

- Course Title: **Introduction to Israel-Palestine Conflict**
- Course Code: M.A. (DLB)0707
- Course Type: Elective
- Credits: 4
- Course Level: BA & MA
- Semester: Spring 2026
- Course Pre-requisites: Curiosity and Diligence
- Name of Instructor: **Dr Khinvraj Jangid**
- Assessment: 10% Class Participation, 30% Reflection Exercise, 30% Midterm Test and 30% End-term exam

Overview

The conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinians is one of the well-known, yet compound, ongoing conflicts in international relations. This course invites the students to look at its complex genesis with the first Arab-Israel war of 1948. However, it does not intend to analyse the Arab-Israel conflict and the various actors involved in it at the regional or international level. The *events*, *actors* and *ideas* of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians constitute the core of the course. It is important to highlight the distinct history of the two—the Israelis and the Palestinians. This course will provide an historical view of the conflict by examining political, national and social issues entangled since the 1948 war. It will introduce the students to the two ‘official’ narratives of the Israelis and the Palestinians and help unearth the shortcomings of both when it comes to resolve the issues of the 1948 war. The role of narratives is very important in capturing the realities of the present phase of the conflict. With the help of multiple narratives this course will comprehend the major political and diplomatic causes and underlying dynamics of the conflict.

Objective and learning outcomes

Keeping the focus on the Israel-Palestine conflict and not on Arab-Israel conflict implies that the students at the end of the course would be able to earn precise and comprehensive understanding of one major segment of the conflict which has occupied central space not only in the Middle East but also in the international politics in the aftermath of the World War II. The debate over two-state or one-state solution for the Israel-Palestine conflict

reopens some of the key theoretical formulations pertaining to the one nation – one state prescription. The intricacies of the Israel-Palestine conflict due to the external actors will help students grasp the current nature of international politics. The role played by regional and international actors in this conflict exposes the political manipulation underneath the rhetoric of international security and the sanctity of sovereignty.

Key Components:

The Balfour Declaration 1917

The British Mandate Palestine 1918-1948

The first Arab – Israel war 1948: History, Memory and the role of Narratives

The Birth of Palestinian Liberation Organisation

The 1967 War

The First Palestinian Uprising, *first Intifada* 1989-1991

The Madrid Process 1991

The Oslo Accords 1993

The Camp David Negotiations 1999

The Derailment of the Peace Process 2001

The Second Palestinian Uprising, *second Intifada* 2001-2004

October 7 and Israel-Hamas War

Readings: There is no single textbook or a history book for this course. Each topic has required readings that are important for learning; for each class, mandatory readings are given. In addition to it, there will be some more writings from current news or events, which students will receive in advance before a class. Students should come to read them in class so that discussion or dialogue can take place. All the classes will demand students to participate and play active roles in the classroom with the help of readings. Curiosity is equally important for every class. Curiosity does not kill the cat *here!* All the readings and books here are available in the Jindal Global Library. Journals are accessible via JGU access. Students may use material from the web so long as they can indicate the source as well as give the date accessed. I have given a page of internet sources for daily news and events analysis. Follow some of them weekly.

Plagiarism is an offence. JGU website has a full document explaining what constitutes plagiarism and the degree to which it can affect your career. Beware of it.

Grading: To pass this course the requirement is to earn fifty percent marks minimum. Following are the details of respective grade and its value in percentage.

Note: Jindal Centre for Israel Studies (JCIS) will have guest lectures which will be relevant to the issues dealt in this elective so the students enrolled for it are required to attend all such events of JCIS besides the classroom lectures.

Lecture Schedule

Class one (Three hours once a week)

Introduction of the course and the nature of assessment. Dialogue over the expectations of the students for this elective.

Class two: Historical context of the conflict – Nationalism and Zionism

Readings:

Anderson, Benedict (1991), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso. Pages 1-7

Dowty, Alan (2012), *Israel/Palestine*, Third Edition, Polity Press. Pages 1-67

Migdal, J. S. and B. Kimmerling (1994), *The Palestinian People: A History*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Introduction and chapter one.

Shapira, Anita (2012), *Israel: A History*, Brandeis University Press. Pages 3 – 66

Troen, Ilan (2003), *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Zionist Settlement*, Yale University Press. Chapter one.

