

# Faith and Fiction: Exploring Israeli National Identity

Carleton Winter Break Program in Israel • December 2011

Peter G. Thurnauer Memorial Winter Break Programs Fund



Register for either Fall 2011 course:

Hebr. 221 "Discovering Literary Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem" (Stacy Beckwith)

Relg. 222 "The State of Judaism in the State of Israel" (Louis Newman)

Immerse yourself in a world both sacred and secular, east and west, old and new, through an interdisciplinary program that combines literature, cultural studies, and religious studies.

Both fall courses and the Israel trip will culminate in an independent research project and symposium winter term 2012.

# Faith and Fiction: Exploring Israeli National Identity

## Highlights:

- Converse with noted Israeli authors
- Explore Zionist history in old Tel Aviv
- Meet religious and secular Israeli activists
- Explore the ancient religious sites of Jerusalem
- Discover Judaism's newest expressions in its holiest city
- Learn about the impact of the Holocaust on Israeli identity through the national Holocaust memorial and museum (Yad Vashem)
- Visit a Dead Sea oasis

## Fall Term Courses

### Register for one of the following courses:

Hebr. 222 "Discovering Literary Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem"

This course delves into Israel's two major cities, comparing their history and character. How are Tel Aviv's founding Zionist ideals and the Middle Eastern realities that challenged them portrayed in Hebrew literature? Our literary and cultural studies engagement with Tel Aviv will prepare students for our similar exploration of Jerusalem with its much longer multicultural history. How have places in both cities inspired literary reflections on national identity and memory? How have Israeli authors reciprocally influenced people's views of these urban spaces and their national resonance? At Carleton and then in Israel we will immerse ourselves in an ongoing dialogue between authors, historians, and iconic buildings, plazas, and neighborhoods in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Relg. 222 "The State of Judaism in the State of Israel"

This course will invite students to consider a number of questions. Why were the early Zionists so anti-religious? How, despite this legacy, did the creation of a Jewish national homeland in Israel excite such enormous religious passions? Given this complicated blending of ideologies, how is Judaism practiced in Israel today? What role does Judaism play in this largely secular democracy? How do religious Israelis (of all denominations) relate to their secular neighbors? These questions will be explored through a range of readings from key biblical texts to the works of contemporary "post-Zionist" Israeli thinkers.

Trip to Israel, December 4–18, 2011 (tentative dates)

## Winter Term 2012

Register for independent research course with either Beckwith or Newman. This course will meet just once a week and will give you the opportunity to work collaboratively on a research project that builds on your fall term course and what you learned on the trip to Israel. At the conclusion of the winter term, we will hold a public symposium where you can share your work with the Carleton community.

## What Our 2009 Participants Said about the Israel Winter Break Trip:

- "These have been the two most mind-blowing and thought-provoking weeks of my life."
- "I loved this trip. It greatly exceeded all expectations. You must do it again!"
- "I think I am just in awe of how deeply this trip has affected how I'll approach world conflicts and issues as well as how I'll approach religion."