



Fathom Review

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2015

'It's great to see this new journal. It's accessible and provides expert analysis on strategic, cultural and economic issues relating to Israel. Amidst a lot of sloganeering, Fathom provides nuanced discussion. As such, it fills a real gap.' **Amnon Rubinstein**, Israeli law scholar, politician, and columnist. A member of the Knesset between 1977 and 2002, he served in several ministerial positions.

'Awesome. Good original writing. A really fresh new addition.' **Amir Mizroch**, Editor of Israel Hayom in English.

'Many people have deeply held beliefs and passionate opinions about Israel and the Middle East. Very few people actually know about Israel and the Middle East. Fathom is an excellent source for those who wish to join the camp of those who actually know something about Israel, rather than just have an opinion about it.' **Einat Wilf**, a member of the Knesset for the Labour Party and Independence from 2009-2013.

'Fathom is an insightful, measured and thought provoking publication.' **Professor Clive Jones**, Chair in Regional Security School of Government and International Affairs, University of Durham.

'Fathom is a very impressive publication. I congratulate the editors for filling an extraordinarily important gap on the UK intellectual/political scene.' **Steven J. Zipperstein**, Professor of Jewish Culture and History, Stanford University.

'Now that it exists, I can't imagine not having it.' **Stephen Pollard**, Editor of The Jewish Chronicle.

'Genuinely interesting, well-designed and thought-provoking. We are delighted to include it in the INSS library collections.' **Moshe Grundman**, Director of Publications at the Institute for National Strategic Studies, Tel Aviv, Israel.

'For anyone interested in Israel and its neighbourhood, Fathom is certainly one of the very best sources. It is thoughtful, excellently informed and fully reliable.' **Dr Alexander Jakobson**, Associate Professor of Ancient History at the Department of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

'Fathom aims to illuminate the central issues in Israeli politics and society, and in the always contentious relations the country has with its neighbours, and the wider world. Dispassionate in its arguments and open to those of others, it is a journal of real weight.' **John Lloyd**, Senior Research Fellow, Reuters Institute, UK, and Contributing Editor, The FT.

CONTENTS

Preface	4
ANTHONY JULIUS	
From the Editors	5
Contributors in 2015	7
Israel, Europe and the converging terror threat	15
AMICHAH MAGEN	
What Palestinian terrorists write on Facebook	23
ELHANAN MILLER	
The resurgence of neo-traditionalism	27
ASHER SUSSER	
'There is a clash of civilisations': An interview with Benny Morris	31
GABRIEL NOAH BRAHM AND BENNY MORRIS	
The Left and the Jews: Time for a Rethink	38
ALAN JOHNSON	
Coexistence at Hadassah: Reflections of an Arab social worker in Israel	45
LAMIS SHIBLI GHADIR	

PREFACE

ANTHONY JULIUS

is a lawyer and author of several books, including *T.S.Eliot: Anti-Semitism and Literary Form*, and *Trials of the Diaspora: A History of Anti-Semitism in England*.



Fathom exists to fathom Israel's complexities. It engages with a troubling characteristic of much of the public, political discourse regarding Israel and the Zionist project. In this discourse much is taken for granted, very little is proven; and the content of what is taken for granted is almost wholly hostile, both to Zionism's legitimacy and intentions, and to the state's intentions and actions.

So far, so familiar. It has been easy (and therefore common) for the response to this discourse to comprise an Israel-advocacy conducted at a similarly low level of argument, replying to one-eyed condemnations with similarly one-eyed praise, in a tiring, unilluminating, dance and counter-dance of vilification and adoration. If we had to choose between the two, we would of course choose the latter – there is, after all, much to admire, and much more to defend in Zionism's history, in both its pre-state, and statehood, periods.

But because of Fathom – not only Fathom, but certainly, Fathom – we do not have to choose. The journal is indeed a formidable weapon against one of the major political stupidities of our time – anti-Zionism, and its creature, the BDS movement. Without compromising intellectual integrity, and with a full, clear-sighted understanding of its subject, Fathom's contributors introduce readers to what is (but should not be) the novel notion that an understanding of the Israel-Palestinian conflict demands facts, analysis, and an openness to nuance and detail. Please read it, and support it.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

WELCOME TO THE 2015 FATHOM REVIEW.

Fathom is BICOM's globally respected quarterly journal of expert analysis, informed opinion and genuine debate. We have been creating a deeper understanding of Israel and the region among the world's opinion-formers since 2012.

We combine the authority of the scholarly journal with state-of-the art communication technologies and the limitless reach of social media. Our network of expert contributors spans the globe. And our bandwidth is broad: you won't agree with everything you read in every issue.

Fathom has more than 150,000 readers and our weekly Fathom Highlight email is read by elite opinion-formers all over the world, from the foreign ministries to the editorial offices, from the think tanks to the campuses. In 2015 we published e-Books on what needs to be done to renew the peace process, and on the life and legacy of Yitzhak Rabin.

We created *Fathom* because Israel faces a new strategic threat: delegitimisation. In other words, being made a pariah state by hostile intellectuals and activists who are entrenched in the media, academia, the trades unions, the churches and civil society. From these bases they have been waging a battle of ideas against the Jewish state for decades, often unchallenged.

We created *Fathom* because these intellectuals are getting results. They have been building an intellectual separation barrier between Israel and global public opinion by spreading demonising ideas about Zionism as a movement and Israel as a state. They say 'Zionism is racism' and Israel is a 'settler-colonial project', born in the sin of 'ethnic cleansing'. Today, they claim, Israel is an 'apartheid state' engaged in an 'incremental genocide' against the Palestinians. In short, the demonisers tell the world that Israel is a crime against humanity which should now be brought to an end.

We created *Fathom* because we cannot defeat this strategic threat to the Jewish state by soundbites and infographics. To combat the spreading anti-Zionist ideology we need a sophisticated and long-term intellectual challenge. That is what Fathom provides.

The content we have selected for the 2015 Fathom Review will give you a taste of the hundreds of expert articles, interviews, reviews and debates you can read online at fathomjournal.org.