Class three: Mandatory Palestine and Balfour Declaration

Readings:

Khalidi, Rashid (2007), *Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, Great Britain: Oneword. Pages 31 – 64

Sykes – Picot Agreement 1916

(URL: <http://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HIST351-9.2.4-Sykes-Picot-Agreement.pdf>)

Balfour Declaration 1917

(URL: <http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/peace/guide/pages/the%20balfour%20declaration.aspx>)

Lord Balfour's Personal Position on the Balfour Declaration, *Middle East Journal*, Summer 1968, 22(3): 340-345.

Reinharz, Jehuda (1992), "The Balfour Declaration and its Maker: A Reassessment", *The Journal of Modern History*, 64(3): 455-499.

Class four and five: 1948 War

Readings:

UN Partition Plan for Palestine

(URL: <http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/0/7F0AF2BD897689B785256C330061D253>)

Bar-On, Mordechai (2007), "Remembering 1948: Personal Recollections, Collective Memory, and the Search for 'What Really Happened'", in Benny Morris (ed.), *Making Israel*, The University of Michigan Press. Pages 29 – 46

Gorenberg, Gershom (2009), "A War to Begin all Wars", *The New York Review of Books*, 28 May 2009. (URL: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2009/may/28/the-war-to-begin-all-wars/?pagination=false>)

Khalidi, Rashid (2001), "The Palestinians and 1948: The Underlying Causes of Failure", in Shalaim, Avi and Eugene, Rogan, *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, Cambridge University Press. Pages 12 – 36

Morris, Benny (2008), *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israel War*, Yale University Press. Pages 1 – 37

Said, Edward (2001), "Afterword: The Consequences of 1948", in Shalaim, Avi and Eugene, Rogan, *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, Cambridge University Press. Pages 248 – 261

Shapira, Anita (2012), *Israel: A History*, Brandeis University Press. Pages 155 – 178

Shlaim, Avi (1995), "The Debate about 1948", *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 27 (3): 287-304.

Class six: Birth of Palestinian Liberation Organisation

Readings:

Al-Hout, Shafiq (2011), *My Life in the PLO: The Inside Story of the Palestinian Struggle*, New York: Pluto Press. Pages 49-67, 270-282.

Arafat, Yasser (1978), "The PLO Position", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 7(3): 171-174.

Rubin, Barry and Rubin, Judith (2003), *Yasir Arafat: A Political Biography*, London: Continuum. Pages 3 – 36.

Sayigh, Yezid (1986), "Palestinian Armed Struggle: Means and Ends", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 16(1): 95-112.

Khalidi, Rashid (2007), *Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, Great Britain: Oneword. Pages 140 – 182

Class seven: 1967 War

Readings:

Oren, Michael (2005), "The revelations of 1967: New Research on the Six Day War and its Lessons for the Contemporary Middle East", *Israel Studies*, 10(2): 1-14.

Troen, Ilan and Shalom, Zaki (1999), "Ben-Gurion's Diary for 1967 Six Day War: Introduction and Diary Excerpts", *Israel Studies*, 4(2): 195-220.

Segev, Tom (2007), "The June 1967 War and the Palestinian Refugee Problem", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 36(3): 6-22.

_____ (2005), *1967: Israel, the War, and the Year that Transformed the Middle East*, New York: Metropolitan Books. Pages 1 – 42

Class eight: First Intifada 1989 – 1991

Readings:

Stein, W. Kenneth (1990), "The Intifada and the 1936-39 Uprising: A Comparison", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 19(4): 64-85.

Tessler, Mark (1990), "The Intifada and Political Discourse in Israel", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 19(2): 43-61

Said, Edward (1989), "Intifada and Independence", *Social Text*, No. 22, pp. 23-39.

Class nine: Madrid Conference and Oslo Accords 1991 – 1993

Readings:

Khatib, Ghassan (2010), *Palestinian Politics and the Middle East Peace Process: Consensus and competition in the Palestinian Negotiating Team*, London: Routledge. Pages 77 - 166

Newman, David (1996), "Shared Spaces – Separate Spaces: The Israel-Palestine Peace Process", *GeoJournal*, 39(4): 363-375.

