Moshe Dayan)**
9. **Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, 1970s-1990s**
10. **Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir**
11. **Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert: The 1990s to the Present**
12. **Neither Left Nor Right: The Center**
13. **Conclusion**

Disclaimer

Minor changes to the syllabus may apply during the course. Updates will be announced and when applicable the “Blackboard” will be updated.

Required books

The following books are required. You may purchase or rent copies at the bookstore or find hardcopies (also an electronic copy of Gideon Shimoni's book) at the library.

Joseph S. Nye, Jr. *The Powers to Lead*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Gideon Shimoni. *The Zionist Ideology*. Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1995.

Gregory S. Mahler. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Second Edition. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011.

Recommended reference:

Bernard Reich and David H. Goldberg. *Historical Dictionary of Israel, Second Edition*. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2008.

The Knesset website: www.knesset.gov.il

Major Knesset Debates (1948-1981): <http://jcpa.org/article/major-knesset-debates-1948-1981/>

Israel's Foreign Policy – Historical Documents:

http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/MFADocuments/Pages/Documents_Foreign_Policy_Israel.aspx - see volumes in the left side column.

Jewish Virtual Library: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/indexrestore.html>

- many topics within the library are relevant, especially Israel's international relations:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/intltoc.html>; government and

politics: <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Politics/poltoc.html>; history:

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/history.html>

Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS): <http://history.state.gov/> - see volumes re the Middle East and Arab-Israeli conflict.

Detailed plan of the course

Required readings signaled by an asterisk (*).

1. Introduction (1): (Political) leadership – January 14

* Joseph S. Nye, Jr. *The Powers to Lead*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008 (2010). Please read the entire book as it will set a framework for analysis for the course. Specifically, read the preface and chapters 1 and 3 (but do read the rest too!)

Archie Brown. *The Myth of the Strong Leader: Political Leadership in the Modern Age*. Basic Books, 2014.

Gautam Mukunda. *Indispensable: When Leaders Really Matter*. Harvard Business Review Press, Boston, 2012.

Keith Grint. *Leadership: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Thomas E. Cronin and Michael A. Genovese. *Leadership Matters: Unleashing the Power of Paradox*. Boulder, Colo.: Paradigm Publishers, 2012.

2. Introduction (2): Varieties within Zionism – January 21

* Gideon Shimoni. *The Zionist Ideology*. Brandeis University Press, 1995, chs. 1 (pp. 3-21, 29-37, 46-51), 3 (pp. 85-103, 118-126), 4 (pp. 126-133, 136-139, 154-165), 5 (170-179, 189-208), 6 (all) – This applies also to topic 3.

Arye Naor. "Jabotinsky's New Jew: Concept and Models," *Journal of Israeli History* 30 (2), 2011, pp. 141-159.

Ilan Peleg. "The Zionist Right and Constructivist Realism: Ideological Persistence and Tactical Readjustment," *Israel Studies* 10 (3), 2005, pp. 127-153.

Yossi Katz. "The Re-emergence of Jerusalem: New Zionist Approaches in Attaining Political Goals Prior to the First World War," *Political Geography* 14 (3), 1995, pp. 279-293.

3. Leaders of the Zionist Movement: Herzl, Jabotinsky, Goldmann, Weizmann – January 26, 28, February 2

* READ FOR CLASS: Herzl's "A solution of the Jewish Question", Jabotinsky's "The Iron Wall", Leon Pinsker's "Auto-Emancipation", "The Balfour Declaration", "The Biltmore Program" – all from Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.), *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008.

* Gideon Shimoni – same readings as for topic 2.

Jehuda Reinharz and Evyatar Friesel. "Nahum Goldmann: Jewish and Zionist Statesman – An Overview". In Mark A. Raider (ed.). *Nahum Goldmann: Statesman without a State*. SUNY Press, 2009, pp. 3-59.

Shlomo Avineri. *Herzl: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2008 (2013), pp. 141-247.

Hillel Halkin. *Jabotinsky: A Life*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014.

T.G. Fraser. *Chaim Weizmann: The Zionist Dream*. London: Haus Publications, 2009.

