

ILLINOIS COLLEGE



PATHWAYS TO PEACE

An Impact Report Prepared Especially for
Dr. Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor H'10

AUGUST 3, 2015



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PATHWAYS TO PEACE

The Launch of a Bold and Innovative Initiative

“While riding from Illinois College to Pittsfield three years ago, I heard Dr. Al Habtoor ask my scholar grandson, Andrew, to suggest a way to turn the attention of Illinois College students to the urgent need for better understanding of U.S.-Arab relations. Two weeks later, we proposed an annual study experience that would include travel to the Middle East for small select groups of students and faculty. Dr. Al Habtoor approved the program, and now the fruits of the maiden voyage are before him and the College. It begins a splendid, unique, original plan that will impress all participants for a lifetime, no matter where careers will take them in future years. They will be unofficial but priceless ambassadors of good will for the Arab world. As future Pathways to Peace are traveled, humankind will have reason to rejoice at the vision and inspiration Dr. Al Habtoor brings to Illinois College.”

**- Former U.S. Congressman and
1943 Illinois College Alumnus, Paul A. Findley**

October 14, 2014 was a historic day for Illinois College. Dr. Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor invited former United States President Jimmy Carter to accompany him to campus to present a special lecture entitled “Waging Peace.” The lecture concluded with a panel discussion among President Carter, Dr. Al Habtoor and former U.S. Congressman Paul Findley where they responded to audience questions about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, U.S. foreign policy, and human rights violations. During this lecture, which was attended by thousands of people, Dr. Al Habtoor publicly launched Pathways to Peace, a seminar to give students and faculty the opportunity to examine the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and explore ways to develop a peaceful resolution to this longstanding dispute.

In accord with Dr. Al Habtoor’s belief that, “if [Americans] knew the truth about the Israeli-Palestinian situation, which is incorrectly portrayed in the U.S. media, they would demand a just settlement,” Pathways to Peace allowed six students and six faculty to participate in a seminar to learn about the history of Israel and Palestine, hear from guest

experts, and draw on their own expertise and interests to propose creative solutions to promote a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The seminar culminated with a two-week trip to Israel and Palestine, which was a critical component of the experience as it gave the participants the opportunity to see the effects of the conflict firsthand and to hear from people affected.

Pathways to Peace was unique. Few small American colleges offer a semester-long, in-depth seminar to study this issue, and to have the program expenses and trip to the Middle East completely funded by a private donor is truly remarkable. Illinois College is indebted to Dr. Al Habtoor for giving our students and faculty this remarkable opportunity. And the world is indebted to Dr. Al Habtoor for his tireless efforts and incredible generosity to bring about a more peaceful world.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Program Overview

From its inception, Illinois College envisioned Pathways to Peace would be a seminar functioning like a think tank. To accomplish this, it was important to create an atmosphere where preconceived notions could be brought to participants' awareness and challenged, and creative thinking could flourish. Therefore, students and faculty from a variety of academic disciplines were selected to participate in Pathways to Peace so that their perspectives could enrich group discussion. Twenty-four students and eleven faculty applied to the seminar. Every interested applicant submitted an essay, and participants were selected based on the quality of their essay.

Six faculty - a chemist, two social scientists (psychology and sociology) and three faculty in the humanities (French, theatre and English) - and six students (three international students and three Americans students) majoring in political science, history, economics, philosophy, management and organizational leadership, and biology were selected to participate in Pathways to Peace.

The seminar was led by Dr. Adam Porter, dean and professor of religion, and it took place in the 2015 spring semester which ran from January to May. The seminar format was as follows: each student was paired with a faculty mentor

to work together to each develop a final paper outlining their idea to encourage a peaceful resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These pairings were made based on students' and faculty members' shared interests. Students and faculty were assigned weekly readings on the history of Israel and Palestine, current events facing the region, and political and social commentaries written by experts about the contributing factors to the conflict.

The participants met weekly as a group to discuss the readings, and faculty-student pairings had additional meetings to discuss how the readings could be applied to their final paper. In addition to the readings, three guest experts discussed the peace process with the seminar. To bring the theories and concepts studied in Jacksonville to life, all ten participants traveled to the Carter Center during spring break, and seven participants elected to travel to the Middle East, visiting Israel and the West Bank.

