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There's a time and place for them By Uri Ram

In the early 1980s the Yesh Gvul ((There is a Limit .movement was founded in Israel This movement emphasized one of - Israel's problems since 1967 the blurring of the territorial borders and thus also the moral limits. Michael Faige's book deals with the political culture in Israel in the shadow of these boundary issues. He analyses the cultural messages of the two large movements that offer opposing alternatives to the design of territorial and moral boundaries Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful) and Peace - .Now Unlike other books that deal with the political or historical aspects of each of these movements, the unique character of this book is in its in-depth analyses of the basic assumptions of the political culture of these movements, and the systematic comparison .between the two Faige analyzes Gush Emunim and Peace Now as movements that offer alternative Israeli identities: Gush Emunim offers an identity of a community of believers connected to the ,promised Land of Israel from biblical times while Peace Now offers an identity of individuals who maintain a Western lifestyle in the State of Israel within the Green Line. When these identities are broken down to their fundamental components, one discovers that the dispute between the movements revolves around the concepts of collective time and space, and that these define the difference in the .political concept In the time dimension, Gush Emunim relates to history with a capital H - a continuous fateful story full of significance, beginning with the creation of the nation and its faith and continuing throughout the generations. Zionism and the State of Israel are just chapters in this historical narrative. The land was given ;by divine promise; the Arabs are gentiles .Zionism heralds the coming of the Messiah Peace Now relates to history without the capital H." History is not a spiritual biography, but" rather simply what happened. The relevant history is what happened recently - perhaps .(beginning with the First Aliyah (1882-1903 For Peace Now, history begins with Zionism at the very earliest, and what it contains is settlement and social creativity. The "Now" in the movement's name is the symbolic key. Life is now, the issues are circumstantial and the .solutions must be practical Likewise the dimension of space. Gush Emunim relates to the Land of Israel as a unique place, a place where "our forefathers" walked and the place where everything described in the Bible actually happened. Peace Now relates to the State of Israel as a territorial space in which Israeli sovereignty can be realized, as it indeed was until 1967. Peace Now's approach to the space is a childlike approach - this .space is ours simply because we are here now These approaches similarly give rise to the .political conceptions To Gush Emunim, the Arabs are a foreign element who immigrated to a land not theirs at a time when the true owners were absent against their will. The essence of the state is its Jewishness and its democratic nature is subject to this - so too is the status of the Arabs .living in the state Peace Now feels that the Arabs are here now, as a fact, just as the Jews are here now, as a fact, and the only way to facilitate secure and prosperous life for both parties is a territorial compromise - the division of the .land Three cultures In principle, however, the book does not deal with "conceptions" as abstract ideologies, but rather as social practices, the symbolic tools with which worldviews are constructed. The three sets of such tools that are analyzed in the book are the memory culture, the science culture and the political-activism culture of both movements. The memory culture is at the .heart of the matter The difference between the memory cultures of the two movements is not just in the content of the memory (what is remembered), but also in the approach to the importance of memory in the .(political culture (how much is remembered - Gush Emunim is a movement devoted to memory "it does not matter whether it is an "authentic memory or an "invented" memory, thus the faithful" in its name. This reliance on the" past is first and