Dr. Amichai Magen maps the increasing interconnectedness of the Islamist terror threats faced by Europe and Israel, and considers how policy makers can work together to keep their citizens safe. **Professor Asher Susser** of Tel Aviv University explains the resurgence of 'neo-

traditionalism' throughout the region and its political consequences for both the Arab Spring and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In a fascinating piece of research into the ongoing terror attacks in Israel, the journalist **Elhanan Miller** asks what we can learn about the drivers of extremism in Palestinian society by studying the Facebook pages of Palestinians perpetrators. Historian **Benny Morris** talks to Fathom advisory editor **Gabriel Noah Brahm** about the root causes of the Arab-Israeli conflict. At a time of worrying shifts towards anti-Israelism in the UK Labour Party, **Alan Johnson** makes the case for the western Left to radically rethink its relationship to Israel and the Jews. Finally, **Lamis Shibli Ghadir** provides a fascinating insight into being an Arab social worker in Israel.

We have big plans for expansion in 2016: a Fathom conference and a seminar series, more Fathom e-Books, and a monthly Forum.

Our ambition is huge: to realign intellectual opinion about Israel. We need your support.



Professor Alan Johnson

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What does the 'Corbyn Revolution' mean for the UK Left and Israel? and Boycotting Israel is Wrong: The progressive path to peace between Palestinians and Israelis (Review)

Luke Akehurst is Director of We Believe in Israel.



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Making David into Goliath: How the World Turned Against Israel (Review)

Michael Allen is Special Assistant at the National Endowment for Democracy and editor of the Democracy Digest blog.



SHLOMO AVINERI

Rabin's Strategy: understanding security and the limits of power (Rabin eBook)

Shlomo Avineri is Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a former Director-General of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



OMER BAR-LEV

'The time to compromise is when you are strong' (Interview)

Omer Bar-Lev is an MK for the Zionist Union. He was a commander in one of the army's elite units –Sayeret Matkal – before becoming a high tech entrepreneur and an MK in 2013.



JAMES BLOODWORTH

The Paradox of Liberation: Secular Revolutions and Religious Counterrevolutions (Review)

James Bloodworth is the former editor of Left Foot Forward.



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There is a clash of civilisations': An Interview with Benny Morris. and Dancing Arabs (Review)

Gabriel Noah Brahm is an Associate Professor of English at Northern Michigan University, and a Senior Research Fellow in Israel Studies at Brandeis University.

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The World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide (Review)

David Cesarani (1956-2015) was a research professor in History at Royal Holloway, University of London. He wrote and edited over 15 books, most notably *Eichmann: His Life and Crimes*.



NAOMI CHAZAN

Making Sense of the Israeli Elections

Naomi Chazan is a former Israeli Knesset Deputy Speaker, former Meretz MK. She is Professor Emerita of Political Science and African Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.



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The Resistible Rise of Iran: an Interview with Michael Ledeen

Ben Cohen is a New York-based writer on international affairs and an advisory editor of *Fathom*.



URI DROMI

A statesman not a politician: remembering Yitzhak Rabin

Uri Dromi was the spokesman of the Rabin and Peres governments (1992-96), and a retired Israeli Air Force Colonel.

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Israel's Jane Austen: Irit Linur's all too normal Israel

Noga Emanuel teaches at the Thomas More Institute for Adult Education in Montreal.



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The Ideological Roots of Media Bias against Israel and Winning the War of Words: Essays on Zionism and Israel (Review)

Matti Friedman is a writer and journalist.



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Anti-Judaism, Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism

Eve Garrard is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Manchester.



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An Arab Social Worker in Israel

Lamis Shibli Ghadir is a social worker in the Ein Kerem Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.



SIR MARTIN GILBERT

Rabin in Churchill's War Rooms: remembering a Prime Minister

Sir Martin Gilbert (1936-2015) was a historian and the author of many books including *Israel: A History*.



DORE GOLD

'Only a blind person would ignore the gravity of the threat which is emerging' (Interview)

Dore Gold was Israel's Ambassador to the UN (1997-1999) and the President of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs. He is currently Director-General of Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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Israel's embittered generation

Marc Goldberg made Aliyah to Israel and found himself fighting the Al Aqsa Intifada as an IDF Paratrooper. He is currently writing a book about the experience.



EFRAIM HALEVY

'There is no policy, we are on the edge of a volcano' (Interview)

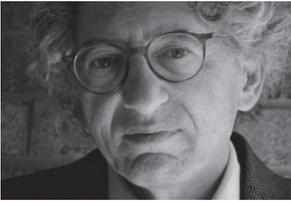
Efraim Halevy was Director of Mossad from 1998 to 2002.



YOAZ HENDEL

The Future of the Israeli Right (Interview)

Yoaz Hendel is Chairman of the Institute for Zionist Strategies and a former Director of Communications for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.



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David Cesarani: In Memoriam

Jeffrey Herf is Distinguished University Professor, Department of History, University of Maryland.



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Red lines and pitfalls: the Iran deal and beyond (Interview) and The Syrian Cauldron – A View from Israel

Michael Herzog is Senior Visiting Fellow at BICOM. He is a former head of the Strategic Planning Division in the IDF, a former Chief of Staff to four former ministers of defence, and in 2009-10 served as special envoy on the peace process.



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Ultra-nationalism, settlements and Jewish extremism (Interview)

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The Corbyn left: the politics of position and the politics of reason. And Jews and the Left: The Rise and Fall of a Political Alliance (Review)

David Hirsh is a Lecturer in Sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London.



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The Hilltop (Review)

Liam Hoare is a writer on politics and literature. His work has appeared in Tablet, The Tower and The Atlantic.



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Symposium on Rabin's legacy

Ronen Hoffman was a Member of Knesset for Yesh Atid (2013-2015). He served as personal assistant to Yitzhak Rabin in the 1992 election and coordinated the Israeli delegation to peace talks with Syria.



ALAN JOHNSON

The Left and the Jews: Time for a Rethink

Professor Alan Johnson is Editor of *Fathom*.



