

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

PSPA 236: The Origins and Evolution of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

This course examines the origins and evolution of the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict and covers the various phases that have marked the conflict. It also deals with the political, ideological, social, and economic factors that have shaped the nature of Arab-Israeli politics from the end of World War I to the present.

The course serves to introduce students to the following: (i) To the parties to the conflict: their perceptions, priorities, and objectives; (ii) To the dynamics of conflict: its political, ideological, and economic dimensions; (iii) To its changing nature: wars and attempts to achieve peace.

The following themes will be covered in the course:

1. The emergence of the postwar bipolar international system dominated by two superpowers having radically different political and economic systems as well as divergent outlooks to international politics. The linkage between the Arab-Israeli conflict, the changing nature of Arab nationalism, and Israeli expansionist politics will be discussed in the context of Cold War politics. The case study for that period is the 1956 Suez war and its consequences.
2. A brief historical overview covering the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict, beginning with the Zionist movement at the turn of the century and the rise of Arab nationalism and ending with the establishment of Western mandatory regimes in the interwar period.
3. Arab-Israeli wars and their regional and international dimensions: the 1948, 1967 and 1973 wars. Issues to be discussed include the following: the Palestine question in inter-Arab politics, the rise of the PLO, American and Soviet policy toward the conflict, the War of Attrition, peace initiatives, the Arab oil embargo in 1973-74 and its regional and international repercussions, the post-1973 inter-Arab and Arab-Israeli politics.
4. The Egyptian-Israeli Peace treaty (the Camp David Accord) in 1979 and its aftermath. The 1978 and the 1982 Israeli invasions of Lebanon and the Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its Lebanon phase.
5. The Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza and changing Palestinian and Israeli priorities and calculations: the proclamation of the Palestinian state in 1988, the initiation of American-Palestinian dialogue, and Israeli responses.
6. The Arab-Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the aftermath of the second Gulf war and the ending of the Cold War: the Madrid Peace Conference in October 1991, the Washington talks, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations from the 1993 Oslo Agreement to Wye River in 1998 to Sharm al-Sheikh in 1999 (Wye River II); the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in 1994; the Syrian-Israeli talks, and the war in south Lebanon leading to the Israeli withdrawal in May 2000.
7. The coming of the Likud-led coalition cabinet in Israel in May 1996 and the stalled peace process: the renegotiation of the post-Oslo peace talks. The coming to power of Ehud Barak in Israel and the reactivation of the peace process. The failure of the Palestinian-Israeli (American) negotiations in Camp David in July 2000 and in Taba in September 2000. The second uprising in September 2000 and the breakdown of the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks with the attacks coming of Ariel Sharon to power.
8. The ongoing Palestinian-Israeli war, Sharon's destruction of the Oslo Agreement and Washington's agenda to combat terrorism since the attacks of September 11, 2001. The road map and the continuing deadlock.

General Readings on the Arab-Israeli Conflict

- Martin Gilbert, The Routledge History of Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Complete History of the Struggle and the Efforts to Resolve It (2002).
- Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001 (2001).
- William B. Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, Revised Edition (2001).
- Edward W. Said, The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After (2001).

