

## Mind the Gap: Reflections on Block and Futerman's *The Classical Liberal Case for Israel*

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Block and Futerman's exhaustive study (2021) of the liberal case for Israel raises a fundamental problem. Given the overwhelming case according to liberal values in favor of Jewish settlement and development of the land called "Palestine" by the British between 1917-48, why are liberals and progressives so intent on denying any legitimate claim to the Jews, so committed to insisting on the exclusive right of Arabs to the land? I'd like here to examine one aspect of this which has less to do with the actual evidence so amply documented by the authors, and more to do with the moral problems involved. It seems to me that one issue has to do, paradoxically, with (by liberal and progressive standards) the vast moral gap between Jews-Israelis and Arab-Muslims.

As the authors argue, by any liberal or progressive standards, the case is open and shut. When it comes to laboring the land, to commitment to principles of equality before the law, to freedom of speech, to freedom of religious worship, to humanitarian concern for not just the rights, but the well-being of others, the difference between Israel and the surrounding Arab states (including the Palestinian leadership) is a yawning chasm. Ironically, in their effort not to place the blame on Palestinians, good liberals and progressives find them inexorably drawn not just to blaming Israel but adopting the Palestinian narrative in which they are evil incarnate.

The problem is best illustrated by two quotes from leading liberal intellectuals in 2003. In an essay in the *New York Times* on "How to talk about Israel," Ian Buruma (2003) observed that "the Palestinian cause has become the universal litmus test of liberal credentials." This represents a massive sea-change of what had been the opposite case right up till 2000, in which, as Edward Said complained so bitterly, liberals sided with Israel.<sup>1</sup> Moreover the observation came at the height of a suicide-terror campaign conducted by the Palestinians—both religious and "secular"—against Israeli civilians in Pizza Parlors, malls and nightclubs, indeed at their Passover Seders. Nothing on the face of it, could be less liberal, less likely to induce a near dogmatic transformation of liberal opinion than this merciless assault on civilians.

How could this alchemical transformation happen? Paul Berman, in the same year noted how for many Western liberals, "Palestinian terror" had become "the measure of Israeli guilt" (Berman 2003, p. 134). If they were so violent, it must have been because the Israelis treated them so badly. As the meme circulating at the time among people who considered themselves "liberal" went: *What choice do they have?* (Landes 2022, pp. 95-98). The purpose of this essay is

to explore this dramatic and seemingly counterintuitive shift by documenting what has been lost from sight by the inversion's success, namely a massive moral gap—at least by liberal and progressive standards—between Israelis and Palestinians. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the task of recalling liberals and progressives to a sound and reasoned moral approach to the real world.

## SELF-CRITICISM AND FREEDOM OF SPEECH/PRESS

Israel is one of the most self-critical societies on earth. What passes for dissident mainstream would be considered radical Left in most other societies. *Haaretz* is more virulently critical of Israeli government policies and social behavior than any mainstream newspaper in any other country. Imagine the editor-in-chief of a French or British or German newspaper fervently hoping that the foreign minister of the US would rape its country and force it to make far reaching concessions to their enemies for the sake of peace.<sup>2</sup> The joke in Israel is that *Haaretz* is the first Hebrew-language Palestinian paper. It illustrates the comment by novelist Aaron Appelfeld in 1988:

Since the Six-Day War... and at an increasing pace, we have witnessed a phenomenon which probably has no parallel in history: an emotional and moral identification by the majority of Israel's intelligentsia with people openly committed to our annihilation.<sup>3</sup>

And since then, the pace has quickened. Self-styled “New historians,” among them, some obsessed with accusing their countrymen of massacring Palestinians even when the evidence is dubious at best, nearly replaced the school curricula of Israel during the Oslo period. It was their effort, in search of “peace,” to “apologize” for their side’s supposed bad behavior (Block and Futerman 2021, pp. 100-17. At the same time, “peace journalists” did everything they could to downplay the troubling behavior of Palestinians, including engaging in outright deception when necessary.<sup>4</sup> The existence of Israeli NGOs dedicated *exclusively* to accusing Israel of war crimes and crimes against humanity—B’tselem, Breaking the Silence, Yesh Din, Physicians for Human Rights—underlines the enduring quality of this Israeli tendency to public self-accusation.<sup>5</sup>

As extreme as Israeli culture is in self-criticism, even when they are not to blame, so is Palestinian culture extreme in scapegoating, even when they are. There is no Palestinian equivalent to the Israeli “Human Rights” NGOs listed above documenting and deploring in great detail the Palestinian abuses of either Palestinian or Israeli rights. On the contrary, there is an almost seamless fit between Israeli self-critical NGOs and Palestinian scapegoating NGOs. Outsiders willingly adopt the narrative that exclusively blames Israel (Block and Futerman 2021, 174f.).

Overall, there is perhaps no culture as committed to blaming others for their failures than Palestinians: Israel is responsible for their crime rate (Arab on Arab violence), the misogynistic honor-killings, their refusal to make peace, their use of genocidal incitement, their (relative) poverty. This is in part due to the dangers any self-critical Palestinian is likely to experience from fellow Palestinians. But it is also a feature of the “strong horse” political culture: there is always someone else to blame. Perhaps the most salient example of this feature of Palestinian political culture is the semiotic journey that the “Nakba”—the “catastrophe” of 1948—has traversed. In the immediate wake of 1948 it was a reproach to Arab leaders who started a war and then imprisoned the victims of their defeat in “refugee camps.” Today, it has become an accusation against Israel, indeed now fetishized as a crime on a par with the Holocaust.<sup>6</sup>

As a result, one runs into serious cognitive and moral distortions. If one asks Palestinians who caused the refugee problem (Nakba), all of them will blame Israel; if one asks Israelis, half of them will either blame Israel or split the responsibility. Any outsider, unfamiliar with this yawning gap in ability to self-criticize, might reasonably conclude that Israel is about 75% responsible. Similarly, any google search for “targeting civilians” will bring up far more accusations against Israel than against Palestinians. For a good example of the difference in action, consider this “debate” on France24, organized by a Lebanese journalist with one

Palestinian and three Israelis, each one farther to the left of the previous one. By then end, even these highly self-critical Israelis become (very delicately) fed up with the Palestinian's constant demonizing (Landes 2023a).

This difference of attitude towards criticism has an immense impact of "information professionals" in the two cultures. Palestinian newspapers have a very narrow range of opinion and information: criticism of authorities is severely punished, whether by the *shabab* or by formal arrest and torture (Abu Toameh 2015; Tawil 2017).<sup>7</sup> Protests (for example of Hamas' killing its own people) risk getting mowed down by machine-gun fire (Ayoub and Choghlan, 2016; Pollak 2014). Palestinian journalists are strongly encouraged to consider themselves a part of the war on Israel, fighting with their camera and pen.<sup>8</sup>

Three days after the story broke, PATV doctored the footage of the "shooting" of Muhammad al-Durah, by introducing a cut to an Israeli soldier aiming and firing a [rubber-bullet] rifle (at Arabs rioting because of that image), before then showing the boy "dead in his father's arms." The purpose was to prove the claim by the cameraman who filmed the scene, that the Israelis had "targeted the boy in cold blood." This accusation (which the cameraman retracted in a private letter to France2), lay at the heart of this icon's power to inspire hatred, the core of the first successful, post-Holocaust, postmodern, blood libel. Asked to explain how he could justify such a procedure, an official explained:

These are forms of artistic expression, but all of this serves to convey the truth... We never forget our higher journalistic principles to which we are committed of relating the truth and nothing but the truth.<sup>9</sup>

No single statement could signal the massive gap between pre-modern Palestinian notions of journalistic principles and modern Western ones than this statement.

