McGill University
Department of Political Science

POLI 444 002 PROTRACTED CONFLICTS-ENDURING RIVALRIES

Autumn Term 2019

Professor Michael Brecher

The **objective** of this course is to illuminate *interstate protracted conflicts-enduring international rivalries* in the twentieth century and the first 19 years of the twenty-first century of world politics. This crucial segment of turmoil in the global system and many regional systems will be examined in *breadth* and in *depth*, that is, at both *interstate* and *individual state* levels of analysis. (The *intra-state* level of Conflict, that is, conflict between minority groups – ethnic, religious, racial and regional – and the political regime of a state, e.g., the Catalans and Spain, Chechnya and Russia, Tibetans and China, are not included in this course).

After an introductory week on the **Course Outline** and its intellectual **Rationale**, and an **Empirical Overview of Cases**, the second week will focus on **Concepts** and **Conceptual Levels**. These will be followed by 11 twice-weekly sessions on analytical **models** of the **Onset**, **Persistence** and **Resolution** of protracted conflicts (PCs), and in-depth studies of PCs active since the end of WW I. They will take the forms of lectures and oral discussions on 33 PCs, resolved and unresolved, among *major powers* and among *middle* and *small powers*, in all geographic regions – Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and inter-regional PCs. The topics for each week will be elaborated below.

**Week 1: (3, 5 September) Overviews**

**Course Outline**: Contents of twice-weekly sessions. Course Requirements; Papers; Grading; Assignments.

**Rationale for studying PCs- EIR**

**Empirical Overview – Cases**

**Readings:**

Brecher, *The World of Protracted Conflicts*, 2016, 45, 47-51 (Actors); 75-76 (Phases); 42, 114-116 (Causes); 168 (last 2 paras.), 177-178 (Perceptions); 195-198 (Behavior); 265-266 (Discordant Objectives); [all analytic themes above, after pp. 47-51 (Actors) relate to China/Japan PC]

**Week 2: (10, 12 September) Concepts**

**Conflict**: Protracted Conflict (PC)-Enduring Rivalry (EIR); International Crisis; Foreign Policy Crisis; War; Peace – conceptual differences, with illustrations; Conceptual Levels – Taxonomy, Framework, Model, Theory

**Readings:**


Brecher, *The World of Protracted Conflicts*, 2016, 3-19
Maoz, Z. and B. Mor, *Bound by Struggle*, 2002, 3-26
Bar-Tal, D. *Intractable Conflicts*, 2013, 33-60

(In the weeks to follow, each participant in the course will be responsible for one protracted conflict in all of its attributes and dimensions, based upon one’s “Works Consulted” (Bibliography) on one’s PC, and must be prepared to report on each PC research topic)

**Illustrative PCs to guide research and reports on your selected Protracted Conflict, presented in the Course Pack:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>China/Japan</th>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Finland/Russia-USSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>Iran/Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-Region</td>
<td>North Korean Nuclear</td>
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</table>

These PCs will appear frequently in the Readings and/or Lectures and cannot serve as a choice for in-depth research and the two required term papers on a PC in this course (to be elaborated below).

**Weeks 3, 4: (17, 24 September, lectures; 19, 26 September, conferences)**

**Origins/Historical Roots:** Evolution of Historical Background (Phases, Transformative Event); Global and/or Regional Systemic Setting at Onset; Conflict Adversaries; Duration

Brecher, *The World of Protracted Conflicts*, 21-43; 75-mid-76 (China/Japan PC)

Also *Sources on Historical Roots* of your PC

**Weeks 5, 6: (1, 8 October, lectures; 3, 10 October, conferences)**

**Basic Causes:** Tangible – Territorial Disputes, Power Rivalry, Economic Access; Intangible – Competing Ideologies, Identity Conflict, Rivalry among Political Leaders; Rank-Order of Basic Causes; **Precipitating Causes** (content, time frame)

Brecher, *The World of Protracted Conflicts*, 103-109 (Model I); 114-116, 134, 163 (Balance of Power), 168 (all pages cited here after Model I refer to China/Japan)
Brecher, *A Century of Crisis and Conflict*..., 237-239 (Iran/Iraq)
Also *Sources on Causes of Onset* of your PC

