

The International MA Program in Conflict Resolution and Mediation

The Gershon H. Gordon
Faculty of Social Sciences
Tel Aviv University

Religious Approaches to Conflict Resolution

Course code: 1044-4053 Fall 2023 Thursdays 16:00 – 17:30

Naftali 004

Prof. Yitzhak Reiter: yr2121995@gmail.com

Office hours: Thursday 15:00-16:00 (by appointment)

Course Description:

It is increasingly becoming evident that for peace and conflict resolution approaches to be effective and sustainable they must take into consideration the religious traditions of the communities involved. As such, religions have direct impacts on the way peace is conceptualized and the way conflicts are resolved in different societies, because they embody and elaborate upon the highest morals, ethical principles and ideals of social harmony. In addition, most of the territorial and national conflicts in the world have an embedded religious nature, and this aspect makes such conflict more difficult to manage and resolve.

For that reason, conflict resolution scholars and practitioners must take into consideration the religious and traditions of the communities to address conflicts involving them, especially in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. Although the current image of religion is often associated with conflict and violence, in fact, notions of peacebuilding are deeply embedded in the religious vision of the communities and religious leaders have developed various approaches and tools to address conflicts. Exploring different perspectives religious conflict resolution approaches, this course will explore principles, values, and practices of peace and conflict resolution rooted in religious traditions. This is an interactive course in which students are expected to engage with the ideas and thoughts presented in the class through the study of religious texts, dialogue, and theoretical academic research.

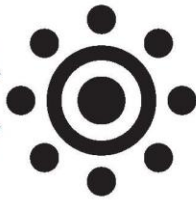
Theoretical and practical aspects of the religious role in conflicts and conflict resolution will help us to better understand the sources of conflict and how religious texts, cultures and communities deal with conflicts and hopefully tips on how they can be solved.

The final goal of this course is to conduct in class a Simulation play of negotiating the future of the Jerusalem Holy Compound within the framework of the Jewish Israeli and the Muslim-Palestinian conflict.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Active participation: 10% of your final grade will be based on attendance and the quality of your participation in class. Reading assignments should be completed before the class for which they are assigned.

Reflection Article: 10% of your final grade will be based on a 1-2 pages reflection paper. They should include, your name, the name of the article, a couple of key points that you learned and questions you are left with after reading the article. The reflection paper must be



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submitted by the due November 30. Students are required to submit an electronic copy of all assignments.

Final Paper: 80% of your grade will be your final assignment. The final assignment will be based upon the preparation for the simulation. Instructions for the final assignment will be given in class. The final assignment is due by January 4, 2024 at midnight. Students are required to submit an electronic copy of all assignments via the Moodle.

Course Outline

1. Theoretical approaches to religious-based conflict resolution (Oct. 19)

Required reading:

- On the Significance of Religion in Conflict and Conflict Resolution First Book in the Religion Matters Book Series (co-edited with Christine Schliesser and Pauline Kollontai), Taylor Francis/Routledge, 2021
<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/39905> Chapter 6, 7, and 10
- Marc Gopin (2000), *New Paradigms of Religion and Conflict Resolution: A Case Study of Judaism in Between Eden and Armageddon*, Oxford University Press, pp. 167 – 195.

Recommended:

- Katrien Hertog, *The Complex Reality of Religious Peacebuilding: Conceptual Contributions and Critical Analysis*, Lexington Books, 2010, pp. 1-38.

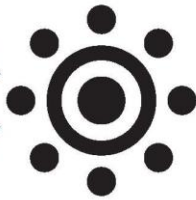
2. Religious narratives in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Oct. 26)

Required reading:

- Reiter, Yitzhak and Herman, Or (2022), *Contested Israeli and Palestinian Narratives of Jerusalem*. In: Kumaraswamy, P.R. (eds) *The Palgrave International Handbook of Israel*. Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.
- Urban, J. "Isaac and Ishmael, Opportunities for Peace within Religious Narratives", *Journal of Religion, Conflict and Peace*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, Spring, 2009.
<http://www.religionconflictpeace.org/volume-2-issue-2-spring-2009/isaac-andishmael>

Recommended:

- Jack Berriault (Author), Rick Phillips (eds.) (2020). *Israel and Palestine: A Common Historical Narrative*, New York: Israel Academic Press, pp. 25-33.
- Reiter Y., (2013). "Narratives of Jerusalem and its Sacred Compound", *Israel Studies* 18:2 (Summer), pp. 111-132.



