

The War on Gaza: Why the Sustainability of the Western-Zionist Colony Is Nigh on Impossible. Amir Nour

Part X

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“The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line, – the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea”
— (W. E. Burghard Du Bois)[1]

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Zionism’s Suicidal Quest for a Substitute Jewish Identity

One of the most qualified specialists in the study of Zionism – its antecedents, motivation, power-base, claim to the land of Palestine, and the far-reaching repercussions of the creation of the state of Israel on both Jews and Arabs – is undoubtedly late Egyptian scholar Dr Abdelwahab Elmessiri. His scholarly interest in, and extensive research on, Zionism as a political movement led to the publication in 1975 of *“The Encyclopedia of Zionist Concepts and Terminology”*, acknowledged to be, to this day, the only work of its kind in the Arabic language.

Among many other works he published is a book[2], which, upon its release in 1977, appealed not only to scholarly readers but also to large elements of the public, for it discusses aspects that, at that time, were not apparent to the public and policymakers alike in the Western countries, the United States in particular, who had then – and still do today – failed to recognize the true nature of political Zionism and had accepted the ambiguities and mythicism that blur the differences between Zionism and Judaism. Such an accommodation continues to facilitate the rationalization of, and support for, a Zionist-dominated Israel, while also helping to conceal the mistreatment of the native Palestinian population and the denial of their legitimate and inalienable rights.

In this outstanding book, Elmessiri also expressed his conviction that the situation was not without hope, and suggested which aspects of Zionist policy and practice could be changed or eliminated so that peace and justice could be realized in the “Promised Land”. The suggestions he put forward were all the more worthy of interest as none of them would do violence either to the basic tenets of Judaism or to the individual human rights of both the Palestinians and the Jews.

With regard to the subject of Zionism and religious belief, Elmessiri observes that it is difficult to think of a political phenomenon that generates more controversy and elicits more

violent reaction than Zionism. Many political movements and institutions, he says, have been described over the years as progressive or counterrevolutionary, nationalist, or settler-colonialist. But unlike Zionism, “very few movements in the twentieth century have been described as being ‘much more than a political entity’[3] [and] it is doubtful whether any political outlook has ever been classified as a ‘sacred word and concept’[4] and as a ‘legitimate religious belief’,[5] not to mention the fact that some Zionists and their sympathizers even view the establishment of a state in the land of Palestine as being the fulfillment of biblical prophecy and an event of apocalyptic significance.

It is precisely this aspect of the controversy surrounding Zionism that made it necessary for the Egyptian scholar to begin his study of this ideology by asserting what he believed is self-evident, namely that Zionism *is* a political movement, and *is not* a religious doctrine. He added that the hue and cry in the West, following the adoption of the 1975 United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism, was a timely reminder of the need to emphasize once more the difference between the religious belief and the political program.

Far from being sacred, Elmessiri affirms, Zionism is a political ideology of complex European origins, rooted primarily in the socioeconomic realities of the Eastern European Jewish ghettos and in European society of the late nineteenth century; the common denominator among their wide variety of schools of thought being the conviction that the Jews, without waiting for divine intervention, should achieve “autoemancipation” by taking matters into their own hands and terminating their state of perpetual alienation and deep longing, and create a Jewish state of their own or, to use the more precise phrase of Theodor Herzl, “the Jews’ state” (*der Judenstaat*)[6]. It also was being understood that the Jewishness of this state lay neither in its religious orientation nor in its commitment to Judaism and its values, but instead in its presumed national (ethnic) Jewish character.

That is why like scores of other authors do, Elmessiri highlights the well-established historical fact that many of the founders of Zionism had little concern with Judaism, and even evinced a marked hostility toward its precepts and practices. Indeed, Herzl himself, during a visit to Jerusalem, consciously violated a great number of Jewish religious practices in order to emphasize his new non-religious outlook as distinct from a traditional religious stance[7]. Likewise, his close friend, the Hungarian-born and Germanophile writer and Zionist leader, Max Nordau[8] was a self-avowed atheist who believed that the Torah was “inferior as literature” compared “to Homer and the European classics”, and that it was “childish as philosophy and revolting as morality”[9]. He even suggested that the day would come when Herzl’s *Der Judenstaat* would be given equal status with the Bible, even by its author’s religious opponents[10]. In an autobiographical sketch, he wrote: “When I reached the age of fifteen, I left the Jewish way of life and the study of the Torah (...) Judaism remained a mere memory and since then, I have always felt as a German and as a German only”[11]. Similarly, Chaim Weizmann took pleasure at times in “baiting the Rabbis about kosher food”[12], and a typical group of Zionist halutzim (pioneers), deliberately irreligious, and militantly atheistic, marched in defiance of Jewish dietary laws in the early 1920s to “the Wailing Wall on the Day of Atonement munching ham sandwiches”. [13]

