RELI 329/2
POLI 398A/2 A

Israel: Religion and State

Wednesday and Friday 10:15-11:30
Location : FG B050 SGW
Professor: Ira Robinson
Office: Annex R (2050 McKay St.), room 303
Office Hours: Thursdays, 13:00-14:00 or by appointment.
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Teaching Assistant: Ms. Minghui Pan
TA Email: mingxiaohui@gmail.com
TA Office Hours: TBA
Course Website: Moodle: accessed through your “My Concordia”

Course Description:

This course will examine issues relating to religions in Israel. It will include an analysis of historical and contemporary attempts to define Israel as a “Jewish State”. It will include as well the position of religions, especially Judaism but inclusive as well of Islam and Christianity, with respect to the Israeli state and its laws. It will explore various Judaic visions of the State of Israel and its religio-political destiny as well as the societal tensions engendered by the variety of Israeli-Jewish interpretations of Judaism and the Judaic lifestyle. It will also deal with the de facto presence of several religious traditions within Israeli society and their influence on Israel’s societal discourse.

Course Requirements:

1. Students will write a take-home mid-term assignment and a final take-home assignment. The mid-term and will be worth 20% of the final grade and the final take-home assignment will be worth 40% of the final grade.

2. Along with each reading assignment there will be a question assigned. Students are required to submit a 1 page (typewritten) response to any ten assignments during the course of the term. Responses for any question will be accepted for full credit only on the day it is due at the end of class unless accompanied by a reasonable excuse. Responses received after the due date, or non-hard copy responses (e.g. email attachments) without a reasonable excuse will be penalized one point if the response is up to one week late, and two points if it is more than a week late. If you choose to submit more than ten responses, your grade will be determined on the basis of your best ten responses. Each response will be worth 4% of the final grade for a maximum of 40%.

Grading Standards:
A Superior grasp of the material; explanations clear and well-written; presentation of original insights going beyond class discussion.

B Good grasp of the material; clear and orderly presentation; demonstration of ability to utilise concepts learned.

C Adequate grasp of the material; reasonably clear presentation.

D Clearly inadequate grasp of the material; unclear presentation.

F Assignments not presented.

Learning Objectives:

The learning objectives of this course include competency in the areas of Israel and Judaism, improved ability to synthesize information, and improved writing ability.

Plagiarism:

The most common offence under the Academic Code of Conduct is plagiarism that the Code defines as "the presentation of the work of another person as one's own or without proper acknowledgement."

This could be material copied word for word from books, journals, internet sites, professor's course notes, etc. It could be material that is paraphrased but closely resembles the original source. It could be the work of a fellow student, for example, an answer on a quiz, data for a lab report, a paper or assignment completed by another student. It might be a paper purchased through one of the many available sources. Plagiarism does not refer to words alone - it can also refer to copying images, graphs, tables, and ideas. "Presentation" is not limited to written work. It also includes oral presentations, computer assignments and artistic works. Finally, if you translate the work of another person into French or English and do not cite the source, this is also plagiarism.

In Simple Words:
DO NOT COPY, PARAPHRASE OR TRANSLATE ANYTHING FROM ANYWHERE WITHOUT SAYING FROM WHERE YOU OBTAINED IT!

LIST OF SERVICES:

- **Department of Religion Academic Advisors:** Dr. Naftali Cohn and Dr. Marc Lalonde. To schedule an appointment, call 514-848-2424, x2065.

- **Concordia Counselling and Development** offers career services, psychological services, student learning services, etc. [http://cdev.concordia.ca/](http://cdev.concordia.ca/)
Texts:

Anita Shapira, *Israel: a History* (Hanover, University Press of New England, 2012). All other required readings, other than items freely available on internet sites, will be available in a coursepack. These will be available for purchase at the Concordia University book store.

Syllabus:

1. September 9:
   **Introduction to Course: What is a Jewish State?**
   No assigned reading

2. September 11:
   **Who was a Jew? What was Judaism in the minds of Jews, Christians and Muslims?**
   Reading:

3. September 16:
   **The Eighteenth Century and the Jews: Revolution and Its Consequences**
   Reading:
4. September 18:
   **The Nineteenth Century and the Jews: Antisemitism and its Consequences**
   Reading:

   **No Class September 23--Yom Kippur**

5. September 25:
   **Jews and the Land of Israel: Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**
   Reading:
   Shapira, pp. 3-26.

6. September 30:
   **Political Zionism: 1897-1917**
   Reading:
   Shapira, pp. 27-64.

7. October 2:
   **Religious and Cultural Zionism**
   Reading:

8. October 7:
   **The British Mandate: the development of the "Jewish National Home", 1922-1948**
   Reading:
   Shapira, pp. 67-152
9. October 9:
**The British Mandate: Religious Issues**
Reading:

10. October 14:
**Israel: Religion in the Public Sphere**
Reading:
Shapira, pp. 155-291.

11. October 16:
**Israel: Religion in the Political System**
Reading:
Efraim Inbar, “Jews, Jewishness, and Israel’s Foreign Policy”, *Jewish Political Studies Review* 2 (1990), pp. 165-183

12. October 21:
**Israel: Education and the Army**
Reading:

13. October 23:
Non-Jewish Religions in Israel
Reading:

14. October 28:
Six Day War and Its Consequences: Messianism; Gush Emunim
Reading:
Shapira, pp. 295-354.

15. October 30:
Six Day War and Its Consequences: Greater Israel; Settling Beyond the "Green Line"; Peace Process
Reading:
David Hartman, A Heart of Many Rooms: Celebrating the Many Voices Within Judaism (Woodstock, Jewish Lights), pp. 267-296.

16. November 4:
Contemporary Israel: Sephardim/Mizrachim in Israeli Politics and Religion
Reading:
Shapira, pp. 357-475.

17. November 6:
**Contemporary Israel: The Haredim (Zionist, non-Zionist, anti-Zionist)**
Reading:

18. November 11:
**Contemporary Israel: “National Religious” Jews**
reading:

19. November 13:
**Contemporary Israel: Non-Orthodox Judaism**
Reading:


20. November 18:

"Secular" Jews and Religion
Reading:

21. November 20:

Who Is a Jew?: the Ethiopians
Reading:

22. November 25:

Religion and the Peace Process
Reading:
23. November 27

**Israel: Jewish State or State of All Its Citizens?**

Reading:


24. December 2:

**Israel and Jews in the Diaspora**

Reading:


25. December 4:

**Toward a Conclusion**

Reading:

26. December 8 (make-up day)
Review and Consultation for Final Take-Home Assignment
No assigned reading.