

The Ugly Israeli Denounced

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Even before Israel exposed its heart of darkness to the world in the aftermath of Oct 7, the term "the ugly Israeli" was already a thing. According to many reports, Israelis traveling internationally have developed a reputation for unruliness, rudeness, and assertiveness; observed instances of Israelis arguing, yelling, and disregarding rules have led to negative perceptions by airline staff and other travelers abroad, and even to a Ynet news report that wonders, "[Are Israel's tourists the worst in the world?](#)" But such characterizations of a national stereotype are just the tip of the iceberg.

The "heart, mind and soul" of the Israeli public in general is twisted, maybe even beyond redemption. Israel is often described by analysts in the Arab media as an army that has a state rather than a state that has an army. Support for military measures designed to entrench and expand Zionist political and territorial control of historic Palestine has been a characteristic of the Israeli public since the entity's violent establishment on 78 percent of Palestine in 1948. This mass public support of violence is the natural human condition of a "State of Terror," one that came into being through massacres very much like those taking place in Gaza daily now, and through robbery and deceit (very much like that being exercised now by Netanyahu and his partner in crime, Joe Biden) on the backs of the mostly agrarian Palestinian people at the time. (See State of Terror: How Terrorism Created Modern Israel by Thomas Suarez, "The first comprehensive and structured analysis of the violence and terror employed by the Zionist movement and later the state of Israel against the people of Palestine", according to Ilan Pappé.)

The aftermath of October 7th has disrupted Israel's success in directly influencing the perceptions of the publics of other nations and garnering tolerance for the Israeli government's strategic objectives. But the Israeli public is still firmly in the government's public policy grip.

The Zionist Jewish entity controls not only the content and limits of Jewish identity, but also the content and limits of Palestinian lives. My concern here with the Israelis and their [grandiose and self-absorbed](#) national character is to expose and condemn their “[distance from humanity](#),” their “[millennia-old disdain for non-Jews](#)” (i.e., their racism), which have shaped the horrendous and unjust world in which Palestinians have lived for more than 76 years and made the Israeli public complicit in genocide.

The censorship and repression of the Palestinian, international, and Israeli media hide some of the horrors of Israel’s war on Gaza’s children. But is it really possible that the Israeli public is unaware of the story the whole world is watching with horror, [a story](#) of “famished Palestinians killed outside aid trucks on Al-Rashid Street in February; of tent-dwellers in Rafah burned alive in Israeli air strikes; of women and children subsisting on 245 calories a day?” Do they honestly believe instead what Benjamin Netanyahu describes as “the victory of Judaeo-Christian civilisation against barbarism?”

In an attempt to search the Israeli public’s heart of darkness, Eitan Bronstein Aparicio (De-Colonizer) recently published a [video](#) of himself having conversations with random Israelis in May 2024 about what Israel is doing in Gaza and the possibility that its actions will ultimately be recognized as genocide.

Aparicio asks these individuals for their opinion on the [lawsuit](#) against Israel brought by South Africa before the International Court of Justice in The Hague (On February 16, the ICJ called on Israel to avoid actions that could lead to genocide and to facilitate humanitarian access for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.) Unsurprisingly, their responses show a uniform obliviousness to their government’s willful causing of great suffering to Palestinian civilians, including the “mowing” of Palestinian children. They deny it’s happening, even as the UN has put Israel on its “blacklist” for the killing, maiming, recruitment of minors, bombings of schools and hospitals, and attacks on humanitarian aid workers as well as Israel’s use of starvation as a weapon of war. Aparicio says:

“All the people I interviewed reject it [the idea that Israel is conducting a genocide on Palestinians] and even react to it with anger.”

At the very least, the scale and nature of Israeli military operations in Gaza, combined with policies that result in severe Palestinian suffering, suggest an intent to weaken or destroy the Palestinian population in Gaza. But Israelis are in self-absorbed denial.

Like the Nazi regime in Germany, the Zionist regime has been highly effective in its use of propaganda (hasbara), including [exploitation](#) of the Holocaust to shape public opinion, especially the Jewish-Zionist entity’s own public. It uses the Holocaust to justify military actions, occupation policies, and settlement expansion in the Palestinian territories, invoking historical suffering to justify contemporary political objectives.

Zionist leaders cooperated with Nazi Germany (the Haavara Agreement of 1933—i.e., before the Holocaust) to allow Jewish emigration and the transfer of Jewish assets from Germany to then “British Mandatory Palestine,” thus helping to undermine the anti-Nazi boycott, which was supported by many European and American Jews and posed a potential threat to the German economy.

Under the Agreement, Jews emigrating from Germany could use their assets to purchase

German-manufactured goods for export to Palestine. This created a substantial export market for German factories in British-ruled Palestine, which was beneficial for the German economy during a time of economic hardship. The largely agrarian Palestinian population was locked out, then as now, of the economic benefits of the influx of Jewish capital and labor to Palestine.

