

# ZIONISM & ARAB NATIONALISM

In this lesson, students will explore the concept of nationalism and connect the rise of nationalism in Europe to the emergence of both Zionism and Arab Nationalism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Essential Questions

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- What is a nation?
- How is nationalism different than patriotism?

## Learning Outcomes

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Students will be able to:

- Situate a modern conflict in its historical and geographical context.
- Describe the impact of nationalism on both Jews and Arabs
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases used in a text.
- Determine the central ideas or information from a primary text.

## Materials Needed

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### MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES

- Video: *Land Matters*, available online
- Adobe Spark: *Zionism & Arab Nationalism: Primary Sources, Key Words, and Maps*, available online

### PRIMARY SOURCES

*All of these sources are available as pdfs or online in an interactive digital format.*

- DOCUMENT 1: *The Jewish State (1896)*, Theodor Herzl
- DOCUMENT 2: The First Zionist Congress (1897)
- DOCUMENT 3: Selected Writings of Sati' al-Husri
- DOCUMENT 4: The First Arab Congress (1913) and Map
- *Optional*: DOCUMENT 5: Arab Nationalisms
- *Optional*: DOCUMENT 6: Zionisms

### HANDOUTS

- Prior Knowledge Handout
- Nationalism vs. Patriotism Exercise
- Primary Source Chart
- Exit Slip

## Lesson Plan

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### 1. INTRODUCTION:

Introduce the topic and emphasize that it's important to learn about the wider context—history, geography, etc.—that has influenced the Arab-Israeli (sometimes referred to as the Israeli-Palestinian) conflict. In these materials, we use the phrase “Arab-Israeli” as a way to point out that the conflict has taken place in a larger arena and has involved many Arab nations. The conflict between Israel and the Palestinians is a subset of that larger conflict. The following points may be helpful as you introduce the topic:

- Today we will be learning about the Arab-Israeli conflict. Many people who are not directly part of this conflict feel connected to the area for cultural or religious reasons.
- This conflict has been the focus of worldwide media and diplomatic attention for decades.
- The conflict is extremely complex and cannot be properly understood with knowing the history and geography of the area.

### 2. ASSESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

- **Option 1:** Using the **Prior Knowledge Handout**, assess prior knowledge, misconceptions, and particular areas of interest among students.
- **Option 2:** More informally, have a **brief class discussion** around the questions: What do you think the Arab-Israeli conflict about? How much do you know about it?

### 3. SETTING THE STAGE

Students should watch the short video, *Land Matters*, which provides the necessary historical context for understanding the origins of the conflict and peace process. You may also want to use the following **talking points**:

- The focus in this lesson is on the emergence of both Arab and Jewish nationalisms in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Jewish nationalism, or Zionism, as it came to be called, is often connected to Theodor Herzl, who is considered the founder of modern Political Zionism (as seen in **DOCUMENT 1: The Jewish State**).
- Herzl called for a meeting of the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland in 1897. Jews from around the world gathered to define their goals for a future Jewish state (as seen in **DOCUMENT 2: The First Zionist Congress**).
- Arabs had also begun to reflect on the idea of nationalism during this time. Although there were others, Sati' al-Husri was one of the most influential figures in the early 20<sup>th</sup> to think and write about Arab nationalism (as seen in **DOCUMENT 3: Selected Writings of Sati' al-Husri**).
- In 1913, a group of young Arab nationalists met in Paris at the first Arab Congress where they adopted a list of resolutions for their growing movement (as seen in **DOCUMENT 4: The First Arab Congress**).
- The origins of the current Arab-Israeli conflict can be traced to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when Jewish nationalism (Zionism) and Arab nationalism came into competition with each other.

#### 4. NATIONALISM EXERCISE

The term "nationalism" is often used interchangeably with the term "patriotism." While nationalism and patriotism share some features, there are also important differences between them. Use the **Nationalism vs. Patriotism Handout** to help students sort through what the terms have in common and to distinguish the features that make them different from each other.

