

JERUSALEM: SACRED SPACE, CONTESTED SPACE

RELSTY 125

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON

TUE/THU #####

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Course Description (long):

Jerusalem was and remains both a magnet for cultic devotion and an epicenter of religious conflict. This course examines the political, religious, and cultural history of Jerusalem, focusing primarily on Jerusalem as a concrete and conceptual phenomenon. Beginning our story in the Bronze Age, we will explore a wide range of sources—literary, archaeological, and iconographical—that bear witness to the remarkable transformation of a small, backwater village in the hills of Canaan to a sacred center for millions of Jews, Christians, and Muslims today. We will study the political, physical, and conceptual development of this urban space through its multiple destructions and reconstructions, considering the emergence of Jerusalem as a sacred space, an apocalyptic space, and a contested space. We will also give some attention to the political tensions in modern Jerusalem, using our study of the past to inform our consideration of the present.

Course Description (short):

This course traces the history of Jerusalem from the Bronze Age to the present. Using a sampling of relevant primary sources (e.g., literary, archaeological, iconographical), students will study the political, physical, and conceptual development of this urban space through its multiple destructions and reconstructions, considering especially the emergence of Jerusalem as a sacred space for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Students will also give some attention to the political tensions in modern Jerusalem, using the study of the past to inform reflection on the present.

Course Objectives:

- To stoke the embers of intellectual curiosity. I want you to leave this class not with a notebook full of answers but with an inquisitive mind that thirsts to explore—beyond the walls of UMass—the many complex and contested dimensions of Jerusalem’s past and present.
- To gain a basic mastery of the major issues and data relevant to the study of the history of Jerusalem.
- To develop skills in interpreting diverse primary source material, learning the art of reading ancient and modern sources—literary and archaeological—within their original contexts.
- To develop skills in critical thinking by reading, analyzing and discussing scholarly arguments. Becoming thoughtful, careful, articulate thinkers will serve you well in the future, whether you become a doctor, journalist, CEO, or POTUS.

Course Textbooks:

- Eric H. Cline, *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*. The University of Michigan Press, 2004 (ISBN: 0-472-11313-5). Hereafter abbreviated Cline.
- An English translation of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) and New Testament.
 - Recommended: *The HarperCollins Study Bible*, 2006 (ISBN: 9780060786847).

- Supplementary readings posted on Blackboard. Hereafter abbreviated BB.

Course Requirements:

- **Regular attendance, daily readings, and in-class participation (10%)**
 - Completion of assigned readings must be done *before* the class day indicated.
 - Each student is allotted 4 personal days for the semester, to be used (or not) at your discretion. Each absence in excess of 4 will result in the loss of ½ point. Please note: I make no distinction between “excused” or “unexcused” absences, which means you are responsible to use your personal days wisely. Also note: You are still responsible for the material/readings on days missed, so make sure you find a reliable student to share notes.
- **Response Papers (40%)**
 - There will be 4 short response papers (1–2 pages) focused on a specific reading assignment (10% each).
 - Each paper will respond to the questions/instructions indicated on the assignment schedule (below).
 - The goal of these papers is to facilitate critical engagement with a wide range of sources, from ancient texts to scholarly articles and books.
- **Midterm Exam (25%)**
- **Final Exam (25%)**

Course Policies:

1. **Classroom Etiquette:** This class will begin promptly, so please arrive on time and remain for the duration of the class. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please see me in advance to let me know. Additionally, the following commandments (sorry, I don’t have 10 of them!) will govern our sessions together:
 - a. Be attentive, and take notes. Snoring will not be tolerated.
 - b. Laptops/tablets are discouraged (but not outright prohibited).
 - c. Cellphones must be put away with ring tones turned off.
 - d. Please feel free to chime in with substantive comments and/or intelligent questions (but no snide remarks) during class, but be considerate of others and avoid unnecessary disruptions. Moreover, given that religion can be a potentially contentious topic of conversation, we must strive for respectful and civil dialogue in the classroom.
2. **Late/Missed Exam:** If you arrive late for an examination, you will not receive extra time to complete it. If you miss an examination, you are responsible to schedule with me a penalized make-up session. Your exam will lose 5% points for each class day following the scheduled exam (e.g., a Monday exam taken on Wednesday can receive a maximum of 95%). You may not receive any credit for the exam after 1 week. In cases of emergencies or other extreme circumstances (e.g., a death in the family or personal/medical crisis), please contact me *as soon as possible* and *in advance* (if possible) so that we can make appropriate arrangements.
3. **Academic integrity:** Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Massachusetts Boston Policy on Academic Integrity. Please refer to the university policies on student conduct found online: http://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/community/code. Please review these policies and strictly adhere to them in the class and in all of your work. Failure to do so may result in: (1) minimally, a loss of credit for any assignment or exam found in violation of the rules; (2) forced withdrawal or a grade of “F” for the entire course; (3) suspension from the College; or (4) permanent dismissal.

4. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism, as a form of intellectual theft, is the unpardonable sin in academia and thus will not be tolerated. It is imperative that the written and oral work that you present in this course reflect your own reading, critical analysis, and writing. Plagiarism includes:
 - a. submitting someone else’s work in your name whether that someone else is someone you know or someone who posted their work on the Internet (whether you paid for the material or not);
 - b. submitting your own work from another course without disclosure to the instructor;
 - c. copying passages verbatim or in close paraphrase from published or unpublished material written by someone else without properly using quotation marks and/or without citing your source.

5. **Classroom Recordings:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas (and, selfishly, to protect me from becoming a YouTube viral sensation!), students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

6. **Disabilities:** If you have a disability or special need pertinent to the class structure, assignments, or exams, please inform me as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations to ensure full participation and educational opportunity. If you have a disability and feel you will need accommodations in order to complete course requirements, please contact the Ross Center for Disability Services, Campus Center, UL Room 211 at 617-287-7430; <http://www.umb.edu/academics/vpass/disability>.

Grading Scale:

A 94–99	B+ 87–89	C+ 77–79	D+ 67–69	
A- 90–93	B 84–86	C 74–76	D 64–66	F 59 and below
	B- 80–83	C- 70–73	D- 60–63	

Lecture/Assignment Schedule:

DATE	LECTURE	ASSIGNMENT
TUE	Course Introduction and Orientation	
THU	Sacred Space, Contested Space: Conceptual Foundations of Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 1–10
TUE	The Elephant in Jerusalem: The Politics of Historiography	READ Nadia Abu el-Haj, <i>Facts on the Ground</i> (selections on BB) Response Paper 1: <i>Nadia Abu el-Haj’s book created an academic/political firestorm after its publication in 2001. Your reading selection focuses on her critique of Israeli archaeologists digging in Jerusalem. Summarize her argument/critique of Israeli archaeology. Why do you suppose her argument was so controversial? Assess the (de)merits of her argument.</i>
THU	Canaanite Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 11–19; Joshua 10:1–15; Judges 1
TUE	David and Solomon’s Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 19–35; Finkelstein, “King Solomon’s Golden Age: History or Myth” (BB)