Elmessiri also informs that the Zionist settlers in Palestine, the first to implement this new philosophy of political Zionism, were unusually careful to stress the non-religious and untraditional nature of their endeavor so that there would be no misunderstanding of their philosophy. That’s most probably the reason why they dropped the name “Jews”, calling themselves “Hebrews” instead. They used this more modern term in their campaigns in the 1930s and early 1940s, calling for a “Hebrew” rather than “Jewish” state. The current term,

“Jewish state”, Elmessiri said, originally coined as a non-religious concept, was revived in the 1940s, again with no intended religious connotation.

So, most of the early Zionists have seen themselves in non-religious terms, and their ideology, patterned after nineteenth-century European nationalism, was intended to replace traditional religious beliefs. Such an amoral outlook, replacing deep religious commitment while making full use of it, has always proved to be a more or less sure way for recruiting the masses, and the “fusion of nationalistic outlook with religious fervor was achieved by turning authentic religious doctrine into a national myth”. [14]

In light of the foregoing, it comes as no surprise that the Jewish orthodox sect *Neturei Karta* (Guardians of the City), for example, characterizes the Zionist rabbis as “the clericals of the false Israel” who “teach a false doctrine” [15]. Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik (1853-1918), who was Rabbi of Brisk, Poland, and the founder of the “Yeshiva approach to Talmudic study”, had this to say about Zionism: “The Jewish people have suffered many (spiritual) plagues – the Sadducees, Karaites, Hellenisers, Shabbatai Zvi, Enlightenment, Reform and many others. But the strongest of them all is Zionism”. [16]

In effect, in a 1381-page landmark book [17] considered by many as a definitive treatise on the differences between Judaism and Zionism, Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro explains how and why Zionism represents a hijacking of Jewish identity, or as he puts it, a theft of that identity that is not in line with his religion. Zionism, he says, was conceived to erase classic Jewish identity as a people with a divinely ordained mission and replace it with an identity based on national polity. This attempt to reengineer Jewish identity resulted in the creation of a “self-deprecating, logically inconsistent, traumatic ideology called Zionism”.

It also engendered a belief that no other country in the world adheres to, that is, Israel is the homeland (heimat) and nationality of the Jewish people scattered all over the Earth, including people who never visited Israel, never were citizens of this country, nor were their family members, nor do they ever plan to be. No Muslim country makes such an absurd claim vis-à-vis the world’s Muslims, nor has the Vatican ever professed that it is the country of all Catholics.

Rabbi Shapiro, who begs to differ, is of the opinion that if someone wants to extricate themselves from Zionism’s influence, they must maneuver through a mess of false ideology, false Judaism, false history, false politics, and a false worldview.

In his comprehensive account and critical examination of the various Zionist schools of thought and their ideologies, the orthodox Jewish scholar points out that the original Zionists were Jews who were influenced by, impressed with, and envied the lifestyle of the Gentiles over that of the Jews. More than anything else, they wanted to be secular, or in the words of Vladimir Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the “diametrical opposite of a Jew”; because they attributed anti-Semitism to the priestly lifestyle of the religious Jews, looking at them as “ugly, immoral, and debased”. They, therefore, were convinced that if the Jews could become normal, that is to say to change their lifestyle, and indistinguishable from non-Jews, anti-Semitism would end.

As a matter of fact, pioneer Zionists did secularize themselves, but anti-Semitism didn’t end. They were rudely awakened to their Jewishness by anti-Semitic violence, especially the string of pogroms that began in Russia in 1881, and thus were stuck between a rock and a hard place: they refused to be Jews, and the Gentiles refused to let them be Gentiles. This is

how they resolved that Zionism must be their “Plan B”. They basically figured if they can’t join the Gentile nations, they’ll make a nation of their own by turning all the Jews into a nationality.

In doing so, they created an entirely new society, pretending they were scions of the “ancient people of the Book” – partly to garner support from the Evangelicals and to recruit Jews to populate their future state.