In general, patriotism has more to do with feelings and emotions, it is more connected to the individual, and it tends to focus more on the symbols of the nation. Nationalism, on the other hand, is group-oriented and requires some level of political organization; it emphasizes the right to independence or sovereignty, and uses shared identity markers (language, history, or ethnicity, etc.) as unifying forces. In terms of power, patriotism is often reflected in a show of power (military parades, national celebrations, etc.) and nationalism reflects the intent to gain power.

#### 5. PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Working with **DOCUMENTS 1-4 and the Primary Source Chart**, divide the students into groups of 4. Each student in the group will receive one document and will become the group "expert" on the content of his/her document. Once each student has worked through his/her document, the group will come together and share what they have learned. By the end of the exercise, students will have a complete set of answers and will have been exposed to four primary texts.

#### 6. CONCLUSION

Have students fill out the exit slip or use the questions to hold a class discussion.

#### 7. EXTENSION ACTIVITY

If there is time, you may want to have students consider **DOCUMENTS 5 AND 6** which demonstrate that neither Arab Nationalism nor Zionism were monolithic and that both Arab Nationalism and Zionism took a number of different forms, beginning in the 19th century.

#### Questions for discussion:

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- What role did religion play for some Jews and some Arabs in their ideas of nationalism?
- What are some of the other ideas of "homeland" that emerged among Arabs and Jews?
- How do these ideas of Nationalism and Zionism compare with what you read in **DOCUMENTS 1-4**?

## DOCUMENT 1: *The Jewish State* (1896), Theodor Herzl

*Herzl (1860-1904), a Jewish journalist from Vienna, became increasingly concerned about the growing antisemitism across Europe at the end of the 19th century. Despite the fact that many Western European countries had emancipated Jews, he noted that Jews, even those in high positions, were not safe from antisemitism. He concluded that the only solution to the antisemitism that he saw around him was to establish a Jewish state. He detailed his vision of this state in his book, Der Judenstaat ("The Jewish State"). Herzl's Zionism was the most significant source of Jewish nationalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; he is viewed as the father of modern political Zionism.*

### EXCERPT

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The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is an ancient one: It is the restoration of the Jewish State.

No one can deny the gravity of the Jewish situation. Wherever they live in *appreciable* numbers, they are more or less persecuted. Their equality before the law, granted by statute, has become practically a *dead letter*. They are debarred from filling even moderately high positions in the army, or in any public or private institutions. And attempts are made to thrust them out of business also: "Don't buy from the Jews!"

Attacks in Parliaments, in assemblies, in the press, in the pulpit, in the street, on journeys...are increasing by the day.

Can we hope for better days..? I say that we cannot hope for the current to shift.... The nations in whose midst Jews live are all either covertly or openly Anti-Semitic....

We are one people--our enemies have made us one without our consent, as repeatedly happens in history. Distress binds us together, and thus united, we suddenly discover our strength. Yes, we are strong enough to form a State, and, indeed, a model State. We possess all the *requisite* human and material resources.

The whole plan is in its essence perfectly simple....Let *sovereignty* be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves.

**Source:** This passage has been excerpted from *The Jewish State* translated by Sylvie D'Avigdor in 1896 and printed by the American Zionist Emergency Council in 1946 and from *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, ed. by Arthur Hertzberg and published by the Jewish Publication Society (Philadelphia) in 1959.

