Westmont in Jerusalem 2017

IS122 Culture and Society: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

Prof. Bruce N. Fisk

DESCRIPTION
This course will study modern relations between Israelis and Palestinians in the land. Included will be a review of recent history, a discussion of probable causes (religious, cultural, political), assessment of current events (e.g., the "Arab Spring"), and consideration of the prospects for a just and peaceful resolution to the conflict. Numerous field trips and briefings.

GENERAL EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY
The focus of this course will be on political, cultural, economic and religious forces and historical developments that have led to what is today often called the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a conflict that has played out, especially since 1967, on a world stage and in an increasingly unstable geographical region. The principal reader for the course (Smith) adopts a historical-chronological framework that will serve us well as we consider patterns of human migration and displacement; developing and competing nationalisms; international powers and the impact of diplomacy; global conflicts and major crises; influential figures, institutions and parties; key negotiations and treaties; and proposed solutions for, and obstacles to, a lasting peace. Not only is the textbook an excellent tour of the stages and dynamics of the conflict, it also includes an outstanding set of primary source documents linked to each chapter. With the context Smith provides, this primary literature—treaties, letters, speeches, government papers, etc.—will expose students to a broad array of learned, yet opposing, perspectives on and analyses of the politics, cultures and challenges of the region. Supplementing reading and class discussion, the course will include numerous field trips, walking tours, expert briefings and meaningful encounters. All of this will move students toward nuanced understandings of contemporary Israeli and Palestinian societies, including their cultural differences, internal diversities, and collective memories (e.g., of the Holocaust, the War of Independence/the Nakba, the Six Day War/the Nakshah). Students will be asked to evaluate and react to these perspectives from their own critical location, enriched by foundational theories including postcolonial theory (Edward Said) and conflict theory (Max Weber). Course assignments will require students to organize and articulate competing explanations of historical events, political theories, economic pressures and cultural conflicts, with a view to offering constructive solutions to one of the many problems plaguing the region. Students will also be invited to apply insights from other WIJ courses (on Arabic, Judaism and Islam, Jesus in the Gospels) in their work.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will:
- o consider competing frameworks for understanding the region's recent history and major developments, political actors, and social movements (assessed through time-line, response papers, class discussions, and tests).
- o demonstrate familiarity with the region's basic physical features (topography, climate zones, cities, water systems, agricultural zones, seasons, and political boundaries, and how these features have played an important role in the conflict (assessed through map and field work).
- o demonstrate an understanding of the significance of current events and their depictions in media (assessed through regular review and critique of media sources).
- o be able to articulate foundational issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as additional layers of complexity (assessed through discussion, presentations, and tests).
become adept at hearing, understanding, assessing and critiquing historical accounts, political claims, and conflicting narratives (assessed in response papers and class discussion of primary & secondary literature, and of presentations & briefings).

READINGS
Required:
www.amazon.com/Palestine-Arab-Israeli-Conflict-History-Documents/dp/1457613484/
Additional readings (handouts, links, maps) as indicated in the schedule.

Prerequisite (required in Fall Orientation class):

Recommended:

ACCOUNTABILITY
10% 1. Engagement. Full, active, energized presence throughout the program is really important. The WIJ17 community statement indicates how this engagement is measured.

30% 2. Readings and Response Papers.
See Schedule for reading due dates. Read each chapter of Smith for the main ideas (not the fine details), think through the chronology, and slow down for the source documents. Mark up your copy with readable comments, selective hi-lighting, cross-references and questions. Bring Smith and other relevant resources to class meetings (and on excursions, if requested). Whenever a reading is due, prepare the following written materials and be prepared to share them in class.
1. Prepare two discussion questions.
A good discussion question will give evidence of skim- and close-reading as well as personal reflection; and it will include a substantive comment or thesis that aims to clarify an important point or generate lively exchange.
2. Highlight an important event.
Select one event or episode of significance (discussed in the text, listed in the chronology), summarize it in your own words (100 words max.), identify contextual/social/political factors in play, and describe how the region changed in its aftermath.
3. Highlight one document or compare two documents.
a. Select one of the primary source texts in the chapter, briefly describe its significance (at the time and/or subsequently), and consider ways in which Smith’s interpretation offers a particular perspective on the document or the events it represents.
b. Or select two documents in the chapter, briefly describe their significance, and consider ways in which they can be helpfully read together to show contrasting perspectives; to reinforce a particular narrative; or to provide important nuance and complexity.