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3. Is religion a barrier or an advantage for achieving peace in the Middle East? (Nov. 2)

Required reading:

- Reiter, Yitzhak, "Religion as a Barrier to Compromise in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict", in *Barriers to Peace in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Yaacov Bar-Siman Tov, ed.), The Jerusalem Institute for Israeli Studies, 2010 Chapter 6.
- Gopin Marc (2005). *Bridge or Barrier : Religion, Violence and Visions for Peace in* Gerrie ter Haar, & James Busuttil (eds.) *World Religions, Violence, and Myths of Peace in International Relations*. Brill pp. 35-56.

4. Hallowed land: The link between religion and land in territorial conflicts (Nov. 9)

Required reading:

- Ben-Israel, Hedva (1998). "Hallowed Land in the Theory and Practice of Modern Nationalism", in Benjamin Z. Kedar and R.J. Zvi Werblowsky (eds.), *Sacred Space: Shrine, City and Land*. Macmillan and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, pp. 278-294.
- Reiter, Y. (2007). "All of Palestine is Holy Muslim Waqf Land' – A Myth and Its Roots." In Ron Shaham (ed.). *Law, Custom, and Statute in the Muslim World, Studies in Honor of Aharon Layish*. Leiden and Boston: E.J. Brill, pp. 172-197.

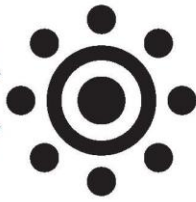
Recommended:

- Reiter, Y. (2008). *Jerusalem and its Role in Islamic Solidarity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 11-36.
- Little, David (2007), *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, Cambridge University Press, "The Settler who met Arafat", pp 341-356.
- Benvenisti, Meron (2001) *Sacred Landscape: Buried History of the Holy Land Since 1948*. University of California Press, 2001, pp. 270-316.

5. Islamic approach to war, peace and conflict resolution (Nov. 16)– guest lecturer – Prof. Mustafa Abu Sway (Al-Quds University)

Required reading:

- Abu Sway, M. (2006). "The Concept of Hudna (Truce) in Islamic Sources". *Palestine-Israel Journal*, 13:3. <https://pij.org/articles/860/the-concept-of-hudna-truce-in-islamic-sources>
- "Islamic Tradition of Nonviolence: A Hermeneutical Approach" In *Identity, Morality, and Threat: Towards a Theory of Identity-based Conflict* Daniel Rothbart and Karina Korostelina eds. Lexington Books.



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- Understanding an Islamic Framework for Peacebuilding, Islamic Relief Worldwide (Birmingham, UK) working paper series no. 2013-02 (with Abu-Nimer M. & MohamedSaleem A.) (2013) pp. 1-25.

Recommended

- Understanding an Islamic Framework for Peacebuilding, Islamic Relief Worldwide (Birmingham, UK) working paper series no. 2013-02 (with Abu-Nimer M. & Mohamed-Saleem A.) (2013) pp. 1-49.
- Maffettone, Claudia. Principles and Practices of Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam. The Case of Morocco. Available at:
<https://www.mediate.com/articles/MaffettoneC2.cfm#>
- Bahlul, R. (2003). From Jihad to peaceful co-existence: The development of Islamic views on politics and international relations. Birzeit: Birzeit University, 10-19.
<http://ialiis.birzeit.edu/sites/default/files/From%20Jihad%20to%20Peaceful%20Co-existence%20The%20Development%20of%20Islamic%20Views%20on%20Politics%20and%20International%20Relation.pdf>
- Abu-Nimer, Mohammed. (2000). A Framework for Nonviolence and Peacebuilding in Islam. Journal of Law and Religion. 15. 10.2307/1051519.
at:https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265240732_A_Framework_for_Nonviolence_and_Peacebuilding_in_Islam/citations
- Reiter, Y. (2022) How Did Islam Cope with the Challenges of International Laws of War and Peace during the 19th and 20th Centuries? *Al-Qasemi Journal of Islamic Studies*, volume 7, issues 1+2, 41-66.