The contact between this advocacy, weaponized journalism and the modern journalism from which it so differed in principle has not been felicitous. In the al-Durah affair, the same Western (Israeli-French) journalist who made the footage news and introduced it into the mainstream of Western information systems, and who admitted privately that his Palestinian cameraman staged footage "all the time... a cultural thing," wrote formally that: "Never failing in his professionalism, Talal is a most credible source, and has been employed by France2 since 1988" (Enderlin 2010, p. 4).

When Israel complained to the BBC that their correspondent Fayad abu Shamala proclaimed at a Hamas rally in Gaza in May 2001 that "journalists and media organizations [are] waging the campaign shoulder-to-shoulder together with the Palestinian people," the BBC responded: "Fayad's remarks were made in a private capacity. His reports have always matched the best standards of balance required by the BBC" (Gutmann 2005, p. 252). (Some years later, evidence emerged that Shamala was a *member* of Hamas—see Gross 2004).

In both cases, Western journalists made statements meant to assure their listeners that their Arab Muslim collaborators were as reliable as they were. Instead, in both cases, their statements signaled how unreliable they were—a deeply ironic statement about just what the "best standards of balance required" by the BBC and France2 really were. Charles Enderlin, the Jerusalem-based head of the Middle East Bureau of the French television station France 2, who broke the Dura story, later made a deeply shocking admission about his most lethal words—"the target of fire coming from the Israeli position." Asked if he might not have been hasty, since the evidence showed the bullets were not coming from there, he replied: "What would they say in Gaza if I didn't?" *Haaretz* buried the comment in the Hebrew version; it did not appear in the English or French translation (Landes 2013). Somehow the pre-modern and the post-modern journalists have found common ground: lethal anti-Israel narratives.

## CONCERN FOR THE CIVILIANS ON THE OTHER SIDE

No single issue illustrates the vast gap between Israelis and Palestinians more than their attitude toward the lives of their foe's civilians, and especially their children. On the one hand, Palestinians *as a culture* eagerly seek to kill Israeli civilians, especially their children; and when they succeed in so doing, they openly rejoice.

In a particularly nasty, but not exceptional, case, a Jordanian woman “journalist” took the central role in the bombing of a central Jerusalem pizzeria on a busy school-vacation afternoon. The specific goal, she has boasted in now-viral interviews, was to target religious Jewish children and to kill as many as possible. Fleeing to the safety of Ramallah by service-taxi (“sherut”) minutes after the massive explosion, she has spoken of her disappointment at the initial news reports that indicated three dead (Tamimi 2012). In fact, the death toll was sixteen with about 130 injured. Three of those murdered were US citizens.

A walk-through replica of the devastated site was erected at An-Najah University, Nablus, some weeks later. Replete with simulated pizza slices and parts of children's bodies, the exhibit drew large crowds of viewers eager to savor the *Schadenfreude* of the blow, until Arafat, forced by international revulsion, told them to shut it down.<sup>10</sup> In July 2013, the Justice Department in Washington brought terror charges against her based on the US citizenship of some of her victims, which eventually prompted the FBI to add her to its FBI Most Wanted Terrorists list.<sup>11</sup> Despite loud claims to consider the Tamimi extradition “a foremost priority for the United States,” US officials, quietly acknowledging the deep support Tamimi's deed has among the Jordanian populace (majority Palestinian), appear loathe to even publicly raise the question of her extradition on the grounds that this would undermine support for the monarchy.<sup>12</sup>

The targeting of civilians by Palestinian “suicide operations” has produced a three to one ratio of civilian to combatant deaths over the course of their campaigns since 2000. The PA offers an immediate salary to any family of a terrorist who has killed Israeli civilians, and no amount of pressure or disapproval from “supporters” has succeeded in getting them to stop. And the media show no interest in bringing this to the attention of their audiences, even in cases of Palestinian attacks on civilians (Kuperwasser 2017).<sup>13</sup>

Israelis, on the other hand, have done their best to avoid civilian casualties. If, indeed, the Israelis had wanted to target civilians as the joint Israeli-Palestinian NGO statements allege, they would have done far more damage. Benny Morris makes the same argument about the alleged “ethnic cleansing” of Palestinians in 1948 (Block and Futerman 2021, p. 92f).

The IDF's most exceptional counterterrorist campaign, in Jenin refugee camp (the terror capital of Palestinian-controlled territories) in 2002, produced a three to one combatant to civilian ratio, the exact opposite to the Palestinian one, and a ratio unmatched in urban warfare by any army then or since (Henkin 2003, pp. 33-69). And yet, because of a press corp ready to echo any Palestinian claim, no matter how false, *as news*, this operation became known as the “Jenin Massacre” and solicited furious demonstrations around the world, punctuated with accusations that the Israelis were the new Nazis (Landes 2022, chapter 3).

The ability of Israelis to target with extraordinary precision, including their warnings to civilians to evacuate, produce nearly comic situations where Palestinian civilians at once acknowledge that militia commanders live in their midst, but expect the IDF to target them without injuring anyone else. “But to target the commander and those around him, honestly this is something we didn't expect... it's collective punishment” (Abudlrahim 2023). (This occurred during an operation in which the combatant to civilian ratio was 2:1.)

The IDF's reluctance to target even the most wanted enemies when civilian casualties might be high has become a key factor in the strategy of Jihadi groups (Hamas, Islamic Jihad). First, they literally use their civilians as shields to hamper Israeli retaliation for their rocket attacks on Israel. As Hamas commander Fathi Hammad exulted:

[The enemies of Allah] do not know that the Palestinian people has developed its [methods] of death and death-seeking. For the Palestinian people, death has become an industry, at which wom-

en excel, and so do all the people living on this land. The elderly excel at this, and so do the *mujahideen* and the children. This is why they have formed human shields of the women, the children, the elderly, and the *mujahideen*, in order to challenge the Zionist bombing machine. It is as if they were saying to the Zionist enemy: “We desire death like you desire life” (Hammad 2008).

In a recent case, the IDF actually captured on film an Islamic Jihad commander bringing his daughter to his side to halt an Israeli strike (in which he succeeded).<sup>14</sup>

This striking difference between the Israeli attitude towards the lives of their enemy’s civilians, and the Palestinian attitude towards their own civilians’ lives has produced over the last two decades a cannibalistic strategy in which Jihadis try and engineer the highest civilian casualties so that they can win the PR war by accusing Israel of wantonly killing civilians. As a result, while Hamas shows great talent for, and spends great sums, digging underground tunnels, it has not dug one public bomb shelter (Issacharoff 2016; Tobin 2014). Its underground structures are for sheltering and transporting terrorists and bombs, not civilians. So they fire rockets at Israel from civilian centers, hospitals, and UN schools, and necessarily invite counter strikes (Ghermezian 2014); when Israel warns the civilian population to leave (thus giving up the crucial element of surprise), they refuse to let the civilians flee (Kredo 2014). Sitting in safety in five-star hotels in Doha, Qatar, they conduct a Jihad that sacrifices their own people (Abu-Toameh 2022).