Ben-Ami, Shlomo (2006), *Scars of War, Wounds of Peace: The Israeli-Arab Tragedy*, Oxford University Press. Pages 201 – 239

Shlaim, Avi (1994), "The Oslo Accord", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 23 (3): 24-40.

Class ten: Camp David and elusive Peace 1999-2000

Readings:

Baral, Oren (2005), "The Failure of Israel-Palestine Peace Process, 1993-2000", *Journal of Peace Research*, 42(6): 719-736.

Malley, Robert and Hussein Agha (2002), "Camp David and After— Continued", *The New York Review of Books*, 13 June 2002.

(URL:<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2002/jun/27/camp-david-and-aftercontinued/?pagination=false>)

Morris, Benny and Ehud Barak (2002), "Camp David and After: An Exchange I. (An Interview with Ehud Barak)", *The New York Review of Books*, 13 June 2002. (URL: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2002/jun/13/camp-david-and-after-an-exchange-1-an-interview-wi/?pagination=false>)

Rynhold, Jonathan (2003), "Making Sense of Tragedy: Barak, the Israeli Left and the Oslo Peace Process", *Israel Studies Forum*, 19(1): 9-33.

Class eleven: Second Intifada 2001 – 2004

Readings:

Bishara, Azmi (2000), "A Double Responsibility: Palestinian Citizens of Israel and Intifada", *Middle East Report*, No. 217, pp. 26-29

Dowty, Alan (2004), "Impact of the Aqsa Intifada on the Israel-Palestine Conflict", *Israel Studies Forum*, 19(2): 9-28.

Hilal, Jamil (2006), " Hamas' Rise as Charted in Polls 1994-2005", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 35(3): 6-19.

Shikaki, Khalil (2002), "Palestinians Divided", *Foreign Affairs*, 81(1): 89-105.

Scham, L. Paul (2006), "The Historical Narratives of Israelis and Palestinians and the Peacemaking Process", *Israel Studies Forum*, 21(2): 58-84.

Class twelve and thirteen: Frameworks of analysis

Readings:

Bar-On, Mordechai (2006), "Conflicting Narratives or Narratives of a Conflict: Can the Zionist and Palestinian Narratives of the 1948 War Be Bridged?", in Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bar-Tal, Daniel (1990), "Israel-Palestine Conflict: A Cognitive Analysis", *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 14 (1): 7-29.

Dowty, Alan (2012), *Israel/Palestine*, Third Edition, Polity Press. Pages 220 – 266

Boullion, E. Markus (2006), *The Peace Business: Money and Power in the Palestine-Israel Conflict*, London: I. B. Tauris. Pages 1 – 22

Class fourteen and fifteen: For revision

The readings prescribed for each class are mandatory. The suggested readings are there to help students for further research or assignment work.

Suggested Readings:

Bar-On, Dan et al. (2012), *Side by Side: Parallel Histories of Israel-Palestine*, New York: The New Press.

Dowty, Alan (2012), *Israel/Palestine*, Third Edition, Polity Press.

- Milton-Edwards, Beverley (2009), *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A People's War*, Routledge.
- Segev, Tom (1986) *The First Israelis*, New York: Free Press.
- Naveh, Eyal (2006), "The Dynamics of Identity Construction in Israel through Education in History", in R. I. Rotberg (ed.), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Robert I. Rotberg (2006), *Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Conflict: History's Double Helix*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Brunner, Jose (1997), "Pride and Memory: Nationalism, Narcissism and the Historians' Debates in Germany and Israel", *History and Memory*, 9 (1-2): 256-300.
- Caplan, Neil (2010), *The Israel-Palestine Conflict: Contested Histories*, Oxford: Willy-Blackwell.
- Esmeir, Samera (2003), "1948: Law, History, Memory", *Social Text*, 21 (2): 25-48.
- Gelber Yoav (2011), *Nation and History: Israeli Historiography between Zionism and Post-Zionism*, Middlesex: Vallentine Mitchell.
- Khalidi, Rashid (2007), *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood*, Boston: Beacon Press.
- Khalidi, Walid (1971), *From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem until 1948*, Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies.
- Maslha, Nur (2003), *The Politics of Denial: Israel and the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, London: Pluto Press.
- Migdal, J. S. and B. Kimmerling (1994), *The Palestinian People: A History*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Morris, Benny (1990), *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- _____ (2007), *Making Israel*, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press.
- _____ (2008), *1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*, London: Yale University Press.
- Motzafi-Haller, Pnina (2005), "The Politics of Academic Teaching in Israel: How the War Affects our Teaching of Ethnicity, Gender, and Social History", *Journal of Women's History*, 17 (4): 170-176.
- Nusseibeh, Sari (2012), *What is a Palestinian State Worth*, Harvard University Press.

