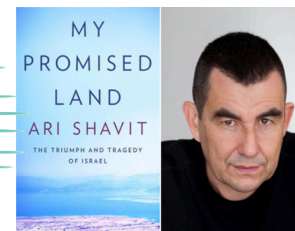


The conversation units



We have created for you eight individual discussion units based on particular chapters of the book. You can work with these units in a nine-part series of meetings that culminate in the Whole Book Discussion, or you can work with the units as individual stand-alone modules.

For each discussion you will need

- ♦ to have read the book yourself...
- ♦ for everyone attending the discussion to have read the particular chapter under discussion AND Chapter One – At First Sight (this first chapter offers crucial context) – no short cuts!
- ♦ to have worked through the guide, making decisions for yourself.
- ♦ to print out any of the materials you wish. You can also run the entire session carbon-free.
- ♦ a quiet, well-lit room with comfortable seating for the discussion itself.
- ♦ a flip-chart or white board.

What do we recommend?

- ♦ Make sure everyone introduces themselves if it is a new group. Then throw out a “warm-up question” that everyone in the group should answer, before digging into the written questions. We find that the following opener is generative: “What is your exclamation mark and your question mark after reading the two chapters?” ie what surprised them, and what question do they have? Have everyone in the group answer this briefly.
- ♦ Build a group “re-cap” on the white board. Have everyone contribute to a brief summary of the chapter’s main topics. This way everyone will be reminded of what they read, and will feel that they are building a shared picture. Don’t take more than 10 minutes for this.
- ♦ Follow the questions. But don’t forget that you are aiming to build a flowing conversation, and not a staccato question/answer session. So feel free to alter the order of the questions, to dwell more on some than others, skip over some, and add your own.
- ♦ By way of summary, introducing these four values of Zionism to the group:

Zionism appears throughout the book in many guises. Sometimes Zionism is like a character with whims and will, sometimes faceless sometimes emotional. “My Promised Land” presents Zionism as something dynamic, ever-changing, but with something constant at its heart. We at Makom would say that the heart of Zionism is summed up in the penultimate line of Israel’s national anthem: “To be a free (Jewish) People in our land.”

This line breaks down into four key values that are both simple and complex:

- To be** – to survive, and also “to be” in the sense of to relax, “just to be”
 - Free** – free to take responsibility, free to grant and restrict freedoms, free to create
 - (Jewish) People** – connected to Jews globally, to Jewish civilization and culture
 - In Our Land** – the home of this collective enterprise is the “Holy Land”
- ♦ Place four signs up around the walls: To Be, Free, Jewish People, and In Our Land.
 - ♦ Have everyone write out (or print out beforehand) one quotation from the chapter that they wholeheartedly agreed with, and one with which they strongly differed. Ask everyone to post each quotation under the appropriate Zionist value. Give time for everyone to look at each other’s choices.

At the end of the session the facilitator may draw attention to the various quotations under the four different headings. They will act as a powerful reminder of the values that underlie the Zionist enterprise, and also as a rich embodiment of how much argument and multi-vocality enlivens its future.

For a more expansive explanation of the four values of Zionism (what we call The Hatikvah Vision), you are invited to read this, and/or to watch this...

The book is liable to arouse sharp discussion and possible disagreement. Don't freak out – it would be amazing if a group of Jews were to read this book and not disagree about it passionately. We would suggest though: Try to insist that comments and opinions are referred back the book itself – “where did you pick that up in the book?” “was that what Shavit actually wrote?”

Finally, feel free to read our “Provocative Facilitation” guide, and contact us for suggestions: makom@jafi.org