

## **Scientific, financial and personal report – September 2019 – January 2020**

The preparations start very early. One has to imagine that I did my research stay in Israel in my academic winter semester 2019. But I applied in the summer of 2018. As I walked through the corridors of the University of Fribourg, I saw the Jean Nordmann Foundation's Scholarship Announcement on the bulletin boards of the International Relations Office. I read the criteria with great interest and curiosity. Unfortunately, I did not meet them because I am still a Bachelor student. But I spoke to Mrs Nast, who is the secretary in charge of awarding the scholarships. She encouraged me to send in an application dossier. After sending the necessary documents such as CV, tentative course list, letter of motivation, evidence of English skills and letters of recommendation etc., I received the message at the end of December 2018 that I had been awarded the scholarship. I am the first bachelor student to receive a scholarship intended for master students, doctoral students and/or postdocs. I had to be nominated by the University of Fribourg as a regular student under the bilateral agreement with the partner university: Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I was. Then I had to apply to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI), which asked for documents, despite its honourable intentions. This threatened to become a bureaucratic process. They asked about my English level and they requested a visa, a document confirming that I have health insurance, a medical certificate and much more.

After overcoming these hurdles, I was able to prepare myself for Israel, i.e. learn Hebrew. It is a difficult language, but if you already know a little Hebrew and finish the Ulpan with distinction, you can also enrol in Hebrew courses during the semester. The closer the semester approaches, the more information you get about the exact process of the orientation days, etc. On September 4, 2019 I flew to Israel. I had received a room in the Students Village and had attended the Ulpan in my first month. I had to pay for my semester and the Ulpan in advance, which together cost about \$4,000, including the cost of my room, of course. I was in an apartment with 5 rooms, a shared kitchen, and a shared shower/WC. The apartment was extremely minimalistic and rather run-down. When I entered the apartment and especially my room, everything was dirty. Among the exchange students there was not a single generally positive voice about the Student Village, especially regarding cleanliness. The Student Village is a bit away from the city, which makes it a bit tedious to spontaneously go to the center. You don't get to know the city as much as if you were looking for an apartment in the center on your own. From this point of view, I would definitely recommend looking for a private apartment in the city, even if at the beginning it is connected with more effort. The positive thing about the

Student Village was that it was right next to the university. Although I wrote that I don't want to live with German or French speaking people, they put me with German speaking Student together. After my first month I changed apartments. I continued to live in the Students Village but moved in with an American - just the two of us, in a 5-room apartment. This made life a lot easier.

The first month before I started my studies gave me the time I needed to accommodate myself in Israel. I would recommend this to everyone - it takes time to get used to a new country. During the semester I attended 4 courses. One of them was useful for my research. I attended the following courses:

"History of Anti-semitism" by Katherine Aron-Beller. The aim of this course was to analyze the hatred towards Jews as a historical force that runs through history. After treating precursors in the pagan world of antiquity and in classical Christian doctrine, the course focused on the modern phenomenon crystallizing in 19th-century Europe and reaching its lethal extreme in Nazi ideology, propaganda, and policy.

"Reporting Armed Conflict" by Linda Gradstein. The seminar-based course focused on the objectives, methods and consequences of media involvement in armed conflicts and the importance of armed conflict for the media, in both historical and contemporary perspectives. The aim of the course was to provide tools to analyze and understand different cultural, social and technical aspects of the relationship between the media and armed conflicts, while also maintaining strong practical components. Such practical components included the workshopping based introduction of key journalistic skills including developing sources, interviewing techniques and writing with a focus on application within active conflict zones. This course included multiple field visits and interviews with those involved in the Israeli-Palestinian, and other Middle Eastern wars and offensives. The course considered media interaction in low, medium and high intensity armed conflicts

"Challenges of Regional Cooperation" by Galia Bar Nathan-Press. The goal of this course was to explore and test the basic conceptual tools and competing theoretical arguments within the academic field of International Relations, which try to explain the nature, scope and degree of success of various regional cooperation schemes. While we were more interested in the Middle East, it was crucial to understand the Middle East within a broader comparative perspective.

There, the course was divided into three sections: The first section outlined the key concepts and theoretical arguments. The second section explored, using these concepts, the nature and fortunes of regional cooperation in Europe, Asia, Latin American and Africa. The third section then zoomed in to focus more specifically on the challenges and various examples of regional cooperation in the Middle East.

"Cybersecurity" by Dmitry Epstein. This class took a very broad look at cyberconflict and cybersecurity as a core issue in the information society. It aimed to assist the Students in developing critical analytical thinking about the role of technology design, regulation, and use in contemporary conflict. First, I gained a bird's eye view of the information society and its vulnerabilities. Second, I learned to identify a range of avenues of exercising power in online environments. Third, I acquired an in-depth understanding of the components of technology design, regulation, and use in cybersecurity. Fourth, I learned about cybersecurity in Israel. And finally, I developed skills in communicating research-based opinions to the general public and designed a research project asking critical questions about cybersecurity.