YOSSI KUPERWASSER

The Struggle over the Iranian Nuclear Programme

Brig. Gen. (res.) Yossi Kuperwasser was chief of the research division in IDF Military Intelligence, and until recently, director general of the Ministry of Strategic Affairs.



TZIPI LIVNI

Symposium on Rabin's legacy

Tzipi Livni is a Member of Knesset for Zionist Union. She served as Israel's Foreign Minister (2006-2009) and Justice Minister (2013-2014), and led Israel's negotiating team with the Palestinians in 2007-8 and 2013-14.

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Ally: My Journey across the American-Israeli divide (Review)

David E. Lowe is the Vice President for Government Relations and Public Affairs at the National Endowment for Democracy.



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Israel, Europe and the Converging Terror Threat

Dr. Amichai Magen is Head of the Governance & Political Violence Programme at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism (ICT). He is also a Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



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Australia & Israel: A Diasporic, Cultural and Political Relationship (Review)

Dr Philip Mendes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Medicine at Monash University.



ALAN MENDOZA

The New Special Relationship: The British Conservative Party and Israel

Alan Mendoza is the Executive Director of the Henry Jackson Society.



ELHANAN MILLER

What Palestinians write on Facebook and Gaza One Year After (Interview)

Elhanan Miller is the Arab Affairs reporter for the Times of Israel.

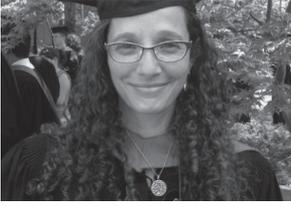


CARY NELSON

Multi-stage Coordinated Unilateralism: A Proposal to Rescue the Two-State Paradigm

Cary Nelson is a Professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, co-chair of the Third Narrative's Academic Advisory Council, and the co-editor of The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel.

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The Collective Impact Forum and Arab Employment (Interview)

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Islamic State and Islamist politics in the UK: why 'not in my name' is not enough

Dave Rich is Deputy Director of Communications at the Community Security Trust.



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Interfaith on Campus: lessons of the St Andrews Coexistence Initiative

Joel Salmon is the founder and President of the St Andrews Coexistence Initiative and was the President of the Jewish Society for two years. He studies International Relations at the University of St Andrews.



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Ben-Gurion: Father of Modern Israel (Review)

Colin Shindler is an Emeritus Professor at SOAS, University of London and founding chairman of the European Association of Israel Studies.



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Is it Iran's Middle East now?

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The Resurgence of Neo-traditionalism

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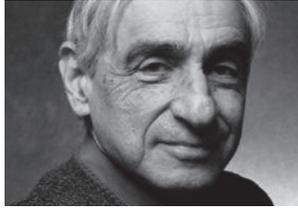
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*Reflections on Contemporary
Anti-Semitism in Europe*

Kenneth Waltzer is the former director of the Jewish Studies program at Michigan State University (MSU).



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*Debating Michael Walzer's
'Islamism and the Left' (Roundtable)*

Michael Walzer is Professor Emeritus at the Institute for Advanced Study, and the former editor of Dissent magazine.



MICHAEL WEGIER

Catch the Jew! (Review)

Michael Wegier is the Chief Executive of United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA).



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Terrorism in Cyberspace

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Making Sense of ISIS (Interview)

Michael Weiss is a Fellow at the Institute of Modern Russia and is co-author, along with Hassan Hassan, of *ISIS: Inside the Army of Terror*.



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Symposium on Rabin's legacy

Dr. Einat Wilf is a Senior Fellow with the Jewish People Policy Institute and an Adjunct Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.



ISRAEL, EUROPE AND THE CONVERGING TERROR THREAT

AMICHAH MAGEN

Amichai Magen maps the increasing interconnectedness of the Islamist terror threats faced by Europe and Israel, and considers how policy makers can work together to keep their citizens safe.

Not long ago, the sensible commuter in an average European city could reasonably assume that she was generally immune from the kind of security threats faced regularly by her friend living in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv.

By the beginning of 2015, the security ecosystem affecting Israelis and Europeans had converged dramatically and negatively. In the coming years, possibly decades, making sure that Europeans can go about their normal business in safety will necessitate a concerted effort to understand the ideology and modus operandi of jihadist terrorism, to contain and ultimately reduce the capacity and motivation of terrorists to attack, and to strengthen resilience in European societies. Indeed, the counter-terrorism posture required to protect civilians, whether in European or Israeli cities, while not identical, will depend on the intelligent and determined application of common guiding tenets and so will greatly benefit from intimate European-Israeli dialogue, cooperation, and learning.

THE NEW SECURITY ECOSYSTEM

In approaching the new security ecosystem it is important to distinguish between three ideological movements animating contemporary jihadist activity – Salafist, Shia, and Muslim Brotherhood led – as well as between three concentric circles of jihadist threats: local, European, and (broadly) Middle Eastern. Each ideological stream and concentric circle impacts both European and Israeli security, albeit to different degrees.

Salafist jihadism: the rising threat to Europe

Salafist jihadism represents the most serious and immediate terrorist threat to Europe, and is fast rising in the hierarchy of threats to Israel. Salafist jihadism – to which Al-Qaeda, its affiliates in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa, Jabhat al-Nusra, Ansar Bait al-Maqdis, and Islamic State (IS) all subscribe – is a compound ideology: it mixes a highly puritanical reading of Sunni Islam – one which strives to emulate the ‘pious ancestors’ (Salaf) by rejecting apostate (Kuffar) regimes and seeking to establish a Sharia-based Caliphate – with a virulent interpretation of the

concept of jihad – one that downplays the non-violent, spiritual reading of the notion in favour of a proclaimed duty of every Muslim to fight for the realisation of the Caliphate.

This violent utopianism inspires Salafist jihadism's vision of conflict, society, and politics. To their mind, the Ummah (or 'community of believers') is in a state of total war with the West, 'the Jews', and other non-believers, including apostate Arab regimes and Shia Muslims. This war not only justifies acts of extreme violence against those who have conspired to 'suppress the true faith' – beheadings, crucifixions, mass executions and rape – but involves the rejection of all forms of man-made law, democracy, and the Westphalian international system. Indeed, Salafist jihadism is contesting the essential values and institutions of modern liberal societies in a manner not experienced by the West since the defeat of Nazism.

