



The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Ever-Roaring Volcano

Course Code: HUMA2000E , Mode: L1

Course Offered in: Fall 2024, Tuesday 12:00-2:50pm

Room: G009B, CYT

Prof. Gad Yair

Course Description

This 13-week course on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the conflict, including its historical background, key actors, and the current state of affairs. The course will cover a wide range of topics, including the 1948 war, the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Jerusalem, religion, history, and more. Each week will include a short introduction to the topic, followed by recommended films and readings that will help students gain a deeper understanding of the issues at hand. By the end of the course, students will have a solid grasp of the complexities of the conflict and the various perspectives involved. A major theoretical guiding theme would revolve around the idea of "cultural trauma."

Key Course Intended Learning Outcomes

1	Students will understand the connection between Israel's past and present
2	Students will understand the concept of "cultural trauma"
3	Students will learn to analyze the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
4	Students will be able to analyze a political speech
5	Students will understand Israel's and Palestine's strategic challenges

Contribution of Learning Outcomes to Programs of Study

Apply knowledge in social science theory to study issues of social or cultural significance.	CILO-1, 2, 4, 5
Apply knowledge in social theory to study issues relating to Israeli and Palestinian societies	CILO-1, 2, 4, 5
Enhance students' academic writing competence	CILO-1, 2, 4, 5

Course Assignments

Reading: Each class has a few reading options – read at least one from the list. Read required assignment before class. Write "think pages" after class presentation and discussion.

Written Analyses: 4 Think Pages (80%); 1 Summary Reflection (20%).

Think Paper: Select four topics over the course of the semester to write reflective "think pages" (750 words each). Think pages should include your reflections on that week's reading and include critical analyses of the text(s).

A good think paper meets the length requirements, is free of spelling/grammar errors, makes clear points, and reflects deep thinking about the reading by connecting ideas in the reading to ideas covered in class, showing problems/contradiction within the arguments of the text, and/or highlighting or demonstrating further evidence of claims in the reading.

My recommendation is to read class readings before class and write your assignments after class when we cover those readings. Please upload your think pages to Canvas.

Summary Reflection: A final paper (1000 words) should summarize your overview of 'what have I learnt in this course' – and what are your main takeaways from the course. The final reflection is due no later than December 10, 2024.

Quality: final reflections should meet the word requirement, be free of spelling/grammar errors, and identify at least three areas of learning, and explain why the "take away" is important.

Grading: Each of the five papers is worth 20% of the final grade.

Integrity Policy: Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. It is important that the written work that you present reflect your own reading, critical analysis, and writing. Plagiarism includes: a) submitting someone else's work in your name whether that someone else is someone you know or someone who posted their work on the Internet; and whether you paid for the material or not; b) submitting your own work from another course without disclosure to the instructor; c) copying passages verbatim or in close paraphrase from published or unpublished material written by someone else without properly using quotation marks and/or without citing your source; d) use of AI technology to write assignments.

Citation of Sources: In everything you write for this class, you must properly cite your sources using either the Chicago (footnote) or MLA (parenthetical citations and works cited) methods. For references on how to cite according to different academic styles: <http://www.citationmachine.net/>

Readings and Topics

Class 1: Introduction to the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

This week will provide an overview of the conflict, including its historical background, key actors, and the current situation.

Theoretical Framework: Trauma, Constitution, Character

Alexander, Jefferey, 2012. *Trauma: A Social Theory*. Malden, MA: Polity.

Yair, Gad, 2015. "The Germans: Cultural trauma and the Israeli habitus," *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, Vol. 3(2): 254-279.

Class 2: The 1948 War and the Palestinian Exodus

This week will examine the events leading up to the 1948 war, the war itself, and the Palestinian exodus that followed.

The Zionist Revolution

Leon Pinsker, 1882. Auto-Emancipation. [Link](#)

Theodor Herzl. 1896. The Jewish State. [Link](#)

Shavit, Ari, 2013. *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. New York: Random House.

Class 3: The Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip

This week will focus on the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, including the settlements, checkpoints, and the separation wall

Class 4: Between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv

This week will explore the significance of Jerusalem to both Israelis and Palestinians, including the religious, cultural, and political dimensions of the city.

Yair, Gad and Samira Alayan, 2009. Paralysis at the top of a roaring volcano: Israel and the schooling of Palestinians in East Jerusalem. *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 53(2): 235-257.

Class 5: The Palestinian National Movement

This week will examine the history of the Palestinian national movement, including the PLO, Hamas, and Fatah.

Class 6: The Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process

This week will focus on the various attempts to resolve the conflict, including the Oslo Accords, the Camp David Summit, and the Annapolis Conference.

Class 7: Religion and the Conflict

This week will explore the role of religion in the conflict, including the significance of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity to the conflict.

Roman, Michael and Alex Weingrod, 1991. *Living Together Separately: Arabs and Jews in Contemporary Jerusalem*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sela, Avraham and Alon Kadish, 2016. "Israeli and Palestinian Memories and Historical Narratives of the 1948 War—An Overview." *Israel Studies*, Vol. 21(1): 1-26. [Link](#)

Yair, Gad and Nabil Khattab, 1995. "Changing of the guards: Teacher-student interaction in the Intifada." *Sociology of Education*, Vol. 68: 99-115.

Class 8: The Gaza Strip

This week will focus on the situation in the Gaza Strip, including the blockade, the humanitarian crisis, and the role of Hamas.

Class 9: The Israeli-Palestinian Economy

This week will examine the economic dimensions of the conflict, including the impact of the occupation on the Palestinian economy and the role of international aid.

Class 10: The Israeli-Palestinian Water Conflict

This week will explore the water conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, including the allocation of water resources, the construction of dams, and the impact of climate change.

Class 11: The Palestinian Refugees

This week will examine the issue of Palestinian refugees, including their legal status, their living conditions, and their right of return.

Class 12: The Future of the Conflict

This week will explore the prospects for peace, including the two-state solution, the one-state solution, and other possible outcomes.

Class 13: The Nobel Prize and Peace in the Middle East

[President Obama's Cairo Address](#)

[Prime Minister Yair Lapid's Address to the UN, 2022](#)