To me, the De-Colonizer interviews with Israelis are as chilling as the following excerpt from the cross-examination of Otto Ohlendorf, commander of Einsatzgruppe D, during the Nuremberg trials, which United Nations Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories Francesca P. Albanese shared on Facebook:

Q. Will you explain to the Tribunal what conceivable threat to the security of the Wehrmacht a child constituted in your judgment?

A. I believe I cannot add anything to your previous question. I did not have to determine the danger but the order contained that all Jews including the children were considered to constitute a danger for the security of this area.

Q. Will you agree that there was absolutely no rational basis for killing children except genocide and the killing of races?

A. I believe that it is very simple to explain if one starts from the fact that this order did not only try to achieve security, but also permanent security because the children would grow up and surely, being the children of parents who had been killed, they would constitute a danger no smaller than that of the parents.

When I came across the De-Colonizer video, I was curious to hear how the Israeli respondents would handle Aparicio's question on the Gaza genocide, especially because Israeli PR has long invoked the term "ethnic cleansing" (in reference to Israeli Jews) as a tactic to create a negative association with the Palestinian right of return, framing it as something that could lead to the displacement of Israeli Jews. (See Frank Luntz's [report](#), which was commissioned by The Israel Project and came to light in 2009. It suggests several fact-denying strategies for Israel's public policy communication.) The loaded term "ethnic cleansing" resonates negatively with Western audiences, says the report, but as it turns out, the concept of genocide, especially when it is not merely rhetorical and is happening before our eyes, also does.

The Israeli respondents in the video recycle all the most familiar tropes of Zionist propaganda, making use of several strategies of PR communication in Luntz's report, such as denial, deflection, and accusations of antisemitism. They pretend that the war on Gaza with its wholesale obliteration of neighborhoods and families, schools, hospitals and markets, is an equal struggle between an Israeli state that has the fourth most powerful army in the world (F16s, nuclear weapons, the unconditional logistical, political and diplomatic support of the most powerful state on earth: the USA, and massive trading privileges from the EU) ... and Hamas. They pretend that it all started on Oct 7, 2023 and do not acknowledge that Palestinians have lived for so long, not just with the blockade of Gaza, but also with the daily threat of Israeli incursions, the kidnapping of their children by brutal Israeli soldiers, the demolition of their homes, the humiliation of men, women and children at countless checkpoints, and the daily interference with normal life at every imaginable level.

Comparing Israel and the Palestinian resistance is like comparing the rapist and the rapist's victim. And yet, without exception, the De-Colonizer respondents do just that, with one of them saying (appallingly, since the issue being discussed is genocide) at minute 4:44— "and I say, 'I wish they didn't exist.'"

Another respondent says,

"It's a war that's sad for both sides. We on the Israeli side didn't start it. It opened, exploded, on October 7, but there is a war, and it is sad for both Israelis and Palestinians. A war, but it's a kind of contact between the Palestinian population, Hamas, and Israel."

To the Israeli public, the unfolding horror in Gaza is a "kind of contact" the nature of which appears to be a mystery. It's genocide, folks. The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories has found "reasonable grounds" to believe that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The report presented at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, entitled 'Anatomy of a Genocide', outlines specific acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.

Aparicio concludes:

"The probability that in a few years' time it will be proven that Israel has committed a genocide must also be taken into account by the Israelis themselves. This is a potential future that will shock all those who have not lost their humanity and who have not been swept away by the prevailing racism."

It must be exhausting, this denial and rationalization on the part of Israelis. But then, so is facing the facts. A Jewish-American friend posted on Facebook about her exhaustion as she grapples with these gruesome facts:

"I am so exhausted that 'exhausted' doesn't even fully cover how I feel from having my secondary trauma as a second gen Shoah survivor triggered constantly since Israel started its genocide in Gaza. The flip-flopping from the grief, shame, empathetic pain & sheer rage toward the perpetrators & the "Good Germans" who are enabling it is pushing the limits of my sanity. I hold onto stories of courage, resistance & selfless compassion as my life rafts in this sea of hate & sheer evil."

I wrote this blog post with this question in my mind about Israelis: Have they "lost their humanity" for good? Do they need to wait "a few years' time" for Israel's crimes against humanity to be "proven" before being "shocked." One of them says, "Alas, if it comes to that!" Well, it has come to that ... and more.

Through control of the media, the spread of Zionist ideology, and the hasbara portrayal of the settler-colonial Jewish Zionist state as a victim figure with "a right to exist" forcibly on someone else's land, Israel manipulates public perception and promotes the public's complicity with the destruction of the Palestinian population in Gaza. The Israeli Jews who dissent must first go through a wrenching "identity crisis" and then, like the historian Ilan Pappé, be hounded out of Israel. Pappé moved out in 2008 after appearing in an Israeli newspaper at the center of a target and receiving several death threats.

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This article was originally published on the author's [Medium](#).

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Featured image: Frame captured from a De-Colonizer 1948 [video](#) titled "Une conversation en hébreu sur le génocide"

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