At the conclusion of the seminar, students and faculty wrote papers proposing various pathways to peace and presented their papers to the group.

Challenges of the Program

The primary challenge Illinois College encountered administering Pathways to Peace was recruiting students to participate in the program. Before coming to Illinois College, many of our students have never traveled outside their hometowns. Many experience their first trip to nearby St. Louis and Chicago as students at Illinois College, even though these cities are only a few hours away. Given their inexperience with travel, recruiting students to travel to a

region they are unfamiliar with and which they believe to be dangerous is difficult.

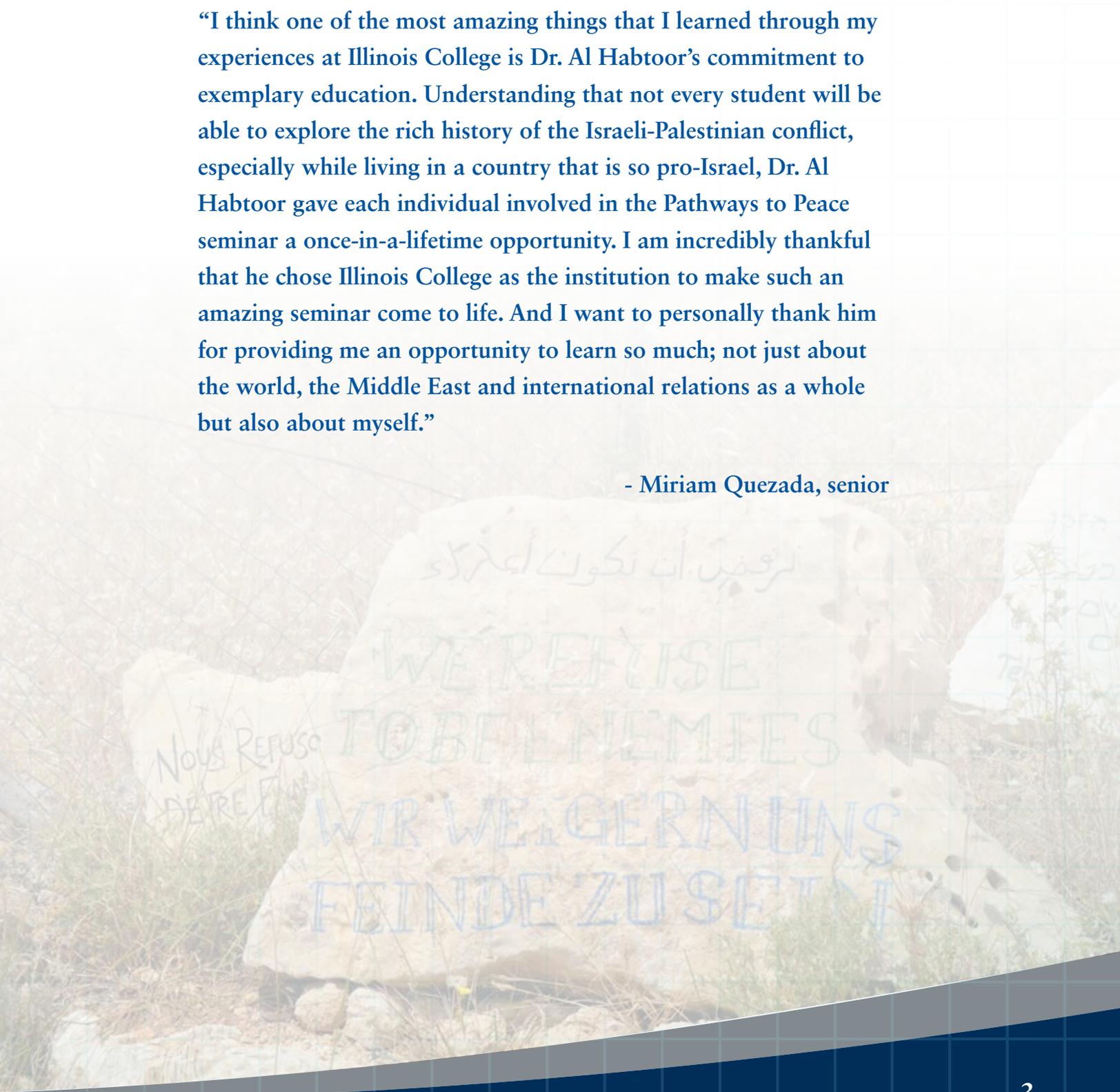
Despite this challenge, it is important to note that 76 percent of the students who applied to Pathways to Peace previously participated in the Khalaf Al Habtoor Leadership Program. The Khalaf Al Habtoor Leadership Program was a valuable pipeline for recruiting Pathways to Peace participants.

