

POL 129:
The Arab-Israeli Conflict
Fall Quarter 2006

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Course Description:

This course focuses on the causes, course, and implications of the Arab-Israeli conflict from World War I to the present. It examines the history of the conflict, comparing the conflicting narratives of the Palestinians, the Arab States, and Israel. It explores the politics of force over the course of the conflict, as well as the diplomacy of the conflict. It examines the relationships among Arabs and Israelis, as well as inter-Arab relations and the relations between the rivals and external powers. The course offers a window into the interrelations between domestic forces—political, economic, social—and the international relations of Israel and the Arabs. Finally, it examines the ramifications of the conflict for the rivals and for the international system writ large. Topics covered in the course include the following:

1. **History**

- Jewish-Arab relations in Palestine under the Ottoman Empire
- World War I and its aftermath
- The rise of the Palestinian national movement and the Zionist organization in the interwar era
- World War II and the Palestinian-Jewish struggle, 1945-47
- The Naqba and the War of Independence—conflicting narratives
- The evolution of the conflict in the post-independence era
- The Sinai War and its aftermath
- Inter-Arab politics and the Palestinians, 1949-1967
- The Six Day War and its aftermath: Israeli policy in the occupied territory
- The War of Attrition, the Palestinian challenge, and the Yom Kippur/Ramadan War
- The rise of the peace process—from step-by-step diplomacy to the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty
- The Lebanon War
- The First Intifada
- The Gulf War and the Madrid Process
- The Oslo Accords and Israeli-Arab negotiations

- The collapse of the Oslo Process and the Al Aqsa Intifada
 - Israeli unilateralism in the occupied territories
 - Palestinian politics during the Intifada
2. **The Politics of the A-I conflict**
 - Jewish, Palestinian, Arab nationalist roots of the conflict
 - State building and the A-I conflict
 - Inter-Arab relations and the A-I Conflict
 - The two-way effects of domestic politics and the A-I conflict
 - The global system and the A-I conflict, effects and implications
 3. **Strategic Aspects of the A-I Conflict**
 - From war to war. Large scale confrontations in the A-I conflict. Causes of the A-I wars and their implications
 - Low Intensity A-I Conflicts. Guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and mass uprisings in the A-I conflict
 - Weapons of Mass Destruction and the A-I conflict
 - The prospects of arms control and disarmament in the Middle East
 4. **Diplomacy and Peacemaking in the A-I Conflict**
 - Arab and Jewish diplomacy in the pre-1948 period
 - Early attempts at A-I settlement: The Za'im initiative, the Israeli-Jordanian dialogue, Israeli-Egyptian secret negotiations
 - Arab, Israeli, and superpower diplomacy in the post-1967 era
 - The Kissinger step-by-step diplomacy
 - The Sadat initiative and the Camp David 1978 accords
 - The diplomacy of stalemate in the 1980s
 - The Madrid conference and the multilateral track
 - The making and unmaking of Oslo
 - Lessons from the diplomatic record of the A-I conflict
 5. **Social and Economic Aspects of the A-I Conflict**
 - The social and economic structure of Palestinian society: Palestinian refugees, Palestinians under Arab regimes, Israeli-Palestinians, and the Palestinians under Israeli occupation
 - The social and economic structure of Israel and its relationship to the A-I conflict
 - Social and economic motivations for peace in Israel and the Arab world
 - Social and economic impediments of peace in Israel and the Arab world
 - The effects of the A-I conflict on the political economy of the Middle East
 6. **The Arab-Israeli Conflict and the International System**
 - How the changes in the international system affected the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict: Theory and history
 - The implications of the A-I conflict for regional security in the Middle East

- Effect of the A-I conflicts on other regional and international systems
- Non A-I conflicts in the Middle East and their relationship to systemic conflicts

Course Requirements:

1. Midterm examination: 30% of the final grade. **Midterm Date: November 2.**
2. Term Paper: 8-10 double spaced pages on a topic selected from a list: 30% of final grade. **Paper due November 30.**
3. Cumulative final examination: 40% of final grade.

Textbooks:

Rashid Khalidi 1998. *Palestinian Identity*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press (hereafter Khalidi, 1998).

Zeev Maoz 2006. *Defending the Holy Land: A Critical Analysis of Israel's Security and Foreign Policy*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press (hereafter Maoz, 2006).

Dennis Ross 2004. *The Missing Peace: The Inside Story of the Fight for Middle East Peace*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux (hereafter, Ross, 2004).

Avi Shlaim 2001. *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*. New York: W. W. Norton (hereafter Shlaim, 2001).

