

Advanced Institute, Fall 2014
THE CASE FOR NATIONALISM
Instructors: Ran Baratz and William Kristol
Jerusalem, Israel

Is national pride to be celebrated or feared? Is “national interest” a noble idea? Do nations have a future—and should they have a future? Or is the world moving toward a new age of cosmopolitan internationalism, trans-national ideologies, and sub-national tribalism? Are deeply felt national histories so easy to forget, and is it really desirable that they be forgotten?

Led by Dr. William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard* and one of the leading public intellectuals in America, and Dr. Ran Baratz, prominent Israeli thinker and writer and founding editor of *Mida*, this institute will examine the political and moral questions surrounding nationalism and nation-states. The course will begin by examining the case for and against nationalism, drawing upon some of the major works of modern political theory. It will then look in detail at three “regimes”—Europe, America, and modern Israel—drawing upon a mix of classic texts, speeches, and case studies.

In Europe, we see the dominant moral and political idea of our age—“human rights”—in its most advanced form. All persons everywhere are entitled to equal dignity and equal protections. The most dangerous threats to human rights—terror and empire, religious extremism, natural catastrophe, market dysfunction—all transcend national borders. Human rights cannot be secured by nations, and excessive national pride is a threat to the new ideal of the free, sovereign, cosmopolitan individual. The nation must be overcome and replaced by a centralized governing body that is large enough to protect global citizens from global threats.

In America, we see the ideals of universal liberty and natural rights combined with a belief in the exceptional character and special responsibilities of the American nation. Does American power serve the interests of world order? Do Americans believe in their own exceptionalism, or do they seek to become a nation among the nations?

The question of nationalism takes on special significance for citizens of Israel, the world’s only Jewish State. Zionism is a form of nationalism, and the founding of Israel represents the culmination of ancient longings for the rebirth of Jewish sovereignty in the Jewish homeland. But it was also founded in partial response to World War II and the Shoah it perpetrated on European Jewry. If the intellectual architects of the European Union believe that the national form causes violence and stands in the way of a more harmonious world, the intellectual architects of the State of Israel believed the opposite—that only a state dedicated to the protection of the Jewish people will ensure their welfare and prosperity.

Taken together, these urgent questions invite us to think about the deepest meaning and true character of political life, returning us yet again to the great texts and thinkers who illuminated the problems of politics with greatest clarity and force.

Monday, December 8, 2014

9:15 am to 12:15 pm ***America's Founding***

Readings:

- The American Declaration of Independence
- Letter of Thomas Jefferson to Roger Weightman (June 24, 1826)
- *The Federalist Papers*, No. 1

2:15 pm to 5:00 pm ***Nationalism and Zionism***

Readings:

- The Israeli Declaration of Independence
- Yehezkel Kaufmann, *Golah ve- Nekhar*, Ch. 2 [Heb. only]

Tuesday, December 9, 2014

9:15am to 12:15 pm ***"Defending Identity": Israel and the World***

Readings:

- Natan Sharansky, *Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy* (2008), Chs. 3–7, and conclusion

2:15 pm to 5:00 pm ***America: Perpetuation***

Readings:

- "The Star-Spangled Banner"
- Abraham Lincoln, Address on "The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions" (January 27, 1838)
- Lincoln, Gettysburg Address (November 19, 1863)
- Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address (March 4, 1865)

Wednesday, December 10, 2014

9:15am to 12:15 pm ***American Nationalism and Internationalism***

Readings:

- Walter Berns, *Making Patriots* (2002), introduction, chs. 1, 5, 7, and epilogue
- Marc F. Plattner, "Two Kinds of Internationalism," *The National Interest* 79 (Spring 2005)

2:15 pm to 5:00 pm ***Zionism and Judaism—Shall the Two Walk Together?***

Readings:

- Benzion Netanyahu, “Leo Pinsker”

Thursday, December 11, 2014

9:15am to 12:15 pm ***Europe: Beyond Nationalism***

Readings:

- Marc F. Plattner, “Sovereignty and Democracy,” *Policy Review* (December 2004)
- Robert Kagan, “Power and Weakness,” *Policy Review* (June- July 2002)
- Anne Applebaum, “Nationalism is Exactly What Ukraine Needs,” *New Republic* (May 12, 2014)

2:15 pm to 5:00 pm ***“A Nation Like All Other Nations?”; The Holocaust Effect***

Readings:

- Arthur Koestler, “Judah at the Crossroads: An Exhortation” *Commentary* (October 1967)
- Emil Fackenheim, “Jewish Faith and the Holocaust: A Fragment”

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm ***Whatever Happened to Arab Nationalism?***

Readings:

- Martin Kramer, “Arab Nationalism: Mistaken Identity,” *Daedalus* 122, no. 3 (1993)

Friday, December 12, 2014

9:15am to 12:15 pm ***June 1940***

Readings:

- Winston Churchill, Speech to the House of Commons (June 18, 1940)
- Charles de Gaulle, Speeches to the People of France (June 18 and 19, 1940)
- Ze’ev Jabotinsky, Speech at Manhattan Center in New York (June 19, 1940)
- Rick Richman, “Jabotinsky’s Lost Moment: June 1940,” *The Tower* (December 2013)