

# המחלקה לפוליטיקה וממשל

## הסמינר המחלקתי

יום שלישי ג' כסלו, 25/11/2014 בין השעות 12:15–14:00 אולם שרה תדמור

ד"ר ג'ולי קופר, אוניברסיטת ת"א

### Democracy and Theocracy in Jewish Political Thought: From Baruch Spinoza to Michael Walzer

The talk explores the legacy of Baruch Spinoza's critique of theocracy for contemporary projects, spearheaded by Michael Walzer, to establish Jewish political thought as an academic field. As set by Walzer and his colleagues, the field's research agenda includes the demonstration that Jewish political thought is not inherently theocratic. With this demonstration, Walzer would rebut charges that Judaism is inimical to democracy. Yet Walzer also seeks to discredit what he considers a characteristically Jewish argument - the argument that theocracy is a radically democratic, egalitarian regime. Tracing this argument's origins to Spinoza's Theologico-Political Treatise, the talk shows that sovereignty's status as the defining horizon of the political is what is at stake when Jewish thinkers reject theocracy in the name of politics. Constrained by Spinozist assumptions, Walzer remains reluctant to pursue the challenge to norms of state sovereignty that, by his own admission, the Jewish political tradition invites