6. Christian approach to war, peace and conflict resolution (Nov. 23)– guest lecturer – John Munayer (Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue)

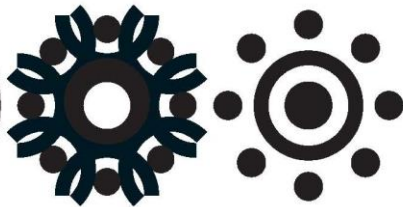
Required reading:

- Farneubun, P. K. (2013). Understanding Christian's Perspective on Peace and War. *Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional* , 9(2), 105-115.
<http://journal.unpar.ac.id/index.php/JurnalIlmiahHubunganInternasiona/article/view/1046/1015>

7. Jewish approach to war, peace and conflict resolution (Nov. 30)

Required reading:

- Gerald M., Steinberg, 'Jewish Sources on Conflict Management in Jewish Sources', M. Roness, ed. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, Program on Conflict Management and Negotiation, 2008, pp. 10-25.



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- Howard Kaminsky, *Fundamentals of Jewish Conflict Resolution: Traditional Jewish Perspectives on Resolving Interpersonal Conflicts* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2017), Preface pp. xix – xxxvi; 403-467.
- Eisen, Robert, *The Peace and Violence of Judaism: From the Bible to Modern Zionism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 142-203.

8. Jerusalem – Competitive religious symbols in conflict (Dec. 7)

Required reading:

- Ferrari, S. (2002). "The Religious Significance of Jerusalem in the Middle East Peace Process" in M. J. Breger and O. Ahimeir (ed.) *Jerusalem: A City and Its Future*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, pp. 223-234.
- Friedlander, R. and Hecht, R. (1998). "The Bodies of Nations: A Comparative Study of Religious Violence in Jerusalem and Ayodhya," *History of Religions*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 101–149.
- Hammami, R. and Tamari, S. (2000). "The Battle for Jerusalem." *Jerusalem Quarterly File* 10.

Recommended:

- Bigelow, A. (2010). *Sharing the Sacred: Practicing Pluralism in Muslim North India*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 195-238.
- Hassner, R. (2009). *War on Sacred Grounds*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 1-14.
- Atran, S., Ginges, J., Medin, D., & Shikaki, K. (2008). Sacred bounds on rational resolution of violent political conflict. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA* 104(18), 7357-7360.
- Reiter, Y. (2017). *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine: Sharing and Conflict Resolution*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. XV-XVII.
- Hayden, R. (2002). "Antagonistic Tolerance," *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 205-231.
- Reiter, Y. (2018). "Mechanisms for Coexistence" in I. Finkelstein et. al. (eds.) *In Status Quo: Structures of Negotiation*. Berlin: Hatje Cantz, pp. 43-53.

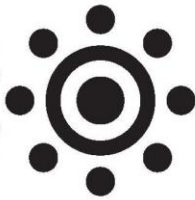
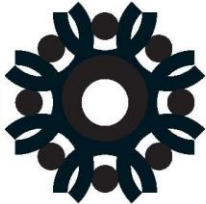
9. The conflict over the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa compound (Dec. 14)

Required reading:

- Reiter, Y. (2017). *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine: Sharing and Conflict Resolution*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. XV-XVII; 20-50.

10. A Jewish intra-religious conflict – the case of the Western Wall (Dec. 21)

Required reading:



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- Lahav, P. (2015). "The Women of the Wall: A Metaphor for National and Religious Identity." *Israel Studies Review*, Volume 30, Issue 2: pp. 50-70.
- Jobani, Y. and N. Perez. (2014). "Women of the Wall: A Normative Analysis of the Place of Religion in the Public Sphere." *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion*, 3 (3): 484-505.