4. Pre-state leadership in Eretz Israel/Palestine and abroad – February 4, 9

- * Gideon Shimoni. *The Zionist Ideology*. Brandeis University Press, 1995, ch. 8.
 - * Yosef Gorny. "Negation of the *Galut* and the Centrality of Israel: Nahum Goldmann and David Ben-Gurion". In Mark A. Raider (ed.). *Nahum Goldmann: Statesman without a State*. SUNY Press, 2009, pp. 75-92.
- Josef Heller. *The Birth of Israel 1945-1949: Ben-Gurion and his Critics*. University Press of Florida, Gainesville, FL, 2000.
- Jørgen Jensehaugen, Marte Heian-Engdal & Hilde Henriksen Waage. "Securing the State: From Zionist Ideology to Israeli Statehood," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 23 (2), 2012, pp. 280-303.

5. Introduction (3): the Israeli political system – February 11, 16

- * READ FOR CLASS: "The Declaration of Independence" and "The status-quo agreement". In Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.), *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008.
 - * Gregory S. Mahler. *Politics and Government in Israel: The Maturation of a Modern State*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2011, chapters 4-5. Chapters 1-3, 6-7 are for whoever needs a general background. Please familiarize yourselves with the political setting of Israel.
- Walter Laqueur. *The History of Zionism*. Tauris Parke Paperbacks, New York, 2003, chapter 11.

6. David Ben-Gurion – February 23, 25, 26

- * Anita Shapira. *Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014, chs. 5, 7-11.
- Gideon Shimoni. *The Zionist Ideology*. Brandeis University Press, 1995, pp. 201-205.
- Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, "Ben-Gurion and Sharett: Conflict Management and Great Power Constraints in Israeli Foreign Policy," *Middle Eastern Studies* 24 (3), 1988, pp. 330-356.
- Yehudit Auerbach. "Ben-Gurion and Reparations from Germany". In Ronald W. Zweig (ed.). *David Ben-Gurion: Politics and Leadership in Israel*. London and Jerusalem: Frank Cass and Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 274-292.
- Elhannan Orren. "The War of Independence". In Ronald W. Zweig (ed.). *David Ben-Gurion: Politics and Leadership in Israel*. London and Jerusalem: Frank Cass and Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1991, pp. 173-192.
- Michael Bar-Zohar. *Ben-Gurion, a biography*. Adama Books, New York, 1986.
- Michael B. Oren, "Ambivalent Adversaries: David Ben-Gurion and Israel vs. the United Nations and Dag Hammarskjold, 1956-57," *Journal of Contemporary History* 27 (1), 1992, pp. 89-127.

7. Moshe Sharett – March 2, 4

- * READ FOR CLASS: "The clash with Ben-Gurion-Sharett". In Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (eds.), *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings on Society, Politics, and Foreign Relations, Pre-1948 to the Present*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2008.
- * Gabriel Sheffer. *Moshe Sharett: Biography of a Political Moderate*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, chs. 11, 23, 28.

- * Neil Caplan. "The 'Sharettist Option' Revisited". In Elie Podeh and Asher Kaufman (eds.), *Arab – Jewish Relations: From Conflict to Resolution?* (Brighton: Sussex University Press, 2006), pp. 64-73.
 - * Yechiam Weitz. "The Reparation Negotiations in Israeli Politics: An Introduction". In Yaakov Sharett (ed.). *The Reparations Controversy: The Jewish State and German Money in the Shadow of the Holocaust 1951-1952*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2011, pp. 1-22.
- Moshe Yegar. "Moshe Sharett and the Origins of Israel's Diplomacy," *Israel Studies* 15 (3), 2010, pp. 1-26.

- **Midterm exam, 50 minutes, on March 4.**

SPRING BREAK March 9-13

8. Levi Eshkol and Golda Meir – March 16, 18

- **Elections in Israel March 17. We will discuss them on the day before and after with the results.**

- * Michael B. Oren. "Levi Eshkol, Forgotten Hero," *Azure* 14, 2003, pp. 25-72.
 - * Michael Brown. "The American Element in the Rise of Golda Meir, 1906-1929". *Jewish History* 6 (1/2), 1992, pp. 35-50.
 - * Yossi Goldstein. "Israel's Prime Ministers and the Arabs: Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir and Yitzhak Rabin," *Israel Affairs* 17 (2), 2011, pp. 177-193.
- Shlomo Aronson. "Leadership, Preventive War and Territorial Expansion: David Ben-Gurion and Levi Eshkol," *Israel Affairs* 18 (4), 2012, pp. 526-545.
- Shlomo Aronson. *Levi Eshkol: From Pioneering Operator to Tragic Hero – A Doer*. London and Portland, OR: Vallentine Mitchell, 2011, chs. 9-12.
- Gershon R. Kieval, "The Foreign Policy of the Labor Party," in Bernard Reich and Gershon R. Kieval (eds.), *Israeli National Security Policy* (New York: Greenwood Press), 19-54.
- Yehuda Avner. *The Prime Ministers: An Intimate Narrative of Israeli Leadership*. Toby Press, New Milford, CT/London/Jerusalem, 2010.

