

Decision Points Podcast: Season 4

Essential Books on Zionism and U.S.-Israel Relations

by [David Makovsky \(/experts/david-makovsky\)](/experts/david-makovsky)

Oct 28, 2022

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Brief Analysis

Part of a series: [Decision Points Podcast \(https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/series/decision-points-podcast\)](https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/series/decision-points-podcast)

or see Part 1: [Decision Points Podcast: Season 1 The U.S.-Israel Relationship\(/policy-analysis/decision-points-podcast-season-1-us-israel-relationship\)](/policy-analysis/decision-points-podcast-season-1-us-israel-relationship)

In this season of the Decision Points podcast, authors of seminal books on the U.S.-Israel relationship and the history of Zionism and Israel join Institute Senior Fellow David Makovsky to unpack their work and engage in striking, insightful conversations.

The new season highlights some of the finest and most cutting-edge books on Zionism, the U.S.-Israel relationship, Israeli-Arab relations, and Israeli politics and culture. On each episode, key diplomats, distinguished historians, and other prominent scholars will join TWI Senior Fellow David Makovsky, Director of the Koret Project on Arab-Israel Relations and Ziegler Distinguished Fellow, to unpack their books and engage in insightful conversations. The first episode premieres on October 31, in which Wall Street Journal columnist and Hudson Institute scholar Walter Russell Mead discusses his sweeping new book *The Arc of a Covenant: The United States, Israel, and the Fate of the Jewish People*.

Episode 1: Genesis of American Support for Israel: The Gentile Push for a Jewish State

Walter Russell Mead, the author of *The Arc of a Covenant: The United States, Israel, and the Fate of the Jewish People*, discusses the centuries-long history of Zionism in America, the hurdles Truman overcame to recognize the state of Israel, and the evolution of Israel's role in U.S. domestic politics. Mead is a columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* and a scholar at Hudson Institute.

Episode 2: Herzl's Chutzpah: Unpacking a Founder's Vision

Shlomo Avineri, the author of *Herzl's Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State*, discusses the father of modern Zionism and his legacy. Avineri is director of the Institute for European Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Episode 3: David Ben-Gurion: Leader of the Young State Confronts Momentous Decisions

David Ben-Gurion's term as Israel's prime minister marked not only a new era for the Jewish people, but a starkly different chapter in his own life. Anita Shapira, the author of *Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel*, joins the podcast to discuss the challenges and accomplishments of this time, from immigration and Labor party politics to German reparations and nuclearization.

Episode 4: Jabotinsky and the Birth of the Israeli Right

Hillel Halkin, author of *Jabotinsky: A Life*, joins the podcast to discuss Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky and the origins of the Revisionist movement.

Episode 5: Kissinger's Middle East: Limiting Moscow and Starting a Road to Peace

Martin Indyk, former Special Envoy for Middle East Peace, Ambassador to Israel and author of *Master of the Game: Henry Kissinger and the Art of Middle East Diplomacy* (<https://www.amazon.com/Master-Game-Kissinger-Middle-Diplomacy/dp/1101947543>), discusses former Secretary of State and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger's Middle East strategy from the 1973 War to the beginnings of a peace process.

Episode 6: An Insider's View of the Carter White House: Negotiations with Sadat, Begin, and Assad

Stuart Eizenstat, accomplished diplomat, Jimmy Carter's Chief Domestic Policy Adviser, and author of *President Carter: The White House Years*, provides an unparalleled view of the Carter Administration's Middle East decision-making. David and Stuart discuss the Camp David Accords, negotiations with Syria's Hafez al-Assad, and a field trip to Gettysburg.

Episode 7: Too Much History and Too Little Geography: A Conversation Across the Israeli-Palestinian Societal Divide

Yossi Klein Halevi, Shalom Hartman Institute fellow and author of *Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor*, joins the podcast to discuss Israeli-Palestinian coexistence with Yousef Bashir, Director of Research & Operations for the S. Daniel Abraham Center for Middle East Peace and author of *The Words of My Father*. Halevi and Bashir share personal experiences, common public perceptions among Israelis and Palestinians, and potential steps to narrow the societal divide amid difficult times.

Episode 8: Rabbi Kook: Founding Religious Zionism and Those Who Seek to Subvert His Legacy Today

Yehudah Mirsky, Professor of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University, faculty member of the Schusterman Center for Israel Studies, and author of *Rav Kook: Mystic in a Time of Revolution* joins the podcast. David and Yehudah discuss the ideology of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, founder of Religious Zionism, and the subversion of his ideology by a small minority of the modern movement.

Episode 9: Combating Anti-Semitism in the Middle East and Beyond

David is joined by acclaimed historian Deborah Lipstadt, appointed by President Biden as the State Department's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism. The two discuss the state of contemporary anti-Semitism, reflect upon the role of the Holocaust in Israel, and draw takeaways from Lipstadt's travels to the Gulf and Morocco.

Episode 10: Grappling with the Direction of the New Netanyahu Government

In the season finale, David is joined by Ben Caspit, columnist and author of *The Netanyahu Years*, and David Horowitz, the founding editor of *The Times of Israel*, to discuss Israel's returning prime minister and his controversial right-wing government. David and the guests break down the keys to Binyamin Netanyahu's long-lasting political career, the evolution of his public persona, and try to understand the trajectory of the new government.

Episode 11: The Judiciary Debate and the Future of Israeli Democracy

Host David Makovsky is joined by Prof. Yedidia Stern, president of the Jewish People Policy Institute and former dean of the law faculty at Bar-Ilan University, and Justice Elyakim Rubinstein, Israel's former attorney-general and the recently retired deputy president of its Supreme Court. After breaking down the history and structure of Israel's judiciary, they discuss the serious implications that Justice Minister Yariv Levin's radical reform package could have for the future of Israeli democracy.



PART OF A SERIES

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RECOMMENDED



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Decision Points Podcast: Season 5](#)

The Gaza War and its Aftermath

Jul 22, 2024

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David Makovsky

(/policy-analysis/decision-points-podcast-season-5-gaza-war-and-its-aftermath)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

[Disagreements on Hostages Loom Over Netanyahu's Washington Trip](#)

Jul 19, 2024

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David Makovsky

(/policy-analysis/disagreements-hostages-loom-over-netanyahus-washington-trip)



BRIEF ANALYSIS

Opportunities and Risks with Iran's New Government

Jul 18, 2024



Patrick Clawson,

Holly Dagues,

Saeid Golkar

(/policy-analysis/opportunities-and-risks-irans-new-government)

TOPICS

Arab-Israeli Relations (/policy-analysis/arab-israeli-relations)

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REGIONS & COUNTRIES

Israel (/policy-analysis/israel)