Recommended Reading:

Howard M. Sachar 1996. *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time*. New York: A. A. Knopf (2nd Revised Edition, hereafter Sachar, 1996).

Benny Morris 2001. *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001* (hereafter Morris, 2001).

Ilan Pappé 2006. *A History of Modern Palestine: One Land, Two People*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2nd Edition, hereafter Pappé, 2006).

Edward W. Said 1992. *The Question of Palestine*. New York: Vintage Books (2nd Edition, hereafter Said, 1992).

Alan Dershowitz 2003. *The Case for Israel*. New York: Wiley & Sons (hereafter Dershowitz, 2006).

Note: In addition to these textbooks and recommended readings, there will be other assigned readings. We will arrange these readings in a course pack which can be purchased. Details on the course pack will be posted on the course Website

Course Schedule:

Session 1—September 28:

What Is the Arab-Israeli Conflict?

- Who are the actors?
- What is the conflict all about?
- The problem of competing narratives
- When do we start to describe the history of the conflict?
- How to study the conflict?
- Objectivity, subjectivity, and value judgment in the study of the A-I conflict

Required Reading:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 1-27.

Ross 2004, pp. 15-44.

Khalidi 1998, pp. 9-34.

Recommended Reading:

Said 1992, pp. 3-15, 46-55.

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 1-31.

Pappe 2006, pp. 1-13.

Session 2—October 3:

History of the A-I Conflict: From the Rise of Zionism to the Formation of Israel

- Ottoman Palestine
- The Zionist movement and concept
- Zionist settlement in Palestine, 1882-1914
- World War I and Arab and Jewish diplomacy
- The British mandate in Palestine and the reaction of the Palestinian, Arab and Zionist movements to British policies
- The Arab revolt of 1936-39 and the Peel Commission
- World War II in the Middle East
- The Jewish-Palestinian struggle in the postwar era and the UN Partition resolution
- The origins of the 1948 Naqba/War of Independence
- The Palestinian refugee problems and the outcomes of the war

Required Readings:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 28-53.

Khalidi 1998, pp. 89-175.

Recommended Readings:

Said 1992, pp. 56-114.

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 32-77.

Sachar 1996, pp. 3-353.

Session 3—October 5:

History of the A-I Conflict: From the End of the 1948 War to the Six Day War.

- The armistice agreements and the implications of the 1948 War—the Palestinian Refugees, the Arab States, and the early years of Israel
- The road to the Sinai War and its implications
- The Arab Cold War and the Arab-Israeli Conflict—the formation of the PLO
- The origins of the Six Day War
- The May-June 1967 crisis and the Six Day War
- The implications of the Six Day War

Required Readings:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 54-250.

Maoz 2006, pp. 47-112.

Recommended Reading:

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 91-99.

Sachar 1996, pp. 354-666.

Michael Oren 2002. *Six Days of War*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Session 4—October 10:

History of the A-I Conflict: From the Six Day War to the Yom Kippur War

- The postwar diplomacy: Inter-Arab politics, international initiatives, and the domestic Israeli Scene
- The Egyptian-Israeli War of Attrition, 1969-70
- The rise of Palestinian resistance
- The origins of the Yom Kippur War
- The Yom Kippur War and its consequences

Required Readings:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 250-324.

Maoz 2006, pp. 113-170.

Recommended Reading:

Sachar 1996, pp. 667-713, 740-787.

Pappe 2006, pp. 185-207.

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 100-103.

Session 5—October 12:

History of the A-I Conflict: From the Yom Kippur War to Oslo

- The disengagement agreements and Kissinger's Step-by-Step diplomacy
- The Sadat initiative and the Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement
- The Lebanon War and the Arab-Israeli paralysis
- The Intifada, the Gulf War and the Madrid Process
- The Oslo Accords

Required Readings:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 325-523.

Maoz 2006, pp. 171-230.

Ross 2004, pp. 46-121.

Recommended Reading:

Sachar 1996, pp. 788-1000.

Pappe 2006, pp. 185-253.

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 104-116.

Session 6—October 17:

History of the A-I Conflict: From Oslo to Lebanon II and Beyond

- The implementation of Oslo
- Israeli-Syrian negotiations
- The assassination of Rabin and political changes in Israel
- Palestinian politics
- The Camp David II conference and the collapse of Oslo
- The Al Aqsa Intifada, 2000-2006
- The Second Lebanon War
- What Next?

Required Reading:

Shlaim 2001, pp. 524-610.

Ross 2004, pp. 137-208, 509-711.

Recommended Reading:

Pappe 2006, pp. 254-269.

Dershowitz 2003, pp. 117-245.

Session 7—October 19:

Strategic Aspects of the Arab-Israeli Conflict—Low- and High-Intensity Warfare

- The foundations of Israel's security conception
- The Arabs at War—Determinants of military performance
- Low-Intensity conflict in the A-I conflict: terrorism, guerrilla warfare, counterinsurgency, and mass political violence.
- Weapons of Mass Destruction—Realities, conceptions, and future scenarios

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 3-34, 231-298.

Kenneth M. Pollack 2004. *Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991*. New York: Bison Books, pp. 1-13, 552-592.

Recommended Reading:

Session 8—October 24:

Strategic Aspects of the Arab-Israeli Conflict—Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East

- Israeli nuclear policy: Origins, history, Doctrine
- Arab pursuit of weapons of mass destruction: theory and practice
- Attempts at arms control in the Middle East
- WMD scenarios in the future Middle East

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 301-357.

Recommended Reading.

Shai Feldman 1997. *Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control in the Middle East*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 121-150, 205-242.

Session 9—October 26:

Israeli Politics and the A-I Conflict

- Israeli political system—an elementary introduction
- The Arab-Israeli conflict as a nation-building process
- The ideological dimension of Israeli positions on war and peace with the Arab world
- Public opinion and the A-I conflict
- The political economy of the A-I conflict
- Civil-military relations and the Arab-Israeli conflict
- Political and legal oversight of the security community—problems and prospects

Required Readings:

Maoz 2006, pp. 499-543.

Asher Arian 1995. *Security Threatened: Surveying Israeli Opinion on Peace and War*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 161-230.

Recommended Reading:

Alan Arian 2005. *Politics in Israel: The Second Republic*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, pp. 263-312. (Available in course pack.)

Session 10—October 31:

Arab Politics and the Arab-Israeli Conflict—the Domestic Politics of Arab States

- The political system of Arab-states: an elementary introduction
- The domestic functions of the Arab-Israeli conflict in Arab states
- Diversionary uses of the Arab-Israeli conflict
- The economic effects of the Arab-Israeli conflict
- The relationships between elites and mass publics in the Arab world and the management of the A-I conflict.

Required Reading:

Roy R. Andersen, Robert F. Siebert, and Jon G. Wangler 2007. *Politics and Change in the Middle East*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 134-185.

Barry Rubin 2002. *The Tragedy of the Middle East*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 70-137.

Fouad Ajami 1999. *Dream Palace of the Arabs: A Generation's Odyssey*. New York: Vintage Books. pp. 253-313.

Session 11—November 2:

Midterm Examination—No Readings

Session 12—November 7:

Palestinian and Inter-Arab Politics and the A-I Conflict

- Palestinian society before and after the Naqba
- The formation of the PLO, its structure, and changing political aspirations
- Palestinian fundamentalism— Hamas and the Islamic Jihad
- The politics of the Oslo process
- Inter-Arab politics and the Arab-Israeli conflict—cooperation and competition
- Leadership in the Arab world and the A-I conflict
- The Arab world, the Islamic world and the A-I conflict: How central is the A-I conflict to the stability of the Middle East?

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 574-581.

Khalidi 1998, pp. 177-208.

James H. Lebovich 2004. Unity in Action: Explaining Alignment Behavior in the Middle East. *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(2): 167-189.

Shaul Mishal and Avraham Sela 2006. *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence*. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 13-48, 83-112.

Recommended Readings.

Said 1992, pp. 182-237.

Barry Rubin 2002. *The Tragedy of the Middle East*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 193-226.

Session 13—November 9:

Diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli Conflict—Early efforts at resolution (1947-67)

- The road to the 1948 War
- Postwar Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian negotiations
- Israeli-Egyptian secret negotiations in the 1950s
- Israeli-Jordanian secret negotiations in the 1960s
- International mediation in the pre- and post-1948 era

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 386-405.

Shlaim 2001, pp. 95-142, 224-228.

Recommended Reading:

Session 14—November 14:

Diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli Conflict—First steps toward agreement (1967-79)

- The impact of the Six Day War on the prospects of peace in the A-I conflict
- Diplomacy between wars, 1967-72
- Step-by-step diplomacy, 1973-75
- The Sadat initiative and the Camp David Accords

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 405-436.

William Quandt 2001. *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, pp. 98-242.

Session 15—November 16:

Diplomacy in the Arab-Israeli Conflict—From Camp David I to Camp David II and Beyond (1979—)

- The Autonomy talks, 1979-1981
- The rise and fall of the Peres-Hussein agreement
- The Madrid Process
- The Oslo Accords
- Israeli-Syrian negotiations, 1992-2000
- Camp David II and the collapse of Oslo
- What next?

