

State and religion in Israel: a philosophical-legal inquiry

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Abstrak

State and Religion in Israel begins with a philosophical analysis of the two main questions regarding the role of religion in liberal states: should such states institute a 'Wall of Separation' between state and religion? Should they offer religious practices and religious communities special protection? Gideon Sapir and Daniel Statman argue that liberalism is not committed to Separation, but is committed to granting religion a unique protection, albeit a narrower one than often assumed. They then use Israel as a case study for their conclusions. Although Israel is defined as a Jewish state, its Jewish identity need not be interpreted religiously, requiring that it subjects itself to the dictates of Jewish law (Halakha). The authors test this view by critically examining important topics relevant to state and religion in Israel: marriage and divorce, the drafting of yeshiva students into the army, the character of the Sabbath and more.