

SOP77031 —Conflict Zones: Case Studies

Module Information	
Module Code	SOP77031
Module Title	Conflict Zones: Case Studies
Department	Sociology
Year Group	MPhil in Race, Ethnicity and Conflict
Module Personnel	Dr David Landy
Academic Year	2026-27
Credit Weighting	10 credits
Semester	Semester 1
Contact Hours	2 lectures per week

Module Content	
Module Description	What are the roots of genocide? In January 2024, the International Court of Justice found there was a ‘plausible case’ that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, a ruling which came within days of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Beyond the headlines, how can we understand how this instance of ‘plausible genocide’ and the conflict behind it has been constructed, conducted and dealt with internationally. While Israel/Palestine has traditionally been understood as a paradigmatic example of a conflict based on race and ethnicity, this is now being replaced by the paradigms of apartheid and genocide applied to it, in particular by outside actors and NGOs. This module examines the various understandings of the area as alternatively a conflict zone, democracy under siege, apartheid regime, and system of colonial control that has led to genocidal violence. Understandably, this module focuses on Gaza more than previous years. But we will also be examining the history and current situation in the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel itself. This module examines both the situation and the reactions of the various parties, taking a critical look at Israeli and Palestinian responses to the conflict. The module also examines international interventions in the

Module Content

	conflict – both what has motivated the extraordinary international interest in Israel/Palestine and the effect of this involvement. The aim of the module is to understand the particular issue of Israel/Palestine, and to use this to develop approaches to conflict situations which has general application. Key debates that this class engages in is conflict and race, colonisation practices, resistance strategies, the representation of conflict, the use of human rights by parties in conflict situations, and critiques of the role of outside intervention.
Module Learning Aims	• Israel/Palestine – historical and political perspectives • Israel/Palestine – theorising a field of conflict • The case of Jerusalem • Israeli and Palestinian responses to the conflict – living with conflict • Representations of the conflict in film and fiction • The role of ‘the peacemakers’ – the reason and effect of outside intervention • Diaspora Jewish involvement in Israel/Palestine • Palestinian solidarity and the problems of social movement intervention
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of the module you will be able to: • Understand the main issues involved in the Israel/Palestine conflict • Relate this specific instance to wider theoretical understandings within race and conflict studies • Theorise the roles of race and racialisation within the conflict • Examine representations of the Israel/Palestine situation • Critically analyse the role of external involvement within a conflict zone • Understand the reasons behind the globalisation of this particular conflict and relate this to other conflicts.
Indicative Reading / Resources	There are no textbooks for the course but readings will be set each week. In addition, the following resources will be useful: • Gelvin, James. 2014. <i>The Israel-Palestine Conflict: One Hundred Years of War</i>. • Kotef, Hagar. 2020 <i>The Colonizing Self: Or, Home and Homelessness in Israel/Palestine</i>. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Module Content

	• Lentin, Ronit (ed.) 2018. <i>Traces of Racial Exception: Racializing Israeli Settler Colonialism</i>. Bloomsbury Academic: London • Haddad, Toufic. 2016. <i>Palestine Ltd.: Neoliberalism and Nationalism in the Occupied Palestinian Territory</i>. London: I. B. Tauris, SOAS • Matar, Dina. 2010. <i>What it Means to be Palestinian: Stories of Palestinian Peoplehood</i>. I.B. Tauris: London, 2010; • Zureik, Elia. 2016. <i>Israel's Colonial Project in Palestine</i>. London: Routledge
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Assessment

Assessment Components	3,000-word analytical review
Assessment Details	Assessment is based on a 3,000-word analytical review of a representation of Israel/Palestine, either fiction or non-fiction. The representation can be a film, a pamphlet, a blog, a textbook, and come from either within Israel/Palestine or be outside representations of the situations. Students are expected to relate their analysis to the theoretical readings on this module and the wider course.

Additional Information

Prerequisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Any other information	