### KEYWORDS

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**antisemitism:** hostility toward or discrimination against Jews as a religious or ethnic group

**appreciable:** significant, large

**dead letter:** a law or policy that is not enforced

**emancipated:** permitted to become citizens on the countries in which they lived; freed from previous laws and policies that restricted full Jewish participation in society

**requisite:** necessary

**sovereignty:** independence, self-government

## DOCUMENT 2: First Zionist Congress (Basel, Switzerland, 1897)

*Shortly after he published his book, The Jewish State, Theodor Herzl called for the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland. During this assembly, Jewish delegates from all over the world established the World Zionist Organization and approved the following goals.*

### EXCERPT

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The aim of *Zionism* is to create for the Jewish people a homeland in *Palestine* secured by public law. [This would be achieved by:]

- The settlement in Palestine of farmers, artisans and laborers in such a manner as serves the purpose [of creating a national home].
- The organization and union of the whole of *Jewry* in suitable local and general bodies, in accordance with the laws of their respective countries.
- The strengthening of Jewish national feeling and national consciousness.
- Preparatory steps to obtain governmental consent necessary to achieve goals of Zionism.

**Source:** Elon, Amos. *Herzl*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976.

### KEYWORDS

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**Jewry:** a collective term for Jews; the Jewish people as a group

**Palestine:** In 135 CE, the Romans renamed the province which had been called Judaea to Syria Palaestina to remove obvious Jewish connection to the land; in the Ottoman period, the shorter term Palestine was used informally to describe the area south of Syria; after World War I, the League of Nations established the British Mandate for Palestine, which originally also included what is today Jordan

**Zionism:** an expression of Jewish nationalism; a movement that began in the 19th century with the hopes of reestablishing a Jewish homeland in the ancestral homeland, the land of Israel; became the official term for Jewish efforts to reestablish a national homeland in the British mandate for Palestine

## DOCUMENT 3: Selected Writings of Sati' al-Husri (early 20<sup>th</sup> century)

*Among scholars, al-Husri is considered one of foremost thinkers and educators in the development of the concept of Arab nationalism. For him, this meant that all Arabs shared a national identity. For al-Husri, being part of a nation did not mean being ruled by the same government or living in the same country or region. In the excerpt below he points to language and history as the most significant elements that a group of people must share to be considered a nation.*

### EXCERPTS

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- Language is the most important spiritual tie which **binds** an individual to the rest of mankind because it is the medium of communication amongst individuals... Since languages differ between [peoples], it is natural that we find groups of individuals who share the same language drawing nearer to each other than to other groups, thereby forming a nation which is distinct from other nations.
- Nationalist feeling depends on historical memories more than anything else... We do not exaggerate when we say that generally... the struggle for independence and unity begin only by recalling the past... Love for independence is **nourished** by memories of the lost independence; the longing for power and glory begins with a **lament** for the lost power and diminished glory; faith in the future of the nation derives its strength from a belief in the brilliance of the past.
- [A common language and a shared history] form the fundamental bases of nation formation. The union of these two spheres leads to the **fusion** of emotions and aspirations, of sufferings and hopes, and of culture. And in this, people see themselves as members of a unitary nation distinct from other nation... If we want to specify the roles of language and history in the formation of a nation, we can say: language is the soul and the life of the nation; history its memory and its **cognizance**.

**Source:** Dawisha, A. I. *Arab Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: From Triumph to Despair* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.

### KEYWORDS

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**bind:** tie or attach

**cognizance:** self-knowledge or awareness

**fusion:** blending or combining

**lament:** an expression of sadness or grief

**nourish:** maintain, keep in mind

## DOCUMENT 4: First Arab Congress (Paris, 1913)

Nationalist ideas began to spread among **Arabs** in the late 19th century. Still part of the Ottoman Empire, Arabs initially took interest in nationalism as a literary and cultural movement to re-establish the prominence of Arab language and culture and to promote a positive ethnic identity. In 1911, a group of Arab students in European universities formed a group called *al-Fatat* ("the Young Arab Society") to discuss their growing interest in nationalist ideas. In 1913, the group called for a meeting of the First Arab Congress where they made the following resolutions. See the accompanying map.