Oz, Amos (1994), *Israel, Palestine and Peace*, New York: Harcourt Brace and Company.

Pappe, Ilan (1999), *The Israel/Palestine Question*, London: Routledge.

____ (2003), "Humanising the Text: Israeli 'New History' and the Trajectory of the 1948 Historiography", *Radical History Review*, 86: 102-122.

Ram Uri (2004), *Waging Peace: Israel and the Arabs, 1948-2003*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rogan, E. and A. Shlaim (2007) (eds.), *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*, second edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Said, Edward W. (1980), *The Question of Palestine*, London: Routledge.

____ (2000), "Invention, Memory and Place", *Critical Inquiry*, 26 (2): 175-192.

Shapira, Anita (2012), *Israel: A History*, Brandeis University Press.

Shapira, Anita and Derek J. Penslar (2003), *Israeli Historical Revisionism: From Left to Right*, Portland: Frank Cass.

Sher, Gilad (2006), *The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Negotiations 1999-2001, Within Reach*, London: Routledge.

The following journals are important for current writings on the conflict and will help research work on any topic covered in the syllabus. Available via JGU library e-databases:

Israel Affairs, Routledge

Journal of Israeli History Politics, Society, Culture, Routledge

Israel Studies, Indiana University Press

Israel Affairs, Taylor & Francis

Middle-East Journal, Middle East Institute

International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Cambridge Journals

British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Taylor & Francis

Journal of Palestine Studies, University of California Press

Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture, Middle East Publications

Internet Sources:

<http://www.haaretz.com> Website of the Ha'aretz daily newspaper known for its independent political views. It is worth looking at the editorials in particular on a weekly basis but particularly on Fridays.

<http://www.jpost.com> Website of the English daily newspaper: The Jerusalem Post. Politically, it tends to be more to the right of Ha'aretz, and should be consulted to maintain a balanced viewpoint.

<http://meria.idc.ac.il> Website for the online journal Middle Review of International Affairs (MERIA) and articles can be accessed free of charge.

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/udc.htm> The United Nations Information System on the Question of Palestine (UNISPAL) was established and is being developed by the Division for Palestinian Rights in response to successive General Assembly mandates.

<http://palestine-studies.org/> The Institute for Palestine Studies provides information, documentation and current research pertaining to the Palestinian history and society.

<http://israelipalestinian.procon.org/> Israel-Palestine Conflict Pros and Cons founded in 2004 compiles events and actors on both sides and intends to look into the questions related to the resolution of the conflict.

<http://www.economist.com> The Economist online offers insight and opinion on international news and politics. It is useful to look at its coverage of Israel-Palestine issues and wider Middle East.

<http://www.memri.org/middle-east-media-research-institute.html> MEMRI explores the Middle East through their Media. Useful for timely translations of news from Arabic and Farsi sources.

<http://www.mei.org.in> Middle East Institute, New Delhi, is a forum for debate, dialogue and discussion. It is in the process of building documentation and database of the region.

<http://www.nybooks.com/?insrc=log> New York Review of Books covers recent books. The extensive book-reviews and blogs offer good discussions. In a similar format and style London Review of Books is also useful. See <http://www.lrb.co.uk/>

• Percentage of Marks	Grade	Grade Value	Grade Description
80 and above	O	8	Outstanding – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
75 – 79	A+	7.5	Excellent - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
70 – 74	A	7	Very Good - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyse existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
65 – 69	A-	6	Good - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
60 – 64	B+	5	Fair – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
55 – 59	B	4	Acceptable - Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
50 – 54	B-	3	Marginal - Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
Below 50	F	0	Fail - Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course