But nothing illustrates how casually Palestinians treat the lives of their own children as the multiple times their scatter-gun rocketing falls in Gaza (as much as 20%!—see Arcand 2021), and on occasion, kills their own children. In such cases, they rapidly clean up the site of any revelatory residue and then bring in the press to cover the story as another Israeli crime. In 2012, a rocket fired from a civilian area exploded before launch and killed five-year-old Mahmoud Sadallah, whom authorities quickly brought to the hospital for a photo-op with the newly appointed Egyptian Brotherhood Foreign Minister Kandil and Hamas leader Ismail Haniya kissing the dead child.



Hamas leader Ismail Haniya and Egyptian (Muslim Brotherhood) Foreign Minister Kandil, make pious photo op of kissing a child that Hamas had killed (Sternthal 2012).

On July 28, 2014, Hamas broke their own *Eid al-Fitr* truce and killed nine children in a refugee camp next to Shifa hospital. NBC (along with many other outlets) dutifully ran an article blaming Israel: ISRAELI STRIKES HIT WITHIN YARDS OF GAZA’S MAIN HOSPITAL AS WELL AS AT A REFUGEE CAMP



ON MONDAY, LEAVING AT LEAST 30 DEAD AND WOUNDED.<sup>15</sup> That same day, an Italian reporter tweeted out what everyone in Gaza knew, but were afraid to say:

*Out of #Gaza far from # Hamas retaliation: misfired rocket killed children today in Shati. Witness: militants rushed and cleared debris.*<sup>16</sup>

The proof, familiar to journalists who don't normally report on these matters: Hamas moved in to clear out the damning evidence. Before the current year-long campaign, Jihadi rocketing in Gaza has killed many more Palestinian children than Israeli.

NB: none of this ghastly strategy could work without the support of both a media and "Human Rights" NGOs, quick to promote Palestinian talking points on the one hand, and a "progressive world eager to hear news of Jews behaving badly," on the other (Landes 2022, pp. 117-19). While some of the worst cases come from advocacy journalists like Robert Fisk, supposedly mainstream journalists like Jodi Rudoren, NYT correspondent in Israel, participate in denying the public secret. She responded to accusations of Hamas intimidating journalists from the Foreign Press Association:

*Every reporter I've met who was in Gaza during war says this Israeli/now F[oreign] P[ress] A[ssociation] narrative of Hamas harassment is nonsense.*<sup>17</sup>

The effect of this press complicity in Hamas' cannibalistic strategy has been immense. Every time Jihadists fire rockets at Israel and Israel responds, condemnations of Israel for its blatant disregard for the life of Palestinian children pour in, some even from Jewish Studies scholars (Pessin 2021).

Perhaps the most eloquent and least known illustration of the moral chasm separating Israel from its neighbors relates to the civil war that has raged in Syria for over a decade (2011-). During this time, the Assad regime has gassed its own people, devastated Palestinian refugee camps, created millions of refugees, and killed an estimated half a million people, mostly civilians, a total that exceeds by five times the death-toll in Arab Israeli hostilities over the last 75 years, including three major wars (100,000).<sup>18</sup> Nothing illustrates the prevalence in the Arab world of "Hama rules," than the last decade in Syria (Monsoor 2018). And nothing illustrates the obsession of the news media with the Arab-Israeli conflict than the contrast between the death vs. media footprint of that conflict and the fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1989-2009.<sup>19</sup>

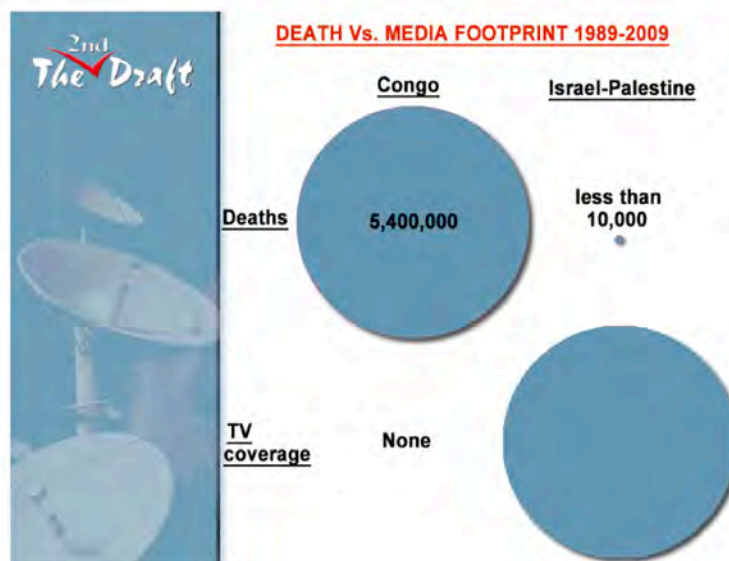


Chart based on the statistics and analysis in Virgil Hawkins, *Stealth Conflicts* (Hawkins 2008)

While this carnage was going on next door, Israeli doctors set up field tents along the border to treat Syrians injured in this civil war, even Jihadist fighters (Kershner 2013). They did this quietly so as not to discourage the wounded from coming for treatment.

This radically different attitude to “the other” translates in a radically different attitude towards one’s own people. While Israelis accept almost anyone claiming to be Jewish, including black Africans, Palestinian leaders show no interest in the welfare of Palestinian Arabs in genuinely apartheid conditions living in refugee camps in Lebanon or Syria or Jordan. Indeed, they have weaponized the refugee problem, and made the refugees they created into weapons against Israel, forcing them to live in misery in order to keep the flame of war alive. As a result, as opposed to the “right of return” to Israel for Jews the world over, Palestinian refugees are not welcome in Palestinian-ruled territories, nor in a future Palestinian state.<sup>20</sup> They must return to Israel.

The mantra “We love death as you (infidels) do life” leads to a host of catastrophes among Arab Palestinians including Jihadists using civilians as human shields, mothers who celebrate their own children’s death in “martyrdom operations,” and beatifically claim that one should have many children in order to “push them to death, to martyrdom.”<sup>21</sup> The yawning chasm is so great here with Israelis is underlined by the outrage that a French journalist felt when she heard an Israeli spokesman claim that this was true of Palestinian mothers.<sup>22</sup> Literally, for her, an unthinkable horror that she cannot imagine Palestinians committing. The difficulty of grasping this yawning chasm here is so great that when a French journalist heard an Israeli spokesman claim that Palestinians deliberately endanger their children’s lives, she was indignant... at the Israeli.

One of the most poignant examples of this radical difference comes out in a dialogue reported by Ami Ayalon, former chief of the Israel security service Shabak with Palestinian psychiatrist Iyad Saraj in 2002:

He said, “Ami, we finally defeated you.” I said to him, “Are you mad? What do you mean, defeated us? Hundreds of you are getting killed. At this rate thousands of you will get killed. You’re about to lose whatever tiny bit of a state you have and you’ll lose your dream of statehood. What kind of victory is that?” He said to me, “Ami, I don’t understand you. You still don’t understand us. For us, victory is seeing you suffer. That’s all we want. The more we suffer, the more you’ll suffer. Finally, after 50 years, we’ve reached a balance of power, a balance, your F-16 versus our suicide bomber” (Ayalon 2012).<sup>23</sup>

Ayalon’s shocked response illustrates how little he understands his foes, who dress in Western personae (psychiatrist) yet reflect a mentality that prevailed in the Middle Ages, in which it was fully justified for leaders to sacrifice the lives of their people for the sake of honor and revenge.

Ayalon assumes the Palestinians “dream of statehood” and want what’s good for their people, including not getting killed, whereas even a Palestinian trained in a modern therapeutic discipline dreams of victory by inflicting pain on his superior enemy no matter what the costs to his own people. No wonder the PA-controlled territories West of the Jordan, and Gaza are impoverished (like the rest of the non-oil-rich Arab world), divided between an exploitative elite and a commoner population living at subsistence.<sup>24</sup> In Gaza, where the suffering of the “people” is exhibit A for Israeli cruelty, the contrast between the wretched victims and the “Gaza you don’t see” of shopping malls, villas, and country clubs is particularly grotesque (Tawil 2020). If Gaza is an “open air prison,” then Hamas are the wardens, living high on the hog.

## PERCEPTIONS OF THE OTHER SIDE IN THE CONFLICT

One of the reasons for the vast gap between Palestinian attitudes towards Israeli lives, and vice-versa, comes from the perceptions of the “other” encouraged by each culture. Palestinian authorities—political, religious, and cultural—all encourage the most relentlessly negative stereotypes of Israelis and more generally, Jews. They are the sons of pigs and apes; they are the devil incarnate (Kressel 2012).<sup>25</sup>



Satan: “I have built my plan on the burning hatred and loathing of Muhammad and his supporters that fills the hearts of the Jews...” Children’s program. This indoctrination is specifically aimed at children who respond eagerly to please their teachers.<sup>26</sup>

No other culture since the Nazis has circulated such racist, demonizing stereotypes, including calls to genocide. Indeed, in this the Palestinians have outdone the Nazis: whereas there is no record of even pro-Nazi ministers and priests calling for the extermination of the Jews from the pulpit, it is a regular feature of Palestinian TV to publish sermons calling for a worldwide genocide of Jews. Invoking an apocalyptic hadith that can be found in Hamas’ founding charter, preachers call for killing every last Jew on earth:

The Jews are the Jews. Whether Labor or Likud, the Jews are Jews. They do not have any moderates or any advocates of peace. They are all liars. They must be butchered and must be killed... It is forbidden to have mercy in your hearts for the Jews in any place and in any land. Make war on them any place that you find yourself. Any place that you meet them, kill them.<sup>27</sup>

The common theme (and shorthand) for referring to this genocidal slaughter is the widely known and cited Hadith of the Rocks and Trees attributed to Muhammad:

The prophet, prayer and peace be upon him, said: “The [End of] time will not come until Muslims will fight the Jews (and kill them); until the Jews hide behind rocks and trees, which will cry: O Muslim! there is a Jew hiding behind me, come on and kill him!”<sup>28</sup>

This hadith comes back again and again, informing a systematically and explicitly racist demonization of the Jews:

these malignant genes and cursed characteristics continue in them. They transfer them—Allah save us—from generation to generation. They inherit it from father to son... Humanity will never be able to live together with them. And that’s why, my brothers, even Europe, America, and others have spit them out, down to the last one... [quotes the Hadith of Rocks and Trees]... Allah, strike your enemies, the enemies of the religion, count them and kill them one by one, and do not leave even one.<sup>29</sup>

If the Western readers of such high-minded publications as the *New York Times* are oblivious to this kind of rhetoric, it is because, in compliance with Palestinian demands that they not be depicted negatively, journalists systematically ignore or suppress it.<sup>30</sup> In response, for example, to Israeli claims that Palestinian incitement like this was responsible for the violence of the so-called “al-Aqsa Intifada,” William Orme (Orme, 2000) wrote an article citing a genocidal speech as follows:

Israelis cite as one egregious example a televised sermon that defended the killing of the two soldiers [at Ramallah on October 12, 2000]. “Whether Likud or Labor, Jews are Jews,” proclaimed Sheik Ahmad Abu Halabaya in a live broadcast from a Gaza City mosque the day after the killings.



By contrast, Israeli attitudes towards Palestinians, despite the evidence of their remorseless hostility, insists on humanizing the enemy. Efforts to paint them negatively are condemned, and some parties, like Meir Kahane's, even banned for what Israeli authorities deem racist depictions of their enemies. Conversely, a school of "peace journalists" insisted on depicting the Palestinians in as positive a light as possible in order to advance the "peace process," and excoriated the Israeli press for not showing as much interest in and compassion for Palestinian casualties as they do for Israeli ones.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the most striking place where this difference in attitude prevails is in Israeli hospitals. Brigitte Gabriele tells the tale of bringing her mother wounded in the terrible Lebanese civil war (1975-82) to the Israeli border, and when, thanks to a free ride from Israeli soldiers, she arrived at the hospital, they immediately took care of her, based on need, not status or identity (Stern 2020). During the "al-Aqsa intifada," Israeli doctors would treat Palestinian terrorists as well as their victims, while other Arab patients would exult. "It gets hard when they cheer [the terrorists]," commented one doctor (Miller 2002). The open hypocrisy of using the Israeli hospital system seems to know no bounds. Despite accusing Israel of deliberately spreading COVID to kill Palestinians, a prominent Palestinian leader chose an Israeli hospital for his COVID treatment (Marcus 2020).

This gap is inadvertently admitted by Palestinians themselves. Palestinian awareness of Israel's real values and behavior can also be seen in the way the refugees of Sabra and Shatilla camps in Lebanon in 1982 fled to IDF positions for protection from the Phalange militiamen massacring them. Despite their constant accusations, the Palestinian refugees there knew that in a Lebanon where every militia massacres civilians, the Israelis don't. Today the integration of Israeli Arabs in Israeli hospitals as both doctors and patients is one of the most exceptional examples of integration of Muslim minorities in modern democracies the world over (Reznik 2011).

## TREATMENT OF "DEVIANT" BEHAVIOR: MISOGYNY AND HOMOPHOBIA

One of the more absurd contrasts between Palestinians and Israelis concerns attitudes towards gays and women. In Palestinian culture, both homosexuality and promiscuity are considered capital crimes, carried out by the family of the "transgressor," in what are called "honor-killings," but by liberal and progressive standards deserve to be called "shame-murders" because they are murders committed to wipe out the shame that family member has brought upon the family in the eyes of the community. As one mother, who killed her daughter for being raped by her brother, explained: "I had to protect my children. This is the only way I could protect my family's honor." If she had not, her other children could not marry anyone in the community" (Nelson 2003).