foremost the source of the legitimization of the colonial project that the bloc leads, the project to occupy the space and ,the settlements within it while ignoring disinheritance and perhaps even expelling its .Palestinian residents Gush Emunim also merges two great traditions of memory - Jewish and national. Faige calls the : "result of this merger "the big bang of memory Memory is important to Gush Emunim settlers" both for its manipulative political goals and its centrality to their national religious identity. This is a cycle that nourishes itself: The settlement effort sends Gush Emunim to the memory discourse and the centrality of the memory sends Gush Emunim to ".settle For Gush Emunim, the great dividing line in Israeli political culture is between those who forget and those who remember: The forgetters are the sons of political Zionism, which views ;Israel as a modern nation-state in every way the rememberers are the sons of national-religious Zionism, which views the State of Israel as a "return" to the sources of Judaism and its values. The Land of Israel is not just a "safe haven" in the concrete historical sense, but rather the holy and ,Promised Land in the theological metahistorical sense. Accordingly, the practical culture instituted by Gush Emunim is the adoption of the symbols, the sites, the festival and memorial days, the narratives and the heroes of secular Zionism, with its pioneers, settlers and warriors, imbuing them with a religious character and placing them in the context of the redemption from 2000 years .of exile It would be a mistake, however, to think that the "faith" of the bloc is only related to the distant past. There is also what Faige calls second-degree perpetuation": "The movement's" members perpetuate their attempts to perpetuate the movement is now 'consuming' more and ... more of its own history." This is part of the institutionalization process that this formerly revolutionary movement is undergoing. Faige therefore analyzes events in Gush Emunim's memory culture, including the memorialization oYamit, the settlement in Hebron and the Rachelim incident (in which busloads of supporters of prime minister Yitzhak Shamir were attacked on their way to a rally prior to the Madrid Conference in 1991, and the subsequent establishment of the settlement of .(Rachelim at the site of the attack Memorialization paradox The importance of the past to Peace Now is completely different. If the three big - indicators of time - past, present and future are a kind of retractable telescope with three sections, in this movement the section for the present is the longest one, thus the "now" in its name and its unofficial anthem, with its call: "Don't look back." The titles of the chapters dealing with Peace Now's memory culture speak for themselves: "The Depth of ",Shallowness," "The History of the Short Term ,etc. The shallow and short perspective of time relative to the Jewish and Zionist narrative is, in Faige's interpretation, the movement's message. This is even more obvious in the movement's concept, he writes, according to which "forgetting is the basic condition for the solution of the conflict. The two peoples will not operate on the basis of memories of the past and will not try to obtain fair restitution for the injustice caused ".them The murder of Emil Greenzweig in 1983 at the Peace Now demonstration and the manner in which his death has been commemorated by the movement illustrate the memorialization paradox of the memory culture that undermines obliviousness to the past. The movement had to find ways for what Faige calls "non-memorialization" and the creation of an "anti-myth" as its unique way of ,achieving remembrance and heroism. Thus instead of a "memorial service," evenings commemorating Greenzweig have been turned into academic conferences. Their atmosphere is restrained and even somewhat alienated, the subjects abstracted and estranged. "If the myth's role is to give uniform and heroic significance to an event that can be interpreted in several ways, then Peace Now is doing just the opposite ... It is making the movement's message more relative and bringing subversive voices into the heart of the ".movement At the event marking 10 years since Greenzweig's death, his name was not

even mentioned. Faige concludes that Greenzweig "is a myth designed to teach that the Israeli peace ".movement has no myths The second type of practices examined in the book is what Faige calls science culture: Both movements use science in order to illustrate their ideological claims. Gush Emunim has recruited biblical archaeology, which sketches an ancient imaginary map. Peace Now has recruited the science of the settlement economy. Peace Now provides the public with up-to-date data on what is happening on both sides of the Green Line - its own imaginary map of the present. Peace Now explains to citizens" in the democracy on the western side" of the Green Line about what is happening on its eastern side, where "residents" and .settlers" clash with one another" The third area in which the two movements are - different is in their political activity mainly with respect to demonstrations. Gush Emunim is a movement that encompasses the total existence of its members and demands complete comitment from them. Peace Now is a pure protest movement, a kind of shaky skeleton of activists that occasionally calls upon the public of individuals associated with it to one demonstration or another. Gush Emunim demonstrations are impassioned; Peace Now demonstrations are restrained, with the demonstrators behaving as they would at a concert or play. They come, they chat, they go home. Faige uses graphic descriptions to finely detail these differences - the police at Gush Emunim demonstrations stand with their faces to the demonstrators, protecting the surrounding streets from them and preventing them from breaking out and spreading; at Peace Now demonstrations, the police stand with their backs to the demonstrators, protecting them from the street, which threatens to lash out at .them The two movements analyzed in the book created the political culture of Israel in the 1970s and '80s. Since then Israel and the whole Middle East have experienced several political upheavals. Anyone examining Israeli society today must ask whether the Shas movement and the Shinui party are the new pair of contrasting elements that embodies the faithful" on the one side - in the form of" returning the glory of tradition" - and the" pragmatic "now" on the other, in the form of .the new middle class Faige presents a theory regarding the irony of history - through its actions, Gush Emunim created "the negotiating card" with which the State of Israel will implement Peace Now's program: the final and agreed-upon determination of Israel's borders along the 1967 lines. Following the intifada it is clear to everyone - fro- Ehud Barak to Ariel Sharon that Israel must evacuate the territories and that a Palestinian state will indeed be established. What still needs clarifying are .the security arrangements that this involves This book presents one of the most in-depth analyses ever published on Israeli political culture. Even so, I feel that the author portrays Peace Now as a bit more radical than it actually is - the movement of the established national middle class. Gush Emunim on the other hand, is portrayed as a bit more moderate than it actually is: a fundamentalist jihad" movement in every way. Despite the" ,differences between the movements, however they have a lot of similarities. The author dances a cautious dance between the similarities and differences, and between the continuity and the changes in their approach to Zionism. The two movements are totally Zionist, but they interpret Zionism in different ways and the futures that they offer .are therefore different This difference can be summed up thus: Gush - Emunim is a movement of geographic expansion it wants to hold onto all the territory even .though it is already settled by Palestinians Peace Now is a movement of geographical separation - it wants to hold onto only the borders that guarantee a Jewish majority. The geography and the demography are crushing democracy

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