		Response Paper 2: <i>Compare Cline and Finkelstein on Jerusalem under David and Solomon. Finkelstein's interpretation has elicited strong, in some cases vitriolic, opposition. Why?</i>
THU	Hezekiah and the Emergence of a Jerusalem Mythology	READ 2 Kings 17–20 // 2 Chronicles 29–32; Isaiah 7–11, 37–39
TUE	Josiah's Reforms and the Centralization of Jerusalem	READ 2 Kings 22–25 // 2 Chronicles 34–35; Psalms 79, 122–127, 137
THU	Jerusalem in the Shadow of Babylon	READ Cline, pp. 36–67; 2 Kings 24–25 // 2 Chronicles 36; Daniel 1–6
TUE	Jerusalem in Exile: Prophetic Voices	READ Jeremiah 1–7, 26, 29–33; Ezekiel 40–48; Isaiah 40–53
THU	Sex and the City: A Gendered Jerusalem	READ Lamentations; Ezekiel 16; Isaiah 54–66 Response Paper 3: <i>Summarize the various ways Jerusalem is gendered in these prophetic sources.</i>
TUE	A Persian Jerusalem	READ Ezra 3–10; Nehemiah 2–6; Haggai 1–2; Elephantine Papyri (BB)
THU	*** Midterm Exam ***	
TUE	Urban Life in the Greco-Roman Mediterranean	READ Scobie, “Slums, Sanitation, and Mortality in the Roman World” (BB); Hopkins, “A World Full of Gods” (BB)
THU	The Hellenization of Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 68–95; Peters, “Jews and Greeks in Jerusalem” Part 1 (BB)
TUE	Jerusalem under the Maccabees	READ Peters, “Jews and Greeks in Jerusalem” Part 2 (BB)
THU	Roman and Herodian Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 96–110; Peters, “Jews and Greeks in Jerusalem” Part 3 (BB)
TUE	Sectarian Resistance to Jerusalem	READ <i>Dead Sea Scrolls</i> selections (BB)
THU	Jesus, Jerusalem, and the End of the World	READ Matthew 24–27; Revelation 21–22 Response Paper 4: <i>Summarize the portrayal of Jerusalem in the assigned apocalyptic sections of the New Testament.</i>
TUE	Jerusalem under Siege: First Revolt and Destruction of the Temple	READ Cline, pp. 110–35; Peters, “Not a Stone upon a Stone” Part 1 (BB)
THU	Documentary—Jerusalem (National Geographic)	***No Reading (or catch-up on missed readings!)* **
TUE	From Jerusalem to Aelia Capitolina	READ Peters, “Not a Stone upon a Stone” Part 2 (BB)
THU	Byzantine Jerusalem	READ Peters, “Mother of All the Churches” (BB)
TUE	The Arrival of Islam: Muhammad's Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 136–63; Peters, “Muslims Come to Jerusalem” (BB)
THU	Crusader Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 164–200; Peters, “Jerusalem under the Latin Cross” (BB)
THU	Mamluk and Ottoman Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 201–234
TUE	Whose Jerusalem? The Struggle for Peace in Modern Jerusalem	READ Cline, pp. 235–310

THU	Open Session: Catch-up and Review for Final	
###	*** FINAL EXAM ***	

Syllabus Disclaimer: While this syllabus articulates the scope and expectations of this course, I reserve the right to institute minor adaptations or modifications (emphasis on *minor*) as needed.

Select Bibliography:

Armstrong, Karen. *Jerusalem: Once City, Three Faiths*. Ballantine Books, 1997.

Abu el-Haj, Nadia. *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society*. University of Chicago Press, 2002.

Bahat, Dan. *The Carta Jerusalem Atlas*. Carta, 2011.

Cline, Eric H. *Jerusalem Besieged: From Ancient Canaan to Modern Israel*. The University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Eliav, Yaron Z. *God's Mountain: The Temple Mount in Time, Place, and Memory*. Johns Hopkins University, 2005.

Finkelstein, Israel. "King Solomon's Golden Age: History or Myth" in *The Quest for the Historical Israel: Debating Archaeology and the History of Early Israel*. SBL, 2007.

Goodman, Martin. *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations*. Vintage, 2008.

Montefiore, Simon Sebag. *Jerusalem: The Biography*. Vintage, 2012.

Peters, F. E. *Jerusalem: The Holy City in the Eyes of Chroniclers, Visitors, Pilgrims, and Prophets from the Days of Abraham to the Beginnings of Modern Times*. Princeton University Press, 1985.