

Zionism Revisited: The Post-Zionist Debate

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The Debate in Context: The Three Worlds of Politics

- 1) Material/Realist
- 2) Norms based/Liberal
- 3) Ideational/Constructivist
- * How to these appear in the story of Israel?
- * Which best explains the Israel's creation and development?

Preliminary Comments

- Most charged ideologically
- Many Zionisms, many post-Zionisms?
- Occurs in the World of Ideas
- Global context: the decline of the nation state in EU (where the model was set): ideational? Realist? Norm based?

Four Kinds of Post-Zionism

- Statism and later liberal-civic (Ben-Gurion, later civic)
- New/Old historical and sociological narrative and critique
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- Zionism as anachronism and a failure
- Religious post-Zionism

1) Statism

- Core Argument: No need for pre-state ideology and institutions, later: move from an ethnic model to a civic model
- Counter: Not all Jews are in IL; new global identity (Kol-Dor) in which IL is the focus

2) New/Old Narrative and critique

- Mostly academics: Why do academic debates matter?
- Core argument: from deliverance and return to colonial dispossession
- Mostly academic: Political sociology, sociology, some sectors of history. Issue: focus on internal issues, disregarding the context of the conflict. Not nationalism in search of a state, but a frontier, settler society.

History and sociology

- Old History: Pro-Israel chroniclers
- New History: closer to the truth?
- Why do academic debates matter?
- Sociology: disregard of context

History

- Responses: Old news; adoption of enemy narrative, the Naqba law, Im Tirtzu
- Should the other narrative be allowed?

3) Zionism as an Anachronism and as Failure

- Tony Judt: Zionism was born out an anachronistic central European situation
- Response: true for Europe not for ME, Central European nationalism (Rubinstein and Yaakobson)

4) Religious Post-Zionism

- Moti Karpel: the Emunic Revolution
- Secular Zionism is at the end of its life

Why now?

- Generational
- Political
- Material
- Global trends: State, and postmodernism (narrative, truth and power, lack of progress)

What is at stake?

- Ideational ?
- Material?
- 63% of Israelis were born in IL, does it matter to them?
- For Israel's relationship with the world? Region ?
World Jewry? American Jews?

Where do you stand?

- Did this change your perception of Israel?
- Where would you take the discussion from here?
Would your answer be different if your goal be different?

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