



The Settlers

By Gadi Taub

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The controversy over settlements in the occupied territories is a far more intractable problem for Israel than is widely perceived, Gadi Taub observes in this illuminating book. The clash over settlement is no mere policy disagreement, he maintains, but rather a struggle over the very meaning of Zionism. The book presents an absorbing study of religious settlers' ideology and how it has evolved in response to Israel's history of wars, peace efforts, assassination, the pull-out from Gaza, and other tumultuous events.

Taub tracks the efforts of religious settlers to reconcile with mainstream Zionism but concludes that the project cannot succeed. A new Zionist consensus recognizes that Israel must pull out of the occupied territories or face an unacceptable alternative: the dissolution of Israel into a binational state with a Jewish minority.

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Editorial Review

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Jewish settlements in occupied territories have always been a particular point of contention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Taub examines them through the lens of Zionism, which he argues has always been an explicitly secular and democratic movement that seeks political self-determination for the Jews. A small minority, however, define Zionism as the redemption of the Land of Israel, not the establishment of political independence in the state of Israel, thereby justifying settlements. His thesis is that settlements are a manifestation of an underlying struggle concerning the definition of Zionism itself and not simply an internal political debate. By clearly and concisely tracing the history of religious Zionists and examining their ideology, settlement activities, and shifting political rhetoric, Taub does a great service presenting a very complex situation that, viewed from afar, may seem quite simple. --Christopher McConnell

Review

"Anyone who has been concerned or angered by the debate over the future of liberal Zionism ... should hurry to read 'The Settlers.'"
--Adam Kirsch, "Tablet Magazine"

--Adam Kirsch "Tablet Magazine "

About the Author

Gadi Taub is assistant professor, Department of Communications and the School of Public Policy, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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