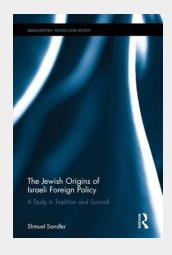
The Jewish Origins of Israeli Foreign Policy

A Study in Tradition and Survival

The conventional understanding of Israeli foreign policy has been that it is a relatively new phenomenon, with some claiming that the 'Jewish People' is an invention by mid-19th century Jewish historians, or simply an 'imagined community'. This book disputes these claims by demonstrating that the Jews have a tradition of foreign relations based on an historical political tradition that goes back thousands of years, and that this tradition has been carried over to the State of Israel. The Jewish political tradition in foreign policy has always been defensive-oriented, whether under sovereignty or in the Diaspora. Power has generally been only a means for achieving survival rather than a goal in itself, whereas Jewish national identity has always been related to historical Zion. In order to explore the question of whether it is possible to identify patterns of international behaviour in the foreign policy of the Jews, the book begins with the Bible and continues through the period of the First and Second Temples, then looks at the long generations when the Jewish people were stateless, and ultimately concludes with an examination of the sovereign Jewish state of Israel. The underlying assumption is that an understanding of these characteristics will allow us to derive a better understanding of the Jewish origins of Israel's foreign policy, which should in turn help to eliminate many of the harshest criticisms of Israel's foreign policy. By presenting a nuanced and intricate examination of longstanding Jewish foreign policy principles, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Jewish Studies, Israeli Studies, International Relations and anyone with an interest in the relationship between religion and foreign policy.



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