



FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University in Prague

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Political Narratives and Identity

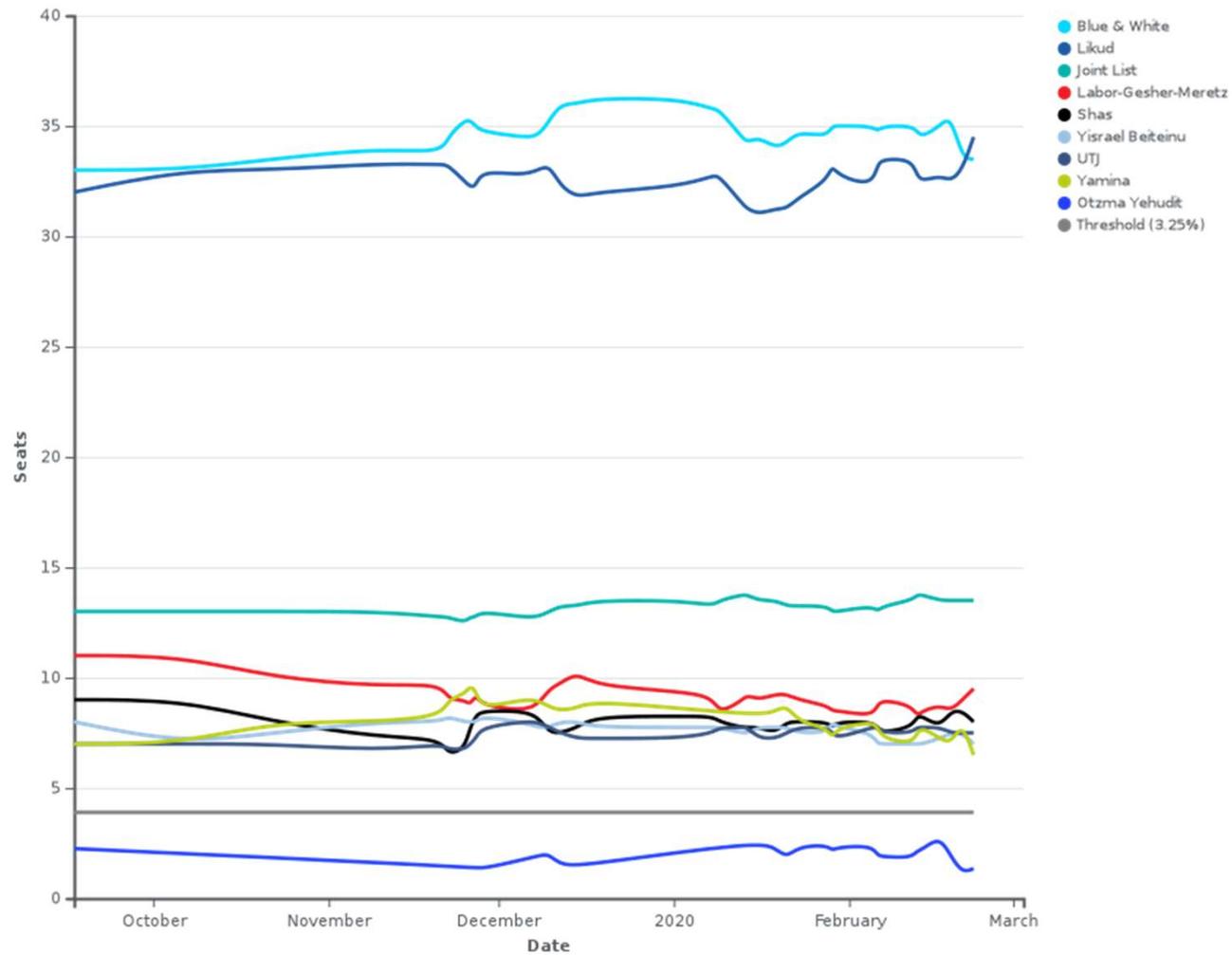
25.2. 2020

Class outline

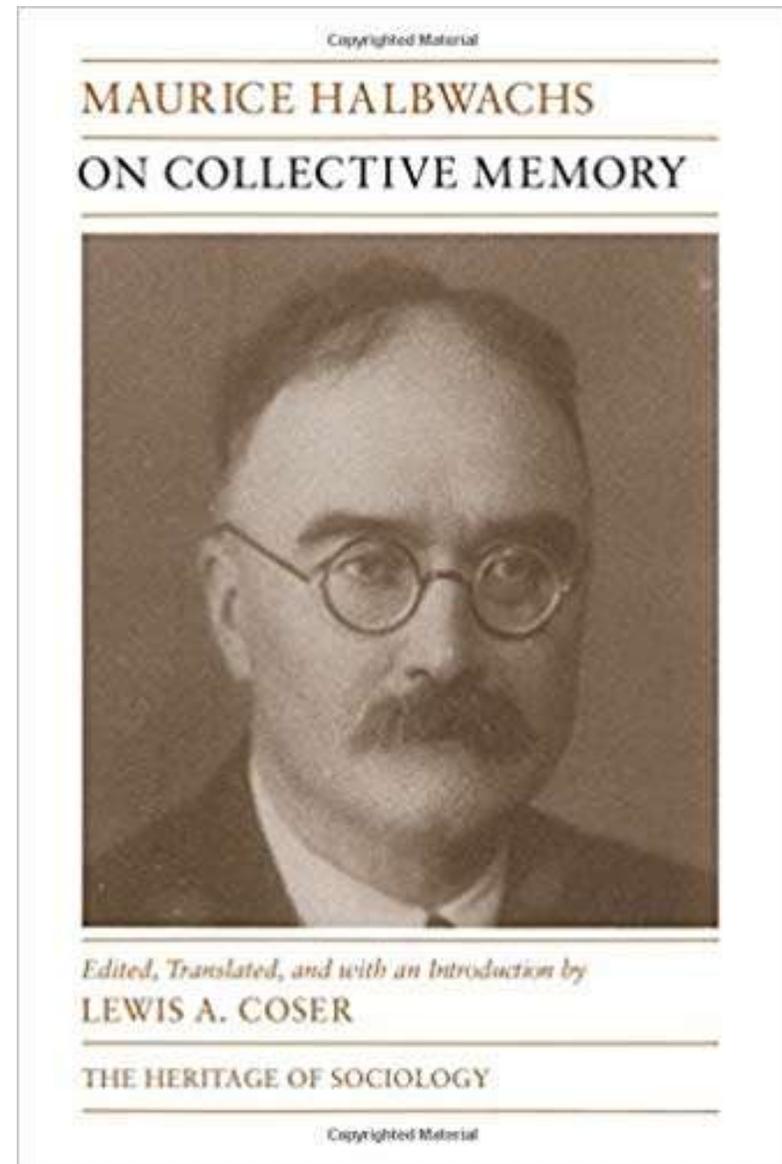
- What is collective memory? What is a political narrative? What is identity?
- Narratives of the conflict
 - The 1948 War
- Israeli and Palestinian identities

- Organizational matters

Upcoming elections – next Monday



Collective memory



Identity

- A highly contested term
- A set of characteristics that define a certain person/group and are internalized
- “identity is an inescapable dimension of being. No body could be without it” (Campbell 1992: 9)
- World without identities would be a “world of chaos, a world of pervasive and irremediable uncertainty, a world much more dangerous than anarchy” (Hopf 1998: 175)
- “Ontological security refers to the need to experience oneself as a whole, continuous person in time — as being rather than constantly changing — in order to realize a sense of agency” (Mitzen 2006: 342)

Narratives

- “While there are many different conceptualizations of what narrative specifically is, most of the approaches agree that the main function of a narrative is to provide a sense of the world by connecting actors and events and giving them a specific meaning within a larger story” (Krebs 2015: 11).
- Essentially, a narrative is a world-ordering device
- It provides a meaning to a set of events

Implications

- Discuss in small groups:
- Why do national identities, narratives and memories matter politically (possibly with reference to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict)?



Belfast Palestine Solidarity Campaign

IPSC shared a post.