In Israel, by contrast, where there are also religious communities that disapprove of both gay and promiscuous sex, gays enjoy full rights (including marriage), and Tel Aviv is known as "the gay capital of the Middle East." Although ultra-orthodox Jews may sit shiva ("mourn as dead") members of the family who leave the community and cease to be observant, they do not kill them, and within Israeli culture there are organizations to deal with the painful (but not deadly) cost of leaving one's community of birth. As for questions of immorality (pre-marital sex, adultery), there is nothing remotely resembling shame-murders. "So what?" say anti-Zionists who find anything favorable about Israel offensive: "you're just pinkwashing Israel's crimes by invoking her tolerance" (Schulman 2011).

The absurdity appears at its height in the slogan, widespread in the US LGBTQ community: "Queers for Palestine."<sup>32</sup> It may not hold true for all members of that community,<sup>33</sup> but its (self-proclaimed) leaders formally side with people who kill outed homosexuals and against a community to which Palestinian gays flee for their lives. The same inversion holds for feminists who side with the Palestinians (in particular the academics in "Gender Studies"<sup>34</sup>), one of those "countries in which forced child marriage; forced marriage to a first cousin; forced pregnancies; honor killing, polygamy; and F[orced] G[enital] M[utilation] are pandemic" (Chesler 2023). The hijacking of the feminist agenda by the Palestinian cause, often spearheaded by Arab women who wear hijabs and parrot the most toxic positions of the men they prefer not to confront, has done

extensive damage to the feminist cause, especially in the Muslim world, as for example, in Iran (Blackmer 2023). Indeed, women advocates for the Palestinian cause can be among the most strident, uncompromising, and disparaging voices (Chesler 2023). And the response of what Lenin, were he a Muslim would have called “useful infidels,” is to accuse Israel of “pinkwashing,” of using their tolerance of gays to whitewash their crimes against the Palestinians.

## TRIUMPHALIST VS DEMOTIC RELIGIOSITY

One of the more pessimistic interpretations of this conflict is that it is religious, that at its core lies a war between Jews and Muslims that can never be resolved without the dissolution of at least one (for atheists, preferably both) religions. Actually, it is less a question of religion than “religiosity,” that is, the way in which the faithful “live” their beliefs. Here we find an important distinction between triumphalist and demotic religiosity.

Triumphalist religiosity is a faith that needs to have visible superiority within a society in order for its adherents to feel reassured that it is the one true faith (Landes 2016). This religiosity demands public acknowledgment of its superior status in multiple forms—legal privilege, public displays of honor and precedence, and in some cases, visible signs of submission from members of other religions. In monotheism this triumphalism goes hand in hand with some form of supersessionism, in which previous monotheistic faiths are displaced, replaced, and effaced by the new, improved variant. This religiosity has an elective affinity for claims to monopolize exegesis of sacred texts, to have exclusive access to divine salvation, reserved only to its faithful, and to authoritarian or hierarchical political formulas like “One God, one ruler, one faith.” It has a very low tolerance for displays of what it considers disrespect, which it can consider a form of intolerable blasphemy. It tends toward zero-sum thinking (only one faith can be the true one), and interpersonal relations (I’m superior because you are inferior).

Demotic religiosity on the other hand, emphasizes egalitarian, horizontal approach, emphasizing the dignity of manual labor, the principle of equality before the law, exegetical modesty (many possible interpretations of texts), and a personal relationship between believers and God. Demotic religiosity emphasizes self-examination (criticism) and repentance for faults (responsibility); it views visible displays of superiority as pretentious if not hypocritical. As Lao Tsu put it: “he who knows does not speak; he who speaks does not know” (Tzu ca. 500 BCE). Monotheistic demotic religiosity has an elective affinity for aniconic worship (including iconoclasm), the political formula “No king but God,” and positive-sum relations through empathy and respect of the other. It has a high tolerance for dissent and criticism, and low claims to monopoly on salvation: “God is too great for any one faith” (Landes 2007).

Both these forms of religiosity can be found in Islam and Judaism (and Christianity for that matter). But when we consider the current situation in the Middle East, clearly the triumphalist strain, while not necessarily majoritarian, is dominant among the Muslim leadership, and the demotic strain is dominant among Jews/Israelis. Indeed the very settlement and working of the land, the ethos of the kibbutzim (both secular and religious), the pre-state apparatus, all reflected the egalitarian, demotic, propensities (Katzenelson 1932/2002). In Muslim society, however, though demotic strains are strong in some areas of the faith, the predominant voice, the voice of honor, of authority, of intolerance for other religions dominates the political culture, still deeply committed to the un-democratic principle of the mixing of “church and state.” The contrast between how the Jordanians ruled the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif and the walled city of Jerusalem and how the Israelis did, constitutes yet one more striking example of the moral gap between the two religious communities: from the Jordanians banning both Jews and Zionist Christians from the city, desecrating tombs and destroying Jewish places of worship, to Israelis guaranteeing freedom of worship for all, allowing the Islamic Waqf to govern the Temple Mount, and opening access to the city for all.

The conflict is not a matter of religion so much as of religiosity. As long as Muslims hold by the principles of Dar al-Islam (realm of submission [to Sharia]) and Dar al-Harb (realm of the sword [to be conquered]), Israel will remain an insult to Muslim pride, a blasphemous political entity in the midst of what

should be Dar al-Islam (Landes 2022; Ye'or 2001). It is not for nothing that some Caliphators consider Jerusalem the future capital of the global Caliphate; and that allegedly secular Palestinian irredentists demand a Jew-free Palestine.<sup>35</sup> It is, to coin a precise if somewhat clumsy formulation: the “Autonomous Jew-Triumphalist Muslim conflict.”

And the rest of the infidel world, if it wishes to remain free, has a vested interest in supporting an agreement between autonomous Jews and demotic Muslims, rather than the victory of a triumphalist Islam that has its eyes on the rest of Dar al-Harb, once it takes care of the Jews:

We believe in this [genocidal] Hadith [of the Rocks and Trees]. We are convinced also that this Hadith heralds the spread of Islam and its rule over all the lands... Oh Allah, annihilate the Jews and their supporters... Oh Allah, raise the flag of jihad across the earth... Oh beloved, look to the East of the earth, find Japan and the ocean; look to the West of the earth, find the country and the ocean. Be assured that these will be owned by the Muslim nation, as the Hadith says, “from the ocean to the ocean.”<sup>36</sup>

For puzzling reasons, the dominant information professionals in the West refuse to report this kind of discourse, and instead insist the conflict has little to do with religion, and urge their readers and watchers to support what they refer to as “Palestinian freedom.”<sup>37</sup>

## ZERO-SUM VS POSITIVE-SUM

In the end, it comes down to two cultures, one deeply committed to positive-sum interactions, the other to zero-sum interactions. This is not a racial matter. As many Arabs point out, they too are Semites. It is a matter of culture. It's not that there are no zero-sum tendencies in Israeli society, nor positive-sum in Arab/Palestinian society. But the prevalence of one over the other is notable, especially in the political culture.