**Weeks 7, 8: (15, 22 October, lectures; 17, 24 October, conferences)**
Attitudinal Prism: Perceptions by Principal PC-EIR Adversaries – of Self (Objectives, Capability), of the Enemy (Objectives, Capability), of Patron(s), Involved Major Power(s), and Relevant International Organizations

Brecher, The World of Protracted Conflicts, 141-153 (Model II); 173+174, lines 1-3; 177-mid-178 (China/Japan PC)
Also Sources on Attitudinal Prism and Perceptions of your PC

Weeks 9, 10: (29 October, 5 November, lectures; 31 October + 7 November, conferences)

Behaviour by Principal PC-EIR Adversaries: Decision-Makers; Major Decisions of the two Principal Adversaries during the PC-EIR; Their Decision-making Process; Key Implementation Acts

Brecher, The World of Protracted Conflicts, 115, 191, 195-mid-198 (China/Japan PC); 208-mid-2012 (Iran/Iraq PC)
Brecher, A Century of Crisis and Conflict..., 211-216, line 8 (Finland/Russia-USSR PC); 240-247 (Iran/Iraq PC); 212-213 (to paras. 1 and 2)
Also Sources on Decision-Makers, Major Decisions, Decision-making Process, and Implementation of your PC

Weeks 11, 12: (12, 19 November, lectures; 14 + 21 November, conferences)

Persistence: Discordant Objectives; Relative Military Capability; Conflict-Sustaining Acts by the Principal Adversaries: Political Hostility (threatening acts; invoking support of ally/allies, major power(s) and/or IOs); Violence (escalation, frequency, intensity); Economic Discrimination; Verbal Hostility-Propaganda

Brecher, The World of Protracted Conflicts, Discordant Objectives, 155 (first para.), mid-265-mid-266 (China/Japan PC); Conflict-Sustaining Acts, 219 (first para.); mid-222-mid-223 (China/Japan PC); 243 Overall (to end of Point 5, 251)
Brecher, A Century of Crisis and Conflict..., Conflict-Sustaining Acts, (Finland/Russia-USSR PC); 216-218; Discordant Objectives, 247-248, line 2 (Iran/Iraq PC)
Also Sources on Discordant Objectives, Conflict-Sustaining Acts of your PC

Week 13: (26 November, lecture; 28 November, lecture and discussion)
Conflict Management Techniques: Diplomacy/Negotiations; Role of Third Parties – Support and/or Mediation by patron(s), ally (allies), major power(s), international organization(s); Conflict Resolution – Missed Opportunities; Why some PCs/EIRs Terminate, others remain Unresolved? Reconciliation
Brecher, The World of Protracted Conflicts, 289-298 (Model III); 289-290, 350-352 (causes of conflict resolution); 299-301 (Concepts), testing Model III; 308-309 (war and conflict resolution); 349-356, 351 (evidence and summary of findings); 357-364 (What Have We Learned?)

Brecher, A Century of Crisis and Conflict..., Conflict Management and Resolution 218-228 (Finland/Russia-USSR PC); 248-258 (Iran/Iraq PC); Also Sources on Conflict Management and Resolution (your PC)


Bercovitch, J., “Mediation in the Most Resistant Cases”, in Crocker, Hampson, Aall (eds.), Grasping the Nettle: Analyzing Cases of Intractable Conflict, 2005, 99-121


**Distinction between Weeks 1-2 and Weeks 3-13**

**Weeks 1-2**, lecture format, with students expected to respond to questions on the readings on Concepts and the Conceptual Ladder in Week 2

**Weeks 3-13**, lectures and conferences, with participants reporting on particular attributes and dimensions of their PC and interventions (questions, comments) by the instructor.

Students should choose their preferred Protracted Conflict for in-depth research by 10 SEPTEMBER, 6.00 p.m. Select 2 cases and rank order your preference (1, 2), except for the following PCs: China/Japan, Finland/Russia-USSR, Iran/Iraq, North Korean Nuclear. On the Content of most of the topics in the Course outline to be explored in your oral presentations and papers, see the list of Protracted Conflicts on a separate page below). SEND YOUR PREFERENCES TO ME BY E-MAIL, michael.brecher@mcgill.ca, in WORD. The assignment of PCs will be made BY 15 SEPTEMBER. This will give participants in the course until 19 September to read enough to be prepared to discuss Origins, Historical Roots, etc. of your PC on 19 or 26 September – all the topics noted for Weeks 3 and 4 in the Course Outline. Once your case is assigned, prepare a bibliography of 8 books and articles and begin reading on Historical Roots. The conferences on that topic will occur on 19 and 26 September.