- Avi Shlaim, The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World (2000).
- Neill Lochery, The Difficult Road to Peace: Netanyahu, Israel, and the Peace Process (2000).
- Adnan Abu-Odeh, Jordanians, Palestinians and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process (1999).
- Salman Abu-Sitta, The Palestinian Right to Return: Sacred, Legal and Possible (1999).
- Robert Freedman, The Middle East and the Peace Process (1999).
- Benny Morris, Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999 (1999).
- Itamar Rabinovich, Waging Peace: Israel and the Arabs At the End of the Century (1999).
- Yezid Sayigh and Khalil Shikaki, Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions (1999).
- Israel Shahak, Norton Mezvinsky, Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel (1999).
- Naomi Shepherd, Ploughing Sand: British Rule in Palestine, 1917-1948 (1999).
- United Nations Resolutions on Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1998, Five Volumes (1999).
- Shai Feldman and Abdullah Toukan, Bridging the Gap. A Future Security Architecture for the Middle East (1998).
- Itamar Rabinovich, The Brink of Peace. The Israeli-Syrian Negotiations (1998).
- Uri Savir, The Process, 1100 Days That Changed the Middle East (1998).
- Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Egypt's Road to Jerusalem: A Diplomat's Story of the Struggle for Peace in the Middle East (1997).
- Mustafa Hamarneh, Rosemary Hollis and Khalil Shikaki, Jordanian-Palestinian Relations: Where to? Four Scenarios for the Future (1997).
- Donald Neff, Fifty Years of Israel (1997).
- Glenn E. Robinson, Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution (1997).
- Yezid Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State. The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993 (1997).
- Meron Benvenisti, Intimate Enemies: Jews and Arabs in a Shared Land (1995).
- Moshe Maoz, Syria and Israel: From War to Peace Making (1995).
- Edward Said, Peace and its Discontents: Their influence on U.S. Middle East Policy (1995).
- Michael W. Suleiman, U.S. Policy on Palestine from Wilson to Clinton (1995).
- Graham Usher, Palestine in Crisis: The Struggle for Peace and Political Independence After Oslo (1995).
- Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine. 1994. "Palestinian Elections: A Special Report."
- Glenn Frankel, Beyond the Promised Land (1994).
- Mark Tessler, A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (1994).
- Paul Findley, Deliberate Deceptions: Facing the Facts about the U.S.-Israeli Relationship (1993).
- Martin Gilbert, The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Its History in Maps (1993).
- Shimon Peres, The New Middle East (1993).
- Ann Mosley Lesch, Transition to Palestinian Self-Government: Practical Steps Toward Israeli-Palestinian Peace (1992).
- Ilan Pappé, The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1947-1951 (1992).
- Mark A. Heller, & Sari Nusseibeh, No Trumpets, No Drums: A Two-State Settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (1991).
- Albert Hourani, A History of the Arab Peoples (1991).
- F. Robert Hunter, The Palestinian Uprising: A war By Other Means (Rev and Expand) (1991).
- Thomas L. Friedman, From Beirut to Jerusalem: Updated Edition (1989).
- George Lenczowski, American Presidents and the Middle East (1989).
- Zachary Lockman and Joel Beinin, Intifada: The Palestinian Uprising Against Israeli Occupation (1989).
- Yehoshafat Harkabi, Israel's Fateful Hour (1988).
- Charles D. Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict (1988).
- William B. Quandt, (ed.), The Middle East Ten Years After Camp David (1986).
- Fred Khoury, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma (1985) (for a general historical background).
- Steven Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict (1985).
- L. Carl Brown, International Politics and the Middle East (1984).
- Robert Freedman, Soviet Policy Toward the Middle East Since 1970 (1982).
- Henry Kissinger, Years of Upheaval (1982).
- Maxime Rodinson, Israel and the Arabs (1982).
- Saadia Touval, The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1979 (1982).
- Elizabeth Monroe, Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914-1971 (1981).
- William Wilson Harris, Taking Root: Israeli Settlement in the West Bank, the Golan and Gaza-Sinai, 1967-1980 (1980).
- Edward Said, The Question of Palestine (1979).

Learning Outcomes:

If students complete the course satisfactorily, they are expected to develop the following skills:

- ❖ Students should have a thorough understanding of the origins and the evolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict from the early twentieth century to the present.

- ❖ Students should be familiar with Arab-Israeli wars since 1948 and their repercussions on state and society in Arab countries and Israel.
- ❖ Students should be able to analyze the domestic, regional, and international dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the role of state and non-state actors involved in its various phases.
- ❖ Students should be familiar with recent developments in Arab-Israeli politics, especially since the launching of the peace in the early 1990s.
- ❖ Students should be familiar with the major literature on the Arab-Israeli conflict covering all parties to the conflict.