With the disintegration of Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and large parts of the Sahel region (Mali, Niger, northern Nigeria, Chad, and Sudan) the geographical epicentre of global jihad has shifted away from Afghanistan–Pakistan towards the Levant and North Africa. The most active sources of Salafist jihadism are now on Israel's borders and at Europe's gates. In the coming years Libya, in particular, may become to southern Europe what Gaza is now to Israel – a terrorist safe haven controlled by violent extremists and used by them to launch cross-border attacks while shielded by a captive civilian population.

Europe is increasingly in the cross-hairs of Salafist jihadist organisations. In late January 2015, for example, a spokesman for Al-Qaeda in Yemen – the group claiming to be behind the Charlie Hebdo terror attack in Paris – stated that with the 'weakening' of the US in recent years, France has surpassed America to become the 'main enemy of Islam.'

The hundreds of European Muslims who have travelled to fight in Syria and Iraq since 2011 are almost exclusively followers of the Salafist brand of Islam. Austria, Belgium, France and the Netherlands have all supplied higher per capita numbers of foreign fighters to Syria and Iraq, but the estimated 600 British fighters is, jointly with Germany, the highest absolute number in Europe. Of these, a significant number are known to have returned to European shores and to remain active in extremist circles.

As the campaign of the international coalition against IS puts growing pressure on the organisation in Syria and Iraq, the number of European returnees is likely to grow, raising the probability of both 'Lone Wolf' attacks – typically involving stabbings, shootings, car-rampage attacks, or Boston–Marathon style bombings – as well as more organised strikes by sleeper-cells.

There is evidence that Salafist networks cross European borders. The Millatu Ibrahim group, banned in Germany in 2012, for example, is known to have not only recruited German jihadists but also served to connect them to extremist networks in Austria, Belgium, and France. Similarly, the 16 January 2015 Berlin police raid on 11 addresses and arrest of two men suspected of recruiting fighters, arms and finance for IS, came a day after the thwarting of a terrorist plot in Belgium and

appears to have been part of a wider effort to disrupt a European network of Salafist extremists.

Israel too is experiencing a foreign-fighters problem, although a remarkably smaller one than Europe's. Some 40 Israeli Arab citizens have travelled to Syria to fight or have attempted to do so, and more have travelled from Palestinian Authority (PA) areas. The social-media outlets of Salafist jihadi groups invest a considerable amount of their energy inciting Israeli Arabs and Palestinians to carry out acts of 'spontaneous jihad' against soft (civilian) targets in Israel and Jewish communities in Europe.

In the medium to long-run, the highest threat to Israel emanating from Salafist jihadism comes from the Islamist group that constitutes Al-Qaeda's 'official franchise' in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusra and, to a lesser extent, the Sinai-based Ansar Bait al-Maqdis. IS and its gruesome activities further east continue to dominate Western media attention, yet in north-western Syria, in Lebanon and on the immediate border with Israel in the northern Golan, it is Jabhat al-Nusra that has become the main Sunni jihadi force on the ground.

While al-Nusra is guided by an uncompromising jihadist ideology, its leader Abu Mohammed Al Jolani has so far demonstrated impressive tactical legerdemain; focusing on winning hearts and minds among Sunni Arabs in Syria and Lebanon, rather than terrorising them into submission, and preserving his gains by avoiding targeting westerners or provoking Israel. Still, as Jonathan Spyer observes, Jabhat al-Nusra appears determined to emerge as a kind of Sunni mirror-image of the Shia Hezbollah – establishing an Al-Qaeda shadow-state in Syria and Lebanon with which to attack Israel and the West.

Iranian backed terror: an old foe

Iran – whose leaders routinely call for Israel's destruction – is fighting an escalating shadow-war against the Jewish state and is now, for all intents and purposes, sitting on Israel's northern borders in the form of its proxy Hezbollah, whose manifesto proclaims: 'our struggle will end only when this entity [Israel] is obliterated.'

Iran has been the primary beneficiary of the Syrian Civil War and the disintegration of Iraq and Yemen. The hegemon-by-proxy in Lebanon for decades, Iran is now methodically enlarging and deepening its influence across the region by simultaneously agitating the Shia-Sunni conflict, portraying itself as protector and benefactor of the Shia populations in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, and ruthlessly exploiting power vacuums wherever it finds them. By February 2015, for example, the Iran-backed Houthis rebel group completed a takeover of Yemen capital, establishing a de facto Iranian protectorate in a key geopolitical spot in the Arabian Peninsula.

In the face of the Assad regime's total dependence on Iran and Hezbollah, Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Hezbollah forces are now actively pursuing the establishment of missile bases within Syrian territory with which to strike Israel, while minimising the risk of an all-out Israeli retaliation against Hezbollah in Lebanon. When Israel and Hezbollah next go to war – and it is a question of

when rather than if – the battlefield will likely extend to Lebanon, the Golan, and Syria, and will almost certainly involve Iranian soldiers as well as Hezbollah militiamen.

Trained, supplied and financed by Iran, Hezbollah today poses the most serious and immediate danger to Israeli national security, but is also a rising threat to Europe. Hezbollah is now the world's largest, wealthiest, most militarily capable terrorist organisation, with operations spanning Europe, Africa, the Americas and parts of Asia. Hezbollah has also become an archetype and model for other jihadist groups, Shia and Sunni alike, ready to share its tactical knowledge with groups like Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) in Gaza.

