



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Between Heaven and Earth: The Conflict over al-Aqsa Mosque and the Temple Mount - 56175

Last update 14-03-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Political Science

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Eran Tzidkiyahu

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Coordinator Office Hours: Wednesday 15:00-16:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Eran Tzidkiyahu

Course/Module description:

The Temple Mount is Zion. Returning to Zion is the founding ethos of Zionism. The sanctity of al-Aqsa Mosque and safeguarding it in the cradle of Islam is the founding ethos of the Palestinian National Movement. The Holy Mount is not only the beating heart of the two biggest religions in the Holy Land and a protected value in their national and religious consolidation. It is also the most sensitive and explosive symbolic arena in the Jewish-Arab conflict in the Holy Land and the slippery slope threw which, time and again, tension is transformed into violence. During the course we will read texts regarding the Holy Mount, learn about the different Jewish and Muslim approaches to it, focus on the geopolitical context and will examine how the dynamics and interface between Jews, Muslims and the different authorities that are connected to the place lead time after time to escalation and violence. In addition, we will deal with the different approaches to political arrangements regarding the Mount, while paying attention to the normative gap between law and governance in a modern state and the normative systems that come into play in central holy sites in lasting conflicts.

Course/Module aims:

The course aims to learn and better understand the central role that the Holy Mount plays in Jewish-Arab relations in the Holy Land while emphasizing the points of contact, encounter, friction and interface between the different stakeholders in the site.

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

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Better understand the issue of the Holy Mount and its complexity from the perspective of both Israeli-Jews and Palestinian-Muslims.

To know the role of holy sites in a national conflict which contain an ethno-religious component as well as the normative gap between state laws and sovereignty to on the one hand, and the religious norms in the sacred site on the other hand.

Attendance requirements(%):

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

Part I: Chronological introduction

- 1. A holy place and a national place, holy places in conflict. Familiarity with the physical structure of the Holy Mount.*
- 2. The Temple Mount in Judaism (First Temple, Return to Zion, Second Temple, Destruction, Exile and Redemption); Al-Haram Al-Qudsi Al-Sharif and Al-Aqsa Mosque in Islam.*
- 3. Conflict dynamics: the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa at the end of the Ottoman period and during the British Mandate*

Part B: Thematic axis (conceptual)

- 4. A comparative approach: Zion and the Jewish national idea / Al-Aqsa and the Palestinian national movement*
- 5. The status quo as modus vindi: the arrangements in the first two decades of Israel's rule 1967-1996*
- 6. "The Temple Mount is in our hands" / "Al-Aqsa in danger": the physical and ideological consolidation around the Holy Mount after the 1967 war and the creation of a new religious-national ethos.*
- 7. The Mount and the peace process: the rock of our existence and the collapse of the status quo 1990-2000*

Part C: Recent developments, options for management and de-escalation at the holy site

- 8. From Camp David to the Al-Aqsa Intifada and up to the disengagement from Gaza: 2000-2005*
- 9. Consolidation around the Mount at the beginning of the 21st century: a decade of changes 2005-2015*
- 10. Arrangements for managing the Mount in a changing reality: the stabbings antafada of 2015, the 2017 metal detectors saga, Bab al-Rahma 2019 and up to the present.*
- 11. Denying the attachment of the other side: "Jerusalem does not appear in the Koran", "there was no Temple"*

12. Summary meeting.

Required Reading:

Chidester, David, and Linenthal Edwards T. (eds.). *American Sacred Space*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995. Read the introduction.

COHEN, Hillel. "The Temple Mount/al-Aqsa in Zionist and Palestinian National Consciousness - A Comparative View," *Israel Studies Review*. 2017, vol.32 1 (Summer). pp. 1-19.

Additional Reading Material:

Eliade, M. (1959). *THE SACRED AND THE PROFANE: THE NATURE OF RELIGION*. New York : Harper & Row, pp. 20-65.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 80 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 0 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 0 %
Other 10 %
presence

Additional information: