The Dynamics of the Arab-Israeli Conflict
Semester II

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Course No. MP 1.6
Meeting: By appointment

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of the causes, complexities, and consequences of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. It examines the development of the conflict from its beginnings in the Ottoman period until the present day, reviewing the rise of Zionism, the period of the British Mandate, the emergence of Israel and the Palestinian refugee issue, the birth of Palestinian nationalism and its fragmentation, the impact of Arab-Israeli wars on regional relations, and the diplomatic successes and failures in seeking a political solution to the conflict. Emphasis is on presenting the perspectives of all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and placing it in the context of the history of the Middle East as a whole. Reading, analyzing, and evaluating key texts and documents related to the conflict’s history politics, and diplomacy, are central aspects of this course.

Course Schedule

I. Introduction:
   - The Construction of Conflicting Nationalisms
     a) Palestinian and Arab nationalism
     b) Zionism and Israeli Nationalism
   - Comparing Divergent Narratives of the Conflict: Palestinians, the Arab States and Israeli

II. The Palestine Mandate, 1920-1948:
   - Jewish-Arab Relations in Palestine under the Ottoman Empire
   - World War I and its Aftermath
     a) Balfour Declaration
     b) British Mandate in Palestine: Conflicting British Commitment towards Political Representation, Land and People
• Palestine between the Two Wars
  a) Yishuv: Ideology and politics
  b) Arab Leadership and Revolts against Jewish Settlements
  c) World War II, the Holocaust and the World Jewry
• Arab-Israeli Conflict (1948-49) and Armistice Negotiations
  a) The UN Partition Plan and the End of Mandate
  b) The Palestinian Naqba/Jewish War of Independence
  c) The Birth of Israel and the Palestinian Refugee Question

III. The Arab-Israeli Wars 1956-1982:
• The Great Power Rivalry in the Middle East
• The Suez Campaign, 1956
• The Six Day War (1967) and its Consequences
  a) Intensification of conflict with Syria and Egypt
  b) The Emergence of the PLO and Armed Struggle
• The Yom Kippur War and the Politics of Oil
• Israel’s Lebanon Wars, 1978, 1982 and Rise of Hizbullah

IV. Israeli Rule in the Occupied Territories:
• 1967 and Greater Israel: Israeli Settlers in the Occupied Territories (OT)
  a) Expropriation of Land in OT: Settler Movement
  b) Judaization of East Jerusalem
  c) Harsh Military Occupation
• Rise of Indigenous Palestinian Leadership in OT
• The Intifada (1987) and the birth of radical Islam in the OT:
  Hamas and Islamic Jihad

V. Diplomacy and Peacemaking in the Arab-Israeli Conflict:
• Early attempts at A-I settlement: Za’im Initiative, Israeli-Jordanian
dialogue, Israeli-Egyptian secret negotiations
• Resolution 242 and Land for Peace Formula:
  Superpower diplomacy in the post-1967 period
• The Sadat initiative and the Camp David 1979 Agreements
• The Madrid Conference
• The Making and Unmaking of Oslo:
  Camp David II and Intifada II
• The Saudi Peace Initiatives
• The Syrian track in Peace Process
• ‘Road Map’ and the Future of the Peace Process
VI. Debates in the Arab-Israeli Conflict:
- Role of Religion in Arab-Israeli Conflict
- The Status Arabs in Israel
- Israel's Security Concerns
- The Debate on the “end of the two-state solution”

Method of Instruction:

There will be three lecture and three tutorials of one hour each every week according to the UGC (University Grants Commission) guidelines. Questions, discussion and debate during class are strongly encouraged. Students are expected to follow news reports on the Arab-Israeli conflict and look actively for analytical articles on topics in the course. Ha’aretz, Israel's leading daily newspaper, and website such as challenge-mag.com, pij.org (Palestine-Israel journal) are good sources for analysis of current events. Students are also encouraged to search for more reading material related to politics and society in Israel on the Internet.

Method of Assessment:

An end-semester exam would consist of essay questions based upon the topics covered in the syllabus. In addition, a term paper addressing an appropriate question and/or issue, and a book review on issues and topics in the syllabus, submitted on the last day of the class, will form a part of the final assessment. Students can choose a subject/issue to write about, formulating appropriate question(s) and presenting the argument in a cogent manner. They can choose any book (old or new; from the reading list or otherwise) relevant to the syllabus, for review. The formats for writing term paper and book review will be discussed in the class. The term paper will be presented in a classroom meeting mutually agreed between the teacher and students.

The total assessment is out of a maximum of 100 marks: End-semester exam carries 75 marks; Term Paper carries 15 marks; Book Review carries 5 marks; and Presentation of term paper carries 5 marks.

Select Readings

Books:

4. Eisenberg, Laura Zittrain and Neil Caplan, Negotiating Arab-Israeli Peace: Patterns,


**Book Chapters and Journal Articles:**