**Course Requirements**

**All Readings**: be prepared to discuss these in the Lecture periods and in conferences;

**Choice of one PC for Conference discussions, research and 2 papers**;

**Responsibility for a maximum of 6 minutes for an oral report** on a specific topic in one’s PC in the conference discussions;
Two papers on one’s protracted conflict, incorporating all the dimensions and attributes in the Course Outline.

**Paper 1** is to focus on the topics dealt with in the Lectures and Readings in the Course Pack relating to **Historical Roots, Basic and Precipitating Causes of Onset, and Perceptions**. Paper 1 must not exceed 15 double-spaced pages, excluding Bibliography and Notes, using a Font of 10, to be sent to me as a WORD ATTACHMENT, to reach me by e-mail not later than 20 October, 7.00 p.m.

**Paper 2** is to focus on the topics dealt with in the Lectures and Readings in the Course Pack, relating to **Behaviour, Persistence, and Conflict Management, plus attempts at Conflict Resolution**. Paper 2 must not exceed 15 double-spaced pages, to reach me by e-mail, as a WORD ATTACHMENT, not later than 9 December at 5.00 p.m.

**Grading:** the FINAL GRADE for POLI 444 002 will be based upon the following: each paper (35%); participation in conference discussions (30%).

**Office Hours:** Room 528, Leacock, Tuesday 1.30-3.30 p.m.; Thursday, 1.30-3.30 p.m.

**NOTE:**

“In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change”.

“McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information)”

“In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Student Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.”
# INTERSTATE PROTRACTED CONFLICTS ACTIVE SINCE END WORLD WAR I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Resolved</th>
<th>Unresolved</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Africa (6 PCs)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Angola</td>
<td></td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Chad/Libya</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DRC (Zaire)/Rwanda</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ethiopia/Somalia</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rhodesia</td>
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<td>1980</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Western Sahara</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td><strong>Americas (3 PCs)</strong></td>
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<td>Costa Rica/Nicaragua</td>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Ecuador/Peru</td>
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<td>1998</td>
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<td>Honduras/Nicaragua</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<td><strong>Asia (5PCs)</strong></td>
<td>Afghanistan/Pakistan</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>China/Japan</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>China/Vietnam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>India/Pakistan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
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<td>1999</td>
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<td><strong>Europe (6 PCs)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Finland/Russia-USSR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
<td>France/Germany</td>
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<td>1945</td>
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<td>Italy/Albania/Yugoslavia</td>
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<td>1953</td>
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<td>Lithuania/Poland</td>
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<td>1938</td>
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<td>Poland/Russia</td>
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<td>1981</td>
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<td>Yugoslavia</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Middle East (4 PCs)</strong></td>
<td>Arab/Israel</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td><strong>Iran/Iraq</strong></td>
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<td>Iraq/Kuwait</td>
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<td>Yemen</td>
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<td>1979</td>
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<td><strong>Inter-Region (9 PCs)</strong></td>
<td>Georgia/Russia-USSR</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Greece/Turkey</td>
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<td>Inter-Korea</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Iran/USSR</td>
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<td>1946</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Iraq Regime Change</td>
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<td>2003</td>
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<td><strong>North Korean Nuclear</strong></td>
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North Vietnam/U.S. 1975
Taiwan Strait X
East/West (U.S./USSR) 1989

Totals: 33 PCs

(The 4 PCs noted above in bold-underline are excluded from your preferred PC for the oral presentations and the 2 Term papers)

Note: Several PCs combine more than one pair of adversaries. Thus one may select one pair in the following multi-state PCs:

Arab/Israel: one of the following: Egypt/Israel; Israel/Jordan; Israel/Lebanon; Israel/Syria

Yugoslavia: one of the following: Bosnia/Serbia; Croatia/Serbia; Kosovo/Serbia, Slovenia/Serbia

East/West: France/USSR; U.K./USSR; U.S./USSR

North Korean Nuclear: North Korea/U.S.; North Korea/China; North Korea/South Korea re North Korean Nuclear; U.N. and North Korean Nuclear
Some Guidelines for the POLI 444 002 Papers (1)

Like all who engage in intellectual activity, students should attempt to solve puzzles. Herewith are some guidelines in writing your papers: the focus will be on research questions or puzzles about interstate protracted conflicts.

