The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Department of History
Boston University
TR, 9:30-11:00
Spring 2016

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Office hours: by appointment
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Course Description

This course will take the students through the history and the various realities and challenges of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The course aims to introduce the fundamental historical trajectories of the conflict, and to present and analyze the conflicting narratives and perceptions of both Palestinians and Israelis over key moments and issues in its history. By so doing, we will pay special attention to the respective histories of the conflict, as well as to the challenges that each side is encountering over the future of the conflict and possible solutions to it. Among other issues, the course focuses on key moments in the history of Palestine during the British mandate; the conflicting narratives over the 1948 war; Israel and the Palestinians between 1948-1967; the 1967 war and its implications on Israel and the Palestinians; the development of the Palestinian national movement; the first and second Intifadas and the challenges to the Oslo peace process. The course will address these issues through a variety of readings, primary sources and films. As a conclusion, the students will present their own reflections and analyses of various aspects of the history of the conflict and debate its future implications.

By the end of this course, you should have a deep knowledge and understanding of the history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and be able to identify and discuss the major events and themes that have led to its current impasse, the different competing narratives on certain events, as well as the current challenges both societies are facing.
Required Readings:

The following books will be used extensively throughout the course. Other required readings are available through electronic reserve or on the course's website:


Class Format, Requirements

Class Format:

In the first session of each week there will be an introductory lecture which will treat the themes and readings for that session. The second session will open with student-led question that would lead to a class discussion. In some sessions we will also watch short documentaries. Some of the feature movies will be viewed by the students individually.

Oral Participation in Class (30%): All students must demonstrate that they have read and critically analyzed the material in preparation for the class meetings. Some of the discussions will be led by students (TBA). The discussion and class participation is a very important part of the course and will be reflected in the final grade.

Reflection papers (30%)
The purpose of the reflection paper is to give the students the opportunity to analyze critically one or two items from the syllabus (readings, primary source, or film), or issues that were brought up during our discussion in class. There will be no need for additional outside research. Each student will turn in 2 reflection papers, up to 5 pp. long each. The reflection papers should be sent electronically to the instructor, and are due on Feb. 18, March 31.

Final paper (40%)
The final paper (up to 12 pp. long) will be a research paper (based on academic sources) on a topic that will be decided with the course's instructor. The paper can focus on one of the topics which were discussed during the course (while offering an elaboration or further investigation of
the issue), or on a topic that hasn't been discussed and that the student is interested in further exploring and analyzing.

The students will electronically submit their short proposals for the paper and an initial list of secondary sources on **Feb. 25**, and will present their preliminary research and findings on a special session in class on **March 17**.

The Paper should be typed, double spaced, using Times New Roman 12, and follow the Chicago Manual of Style instructions for footnotes, bibliography etc. The paper is due on **May 6**.

The final grade will include the following:

- Oral participation in class: 30%
- Reflection papers: 30%
- Final paper: 40%

**Academic Honesty**: The work that you submit for this class must be your own work. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will result in an immediate “F” grade for the course. In addition, all such cases will be immediately directed to the Committee of Discipline. Any words and ideas that are not yours should be accompanied by full and complete citation. If you have any further questions dealing with academic honesty you must contact the professor prior to the submission of any written assignment.

**Students with Documented Disabilities**: If you have a disability that requires extra time for assignments, or you need any other accommodations, you will need to bring a note from the BU Office of Disabilities Services at least two weeks before the first assignment so that I can make arrangements.

- Items marked with * indicate suggested readings.

