

## Jerusalem, Holy City of Conflict and Desire

**Instructor:** Prof. Rachel F. Brenner  
104 Van Hise  
M/W/F 9:55 – 10:45  
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Jerusalem has been an object of desire and longing for the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It is the site of the Jewish Temples, of Jesus' Tomb, and of the Mosques of the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa. For thousands of years, Jerusalem and the Holy Land epitomizes has inspired artists and visionaries, while the desire to possess the city, the Land, and the holy places has caused hostilities, conflicts and wars which are by no means over. Starting with Abraham, the forefather of the three religions, we shall study the religious factors and the political interests demonstrated in the Holy Scriptures of the three religions, in the historical events, such as the Crusades, as well as in the poetry and the myths that have shaped the unique ethos of Jerusalem. We shall focus on the exploration of the historical, sociological, and psychological reasons for the emergence of the modern Zionist movement in Europe that resulted in the return to the Land and to the establishment of the Jewish State, a revolutionary event which reconfigured the position of Jerusalem in the consciousness of the world. Our investigation of the ways in which the European-based empires shaped the political-ethnic-national realities of the Middle East will provide a necessary component for the understanding of the current conflicts over Jerusalem and the Land of Israel/Palestine in particular and for the comprehension of the current situation in the Middle East at large. The study of the ethical, theological, and national components of the history of Jerusalem and the Land of Israel will guide our journey into this complex and conflicted part of the world.

## Requirements and Expectations

Every class will begin with a short discussion of current events which should relate to the Middle East. Each student will present a news item in no more than 3-4 sentences. You should make clear the importance of the news item you have chosen to present.

A brief summary of the readings required for each class. The summary should be 6-10 sentences long. It should present in a coherent manner the main ideas of the text. If there are more than one text to read, summarize all of them. You may also include questions about topics you have found difficult to understand. The paper must be **dated and typed double-space**. Please place the summary on my desk **before the beginning of the class. I will not accept papers at any other time.**

The mid-term exam will include the material studied in the first part of the semester.

The topic of the final (3-4 pp.) essay will be of your choice. You should write on a subject that we studied that you found of particular interest to you.

In preparation for the final essay, you will make an oral presentation of 5 minutes which will outline the main argument of your essay. The class will comment on the presentations and ask questions to clarify issues. The presentations will be made in the final sessions of the semester.

There will be two short essays (2-3 pages). Writing Fellows from the Writing Center will be working with you on the essays. For each WF essay you submit the **first version** of the essay. I collect these essays in class. The WF will read your essay carefully within a week, make comments, and have a conference with you the following week to discuss your writing and make suggestions for revision. You will revise the essay and submit within two weeks **both the first version and the revised version with a cover page on top explaining the changes.**

The first version of the essay is **typed double-space, appropriately documented**, of quality of what you would turn in for grading. I purposely do not call the text you will be discussing with the WF “a draft;” it will be the best possible **version** of an essay you could produce on your own. When you hand in the **final version**, you will write an explanation how you have rewritten the paper with the WF’s comments in mind. Please be sure to show respect for the help you are receiving and treat the meetings with the Fellow very seriously.

**Very important! Class participation is a major part of our study; it is a big component of the grade. Your participation and contributions to class discussion are absolutely necessary. Asking questions and raising issues of interest are encouraged and count as class participation.**

**Special events**  
(See dates in the syllabus)

**Dinner and film screening at Hillel (*Dancing in Jaffa*)**

**Two class film screenings**

**Public Lecture**

You will write short reports on the films we will watch at Hillel and in class and on the public lecture

1. Briefly summarize the theme of the film /lecture
2. What was the point that the film tried to prove? What was the main argument of the lecture?
3. Evaluate the film / Lecture.

**Expectations**

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend *all* classes. In case you must be absent, you need to let me know ahead of time. Unexcused absences will affect your grade. Late arrival to class or absence will be excused **only** due to illness or family emergency. Please make sure that you are **always** on time. If you miss a class, it is **your responsibility** to complete the material and the work you have missed.

**Attitude:** Your attitude is part of your grade. It includes being in class *on time*, deferring from using electronic devices during class time, concentration on the subject matter, and active participation.

**Please note:**

--The schedule of the **syllabus** and the **evaluation** are subject to change.