To this end, all of the information/data that you will assemble, in preparing for oral discussions in this course, should serve as the basis of answers in your two papers to the puzzles framed in this memo as Research Questions in the following sequence.

1. **WHEN** did your PC first emerge – which century, year and, if possible, month and day? To answer this question, explore the historical roots (context) in which your PC entered the stage of global system and/or regional sub-system politics. If you have a thesis to explain why your PC erupted *at that time*, that is, an explanation, present the thesis briefly here.

2. **WHO** were the principal adversaries at the *ONSET* of your PC? Were there more than two conflict actors? Indicate the principal adversaries (the states that were directly engaged throughout, or most of, your PC) and the conflict actors (those states that were direct participants in at least one of the international crises that occurred during this PC). Did the number of conflict actors change during the PC; if so, indicate any change(s) in the composition of your PC actors.

3. **HOW LONG** did your PC last? Discuss its evolution in terms of its **PHASES**? If you have a thesis to explain your conflict’s duration – very long (more than a century) *long* (50-99 years), *medium* (25-49 years) or *short* (10-24 years), present it here.

In answering these three clusters of Research Questions, that is, trying to resolve these puzzles, draw on the material you will assemble for the *conferences on Historical Roots*, in **Weeks 3 and 4** of the course.

4. **WHAT** caused your PC – its **Basic Cause(s)** and its **Precipitating Cause(s)**; that is, present the core explanation(s) and the catalyst(s) that set your PC in motion, that is, generated its *Onset*. Focus on the categories for Basic and Precipitating Causes set out in **Weeks 5 and 6** of this course Outline. If you have a thesis on **WHY** Factor A or Factors A and B…were Basic Causes and on **WHY** Factor X or Factors X and Y….were Precipitating Causes, frame them in your Paper 1.

5. **WHICH PERCEPTIONS** shaped the decision-makers’ views on *their own Goals and Capability*? Which perceptions shaped their views on *their Principal Adversary(ies)’ objectives and capability*? **WHAT** were their views of the desired and likely roles by their and their principal adversary’s patron(s), and the desired and likely role of involved major powers and international organizations? Draw on the material you will assemble
Guidelines for the POLI 444 002 Autumn Term Papers -2-

for Weeks 7 and 8 of the course.

REMINDER: The deadline for submitting your first paper at Leacock Room 528 is, 21 October 2019 at 5.00 noon.

For Paper 2 in this course, you should focus on the following puzzles.

6. WHO were the key DECISION-MAKERS of each principal adversary? WHAT were the Strategic and important Tactical DECISIONS by each principal Adversary? HOW were the Decisions reached by each of the principal Adversaries during the main Phases of your PC; that is, examine and clarify the DECISION-MAKING PROCESS for each of the principal adversaries in the different Phases of your PC. And present the Implementing Acts (BEHAVIOUR) to translate their decisions into actions. Use the material assembled for Weeks 9 and 10 of the course.

7. WHAT TECHNIQUES were employed by each principal adversary to sustain their Conflict? If VIOLENCE was used, how often was it initiated by each principal adversary. When, for What Duration, and with What Consequences? Do the same for the other conflict-sustaining Techniques – acts of POLITICAL HOSTILITY, PROPAGANDA, and ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION against the adversary(ies). Rely on the material assembled for Weeks 11 and 12. If you have a thesis to explain the reliance of either or both, or more of the principal adversaries on the Techniques used to keep the PC alive, frame it here and attempt to explain the reason(s) for reliance on this/these technique(s) to keep the PC in motion.

8. WHAT TECHNIQUES were used to manage the PC, that is, reduce the intensity and duration of violence in your PC) – DIPLOMACY/NEGOTIATIONS, and MEDIATION by patrons and/or allies, major powers and IOs. Specify illustrations of each of these Techniques: when were they undertaken; were they successful in Managing the PC or in Resolving the Conflict or neither; and what were the consequences? Rely on the material assembled for Week 13. If you have a thesis to explain the success or failure of these third party efforts to resolve the PC, present it, along with an attempted explanation of its positive or negative effect on conflict management and/or conflict resolution.

The DEADLINE for submitting a hard copy of Paper 2, at Leacock 528, and an on-line copy in WORD, is 9 December 2019, at 5.00 p.m.