21 hrs · 🌐



Dinah Miemah Yesterday at 10:45 · 🌐



Holocaust Remembrance Day

Nazi Germany v Zionist Israel

👍👎👤 47

1 comment 22 shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share



Conflicting Narratives

- The Zionist movement
- British Mandate
- The 1929 massacre
- The Great Arab Revolt 1936-39
- Aftermath of the WWII
- The UN Partition Plan
- The 1948 War
- Six Day War
- First Intifada
- Oslo Peace Process
- Camp David Summit
- Second Intifada



מבנים אלו נבנו על אדמה שנקנתה
ע"י הקהילה היהודית בחברון בתקופת (1807)
ונגזלה ע"י הערבים
אחר שריצחו 67 יהודי חברון בחודש ט' (1929)
אנו דורשים צדקה! השיבו לנו את רכושנו הגזול!
השוב היהודי בחברון

THESE BUILDINGS WERE CONSTRUCTED ON LAND
PURCHASED BY THE HEBRON JEWISH COMMUNITY IN 1807.
THIS LAND WAS STOLEN BY ARABS
FOLLOWING THE MURDER OF 67 HEBRON JEWS IN 1929.
WE DEMAND JUSTICE! RETURN OUR PROPERTY TO US!
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF HEBRON

אירוח חברון
Hebron Hospitality
052-5692872
eladpaas@gmail.com

The War of Narratives: The 1948 War/Nakba/Independence War

- What are the main points of contestation?
- Why does this event play such a pivotal role in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the two national narratives?
 - What is the dominant Israeli narrative?
 - What is the dominant Palestinian narrative?
- What do Barghouti's and Oz's text tell us about the war and its repercussions?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iirDJtsw1Y>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EAmtgfPz-k> (4:50)

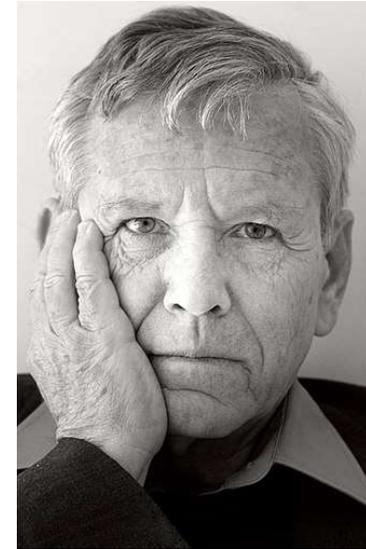
- Does it make sense to investigate works of literary non-fiction and memoirs in a class on politics?