### EXCERPT

- Radical and urgent reforms are needed in the Ottoman Empire.
- It is important to guarantee Ottoman Arabs the exercise of their political rights by giving them meaningful roles in the administration of the Ottoman Empire.
- It is important to establish decentralized governments in each of the Arab and Syrian administrative districts [giving them more autonomy within the Ottoman Empire] according to their needs and abilities....
- The Arabic language must be recognized by the Ottoman Parliament and considered the official language in Syrian and Arab regions.
- Military service of those living in the Syrian and Arab administrative districts will be regional [rather than throughout the Ottoman Empire], except in extreme cases....
- These resolutions will be communicated to the Imperial Ottoman Government.
- These same resolutions will also be communicated to those powers friendly to the Ottoman Empire....

**Source:** British Imperial Connexions to the Arab National Movement. Translated from the French. World War I Document Archive. Web.

### KEYWORDS

**Arabs:** a people who originated in the Arabian Peninsula and spoke Arabic; today, Arabic-speaking people who live mostly in the Middle East and North Africa



**Arabian Peninsula**



**Middle East and North Africa**



**sanjak:** district within the Ottoman Empire; a group of *sanjaks* together would form a *vilayet*

**vilayet:** province in the Ottoman Empire; similar in function to a state in the United States

## DOCUMENT 5: Arab Nationalisms

*Arab Nationalism took a number of different forms, beginning in the 19th century and developing and changing throughout the 20th century. See below for two voices on Arab Nationalism.*

### Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi (c 1873)

*Tahtawi was an early advocate of Egyptian nationalism. As an intellectual who had studied in France, Tahtawi argued that Islam and modern Western thought were compatible with each other and that integrating the two was critical to Egypt's future. In this excerpt, the "homeland" or nation that he talks about refers to Egypt.*

### EXCERPT

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The homeland [nation] is the nest of man, where he toddled and from which he emerged, the congregation of his family, and part of his inner self. It is the homeland whose soil, food, and air have raised him, whose breeze has reared him and in which he grew up... Generous people long for their beloved ones like the lion who longs for its jungle... Free people do not prefer any country to their homeland, and are never patient being away from it.

**Source:** Kurzman, Charles. *Modernist Islam, 1840-1940 a Sourcebook*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

### *Islam and the National Idea* (1932), Rashid Rida

*Rida was an Islamic reformer who was concerned about preserving Muslim unity, identity, and culture. Rida viewed education, especially modern western education, as critically important to bringing about reform in the Islamic world. In this document, which reflects some of his later thinking, he focuses specifically on the relationship between Islam and nationalism.*

### EXCERPT

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As for the kind of nationalism that should adorn [belong to] the Muslim youth, it is that he should set a good example to the inhabitants of his homeland [nation] irrespective of their religion and sects [groups within a religion], and that he should cooperate with them in every legitimate action to further the independence of the homeland and to raise it up in learning, virtue, strength, and wealth.... The Muslim youth must not forget, while serving his homeland and his people, that Islam has honored him...[and that as a Muslim] he is a member of a body bigger than his people, his own personal homeland is only a part of his religious homeland.

**Source:** Haim, Sylvia G. *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*. Berkeley, CA: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1976.

## DOCUMENT 6: Zionisms

*Just as there were many different visions of Arab Nationalism that emerged over time, the same was true with Zionism. The forms of Zionism that you encounter below differed significantly from Theodor Herzl's political Zionism although having a presence in the ancient homeland was critical to all of them. While different visions remained and are reflected in Israel's political makeup, ultimately, Herzl's vision carried the day.*

### ***The Jewish State and Jewish Problem, Ahad Ha'Am (1897)***

*Over the course of his life, Ahad Ha'Am became a central figure in the Cultural Zionist movement, which was dedicated to renewing Jewish life and culture. Ha'Am wanted to create a Jewish cultural center in the land of Israel that would act to reinforce Jewish life in the Diaspora and that would allow Jews to explore and excel in areas of life that were often denied them in Europe (i.e., farming, higher education).*

### EXCERPT

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[Judaism] needs not an independent State, but only the creation in its native land of conditions favourable to its development: a good-sized settlement of Jews working without hindrance [obstacles] in every branch of culture, from agriculture and handicrafts to science and literature. This Jewish settlement [community], which will be a gradual growth, will become in course of time the center of the nation, wherein its spirit will find pure expression and develop in all its aspects up to the highest degree of perfection of which it is capable.