While on a trip led by Walter Russell Meade to Israel, one participant wrote:

the Palestinians are a defeated people; forlorn, hopeless, defiant, impotent (with the one card they have to play—i.e., to say ‘No!’).

I bring this up to illustrate my point. This depiction of the Palestinians assumes a people incapable of anything but zero-sum choices. The idea that they could say “yes” to a deal that would bring them out of defeat but not to (their notion of) victory, seems unthinkable. Defiant in their impotent failure, *what choice do they have* but to sulk and occasionally lash out in desperation? Unconsciously, the formulation admits that positive-sum interactions and Palestinian political behavior do not mix, at all.

And in a sense, this is true. So far in its short life of about a century, Palestinian politics have been dominated by zero-sum thinking and acting. If one were to do a study of positive-sum vs. zero-sum traits—trust vs suspicion, trustworthiness vs betrayal, win-win vs win-lose (and lose-lose), authoritarian “rule or be ruled” politics vs. democratic, egalitarian politics, constructive vs. destructive envy, self-criticism vs scapegoating, empathy vs othering—the Palestinians’ political choices would score very high on the zero-sum scale, and the Israelis very high on the positive-sum scale.

These are precisely the dynamics that turned the positive-sum “Oslo Peace Process” from the win-win formula “Land for Peace” to the win-lose formula “Land for War,” which Yasser Arafat chose and lost, for himself and for his people (Landes 2019).<sup>38</sup> When leaders of the Israeli peace movement claimed “You don’t make peace with friends you make peace with enemies,” they were expressing a desire to turn a zero-sum foe into a positive-sum neighbor. As Bret Stephens (2015) pointed out, however, “you make peace with *former* enemies.” In making “peace with Arafat” the Israelis failed to turn a determined zero-sum player around. They failed, and so did Arafat and his people: a lose-lose. In so acting, Arafat replicated the self-de-

structive choices of the Arab leaders in 1948, 1967, and 1973, and since (2007, 2011, 2014, etc.), while “winning” the lose-lose contest of preserving the war of elimination (Aumann 2010).

This zero-sum mentality pervades Palestinian discourse. It lies at the core of the Palestinian victim narrative of the Nakba that Israel’s joy is built on Palestinian suffering... as if, in fact, it could not have been a great celebration of two peoples (cousins) achieving independence together. The zero-sum choice was the Arab one, for which they now blame Israel, and so prolong their unbroken zero-sum losing streak. It underlies their claim of stolen land—if the Jews, the Zionists benefited, they had to do it at the cost of the Arabs. In actuality, as Block and Futerman’s book documents, where the Zionists came, the productivity of the land increased, populations rose, both Israeli and Arab. Notably Arab population multiplied at over three times the rate of growth in Jewish areas than where Arabs were the decisive majority, and their income exceeded all other neighboring Arab populations.<sup>39</sup>

Asked why he rioted given that since the Zionists had come the land had become much more prosperous, one Arab gave the perfect zero-sum answer:

You say we are better off: you say my house has been enriched by the strangers who have entered it. But it is my house, and I did not invite the strangers in, or ask them to enrich it, and I do not care how poor or bare it is if only I am master in it.<sup>40</sup>

Today, any mention of Zionists draining the swamps brings howls of rage from Palestinians who feel (correctly) that their victim narrative is thereby undermined.<sup>41</sup>

## CONCLUSION

There is a broad consensus of voices who declare themselves not only progressive, but the cutting edge of advanced, progressive values, who manage a complete moral inversion when looking at the conflict between Israel and its neighbors. Israel, which goes to great lengths to avoid killing innocent civilians is viewed as a brutal child-killer while the Palestinians—who target enemy children and endanger, even kill, their own, are considered noble resisters. Israel is considered the new Nazi, while admirers of the Nazis, who openly say they want to finish Hitler’s job, are seen as “the new Jews/victims.”<sup>42</sup>

So why, or how, has the relentlessly zero-sum Palestinian cause become the litmus test of positive-sum liberal credentials? How is it that the more “progressive” one becomes, the more vigorously one embraces the Jihadi apocalyptic narrative, that Israel and the US are the Dajjal, the Antichrist (for seculars, the Nazis) whose destruction will bring world peace? And why did it occur in the first years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as evidenced by the remarks of Berman and Buruma in 2003?

One answer among many concerns the question of separate standards for Israel and for Palestinians. The double standard is most visible in the nature of media’s coverage: if Israel can be held responsible for killing Palestinians, it is major news. If Jews can be accused of deliberately killing Arabs, it is banner news... investigations one after the other.<sup>43</sup> Man bites dog. If Palestinians kill their own children, it’s tweets and mumbles. No investigations, no moral outrage. Dog bites man.

The humanitarian racism underlying this outlook seems to trouble few. As Israeli journalist Ben-Dror Yemini explained to a student who claimed that Israel is justifiably held to a higher standard:

When you tell me that you hold me to higher standards, you also say that you hold Fatima to lower standards. I believe that is called racism, low expectations racism. It may not be the obvious and ugly kind of racism, but it is still racism. You could also call it hypocrisy” (Yemini 2017). NGOs like Human Rights Watch systematically apply double standards in order to convict Israel of war crimes.<sup>44</sup>

Palestinians invoke the validity of this different standard as a major justification for anything they do. Asked about criticism of the Palestinians for incitement, Hanan Ashrawi responded with a classic post-colonial argument: “There is no parity between the people and their occupation and an occupying power. The Palestinians are under siege, they are being shelled, our land is being stolen. Our homes are being demolished.”<sup>45</sup> Asked the same question, Husam Zumlot responded that one “cannot equate between the occupied and the occupier, the colonized and the colonizer, between the besieged those who besiege.”<sup>46</sup> Some news editors explicitly accept this argument (Sternthal 2014); while most just acquiesce. Such concessions actually disguise the core problem. Were it not for this teaching of hatred and contempt and incitement to genocide, which produces a steady stream of “desperate” terror attacks, the Palestinians would not find themselves besieged. Instead, outlets like the BBC refuse to label Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians “terrorist,” even as they talk freely about “Jewish terrorism” (Sela 2016) and the UNHRC refuses to acknowledge Palestinian genocidal incitement as antisemitism (Pillay 2023).<sup>47</sup>

I think many journalists do not even know about how bad Palestinian incitement really is. Granted the material is available and reliable,<sup>48</sup> but they have set so many fences around their knowledge of such delicate matters that they don’t know (and don’t want to know) of its existence. On the contrary, with careful “balance” they manage to exclude the negative evidence as “rightwing”; equate the victims of terror with the death of terrorists and those who come to their defense; and in the process, make Israel look much worse as a result of the imbalance in deaths. As French President Jacques Chirac berated Prime Minister Ehud Barak, speaking on behalf of all the “countries of the world,” in Paris on October 4, 2000: “The discrepancies have to be considered: 64 Palestinians... dead, 2,300 Palestinians injured, while on the Israeli side only two Israeli civilians and one soldier were killed. No one can believe that the Palestinians are responsible for this chain of violence” (Enderlin 2002). In other words, he can’t imagine a “national leader” who would follow the self-destructive logic of starting a war you are going to lose, badly.