Mourid Barghouti



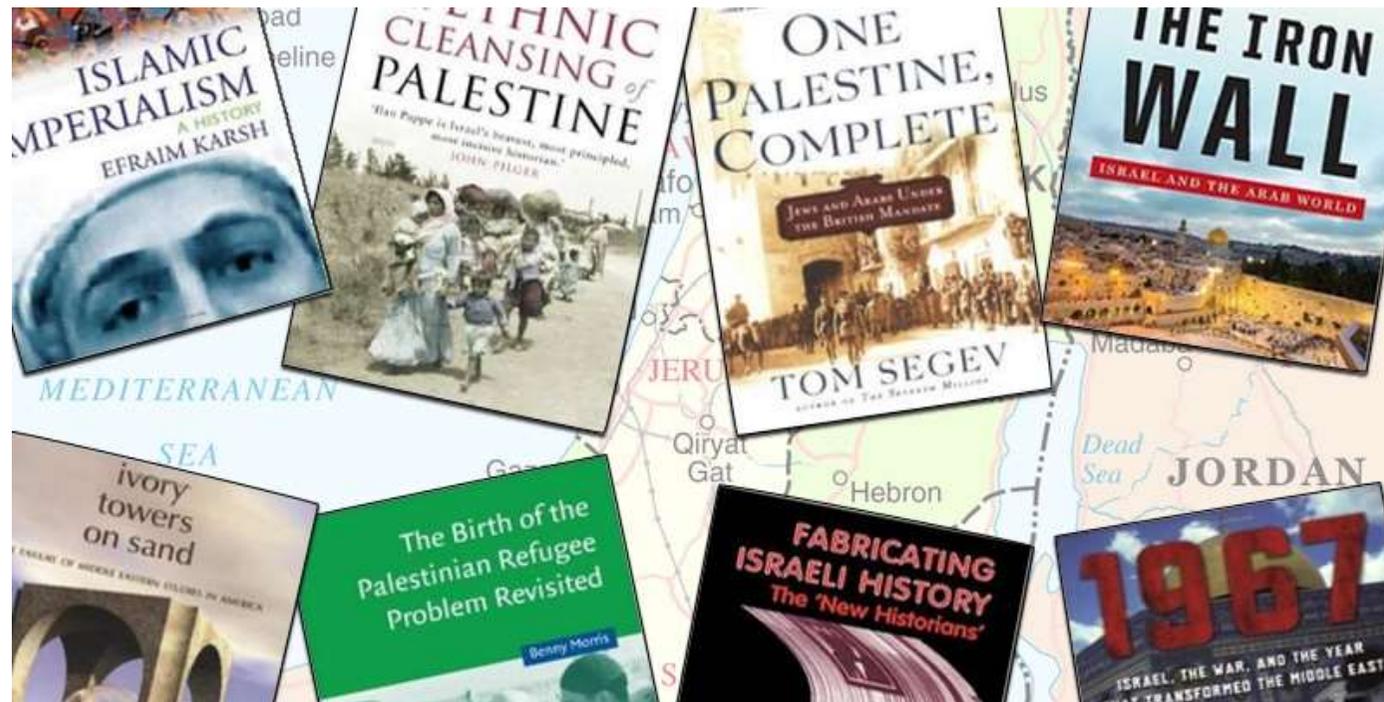
- Palestinian poet and writer
- PLO official
- Lived in exile for a better part of his life

Amos Oz



- First generation Israeli
- One of the most famous Israeli writers
- Liberal Zionist

New Historians



- A very non-coherent group of Israeli historians and authors
- Revisionist historiography of the 1948 War (among others)
- Highly contested and politicized claims

Benny Morris (2004):

"There are circumstances in history that justify ethnic cleansing. I know that this term is completely negative in the discourse of the 21st century, but when the choice is between ethnic cleansing and genocide - the annihilation of your people - I prefer ethnic cleansing."

(<https://www.haaretz.com/1.5262428>)

Ilan Pappé (2013)

"In 1948 it was about taking them out of their homes, now they are doing it in a different way. They created an apartheid system within Israel and they make the West Bank a place where people lack citizenship."

(<https://www.jetdencree.ch/interview-with-ilan-pappe-part-1-the-ethnic-cleansing-of-palestine-4544>)

Burying the Nakba: How Israel Systematically Hides Evidence of 1948 Expulsion of Arabs

Since early last decade, Defense Ministry teams have scoured local archives and removed troves of historic documents to conceal proof of the Nakba

By [Hagar Shezaf](#) | Jul 05, 2019

The Israeli Identity

- Double move: the legacy of oppression of the Jewish people in the Diaspora and its rejection



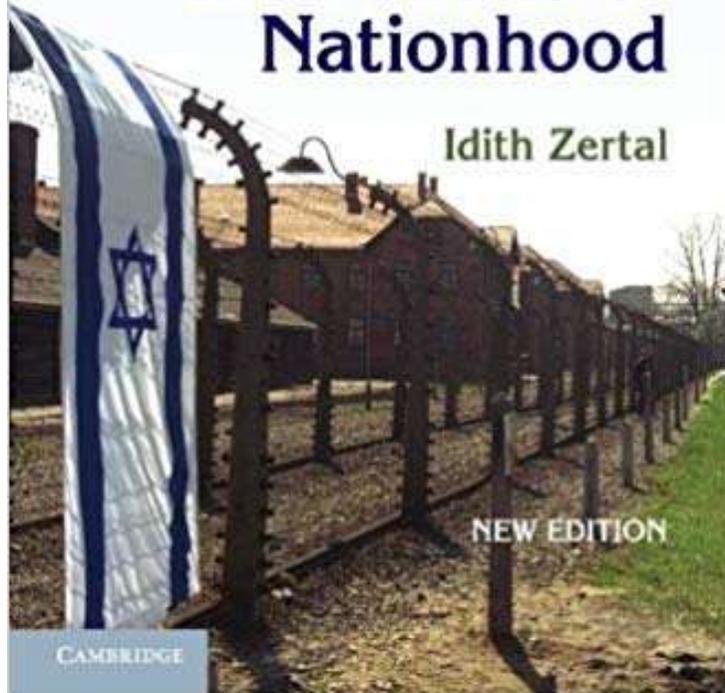
"No one interested in the history of the
contemporary Middle East can ignore this book."
- Tony Judt

Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood

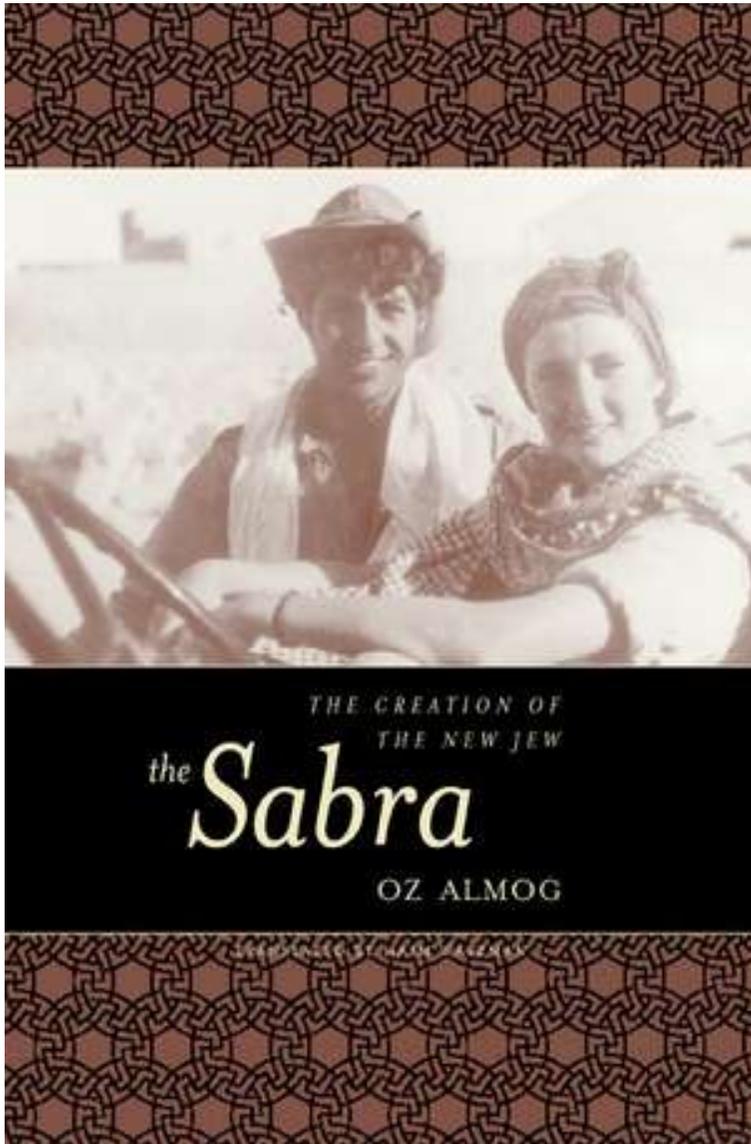
Idith Zertal

NEW EDITION

CAMBRIDGE



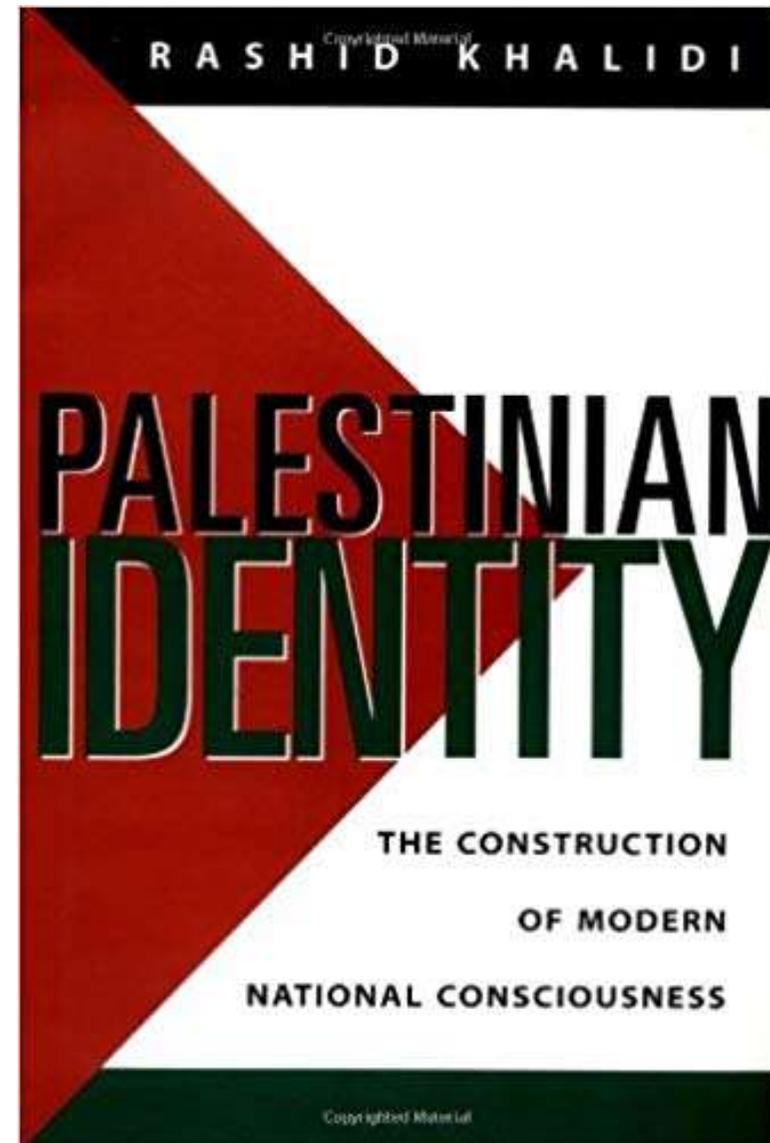




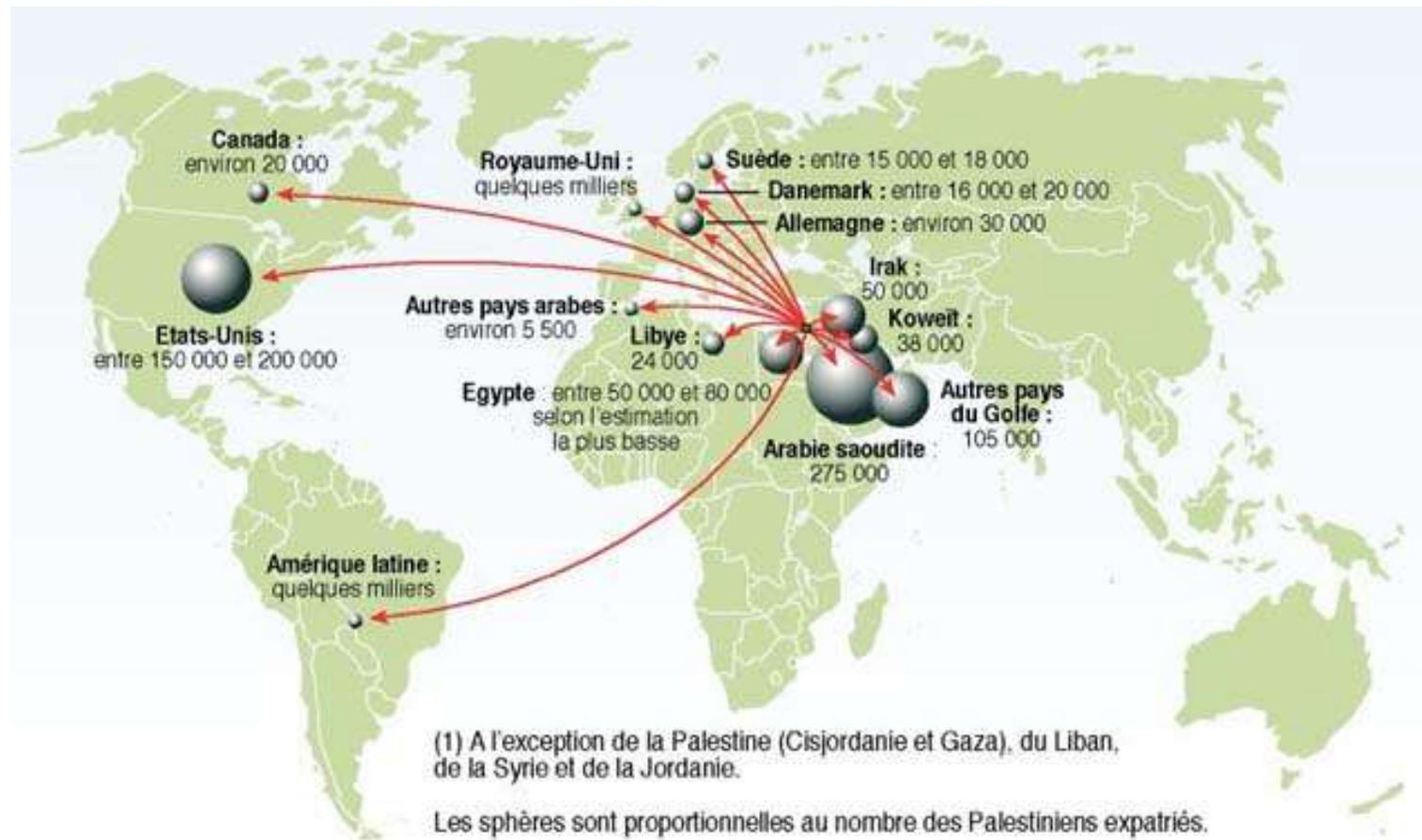
The Palestinian Identity



“The quintessential Palestinian experience, which illustrates some of the most basic issues raised by Palestinian identity, takes place at a border, an airport, a checkpoint: in short, at any one of those many modern barriers where identities are checked and verified ... For Palestinians, arrival at such barriers generates shared sources of profound anxiety.” (Khalidi, 2010, p. 1–2)







Clashing Identities?

