

**Walking the Holy Land:
Religious Pilgrimage and Modern Hiking in Israel/Palestine**

JUST 284R
Fall 2015
Class time: TR 1:15 PM-2:40 PM
LN 2407

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Course description:

This course is a history of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, examined through the lens of the many religious and political movements that have attached meaning to the act of walking across that land.

In the Torah, God commands Abraham to go and walk the Land of Israel; later, annual visits to Jerusalem were mandated in Jewish law. The journeys of Jesus and his disciples gave Christians a spiritual map for the eventual placement of physical shrines across the Holy Land. After the Islamic conquest, Jerusalem and the surrounding land of Palestine hosted Muslim pilgrimage destinations as well. Religious processions and journeys served as expressions of faith, but also as religious adherents' assertions of their right to live and worship in the land.

Spiritual journeys continued through late Ottoman Palestine, the British Mandate, and the establishment of the State of Israel. At the same time, competing national movements began using walking as a way of claiming territory. Religious processions became political demonstrations, and outdoor hikes became military reconnaissance expeditions. To this day, walking in Israel/Palestine/the Holy Land seems to be more than just walking, and trails seem to be more than just trails.

Through the use of selected readings, maps, films, and other materials, this course will give students the chance to explore the spectrum of religious and political meanings attached to the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, and examine how those meanings have been articulated through the act of walking from the late Ottoman period to the present day.

Course objectives:

This course is a 4-credit course, which means that in addition to the scheduled meeting times, students are expected to do at least 9.5 hours of course-related work outside of class each week during the semester. This includes time spent completing assigned readings, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.

In addition, this course fulfills the Humanities ("H") general education requirement. Students in H courses will demonstrate an understanding of human experience through the study of literature or philosophy.

This course also fulfills the Oral Communication ("O") general education requirement. Students in O courses will demonstrate:

1. Proficiency in oral presentations

2. The ability to improve oral presentations in response to critiques
3. Skill in listening to and critiquing oral presentations

Finally, this course aims for the following more specific learning outcomes:

- To familiarize students with the geography and modern history of Israel
- To give students a sense of the value of walking as a religious and political act
- To show how societies use human presence to make claims on territory
- To illustrate the Jewish and non-Jewish layers of meaning that burden the territory of the modern State of Israel
- To examine similarities and differences between religious pilgrimage and ostensibly secular forms of walking, such as modern hiking

Required books:

- Anita Shapira, *Israel: A History* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2012)

Additional course readings (available on Blackboard and/or reviewed in class):

- Oz Almog, *The Sabra: The Creation of the New Jew* (Los Angeles: University of California, 2000), [introduction and chapter 4]
- Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the 19th Century* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 1979), 11-17; 85-91; 191-226.
- Meron Benvenisti, "An Image of a Homeland," from *Conflicts and Contradictions* (New York: Villard, 1986), 17-46.
- Meron Benvenisti, "The Hebrew Map," from *Sacred Landscape: The Buried History of the Holy Land Since 1948* (Los Angeles: University of California, 2000), 11-54.
- Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth: Collective Memory and Mythmaking in Israel* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1995), 71-126 [chapters 4-5]
- BILU, "Manifesto," in *Israel in the Middle East*, eds. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2007), 12-15
- Jorge Luis Borges, "On Exactitude in Science," in *The Aleph and Other Stories*, trans. Andrew Hurley (New York: Penguin, 2000), 181.
- Tawfik Canaan, *Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine* (London: Luzac and Co., 1927), 1-47.
- Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage: Past and Present in the World Religions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997) (various selections)
- Mircea Eliade, "Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred," from *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), 20-67.
- A.D. Gordon, "Our Tasks Ahead," in Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997), 379-383.
- Gershom Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006), 1-41.
- Arthur Hertzberg, introduction to A.D. Gordon, in *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1997).
- Walid Khalidi, *All That Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992) [excerpts].
- Walter Z. Laqueur, *Young Germany: A History of the German Youth Movement* (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 3-24.

- Charles Liebman and Eliezer Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel: Traditional Judaism and Political Culture in the Jewish State* (Los Angeles: University of California, 1983), 1-24 [chapter 1].
- David Lowenthal, "Geography, Experience, and Imagination: Towards a Geographical Epistemology," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 51: 3 (September 1961), 241-260.
- R.A. Markus, "How On Earth Could Places Become Holy?: Origins of the Christian Idea of Holy Places," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2:3 (Fall 1994), 257-271.
- Thomas Merton, "From Pilgrimage to Crusade," from *Mystics and Zen Masters* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1967), 91-112.
- Boaz Neumann, "Pioneers and Pioneerism," from *Land and Desire in Early Zionism* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2011), 1-28.
- Leo Pinsker, "Auto-Emancipation," in *Israel in the Middle East*, eds. Itamar Rabinovich and Jehuda Reinharz (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2007), 10-11
- Shay Rabineau, "Israeli Hiking and the First Trail Network," from *Marking and Mapping the Nation: The History of Israel's Hiking Trail Network*, (unpublished dissertation, Brandeis University, 2013), 115-166.
- Raja Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks: Forays into a Vanishing Landscape* (New York: Scribner, 2011), xiii-41 [introduction and chapter 1]
- Alon Tal, "The Emergence of an Israeli Environmental Movement," from *Pollution in a Promised Land: An Environmental History of Israel* (Los Angeles: University of California, 2002), 115-156.
- Yi-Fu Tuan, "Sacred Space: Explorations of an Idea," in *Dimensions of Human Geography: Essays on Some Familiar and Neglected Themes*, ed. Karl W. Butzer (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978), 84-99.
- Victor Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal," *History of Religions* 12:3 (February 1973), 191-230.
- Charles Warren, "Remarks on a Visit to 'Ain Jidy and the Southern Shores of the Dead Sea in Mid-Summer 1867." *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* 1 (January-March 1869), 143-150.
- Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (University of Chicago, 1995), 114-137 [chapter 8].

