

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Department of Political Science
Fall 2024

Professor Ian Lustick

Syllabus for Political Science 4994

International Politics and the Arab-Israeli

The origins of the conflict between Arabs and Jews in and over Palestine lie not in ancient hatreds or religious dogma, but in competing demands by desperate national groups—each seeking, by their lights, what was not only their right, but duty to achieve. For Zionists, the mass immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel that began in the late 19th century meant saving Jews from repeated and increasingly vicious bouts of Christian anti-Semitism. Jews living in a Jewish country would help Gentiles understand the Jews still among them as part of a normal people, with a country of its own. Following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, the British ruled over Palestine. The Arabs of that country came quickly to understand themselves as caught in a classic nationalist struggle against the consequences of European imperialism, made particularly complicated by the accident of Zionism's interest in their country and the support offered by the Christian world for the establishment there of a Jewish state. In this way we can understand why the conflict can be so persuasively framed in seemingly contradictory ways—as resulting from settler colonialism or from a Jewish struggle for national self-determination.

The particular focus of this seminar will be on relationships between the origins and dynamics of this conflict and the changing structure of international politics. We will study differences, and similarities, in the impact of international factors on the struggles that resulted from the Zionist project in the Land of Israel/Palestine, and Arab and Muslim reactions to it across three periods: Imperialism and the World Wars (1860s-1940s); Cold War (late 1940s-1990); Messy Multi-Polarity (1990s-present). We will consider as well the role the conflict has played as an arena for competition and cooperation among major actors in international politics.

Methodologically, this seminar will emphasize close examination of texts, documents, and videos, development of interpretive and research skills in the evaluation of evidence and competing claims, analytic exploitation of polemical materials, and the writing of a substantial research paper.

Structure of the Course

The class meets once a week for intensive and critical discussion of assigned reading, film clips assigned for viewing, and research in progress. Although contextual and introductory material for each book or set of readings will sometimes be provided in lecture format, responsibility for the direction of class discussions will be shared between professor and students. Study of the relationship between international politics and the conflict in and over Palestine will be organized into three Parts, corresponding two structural changes in global affairs. Part I will focus on the late nineteenth century to the late 1940s, when competition

among multiple Great Powers expressed itself through imperial and colonial activity and in the two most destructive wars in human history—World War I and World War II. In this period Zionism, Arab nationalism, and Palestinian nationalism all took shape and came into contact with one another. Part II begins with the restructuring of international politics, centered on the Cold War—the direct and sustained competition between the Soviet-led communist world and American-led alliances of capitalist or non-communist countries. In Arab-Israeli affairs this period corresponds to the four decades between the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the first Palestinian intifada of 1987-1991, which, following four wars fought mainly between Israel and Arab states, signaled the redefinition of the conflict as one primarily between Israeli Jews and Palestinian Arabs. Part III begins with the end of the Cold War and a shifting structure of international politics that resembles both earlier periods along some dimensions but whose complexity makes it difficult to schematize. We will call it “Messy Multipolarity.” In this period Israeli-Arab relations have focused on violent and non-violent struggles over whether the future of Palestine/the Land of Israel will be determined by the military power of the State of Israel or by the political realities of two peoples living in and aspiring to control the same country.

Requirements of the Course

There will be no examinations in this course. Each student will be asked to prepare to answer questions on designated assigned readings or videos. Seminar discussions will be partially organized around questions that other students ask of the respondents about the assigned material. In every seminar session there will be opportunities to discuss relationships between what we are studying and current events in Israel/Palestine, so students are expected to keep abreast of developments. For this purpose it is strongly recommended that, among many other sources of news and contemporaneous analysis that are available, students subscribe to the [free newsletter of the Daniel S. Abraham Foundation for Middle East Peace](#) which appears six days a week and contains an excellent collection of articles, commentaries, and hyperlinks focused on the details of developments in Israel and Palestine.

Grades in the course will be assigned based equally on contributions to seminar discussions and on a research paper of 15 to 25 pages. Research paper topics will require the approval of the instructor, but the paper must respond to the following prompt:

Identify a dispute about an important issue, event, or claim related to an international dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict—who started a war, who sabotaged an opportunity for peace, why did violence occur, what effect did a particular external intervention have, what explains the policy toward the conflict of a particular international actor at a particular time, or across time, etc. Explain why the dispute is important. Adjudicate the dispute, *i.e.* weigh the evidence and decide where the truth lies. Analyze the implications of what you have found.

In addition to discussion of the assigned reading, portions of some classes will be devoted to sharing ideas about research in progress. Some of our most important discussions in class and in office hours will be focused on choosing and framing a research paper topic. A two-three page paper proposal will be required to be submitted in November, with the exact date to be

determined. Close consultation with the instructor in the choice of topic, the development of the research design, and the collection of sources, is expected. Papers will be happily received for grading by December 19, the last day of the Fall term. Students may elect to submit their papers by the beginning of the Spring term without penalty. Those who do so will be assigned incompletes, which will be changed to regular grades within one month.