The language of instruction was English. The English courses are offered specifically for the international students, so it can be very difficult to get in touch with Israeli students within the university. The exams were all either small papers or exams. Depending on the credits, 5-10 pages were required. The professors were all extremely competent. All are experts in their field and sometimes internationally known. It amazed me that the level of the lectures was so high, although only small groups of students participate. At the beginning and at the end of the exchange semester, you have a conversation with the professor responsible for the exchange semester, where you can share your impressions and ask questions. In general, you are very well looked after.

I received this scholarship mainly for my research work. My topic was: Anti-Semitism in German Idealism. On the significance of anti-Semitism in Immanuel Kant's philosophy.

In this work I analyzed the connection between Kant's anti-Semitic fantasies and various aspects of his philosophy. I intend to give a picture of Judaism at Kant's time as well as describe Kant's picture of Judaism. A work on anti-Semitism must address not only ethical and political issues, but also theological ones. Therefore, I dealt with Kant's philosophy of religion and Kant's internal relations to Judaism. The question of Kant's attitude towards hostility to the Jews, tolerance and Jewish emancipation will be examined.

The Hebrew University is a prestigious university with a wide range of courses for students worldwide. I have developed personally and professionally. I can recommend it to everyone to do a research semester in Jerusalem! I must say that the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is a prestigious university in the world. The professors and the institution are very competent and highly professional. Considering that I got to learn from highly respected scholars in the field of anti-Semitism, it was definitely an enrichment for me. I was allowed to participate in international conferences. I would like to thank the host university, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and their staff, who actively helped me find materials in dusty archives and made their rooms available for me to work in.

Besides my regular studies and research work, I spent most of my time in Jerusalem, although I travelled to Tel Aviv, to the Dead Sea, and to Jordan for a few days. Yerushalayim, ירושלים, "City of Peace," it's called in Hebrew. For most Jews, not just the religious, Jerusalem is the center of their identity. The city is mentioned 657 times in the Old Testament, 154 times in the New, here stood the Jewish Temples, here reigned the great kings. Even the head of government Yitzhak Rabin, none of the religious ones, often quotes the 137th Psalm: "If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill." The many hopes, dreams, and fantasies invested in this city – the abundance of songs of praise that have been sung by poets throughout the generations, who have never set foot in it – create a tremendous tension that almost drives some tourists out of their minds on their first visit. Old-established Jerusalemers, Israelis and Palestinians alike, who forge their personal Jerusalem madness into militant national ideology and politics. The tourists, however, are in fact affected and unprotected by this "mad" city, which often brings more frustration than satisfaction, because it unites too many important elements, which have not yet reached integration, can at best ignore each other, but are immediately hostile to each other in times of crisis. Take, for example, the Western Wall, a naked stone wall of the temple, to which Jews all over the world have longingly lifted their eyes for two thousand years.

However, if we look at this wall from the perspective of Jerusalem as a whole, it becomes a marginal detail next to the mighty mosque complex - in the middle the magnificent Dome of the Rock - which took the place of the destroyed Jewish temple thirteen hundred years ago. Likewise, The Church of the Holy Sepulcher, for whose keys the Christian faith communities have fought bitter wars against each other, becomes miniscule when compared with the Western Wall, mosques complexes, and other places of worship, which oppress it from all sides

The true, benevolent people towards of this city, those who try to free themselves from the "Jerusalem romanticism," look at the beautiful views that these and other postcards show even with considerable suspicion. They know very well that the amazing variety of religious and national elements that this city harbors can only be a source of peace, instead of eternal conflict, - if it is associated with the inner renunciation of messianic fantasies and the transformation of dreams into intellectual creation, not territorial disputes over houses and stones.

Yes, I say to myself, Jerusalem is wonderful, almost three thousand years old, full of longings and dreams and of course holy places, but one must not take it too seriously and certainly not keep it excessively holy. For stones, domes and towers, however old they may be, are never more important and holy than real, living people here and now, whose humanity must take precedence over us and them over all national feeling and religiosity.

Finally, I would like to thank Mr. Nordmann and the International Relations Office for their support of all kinds. They made it possible for me to go to Israel and to expand my sense of responsibility. I would also like to thank the University of Fribourg. Furthermore, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Tiziana Suarez-Nani, who supervised and evaluated my research. For the helpful suggestions and the constructive criticism with the production of this work. I would especially like to thank Dr. Katherine E. Aron-Beller for her willingness to accept me as an external student, for her ground-breaking lectures, especially at the beginning of my project, and for the opportunity to discuss the current challenges at any time. I would also like to extend special thanks to Prof. Dr. Siegfried Weichlein. He has followed my research with constant interest and accompanied me with his differentiated knowledge in the drafting of my work. Outside the Academy, a number of people have also played a major part in this work: I would like to thank my parents and my sister, who supported me at all times to the maximum in my project and kept my back when things got a little longer again.

I would like to thank all those mentioned above and the countless others who have indirectly contributed to the success of this work for their commitment and support.

Thank you!

*Lulgjin Spanca*

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