Invitation

Thursday, 15 April 2010, 6 pm

The Return of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel

Lecture by Gabriel Piterberg

In this original and wide-ranging study, Gabriel Piterberg examines the ideology and literature behind the colonization of Palestine, from the late nineteenth century to the present. Exploring Zionism’s origins in Central-Eastern European nationalism and settler movements, he shows how its texts can be placed within a wider discourse of western colonization. Piterberg revisits the work of Theodor Herzl, Gershom Scholem, Anita Shapira and David Ben-Gurion, among other thinkers influential in the formation of the Zionist myth, to break open prevailing views of Zionism. He demonstrates that it was in fact unexceptional, expressing a consciousness and imagination typical of colonial settler movement. Shaped by European ideological currents and the realities of colonial life, Zionism constructed its own story as a unique and impregnable one, in the process excluding the voices of an indigenous people—the Palestinian Arabs.

“This thoroughly researched and engaging book provides an intellectual, cultural and literary fulcrum from which Zionist ideology and practice can be read afresh. ...This book is essential reading for everyone who is interested in the history of Zionism as well as the history of nationalist movements.” — Yehouda Shenhav, Professor of Sociology, Tel-Aviv University

Gabriel Piterberg teaches history at UCLA, and has taught at St Antony’s and Balliol Colleges, Oxford. His previous books include An Ottoman Tragedy: History and Historiography at Play. He writes for the New Left Review and the London Review of Books.

The discussion will be moderated by Prof. Marc Baer (ZMO).
The essay analyses the few testimonies regarding Callisthenes, an Athenian politician of Demosthenes' age generally neglected by the modern scholarship. Callisthenes, politically active since 357 (when he had a financial role), can be considered an early anti-Macedonian and seems to have had an important role on the political scene for a long time: he was, in fact, probably part of the group that managed the polis until 324, as it is suggested also by his alleged involvement in the Harpalus affair. Read more.

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ZIONIST HISTORIANS — LIKE their counterparts in Australia, South Africa, the United States and other settler societies — hold the dispossession of the Palestinian people to be extraneous to their general history, rather than the integral part that it is. Studying Israel’s foundational myths and historiography through the lens of comparative settler colonialism allows Gabriel Piterberg to keep the Palestinian half of the relational history ever present. The Returns of Zionism book. Read reviews from world’s largest community for readers. In this original and wide-ranging study, Gabriel Piterberg examines... Goodreads helps you keep track of books you want to read. Start by marking The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel as Want to Read: Want to Read saving...