One book is required for purchase and is listed below. All other assigned readings will be posted on the seminar's Canvas site.

Required for Purchase:

Charles D. Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (2017) (Note: We will be relying heavily on this text as a framework within which to understand the very specific readings that will be assigned for each meeting. The Smith book is in its **tenth edition**, and that is the edition you should buy, though for most purposes the eighth or ninth edition will suffice.)

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

Part I: Imperialism, Palestine, and Zionism

Thursday August 29: Introduction, Orientation: The Fundamentally Anarchic Nature of International Politics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jHU-SFpB8>; 1920s HOLY LAND TRAVELOGUE " A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH PALESTINE " ISRAEL 71172 **In class video**

Thursday September 5: Palestinians and Jews in an Agro-Literate Empires

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Prologue, and Chapter 1, "Ottoman Society, Palestine, and the Origins of Zionism, 1516-1914" pp. 1-42.

Beware the Zionist Danger (Canvas)

Raya Adler (Cohen), "The Tenants of Wadi Hawarith: Another View of the Land Question in Palestine," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 1988, (Canvas)

Chaim Nahman Bialik, "City of Slaughter"

Lumiere Brothers in Palestine, 1896 (in class video)

[What Life in the Jewish Shtetl was Like](#) video

Thursday September 12: Zionism, Settler Colonialism, and World War I

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 2, "World War I, Great Britain, and the Peace Settlements: Deciding Palestine's Fate, 1914-1921" pp. 49-82.

Jonathan Schneer, "The Balfour Declaration," Chapters 17-21, 25. (Canvas) NB (each of these chapters is about failed attempts to separate the Ottoman Empire from Germany during World War I by making a separate peace with it. Each student must read at least one of the chapters and be prepared to explain what a major power was trying to accomplish and its relationship to the fortunes of the Zionist project.)

Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky, "On the Iron Wall: We and the Arabs," (1923) (Canvas)

Patrick Wolfe, 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of genocide research* 8(4): 387-409. (Canvas)

Shlomo Avineri, "Zionism as a National Liberation Movement" (Canvas)

[World Zionist Organization's documentary on the establishment of the state of Israel](#)

(Canvas)

Life of the Jews in Palestine, WZO, 1913 (in class video)

Recommended:

Smith, Documents: Husayn-McMahon Correspondence (Scan), Balfour Declaration Drafts, Faysal-Weizmann Agreement (including appended caveat)

Gershon Shafir, "Zionism and Colonialism: A Comparative Perspective," in Michael N. Barnett, eds. *Israel in Comparative Perspective* (1996) pp. 227-242. (Canvas)

Thursday September 19: The Palestine Mandate and British Imperialism

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 3, "Palestine between the Wars: Zionism, the Palestinian Arabs, and the British Mandate, 1920-1939" pp. 102-146.

Leonard Mosely, "Dayan and Wingate" (Chapter 4, from *Gideon Goes to War*, reprinted in Walid Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, pp. 375-382. (Canvas)

Chaim Arlosoroff. "Reflections on Zionist Policy." (1931, reprinted in *Jewish Frontier* (1948) (Canvas)

[Tower and Stockade](#) video circa 1938 (Zionist perspective)

[Palestine Remix—The 1930 Palestine Revolt](#) video (Palestinian perspective)

[Britain in Palestine 1917-1948](#) video (Up to you to figure out the perspective)

[Tel Aviv AKA Jewish Protest Parade in Palestine](#) (1939) (British perspective)

[King David Hotel Blown Up](#) (video 1946) (British Perspective)

Recommended:

Smith, Documents, Palestine Royal (Peel) Commission Report pp. 157-160 "Immigration" section of "The 1939 White Paper" pp. 155-162

Thursday September 26: 1948: The Consequences of World War II: The United Nations, Triumph, and Catastrophe

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 4, "World War II and the Creation of the State of Israel 1939-1949" pp. 162-203.

Ernst B. Haas, "The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept, or Propaganda?" *World Politics*, Vol. 5, no. 4 (July 1953) pp. 442-477. (Canvas)

Smith, Documents, "The 'Final Solution': Nazi Extermination of European Jewry," p. 209; "Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel," pp. 215-217; Testimony to UNSCOP: Jamal al-Husayni, pp. 211-13; Abba Hillel Silver, pp. 213-14.

