



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Contesting the Land: Late Antique Jews and Christians in the Holy Land - 13920

Last update 16-08-2018

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: History of Jewish People & Contemporary Jewry

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Prof. Oded Irshai

Coordinator Email: oded.irshai@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Staff:

Prof Oded Irshai

Course/Module description:

Alongside the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the fourth century CE brought with it a novel interest of imperial and ecclesiastical circles in Roman Palestine culminating in a grand imperial plan to transfer the land into a Holy Land. This new development was accompanied by the birth of Christian pilgrimage and liturgy. How did these developments affect if at all the dialogue / polemics between Jews and Christians? The course will deal with various topics pertaining to this central issue

Course/Module aims:

The course is intended to tackle themes that are usually sidelined in dealing with the greater issues of the Christian-Jewish dialogue of Late Antiquity. That scholarly state of affairs is usually accompanied by several miss conceptions on the status of the Holy Land in the overall Christian outlook during that period. The course is intended to dispel these miss conceptions and to introduce a new understanding of that terrain.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Get closely acquainted with Patristic and rabbinic sources as well as get acquainted with modern theories concerning religious phenomena, and literary deconstruction theories.

Attendance requirements(%):

Full attendance

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Close reading of sources and evaluation of secondary literature as well as exposure to new venues of research

Course/Module Content:

Topics:

1. Introduction: Chronological Framework, Sources

M. Avi-Yona, The Jews of Palestine: A Political History from the Bar Cochba War to the Arab Conquest, NY 1976 ;S. Schwartz, Imperialism and Jewish Society 200 BCE To 640 C.E, Princeton NJ 2001, pp. 179-289; O. Irshai, 'The Byzantine Period', in: D. Biale (ed.)The Cultures of the Jews, New York, 2002, pp. 180-220 ; A. Cameron & P.

Garnsey (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. XIII: *The Late Empire, 337-425*, Cambridge 1997; A. Cameron et al. (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. XIV: *Late Antiquity Empire and Successors, AD 425-600*, Cambridge 2000; Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought*, New Haven 1992; G. Stemberger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land : Palestine in the Fourth Century*, Edinburgh 2000.

Sources and Bibliography on the Christian Holy Land:

J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*, Guildford 1977; E.D. Hunt, *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1982; P.W.L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places: Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century*, Oxford 1990; Andrew S. Jacobs, *The Holy Land and Christian Empire in Late Antiquity*, Stanford CA, 2004;

Resources: P. Maraval, *Lieux saints et pèlerinages d'Orient*, Paris 1985; Y. Tsafrir, L. Di Segni & J. Green, *Tabula Imperii Romani – Judaea Palaestina: Maps and Gazetteer*, Jerusalem 1994;

2. Political, Religious and Cultural Atmosphere in the Holy Land: Tense or Calm?

Bibliography: Glen W. Bowersock, 'Polytheism and Monotheism in Arabia and the Three Palaestines', *DOP* 50 (1997), pp. 1-10; G. Stemberger, (*supra*, section 1), pp. 298-315

3. Holy Space: Arch types and Phenomenology

Sources and Bibliography: M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, San Diego 1959, pp. 20-59; Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map is not Territory*, Leiden 1978; Eadem, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*, Chicago 1987;

The Notion of the Nave (Omphalos) of the World: Ph. Alexander, 'Jerusalem as the Omphalos of the World: On the History of a Geographical Concept', in: Lee I. Levine (ed.), *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*, New York 1999, pp. 104-120.

4. Christian Holy Space

Sources and Bibliography: Sections from Eusebius of Caesarea's *Onomasticon* and *The Martyrs of Palestine*.

R. Markus, 'How on Earth Could Places Become Holy? Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2 (1994), pp. 257-271; B. Caseau, 'Sacred Landscapes', in: G. W. Bowersock, P. Brown and O. Grabar (eds.), *Late Antiquity: A guide to the Post Classical World*, Cambridge Mass. 1999, pp. 21-59;

5. The Land and its Inhabitants in Early Christian Thought

Sources and Bibliography: A. Readings from the Gospels

W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, Berkeley 1974, pp. 28-44; G. Stemberger,

ibid. pp. 409-438.

B. Readings from Origen.

O. Irshai, 'From Oblivion to Fame: The History of the Palestinian Church (135-303 CE), in: O. Limor and Guy G. Stroumsa (eds.), *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land – From the Origins to the Latin Kingdom*, Turnhout 2006, pp. 91-139 (background); R. L. Wilken (*supra* section 1), pp. 46-81.