Course requirements and grading procedures:

Overview: Students will be graded on two in-class presentations, a final paper, and class participation.

Presentations: The first presentation will be 5-10 minutes in length, will relate to one of the assigned readings, and can be given in tandem with another student. First presentations will take place on a rolling basis through the first part of the semester. In the second presentation, which will also be 5-10 minutes in length, individual students will give overviews of their final papers (see below) to the class.

Feedback on presentations: Student presenters will receive feedback on their presentations from the class. For each presentation, class audience members will fill out a short worksheet that offers constructive critiques on criteria including: a) rapport with the audience; b) voice, projection, and audibility; c) clarity of purpose; d) originality of ideas; e) organization; f) persuasiveness of evidence; g) ability to respond to questions; h) effectiveness of visual/electronic aids. This feedback is intended to enable students to improve their skills for the final presentation. Offering constructive feedback to presenters is a part of each student's class participation grade (see below).

Final papers: The final papers will be 7-10 pages in length (double-spaced, one-inch margins, Times New Roman font), and will synthesize the readings, lectures, and class discussions with a topic determined in consultation with the instructor.

Preparation for second presentation and final paper: By Week 8 of the course, students will have determined a final topic in consultation with the instructor. By Week 12, students will have updated the instructor on their overall progress. During Weeks 15 and 16, students will conduct their second presentations. Final drafts of papers will be submitted to the instructor via e-mail during finals week. Deadline will correspond with the conclusion of the allotted final exam time (to be announced).

Class participation: Participation is a large part of the grade. Attendance affects class participation (see below); unexcused absences and excessive tardiness will count against students' participation grades. Overall, students will be evaluated on overall performance in the areas of a) preparation (arriving at class with necessary materials and having read required readings); b) analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information presented in readings and in class; c) substantive contributions to class discussions; d) offering feedback on other students' presentations; e) ongoing involvement in the course.

Grades: Grades will be given in the following proportions:

- First presentation over one of the class readings: 15%
- Second presentation on final paper topic: 25%
- Final paper: 40%
- In-class participation: 20%

Grading scale:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	60-70%
F	Below 60%

Attendance: All students are expected to attend class meetings, and to be ready for class on time. Class will begin at exactly 1:15 PM. Attendance affects final grades (see "Class participation" and "Grades" above), and students must attend at least 75% of the class sessions in order to receive a passing grade for the course. Absences will be excused for religious observances, illnesses (medical documentation is required), and other extenuating circumstances, subject to approval from the instructor.

Option for first presentation: Rather than building the first presentation solely around a reading, students may opt to take a local walk that puts concepts from the readings into practice, and thereby incorporate their own experiences into the material presented.

Schedule of readings:

The schedule below is subject to change at the instructor's discretion, based on the evolution of the course over the semester. In the event of changes, students will be notified ahead of time either in class or via e-mail. At the end of each class session, the instructor will give the priority levels for the next session's readings.

- **Week 1 (Sept. 1, 3): Overview and symbolic significance of walking**
 - Borges, "On Exactitude in Science"
 - Lowenthal, "Geography, Experience, and Imagination"
 - Tuan, "Sacred Space"
- **Week 2 (Sept. 8, 10): Jewish pilgrimage and the spiritual map of Eretz Israel**
 - Sign up for Week 15-16 final presentation slots
 - Coleman and Elsner, introduction and chapter 1
 - Turner, "The Center Out There: Pilgrim's Goal"
 - Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela
 - In class: selections from Hebrew Bible, Talmud, medieval works
- **Week 3 (Sept. 17): Islamic pilgrimage and the spiritual map of Palestine**
 - OFF September 15 (Rosh Hashanah)
 - Coleman and Elsner, chapter 2
 - Canaan, "Saints and Shrines in Palestine"
- **Week 4 (Sept. 24): Christian pilgrimage and the spiritual map of the Holy Land**
 - OFF September 22 (Erev Yom Kippur)
 - Coleman and Elsner, chapter 5
 - Markus, "How on Earth Could Places Become Holy?"
 - Merton, "From Pilgrimage to Crusade"
- **Week 5 (Sept. 29, Oct. 1): Western explorers and the "rediscovery" of the Holy Land through walking**
 - Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land*, 85-91; 191-226.
 - Robinson, *Biblical Researches in Palestine* (selections)
 - Warren, "Remarks on a Visit to 'Ain Jidy"
 - Comparison: Biblical map, Ottoman map, Robinson map, PEF map
- **Week 6 (Oct. 6, 8): Modern hiking, youth movements, and Zionism in Europe**
 - Shapira, chapter 1, "The Emergence of the Zionist Movement"
 - Pinsker, "Auto-Emancipation"
 - BILU, "Manifesto"
 - Laqueur, *Young Germany: A History of the German Youth Movement* (selections)
 - In class: YIVO Encyclopedia, "Landkentenish"
- **Week 7 (Oct. 13, 15): Labor Zionism and "knowing the Land of Israel"**
 - Shapira, chapter 3, "Palestine Under British Rule"
 - Neumann, "Pioneers and Pioneerism"
 - Hertzberg, introduction to A.D. Gordon
 - Gordon, "Our Tasks Ahead"
- **Week 8 (Oct. 20, 22): The Judean Desert and Masada – the "centers out there" of hiking in British Mandate Palestine**
 - REMINDER: Determine final paper topic by October 22

