Modern Jewish History:
The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics, 1848-1948

From the top left: a poster of the Jewish National Fund (1950); Palmach (Strike Platoons) women in the Judean desert (circa 1945); a Jewish carpenter and his granddaughter (Poland, undated); and a Soviet propaganda poster (in Yiddish), “Religion is an obstacle to the five-year plan” (1928).

Where should Jews live? What language(s) should they speak? With which political and cultural movements in the non-Jewish world should they empathize? What political tactics should they favor? What kind of force should Jews use in the increasing Arab-Jewish conflict in the Land of Israel? All of those crucial questions faced the multifaceted spectrum of ideologies, movements, parties, and individuals that constituted the emerging Jewish politics during their formative years.

Focusing primarily on three centers – Eastern Europe, the United States, and the Middle East – we will look at how those different movements sought to solve the above questions. Many of the questions and situations faced by Jewish ideologies and political movements – not only during the Holocaust – were often, quite literally, a matter of life or death. We will see how those critical dilemmas generated profound intra-Jewish controversies and divisions, some of which have continued to this very day.

Note: This course has asynchronous meeting times; there are no set class meetings.

Instructor: Prof. Gil Ribak
Email: gribak@arizona.edu

For more questions contact Jackie Schmidt, Outreach Coordinator at jan1@arizona.edu or visit our website at www.judaic.arizona.edu.