C. The Christianization of the Holy Land in the 4th Century in the Eyes of the Local Christian Leadership.

Readings from Eusebius of Caesarea, Cyril of Jerusalem and Gregory of Nyssa. L. Perrone, ' "Rejoice Zion Mother of All Churches": Christianity in the Holy Land During the Byzantine Era', in: Limor & Stroumsa (*supra*), pp. 141-173 (background); P. W. L. Walker, (*supra* section 1), pp. 93-130; 133-170; Jonathan Z. Smith, (*supra* section 1), pp. 74-95; B. Bitton – Ashkeloni, 'The Attitudes of Church Fathers toward Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries', in: Lee I. Levine (*supra* section 3), pp. 188-203; O. Limor, 'Reading Sacred Space: Egeria, Paula, and the Christian Holy Land', in: Y. Hen (ed.), *De Sion lex et verbum domini de Hierusalem: Essays on Mediieval Law, Liturgy and Literature in Honour of Amnon Linder*, Turnhout 2001, pp. 1-15.

6. Contest and Appropriation of the Land: The Case of Jerusalem

Sources and Bibliography: A. The Prohibition Concerning the Entering the City by Jews: History or Fiction? Readings will be submitted separately.

B. The Account of the Bordeaux Pilgrim (333 CE). Readings from the account in the translation by J. Wilkinson. J. Elsner, 'The Itinerarium Burdigalense: Politics and Salvation in the Geography of Constantine's Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies* 90 (2000), pp. 181-195.

C. The Apparition of the Cross in Jerusalem in 351 CE and the Jews: Spiritual Power and Politics. Readings from the Epistle of Cyril of Jerusalem to the Emperor Constantius II. Jan W. Drijvers, *Cyril of Jerusalem: Bishop and City*, Leiden 2004, pp. 153-176.

D. Julian the "Apostate" and the Jerusalem Temple. Readings from Julian's epistles and Against the Galileans, as well as from Christian histories and invectives. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism Vol. II*, Jerusalem 1980, pp. ... (Commentary on the Julian documentation); A. Momigliano, 'The Disadvantage of Monotheism for a Universal State', in: Idem, *On Pagans, Jews, and Christians*, Middletown CT. 1987, pp. 142-158.

7. The Demise of the Jewish Patriarchate and the Judeo-Christian Conflict

in the Galilee. Readings from Roman Imperial Law (translated and annotated by A. Linder) and from the Story of Joseph from Tiberias (according to Epiphanius'

Panarion ch.30), Lucian of Kafar Gamla and the Discovery of St. Stephen's Bones.

S. C. Goranson, 'Joseph of Tiberias Revisited: Orthodoxies and Heresies in Fourth Century Galilee', in: E. M. Meyers (ed.), *Galilee through the Centuries: Confluence of Culture*, Winona Lake ID, 1999, pp. 335-343; Andrew S. Jacobs, (*supra*, section 1), pp. 182-190. E. Reiner,

8. Synagogue Art and Polemics.

Sources and Bibliography: Readings and Slides will be submitted later.

G. Stemberger, (supra, section 1), pp. Lee I. Levine, The Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years, New Haven CT 2000; J. Elsner, 'Late Antique Art: The Problem of the Concept and the Cumulative Aesthetic', in: S. Swain & M. Edwards (eds.), Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire, Oxford 2004, pp. 271-309 (background); Lee I. Levine and Z. Weiss (eds.), From Dura to Sepphoris: Studies in Jewish Art and Society in Late Antiquity (Journal of Roman Archaeology, Suppl. Series, 40), Portsmouth RI, 2000; Z. weiss, The Sepphoris Synagogue: Deciphering an Ancient Message through Its Archaeological and Socio-Historical Contexts, Jerusalem 2005, pp.

9. The "End of Days" in a Polemical Context.

Sources and Bibliography: Readings will be submitted later.

O. Irshai, 'Dating the Eschaton: Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Calculations in Late Antiquity', in: A. I. Baumgarten (ed.), Apocalyptic Time, Leiden 2000, pp. 113-153.

Required Reading:

See above

Additional Reading Material:

There might be some minor changes in the secondary bibliography

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 15 %

Participation in Tutorials 40 %

Project work 30 %

Assignments 15 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

none