

**THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT:
A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY**

Dr. Ronen Zeidel

Course Number: 702.2126

Class Time: TBA

Class Location: TBA

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Course Description:

The **study of the conflict** through its documentary history provides a clear chronological and textual foundation for examining its origins, evolution, and ramifications, with an eye to various proposals for conflict-resolution.

The **resolution of the conflict** should begin with a probing diagnosis of the longevity and intensity of the subject, prior to proposing the requisite remedy or treatment for the problem. This is to proceed logically and rationally as befits a scientific enterprise.

The **tragedy of the conflict** is a subject for historical introspection or humanitarian empathy. It can be a catalyst for efforts to solve the conflict.

The **focus of the conflict** as reflected in our course of study is the local-territorial dimension within *Eretz-Israel*, called Palestine throughout the centuries. We shall however take account of broader regional aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict – thus the course title.

The course will provide a clear historical line with the documents serving as the backbone of the conflict and the attempts by both sides, as well as the international community to solve it.

Course Requirements: Students must read all course materials and bring critical thinking to the topics addressed. **Students will be required to read *Haaretz* (English version) or the *Times of Israel* every day.**

Midterm Paper: 20%

Final Paper: 60%

Active Participation 20% (includes 5% for summarizing the document read in class in advance, focusing on its main points). Active participation also includes: attendance in class, questions to the lecturer and answers, relevant initiatives by the students (for example, bringing a current subject to be discussed and explained at the beginning of class).

Syllabus:

1. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Early history of Zionist settlement in Palestine and primordial Palestinian nationalism in the 19th century. WWI and the British invasion to Palestine.

James L. Gelvin, *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One hundred Years of War*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition, 2007. pp. 1-14.

Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A history with Documents*, Boston and New York: Bedford St Martin's, 2007. 6th edition. Pp. 59-78.

Document: The Balfour Declaration 1917

2. THE BRITISH MANDATE IN THE 1920S

Explaining the novel term "mandate", surveying the geographical formation of Palestine by the British and the ceding of the east bank of the Jordan river to the Emir Abdulla. The evolution of a split community in Palestine and the birth of the national conflict in Palestine.

Mark Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University press, 1994. Chapter 3, pp. 127-184. Particularly 157-165.

James L. Gelvin, pp. 76-92.

Document: Mandate for Palestine, 1922

3. PALESTINE IN THE 1930S: VIOLENCE AND PARTITION

The arrival of an increasing number of Jewish immigrants accelerates the violent turn of the conflict. The Arab revolt of 1936-9 breeds the vision of partition among British and Jews. The White paper of 1939 signifies a change in British policy and a repeal of Balfour and the Mandate for Palestine

Yoav Gelber, *Jewish-Transjordanian Relations 1921-1948*, London: Frank Cass, 1997. Chapter 5, "The Arab Revolt", pp.83-103. Chapter 6, "The Royal Commission and the Partition Plan", pp.105-124.

Gelvin, pp.116-144

Smith, pp.146-157.

Documents: The Peel Report, 1937

The 1939 White Paper

4. END OF MANDATE AND UN RESOLUTION ON PARTITION OF PALESTINE 1945-1947

The end of WWII and the tragic fate of European Jewry hasten British need to mend Palestine policy. Decolonization brings the end of the British mandate within sight but worries of an imminent violent confrontation loom. The UN accepts a resolution on partition which gives international legitimacy to a Jewish state in part of Palestine.

Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1947-1951*, London: Tauris, 1992. Chapter 1, "The Diplomatic battle: UN Decisions Feb.1947-May1948", pp.16-46.

Alexander Yakobson and Amnon Rubinstein, *Israel and the Family of Nations*, London and New York: Routledge, 2010. Chapter 1, "The Establishment of the State of Israel: The UN Debates in 1947", pp. 12-65.

Gelvin, 121-126.

Smith, 187-199.

Document: UN Resolution on Partition of Palestine, 1947

5. 1948: KEY YEAR IN THE CONFLICT

The Israeli War of Independence evolving from a local war of communities to a regional war with the invasion of Arab armies to Palestine. We shall read the Israeli Declaration of Independence, follow the military developments of the war, and discuss the creation of the Palestinian refugee problem.

Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947-1949*, Cambridge: CUP, 1987. Chapter 3, "The Second Wave: The Mass Exodus, April-June 1948", pp.61-131.

Gelvin, pp.126-143

Documents: Israeli Declaration of Independence, May 1948

6. POST 1948

We will follow the challenges facing the new state of Israel in its first decade and the Palestinian refugees in their diasporas

Moshe Shemesh, "The palestinian Society in the Wake of the 1948 War: from social Fragmentation to Consolidation", *Israel Studies* , 9, 1 (spring 2004). Pp. 86-100.

Gelvin , pp.134-143.

Document: UN Resolution 194, 1948

7. THE ROAD TO 1967 AND THE 1967 WAR

The rise of Nasserism and Pan Arab ideology bring Israeli-Arab relations, after a tensed period of 19 years, to war in 1967. The 1967 war is another important landmark in the history of the conflict with the Israeli victory and the occupation of territories including East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. The decline of Nasserism signifies the conversion of the conflict from Arab-Israeli to Palestinian –Israeli.

Smith, pp.271-294.

Document: UN Security Council Resolution 242 (Peace in the Middle East), 1967

8. PEACE WITH EGYPT 1979

The rise of a new Egyptian president, Anwar al-Sadat, results in the 1973 war following which Egypt forsook the road of war to achieve its territories. Egypt initiates a peace initiative and abandons the Arab camp. Israel withdraws from the Sinai Peninsula and agrees to grant autonomy to the Palestinians. The conflict returns to be Palestinian-Israeli.

Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2000, ch. 9, "Peace with Egypt 1977-1981," pp. 352-383. **E327.56 S558**

Smith, pp.360-365.

Documents: Camp David Framework for Peace, 1978

Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty, 1979

9. THE ROAD TO THE INTIFADA, 1987

The Lebanon War of 1982 and the PLO defeat in it, the consolidation of Israeli hold on the West Bank and Ghaza, the expansion of Jewish settlements in the territories, the strategic change in PLO policy led by Arafat. This is the background of the outburst known as the Intifada in late 1987.

Helena Cobban, "The PLO and the Intifada," in Robert O. Freedman, ed., *The Intifada: Its Impact on Israel, the Arab World, and the Superpowers*, Miami: Florida International University Press, 1991, ch. 3, pp. 70-106. **E322.42 F853**

Gelvin, pp.212-221.

Document: PLO Declaration of Palestinian Independence, 1988

10. THE ROAD TO THE DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES (OSLO), 1993

Another crisis of the PLO following the Gulf War, economic crisis in Israel and the return of the Labor party under Rabin and Peres, give vent to negotiations with the PLO. With the signing of the DOP in Washington DC, a new era opens: the Palestinians establish the Palestinian Authority. Israel improves relations with the Arab world and peace is signed with Jordan in 1994. Discussion on the heritage of Oslo

David Makovsky, *Making Peace With the PLO: The Rabin Government's Road to the Oslo Accord*, Boulder: Westview and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1996, ch. 2, "Drafting the Declaration of Principles," pp. 31-43, and ch. 3, "Upgrading the Oslo Talks," pp. 45-58. **E327.172 M235**

Smith, pp.432-442.

Gelvin, pp.229-238.

Document: DOP/Oslo Accord between Israel and PLO, 1993

11. THE FALL (2000-2018): CAMP DAVID II, THE SECOND INTIFADA AND THE AFTERMATH

The failure of summit in Camp David , the outburst of the second Intifada shattering hopes on both sides, the rise of violence. Hudna with the Hamas, unilateral disengagement from Gaza, followed by seasonal outbreaks of hostility on that front.

The second Lebanon war 2006. Abu Mazin's campaign to achieve international recognition in a Palestinian state. The rift in the Palestinian camp. Above all , the lack of will on both sides to reach a solution

Smith, pp.499-514.

Gelvin,pp.238-255.

Non-document: "The Israeli Camp David

II Proposals for Final settlement, July 2000"

<http://www.mideastweb.org/campdavid2.htm>

12. CONCLUSIONS:

What are the existing paradigms for a solution ? Are they viable ? What are the chances for a change ? Is a breakthrough possible ? Are there any changes in the positions of both sides ? An open discussion.