

# Sloughing from Guernica to Gaza to be Born

By [Emanuel Pastreich](#)

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*I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and, at the same time, to talk about the larger symbolic power of Christmas for us in the received tradition. Christmas today commemorates the birth of Jesus, the child of the poor Jewish couple Joseph and Mary who travelled from Nazareth to David, where Joseph was to be registered for the census ordered by the Roman Empire during the gaudy rule of Caesar Augustus.*

*Jews then were an occupied people, struggling under the heavy hand of Rome, oppressed like the Palestinian people today who are likewise subject to a new imperial order expressed through remote cameras, armed drones and robots, and cluster bombs. They are subject to the brutal authority of Jerusalem, Washington, and London, the empire of deception and decay.*

These two imperial systems, although separated by two thousand years, have much in common. It was the dream of wealth and the power of Rome that deeply influenced the mentality behind British expansion in the nineteenth century, and American expansion in the twentieth.

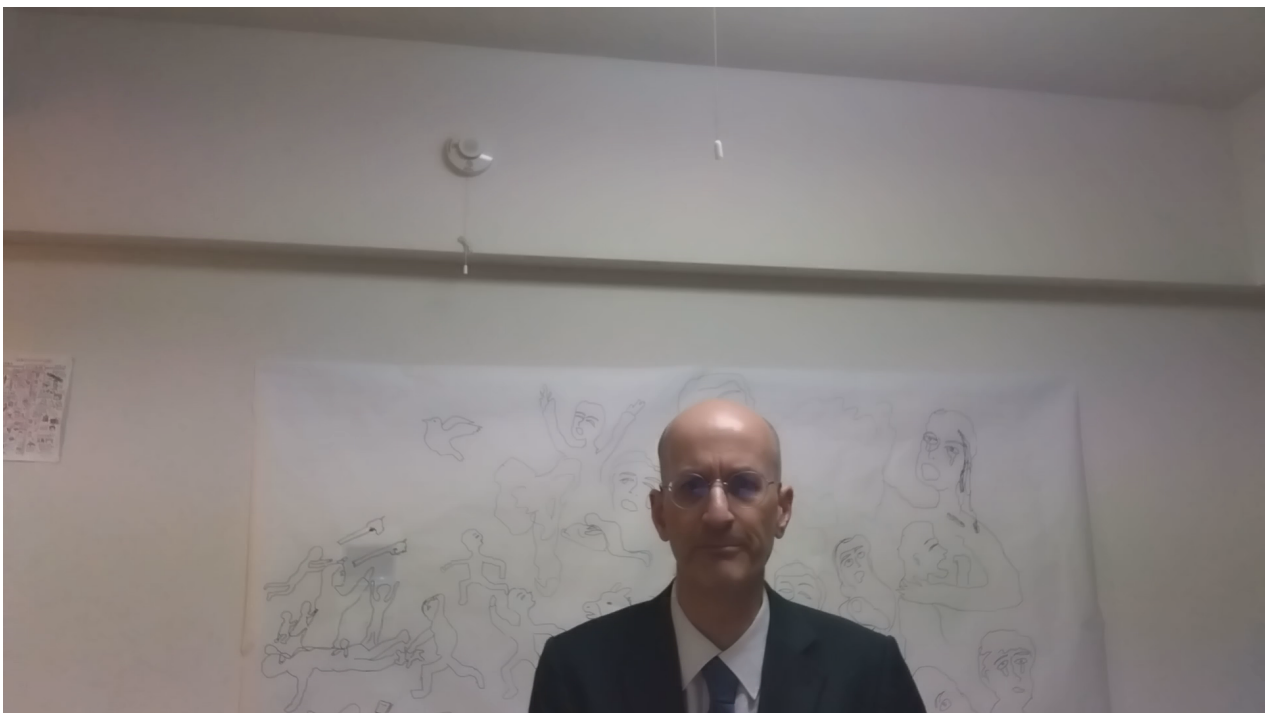
Mary and Joseph stopped in Bethlehem the night that Jesus was born; Mary had him in the manger, alongside the animals, because there was no room for them at the inn. Today, Bethlehem is located in the West Bank, a region supposedly under Palestinian control, but

subject to the worst forms of Israeli suppression. Bethlehem may be inhabited by Palestinians today, but the heavy hand of imperial control is the same that Jews were subject to then.

Jesus led an effort to resist Roman imperialism, the globalism of that day. He was one of many who tried to do so at that time. His approach was unique in that he made an appeal to all citizens, not just to ethnic Jews, and he stressed the spiritual aspect of resistance to Rome.

This Christmas gives us a chance to reflect on this long battle, economic, spiritual, and physical, against overwhelming imperial power in Palestine. Despite all the Zionist ideology that decorates the New York Times, I do not think there is much doubt as to where Jesus would stand in the current struggle.

Israel has always been an imperialist experiment. Establishing Israel as an ethnic state served as the means for the British Empire during the First World War to extend its influence throughout the Middle East, to extend its control the Suez Canal, and to gain access to petroleum. The leaders of the Zionist movement advocating that Jews had a right to Palestine guaranteed by God, and that they were entitled to take it back at any cost, were greatly assisted by the British Empire.