Useful Sources

- Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories (copies on reserve in Jafet Library)
- Journal of Palestine Studies
- Shu'an Filastiniyya
- Middle East Journal
- Middle East Quarterly
- Middle East Policy
- Arab Studies Quarterly
- Middle Eastern Studies
- The Economist

Required Readings (placed on reserve in Jafet Library)

Part I: The changing International System and the Cold War.

- Iliya Harik, "The Origins of the Arab State System", in Giacomo Luciani (ed.), The Arab State (1990), pp. 1-28 (Chapter 1).
- William Polk, The Arab World (1980). Chapters 8, 9.
- Walter Lafeber, American, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-1984 (1985), Chapters 2, 3.
- Henry Kissinger, "Leapfrogging Containment: The Suez Crisis", in Henry Kissinger, Diplomacy (1994): 522-549.

Part II: Zionism and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1967.

- Walter Laqueur, A History of Zionism (1972). (Chapter 11) pp. 589-599.
- William Polk, The Arab World (1980), Chapter 12.
- Avi Shlaim, Collusion Across the Jordan (1988). Chapter 20.
- William B. Quandt, Decade of Decisions (1977). Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
- Richard B. Parker. "The June 1967 War: Some Mysteries Explored", Middle East Journal (Spring 1992): 175-197.
- William B. Quandt, "Lyndon Johnson and the June 1967 War: What Color Was The Light?" Middle East Journal (Spring 1992): 198-228.

Part III: The Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1967-1991.

- Seth Tillman, The United States in the Middle East (1982). Chapter 3, pp. 73-90.
- Quandt, Jabber, Lesch, The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism (1975). Part II, pp. 45-112.
- Yezid Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State (1997), pp. 217-281.
- William B. Quandt, Camp David, Peacemaking and Politics (1986). "Conclusion", Chapter 12, pp. 320-381.
- Avner Yaniv, Dilemmas of Security (1987). Chapter 1, pp. 3-26.
- David McDowall, The Palestinians. The Road to Nationhood. Chapters 7, 8, 9, pp. 81-124.
- Yezid Sayigh, Armed Struggle and the Search for State (1997), pp. 638-692.

Part IV: The Arab-Israeli Conflict Since 1991: War, Peace, and Deadlock.

- Ilan Halevi, "Self-Government, Democracy, and Mismanagement Under the Palestinian Authority", Journal of Palestine Studies (Spring 1998): 35-48.
- Uri Savir, The Process (1997), pp. 29-89.
- Itamar Rabinovich, The Brink of Peace (1998), pp. 235-264.
"The Moratinos Document, The Peace that nearly was at Taba," Ha'aretz, February 14, 2002.
- Sara Roy, "The Palestinian Economy After Oslo", Current History (January 1998): 19-25.
- Rashid Khalidi, Palestinian Identity (1997), pp. 177-209 (Chapter 8).
- Alan Dowty, "Israel's First Fifty Years", Current History (January 1998): 26-31.

"After Zionism", The Economist, A Survey of Israel. April 25, 1998. (optional).

Yezid Sayigh and Khalil Shikaki, Strengthening Palestinian Public Institutions, Council on Foreign Relations, June 28, 1999.

Additional reading material will be assigned during the semester.

Course Requirements and Grading

Students are required to do the assigned readings on a weekly basis before they are discussed in class and are expected to participate in class discussions. They are also required to write a short analytical paper on a topic covered in the course. The paper should not exceed 5-6 pages (typed, double-spaced) and is due on January 6, 2003. In addition, there will be two examinations, a mid-term and a final.

The grade distribution is as follows: 20% for the mid-term exam; 20% for the paper; 10% for class participation and attendance; 50% for the final exam. **Class attendance is mandatory. Any student who misses more than one-fifth of the class sessions will be required to withdraw from the course.**