Also, because Zionism has nothing to do with Judaism but is rather a political movement, many early Zionists were atheists or agnostics, but still claimed God gave the Jews the “Holy Land”.

Making “Good Jews” White and European

On that same subject of the perversion of the Jewish identity, Professor Steven Friedman, one of South Africa’s foremost political theorists of mainstream understandings of Jewishness, wrote a thoroughly-researched book.[18] In it, he offers a searing analysis of the weaponization of anti-Semitism in service of political objectives that support the Israeli state and global white supremacy. Friedman argues that the changes wrought to Jewish identity form an important element in the ideology which underpins the Israeli state and that they deserve more attention than they have received.

He appropriately reminds us that until the French revolution and the Enlightenment, all Jews were effectively forced to adhere to their religion by the reigning authorities. And when Jews were allowed to choose whether to practice their religion, those who chose not to were still regarded as ethnically Jewish. This made Jewish identity more complicated than that of most other religious or ethnic groups.

The concept of religious tolerance promoted by thinkers of the Enlightenment era led to an unprecedented transformation in the legal and economic status of the Jews. Having enjoyed civil rights and been allowed a freedom of movement denied to them for centuries, Western European Jews in the nineteenth century rose to high levels in the professions, the arts, business and even government.

Yet, as explained by Stanford University Professor Maxine Schur in a presentation at Oregon-based Reed College,[19] “beneath the new external acceptance of the Jews, there existed in European society a virulent undercurrent of anti-Semitism which was different than the one that had plagued the Jews in the Middle-Ages or during the Inquisition for it was based not on theological, but secular grounds. It was racial, rooted in bogus biology. Paradoxically, the racial anti-Semitism was given authority and first popularized by a self-confessed proponent of religious tolerance, the celebrated philosopher of the Enlightenment, Voltaire”.

Indeed, François-Marie Arouet (1694-1778), known by his nom de plume Voltaire, was famous for his wit and his criticism of Christianity, especially of the Roman Catholic Church, and a staunch advocate of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and separation of church and state. Furthermore, what matters for our purpose is that he was outspoken in his hostility towards the Jews, and recent scholars such as Arthur Hertzberg[20] have seen him as one of the founders of modern secular anti-Semitism.

In effect, in his 1756 “*Essai sur les mœurs et l’esprit des nations*” (translated to English as “*Essay on the customs and spirit of nations and key facts of history from Charlemagne to*

Louis XIII”), Voltaire writes:

“The Jews are an ignorant and barbarous people, who have long united the most sordid avarice with the most detestable superstition and the most invincible hatred for every people by whom they are tolerated and enriched (...) In all the annals of the Hebrew people, one does not see any generous action. They know neither hospitality, nor liberality, nor clemency. Their sovereign happiness is to practice usury with foreigners (...) Their glory is to set fire to and bloody the small villages that they can seize. They slaughter the old and the children (...) They never know how to forgive when they are victorious; they are the enemies of the human race. No politeness, no science, no art perfected at any time among this atrocious nation”.

In a section devoted to Voltaire, the Jewish Virtual Library considers that historically speaking, Voltaire’s outlook was a powerful contribution to the creation of the mental climate which made possible the emancipation of the Jews, but at the same time it prepared the ground for the future racial antisemitism. Just after Voltaire’s death, Zalkind Hourwitz, librarian to the king of France, wrote: “The Jews forgive him all the evil he did to them because of all the good he brought them, perhaps unwittingly; for they have enjoyed a little respite for a few years now and this they owe to the progress of the Enlightenment, to which Voltaire surely contributed more than any other writer through his numerous works against fanaticism”.

For Nabila Ramdani, an Algerian French journalist and columnist, however,

“the celebrated philosopher was an unapologetic racist and anti-Semite who inspired Hitler, and the removal of his statue in Paris was long overdue (...) The problem is not simply that Voltaire failed to incorporate persecuted groups such as Black people and Jews into his so-called progressive thinking; it is that his advocacy of biological racism and white supremacy still offer justification to all kinds of extremists. These include Nazi sympathizers traditionally linked to France’s far-right National Rally (formerly the National Front) as well as terrorists who target synagogues and mosques”.^[21]

When restrictions on Jews in Europe began to ease, religious hostility to them as a group became less tenable. In theory at least, Jews could choose not to be Jewish by converting to Christianity, as more than a few did. But bigotry is not that easily ended. Those who were prejudiced against Jews, presumably alarmed that they could now integrate into society, focused not on the religion of the targets of their bigotry but on accidents of birth; they began to insist that Jews constituted a separate and dangerous race. The ideologues of this new racism called it “anti-Semitism”.