Currently bogged down in fighting for Assad's survival Syria and hesitant to open a full second-front against Israel, Hezbollah has, in the last three years, opted to strike at Israeli and Jewish targets in India, Georgia, Cyprus, and Bulgaria – where in July 2012 a Hezbollah bomber killed five Israeli tourists and wounded 32 in the seaside resort of Burgas. As tensions between the West and Iran rise around the deadline for the conclusion of nuclear talks, and as Israel seeks to prevent Hezbollah attacks on its northern border or the transfer of sophisticated weaponry to the hands of the Shia militia, the risk of Hezbollah strikes on European soil grows. Indeed, an Iranian/Hezbollah attack on a Jewish or Israeli target in London, Paris or Berlin – one mirroring perhaps the 1994 bombing of a Jewish Community Centre in Buenos Aires – would come as no surprise.

Hamas and Sunni Islamism targeting Europe?

The logic whereby thwarting terrorist activity in the Middle East may increase the risk of its eruption in Europe also extends to Muslim Brotherhood-aligned organisations, especially Hamas. Like Hezbollah, Hamas – which has fought three rounds of major hostilities with Israel in the past five years from the Gaza Strip – depends on violent struggle against Israel for its legitimacy and funding, yet is currently reluctant to provoke the Israeli Army into a further round.

Having emulated Hezbollah's military organisation, infrastructure build-up (notably the construction of underground bunkers and terror-tunnels), and fighting doctrine, it is not inconceivable Hamas will mimic Hezbollah and Salafists by striking soft targets on European soil, where it has an extensive fundraising network, as well as a limited recruitment operation. The terror-traffic between Europe and the Middle East goes both ways in fact. In April 2003, for instance, Hamas claimed responsibility for a suicide-bombing carried out by two British Muslims in Tel-Aviv, killing three civilians and wounding 50.

In the longer term, Hamas's deeper threat lies in its continued control of Gaza and ambitions for taking over the West Bank and destabilising Jordan. As long as Gaza's 1.8 million civilians live under Hamas rule, Gaza's huge child population will continue to be systematically indoctrinated into a radical Islamist, anti-Western and anti-Semitic ideology – raising successive generations of jihadists and undermining any prospect of Palestinian-Israeli co-existence. Although nominally in a unity government with Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah party, Hamas remains committed to expanding

its rule to the West Bank, and eventually Israel.

Hamas's ambitions challenge not only Israel, Jordan, and the PA, but European interests also. For the foreseeable future, should Israel be forced to withdraw its security presence from the West Bank, Hamas is poised to challenge the rule of the weak and corrupt PA in Ramallah, spark an intra-Palestinian civil war, boost the Islamist threat to the survival of the neighbouring Jordanian monarchy, and turn the West Bank into a missile launching pad against Israel's largest and most densely populated civilian centres. Avoiding this nightmarish 'Gaza II scenario' is at the heart of Israeli security concerns and must be the top priority of anyone concerned to preserve stability in Jordan and keep alive the prospect of Israeli-Palestinian peace: both vital European strategic concerns.

STRIVING FOR SECURITY, TOGETHER

Whilst this picture looks ominous, it is worth recalling that terrorists only win when they manage to paralyse targeted societies into submission or get them to grossly overreact and therefore stoke the fires of insurgency or civil war. Otherwise they always lose, the only question is at what cost?

No functioning democratic state has ever been overrun by a terrorist organisation and that record will not change as long as Western societies pursue determined and sensible counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation policies in a level-headed manner. There are no magic-bullet solutions. An effective strategy must be multi-layered, grounded in sound values which protect the sanctity of human life, based on broad international cooperation, and open-ended. All brands of Islamic radicalism – Salafist, Shia, and Muslim Brotherhood-led – think in terms of grand historical processes. Containing, countering, and eventually defeating their malicious ideas require that Western democracies be normatively and institutionally prepared for a long struggle.

ENDING DENIAL, BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, AVOIDING OVERREACTION

Overcoming denial, building societal awareness, and pursuing evidence-based understanding of jihadi extremism in a rational and systematic way, is the most important – and perhaps most psychologically and culturally difficult – first step. Whether it is because of misplaced 'political correctness', fear that it will be the messenger who is shot, or concern that acknowledging the existence of a problem will actually exacerbate it – many European leaders and publics still invest considerable time and energy in self-deception; ignoring the severity, even existence, of jihadist threats, or dismissing the topic as illegitimate Islamophobia.

Denial perpetuates ignorance, and ignorance borne of denial tends to breed paralysis, suspicion, conspiracy theories, xenophobia, or just plain bad policy. Where denial and ignorance persist, the shock of a major terrorist attack, when it comes, almost inevitably propels public opinion

and elected politicians toward knee-jerk reactions which are typically ill-informed and can be enormously costly (think invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the US Patriot Act). Even without such an overt shock, lack of informed understanding of the sources and nature of the threat is pernicious. It undermines healthy prevention, harms efforts to build responsible social resilience to political violence, and plays into the hands of Islamist and far-right extremists alike.

To avoid the ‘denial-overreaction trap’, Britain and other European societies, must be free to conduct an open, honest, and clear-headed public discussion about the nature, causes, and dangers of Islamist extremism – Salafi, Shia, and Muslim Brotherhood-led. Then it can ensure they have the knowledge, institutions, technologies, and policies to face these threats; to reliably assess their trends and relative danger; to decide on the level of risk it is prepared to tolerate; to debate the democratic, legal, and economic dilemmas; and to maximise the national and international resources available. In each of these realms, Israel’s hard-gained experience – its failures as well as successes – is of profound value, as are those of other like-minded nations, such as Australia, Canada, France, India, and the United States.

REDUCING TERRORIST MOTIVATION AND CAPACITY

Acts of terrorism, as Boaz Ganor aptly observes, result from the convergence of two variables: motivation and operational capacity. Terrorist attacks can be limited or prevented entirely by reducing motivation of the perpetrators, lessening the organisation or individual attacker’s capabilities, or both.

In a globalised world – where travel, weapon-smuggling and even bomb-construction knowhow are readily available – reducing terrorist capabilities is first and foremost about intelligence. Collecting, analysing and operationalising information about terrorist organisations and terrorism-enabling activities – radicalisation, money-laundering, procurement, training – ought to be a key focus of European-Israeli cooperation. This should not only be at the level of clandestine security organisations (where it is already quite developed) but in other relevant fora where it is currently weaker: between banks, aviation authorities, and in open-source intelligence for example. Similarly, Israel’s expertise – particularly the know-how of its counter-terrorism, police, and border-control units – represents a treasure trove of experience that ought to be closely studied to save European lives.