20% 3. Encounters Journal
Maintain an Encounters Journal with entries for each field trip, walking tour, or guest lecture of relevance to this course. (Many encounters will have relevance for more than one course. E.g., a walking tour of the Temple Mount / Haram al-Sharif will illuminate our courses on “Judaism,” “Islam,” “Jesus” and the I-P Conflict!) Record major highlights, impressions and interesting facts; make note of contested claims and distinctive perspectives; and pose substantive questions or
claims that you might explore further. These social encounters will offer insight but also generate confusion. The following questions may prompt fruitful reflection as you watch, listen and learn:

**PEOPLE**
- What symbols of power, status, honor (or their absence) does this person display?
- What symbols and images of national or religious identity are on display?
- What signs do you see that past events live on in collective memory to define the present?
- Can you detect indicators of marginalization (relating to wealth, health, gender, age, skin color, refugee status, religious affiliation, citizenship status, I.D. cards)?
- Does this person display conflicted loyalties (Christian and Arab; Israeli and refusenik; Jewish and American, etc.)? How? Does one identity predominate?
- What signs do you notice of conflict and/or peace between peoples?
  - signs of militarism?
  - types and impact of violence?
  - models of reconciliation?
  - moments of shalom and signs of cooperation?
  - friction between Islam, Judaism & Christianity?
- Are you hearing mutually incompatible stories told to explain the same reality?

**PLACES**
- How have past events (e.g., battles, deaths, miracles) shaped the significance and symbolic value of this place or space?
- How does this art, architecture, monument or ritual interpret the past and define present reality?
- How is this space controlled and restricted and why?
- What notions of holiness apply to this site, shrine, tomb, etc.?
- How have different cultures exerted influence on the construction and use of this space?
- What biblical texts continue to define this space?
- What is significant about the boundaries and subdivisions of this space? Are they contested?
- What is most notable about this entrance, checkpoint or boundary? Who can cross? Who decides?

**PERSONAL**
- Is this experience (of conflict, etc.) affecting different members of our group differently?
- What connections do you see between the world of Jesus and the modern Middle East?
- How is your own identity (as American, Christian, female, white, young, etc.) changing?
- What narratives did you bring that are being reinforced? Challenged? Deepened? Overturned?
- Any surprising appearances of Jesus?

Date and title each entry with the name of the speaker/guide/organization/event/location/etc. Journals will be checked periodically during the term and graded at the end for thoroughness, neatness and usefulness. Recommended: 5x8 Moleskin® or similar. E-journals are fine in a standard format (e.g., Word).

**4. Media log**
Maintain a current events log to track and assess important developments in Israel/Palestine and the region. Make entries once a week. Focus on major issues, physical sites, current events, people groups and influential individuals, and always relate your current event to some larger trend/movement/
You will have opportunities to summarize for the class your stories and to prompt group discussion, so bring your log to class.
A representative list of links appears at the end of the syllabus. Do not limit yourself to one or two sites. Beware of editorial bias. Read critically.
Graded for format, neatness, organization, clarity of abstract, and value of questions.
Follow this format for each entry:
1. Bibliography: Author, “Title,” News Source (URL). Date published; date accessed. Sample:

3. Discussion: offer two open (non-factual) questions for class discussion.

Media Resources

News Sites
- Al-Ahram: Cairo-based weekly, government-affiliated on-line weekly
- Al Arabiya: another pan-Arab news site, based in Qatar
- Al Jazeera: a pan-Arab news source based in Qatar
- British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News - Middle East: current events and in depth features
- Common Ground News Service: up to date archive of “constructive articles that foster dialogue”
- Electronic Intifada: independent site on Israel-Palestine conflict
- Foreign Policy - The Middle East Channel
- The Guardian (U.K) - Middle East round-up: a British daily paper; politics typically left-of-centre.
- Ha'aretz: a major, broadly liberal Israeli news site
- Israeli Occupation Archive: “documenting the Military Occupation of Palestinian and Arab Lands”
- Jerusalem Post: major right-of-center Israeli newspaper
- The Jordan Times: English-language daily from Jordan
- Los Angeles Times - Middle East page
- Middle East Web Gateway: site run by people active in Middle East dialogue and peace education
- New York Times - Middle East page
- The Palestine Chronicle: independent online news, commentary, features and reviews
- Wall Street Journal - Middle East page: business/financial paper with the largest circulation in the U.S.
- Washington Report on Middle East Affairs: news & analysis by the American Educational Trust
- YNet News: tied to Yedioth Ahronoth, Israel's most widely-read daily newspaper

Human rights, advocacy, analysis, etc.
- +972: web magazine owned by journalists/bloggers/photographers providing reports and analysis
- AIPAC: The American Israel Public Affairs Committee – “America’s pro-Israel lobby”
- Alternative Information Center: news archive of Palestinian/Israeli human and national rights org.
- Addameer: a Palestinian Prisoners’ Support and Human Rights Association
- Badil: Resource Center for Palestinian Residency & Refugee Rights
- Bitter Lemons – Palestine-Israeli crossfire:  irenic, informed analysis from both sides
- Bitter Lemons: great archive of historic documents on the conflict
- B'Tselem: Israeli information center for human rights in occupied territories
- CAMERA: Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America (pro-Israel media watch)
- Churches for Middle East Peace: coalition of 21 public policy offices of national churches & agencies
- Counterpunch: political newsletter and archive
- Ishishblog: blog of Hussein Ibish (American Task Force on Palestine)
- Israeli Committee Against House Demolition: direct-action resistance of Palestinian house demolition
- Jonathan Cook: news and analysis by British journalist and author based in Nazareth
- Mondoweiss: The War of Ideas in the Middle East: progressive slant; news aggregator
- Sabeel: an ecumenical liberation theology movement among Palestinian Christians
- Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics and Culture: venture in dialogue and cooperation

Politics and Government
- Israeli Defense Forces: official website of the Israeli military, press releases, statistics
- Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Israeli Knesset
- Palestinian Authority
- PLO Negotiation Affairs Department
U.S. Department of State
U.S. White House

20%  5. Final exam.
Details forthcoming.

SCHEDULE (Draft. Class dates, field trips and briefings under development.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>Smith: Prologue (1-11)</td>
<td>The Arab-Israeli Conflict in Historical Perspective: The Middle East and Palestine to 1517 (Roman, Byzantine, Islamic periods)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-18</td>
<td>Smith: chp 1</td>
<td>Ottoman Society, Palestine, and the Origins of Zionism, 1516-1914 (Ottoman period and decline, Zionism and Herzl, Land in Palestine)</td>
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<td>1-30</td>
<td>Smith: chp 2</td>
<td>WWI, Great Britain, and the Peace Settlements, 1914-1921</td>
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<td>Week of 2-6</td>
<td>Smith: chp 3</td>
<td>Palestine Between the Wars: Zionism, the Palestinian Arabs, and the British Mandate, 1920-1939</td>
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<td>Week of 2-13</td>
<td>Smith: chp 4</td>
<td>WWII and the Creation of the State of Israel, 1939-1949</td>
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<td>Week of 2-20</td>
<td>Smith: chp 5</td>
<td>The Beginning of the Arab-Israeli Conflict</td>
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<td>2-27</td>
<td>Smith: chp 6</td>
<td>From Suez to the Six-Day War, 1957-1967</td>
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<td>Week of 3-6</td>
<td>Smith: chp 7</td>
<td>War and the Search for Peace in the Middle East, 1967-1976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of 3-13</td>
<td>Smith: chp 8</td>
<td>Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Camp David Accords: The Palestinian Equation in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1977-1994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of 3-20</td>
<td>Smith: chp 9</td>
<td>From Pariah to Partner: The PLO and the Quest for Peace in Global and Regional Contexts, 1984-1993</td>
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<td>Week of 3-27</td>
<td>Smith: chp 10</td>
<td>Israeli-Palestinian/Arab Negotiations and Agreements, 1993-1999</td>
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<td>Week of 4-10</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Developments in Israel and Palestine during the Obama (Jan. 09) and Netanyahu (Mar. 09) administrations; the Arab Spring</td>
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<td>Week of 4-17</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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GENERAL EXPECTATIONS (for Westmont in Jerusalem 2017)