The term appeared in Germany in the 19th century and is commonly associated with the German activist Wilhelm Marr, who, in 1879, founded the “*Antisemiten Liga*” (League of Anti-Semites) following the publication of a pamphlet whose German title translates as “The Victory of Jewishness over Germanness”.^[22] It has remained in usage even though it is inaccurate since Arabs are Semites too.^[23] While anti-Jewish racists often despise Arabs as well, the term was used to describe a prejudice against Jews only.

After 1948, and more conspicuously in the years following the June 1967 Israeli-Arab War, the Israeli state and its Western supporters have endeavored to convert “anti-Semitism” from a description of anti-Jewish racism to a weapon against their critics, many of whom happen to be Jews who believe that the state’s attitudes and practices are racist. As it was,

an allegation of racism has been turned into a weapon against anti-racists. This is accompanied by another turnaround: the Israeli state and its supporters seek to turn the campaign against anti-Semitism from a rebellion against white supremacy into an endorsement of white Europeaness.

In effect, the use and misuse of anti-Semitism to browbeat Israeli state opponents is part of a larger reality in which those who do this seek to change the nature of Jewish identity by distinguishing between “real” Jews and the rest. They also seek to “flatten out” Jewish identity. Jews are no longer, like every other group, a complicated mix of differing opinions and perspectives. Instead, there are only “good” Jews who attach their identity to the Israeli state and “bad” ones who do not. The historian Avi Shlaim, responding to claims that all “real” Jews support the Israeli state, observes: “Ironically, to treat Jews as a homogeneous group is in fact an antisemitic trope. It is antisemites who fail to differentiate between different kinds of Jews, and want to see them all clustered in one place. It is on this basis that Theodor Herzl, the visionary of a Jewish state, predicted that the antisemites will become our most dependable friends”.[24]

To be sure, as we have noted earlier, an important source of anti-Jewish hostility is the Christian right, which has held Jews in contempt for centuries.[25] But its religious beliefs also ensure uncritical support for the Israeli state.[26] The fact that these allies of the Israeli state see it as an essential means to achieve the death of the Jewish religion, and that hostility to Jews is deeply embedded in their view of the world, does not deter the state and its supporters. Thus, during a state visit to Brazil in 2019, then Prime minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, declared: “We have no better friends in the world than the Evangelical community”.[27]

To make sense of this confusing thinking, Friedman explains, it is crucial to understand that for those in positions of Jewish authority who peddle this attempt to manufacture a reality that seems entirely unreal, anti-Semitism no longer means prejudice against Jewish people. In the English-speaking world, this development can be dated to the 1970s when Arnold Foster and Benjamin Epstein, who held leadership roles in the American Anti-Defamation League, published a book[28] which started something of a cottage industry. It is noteworthy that the Anti-Defamation League was founded to combat anti-Semitism in the United States, but it has become chiefly a propaganda vehicle for the Israeli state.

For the South African Professor, the term “anti-Semitism” has become detached from its moorings. It no longer means racism directed at Jews; it means holding left-wing or egalitarian opinions, which often seems to include being opposed to the white supremacy of which anti-Semitism was once a part. The new Jew – or victim of anti-Semitism – is no longer a member of a particular ethnic group; it is a right-wing person, Jewish or non-Jewish, who supports the economic status quo and the racial hierarchies that have reigned in the West for centuries. The new anti-Semite is not a person who hates Jews; it is a person, Jewish or non-Jewish, who embraces egalitarian values. Jewish people are no longer victims of prejudice as a group; they are now divided into two groups – one “good”, the other ‘bad’ – and ‘bad Jews’ are one of the groups most likely to be accused of anti-Semitism. This is so because of, and not despite, the fact that the “bad Jews” who are stigmatized as “anti-Semites” tend to be anti-racists.

The American “new anti-Semitism” was a product of the Israeli state and has now become not only a core position among the state’s defenders but “one that characterizes the mainstream of most of Western politics.”[29]

The claim that hostility to the Israeli state was born of anti-Jewish hatred has emerged in that state years before the Americans claimed to have found a new and dangerous anti-Semitism: “A significant intellectual milestone was in the late 1960s when Israeli researchers began to develop the concept of ‘new antisemitism’. Their view was that the old anti-Jewish sentiment that had taken shape and changed form over the centuries was now directed first and foremost against the Jewish political enterprise of Zionism and Israel”.[30] A recently published study shows that it was the Israeli state itself which had started the ball running; the term had been used at a series of seminars organized by the office of the Israeli president in the late 1980s.[31] This view soon became deeply embedded in the Israeli state’s ideological battle with its critics.