Successes of the Program

Pathways to Peace was successful in educating Illinois College students and faculty about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and raising awareness about the plight of the Palestinians:

“I think one of the most amazing things that I learned through my experiences at Illinois College is Dr. Al Habtoor’s commitment to exemplary education. Understanding that not every student will be able to explore the rich history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, especially while living in a country that is so pro-Israel, Dr. Al Habtoor gave each individual involved in the Pathways to Peace seminar a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I am incredibly thankful that he chose Illinois College as the institution to make such an amazing seminar come to life. And I want to personally thank him for providing me an opportunity to learn so much; not just about the world, the Middle East and international relations as a whole but also about myself.”

- Miriam Quezada, senior



“Prior to the program, I had little knowledge about the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine. Because I was strongly influenced by the general media, I had a more positive picture about Israelis than Palestinians. During the program, I got a chance to learn about the history of both Israelis and Palestinians and the story prior to the current conflict. The trip to Israel and Palestine was also very educational and eye opening. The people we met and the places we visited really humanized the Israel-Palestine conflict.”

– Oak Wattanasirakul, freshman

“Through this experience, I learned there is always more than one side to the story. Based on traveling through Israel and Palestine, this experience taught me to be more culturally aware because we do not always understand one another’s actions until we are able to understand their background culturally or personally.”

– Victoria Wynecoop, junior

“My experience in the Pathways to Peace Seminar enlarged my view of the world, especially in regard to the Middle East. Having lived and traveled abroad, I believed coming into Pathways to Peace that I already had a good understanding of most regions across the globe, even if I hadn’t studied them extensively or voyaged to them. I quickly learned that my knowledge was lacking. Through our readings, weekly interdisciplinary discussions, and, in particular, visits to the Carter Center and to the Middle East, I came to better comprehend these places, the people in them and the issues they are facing, and to see how they all fit into the complex, interconnected world that we live in.”

– Dr. Devin Bryson,
assistant professor of French

“Before the Pathways to Peace class, I thought I understood the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During the seminar, I was given so much valuable information, and I realized how much I still had to learn.”

– Dr. Caitlin Vasquez-O’Brien,
assistant professor of psychology

Successes of the Program

Pathways to Peace was also successful in bringing together a diverse group of participants. The different academic backgrounds represented, as well as the inclusion of international students, enriched the group's discussions. International students shared stories of conflict and oppression from their own countries and challenged their American peers' world-view.

In addition, the seminar format successfully involved students and faculty as joint learners. Students reported that they benefited from grappling with the issues alongside their professor mentor, and they learned a great deal about researching and presenting an argument by working alongside their professor mentor on their final paper.

“Pathways to Peace offered us a unique window into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – one of the bleakest struggles the world faces today. As a seminar, Pathways to Peace was challenging and stimulating: guest speakers with widely varying outlooks each provided their own, unique insights. Its subject matter forced me to work in an interdisciplinary fashion, merging my own discipline - philosophy - with law, political science, history and sociology: an approach emblematic of the “liberal arts” endeavor.”

– Guus Duindam, junior

“This is higher education at its finest: clear, critical and exemplifying an expanded range of possibility. This was entirely possible because Dr. Al Habtoor fashioned this rare space for this type of clear discussion to be had.”

– Paul Fuller, assistant professor of sociology

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Timeline

OCTOBER 14, 2014:

Dr. Al Habtoor launched Pathways to Peace in conjunction with “Waging Peace,” a lecture by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

JANUARY 2015:

Students and faculty began the Pathways to Peace seminar. Provost Elizabeth Tobin and Dean Adam Porter traveled to Israel to identify resources for the Pathways to Peace trip planned for May 2015.