-- Any work that is in violation of the UW Code of Honor will be graded as 0 or Fail. For more information about how to avoid plagiarism and about proper paraphrasing and quoting, see <http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QuotingSources.html>

-- The use of your laptop should be limited to making notes concerning the materials discussed in class. Your focus should be on the ongoing discussion and on participation which is a very important component of our study. No other electronic devices are allowed.

-- Extensions on papers, essays, and the exam will not be granted.

-- Please let me know within the first two weeks of the semester about the dates on which you will need relief due to religious observance

**Evaluation (subject to change)**

Attendance and Attitude	5%
Class Participation	15%
News presentations	5%
Lecture and film reports	10%
Short papers	20%
Midterm	15%
Final essay presentation	5%
Final essay	25%

**Grading scale:**

92-100 A  
 89-91 AB  
 83-88 B  
 80-82 BC  
 71-79 C  
 65-70 D  
 64 and less F

**Required Texts:**

Arthur Hertzberg, Ed. *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*. New York: Atheneum, 1986.

Jonathan Marc Gribetz, *Defining Neighbors: Religion, Race, and the Early Zionist-Arab Encounter*

Electronic Reserve [R]

A course reader is available at Social Science Copy Center, 1180 Observatory Drive  
 Social Science Building. Sewell Hall, Room 6120

## Syllabus

### Students are expected to bring the assigned texts for every class

W. Jan. 20                    Introduction  
                                   Historical Outline (R)

### **I.                                Biblical Zionism**

F. Jan. 22                    Harry Orlinsky, “The Biblical Concept of Israel: Cornerstone of the  
 Covenant between God and Israel.” (R)  
 Psalms, 137, 126 (R)

### **II.                                The Period of the Second Temple and the Revolt**

M. Jan. 25                    Martin Goodman, “Jews and Judaism in the Second Temple Period.” (R)

W. Jan. 27                    Josephus Flavius, “Preface,” *The Wars of the Jews*. (R)

F. Jan. 29                    Review and **First Essay Assignment**

### **III.                                Theological Perceptions of Jerusalem**

M. Feb. 1                    **The Jewish Perspective - *Sefer Ha-Agadah*** [The Book of the Midrash]  
The Land of Israel: p. 359 – 1, 3, 7; p. 360-364 – 10, 15; p. 362 – 36, 41,  
 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57; p. 369 – 87, 88. [R]  
Mourning over the Destruction: p. 197 – 17, 20; p. 198 – 21, 22, 23, 24;  
 p.199 – 29. (R)

W. Feb. 3                    Redemption and the Days of the Messiah: p. 372 – 113, 114; p. 384 –61,  
 69; p. 391 – 21; p. 392 - 30, 31; p. 393 – 36; p. 394 – 49; 402 – 23, 27 (R)

F. Feb. 5                    **The Christian Perspective**  
 James C. Vanderkam, “The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament.”  
 [R]  
 Memorandum of the Patriarchs and the Christian Heads of the  
 Communities in Jerusalem on the Significance of Jerusalem for Christians.  
 (R)

- M. Feb. 8                    **The Muslim Perspective**  
 Yitzchak Reiter and Marwan Abu Khalaf,  
 “Jerusalem’s Religious Significance: Jerusalem in the Faiths of Judaism,  
 Christianity and Islam.” [R]  
 Ziad AbuAmr, “The Significance of Jerusalem: A Muslim Perspective.”  
 [R]

**First Version of First Essay due – make appointments with Writing Fellows**

- W. Feb. 10                    Film Screening  
**Jerusalem: Within These Walls**

- F. Feb. 12                    Film discussion

**IV.                                Religious Attitudes to Jews in the Diaspora**

- M. Feb. 15                    **Jewish Diaspora in Christian Lands**  
 Ram Ben Shalom, “Medieval Jewry in Christendom.” [R]

- W. Feb. 17                    **Christian Theological Views of Judaism**  
*The Gospel of Matthew*, chapter 1 [R]  
 “Bible Verses about the Jews.” [R]  
 “Church Fathers about Jews.” [R]  
 “Philip A. Cunningham, “The Modern Church’s Renunciation of Anti-  
 Judaism.” [R]

- F. Feb. 19                    **Jewish Diaspora in Moslem Lands**  
 Mark R. Cohen, “Medieval Jewry in the World of Islam.” (R)  
 Yehuda Halevi. *Biography and Poems.* (R)