Opposition to the Israeli state and its actions did not target the Jews; it was aimed at the Israeli state. But central to Zionism’s understanding of itself was the claim that it was the vehicle of all Jews, not merely those Jews who supported the idea of a Jewish state. As a result, to reject the Israeli state – or even to criticize what it did – was to show hostility to the Jews, even if you happened to be Jewish. Friedman views this logic as false, “just as to oppose apartheid in South Africa was not an expression of prejudice against white people. But it served the purpose of Zionism and its allies”.

And so, for the ideologues of Zionism, the “Jewish state” quickly turned from a cure for anti-Semitism to its cause when it was faced by the reality of Palestinian resistance. The Palestinians who wanted their land back were labelled the “new Nazis”, hence Netanyahu’s false claim that it was the Mufti al-Husseini, not Hitler, who devised the mass murder of European Jews. In truth, Netanyahu was following the lead of Malcolm Hoenlein, an American Jewish leadership figure and vocal supporter of the Israeli state, who told a meeting in Toronto, Canada, that Hitler had reluctantly “followed the wishes of the Mufti when he had decided to kill all Jews”.[32]

This invention served an important purpose: it conveniently portrayed Palestinians not as victims of the power of the Israeli state but as powerful Jew-haters whose enmity was even greater than that of the Nazis. It follows, of course, that if Palestinians are Nazis, those who support their cause are too, the primary effect of which being to “delegitimize the Palestinian cause and to practically remove once and for all the Palestine issue from the international agenda”.[33]

Furthermore, Friedman rightly calls attention to the fact that “comparing anti-Jewish racism to any other form of racial bigotry is now branded anti-Semitic because it is said to reduce the significance of Jewish suffering – which is the justification for the state”.

Indeed, President Biden’s “special envoy to combat anti-Semitism”, Deborah Lipstadt, for instance, has insisted that hatred of Jews is both eternal and unlike any other historical fact, “beginning with her earliest work, which argues that the Holocaust was a unique, incomparable event, Lipstadt has tended to exceptionalize antisemitism as the most ancient, enduring form of prejudice – a constant transhistorical force, resurfacing across eras and continents”.[34] Responding to this peculiar claim, American Jewish Studies scholar Barry Trachtenberg remarks: “If one accepts antisemitism to be eternal, and not a consequence of social or historical factors, then it is a fact of life that will forever push Jewish people into defensive postures. It will make us more nationalist, more reactionary, more militaristic, and more closed off the rest of the world”.[35]

Worst still, the claim that opposition to the Israeli state and to its actions is equated with

“antisemitism” has become the official position of Western governments, and in some US states, such opposition has even been criminalized.

This outstanding development in the West was spearheaded by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), an intergovernmental organization comprising 35 members and 9 observer countries founded in 1998 by former Swedish Prime minister Göran Persson, with the declared mission of combating “growing Holocaust denial and antisemitism”.^[36] Its most potent and damaging instrument is, by far, its definition of anti-Semitism which has become an article of Zionist faith and is relentlessly portrayed by Zionists as “what the Jewish community wants”. Steven Friedman believes that “the IHRA and its participating governments do not consider this attempt to force all Jews to associate with the state’s actions as anti-Semitic. Nor do they acknowledge that, by labelling opposition to the state as hostility to Jews, their definition violates this clause. Thus, the IHRA definition itself becomes anti-Semitic and, consequently, the Western states that endorse and apply it are keeping alive a shameful history of anti-Jewish racism”.^[37]

By defining hostility to Jews in a way which substitutes a state for an ethnic group, the British Jewish author Robert Cohen points out, the IHRA definition also defines what it is to be Jewish: “By that reckoning, to be Jewish is to deny the possibility that Zionism has played out in racist ways, despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. And to be Jewish is to believe that the state of Israel is a democratic nation like any other, despite Israel’s own constitutional laws defining it as the nation state of the Jewish people rather than the state of all its citizens (...) To be Jewish, according to the IHRA, is to deny the truth, ignore reality, and defend the indefensible”.^[38]

