

The Politics of Israel and Palestine

Prof. Bernard Avishai,
bavishai@gmail.com, 603 748 9040

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Introduction

This course explores the century-old conflict as seen from the political structures and changing narratives of Israelis and Palestinians. We shall begin by looking at the espoused purposes of the historic Zionist movement and the responses of the Palestinian Arab community to it. We shall look, in parallel, at the formation of the Arab national movement as a whole—and within this, the claims of Palestinians—and especially responses to imperial activity, before and after the British Mandate. We'll then consider the founding of the state of Israel and the formation of the post-1948 Palestinian national movement.

We shall focus thereafter on the aftermath of the 1967 war, the start of the Israeli occupation, and the latter's impact on Israeli institutions, its economy, and its political parties. We'll look correspondingly at the formation and strategies of the Palestine Liberation Organization and, thence, to the founding of Hamas. We shall look, finally, at contemporary political and economic developments in light of the global forces operating on the region, and consider the plausibility of a two-state solution.

Course Requirements

The class will run as a series of structured discussions based on assigned reading. Attendance is compulsory. Prof. Avishai will call on students by name and expect informed judgments; students cannot learn from one another if other students fail to show up in class or fail to read the assignments.

Examinations are meant to stimulate team-based learning. Thus, examinations will conform to the following format: A set number of examination questions will be passed out in advance of each exam; a specific number of questions will be drawn at random and all students will answer the questions chosen. It is expected that students will form study groups and divide up the labor involved in preparing thoughtful answers. However, students will be judged individually.

Students will also have to write a 15-page research paper, to be handed in the final day of class.

All exams will be closed book and students will be permitted only one page of handwritten notes. The mid-term will be worth 20%, the final 50%, and the paper 30%. Failure to participate in class discussion, or unexcused absences, will produce a penalty of up to 10%.

Class Schedule (by Number) and Readings	
Introduction	
1. Monday, March 25	Before the first class, see the “Palestinian – Israeli Conflict Timeline,” Wikipedia ; see also the BBC’s sequence of maps that match the timeline. Introductory discussion: What images and assumptions govern discussion of the conflict in the public media?
2. Wednesday, March 27 <i>Are we stuck?</i>	Read, Hussein Agha and Robert Malley, “ Who’s Afraid of the Palestinians? ” <i>New York Review</i> , February 10. 2011.
The Zionist Disruption	
3. Friday, March 29 <i>“The Jewish Question”</i>	Read, David Vital, <i>The Origins of Zionism</i> , Chapter 2; Bernard Avishai, <i>The Tragedy of Zionism (TofZ)</i> , Introduction (“The Jewish Problem”).
4. Monday, Apr 1 <i>Political Zionism</i>	Read, Vital, Chapter 3, Avishai, Chapter 1; also, Leo Pinsker, “ Auto-emancipation ” (in Arthur Hertzberg, <i>The Zionist Idea</i> , pp.178-98)
5. Wednesday, Apr 3 <i>Cultural Zionism</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 2; read also, Avishai, <i>The Hebrew Republic</i> , pp. 212-28; Achad Haam, “ The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem ,” Hertzberg, pp. 262-69
6. Friday, Apr 5 <i>Labor Zionism and Settlement</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 3 and 4
The Arab Awakening	
7. Monday, Apr 8 <i>The Stirrings of Nationalism</i>	Read, George Antonius, <i>The Arab Awakening</i> , Chapter 5 and 9; Christopher Sykes, <i>Crossroads to Israel</i> , Chapter 1
8. Wednesday, Apr 10 <i>Imperialism and the Balfour Declaration</i>	Read, Sykes, Chapters 2 and 3
9. Friday, Apr 12 <i>Settlement and Displacement</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 5; Khalidi, <i>The Iron Cage (IC)</i> , Chapter 2; Sykes, Chapter 6
The Hebrew Revolution vs. the Arab Revolt	
10. Monday, Apr 15 <i>The Palestinian Arab Revolt</i>	Read, Khalidi, <i>IC</i> , Chapter 4; Sykes, Chapter 7
11. Wednesday, Apr 17 <i>WWII and the run up to war</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 6; Khalidi, <i>IC</i> , Chapter 1; Sykes, Chapters 10 and 11
12. Friday, Apr 19 <i>1948-9</i>	Read, Sykes, Chapters 12 and 13
Mid-term Exam	
13. Monday, Apr 22	<i>Mid-Term Exam: Three questions will be distributed in advance; one will be drawn from a hat and all will answer that question; one hour, closed book, 1 pg. of handwritten notes only.</i>
State-building and Dispersion to 1967	
14. Wednesday, Apr 24 <i>The Making of Israel</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 7; Sachar, <i>A History of Israel</i> , Chapter XV