- Do you see any parallels between Israeli and Palestinian identities?
- In what ways are they clashing, even mutually exclusive?

**THERE IS NO
ISRAEL—
THERE IS ONLY
PALESTINE!**



*Stop Zionist Terror!
Support the PLO!
Support the Lebanese
National Movement!
Defeat u.s. Imperialism!*



There was no such thing as
Palestinians, they never existed.

— Golda Meir —

AZ QUOTES

What does it mean to be an Israeli and a Palestinian today?

- Fragmentation of identities
 - Among Israeli Jews, there is a tension between being “Israeli” and “Jewish”
 - Palestinians experience divided – Israel proper, West Bank, Gaza, diaspora
- Palestinian identity in Israel proper is suppressed through various means
 - “Nakba Law”
 - Proposed “Loyalty Bill”

Organizational matters

- Materials being updated in moodle
- Movie “Advocate” at the One World film festival:
<https://www.oneworld.cz/2020/films-a-z/39095-advocate>

Weekly assignments

- Submit the assignment once you are done!!
- Can you see my comments?
- Generally good
- Capture the main arguments/points/messages of the readings
- Distinguish between your opinions/what you read elsewhere and what was written in the texts
- A short paragraph is ideal
- If you directly quote from a text, put in the page number
- There will be a make-up assignment at the end of the semester for those who missed one

Questions?