Thereafter, the IHRA definition has been used relentlessly to stigmatize political expression and shut down free speech in the Western world, whether it be by governments or many universities. It has been “wielded against academics who campaigned for Palestine to deprive them of jobs and to suppress campaigns against the Israeli state, in particular the BDS movement”.^[39]

Nowadays, the Israeli state is seen not only as ally of the West but also as its representative in the Middle East. Like South Africa before 1994, Friedman observes: “the Israeli state is in, by not of, the region it finds itself”. This further explains why the “Collective West” regards Israel as “the only democracy in the Middle East”, democracy being often used by Western governments, elites and academics as a code for “Western”, and why former Israeli Prime minister Ehud Barak dared to utter the racist claim that Israel is a “villa in the jungle”! Instead of this misnomer, the more correct definition that should be applied to the Israeli state is, in the words of Steven Friedman: “the only Western state in the Middle East”.

All of this perfectly sums up the tenacious prejudice that this Western-created state is an island of “first world” Western civilization in a barbaric neighborhood.^[40]

Such a prejudice is hardly a novel phenomenon, nor does the Western racist and supremacist mindset seem to become a fading memory during our times. Indeed, back in 1914, Winston Churchill was not ashamed to declare: “We are not a young people with an innocent record and a scanty inheritance... We have engrossed to ourselves an altogether disproportionate share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by force, often seems less reasonable to others than to us”. Churchill was telling the plain truth to his pairs in the

closed meeting of the British Cabinet. As a new academic study[41] has asserted, the impact of British colonialism on India was devastating, uncovering staggering death tolls and immense wealth extraction that was carried out by the empire during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The report estimates that India suffered 165 million excess deaths due to British colonialism between 1880 and 1920, “a figure that is larger than the combined number of deaths from both World Wars and the Nazi holocaust”! It also estimates that during nearly 200 years of colonialism, the British Empire stole at least \$45 trillion in wealth from India. Interestingly enough, this new research further highlights how British colonialism in India was not only devastating for the Indian people, but also had “a profound impact on the global capitalist system” and “inspired fascist leaders like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini”, who then carried out similar genocidal crimes within and outside their own borders.

A further example of this deeply rooted feeling was given, much more recently, by none other than the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell Fontelles, who, addressing young European diplomats at Bruges, Belgium, said: “Here, Bruges is a good example of the European garden. Yes, Europe is a garden. We have built a garden. Everything works. It is the best combination of political freedom, economic prosperity and social cohesion that the humankind has been able to build the three things together (...) The rest of the world - and you know this very well, Federica - is not exactly a garden. Most of the rest of the world is a jungle, and the jungle could invade the garden (...) Europeans have to be much more engaged with the rest of the world. Otherwise, the rest of the world will invade us, by different ways and means (...) Keep the garden, be good gardeners. But your duty will not be to take care of the garden itself but [of] the jungle outside”.[42]

A Naked Colonialism Fast Approaching Its Demise

According to the Cornell Law School Legal Information Institute, settler colonialism has “an additional criterion that is the complete destruction and replacement of indigenous people and their cultures by the Settler’s own in order to establish themselves as the rightful inhabitants”.

Image: File photo of illegal Israeli settlements



Many scholars apply the term to Israel’s founding too. Late Australian historian Patrick Wolfe, for one, clearly referred to the Zionist settler project in Palestine as an example of settler colonialism in a seminal essay[43] published in 2006. As practiced by Europeans, he wrote, “both genocide and settler colonialism have typically employed the organizing grammar of race. European xenophobic traditions such as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or Negrophobia are considerably older than race, which, as many have shown, became

discursively consolidated fairly late in the eighteenth century (...) Settler colonialism destroys to replace. As Theodor Herzl, founding father of Zionism, observed in his allegorical manifesto/novel, 'If I wish to substitute a new building for an old one, I must demolish before I construct'.[44] Settler colonialism is an inclusive, land-centered project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan center to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminating the indigenous societies... The colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event".

