



# Holy sites in the Holy Land: Conflict or Co-existence?



**The following course depicts the ongoing disputes of Israel's ethnic, national, and religious groups over contested holy places, compared to other noteworthy holy places around the world.**

The course will engage with the following questions:

- ▶ In what way do holy sites take part in disputes of the urban and spatial landscape?
- ▶ Who determines holy sites and their level of sanctity?
- ▶ How does a holy place serve for national recruitment purposes and religionization of territorial conflict? A particular emphasis will be placed on the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa Compound and the Western Wall from the era of the British Mandate Period in Palestine to the Present.
- ▶ What is the place of a minority in the public landscape, and what prevents the majority in the city or state from allowing the minority to operate a mosque in the city of Beer Sheva?
- ▶ What role do cemeteries play in competing for the historical narrative of the country? In this topic, a particular emphasis will be placed on Mamilla Cemetery.
- ▶ Can Jews and Muslims share the same territory in coexistence? Case studies of Cave of the Patriarchs, Rachel's Tomb, and Tomb of Samuel the prophet will be analyzed.
- ▶ Is it possible and under what conditions can the status quo of a holy place can be altered? Case studies of Women of the Wall, the room of the Last Supper on Mount Zion, and the Temple Mount will be analyzed.
- ▶ How does the dispute between Muslim and Christian hegemony in Nazareth generate a conflict over the landscape surrounding the Church of the Annunciation?
- ▶ How do holy sites serve as national symbols?

**The course will take place every Friday morning at 8:00 a.m. during the first semester of 2021 between October 15th and January 21th. Lectures will be held in the Te'ena (fig) hall, building no. 6, Ashkelon Academic College.**

**For additional details and registration, please contact Nofar Moshe via email: [Noprms@aac.ac.il](mailto:Noprms@aac.ac.il) or phone: 08-6789-131.**

**\*The course is free of charge.**

## On the lecturer:



Yitzhak Reiter is a Professor of Islam, Middle East history and politics, and Israel Studies. He teaches in the Department of Israeli Land Studies at Ashkelon Academic College, IDC – Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, and Al-Qasemi College. Reiter is active in track-two diplomacy meetings regarding the Arab-Israeli conflict and Jewish-Arab relations inside Israel, and his expertise is covered by media interviews. Professor Reiter is an expert on conflict resolution in holy places, the Arab minority in Israel, the Middle East and Israel politics, and Islamic law.

Between 1978-1987, Reiter served as deputy advisor on Arab Affairs for three Israeli Prime Ministers (Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, and Shimon Peres). In 2006, he advised the Israel Council for National Security regarding the policy of integrating the Arab minority.

Reiter taught at Emory (2018) and the University of Minnesota (2008-09); He was a visiting scholar to The Middle East Institute – Washington D.C. (2003), Sydney University (2003-4), and Oxford University – St. Antony's College (2001). Reiter is the author and editor of 19 books and numerous articles.

Reiter has published 19 books, among them:

- Contested Holy Places in Israel–Palestine: Sharing and Conflict Resolution (Routledge, 2017).
- Islam, Jews, and the Temple Mount: The Rock of Our/Their Foundation (Routledge 2020).