Kermit Roosevelt, "The Partition of Palestine: A Lesson in Pressure Politics," *Middle East Journal*, 2 (1948) pp. 1-16. (Canvas)

Walid Khalidi, "Plan Dalet: Master Plan for the Conquest of Palestine," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (Autumn, 1988), pp. 4-33. (Canvas) Or Ari Shavit, "Lydda, 1948," *The New Yorker*, October 21, 2013,

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/10/21/lydda-1948> (Canvas)

[The Reestablishment of Israel On May 14, 1948](#) Video

[The Arab Israeli Conflict - part 1 : Land Division](#) Video

[The Arab Israeli Conflict - part 2](#): Atrocities, Massacres Video

Thursday October 3: NO CLASS—FALL BREAK

Part II: The Cold War and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Stimulation and Constraint

Thursday October 10: The Transformation of International Politics after World War II and the first decade of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: 1948-1957

X (George F. Kenan), "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947). (canvas)

Arnold Krammer, "Soviet Motives in the Partition of Palestine, 1947-1948," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 2 (1973) pp. 102-119. (Canvas)

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 5, "The Beginning of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: Regional Strife and Cold War Rivalries, 1949-1957" pp. 218-235

Benny Morris, *Israel's Border Wars: 1949-1956* (1993) pp. 117-153. (Canvas)

Moshe Dayan, *Diary of the Sinai Campaign*, pp. 58-65, 71-76. (Canvas)

Daniel C. Williamson. Review of Pearson, Jonathan, *Sir Anthony Eden and the Suez Crisis: Reluctant Gamble*. H-Diplo, H-Net Reviews. July, 2003. <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=7912> (Canvas)

Thursday October 17: From War to War I: 1958-1968

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 6, "From Suez to the Six-Day War, 1957-1967," pp. 258-289.

Israel Eldad, "Eretz Israel or Palestine," *The Jewish Revolution: Jewish Statehood* (1971) pp. 77-87 (Canvas)

Ian S. Lustick, "The Evolution of Jewish Fundamentalism," and "The Emergence of Gush Emunim," in *For the Land and the Lord* (1988, 1994) pp. 17-46. (Canvas)

Moshe Dayan, "A Soldier Reflects on Peace Hopes," September 27, 1968, in Laqueur and Rubin *The Israel-Arab Reader* (1985) pp. 434-445. (Canvas)

Fayez Sayegh, "Zionist Colonialism in Palestine," 1965, in Laqueur and Rubin, *The Israel-Arab Reader* (1985) pp. 167-168. (Canvas)

Thursday October 24: From War to War II: 1969-1976

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 7, "Land, War, and Diplomacy: Shifting Calculations in a Cold War Context, 1967-1976," pp. 300-329.

Hasannain Haykal, "The Strategy of the War of Attrition," (April 1969) (Canvas)

Riad Ashkar, "The Syrian and Egyptian Campaigns," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 3 (1974) pp. 15-33. (Canvas)

Bartov, Hanoach. 1974. "Israel after the War: 2: Back to Abnormal." *Commentary*, 57: 41-45 (Canvas)

Ian S. Lustick, "To Build and to Be Built By: Israel and the Hidden Logic of the Iron Wall," *Israel Studies* (Summer 1996). (Canvas)

[Occupied West Bank | Palestinians](#)

Thames TV 1978 0-3:14 (video)

Tuesday October 31: Camp David I: 1977-1990

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 8, "Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Camp David Accords" pp. 344-376.

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 9, "From Pariah to Partner: The PLO and the Quest for Peace in Global and Regional Contexts, 1984-1993" pp. 394-415.

Ian Lustick, "Israel and the West Bank after Elon Moreh: The Mechanics of De Facto Annexation," *Middle East Journal* (Autumn 1981) pp. 557-577. (Canvas)

Ariel Sharon, "Speech on Strategic Problems in 1980's" December 15, 1981. (Canvas)

Ramzy Baroud, [My Beit Daras, My Nakba: Two Palestinian Intellectuals Reminiscing about Their Destroyed Village](#), Video.

Michael McGwire, "The Middle East and Soviet Military Strategy," *Middle East Report*, no. 151 (April-May, 1988) pp. 11-17. (Canvas)

Part III: Messy Multipolarity: "Lock-In" or Back to the Future in International Relations?

Thursday November 7: Unipolarity, Fundamentalism, and the War on Terror

G. John Ikenberry, "Why the Liberal World Order Will Survive," *Ethics and International Affairs*, 32, 17-29. (Canvas)

Kristol and Kagan, "Toward a Neo-Reaganite Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 75, no. 4 (July-August 1996) pp. 18-32. (Canvas)

Osama Bin Laden, "Oath to America" and "Why We Are Fighting You," in *The Al-Qaeda Reader*, Raymond Ibrahim, ed. pp. 193-219. (Canvas)

Farid Zakaria, "Why they Hate Us?" *Newsweek*, October 15, 2001. (Canvas)

Ian S. Lustick, "The Worldview of Jewish Fundamentalism" *For the Land and the Lord: Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (1988, 1994) pp. 72-90. (Canvas)