In Palestine, however, the native society has not been eliminated. Palestine is not "as Jewish as England is British", as Chaim Weizmann once candidly expressed Zionist goals. Instead, as Rashid Khalidi said, "The population of the entire country from the river to the sea, unified by decades of occupation and colonization since 1967, is today at least half Palestinian, and that proportion is growing. The natives are still there, and they are restless. Those Palestinians who have managed to remain in historic Palestine - in spite of the ceaseless efforts to dispossess them - continue to resist erasure. Outside of Palestine, an equal number remain profoundly attached to their homeland and to the right of return. The Palestinians have not forgotten, they have not gone away, and the memory of Palestine and its dismemberment has not been effaced. Indeed, wider international audiences are increasingly aware of these realities".[45]

When one looks at white settler colonies, Joseph Masad insightfully observes[46], the only ones that have survived are the ones who have been successful in absolutely eliminating and annihilating the native population, either completely or basically retaining a small minority of them. We see this especially in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

The situation is quite different in other settler-colonial places - like South Africa, Algeria, Rhodesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia - where the attempts to establish settler-colonies have failed, and as a result, those countries ended up gaining their independence in the early 1960s and through the mid-1990s. And the reason why those attempts did not succeed is because the native populations have always outnumbered the white settler intruders.

The Western-Zionist settler-colonialism in Palestine clearly belongs to the latter project. As mentioned before, Theodor Herzl had foreseen the absolute need to expel the native Palestinian population and replace it with Jewish immigrants coming mostly from Eastern and Western European countries; a *sine qua non condition* for the successful establishment of a "Jewish state" in the "Holy Land".

Later on, in the 1920s and 1930s, Zionist ideologues and activists came up with concrete schemes and plans on how to bring this about, and started to implement their designs even before the 30th of November 1947, the day the United Nations General Assembly passed the Partition Plan Resolution. Indeed, by the time Israel was finished with the expulsions by December 1948, the Zionists had successfully evicted more than 90% of the Palestinian population in the territories they illegally occupied by brutal force.

According to Prof. Masad, the major mistake the Zionists made was to conquer the remaining part of Palestine in 1967, adding to Israel a large number of Palestinians, not only the indigenous populations of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, but also more than half the refugees that they had expelled in 1948 among those who had taken refuge and had been living in the areas Israel conquered. As a result of that, the

demographic situation changed dramatically in Israel to affect the survivability of the settler colony, at least on a demographic basis.

As referred to earlier, several Israeli officials, including Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak, have made predictions over the last few years, saying they were not sure Israel will survive to its 80th or 100th birthday. That kind of worry is based essentially on the internal fissures, the demographic contraction of Israel, and the fact that there's no new major pool from which to draw additional Jewish immigrants. The six million or so American Jews, for instance, have never shown a willingness, or at least never has been a large percentage of American Jewry that showed an interest in moving to Israel. Even though many individual Jews may be strongly supportive of Israel, that does not mean that they are all Zionists, or they're going to move en masse to Israel.

Accordingly, Joseph Masaad goes on to say, the mass murder and genocidal policies of the Israeli government are not necessarily irrational. The issue is not only to eliminate the Palestinians physically and demographically, but also to forestall the possibility of resistance in the future. This kind of behavior is quite rational, followed by many of the settler-colonial countries – like the appalling atrocities and mass killings committed by the British in Kenya in the 1950s and 1960s; the American support for the Portuguese in the South African war on the guerrillas in Angola and Mozambique between 1962 and 2000; the Western support to the French in Algeria where any uprising by the Algerian natives against their cruel and sadistic French settlers would be met with massive murders of tens of thousands of Algerians as in 1945, so much so that hundreds of thousands of Algerians were killed by the French during the war of independence between 1954 and 1962; and the US troops going to support France after its defeat in Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam in 1954, continuing the war at the behest of the French and then independently until 1975.

In light of the above, there's nothing special about the ongoing Western support for Israel. Israel's President Isaac Herzog has been banging on about how Israel is defending Western civilization, and that were it to fall, Europe would be next. The exact same discourse has recently been repeated by Netanyahu in his latest address to the US Congress, saying: "We meet today at a crossroads of history. Our world is in upheaval. In the Middle East, Iran's axis of terror confronts America, Israel and our Arab friends. This is not a clash of civilizations. It's a clash between barbarism and civilization. It's a clash between those who glorify death and those who sanctify life. For the forces of civilization to triumph, America and Israel must stand together. Because when we stand together, something very simple happens. We win. They lose (...) The ICC is trying to shackle Israel's hands and prevent us from defending ourselves. And if Israel's hands are tied, America is next. I'll tell you what else is next. The ability of all democracies to fight terrorism will be imperiled. That's what's on the line".[47] Netanyahu's lies were met with dozens of standing ovations on the part of the overwhelming majority of the audience. The rare but resounding dissenting voices came from inside the Capitol with Rashida Tlaib holding a "War Criminal" sign, and from the outside with thousands of protesters chanting "free Palestine" and also calling Netanyahu a war criminal.