FEBRUARY 1, 2015:

Former U.S. Congressman Paul Findley presented “Obstacles to the Peace Process in the United States” to Pathways to Peace.

FEBRUARY 23-25, 2015:

Woodrow Wilson Fellow David Greenlee, career diplomat and former Foreign Service officer, presented “Striving for Peace: Monitoring Stability in the Arab-Israeli Conflict.”

MARCH 16, 2015:

Joshua Landis, director of the Center for Middle East Studies and an associate professor at the University of Oklahoma’s College of International Studies, presented “The Crisis in Syria and Its Effect on the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process.”

MARCH 10-12, 2015:

Pathways to Peace participants visited the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia. They heard from a variety of experts in conflict resolution, met with Center personnel, and had a teleconference with Nathan Stock, Director of the Carter Center’s Israel-Palestine office. They also visited Atlanta’s Center for Civil and Human Rights.

MAY 1, 2015:

Based on their outstanding papers, Pathways to Peace students were selected to present their papers and findings at the Celebration of Excellence. The Celebration of Excellence is Illinois College’s honors assembly showcasing the outstanding academic achievements of our best students from every area of campus. The Pathways to Peace presentations were very well attended by students, faculty, Illinois College Trustees and donors, which helped to raise awareness about the Pathways to Peace seminar and, more importantly, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Timeline, continued

MAY 20-29, 2015:

Six Pathways to Peace participants (three students and three faculty members) traveled to Israel and Palestine to witness the conflict and the effects of the conflict firsthand.

MAY 21-22, 2015:

To hear from both Israelis and Palestinian human rights groups, Pathways to Peace met with Grassroots Jerusalem and Rabbis for Human Rights in Jerusalem.

MAY 23, 2015:

Pathways to Peace visited the Tent of Nations, a family owned Palestinian farm between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. Israel is attempting to take the land of the Tent of Nations to give to settlers, but the Tent is resisting this in court. Israel refuses to provide utilities, so the Tent has installed solar panels and water cisterns. It is a model of how creative nonviolence can work.

MAY 24, 2015:

The group met with Palestinian students from Bethlehem University, hearing firsthand how difficult it was to live under Israeli occupation.

MAY 25, 2015:

Pathways to Peace traveled to Jericho to tour the Auja Ecco Center. That evening they stayed with families from Beit Sahour, a town adjacent to Bethlehem, again hearing firsthand accounts of the difficulty of life for Palestinians.

Siraj, a reputable tourist agency that does similar tours for Harvard University and Boston College, coordinated the trip and visits with the advocacy groups.

MAY 26, 2015:

The group traveled to Ramallah and visited the planned Palestinian city of Rawabi. This was a highpoint of the trip, giving all participants hope for the future of Palestine. Rawabi was a tangible demonstration of the increasing confidence of the Palestinian Authority and will certainly be a boon to its economy.

MAY 27-28, 2015:

The group's Middle Eastern tour concluded in Jaffa. This was an important and fitting conclusion to the journey, since participants began the seminar by reading about Jaffa. Our tour guide was a Palestinian from Jaffa who is studying political science and who was elected to the Tel Aviv City Council, where he advocated for Palestinian rights.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

The Results

“Everyone hopes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is resolved sooner than later, but most probably it will fall on the shoulders of our children. Their minds and way of thinking is different from ours. And for that reason, they should take part in finding the solution. They should be asked to find scenarios and solutions to the conflict. They understand what their generation thinks and how they address this issue.”

- Khalaf Al Habtoor

The primary goal of Pathways to Peace was to give students and faculty the opportunity and resources to examine the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a multitude of perspectives and academic disciplines in the hopes that creative solutions toward a peaceful resolution could be presented.