Beverly Milton-Edwards & Stephen Farrell, "We Deal with Allah Directly," "Political Islam and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict," *Polity* (2010) (Canvas)

Bradley A. Thayer, *The Pax Americana and the Middle East: U.S. Grand Strategic Interests in the Region after September 11* (BESA: Mideast Security and Policy Studies, No. 56) pp. 3-19. (Canvas)

The Jerusalem Program (document, 1968 2004)

Second Intifada Explained (video) (Canvas)

The Second Intifada: When Hope for Peace Died (video) (Canvas)

Why does Israel want to ban the documentary 'Jenin, Jenin'? (video) (Canvas)

Israeli Troops Raid Refugee Camp, Palestinians Throw Stones (video 2006) (Canvas)

Thursday November 14: The Peace Process Carousel and Its Pathology

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 9, "From Pariah to Partner: The PLO and the Quest for Peace in Global and Regional Contexts, 1984-1993" pp. 415-423.

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 10, "Israeli-Palestinian/Arab Negotiations and Agreements, 1993-1999" pp. 435-465.

Lustick, Ian S. "Ending Protracted Conflicts: The Oslo Peace Process between Political Partnership and Legality." *Cornell International Law Journal*. (1997) pp. 101-117. (Canvas)

John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "The Great Benefactor," from *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (2007) pp. 23-48. (Canvas)

Minutes of U.S.-Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, from *The Palestine Papers*, Clayton E. Swisher, ed. pp. 240-275. (Canvas)

Thursday November 21: Mowing the Lawn": The Turbulent Orderliness of Great Power Disengagement

Ari Shavit, "Weissglas: Disengagement is Formaldehyde for Peace Process" (Canvas)

Efraim Inbar, "Stop Saying Sorry," *Jerusalem Post*, May 30, 2005 (Canvas)

Efraim Inbar and Eitan Shamir, "Mowing the Grass: Israel's Strategy for Protracted Intractable Conflict," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 37, No.1 (2014). (Canvas)

Amnesty International, "Israel: Arms embargo needed as military unlawfully kills and maims Gaza protesters," April 27, 2018. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/04/israel-arms-embargo-needed-as-military-unlawfully-kills-and-maims-gaza-protesters/> (Canvas)

Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chapter 11, "The Oslo Process Undone: Camp David 2000, Palestinian Rebellion/Factionalism, and Israeli Unilateralism: Identities in Conflict, 1999-2015" pp. 482-525.

Ariel Handel, "Exclusionary Surveillance and Spatial Uncertainty in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," in *Surveillance and Control in Israel/Palestine: Population, Territory, and Power*, ed. Elia Zureik, David Lyon, and Yasmeen Abu-Laban (2011). (Canvas)

Tuesday November 26: THURSDAY CLASSES ON TUESDAY: Rights Based Approaches, BDS, and Lawfare

Omar Barghouti, *BDS: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights* (2011) pp. 1-62. (Canvas)

["ICJ Opinion declaring Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories unlawful is historic vindication of Palestinians' rights,"](#) Amnesty International, July 19, 2024.

Gerald M. Steinberg, Anne Herzberg, and Joshua Bacon, "NGOs and the Political-Legal Theater in Operation Protective Edge," *Strategic Assessment*, Volume 19, No. 1, (April 2016) pp. 73-86. (Canvas)

Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Sarah Ihmoud and Suhad Dahir-Nashif, "Sexual Violence, Women's Bodies, and Israeli Settler Colonialism," November 17, 2014. (canvas)

Abu Ali Awad, Youtube of Tedx Talk from 2015;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzDEFAGv_hc

Salman Abu Sitta, "The Return Plan," <https://vimeo.com/267407386/4a9d6adfbe>

The Gaza War:

[" Hamas Actually Believed It Would Conquer Israel. In Preparation, It Divided the Country Into Cantons,"](#) Shlomi Eldar, *Haaretz*, April 5, 2024. (Canvas)

Yuval Abraham, 972, ["The Mass Assassination Factory: Inside Israel's Calculated Bombing of Gaza"](#) November 30, 2023. (Canvas)

Itamar Katzir and Ofir Hovav, ["Boycotted, Canceled and Isolated: Will Israel Become the New Russia Due to the War in Gaza,"](#) *Haaretz*, December 9, 2023. (Canvas)

Netta Ahituv, ["Suddenly I Realize that I'm Burning: Israelis Who Fought in Gaza and What They Saw,"](#) *Haaretz*, May 4, 2024. (Canvas)

Recommended:

International Court of Justice, ["Legal Consequences Arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem,"](#) July 19, 2024. (Canvas)

Thursday November 28: NO CLASS--THANKSGIVING

Thursday December 5, 2018: LAST CLASS Discussion of Preliminary Research Findings