

THE BALFOUR DECLARATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF MANDATE PALESTINE INTO A JEWISH NATIONAL HOME

A lecture by: Prof Donna Robinson Divine

Biography

Donna Robinson Divine is the Morningstar Family Professor of Jewish Studies and Professor of Government, Emerita at Smith College where she taught a variety of courses on Middle East Politics. Fluent in Hebrew, Arabic, and Turkish, she has held visiting appointments at Yale, Harvard, and the Hebrew University as well as fellowships from the National Endowment of the Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, and several Fulbright grants. Author of many scholarly articles on a variety of topics in Middle East history and politics, she has also written *Women Living Change: Cross-Cultural Perspectives. Essays from the Smith College Research Project on Women and Social Change*. Other works include *Politics and Society in Ottoman Palestine: The Arab Struggle for Survival and Power* and *Postcolonial Theory and The Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Her latest book is *Exiled in the Homeland: Zionism and the Return to Mandate Palestine*. She was named the Katharine Asher Engel lecturer at Smith College for the 2012-2013 academic year in recognition of her scholarly achievements and Smith's Honored Professor for excellence in teaching. She currently serves as Vice-President of the Association for Israel Studies and is an adjunct professor at Haifa University.



Time

7.30pm

Date

Wednesday, 15 March 2017

Venue

Mandelbaum House
385 Abercrombie St, Darlington

Contact

Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod

michael.abrahams-sprod@sydney.edu.au



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The Balfour Declaration gave Zionists an occasion to rejoice, but it also gave them reasons for fear.

To meet the expectations that accompanied Great Britain's support for a Jewish national home, Zionists had to attract large numbers of Jews to Palestine's shores, mobilize vast amounts of money for economic investment, and build an autonomous infrastructure to serve as the authority of a Jewish national home.

But when Great Britain issued its wartime declaration, Zionists had not yet forged a broad-based Jewish consensus for their aims. Desperate to rally Jews to their nation-building cause, Zionists also had to demonstrate to the British, however flimsy the evidence, that their grandiose schemes carried weight. In a sense, Zionists had to build a homeland to justify

British support even as they had to create the conditions for Jews to feel that Palestine was their home. Thus Zionists confronted two different sets of challenges, and my talk will explain how, particularly, in the first decade of the British Mandate, they structured their policies to meet wildly different sets of expectations that often conflicted with one another.