**Final version of first essay due**

- M. Feb. 22                    **Muslim Perspective**  
 “A Chronology of the Qur’an.” [R]  
 “Quotes from the Qur’an and Hadith about Jews, Jerusalem and Israel.”  
 [R]  
 “Islam: References to Jews in the Qur’an.” [R]  
 “40 Ahadith Concerning Masjid Al-Aqsa.” [R]

- W. Feb. 24                    Summary and Review

**V. Jews in the Period of the Enlightenment**

- M. Feb. 29 David Sorkin, "Into the Modern World"  
**Part I** – Jews in Western Europe  
 Moses Mendelssohn, "The Right to be Different."
- W. March 2 **Part II** – Jews in Eastern Europe
- F. March 4 **Part III** – Modern Antisemitism and the Rise of Zion
- M. March 7 **Mid-term Exam**

**VI. The Foundations of Modern Zionism**

- W. March 9 Herzl: "Visionary of the Jewish State"  
 Herzberg, 2014-231  
 "The Dreyfus Affair." (R)

**Second Essay Assignment**

- F. March 11 "Nordau," – Herzberg, 233-241  
 "Jewry of Muscle" (R)
- W. Oct. 28 Herzberg, Ahad Ha-Am, "Biography," 249-251; "The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem," 262 – 269  
 Ahad Ha-Am, "The First Zionist Congress" (R)
- M. March 14 No Class  
 T. March 15 Lecture by Prof. Mirjam Zadoff  
 4:00 pm  
 Location and topic to be announced
- W. March 16 Discussion of the lecture
- F. March 18 Herzberg, "Aaron David Gordon," 369-383.  
 Techiah Liberson, "Those First Years," (R)  
 Deborah Dayan, "My Coming to Palestine," (R)  
 Judith Edelman, "In the War Years," (R)

**Spring Recess**

M. March 28 Shlomo Avineri, “Eliezer Ben Yehuda,” (R)

**First Version of the Second Essay Due –  
make appointments with Writing Fellows**

**VII. Ottoman Empire and the Jewish Settlement in Palestine**

W. March 30 Gribetz, Chapter I, “Locating the Zionist-Arab Encounter.”  
Introduction  
Jerusalem Palestine and the Holy Land (15-18)  
Jerusalem, the Ottoman Empire, and the Intercommunal  
Difference (18-26)

**The Arab Perspective**

F. April 1 Girbetz, Chapter I  
Jerusalem and Europe (29-31)  
Palestine’s Population (31-38)

M. April 4 No class  
Hillel Event – supper and film “Dancing in Jaffa”  
611 Langdon st.  
5:30-8:00

W. April 6 Discussion of the film

F. April 8 Girbetz, Chapter II, “Muhamad Ruhi al-Khalidi’s “as-Sayūnism”  
Introduction (39-40)  
The Ancient Jewish Link to Palestine (50-54)  
“Mendelssohn’s Theory” (54-56)

M. April 11 Girbetz, Chapter II  
Navigation between Sympathy and Fear (69-71)  
Realigning Interreligious Polemics in Palestine (73-76)  
Jews from East and West (85-89)  
Conclusion (92)



### **The Jewish Perspective**

- W. April 13 Yitchak Epstein, "The Hidden Question." (R)
- F. April 15 Hertzberg, "Martin Buber: Hebrew Humanism," (451-453; 457-463).  
Martin Buber, *The Land of Two People* (R)

### **Final Version of the Second Essay due**

- M. April 18 Film Screening  
**1913: Seeds of Conflict**
- W. April 20 Film discussion
- VII. The Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate**
- F. April 22 The Balfour Declaration (R)  
Gideon Shimoni, "Christian Precursors of Modern Zionism" [R]  
Robert O. Smith, "The Quest to Understand Christian Zionism." [R]  
Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, Afterword (R)
- M. April 25 Gribetz, "Conclusion"  
Religion and Race in the Age of the Mandate (237-240)  
"Irrespective of Race and Religion." (241-245)
- W. April 27 Religion, Race and the Contemporary Israeli-Palestinian  
Encounter (245-247)

### **VIII. Biographical Reflections of the Historical Period**

- F. April 29 Nitsa Ben-Ari, "S. Yizhar's Ambivalent Zionism and the First Sabra  
Generation." (R)
- Philippe Bourmaud, "'A Son of the Country'": Dr. Tawfiq Canaan,  
Modernist Physician and Palestinian Ethnographer" (R)

M. May 2, W. May 4 F. May 6 - Presentations of Essay Outlines