Recommended:

- Reiter, Y. (2016). "Feminists in the Temple of Orthodoxy: The Struggle of the Women of the Wall to Change the Status-Quo", *SHOFAR* 34.2 (Winter) 80-107.
- Jobani, Y. and N. Perez. (2017) *Women of the Wall: Navigating Religion in Sacred Sites*. New York: Oxford University Press, Chapter 3.
- Reiter, Y. (2017). *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine: Sharing and Conflict Resolution*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 3-19.

11. Preparation for simulation play on management and resolution of the conflict over the Temple Mount/AI-Aqsa compound (Dec. 28)

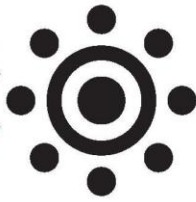
- Lehrs, L. (2013). *Peace Talks on Jerusalem A Review of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Concerning Jerusalem 1993-2013*: <http://din-online.info/pdf/m-i21.pdf>
- Klein, M. (2019). "Jerusalem in the Peace Process", in Mourad, A. Suleiman et al (eds.) (2019). *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem*. London & New York: Routledge, 408-414.
- Reiter, Y. (2017). *The Eroding Status Quo: Power Struggles on the Temple Mount* (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research).

12. Simulation play and conclusion (Jan. 4)

13. Conclusion and reflection (Jan. 11)

General reading for preparing the simulation on the Jerusalem Holy Compound and writing your papers:

- Reiter, Y. (2008). *Jerusalem and its Role in Islamic Solidarity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), pp. 93-127.
- Lehrs, L. (2013). *Peace Talks on Jerusalem A Review of the Israeli-Palestinian Negotiations Concerning Jerusalem 1993-2013*:
<http://din-online.info/pdf/m-i21.pdf>
- Klein, M. (2019). "Jerusalem in the Peace Process", in Mourad, A. Suleiman et al (eds.) (2019). *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem*. London & New York: Routledge, 408-414.
- Reiter, Y. and Dimant, D. (2020). *Islam, Jews and the Temple Mount: The Rock of Our/Their Existence* (London and New York: Routledge) 150.
- Reiter, Y. (2017). *Contested Holy Places in Israel-Palestine: Sharing and Conflict Resolution* (London and New York: Routledge).



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- Reiter, Y. (2017). *The Eroding Status Quo: Power Struggles on the Temple Mount* (Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research).
- Breger, M. J., Reiter Y. and Hammer L. (eds.) (2012). *Sacred Space in Israel and Palestine: Religion and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge).
- Breger, M. J., Reiter Y. and Hammer L.(eds.) (2009). *Holy Places in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Confrontation and Co-existence* (London and New York: Routledge.)
- Reiter, Y. (2018). Jordan and Jerusalem: Hashemite Quest for Legitimacy Kumaraswamy, P. R. (ed.) *Handbook on Contemporary Jordan*, New York: Palgrave, pp. 295-309.
- Reiter, Y. and Seligman, J. (2009). "1917 to the Present: Al-Haram al-Sharif / Temple Mount (Har ha-Bayit) and the Western Wall" in B.Z. Kedar and Oleg Grabar (eds.), *Where Heaven and Earth Meet: Jerusalem's Sacred Esplanade*. Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi and Texas University Press, 231-272.
- Reiter, Y. (2008). "The Temple Mount Is in Their Hands, The Western Wall in Our Hands" in Ora Ahimeir (ed.) *Jerusalem Record of Forty Years*. Jerusalem: The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 443-457.
- Reiter, Y. (2002). "Jewish-Muslim *Modus Vivendi* at the Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif since 1967" in Marshall J. Breger and O. Ahimeir (eds.). *Jerusalem: Essays towards Peacemaking*. Syracuse University Press, pp. 269-295.

Academic Fraud

Any person found guilty of academic fraud will be subject to severe sanctions. Some examples of academic fraud include:

- plagiarism or cheating of any kind;
- submitting work of which the student is not the author, in whole or in part (except for duly cited quotations or references);
- presenting research data that has been falsified or concocted in any way; and
- submitting, without written prior approval from the professors concerned, the same work for more than one course.

Classroom rules

- Students are expected to arrive to all classes on time.
- Please do the readings as parts of the class will be discussion based