

2011 Summer School in Comparative Conflict Studies

Under Occupation: turning points in Palestinian socio-political realities

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July 11-18, 2011

Course Description:

The political changes that have occurred in Palestinian society since 1948 through the Al Aqsa Intifada suggest a number of critical turning points in the socio-political realities of the Palestinian people. The most important of these junctures is a strong sense of defeat felt by the Arab nation following the Six-Day War, which brought about the collapse of the pan-Arab vision and the emergence of the religious concepts that replaced this vision. In other words, the national discourse underwent a process of Islamization and, at the same time, the Islamic discourse underwent a process of nationalization. This dialectic accelerated the emergence of a coherent national collective and prepared it for the struggle for independence. During and after the first Intifada and the Al Aqsa Intifada, Palestinian society was deeply affected by these religious concepts.

This course will explore the main aspects of Palestinian society under the Israeli occupation as well as the main dilemmas and challenges faced by the Palestinian people in their struggle for an independent state. We will examine the instruments that shaped a new strategy for coping with the Palestinian political reality. The issue of martyrdom- shaheedom, will also be interrogated as bringing together the theme of national revolutionary sacrifice with the theme of self-sacrifice present in Islam. The course will also investigate how the Al Aqsa Intifada created a new social-cultural reality that offered a way of coping with the occupation by idealizing the death and the “space of martyrdom”. The course will also examine the effects of the political project of the Palestinian state on gender relations in Palestinian society.

The course is divided into four parts. The first part will offer a historical introduction to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Throughout this part we will explore the major turning points in the Palestinian –Israeli conflict. The second part will focus on social and political orientations and changes among the Palestinians who live under occupation. The third part is devoted to the link between religion and nationalism, and how they affected the state project. The last part will examine the relationship between the nature of the Palestinian political struggle and the position of women within that struggle.

Course Structure:

Part One: Historical background

- The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its major historical turning points.

Part Two: Socio-political changes and realities

- The Palestinian uprising: political uprising or social –political uprising?

Part Three: “Politi-religization”: religion and nationalism as shaping forces of the Palestinian struggle

- Religious Meaning of the Shahid
- Development and Cultivation of the Concept of the Shahid’s
- Parents in the Context of Sacrifice and Bereavement

Part Four: gender relations in the Palestinian struggle

- Women, Islam and the Palestinian struggle.

- Course Outline by Day -

Tuesday July 12 (Day 1)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 Historical background to The Israeli-Palestinian conflict: **Al-Nakba** the Palestinian Catastrophe

Recommended reading:

- Whalid Khalidi. "Why Did the Palestinians Leave, Revisited." *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Winter 2005. Vol. 34, Issue 2.

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00

- Movie: *Al-Nakba the Palestinian Catastrophe*
- Discussion

Recommended reading:

- Sa'di, A. (2002). "Catastrophe, Memory and Identity: Al-Nakbah as a Component of Palestinian Identity. *Israel Studies*, 7(2), 175-199.

Wednesday July 13 (Day 2)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 The Palestinian Uprising and the Intifada Generation

Recommended reading:

- Lori Allen. "Getting by the Occupation: How Violence Became Normal during the Second Palestinian Intifada", *Cultural Anthropology*. Aug 2008. Vol. 23, Issue. 3, p. 453-487

Additional reading:

- Michele Esposito. "The al-Aqsa Intifada: Military Operations, Suicide Attacks, Assassinations, and Losses in the First Four Years," *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Washington: Winter 2005. Vol. 34, Issue 2.

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00

- Film: *Arna's Children*

Recommended reading:

- Abdel Aziz, Mousa Thabet, Yehia Abed and Panos Vostanis. "[Emotional problems in Palestinian children living in a war zone: A cross-sectional study.](#)" *The Lancet*. London: May 25, 2002. Vol. 359, Issue 9320.

Thursday July 14 (Day 3)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 “Politi-religionization”: religion and nationalism as shaping forces of the Palestinian struggle.
Religious Meaning of the Shahid

- Development and Cultivation of the Concept of the Shahid

Recommended reading:

- Farhana Ali, Jerrold Post. “The History and Evolution of Martyrdom in the Service of Defensive Jihad: An Analysis of Suicide Bombers in Current Conflicts.” Social Research. Summer 2008. Vol. 75, Issue 2, pp. 615-654.
- Neil L Whitehead, Nasser Abufarha. “Suicide, Violence, and Cultural Conceptions of Martyrdom in Palestine.” Social Research. Summer 2008. Vol. 75, Issue 2, pp. 395-416.

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00

- Film: *Cult of Suicide Bomber*

Recommended reading:

- Lori A Allen. “The Polyvalent Politics of Martyr Commemorations in the Palestinian Intifada.” *History and Memory*. Fall 2006. Vol. 18, Issue 2, p. 107-138.

Friday July 15 (Day 4)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 Parents in the Context of Sacrifice and Bereavement

Recommended reading:

- Lori A Allen. “Mothers of Martyrs and Suicide Bombers: The Gender of Ethical Discourse in the Second Palestinian Intifada.” *Arab Studies Journal*. Spring 2009. Vol. 17, Issue 1, pp. 32-61.

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00

- Film: *Mothers of Martyr*

Recommended reading:

- Shalhoub-Kevorkian, Nadra. [“Liberating voices: The political implications of Palestinian mothers narrating their loss.”](#) *Women Studies International Forum* 26(5), 2003 pp. 391-407.

Saturday July 16 (Day 5)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 Gender relations in the Palestinian struggle; Women, Islam and the Palestinian struggle

Recommended reading:

- Dajani, Souad. [“The Struggle of Palestinian Women in the Occupied Territories: Between National and Social Liberation.”](#) *Arab Studies Quarterly*, Spring 1994, Vol. 16, Issue 2.
- Juliane Hammer. [“Prayer, Hijab and the Intifada: The influence of the Islamic movement on Palestinian women”](#) *Islam & Christian Muslim Relations*, Oct 2000, Vol. 11, Issue 3.

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00 The role of Palestinian women in the political struggle

- Film: *Bab El Shams*: part 2

Recommended reading:

- Engendering state-building: The women’s movement and gender-regime in Palestine
- Amal Jamal. *The Middle East Journal*. Washington: Spring 2001. Vol. 55, Issue 2.

Sunday July 17 (Day 6)

Morning class:

10:00-12:30 Summary, reflections and closure

Afternoon class:

14:00-16:00 Final Evaluation