It is your leaders’ responsibility to build an interesting itinerary, to introduce you to thoughtful people, to keep assignments meaningful, to lead field trips and discussions that are relevant and fun, and to keep the pace sustainable. It is your responsibility to be engaged and fully present throughout the program, beginning today. Each course will assess and grade student engagement. Here are some expectations.

- **Disposition.** We will be living and traveling together for almost 4 months. Any one person’s behavior, language and demeanor will have an impact on the group. Please be encouraging, respectful and kind to each other. Volunteer to help. Lead by example. Don’t gossip. Be inclusive. Be patient. Don’t let frustrations build. Keep communication lines open. Try new things. Don’t replace community with technology. Don’t just *keep* the rules—*honor* them.

- **Curiosity.** Pay attention to your surroundings. Be mentally engaged as much as possible. Take notes and record questions during briefings. Ask questions. Don’t check out.

- **Alertness.** Get enough sleep. Eat healthily. If you drink alcohol—we’ll talk about this subject separately—don’t overindulge. (There will be zero tolerance for drunkenness.) Pay attention in class, in briefings, on field trips, during group sessions.

- **Timeliness.** Many people in the Middle East operate on “polychronic time” (see Storti), but we will be more “monochronic.” In other words, be *on time.* If one person delays the group for 5 minutes, that’s almost 2 hours of people-time. Sometimes lateness is unavoidable, but promptness is one way to show...
respect to fellow students and leaders. Set an alarm. Wear a watch. Check on each other. Expect, but don't cause, delays. Allow extra time. Arrive early.

- **Modesty.** We will endeavor to conform to local expectations regarding modesty. Our goal is to respect local culture and avoid offense. This will mean care regarding dress, physical displays of affection, alcohol, and any other behaviors or language that would violate local norms. Thus, for example, no sleeveless or low-necked T-shirts; no short shorts. (Much of the time, no shorts at all.) Skirts should cover well below the knees. Encourage each other to be aware and culturally sensitive, rather than to push the boundaries.

- **Technology.** Increasingly the Middle East is fully wired and connected. One of your challenges during the program may be the degree to which you stay plugged in to social media. Some of us may be tempted to deal with bouts of loneliness or culture shock by retreating into cyberspace. Some of us may be overly concerned about posting selfies. Let's set realistic goals and help each other stay fully engaged.

- **Honesty.** As leaders we pledge to tell you the truth, to keep you informed, and to answer your questions honestly. We ask you to return the favor.

- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the theft of someone else's words or ideas, including improper or missing citations. Plagiarized submissions will earn a failing grade for the assignment and potentially the course. If you are unsure how to cite materials, including web sources, refer to a sourcebook (e.g., http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/) or talk with one of your professors.

- **Disabilities:** Students who have been diagnosed with a disability are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by the Office of Disability Services. These accommodations may be necessary to ensure your equal access to this program. Please contact Sheri Noble, Director of Disability Services: 310A Voskuyl Library, 565-6186, snoble@westmont.edu.