THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT:  
A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

Dr. Ronen Zeidel

Course Number: 702.2126
Class Time: Monday 15:00-18:00
Class Location: Tba
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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.

Due to inavailability of time, not all the sources in the reading list will be covered. The uncovered sources should help the students with their assignments. The course, however, 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 will demand a reading of the materials and generating judgment and thought on the topics addressed. The Students will be required to read Haaretz (English version) every day.

Midterm Paper 40%
Final Paper 40%
Active Participation 20%
Syllabus [for documents see course Reader]

1. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND
The Holy Land is the locus of sanctity and memory, the place of myth and legend. Inasmuch as our course deals with competing claims, it is necessary to begin with the resonances from the past that nurture peoples’ bonds with this country.


2. ZIONISM AND THE ARABS OF PALESTINE, 1917-1947
The possibilities for preempting the conflict or resolving it at an early stage surfaced coterminous with the dynamics of its outbreak and evolution. But the failure to solve it by 1947-48, attending Israel’s imminent founding, constitutes the stark and sobering historical reality.

1917, The Balfour Declaration, p. 1
1918, Declaration to the Seven, p. 2
1919, The Feisel-Weizmann Agreement and Feisal-Frankfurter Letters, p. 4
1919, King-Crane Commission Report, p. 7
1922, Churchill White Paper, p.16
1922, Mandate for Palestine, p. 21
1937, From the Report of the Palestine Royal Commission (Peel Comm.) p. 29
1939, British White Paper on Palestine, p.30
1947, UN General Assembly Resolution 181 (Partition Plan) p. 38

James L. Gelvin, pp.76-92.

Rashid Khalidi, The Iron Cage, Chapters 2,3.

Israel’s establishment, accompanied by military success and international recognition, did not elicit Arab/Palestinian acceptance of the Jewish State. The Palestinian refugee problem was born, and is still a vibrant component of the conflict. Palestinian resistance and warfare characterized the period. Meanwhile, broader political efforts and initiatives for conflict-resolution failed.

1948, Declaration of the State of Israel,58
1948, UNGA Resolution 194 (III) (Refugee Return),61
International involvement, especially by the United States, is the hallmark of many years of diplomatic effort to resolve the regional Arab-Israeli conflict. At the same time, the Israeli-Palestinian conundrum remained politically intractable.

1967, UN Security Council Resolution 242 (Peace in the Middle East),64
1968, PLO Palestinian National Charter (revised),65
1973, UNSC Resolution 338 (cease-fire),69
1974, Separation-of-Forces between Israel and Syria,70
1974, PLO: PNC Cairo Meeting (Phases Plan), and UN Observer Status,73
1978/9, Camp David Framework for Peace, and Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty,79
1981, U.S.-Israel Memo of Understanding, and Israeli Golan Law,83
1982/3, Lebanon: Agreement on PLO Withdrawal from Lebanon, 1982,84
   The Reagan Plan, 1982.90
   UNSC Resolution 520, 1982.94
   Lebanon-Israel Truce Agreement, 1983.95

5. PALESTINIAN UPRISING (Intifada) AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS, 1988-1992
The intifada represented the Palestinian struggle against Israel in a period of low diplomatic activity. Islam, the core cultural identity among the Palestinians, evoked the earthy power of religion in politics and warfare. Meanwhile, the Middle East reverberated with events in the Persian Gulf and the war that erupted in 1991.

1988, West Bank-Gaza Palestinian Leaders: Fourteen Points and Intifada UNC,97
1988, Covenant of the Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS)[excerpts],100
1988, PLO Declaration of Palestinian Independence,102
1988, UNGA Resolution on the Question of Palestine,104
1991, Madrid Peace Conference invitation,105

Gelvin, pp.116-144.

Gelvin, pp.173-196.

Gelvin, pp.212-228.

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The 1993 Oslo Accord was a radical breakthrough in the attempt to solve the violent and bitter conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. A political process was launched, but it ran aground in an atmosphere of terrorism and incrimination. The United States under President Clinton played a major role in trying to manage the conflict and salvage the Oslo process.

*Note: There are many internet sites that since 1993 have provided documents and articles on the Oslo Accords, offering a variety of opinions regarding conception, implementation, and responsibility. A few among them: Middle East Institute policy briefs, MERIP reports, PalestineHistory, Free Palestine Campaign, MEMRI, CATO Institute, Freeman, Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, Ariel Center for Policy Research [Nativ], Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Al-Awda [Refugee Return], and many more.

1993, Arafat to Rabin Letter; DOP/Oslo Accord between Israel and PLO,107
1994, Treaty of Peace Between Israel and Jordan,116
1995, OSLO II Interim Agreement on West Bank and Gaza Strip,125
1998, Wye Memorandum between Netanyahu and Arafat,140
1999, Sharm E-Sheikh Memorandum,145

Gelvin, pp.229-257.


7. THE SECOND INTIFADA AND ISRAEL'S DISENGAGEMENT, 2000-2005

Renewed violence and political closure prevented any progress toward a bilateral agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. However, steps were taken to try and shape a new political and territorial reality in the Land.

Hillel Frisch, “Debating Palestinian Strategy in the al-Aqsa Intifada,” Terrorism and Political Violence, 15, 2, Summer 2003, pp. 61-80. ERESERVE 001361722

2001, Tenet cease-fire plan, 149-150
2003, The Bush Road Map, 151-154
2004, The Sharon Disengagement Plan, 155-159

8. ISSUES IN DISPUTE AND CONTROVERSY
The rights of individuals and peoples continues to be a source of debate and differences in the conflict. In this regard, events from decades ago continue to have an impact on the legal, territorial, and political dimensions of the conflict and its resolution.

*Jewish Settlements

*Arabs in Israel

*Palestinian Refugees

*Jewish Refugees
Maurice M. Roumani, “The Silent Refugees: Jews from Arab Countries,” Mediterranean Quarterly, 14, 3, Summer 2003, pp. 41-77. ERESERVE 001362011

9. PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTIONS FOR CONFLICT-RESOLUTION
Among the approaches to solving the conflict in the Land, we wonder which one, or combination of which, may perhaps pave the political pathway to peace.


Benny Morris, One State, Two States:Resolving the Israel-Palestine Conflict, Yale: Yale University Press. Chapter 3.


10. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: NATIONALISM AND RELIGION IN THE POLITICAL EQUATION
Papers are due two weeks after the last day of class (January 21st 2014). Papers should be submitted electronically as an e-mail attachment to: vesnaronen@hotmail.com with copy (cc) to: uhisfinalpapers@gmail.com