Yigal Allon:

Anita Shapira. *Yigal Allon, Native Son: A Biography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.

Moshe Dayan:

Mordechai Bar-On. *Moshe Dayan: Israel's Controversial Hero*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012.

9. Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres, 1970s-1990s – March 23, 25

- * Efraim Inbar. "Yitzhak Rabin and Israel's national security". *Journal of Strategic Studies* 20 (2), 1997, pp. 25-40.
 - * Leslie Derfler. *Yitzhak Rabin: A Political Biography*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, chs. 4-5, 10-11.
 - * Guy Ziv. *Why Hawks Become Doves: Shimon Peres and Foreign Policy Change in Israel*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2014, chs. 4-5.
- Linda Benedikt. *Yitzhak Rabin: The Battle for Peace*. London: Haus Books, 2005.

Yossi Goldstein. "Israel's Prime Ministers and the Arabs: Levi Eshkol, Golda Meir and Yitzhak Rabin," *Israel Affairs* 17 (2), 2011, pp. 177-193.

Yitzhak Rabin. *The Rabin Memoirs*. University of California Press, 1996.

Michael Bar-Zohar. *Shimon Peres: The Biography*. Random House, 2007.

10. Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir – March 30, April 1, 6

* Daniel Gordis. *Menachem Begin: The Battle for Israel's Soul*. New York: Nextbook/Schocken, 2014, chs. 8, 12-14.

* Colin Shindler. *The Land Beyond Promise: Israel, Likud and the Zionist Dream*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2002, chs. 12, 17, 18.

Avi Shilon. *Menachem Begin: A Life*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012, pp. 248-347.

Ilan Peleg. *Begin's Foreign Policy, 1977-1983: Israel's Move to the Right*. Greenwood Press, New York, 1987.

Ilan Peleg, "The Foreign Policy of Herut and the Likud," in Reich & Kieval, pp. 55-78.

Arye Naor. "Hawks' Beaks, Doves' Feathers: Likud Prime Ministers between Ideology and Reality," *Israel Studies* 10 (3), 2005, pp. 154-191.

Nadav G. Shelef. "From 'Both Banks of the Jordan' to the 'Whole Land of Israel': Ideological Change in Revisionist Zionism," *Israel Studies* 9 (1), 2004, pp. 125-148.

Yechiam Weitz. "The Road to the 'Upheaval': A Capsule History of the Herut Movement, 1948-1977," *Israel Studies* 10 (3), 2005, pp. 54-86.

Gideon Doron. "Right as Opposed to Wrong as Opposed to Left: The Spatial Location of 'Right Parties' on the Israeli Political Map," *Israel Studies* 10 (3), 2005, pp. 29-53.

11. Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert: The 1990s to the Present – April 8, 13, 15

* Guy Ben-Porat. "Netanyahu's Second Coming: A Neoconservative Policy Paradigm?" *Israel Studies* 10 (3), 2005, pp. 225-245.

* David Landau. *Arik: The Life of Ariel Sharon*. Knopf, 2014, chs. 13-17 (specific instructions will be announced).

* Galia Golan. *Israeli Peacemaking Since 1967: Factors Behind the Breakthroughs and Failures*. London and New York: Routledge, 2015, chs. 7 (Barak) and 8 (Olmert).

Yael S. Aronoff. "From Warfare to Withdrawal: The Legacy of Ariel Sharon," *Israel Studies* 15 (2), 2010, pp. 149-172.

Ben Caspit and Ilan Kfir. *Netanyahu: The Road to Power*. Secaucus, NJ: Birch Lane Press, 1998.

12. Neither Left Nor Right: The Center – April 20, 22

* Amir Goldstein. "'We Have a Rendezvous with Destiny' – The Rise and Fall of the Liberal Alternative," *Israel Studies* 16 (1), 2011, pp. 26-52.

* Kevjn Lim. "Neither Left Nor Right but Backwards: The Failure of Centrist Parties in Israel and Their Relationship to the Multiparty System," *Israel Affairs* 15 (1), 2009, pp. 28-51.

13. Conclusion – April 27