Reducing terrorist motivation involves both short-term deployment of sticks and carrots and deeper, societal counter-radicalisation efforts. Although their values and conduct are abhorrent, terrorists are rarely psychopaths. Most terrorists calculate their action based on the dual logics of consequentialism and appropriateness. Accordingly, the motivation of would-be perpetrators can be greatly reduced where intelligence makes the likelihood of early detection high, the chances of escaping an attack low, legal sanctions against involvement in terrorist activity of any kind tough

and, at the same time, the benefits of lawful citizenship and integration into society are visible and attractive.

The best way to deal with a terrorist threat is to prevent its emergence or spread. Understanding processes of radicalisation and developing effective de-radicalisation policies ought therefore to be at the heart of European-Israeli dialogue about prevention of Islamist political violence.

Studies of Islamic groups in Europe are somewhat encouraging in this area, finding that although young Muslim men in many European communities often feel frustration and humiliation they have to be actively radicalised by others to cross the line into terrorist activity. Contrary to popular myths about spontaneous internet-based radicalisation of lonely and unhinged individuals, the process of radicalisation is almost always a social one. Peer-pressure, systematic indoctrination, separation from general society and repetitive training – which can more readily occur in prisons, secluded religious centres, remote training camps, or in fighting abroad – are typically preconditions for getting vulnerable recruits to cross the line into terrorist activity.

These barriers provide state and civil society organisations with real opportunities for preventing and reversing radicalisation. As Omar Ashour's extensive study, *The Deradicalization of Jihadists*, demonstrates, combining determined state repression of Islamist radicalisation with the nurturing of alternative, moderate religious leadership, breaking up insular-group indoctrination, and using economic and social incentives to draw would-be recruits towards other activities, can reduce terrorist motivation and shrink the pool of recruits.

CONTAIN, PROTECT, AND COUNTER

Deterring and deradicalising existing and would-be terrorists, while a top priority and challenge for Western democracies, constitutes only a limited, shallow response to the problem. Tackling the root causes will require a far deeper strategic alignment in the West and, eventually, liberal transformations in Iran, Turkey, and the Arab world. We are today in the midst of a profound historic struggle not only between the free world and radical Islam, but within Islam itself – between those who wish to reconcile Islamic civilization with life-affirming values, and those who hijack Islam and turn Muslim countries to the cause of life-destroying barbarism. Ensuring that liberal progressivism triumphs over fundamentalist malevolence necessitates both the reinvigoration of the West (not least NATO) and the formation of new ties with those in the Muslim world – and they are many – who wish to be part of the liberal international order.

In thinking about this grand struggle, Europeans and Israelis can begin to stem the tide of extremism and enhance regional security and peace. First, we must remain united around the central liberal truth about the foundations of true peace and security in the international system. To paraphrase the European Security Strategy, adopted by European Union members in 2003: the quality of international society depends on the quality of states and governments that are its

foundation. The best protection for our own security is a world of well-governed states that can provide for their own citizens and behave responsibly in the international system. This is as true for Lebanon and the Palestinians as it is for Bosnia-Herzegovina and Ukraine.

Second, Western democracies must resist the tendency to compartmentalise violent flare-outs in the Middle East and see them as self-contained. It is essential to connect the dots and address the animating agents of violence in the region. Most importantly, it is vital to understand Iran's methodical guiding hand across the region – from Lebanon, Iraq and Syria, to Yemen and Gaza – and to develop an integrated regional strategy to counter Tehran's hegemonic ambitions. In particular, reaching a nuclear and sanctions-relief deal with Iran must also address its ongoing support for global terror, especially Hezbollah and PIJ.

Third, we must work together to roll back those areas of chaos in North Africa and the Middle East which have come under the sway of Salafist jihadism, Iranian-backed Shia militancy, and radical Muslim Brotherhood groups. If Islamist Non-State Armed Governors (INSAG's) such as IS and Jabhat al-Nusra in Iraq and Syria, the Houthis in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Ansar Bait al-Maqdis in Sinai, Hamas and PIJ in Gaza, and Boko Haram in Nigeria are permitted to continue their territorial gains and entrenchment among the local populations, they will indoctrinate millions of children, gradually acquire state-like military and financial assets, and increasingly challenge the existing international order. A 'contain and counter' strategy will necessarily involve military action, but of equal importance in the long run will be civilian capacity building, economic development, and governance improvement. Here, Europe can learn from Israel's hard-power expertise while Israel learns from Europe's soft-power capabilities.

Finally, it is essential to safeguard those states in North Africa and the Middle East that are either fledgling democracies (Tunisia) or islands of relative stability interested in maintaining the state-based order and prepared to work with Western partners to increase security, prosperity and peace. In particular, Israel and Europe should do more to nurture the development of an axis of stability to contain and counter armed groups and Iranian encroachment. Such an axis of stability should involve Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, and perhaps even Saudi Arabia and relatively moderate Gulf monarchies.

Israel itself is living proof that a human society can survive, indeed thrive, in the face of near constant security threats. In the years and possibly decades to come providing security to our respective populations will require that we communicate, cooperate, and learn from each other as never before.



WHAT PALESTINIAN TERRORISTS WRITE ON FACEBOOK

ELHANAN MILLER

As the British government's recently launched counter-extremism strategy acknowledges the role of social media in spreading hate, Elhanan Miller looks at the drivers of extremism in Palestinian society through the Facebook pages of Palestinians perpetrators in the recent wave of terror attacks.

For Bahaa Allyan – who boarded a city bus in Jerusalem on 13 October and shot dead two passengers – the struggle between Palestinians and Israelis playing out in Jerusalem was about more than the perceived threat to the al-Aqsa Mosque. It was a battle over narrative.