15. Friday, Apr 27 <i>PLO, King Hussein of Jordan, The Suez War—and the Great Powers</i>	Read, Tyler, <i>A World of Trouble (WT)</i> , Chapter One; “PLO: History of a Revolution,” Al Jazeera , August 31, 2009; Bernard Avishai, “ An Unlikely King: Hussein in War and Peace ,” <i>The Nation</i> , September 22, 2008
The 1967 War—and After	
16. Monday, Apr 29 <i>Run-up and Consequence—to 1973</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 8; Tyler, <i>WT</i> , Chapter 2; watch on YouTube, PBS, “The 50 Years War, parts 1-3 ”
17. Wednesday, May 1 <i>Occupation, Settlement, and the US Engagement in Camp David</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>TofZ</i> , Chapter 9; Tyler, <i>WT</i> , Chapters 3, 4, 5
17.a. Wednesday, May 1, 7:00 PM, evening with pizza <i>1982 and its Aftermath</i>	Watch, film, “PLO: History of a Revolution: Winds of Heaven ”; film, “Waltz With Bashir”
18. Friday, May 3 <i>Political Change in Israel and Palestine</i>	Read, Walid Khalidi, “Toward Peace in the Holy Land,” <i>Foreign Affairs</i> , Spring 1988; Bernard Avishai, “The Forty Years Crisis: April 1988,” from <i>A New Israel</i>
Oslo and the Peace Process	
19. Monday, May 6 <i>The Oslo Process</i>	Read, The Oslo Agreements ; watch, PBS, “The 50 Years War,” parts 4-6 ; Tyler, <i>WT</i> , pp. 374-401 and Chapter 10
20. Wednesday, May 8 <i>The Israeli Economy and the Palestinian Authority</i>	Read, Bernard Avishai, “Israel’s Future: Brainpower, High-tech—and Peace,” <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , Nov-Dec, 1991; Palestinian National Authority, Wikipedia entry
21. Friday, May 10 <i>Camp David 2 Unraveling</i>	Read, Tyler, <i>WT</i> , Chapter 11; Dennis Ross, <i>The Missing Peace</i> , 2004, Chapter 24 and 25
Al-Aqsa Intifada to Annapolis Conference	
22. Monday, May 13 <i>Israel’s New Structure</i>	Read, Bernard Avishai, <i>The Hebrew Republic (HR)</i> , Chapters 1, 2, 3
22.a. Monday, May 13 7:00 PM evening with pizza	Watch, film, “Arna’s Children” (Juliano Mer, Director)
23. Wednesday, May 15 <i>Israel’s Politics and Economy</i>	Read, Avishai, <i>HR</i> , Chapter 4 and 5
24. Friday, May 17 <i>Palestine’s Election</i>	Read, Robert Malley, “A New Middle East,” <i>New York Review</i> , Sept. 21, 2006
25. Monday, May 20 <i>Palestine’s Economy</i>	Read, Bernard Avishai, “The Economics of Occupation,” <i>Harper’s</i> , October 2009
American Mediation?	
26. Wednesday, May 22 <i>Olmert and Abbas</i>	Read, Bernard Avishai, “A Plan for Peace That Still Could Be,” New York Times Magazine , Feb. 7, 2011
27. Friday, May 24 <i>Stalemate—for now</i>	Read, “A Palestinian State Has Become Impossible,” interview with Sari Nusseibeh, Le Figaro ; Rashid Khalidi, Interview in Haaretz , May 12, 2011

28. Monday, May 27 <i>Confederation?</i>	Read, Bernard Avishai, "Abraham's Children," <i>Harper's</i> , December 2011
29. Wednesday, May 29	<i>Review, questions</i>

Research Paper: The deadline is class time on May 24th. Students will answer the following question in no more than 10 pages:

Former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban once quipped: "The Palestinians never miss a chance to miss an opportunity." Do you think this remark is fair? Why and/or why not? Prove your point by referring to at least two historical efforts at peace-making, from 1918 to 2009.

Final Exam: Five questions will be handed out two weeks in advance; two will be drawn at random and all students will answer those two; two hours, no books. Allowed: two pages of handwritten notes only.

Books you will need to buy:

- Bernard Avishai, *The Tragedy of Zionism*, 2nd. edition, Helios Press, New York, 2002; originally published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 1985
- Bernard Avishai, *The Hebrew Republic*, Harcourt, New York, 2008
- Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage*, Beacon Press, Boston, 2006
- Patrick Tyler, *A World of Trouble*, Farrar. Straus, and Giroux, New York 2009

The other readings will be included in a reader to be distributed at the beginning of class.

Prof. Bernard Avishai's bio. Visiting Professor at Dartmouth during the spring quarter. He is Adjunct Professor of Business at the Hebrew University, and taught at MIT in the 1980s and Duke in the 2000s. He is a past technology and strategy editor of *Harvard Business Review* and, among other management positions, the former International Director of Intellectual Capital at KPMG. He has written about global business, public policy, and Middle East affairs, for *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Nation*, and many other publications. A Guggenheim fellow, he is the author of four books, including *Promiscuous* (Yale), and blogs at www.bernardavishai.com. He is a columnist for *The Daily Beast's* Zion Square.