Interestingly, while Palestinians openly insist on a (post-colonial) double standard, most Western progressives deny there is one, because admitting that Israel is held to a higher standard would reduce the opprobrium.<sup>49</sup> This denial can become almost comic. In an exchange between Norman Finkelstein and Ken Spiro over the question of whether Israel is held to a higher standard than other countries (Mendoza 2016), Finkelstein responded with a resounding “No!” Why? Because, “Israel is not held to *any* standard,” he insisted, and after citing all the sources that condemn Israel, asks: “Has the condemnation produced any results? If they had been effective, they wouldn’t have to be repeatedly condemned.” QED. Nice evasion of the only framework in which standards can be evaluated, namely comparative.

What Finkelstein’s answer reveals is a man obsessed with Israeli “sins,” consumed by a need to punish it. To admit to a double standard would mean reducing the flame of moral opprobrium under Israel. It must remain on the hot seat. Asked to deal with the avalanche of condemnations, he lists all the condemners and asks, “so they’re all antisemitic? Is that the argument you’re making?” [Actually, no, it’s not.] Asked about the vast gap between condemnations of Israel (where 1000s have died in a decade of war), and the marked absence of condemnations of Syria (where half-a-million were slaughtered and millions were driven from their homes in a decade), Finkelstein starts to rant: “you have to be a certifiable moron if you haven’t heard condemnations of Syria.” Asked about why there are no UN condemnations, he responds: “You’re brain dead. I’m not having a conversation with someone who’s brain dead.” After shouting some more insults, Norman hangs up.<sup>50</sup>

Why the furor? Why the vituperation? Why the change of subject? Because there’s no doubt that Israel is held to a higher standard, and Finkelstein is exhibit A in that charge, consuming uncritically thousands of pages of reports from NGOs obsessed with Israel, and angry that this tidal wave of criticism doesn’t have the desired effect of forcing Israel to behave as he thinks it should. He hung up because he knew he would lose this round.

On the other hand, the comments section is filled with enthusiastic support for Finkelstein:



Norman totally schooled them both. He told those two in no uncertain terms and they kicked him off [sic]. Norman is a truth machine that even morons can't ignore. Was a thing of beauty.

I'd love for one debate, just one. where the level of coherence is that level of mr. finkelsteins. Norm always takes arguments head on with objectivity. No straw men needed.

The host looks extremely uncomfortable, maybe he doesn't want to hear the truth, doesn't want to hear facts, he has no argument worth hearing to put forward... the fact is, Norman Finkelstein knows what he is talking about.... no one who comes up against him can win any argument...why... because you cannot argue with the truth! Thank you Norman for always defending another people against your own people. Good man.

In a world filled with an abundance of public folly, these remarks illustrate the way a partisan passion has produced people completely divorced from reason and evidence, effectively unmoored post-truth, post-moderns, trying to use modern lingo ("facts," "truth," "objectivity") to claim hegemony (Landes 2023c). Such developments bode ill for Western democracies under attack from a cognitive war campaign (Landes 2021).

To begin to think about how to respond, it helps just to ponder this startling inversion of both moral and empirical reality, or to paraphrase the great poet: *to stand on the shores of this yawning gap and think, till victim narratives and inverted standards, to nothingness do sink.*

## NOTES

- 1 Note that while Saïd's *Orientalism* (1978) and its follow-ups, *Question of Palestine* (1980), and *Covering Islam* (1982), had made great headway in academia, especially Middle-East Studies, it had yet to go mainstream. On the sudden sea-change see Shahid Alam's comment in 2012: "Ten years back, if I were to articulate the most modest, mildest criticism of Israel, not one student would speak for the other (Palestinian) side. Today over the last few years that situation has been entirely reversed, completely reversed." Shahid Alam, lecture at Northeastern: University, [youtube.com/watch?v=mUS2XAGq4Bg&t=27s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUS2XAGq4Bg&t=27s).
- 2 Ha'aretz editor: Israel wants to be raped. 2007. *Jerusalem Post*. <https://www.jpost.com/Israel/Haaretz-editor-Israel-wants-to-be-raped>.
- 3 English version: Megged 1994.
- 4 Wolfsfeld, G. 2004. For an example of deliberate obfuscation, the Israeli "peace" media and the Western press presented the PA's decision *not* to change their Charter as required by the Oslo Accords, as a compliance with Oslo (see Schmemmann, 1996). Wolfsfeld (2004, p. 183) does not mention the refusal, but then cites Netanyahu's use of the Palestinian refusal in his campaign against Ehud Barak as an illustration of his demagoguery.
- 5 On B'tselem's refusal to document violations of Palestinian rights by Palestinian authorities, see Parsons, 2012. See also Friedman 2015. In general, for a critique of the anti-Israel, Israeli NGOs, see NGO Monitor.
- 6 On the origins of the term Nakba (used to describe 1948; the original use was the end of the Caliphate in 1922), see Zureiq 1948. For a discussion, see Landes 2022, pp. 193-98.
- 7 And this torture and repression is about the "moderate" PA. For the shabab at work in Gaza see Ralph 2017.
- 8 Discussion in Landes 2022, pp. 306-7.
- 9 PATV Official Explains Doctoring al Durah Footage. See Schapira 2002.
- 10 Arafat closes 'suicide bombing' art show. 2001. BBC. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/1564188.stm>.
- 11 Individual Charged in Connection With 2001 Terrorist Attack in Jerusalem That Resulted in Death of Americans. 2017. US Department of Justice. <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/individual-charged-connection-2001-terrorist-attack-jerusalem-resulted-death-americans>. Ahlam Aref Ahmad al-Tamimi on FBI's Most Wanted list. 2017. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/3/15/ahlam-aref-ahmad-al-tamimi-on-fbis-most-wanted-list>.