On 11 October, two days before he boarded that bus not far from his East Jerusalem village of Jabel Mukaber, the 22-year-old graphic designer was frantically trying to defend the reputation of Israa Jabees, a resident of his neighbourhood. That morning, Jabees had been seriously injured setting off an explosion in her car, apparently intended to detonate a gas canister, having been stopped for inspection by Israeli police en route to Jerusalem. Israeli security services reported finding hand-written notes on her person expressing support for ‘martyrs’, and believe she was on her way to carry out a major terror attack in the heart of the Israeli capital.

But on Allyan’s Facebook page, the story was dramatically different. Based on conversations with Jabees’s family members, he surmised that a malfunction had occurred in her car, causing police to mistake her for a terrorist and shoot her ‘in cold blood.’ For the benefit of friends surprised with his sudden transformation into citizen journalist, he wrote ‘I am posting news on my [Facebook] page due to the absence of real media, and also to refute Hebrew media, which some consider credible beyond doubt. Without real media, our truth will be lost.’ Such claims – that Palestinian perpetrators who are injured or killed whilst carrying out attacks are in fact victims of unprovoked assault or murder by Israelis – are common in Palestinian discourse.

For observers of the recent round of violence in Israel and the Palestinian Territories, and increasingly for Israeli security services, Facebook provides an indispensable window into the hearts and minds of Palestinian terrorists. It sheds light on the motivations that caused them to take a knife, gun or car; to kill and often be killed. In the case of Bahaa Allyan, it reveals that he was frustrated not only with Israeli media, but also with the lack of patriotism of his peers.

Allyan blasted the merchants in his village for not shuttering their shops in solidarity with a nationwide strike declared in memory of the Palestinian ‘martyrs.’ He also decried the Palestinian Authority as ‘traitors’ for not cancelling the football league.

Orit Perlov, an expert in Palestinian social media at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University estimates that one third of Palestinians are active on social media. The ubiquity of sites like Facebook and Twitter has brought about a certain democratisation of information, giving a voice to women and youth in particular who have no access to mainstream Palestinian politics.

Teenagers like 19-year-old Muhannad Halabi, who stabbed two Israelis to death and injured two others in Jerusalem's Old City on 3 October, are inundated with gruesome images of injured Palestinians shot by Israeli soldiers, or violent clashes in and around Temple Mount, known in Arabic as al-Haram ash-Sharif.

'The Third Intifada is here,' wrote Halabi, a law student at al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, a day before the attack. Earlier, he shared a viral video clip of a female Muslim activist, a member of the 'Murabitat' group recently banned by Israeli authorities for intimidating and assaulting Jewish visitors to the Temple Mount, being arrested by Israeli police. He wrote 'what is happening to al-Aqsa Mosque is what is happening to our holy sites, and what is happening to the women of al-Aqsa is happening to our mothers and women.'

Like many of his peers, Halabi used Facebook not only as a means of following news as it broke, through news pages such as Quds News Network (3.6 million followers) or Gaza-based Shehab News Agency (4.1 million followers), but also as a means to express his views without restriction.

Halabi criticised Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's speech at the UN on 30 September, accusing him of accepting the division of Jerusalem between Israel and Palestine, and of renouncing the armed struggle against the Jewish State.

'Excuse me Mr. President,' he wrote, 'but what is happening to the women of al-Aqsa and to al-Aqsa will not be stopped through peaceful measures. We were not raised to be humiliated.'

Like Halabi, Allyan of Jabal Mukaber harboured deep animosity for the Palestinian political leadership. 'The reassuring thing is that the leaders are out of the equation,' he wrote on Facebook earlier this month, describing the grassroots character of the current violence. 'The opportunists and those who love to appear on television will soon be marginalised.'

At first, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu made little mention of social media's crucial contribution to the recent spate of violence, focusing instead on incitement by Arab leaders both in Israel and in the Palestinian Territories. But during a Likud party meeting on 19 October, he highlighted Facebook's role in proliferating violence. 'What we see here is a combination between Islamic extremism and the internet. Osama Bin Laden meets Zuckerberg.'

The problem with the internet, Netanyahu has already learned, is that it has no physical boundaries, cannot be arrested, and unlike Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, cannot be subjected to international diplomatic pressure to tone down incendiary rhetoric. Israel has been monitoring

activists on social media and arresting those suspected of inciting violence. But as internet expert Orit Perlov put it, this only made the insidious activity resemble ‘an octopus with tentacles but no head.’

In fact Palestinian politicians, rather than being the leaders of the public mood, are now the ones who are monitoring social media for sources of inspiration and public legitimacy. Jibril Rajoub, a former chief of security in the West Bank and leading Fatah official, praised a Facebook post written by Allyan last year, during an interview on Palestinian television on 17 October. The entry, titled ‘will of a martyr,’ instructed Palestinian factions not to claim responsibility for an attack committed solely for personal, patriotic reasons.

‘This blog entry should become a document taught in school about the meaning of martyrdom and patriotism,’ Rajoub said.

Indeed, more and more Palestinian politicians are using social media to directly convey their message to the public. In many cases, Facebook is the first venue of choice, preceding mainstream print or broadcast media.

Mousa Abu Marzouk, deputy head of Hamas’s political bureau, often uses his Facebook account to explain his movement’s positions. In an 11 October post, he explained why Hamas had decided to refrain from launching rockets into Israel in support of the ‘Intifada’ raging in the West Bank, despite the fact that many social media pages have urged it to do so.

He reasoned, ‘the Intifada will go by without us winning the battle of missiles and [launching missiles] will only portray us as aggressors and them as victims in the eyes of the world.’

Both Hamas and Fatah, the two largest Palestinian factions, maintain Twitter and Facebook accounts, used to notify their followers of rallies, political arrests, and breaking news. Sometimes, pages vanish – presumably for violating Twitter or Facebook’s guidelines – but soon new pages emerge under new names. Hamas’s armed wing, the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, currently tweets using two different accounts, with a combined following of over 150,000.

