Religion and Politics in Israel

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The course looks at the complicated, unresolved relationship between the political and religious realms, or frameworks on interpretation, in Israel. It will do so while contesting the antinomy alleged in the courses own title (i.e., that religion and politics are two separate realms, the interaction of which constitutes a conundrum), offering instead a more nuanced, ‘post-secular’ understanding of the religious, theological underpinnings of modern (allegedly secular) politics, as well as a political reading of Israeli Judaism. The course will also consider the implications of Israel’s Jewish identity on non-Jews in Israel.

Course Requirements:

1. Full attendance and participation. 15% of the final grade.
2. Midterm exam. 35% of the final grade.
3. Final exam. 50% of the final grade.

Course outline:

A. Some preliminary theoretical considerations: the post-secular turn

**JAN. 23**

**INTRO TO POST SECULARISM**


**JAN. 28**

**THE POST SECULAR CONTINUED**


**B. Zionist Nationalism Jewish Religion and Jewish Identity**

**JAN. 30TH: ZIONISM, EXILE, REDEMPTION AND MESSIANISM**


**FEB. 4TH: ZIONISM AND THE SECULARIZATION (?) OF JUDAISM**


**C. Labor Zionism and Jewish Tradition**

**FEB. 6TH: PART 1**


**FEB. 11TH: PART 2**


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**D. The State of Israel: A ‘Semi-constitutional’ Perspective**

**FEB. 13TH: JEWISH AND DEMOCRATIC?**

Israel’s Declaration Of Independence:


**FEB 18**\textsuperscript{TH}: PRESIDENTS DAY – NO CLASS.

**FEB. 20**\textsuperscript{TH}: ETHNIC-DEMOCRACY? ETHNOCRACY?

Smooha, Sammy. “The model of ethnic democracy: Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.” 
*Nations and Nationalism* 8, no. 4 (October 1, 2002): 475-503.


**FEB. 25**\textsuperscript{TH}: THE LAW OF RETURN AND THE WHO IS A JEW CONTROVERSY


**E. Gender, Religion and Politics**

**FEB 27**\textsuperscript{TH}: A LEGAL FRAMEWORK


**MARCH 4TH: A SOCIO-CULTURAL FRAMEWORK**

The Current Case of Exclusion of Women from the Public Sphere (News Clips)


*F. Israeli Secularism – A critical Perspective*

**MARCH 6TH: SECULARIST IDEOLOGY**


**MARCH 11TH: SECULAR IDENTITY**


*G. Jewish Orthodoxy and the Jewish State*

**MARCH 13TH: THE ULTRA ORTHODOX**


**MARCH 18TH: RELIGIOUS ZIONISM**


**H. Intra-Jewish Ethnicity and Religion in Israel**

**MARCH 20TH: THE FIRST ENCOUNTER**


MARCH 25TH AND 27TH: NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

APR. 1ST: NO CLASS, PASSOVER

APR. 3RD: THE CASE OF SHAS


Yadgar, Yaacov. “SHAS as a Struggle to create a New Field: A Bourdieuan Perspective of an Israeli Phenomenon.” *Sociology of Religion* 64, no. 2 (June 20, 2003): 223-246.

I. Traditionists (Masortim) and Israeli Identity

APR. 8TH: PHENOMENOLOGY


**APR. 10TH:** THEORY


**APR. 15TH:** NO CLASS

### J. Israeli Judaism: A Couple Of Cases To Consider

**APR. 17**


Shoham, Hizky, “The Israeli Yom Kippur and Jewish Public Culture in Israel”.

### K. A “Hebrew” Challenge to Israeli Judaism: The “Canaanite” Movement

**APR. 22TH**


L. Non Jews in Israel

APR. 25TH


M. Reform and Conservative Judaism in Israel

APR. 29TH


MAY 1ST: OVERVIEW