We have also heard from the German Head of the European Union, Ursula von der Leyen that the Jewish values of Israel are European values. Such "shared values" must then include the values of colonialism and genocide. It is worth recalling here that the tone of the EU's support for Israel had already been set when she tweeted a photo of the European Commission building in Brussels lit up in an Israeli flag. She pointedly said: "Israel has the right to defend itself – today and in the days to come. The European Union stands with

Israel”.[48]

Shrewdly explaining the justification for the European Union’s solidarity with Israel, including and notably Germany’s purported love for European Jews and its regret over the Holocaust, Prof. Masaad says that after World War II, the Europeans “made the discovery that the Jews were actually white European people”. Their regret was therefore “not that you should not kill people that are different from you, but instead that you should not kill people that are just like you, meaning white European, since Jews, subsequent to the Holocaust, began to be integrated in Europe at the level of cultural value”. As for the belief that non-white people should continue to be killed, it has never been questioned, and we’ve seen many examples of this in European colonial policies since 1945 – from the Algerian and Vietnamese genocides in the case of France, to what the United States has done in Korea, Vietnam, Central and Southern Africa, Central and South America, Afghanistan, Iraq etc.

In his book referred to above, Mahmood Mamdani provides a similar explanation, saying that by the beginning of the twentieth century, it was a European habit to distinguish between “civilized wars” and “colonial wars”. The former were governed by the “laws of war” and the latter by the “laws of nature”, meaning that wars between “people like us” were fought within rules that were meant to limit their barbarity, but wars against people who were not full members of “Western civilization” were not bound by any rules at all. Mamdani traces the beginnings of the massacres of colonized people to the first years of the 19th century, when first Australians were slaughtered by colonists in Tasmania. They were imitated by wholesale slaughters in French Algeria, German Namibia, and Belgian Congo, among others.

Also worthy of mention, in this respect, is the observation according to which Nazi extermination camps were all situated in occupied Poland, not in Germany. There were, of course, concentration camps in Germany, but used as forced labor camps, not death camps. So, by “siting the camps to the east of Germany, the Nazis were, in effect, removing them from Western Europe where such barbarism was not considered acceptable. The east of Europe became, in a sense, a colony inhabited by people who were not considered Aryan and therefore not fully European. They were thus subject only to the laws of nature”. And in the words of Frantz Fanon, “Nazism transformed the whole Europe into a veritable colony.”[49]

This Western support is then “part and parcel of their support for white supremacy in their own countries and elsewhere”, and the unstinting support that Israel is obtaining from powerful Western powers – apparently unshaken by any of its crimes and excesses – is “part of a kind of vengeance that inferior races have arrogated to themselves the right or the ability to kill or resist white supremacy”.

This is also why today, we see most of the support for the Palestinians coming precisely from people who have suffered under countries who had set up central colonies previously, like Algeria, South Africa and Namibia.

Seventy-six years ago, says Ghada Karmi,[50] “an anomalous state was imposed on the Arab Middle East. The new creation was alien in every sense to the region’s culture and anti-colonial struggle (...) The new state went on to violate international law repeatedly, attack its neighbors, persecute the native Palestinian population, and impose a system of apartheid rule over them (...) If instead, Israel had been left to fend for itself, the Palestinian struggle for freedom would have been short, and the settler community in Palestine would gradually and peaceably have been absorbed into the region”.

Ten months into its genocidal war on Gaza, Israel and its Western backers are getting more desperate than ever in defending their mass murder of tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians. And with Zionism exposed to much of the world for an unprecedented savagery in the 21st century, it's becoming clear that this project is not only unsustainable, but may even be approaching its demise.

The current predicament of the state of Israel and its uncertain future were discussed by John Mearsheimer, one of the most distinguished Professors of political science in the world, at the Center for Independent Studies. In it, he explained "why Israel is in deep trouble".[51] Three months later, Mearsheimer's co-author of the celebrated book "*The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*", Stephen Walt, wrote an opinion,[52] in which, he too, says that Israel – whose Zionist project has been getting worse at defending itself for decades – is "in serious trouble". He concluded his analysis by saying that Israel's vengeful and shortsighted behavior has inflicted enormous harm on innocent Palestinians for decades and continues to do so today, warning that its decline in strategic judgement must be reassessed for the sake of its own survival.

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