

# Opposing Israel and Global Capitalism: The Grand Canyon is descended in Stages...

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [History](#)

*Shamus Cooke (2) appears to have triggered a discussion in the pages of Counterpunch, inducing France-based, American journalist Ms Johnstone (1) to register a reply to the readers and Mr Cooke(3). Nonetheless it seems to me that there is some useful critical energy to be expended between the edge of the grand precipice and the flowing Colorado below. Despite the predilections of the US government for chemicals, chemo-therapy will not extinguish capitalism and there is no wonder drug to immunise against the "Israel lobby".*

Ms Johnstone is correct that waging opposition to "capitalism" is about or even more futile than waging opposition to Christianity under the rule of the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages. We can also see that even then the Reformation did not rid us of the Church or all the viciousness it propagated.

However, I do believe that Americans not only have to confront the named Israel lobby but their own deep ideological affinity with the claim to be the "new Jerusalem" or "new Eden". There is an interim stage of consciousness required so to speak. *Humanitarian interventionism*, a reincarnation of Leopold's Congo mythology, is so pleasing to the Left-esp. the American and pro-American "Left" because it is wholly coherent with the imperial ideology upon which the USA itself is based- regardless of its capitalist cosmology.

If Syria's Ba'ath nationalism is really some form of Arab capitalism and not derived from socialism as it was defined by its founders, the fact that Syria and countries of its size do not dominate world "markets" or seem to share this aspiration and that we do not find African imperial relics in Europe and North America except as the residue of African slavery ought to mean that there is something about American "salvationism" which transcends the economic system analysis that is so rightly considered only part of the problem.

It seems to me that it would be an enormous leap in American consciousness were the bulk of its citizens to learn that not only the US is entitled to sovereignty and its prerogatives. Nearly every piece I have read about Syria treats the problem as if it were a "special of the day" instead of the slow result of policy going back to 1967!

When Marx and later Lukacs wrote about "commodity fetishism" they may or may not have been talking about jeans and CocaCola. However, the American expectation that their way of life (esp. as mythologised by the *Committee on Public Information*, aka as Creel Committee, under Woodrow Wilson) is the only way and that fundamental freedoms begin and end with access to US standards of consumption (and obesity) is an even more fundamental attitude in the base support lent by the US population for the most egregious violations of sovereignty, human rights and world peace for which they are willing to pay

homage every four years by electing some clown to the pontificate of the Potomac.

There are many who may disagree with the assertion that America itself is a religion armed with the most technologically advanced prosyletisers on the planet. However, not only did Tocqueville but early political exiles to the US, like Carl Schurz and Mathilde Anneke all found that political action was hopelessly hindered by an almost subservient attitude of Americans toward their clergy. Europeans who had suffered for centuries under clerical despotism could not grasp how Americans were willing to trust political authority to "Pfaffen".

Americanist antipathy toward Roman Catholicism in the late 19th century was not an objection to religious control of politics but to the influence of Southern Europeans, Irish (as Theodore Allen pointed out, North America's first slaves), and other people's priests.

Today's rabid reactions to fundamentalist Islam are not only hypocritical in a country which is still unable to outlaw lynching or prevent bombings of women's health clinics. Their malignancy exceeds mere bigotry and ignorance. The founder of Wahibism- the Islamic sect favoured by the house of Saud- was born more than 50 years after Cotton Mather, the staunch witch-burner who along with Jonathan Edwards is held to be a model of Anglo-American erudition. Religious freedom in the US was initially defined by a sect of fanatical refugees from the English Civil War imbued with the most intolerant doctrines of the Thirty Years War- with all its carnage.

Israel enjoys support in the US not just because of the "lobby" with its bribes and threats or because Americans imagine that they rescued European Jewry (ironically the much maligned Russians did by defeating Hitler's *Wehrmacht*). Israel is supported throughout the US as an ideal, like the US. It is an ideal of white Europeans invading a country far from home, declaring it to be empty and then emptying it of its original inhabitants and proclaiming that it was all "god's will". This is a story that every American knows from childhood unless he or she was forced to flee to the US to avoid American terrorism in her or his native country (e.g. Salvador).

Shamus Cooke does not raise this issue- the mentality and ideology that unite even non-religious Americans behind Israel and even earlier behind South Africa (albeit with less enthusiasm). It is the story of the Promised Land, promised to whites and stolen from everyone else.

For those who do not go to church, Auguste Comte developed Positivism. This "church of science" (not to be confused with Scientology) became the religion of the progressive movement. It substituted "experts" for priests. In the US a wave of regulatory policies were adopted while declaring that mass movements by the affected (labor, et al) were unqualified to manage social change. At the end of the 19th century progressivism was the chief ideology of military-technocratic rule in Latin America. In 1945 it became the religious ideology of nominally secular classes in the US. In the end however the result has been the same: to anchor America's missionary obsessions and transfer authority to a new sacerdotal class- the military-industrial leadership. This sacerdotal class- not unlike the one the dominated Christendom in the Middle Ages- is hopelessly corrupt and dedicated only to its self-preservation.

However Americans- like the Europeans of the Middle Ages- seem quite unable to transcend the absolute belief that beneath all the crime and destitution of their universal church, the

salvation to which they believe they in their promised land alone are entitled is the force for good in the world and the motive for their pride.

Add to this the knee-jerk reaction to the political independence exercised by any country's leadership in disagreeing with the holy see in Washington and there is something short of overturning capitalism that is worth considering but more extensive than deporting AIPAC operatives.

On another point, I feel that the oil issue is also misrepresented or misunderstood. US policy needs control over other people's oil not for its own sake but because it is the benchmark for US dollar supremacy. The USG does not need to physically hold all the world's oil. However they do need to defend the global demand for dollars. This is done by regulating the world oil markets from the wellhead to the spot market and generating the rest through control of the global drug trade (e.g. Afghanistan and even Kosovo are important for this market).

Israel is essentially the most powerful US financial, armaments and weapons "offshore". It has a function not unlike the occupation of the region by the Catholic military orders in the Middle Ages- then it was along with Cyprus and Malta an important nexus for the European Asia trade (at least until the Portuguese established the trans-African sea lanes.

Add to this the ideological value of a hyper-nationalist state capable of exerting influence over European politics too.

There are a number of points that can be addressed in the case of Israel- instead about the only one is whether despite everything, the last bastion of European (quasi-American) colonialism can retain its ideological legitimacy based on events that transpired over 60 years ago and for which we are told the perpetrators were more than adequately punished. Using this criteria Americans should all be defending Haiti's sovereignty with fanatical vehemence- but then blacks do not have any sovereign rights whites are obliged to respect.

#### Notes

- 1) <http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/09/13/the-people-against-the-800-pound-gorilla/>
- 2) <http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/09/18/is-capitalism-to-blame-for-the-syrian-war-drive/>
- 3) <http://www.counterpunch.org/2013/09/23/is-the-israel-lobby-only-a-chimp-among-gorillas/>

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