



Contemporary Israel: New Insights and Scholarship (Jewish Studies in the Twenty-First Century)

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For a country smaller than Vermont, with roughly the same population as Honduras, modern Israel receives a remarkable amount of attention. For supporters, it is a unique bastion of democracy in the Middle East, while detractors view it as a racist outpost of Western colonialism. The romanticization of Israel became particularly prominent in 1967, when its military prowess shocked a Jewish world still reeling from the sense of powerlessness dramatized by the Holocaust. That imagery has grown ever more visible, with Israel's supporters idealizing its technological achievements and its opponents attributing almost every problem in the region, if not beyond, to its imperialistic aspirations.

The contradictions and competing views of modern Israel are the subject of this book. There is much to consider about modern Israel besides the Middle East conflict. Over the past generation, a substantial body of scholarship has explored numerous aspects of the country, including its approaches to citizenship and immigration, the arts, the women's movement, religious fundamentalism, and language; but much of that work has to date been confined within the walls of the academy. This book does not seek not to resolve either the country's internal debates or its struggle with the Arab world, but to present a sample of contemporary scholars' discoveries and discussions about modern Israel in an accessible way. In each of the areas discussed, competing narratives grapple for prominence, and it is these which are highlighted in this volume.



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