All of the participants’ experiences – the texts they read, the guest lecturers they listened to, the ideas they considered and the perspectives they argued in their weekly Sunday evening

meetings, the trip to the Carter Center and the pivotal trip to the Middle East – all converged in their final project in which each participant produced a paper exploring a different pathway to peace. While these twelve papers are the culmination of what the faculty and students learned through their Pathways to Peace experiences, they are but the beginning of their thinking and future actions related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

An Idea Bank for Potential Solutions to the Issues that Plague Israel and Palestine

The twelve papers written by faculty and students for the Pathways to Peace project fall into four broad categories:

- 1) Many of the essays written by students and faculty note the importance of the United States in the region, especially its support for Israel. If the U.S. were to rethink its stance and develop a policy observing international law, it would be better for the U.S. in the long run and promote an environment benefiting both Israel and Palestine.
- 2) We can learn from other struggles of occupied and oppressed peoples and apply some of those resolutions to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- 3) Programs to promote understanding between Israeli and Palestinian youth, a shared concern over the long-term negative effects of the conflict on children’s psyche, improved communication, and using the arts and literature to foster understanding can help Israelis and Palestinians find common ground and contribute toward the peace process.
- 4) There are pragmatic and economic implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which negatively affect both Israel and Palestine. Resolving these issues, particularly around natural resources, can promote peace.

The following are abstracts of each paper. As Dr. Al Habtoor noted above, young people will be key to bringing about a peaceful resolution. Therefore, the students’ papers are highlighted first.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Student Papers



“AMERICA AND ISRAEL: TOWARDS A RAWLSIAN FOREIGN POLICY” *By Guus Duindam, junior from Velp, Netherlands, majoring in philosophy*

Following American moral and political philosopher John Rawls, Duindam argues that the U.S. should base its policies on moral philosophy and international law. Rawls identifies basic doctrines, such as “peoples should be free and independent,” “peoples should respect treaties,” and “peoples should honor human rights.” Collectively, these form the “law of peoples.” Rawls further argues that states can be divided into two broad categories: well-ordered regimes, with either democratic or decent (observing the “law of peoples”) governments and outlaw states who violate the “law of peoples.” Societies who cannot, because of historical burdens, create a well-ordered regime are “burdened.”

Having established these basic premises, Duindam analyzes Israel and Palestine, arguing

that Israel should be categorized as an “outlaw” state, as it engages in unjust wars and violates international treaties (both United Nations’ resolutions and the Geneva Conventions). He further argues that Palestine should be considered a “burdened state,” as it faces great difficulty in governing itself, primarily because of Israel’s policies, but also because of those of the United States. Duindam notes that the United States, too, could be considered an outlaw state, as it only selectively observes international laws.

Findings/Recommendations: Duindam calls for the U.S. to adopt new foreign policies, based on ethics and morals. The U.S. should embrace international law to become a well-ordered regime. And it should stop supporting other states, like Israel, until they do likewise.



“LET PALESTINE CONTROL ITS OWN ECONOMIC DESTINY” *By Jovanny Nava, junior from Mulberry, Florida, majoring in political science, history and economics*

Nava examines the economies of Israel and the West Bank and Gaza, arguing that Israel’s security fence has decreased the labor market for Palestinians and has increased poverty levels. Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza also pay more for electricity, water and transportation; the direct and indirect costs of these policies is almost \$7 billion. Without Israel’s restrictions on Palestine’s economy, Palestine’s GDP could be almost double its current level. Nava further argues that Palestinians also suffer from lack of clear property rights or recognition of those rights.

Findings/Recommendations: Nava argues that Israel’s costs to occupy Palestine are defrayed by Israeli extraction of resources from the land. He recommends that the international community and especially the United States should support Palestinian property rights, including water rights. If Israel had to pay the actual costs of occupation – without military subsidies from the United States and income from Palestinian resources – it would find the financial burden too great to sustain. This would force Israel to end its occupation, helping to promote prosperity and peace.



“IS INCOME INEQUALITY MAKING THE PALESTINIAN/ISRAELI CONFLICT WORSE?”

By Hiba Zawaideh, junior from Amman, Jordan, majoring in management and organizational leadership and economics

Zawaideh discusses the importance of income inequality and how it foments unhappiness. Societies with high levels of income inequality, especially those with limited access to income mobility, can experience disruptions and social unrest. Poor people who see no way to improve their situation may rise-up to protest what they perceive to be an unfair system. She notes that the Israeli standard of living and per capita income is far higher than that of Palestinians and suggests that this could lead to conflict.

Findings/Recommendations: She suggests that moving toward a one-state solution, which would necessitate more closely integrating the Palestinian and Israeli economies and labor-markets, would help to lower levels of income inequality, improve relations between Palestinians and Israelis, and thus promote peace.



“ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN YOUTH: THE BRIDGE TO PEACE”

By Oak Wattanasirakul, freshman from Chiang Mai, Thailand, undeclared major

Relying on psychology, Wattanasirakul notes that since ideological formation is more flexible in younger people, it is important to promote intercultural exchanges by youth. This has become increasingly difficult in Israel and Palestine, especially after the Israelis constructed military barriers to separate Palestinians from Israelis. He suggests that Israelis and Palestinians fundamentally do not understand each other and lack commonalities. Other places that had such divisions – such as South Africa – found that art and especially music were able to cross social boundaries.

Findings/Recommendations: Wattanasirakul recommends that joint music programs be created to allow Israeli and Palestinian youths to learn each other’s traditional music and to work together to perform music. Similarly, he notes that sports, especially soccer (football), are popular among young people. He suggests that intercultural sports leagues be established, in which Palestinians and Israelis would work together on the same team to win on the pitch. Creating such projects and structures would be challenging, but by changing the minds of youth, Wattanasirakul suggests seeds of peace could be planted that would come to fruition later in their lives.



“EDUCATION TO DECOLONIZE COLONIZED TERRITORIES: A CASE STUDY BETWEEN PALESTINE AND NATIVE AMERICAN EDUCATION”

by Victoria Wynecoop, junior from Wellpinit, Washington, majoring in biology

Wynecoop argues that Palestinians and Native Americans have suffered at the hands of colonizing powers, Israel and the United States respectively. She discusses how “historical trauma” can actually alter victims’ DNA, negatively affecting their children. She notes that both Native Americans and Palestinians have suffered enormous trauma from their oppressors.

One solution to this trauma could be through the education system. While the United States used its educational policies intentionally to destroy Native American cultures, in the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinians have been able to create their own school curriculum.

More recently, schools on Native American reservations have sought to heal historical trauma by educating not just students, but their parents and wider families. Wynecoop offers a parallel example in the Al-Najah secondary school in West Bank.

Findings/Recommendations: Wynecoop recommends that both Israeli and Palestinian schools help promote peace by educating their students about each other’s histories and beliefs. Rather than having separate religion classes, Wynecoop advocates teaching all students about Judaism, Christianity and Islam; better understanding would help to break down incorrect impressions and thus promote peace.



“SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE: FOSTERING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION FOR ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE”

By Miriam Quezada, 2015 graduate from Chicago, Illinois, majored in communication

Quezada notes that there are two categories of conflicts. Interest-based conflicts focus on gaining scarce resources, while identity-based conflicts are rooted in psychological and cultural factors. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has elements of each, but Quezada argues that identity-conflict leads to interest-conflict. Intercultural communication helps to resolve identity-conflicts, which in turn, could resolve interest-conflicts.

Currently, Israeli and Palestinian narratives parallel and compete with one another, but intercultural communication could help to bridge these narratives. Quezada highlights

four organizations encouraging intercultural communication: the Parent Circle Families Forum, Combatants for Peace, Peace Institute in the Middle East and Oasis of Peace.

Findings/Recommendations: After offering several examples of where intercultural communication was successful in promoting change (the United States, Chile and Argentina), Quezada argues that intercultural communication could reduce conflict between Israel and Palestine so much that either a one-state or a two-state solution could be adopted: with true understanding this question would become moot.

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Faculty Papers



“THE WORLD IN THE CONGO: THE GREAT WAR OF AFRICA AND TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIONS TO THE ISRAELI/PALESTINIAN CONFLICT”

By: Devin Bryson, Assistant Professor of French

While the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire, has faced internal strife since its independence from Belgium in 1960, the country has suffered from an overwhelming amount of violence, deaths, armed conflict, economic turmoil, displaced populations and struggle for resources since the inception of the continuing conflict, called “Africa’s World War” by author Gérard Prunier and “The Great War of Africa” by writer Jason Stearns in the late 1990s. The reasons for the conflict are complex and are tied to various central African nations, including Rwanda and its genocidal conflict in the 1990s, as well as to international networks of manufacture, consumption, politics and power that implicate numerous Western nations. Although the armed conflict has been centralized

in the eastern part of the DRC, its effects have been felt throughout the country, in surrounding countries in central Africa, as well as in the West, including the U.S. Even Jacksonville has been impacted as increasing numbers of Congolese immigrants have arrived here to seek out a better life.