Required Reading:

Maoz, 2006, pp. 436-495.

Ross 2004, pp. 712-808.

William Quandt 2001. *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, pp. 321-378.

Recommended Reading:

Hussein Agha and Robert Malley 2001. Camp David: The Tragedy of Errors. *New York Review of Books*, August 1 (Available in course packet).

Benny Morris (and Ehud Barak) 2001. Camp David and After: An Exchange. *New York Review of Books*, August 9 (Available in course packet).

Hussein Agha and Robert Malley 2002. Camp David and After: An Exchange 2. *New York Review of Books*, June 13 (Available in course packet).

Jeremy Pressman 2003. Visions in Collision: What Happened at Camp David and Taba. *International Security*, 28(2): 5-43.

Session 16—November 21:

The Diplomacy of the A-I Conflict: Third Party Mediation

- Why do we need third parties to mediate?
- Who should and who does mediate?
- The history of third party mediation in the A-I Conflict
- Evaluating mediation efforts—can mediation be useful in the future?

Required Reading:

Saadia Touval 1982. *The Peace Brokers: Mediators in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 165-283.

William Quandt 2001. *Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, pp. 379-396.

Recommended Reading:

Saadia Touval 1999. Contrasting Mediation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict during and after the Cold War. *Jerusalem Papers on Peace Problems*. Jerusalem: The Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations.

Dennis Ross 2005. The Middle East Predicament. *Foreign Affairs*, 84(1): 61-74 (available in course pack).

Session 17—November 28-30:

The Domestic and Regional Implications of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

- The economic implications of conflict in Israel and the Arab World
- The economic aspects of the Palestinian Predicament
- The domestic political implications of the conflict in Israel: Militarization? Political Instability? Truncated Democracy?
- The use and misuse of the Arab-Israeli conflict by political elites in the Arab world
- The relationship between the Arab-Israeli conflict and inter-Arab conflicts
- The Democratic Peace in the Arab Israeli conflict: Does it apply?

Required Reading:

Maoz 2006, pp. 564-620.

Yoram Peri 2006. *Generals in the Cabinet Room: How the Military Shapes Israeli Policy*. Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, pp. 213-232.

Gershon Shafir and Yoav Peled 2002. *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenships*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 213-307.

The World Bank 2003. *Poverty in the West Bank and Gaza*, pp. 1-40. (In course pack.)

Fred Halliday 2005. *The Middle East in International Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 270-299.

Session 18—November 30: (Term Paper Due.)

The Global Implications of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

- The effects of the A-I conflict on the Middle East
- The Arab-Israeli conflict and superpower involvement in the Middle East—during and after the Cold War
- The effects of the A-I conflict on the world economy
- The A-I conflict and international terrorism
- Will the resolution of the A-I conflict bring peace to the ME? Alternative scenarios

Required Readings:

Ian Lustick 1997. The Absence of Middle Eastern Great Powers: “Backwardness” in Historical Perspective. *International Organization*, 51(4): 653-683.

Barry Rubin 2002. *The Tragedy of the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 258-280.

John J. Mearsheimer and Steven M. Walt 2006. The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy. *Middle East Policy*, 13(3): 29-87. (Available in course pack).

Session 19—December 5:

Resolving the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Justice, Realism, or Pipe Dream?

- The Iron Wall Conception revisited
- Alternative Solutions I: A One-State Solution
- Alternative Solutions II: A Two-State Solution
- Alternative Solutions III: Peace for Peace
- Alternative Solutions IV: The Idea of Transfer
- Alternative Solutions V: External Patronage

Required Readings:

Virginia Tilley 2005. *The One State Solution: A Breakthrough for Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Deadlock*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, pp. 183-234.

The Geneva Accord 2003. The Geneva Accord: A Model Israeli-Palestinian Peace Agreement. <http://www.geneva-accord.org/Accord.aspx?FolderID=33&lang=en>. (Also available on course pack.)

Benjamin Netanyahu 2000. *A Durable Peace: Israel and Its Place Among the Nations*. New York: Warner Books, pp. 279-352.

The Moledet Plan. <http://www.moledet.org.il/english/>. (Also available in course pack.)

The Hamas Platform 2005. http://www.ict.org.il/Articles/h_cov.htm. (Also available in course pack.)

The Saudi Peace Initiative 2002. http://www.peacelobby.org/saudi_initiative.htm. (Also available in course pack.)

Session 20—December 7:

Conclusion and General Discussion

Open discussion of the course and implications of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

No Readings.