[Click here to view the video.](#)

## From Guernica to Gaza

If we want to understand what is happening in Gaza today, it is useful to turn our attention to the **German bombing of the Basque city of Guernica in Republican Spain on April 26, 1937**. The German Condor Legion and the Italian Aviazione Legionaria carried out the attack under the direction of the brutal military genius **Colonel Wolfram von Richthofen**. The bombing of Guernica was not the deadliest battle of the Spanish Civil War, but it had profound significance for world history because it was a devious experiment.

The Germans and Italians, along with their Spanish Fascist allies, had decided that they did not care what the world thought of them and that they were determined to win the war in Spain by inspiring fear through ruthless destruction.

Bombs were dropped on Guernica without any military purpose, but rather to cause the greatest deaths among civilians, employing creative combinations of explosive bombs and incendiary devices that were dropped on residential communities. The attack first targeted water tanks and fire stations so as to make sure the fires could not be extinguished. Fleeing citizens were attacked by Heinkel 51s and Messerschmitts BF109s to show the entire world the unforgiving power of fascist armies.

And thus, in Guernica, a new form of war was born, a new breed of terror that would become the model for “Blitzkrieg” attacks in Poland and France a few years later.



Ruins of Guernica

Guernica was an unmistakable sign to the world that the Fascist forces did not care what others thought of them and that they had the military hardware and the troop discipline to destroy any resistance to their rule. The message telegraphed to all of Europe was the Guernica would be the fate of any city in Europe that dared to resist ([source](#)).

The horror of the attack was commemorated by Pablo Picasso in his painting “Guernica” because it so clearly represented a transformation of the nature of the war itself.



This new fascist way of war was best described by the leader of the Spanish fascists, **General Emilio Mola**. Mola declared,

**“It is necessary to spread terror. We have to create the impression of mastery, eliminating without scruples or hesitation all those who do not think as we do.”**

**That brings us back to the on-going mindless genocide in Gaza: the murder of children, the bombing of hospitals, the killing of journalists and doctors, deprivation of food and water, and the ruthless push to kill in the most brutal manner with impunity.**

**Like Guernica, the attack on Gaza is not being carried out to defend the Jewish residents of Israel.**

Nor it is being done to bring peace and security to anyone. In fact, it is undertaken in a manner that completely discredits the Israeli government and the American government.

**This attack is not meant as defense, but rather as an opportunity to show to the entire world, in the most brazen manner possible, that the Israeli Defense Forces, backed by the United States, Great Britain, and numerous other powers, are free to do whatever they want.**

It is an opportunity for experiments in destroying urban spaces and killing off citizens using drones, robots, missiles, facial recognition software, surveillance and tracking systems, and other new technologies (the Messerschmitts of today) that will be used in future wars around the world.

The attack on Gaza is an opportunity to demonstrate how an urban space can be occupied,

its citizens controlled and destroyed, and the space entirely rebuilt to serve a different population without any possibility of resistance. The knowhow being developed in the process will not only be used to target Palestinians, it will be used against everyone, including Israelis.



Gazan child at a hospital after an Israeli airstrike

Gaza is unlike previous Israeli occupations of the occupied territories, or the murderous American invasion of Iraq, in that the point is not to cover up murder in the fig leaves of security, self-defense, or “just war.”

No, the collapsing shadow empire with its feet of clay in London, Washington, and Jerusalem has made a fatal decision to cast all legitimacy to the winds, to embrace brutality, terror, and overwhelming force as the only means to advance its desperate struggle for survival. If we go back to Noam Chomsky’s famous book “Hegemony or Survival,” it is clear that we have chosen “hegemony” over “survival.”

**No one in Washington should be allowed the cowardice and hypocrisy to try to pin this war on Israel alone.**

**The “Gaza Option,” the total annihilation of a community with complete impunity has roots in the Nakba campaigns of the Zionists in 1948** that drove 750 thousand Palestinians from their land, but it also has roots in the 1985 MOVE bombing in Philadelphia, the 1992 attack on Ruby Ridge, the 1993 Waco Siege, and the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing lockdown.

The rough beast slouching towards Gaza to be born this time will spread its new power to every smart city, to every shopping mall, to every office building in the world containing the surveillance and security software and hardware that is being tested on Palestinians today.

**We Americans will not let this stand.**

**We will not allow a handful of the rich to employ banks of supercomputers,**

**running sophisticated algorithms, to manipulate and dumb down our people, to use hidden persuaders in entertainment to induce narcissism, to run mass media campaigns to distract us with the insignificant, to fabricate financial crises that destroy our lives, nor to allow them to launch false-flag operations that will herd us into a Gaza of the soul.**

We will not permit them to wall us in on all sides with economic bankruptcy, institutional collapse, cultural banality, spiritual depravity, intellectual barbarism, or physical slavery.

We will not follow the cardboard messiahs that they have carefully prepared for us backstage, nor will we use the flawed logic they feed us through their public intellectuals so to confuse us, nor will we fall for the cultural, racial, or identity conflicts they have stirred up in order to divide us against each other.

Nothing will stop us from coming together “*e pluribus unum*” to build a new nation, one that is built up from the basement following exactly the plans we have agreed on, a mansion for the people built not out of money and debt, not out of pornography, social media, and games, not out of weapons systems and surveillance technology, not out of offshore trusts and funds, but build out of, and by, our people, each and every one of us, gathering together to write a new contract which binds us together as equal partners for the common good within a nation state that follows the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

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*He is a regular contributor to Global Research.*

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