Findings/Recommendations: By elucidating the various international connections and the global scale of the conflict in the DRC, both in its origins and in its consequences, Bryson encourages readers to think critically about their own involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other conflicts, provoking them to look for personal, local, and global solutions.





“THEATRE AS “ARTIVISM” IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT: A GRASSROOTS APPROACH TO ENDING THE OCCUPATION”

By Nancy Taylor Porter, Associate Professor of Theatre/Department Chair

It is impossible to build what you cannot imagine; theatre offers the opportunity to envision a better future for the Israelis and Palestinians. In some instances, it provides people with the rare opportunity to collaborate constructively. Theatre is a nonviolent tool that can embody both in its process and final product a vision of peace and thereby become “artivism” (art + activism).

Taylor Porter discusses three theatre companies and their leaders – Israeli Igal Ezraty of the Jaffa Theatre in Tel Aviv; Palestinian Nabil Al-Raei of The Freedom Theatre in Jenin; and Israeli Chen Alon of Combatants for Peace’s Tel Aviv/Tul Karem Theatre Troupe – who seek to

make the individual stories of Palestinians better known to Israelis and vice-versa.

People on both sides of the conflict occasionally complain about the theatres’ work, seeing it as overly political. But, although it is sometimes difficult, the companies continue to work, arguing that they empower the oppressed and raise awareness of the other side’s conditions.

Findings/Recommendations: Taylor Porter argues that united by their transformative personal histories, a desire to use theatre to create social change, and a great capacity for positive leadership, theatre can bring their audience closer to more peaceful ways of living.



“PATHWAYS TO PEACE: A FOCUS ON THE FUTURE”

By T. Caitlin Vasquez-O’Brien, Assistant Professor of Psychology

In the 67 years since Israel declared its independence, conflict in the Middle East has become a way of life. A resolution to a disagreement must be multifaceted. We can apply psychological concepts to a human facet in which all sides can agree that change is vital: the welfare of children in the states of Israel and Palestine.

It can be human nature to despair at the harm caused by conflict without considering whether or not those things so often seen as harmful could, in the right light, also be seen as adaptive. In psychology, a paradigm shift in the early 2000s led researchers to develop a more thorough understanding of resilience (the ability to bounce back from stress successfully and perhaps even function better as a result).

Findings/Recommendations: By targeting expectant and new parents as a population receptive to new information and focusing on the needs of children, Vasquez-O’Brien proposes a resilience education program to be implemented at prenatal care facilities and hospitals, with the objective of creating a superordinate goal (a goal that can only be achieved by cooperation from both sides) that can be shared by Israelis and Palestinians alike: the survival and well-being of their children. To support the utility of such a program, Vasquez-O’Brien reviewed group processes, priming, resilience/positive psychology and finally, successful strategies for managing intergroup conflict.



“NONVIOLENT REVOLUTIONS AND THE TACTICS OF PEACEMAKING: COMPARING SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID AND THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA”

By Paul Fuller, Assistant Professor of Sociology

Fuller provides a comparative case study of the failure of nonviolent resistance to the Israeli occupation of Palestine with the success of the South African Anti-Apartheid movement. Fuller reports that an analysis of successful non-violent social movements shows that the most important factor is being able to reduce military or police support for the government; this seems difficult to achieve in Israel.

Fuller argues that Israel's more central position in the world-system is associated with less intense international pressure and economic isolation than South Africa experienced—particularly with respect to United States advocacy. This in turn is tied to specific forms of cultural legitimacy available for

the occupation that were lacking in South Africa. These structural differences shape the available oppositional tactics: the anti-apartheid movement successfully withheld desired resources in the form of labor, but given the increasing separation of Israel and Palestinian labor markets, this tactic seems less likely to succeed in the current conflict.

Findings/Recommendations: Fuller argues that the sorts of sanctions that worked in South Africa could probably affect Israel as strongly, although the BDS (Boycott-Divest-Sanction) movement will test this theory.