- Liebman and Don-Yehiya, *Civil Religion in Israel*, chapter 1
- Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth*, chapter 4
- Zerubavel, “The Rock and the Vow”
- **Week 9 (Oct. 27, 29): The Palmach and the militarization of Jewish hiking**
 - Shapira, chapter 6, “The Yishuv: Society, Culture and Ethos”
 - Almog, *The Sabra*, introduction and chapter 4
 - Ben-Yehuda, *The Masada Myth*, chapter 5
- **Week 10 (Nov. 3, 5): The first hiking trail system in the Middle East**
 - Shapira, chapter 7, “The War of Independence”
 - Benvenisti, “The Hebrew Map”
 - Rabineau, “The First Trail Network”
 - In class: selections from *Palestine Post* on 1947 hiking accidents
- **Week 11 (Nov. 10, 12): Hiking in the post-1967 Middle East**
 - Shapira, chapter 13, “Six Days that Changed the Middle East”
 - Benvenisti, “An Image of a Homeland”
 - Gorenberg, *The Accidental Empire*, 1-41
 - Tal, “The Emergence of an Israeli Environmental Movement”
 - In class: Judean Desert, Eilat Mountains trail maps
- **Week 12 (Nov. 17, 19): The idea of an Israeli “national trail”**
 - REMINDER: Update Prof. Rabineau on final paper topic by Nov. 19
 - Shapira, chapter 17, “A Decade of Hope: 1990-2000”
 - In class: Oslo Areas A, B, and C in West Bank
 - In class: Michael Druks, *Druksland*, 1974 (visual art)
- **Week 13 (Nov. 24): The rise of Palestinian hiking**
 - OFF November 26 (Thanksgiving)
 - Shehadeh, *Palestinian Walks*, introduction and Chapter 1
 - In class: Sufi Trails (www.sufitrails.ps)
- **Week 14 (Dec. 1, 3): Hiking trails as articulations of other national identities**
 - Khalidi, *All That Remains* (excerpts)
 - In class: Lecture and discussion over Alternative Israel Trail, Palestinian National Trail, Jesus Trail, Gospel Trail, Abraham Path
- **Week 15 (Dec. 8, 10): Final class presentations**
 - Students present based on earlier sign-up sheet
 - Questions and answers/discussion time to follow
- **Week 16 (Dec. 15): Final class presentations, continued**
 - Students present based on earlier sign-up sheet
 - Questions and answers/discussion time to follow

FINAL PAPERS DUE: [to be announced during finals week, Dec. 17-23]

Other fine print:

Educational Environment: Binghamton University is committed to serving all enrolled students in a respectful and intellectually stimulating atmosphere. In return, it is expected that each student will honor

and respect the opinions and feelings of his/her fellow students. If anyone has concerns that this atmosphere is not being upheld, please contact the instructor immediately.

Electronic Devices: In keeping with a respectful class environment, please turn off all phones and other electronic devices during class time. Laptops are permitted for note-taking or for viewing documents; however, if any student uses such a device in a disruptive manner, or for activities unrelated to class lectures, readings, and discussions, the student will be asked to turn off the device, and his/her class participation grade will be affected.

Academic Integrity: Binghamton University provides explicit guidelines in the Student Academic Honesty Code. Unless specified otherwise in the syllabus, all student work submitted for grading should be the work of the student and the student alone. Not acknowledging another person's work with proper references, taking credit for someone else's work, letting work appear in another student's paper, fabricating results, or engaging in unauthorized collaboration on a paper or exam are grounds for failing a given assignment and/or the course. The Academic Honesty Code specifically prohibits "submitting substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once, unless there is prior explicit consent of the instructor(s) to whom the material is being or has been submitted." If anyone has questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, please ask the instructor.

Student Grievances: Harpur College outlines procedures regarding grievances about course grades. The first step is for students to contact the instructor to discuss any concerns. If anyone has any questions or concerns about grades received for any assignment, please arrange to meet with the instructor.