### ***The Manifesto (1902), The Mizrahi***

*As part of a larger movement of Religious Zionism, the Mizrahi sought to establish the people of Israel in their ancient homeland according to the values and principles of their sacred texts and traditions.*

### EXCERPT

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In the lands of the Diaspora the soul of our people—our Holy Torah [sacred texts and traditions]—can no longer be preserved in its full strength, nor can the commandments, which comprise the entire spiritual life of the people, be kept in their original purity, because the times are besieging us with difficult demands....Against his will each loses his Jewish self in the [non-Jewish] majority....

The people has found one remedy for this affliction—to direct their hearts to that one place which has always been the focus of our prayers, that place wherein the oppressed of our people will find their longed-for respite: Zion and Jerusalem.

**Source.** Both passages can be found in: Mendes-Flohr, Paul R. *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

## Prior Knowledge Assessment

<b>WHAT DO I KNOW?</b> What is the Arab-Israeli conflict about? Who is involved? How long has it been going on?	<b>HOW DO I KNOW?</b> What are the sources of your knowledge? Social media, TV news, books, family, friends, etc. How reliable do you think that your sources are?	<b>WHAT DO I WANT TO LEARN?</b> What aspects of this conflict and peace process would you like to know more about?

## What is the difference between Nationalism vs. Patriotism?

### DIRECTIONS:

*With each phrase in the center column, put an arrow either toward Nationalism or Patriotism, indicating whether or not it might be more one than the other. If you can't decide, circle the phrase.*

NATIONALISM	vs.	PATRIOTISM
	Pride in one's country	
	Group that desires sovereignty for country	
	Love of country	
	Belief that one's country is better than all others	
	Willingness to sacrifice for country	
	Violence often plays a role	
	Group's belief in the right to self-determination of country	
	Often involves symbols and civic celebrations	
	Group identity around shared values, language, history, etc.	
	Phrase you would add:	
	Phrase you would add:	

1. Which phrases would you definitely include in the definition of Nationalism?
2. Which phrases would you definitely include in the definition of Patriotism?
3. Which lean more toward Nationalism? Toward Patriotism?
4. Which phrases were the most difficult to categorize? Why?

## Zionism & Arab Nationalism Primary Source Analysis

### DOCUMENT 1: *The Jewish State*, Theodor Herzl

Questions	Write a brief response in your own words.	Provide citations from the text to support your answer.
Why did Herzl think that Jews needed their own nation?		
What did Herzl believe that Jews had in common that made them one people?		

### DOCUMENT 2: The First Zionist Congress

Questions	Write a brief response in your own words.	Provide citations from the text to support your answer.
What is Zionism?		
What kind of nation did Zionists at the First Zionist Congress want to establish? Where?		

**DOCUMENT 3:** Selected Writings of Sati' al-Husri

Questions	Write a brief response in your own words.	Provide citations from the text to support your answer.
What did nationalism mean for al-Husri?		
What did al-Husri believe that Arabs had in common with each other, making them one people?		

**DOCUMENT 4:** The First Arab Congress

Questions	Write a brief response in your own words.	Provide citations from the text to support your answer.
What makes someone an Arab?		
What were the goals of the Arabs who attended the First Arab Congress?		

## Exit Slip

1. Describe how Jews, Christians, and Muslims are connected to the ancient land of Israel.
2. How was this region impacted by surrounding nations and empires from its earliest days up to the beginning of the 20th century?
3. What are some of the reasons that nationalism emerged among European Jews and Arabs in the Middle East? What kinds of nations did these groups imagine?
4. What are some similarities between early Zionism and early Arab Nationalism? Differences?