“REFORMATIVE NARRATIVES: NATIVE AND PALESTINIAN LIBERATORY IMAGINATION”

By Lisa J. Udel, Associate Professor of English

In her comparison of contemporary Native and Palestinian literary narratives, Udel explores the following arguments and issues: the refusal or inability of Israel and the United States as nation-states to acknowledge that colonialism continues to affect the present moment; an agreement that Palestinians and Native groups are colonized peoples and that their work toward national identity becomes an imaginative act; and this imaginative work is enacted through written narratives that reconstruct obscured, ignored, and falsified histories, describe contemporary realities, and assert future possibilities.

Despite some concrete differences, colonial systems have affected both Native peoples and Palestinians in similar ways: a militarized invasion and maintained presence on disputed land; the illegal expropriation of land and resources (human, mineral, etc.); the

containment of people through reservation systems, refugee camps, and the militarized industrial complex; and the perpetuation of all subordinating systems of power, including the narrational. Scholars of Native and Israeli historical narratives identify the various methods of settler colonialism and discuss their ongoing ramifications. Colonialism exerts power over indigenous peoples’ narratives about the past and present, along with the reception of those narratives. In these narratives, history becomes contested ground.

Findings/Recommendations: Because both Native and Palestinian writers express their belief that their work actively resists colonial structures and attitudes, Udel favors indigenous peoples’ rejection of hegemonic narratives in order to promote liberatory imagination and nation building.



“PEACE THROUGH WATER”

By Brent Chandler, Assistant Professor of Chemistry

The Middle East is one of the most arid locations in the world, and as a result access to water plays a very important role in the region. Chandler examines the historical context of the unresolved relationship between Israel and the inhabitants of the West Bank with a focus on the part that water has played. Chandler’s central argument is that access to water is a fundamental human right and should now be the catalyst for peace.

Findings/Recommendations: Chandler outlines projects Palestinian individuals and communities can undertake in order to establish control of their water as a key step toward achieving a strong, peaceful, and independent state. Additionally, he argues that the time is right for Israel to relinquish control of the West Bank and to share its water conveyance, purification and reuse expertise as a model of humanitarianism in the region.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

The Journey Continues

“This project will not be successful the first time, but we will try again and again and again. This is too important an issue for us to not try every possible way to see peace happen.”

- Khalaf Al Habtoor

At the conclusion of the inaugural Pathways to Peace, it is apparent that each participant was profoundly impacted by this seminar. It was an intense and emotional journey, and the participants felt overwhelmed by the entrenched conflict and enormity of the obstacles toward a peaceful resolution. As several students noted, “Far more skilled and powerful people than us have tried to fix this problem and failed. What meaningful contribution to the peace process can we possibly add?”

Despite the reality of the difficulties of reaching peace in the Middle East, students and faculty found reason to be hopeful in their seminar studies and during their meetings with Israelis and Palestinians directly involved in peace work. This contributed to the ideas presented in their final papers. Will the participants’ solutions for peace laid out in their papers translate to action? That remains to be seen. As Dr. Al Habtoor noted, “There is no magical potion to instantaneously cure the Middle East’s ills.” At the least, these papers will bring attention to this conflict on Illinois College’s campus and the community of Central Illinois which is the American Heartland. Several students and faculty are in the process of submitting their papers to academic conferences which will spread awareness among academics. We are also hopeful the participants’ scholarship will provide a basis for future study and application for individuals and organizations working toward peace in the Middle East.

Perhaps the most potential for impact from the Pathways to Peace seminar is the ripple effects this experience will have. Faculty will incorporate their experience into the classroom for years to come, educating countless students about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The students will carry the lessons learned from this program into their future studies at Illinois College. For many of them, like Guus Duindam, this experience helped define career aspirations: “Like nothing else this project redoubled my commitment to justice and international law, drove me to spread the word and strengthened my ambition to one day work at the United Nations. Thus, Pathways to Peace has helped me shape my future.”

While the outcomes described above will not drive a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is our sincere hope that the ideas presented by our students and faculty will provide pathways – smaller side routes – that can help forge a road toward peace. Dr. Al Habtoor, thank you for involving Illinois College in the quest for peace in the Middle East. We are honored to be your partner in this important endeavor.

PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Trip Photos





1101 West College Avenue
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

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