

World Cultures: Nations and Nationalism: Islam, Jews, and the West

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This course considers the complex problem of nationalism and national identity in the modern world. Although it is common to believe that nations have always existed, in fact, they are quite new. For most of human history, people identified themselves not as members of a nation but as belonging to groups far more immediate and concrete—family, clan, or tribe—or as residents of a certain village, riverbank, or other geographic area. Unlike a family or a village, a nation is an abstraction, and people didn't begin to see themselves as belonging to a nation until certain economic, political, and cultural forms were in place—forms that rarely appeared before the eighteenth century.

Our objective in this course will be to consider what a nation is, how nations came to be, what historical experiences particular nations have undergone, and what forms of nationalism and national belonging their peoples have displayed. In pursuing these objectives, we will discuss different theories of nationalism and then look in detail at four case studies, each representing a different form of nationalism: 1) The rise of Arab nations and nationalism amid the collapse empire—Ottoman, British, and French (1914-58); the extreme racist nationalism epitomized by Nazi Germany (1918-45); the nationalism of the independence movement in Algeria (1954-62); and the rival religion-tinged nationalisms of Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, since 1917. The course will conclude with some reflections on the persistence of nationalism in our globalized world.

Course Format and Assignments

Each week, there will be two lectures and one discussion session. The three weekly classes are equally important, and you are required to attend all three. You are also required to complete the readings for each week prior to meeting with your Preceptor. We expect all students to participate actively in class discussions, and part of your grade will depend on this participation.

During the semester you will be asked to write several short essays on aspects of the course readings. There will be a mid-term and final examination, consisting mainly of essay questions. Preceptors may require one or two short tests during the discussion periods.

The essays taken together will count for 40 percent of your grade; the two exams together count another 40%; and attendance and participation about 20%

Texts

Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria, A History from 1830 to the Present*
Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*
Dan Cohn-Sherbok and Dawoud El-Alami, *Palestine Israeli Conflict*
Omar Dahbour, *The Nationalism Reader*
Adeed Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the 20th Century*
Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal, 1955-1962: Reflections on the French-Algerian War*
Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*
Ian Kershaw, *Hitler (Profiles in Power)*
Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, eds, *Israel-Arab Reader*
Readings on electronic reserve, indicated by an *

Topics and Readings

PART ONE. What is a Nation?

Week I (Jan. 21): Introduction to the course

Week II (Jan. 28): What Is a Nation?

Readings: Ernst Renan, *What is a Nation?* in *Nationalism Reader (NR)*
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "The Government of Poland," (NR)
Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation (NR)*
*Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 1-7
Jeremy Brecher, "The National Question," in NR, pp. 344-52
First Paper

Week III (Feb. 4): The Nation as Imagined Community

Readings: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, chs. 1-3
*Partha Chatterje, "Whose Imagined Community," in *Millennium. Journal of International Studies* 20/3, pp. 395-406

Week IV (Feb. 11): What is Nationalism?

Readings: Elie Kedourie, "Nationalism" in NR
Anderson, chs. 5-7
Second paper

PART TWO. From Empire to Nations: The Arab World

Week V (Feb. 18): Origins of Arab Nationalism (No class Feb. 18)

Readings: Adeed Dawisha, *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century*, chs. 1-3
W. Laqueur and B. Rubin, *The Israel-Arab Reader (I-AR)*, pp. 10-29

Week VI (Feb. 25): Britain, the Jews, and the Quest for an Arab Nation

Readings: Dawisha, chs. 4-6
I-AR, pp. 30-77
Third Paper.

PART THREE. Extreme Nationalism: National Socialism in Germany

Week VII (March 3): Nationalism and Racism

Readings: Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Vol. 1, chs. V, IX, and XI; Vol. 2. chs. I, IV, V, VI, VIII
Ian Kershaw, *Hitler*, Introduction and chs. 1-3

Week VIII (March 10): National Socialism in Practice

Readings: Kershaw, chs 4-6
Mid-term Exam: March 12

Week IX (March 17): Spring Break

PART FOUR. Decolonization and National Liberation Movements: The Case of Algeria

Week X (March 24) : France and Algeria

Readings: Charles-Robert Ageron, *Modern Algeria*, chs. 1-6

Week XI (March 31): Algeria and the Rise of Anti-Colonial Nationalism

Readings: Ageron, chs. 7-8

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* in NR

*Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*, pp. 109-54

Week XII (April 7): Decolonization and the National Liberation movement

Readings: Ageron, ch. 9

Mouloud Feraoun, *Journal, 1955-1962: Reflections on the French-Algerian War*

Fourth paper.

PART FIVE. The Israel-Palestine Conflict

Week XIII (April 14): Nationalism and the Politics of History

Readings: Cohn-Sherbok and El-Alami, *The Palestine-Israeli Conflict*, chs 1-2, 6-7

Week XIV (April 21): The Quest for Nationhood: Two Literary Views

Readings: *Ghassan Kanafani, "Men in the Sun"

*Amos Oz, *The Hill of Evil Counsel*

Week XV (April 28): Israel and Palestine after 1948

Readings: Cohn-Sherbok and Dawoud El-Alami, chs 3-5 and 8-10

I-AR, pp. 81-83, 89-110

Final paper.

PART SIX. Beyond Nations and Nationalism?

Week XVI (May 5): Nationalism's Future

Readings: Michael Walzer, "The New Tribalism: Notes on a Difficult Problem," in NR

Jurgen Habermas, "Citizenship and National Identity: Some Reflections on the Future of Europe," in NR