- 12 Congressional Research Service. 2022. Jordan: Background and U.S. Relations, p. 13f. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/middle-east/RL33546.pdf>.
- 13 Since then things have not changed, except that now, under the Biden Administration, funds continue to flow from Western donors: see Pollack and Gerber 2021.
- 14 <https://funker530.com/video/palestinian-islamic-jihadi-uses-his-own-daughter-as-a-human-shield/>
- 15 Strikes Near Gaza's Shifa Hospital, Refugee Camp Kill at Least 10. NBC. <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/middle-east-unrest/strikes-near-gazas-shifa-hospital-refugee-camp-kill-least-10-n166571>. NBC later altered the article's direct blaming of Israel, without signaling the correction and without changing the headline that did: see Cameron 2014.
- 16 <https://twitter.com/gabrielebarbati/status/494131918732926976>.
- 17 <https://twitter.com/rudoren/status/498853892113719300>.
- 18 On Syrian casualties, see Boghani 2016. On the totals for the entire Arab-Israeli conflict, see Jewish Library: <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/total-casualties-arab-israeli-conflict>; Block and Futerman 2021, p. 234, Graph 5.1. On the treatment of Palestinians by Syrians, see Abu-Toameh 2020.
- 19 On Israel's outsized media footprint, see Segev and Blondheim 2010, pp. 7222-85. On the Democratic Republic of Congo's small media footprint, see Sundaram 2023.
- 20 PLO Ambassador to Lebanon in 2011: Palestinian Refugees Will Not be Citizens of the Independent Palestinian State, MEMRI, <https://www.memri.org/reports/palestinian-refugees-will-not-be-citizens-of-palestinian-state>.
- 21 Syrian Author: While the Rest of the World Sanctifies Life, We Arabs Sanctify Death. MEMRI. 2020. <https://www.memri.org/reports/syrian-author-while-rest-world-sanctifies-life-we-arabs-sanctify-death>. Libyan TV Show Host Afaf Abdel Mohsen Praises Palestinians for Having Many Children, Pushing Them to Become Martyrs, MEMRI. 2023. <https://www.memri.org/tv/libyan-show-host-afaf-mohsen-praises-palestinians-many-children-for-death-martyrdom-offspring-bombs>. (Note that one of the reasons Palestinian advocates give for justifying attacks on Israeli children is that they will one day grow up and serve in the army; hence there are no Israeli civilians).
- 22 Nay later explained that her admittedly hasty "Warsaw ghetto comparison" was the product of her outrage at Sharon's claiming the Palestinians deliberately sacrifice their children: Marianne #301 (January 2, 2003); republished France42 Blogspot, November 8, 2007. <https://france42.blogspot.com/2007/11/catherine-nay.html>.
- 23 Ami Ayalon in Moreh, D. 2012.
- 24 "The Middle East is the region with the highest level of income inequality in the world." Demographic and Economic Developments in the Arab World, 2010-2020. 2021. INSS Research Forum 24(1). <https://strategicassessment.inss.org.il/en/articles/demographic-and-economic-developments-in-the-arab-world-2010-2020/>.
- 25 For recent repetition of the theme, see Al-Habbash: Jews are "humanoids... apes and pigs". PA TV, 2022. <https://palwatch.org/page/32517>. For a compendium of Palestinian statements in Arabic denying Israel's existence and demonizing Israel and Jews, see Marcus and Ziberdik 2011.
- 26 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKZnBcHq0YY>
- 27 Sermon by Sheikh Halawa, PA TV, October 13, 2000, <http://www.pmw.org.il/tv%20part6.html>.
- 28 On the hadith, see Sahih Muslim, Portents of the Last Hour. 41:6981-85, <https://hadithcollection.com/category/sahihmuslim/sahih-muslim-book-41-turmoil-and-portents-of-the-last-hour>. This hadith, with the aspiration that it be realized, appears in the Hamas Charter, ¶7. [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/hamas.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hamas.asp).
- 29 Jews pass on evil in their genes. 2018. Palestinian Authority TV. <https://palwatch.org/page/15047>.
- 30 For several discussions of the failure of the legacy media even in the US (which is less anti-Israel than the European), see Landes 2022, chap. 9.
- 31 On "peace journalism," see Wolfsfeld 2004. Danny Dor, Intifada Hits the Headlines: How the Israeli Press Misreported the Outbreak of the Second Palestinian Uprising. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- 32 <https://twitter.com/LGBTQ4Palestine>.
- 33 See Avi Horowitz's conversations with gay community in San Francisco about Palestinian attitudes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hS\\_6enMdco](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hS_6enMdco).

- 34 Gender Studies Departments In Solidarity With Palestinian Feminist Collective, 2021. <http://genderstudies-palestinesolidarity.weebly.com/>. On the leading role of gender studies professors in denying Ayaan Hirsi Ali an honorary degree at Brandeis, see Landes 2022, pp. 421-27.
- 35 On Jerusalem as the future capital of the Caliphate, see Shragai, N. 2012. For an example of the extermination of the Jews, the conquest of the world, and the establishment of the Caliphate's capital in Jerusalem, see the next note.
- 36 Mahdi, I. Friday Sermon on Palestinian Authority TV. 2002. <https://www.memri.org/reports/friday-sermon-palestinian-authority-tv>. Twenty years later: see Makharzah 2021.
- 37 “[R]eligion is pretty low on the list of direct drivers of the conflict. This is not, despite what your grade school teacher may have suggested, a clash between Judaism and Islam over religious differences. It’s a clash between nationalities—Israeli and Palestinian—over secular issues of land and nationhood” (Fisher 2015).
- 38 Nicely summarized by Block and Futerman 2021, p. 180f.
- 39 Block and Futerman, 2021, p. 66, Table 3.3 and p. 78f, Tables 3.5-6. See also the astonishing statistics on taxes paid. Although Jews owned less land, they paid well over three times the amount of taxes than the Arabs did in 1944/45: p. 334, Table 7.10.
- 40 Palestine Royal Commission [Peel] Report. 1937, p. 151. London: His Majesty’s Stationery Office.
- 41 On the importance of draining the swamps to stopping malaria, see Alexander and Dunkel 2017. On the Palestinian response to praise of Israel from the EU: EU’s ‘Israeli independence’ message rebuked in Palestine. 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/27/eus-israeli-independence-message-rebuked-in-palestine>. Palestinian Authority, Fatah Slam European Commission President for Video Message Congratulating Israel On Its 75th Independence Day. MEMRI. <https://www.memri.org/reports/palestinian-authority-fatah-slam-european-commission-president-video-message-congratulating>.
- 42 This theme pervades not only Palestinian discourse, but also “pro-Palestinian” journalists who work for major mainstream outlets: see Zitser 2021; Wulfsohn 2022.
- 43 The case of Shireen abu-Akleh, there were numerous investigations: Forensic Architecture, CNN, AP, NYT, Al Jazeera, WaPo, UNHRC, all of which blamed Israel and suggested or claimed the IDF deliberately killed the journalist. By contrast, not one investigations of the 196 other cases of journalists killed in a Mideast conflict over the previous seven years. The *New York Times* expended much research and many columns to an investigation that failed to find Israel guilty of targeting a medic. See Halbfinger 2018. Answer, at the very end, “No. It was a ricochet” (See Levin 2018).
- 44 NGO Monitor. 2009. Experts or Ideologues? Double Standards: War Crimes, Collective Punishment, Human Shields, Abducted Soldiers. NGO Monitor Monograph Series. <http://ngo-monitor.org/article.php?viewall=yes&id=2611>.
- 45 BBC 28 December 2016 8:35. Matthew Amroliwala interviews Hanan Ashrawi.
- 46 BBC 28 December 2016 8:57. Matthew Amroliwala interviews Husam Zumlot.
- 47 Report Response: see Bayefsky 2023. Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel. UNCHR. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G23/089/77/PDF/G2308977.pdf?OpenElement>.
- 48 Palestinian Media Watch. <https://Palwatch.org>, Middle East Media Research Institute. <https://Memri.org>.
- 49 The one common exception to this denial: “well-wishers” feel that Israel, of all people, having suffered so terribly, would not do to others what was done to them, essentially holding these particular victims to a higher standard than those who tried to exterminate them. See Frantzman 2021.
- 50 For the same kind of argument, written out, see Levine 2018.

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