### Syllabus

**WEEK 1 (Jan. 19, 21)**

**Introduction: Early Encounters between the Zionist Movement and the Arabs**


Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History* (Waltham: Brandeis UP, 2012), ch. 1-2 (pp. 3-64) (Scanned)
WEEK 2 (Jan. 26, 28)

Palestine during World War I: Internal developments, external promises, and the creation of the British mandate


Watch: Allenby Enters Jerusalem 1917 (Youtube)

WEEK 3 (Feb. 2, 4)

Jews and Arabs in Mandatory Palestine

Abdel Monim Said Aly, Shai Feldman and Khalil Shikaki, *Arabs and Israelis: Conflict and Peace Making in the Middle East* (Pelgrave McMillan, 2013), Ch. 1 (pp. 7-45)


Watch: *1913: Seeds of Conflict* (Director: Ben Loeterman, 2015, 60 minutes)

WEEK 4 (Feb. 9, 11)

The War of 1948: History and Historical Debate

Said Aly et al. *Arabs and Israelis*, ch. 2 (pp. 46-84)


WEEK 5 (Feb. 18) [First Reaction Paper due]

Israel and the Palestinians between 1948-1967


Watch: *The Time that Remains* (Director: Elia Suleiman, 2009, 109 minutes)

WEEK 6 (Feb. 23, 25) [Final paper’s proposals due]

The Establishment and Evolution of the PLO

Baruch Kimmerling and Joel S. Migdal, *The Palestinian People*, pp. 240-273 (ch. 8).


Primary Source:
“Palestinian National Charter, Resolutions of the Palestine National Council July 1-17, 1968” (scanned)

Watch: PLO: History of a Revolution (Youtube)
WEEK 7 (March 1, 3)

The 1967 War and its Consequences

Said Aly et al., *Arabs and Israelis* Ch. 4 (pp. 118-155)


Primary Sources:
"UN Security Council Resolutions 242 (November 22, 1967) (scanned)"

Watch: The Six Days War of 1967 (Youtube)

SPRING BREAK: March 8, 10

WEEK 8 (March 15, 17)

The Palestinian Uprising: the First Intifada

March 15:
Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, pp. 561-610 (ch. 12)

Primary Source:

Watch: The PLO: History of a Revolution: Intifada (Youtube)

March 17: Students’ presentations towards final papers

WEEK 9 (March 22, 24)

The Oslo Accords, the PA, and the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations

Said Aly et al., *Arabs and Israelis*, Ch. 9 (pp. 306-330)


[link]

Camp David: an Exchange (Dennis Ross et al.), *The New York Review*, September 20, 2001,

[link]


*Rex Brynen and Roula El-Rifai, (eds.) Compensation to Palestinian Refugees and the Search for Palestinian-Israeli Peace (London: Pluto Press, 2013), TBA*

**WEEK 10 (March 29, 31): [Second Reaction Paper due]**

**Challenges to the Palestinian Authority**


Menachem Klein, "Hamas in Power", *Middle East Journal*, 61, no. 3 (Summer 2007), pp. 442-459. (scanned)


*Primary Source: “The Charter of the Islamic Resistance” (scanned)*

*Watch: Paradise Now (Director: Hany Abu-Asad, 2006, 91 minutes)*

**WEEK 11 (April 5, 7)**

**Challenges within Israel**

Ehud Sprinzak, The Emergence of the Israeli Radical Right *Comparative Politics* Vol. 21, No. 2 (Jan., 1989), pp. 171-192. (scanned)


**WEEK 12 (April 12, 14)**

**The Palestinian citizens of Israel their challenges with the state**

Summary of the Orr Committee Report (scanned)

Shimon Shamir, *The Arabs in Israel –Two Years after the Or Commission Report*, a lecture in Tel Aviv University, September 2005 (scanned)

Elie Rekhess, “The Arabs of Israel After Oslo”, *Israel Studies* 7.3 (2002) 1-44. (scanned) [http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v007/7.3rekhess.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/israel_studies/v007/7.3rekhess.html)

**WEEK 13 (April 19, 21):**

**The Palestinian citizens of Israel their challenges with the state (continue)**

The Future Vision of the Palestinian Arabs in Israel 2006 (scanned)

Watch: *Israel: A State of its Citizens* (Youtube)

**WEEK 14 (April 26, 28)**

April 26:

Watch (in class): *Precious Life* (Director: Shlomi Eldar, 2010, 90 min.)

April 28:

**Conclusion: The Future of the Conflict: Students' Reflections**

Said Aly et al., *Arabs and Israelis*, Ch. 13 (pp. 442-459).