

Zionism and its Discontents

A 3-part Adat Shalom Adult Education series taught by Rabbi Sid Schwarz

For many who lived through the 1967 Six-Day War, Zionism and the State of Israel were at the core of our Jewish identity formation. In fact, that miraculous military victory resulted in making Israel central to the entire Jewish communal enterprise in America and the rest of the Jewish world. In more recent years, Israel has been the most polarizing issue in Jewish communal life. This three-part course will look at some of the elements of that polarization and whether there is a way to bridge the growing divide between Israel advocates and those who are far more critical of the Jewish state.

Session I-The Origins of Zionism

- Pre-reading:
 - Gil Troy, *Why I am a Zionist*, ch. 7 (2002)(PDF in sidebar)
 - Gil Troy, [Why I am a Zionist-Manifesto](#) (2021)
- A. The existential dilemma of Emancipation for Jews
- B. Schools of Zionist Thought
 - a. Political vs Cultural (liberal) Zionism
- C. 1968 Jerusalem Program

Session II- The Crisis of Zionism

- Pre-reading:
 - Peter Beinart, *The Crisis of Zionism*, ch. 1 (2012) (PDF in sidebar)
- A. Herzl's 1902 book, *Altneuland (The Old, New Land)*
- B. Human Rights: Double standards and a Black Eye
 - a. [Durban 2001 UN Conference on Racism](#) and Melchior response
- C. The two Israel's: Inside and beyond the Green Line
 - a. Israeli Arabs/Palestinians
 - b. Israel's Settlement Policy

Session III- Between Solidarity and Conscience

- Pre-reading:
 - Donniel Hartman, "[Liberal Zionism and the Troubled Committed](#)" (2021)
 - David Horvitz, "[Turning the Lights out on Israel's Democracy](#)", *Times of Israel*, 12/26/22.
- A. Anti-Zionism: From the American Council on Judaism to Jewish Voice for Peace
- B. J-Street, ZOA and Aipac-The end of consensus
- C. Democracy at risk
 - a. The Nation-State Law (2018)
 - b. Bibi's new coalition and mainstreaming extremism
 - c. [T. Friedman-D. Gordis](#) debate: "The Israel we Knew is Gone".