A Facebook page claiming to be Fatah’s official platform has been fanning the flames of violence, comparing Israel to the Islamic State and accusing Prime Minister Netanyahu for the burning of the Palestinian Dawabsheh family from the West Bank village of Duma on 31 July. The page also displayed a caricature of a Jewish man being stabbed, with the caption ‘This is Jerusalem, you crazies, beware!’

Finally, the influence of extreme violence currently engulfing the Arab world should not be overlooked when analysing the Israeli-Palestinian conflagration. Over the past five years, Palestinian youth have been immersed in images of Sunni Arab activism in the context of what used to be referred to as the Arab Spring. Images of Arab fighters on the battlefields of Syria, Iraq, Libya or Yemen, glaring from satellite TV news channels and social media websites, have

certainly contributed to a Palestinian sense of belligerency. The lone Muslim fighter, a believer taking matters into his own hands in the face of international passivity, has become a ubiquitous role model for many Arabs across the Middle East.

Israel's struggle to tackle the challenge of hate and incitement shared on social media, calls for a holistic approach. Violent pages should be reported and removed using Facebook's own guidelines banning hate speech, violence and graphic content. At the same time, decision-makers should not focus solely on the medium, but also consider what it tells us about the political, economic and social climate within which messages of hatred and violence can flourish.



THE RESURGENCE OF NEO-TRADITIONALISM

ASHER SUSSER

Asher Susser explains the resurgence of tradition throughout the region and its political consequences for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He was speaking to a Fathom Forum in London on 10 February 2015.

One of the main failures in Western analyses of the Arab Spring was the underestimation of religion as a factor in Middle Eastern politics. When it began, everybody started talking about the secular liberals. The problem is, the secular liberals are virtually non-existent in Arab society – the people who really matter are the Muslim Brotherhood.

If you want to talk about real political organisation, it is invariably of an Islamist character, these days. I wrote a monograph about this five years ago. I examined the rise of Hamas to power in Palestine, arguing that this was not an exceptional development – it was the rule.

When you have free elections, the Islamists either do extremely well or they win. When Jordan had relatively free elections in 1989, the Islamists of various brands got around 40 per cent of the seats in Parliament. The Jordanians have since then cheated in the elections systematically to keep the Islamists out. They changed the election law, fraud, violence – whatever you like – anything but allowing the Islamists to cash in on a free election.

Why is tradition so resilient? I would cite four factors.

TOP-DOWN SECULARISATION

First, there is a top-down character of the secularising reforms introduced in the Middle East over the last 200 years or so. The point of departure of what we call the ‘modern’ era in the Middle East begins with the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798 – that was the crushing introduction of European power and European ideas which induced a period of reform in the Middle East.

However, these secularising and westernising reforms were ‘top down’. They did not come from bottom up. As a result, very often, the people didn’t want them. And there was always a traditionalist push-back against these secularising reforms.

Take a country like Turkey where the most impressive reforms were introduced during the Tanzimat. These Ottoman reforms, beginning in 1839, ended in 1876 with the introduction of the Ottoman constitution. So you could say that Turkey had gone the furthest in this process of

secularising westernisation. But then look at Erdogan today – he is able to cash in on the Islamist sentiment of the bulk of Turkish people.

You see, the reforms that were introduced in a very far reaching fashion under Kemal Ataturk were introduced by force. Ataturk was a dictator – the Latinising of the alphabet, for example, was imposed on the population. That’s why, with the democratisation of Turkey after the Second World War, you have the gradual resurfacing of the Islamic tendency.

Across the Middle East, there may have been secular reforms, but they didn’t produce secular societies. The societies remain in their heart of hearts basically attached to religion.

SOCIETIES OF GROUPS NOT INDIVIDUALS

There is a great book written by a British historian of the Middle East, Malcolm Yapp. The point he makes is that Middle Eastern societies are not societies of individuals – they are societies of groups. And this is the second factor explaining the resilience of tradition.

Western societies see themselves as societies of individuals. The rights of the individual are at the core of political debate, guaranteed by the state. People organise politically as individuals; they join the Republican Party, or the Labour Party, whatever it is – as individuals.

The Middle East, Yapp said, is not a society of individuals – it never was – it’s a society of groups.

You belong to a group – that is, your family, your extended family, your tribe, and perhaps above all else, your religious denomination. So, you are first and foremost a Muslim, or a Jew, or a Christian – and some kind of Christian at that, either Maronite, or Greek Orthodox, or Greek Catholic, and these differences matter. If you’re Muslim it makes a huge difference if you are Sunni or Shiite or a member of the heterodox non-Muslims like the Alawites or the Druze, who are not really Muslims at all.

The Americans invaded Iraq with the belief that it was a society of individuals and so would coalesce into democratic political parties which would vie for power. But what happened? The groups went to war with each other! The civil war, Sunni vs. Shiite, was only to be expected – it couldn’t have been otherwise. And I’m not saying that societies of groups are better than societies of groups of individuals – just different.

Why do we keep getting this wrong? Well, in the West, one unfortunate by-product of Edward Said’s influence is the unwillingness to recognise the Otherness of the Other. In multicultural societies in the West – and I have nothing against multiculturalism, I’m all in favour of it – you have societies which see themselves as multicultural. But look, if you define yourself as multicultural, you are obviously recognising that other cultures are ‘Other’, therefore multi! But when the multiculturalist from the US and other Western states looks at the Middle East, he or she explains Middle Easterners not as Other, but as... us! That’s why we got this whole story about

Facebook and Twitter during the Arab Spring. It was a way of saying, 'They're just like we are!'

Westerners saw Facebook and Twitter but didn't see the Muslim Brotherhood. The story in the West was 'This is Facebook and Twitter; this is the 21st century; this is the secular liberal intelligentsia taking over Egypt.' And then the commentators were shocked when the Muslim Brotherhood walked all over everybody. But they were obviously going to walk all over everybody! The only people who are going to prevent the Muslim Brotherhood from walking all over everybody is the military – not the secular liberals. The secular liberals, to kick the Muslim Brotherhood out of power in Egypt, had to use the military – nobody else could do it.

RELIGION AND STATE

Third point: there never really has been a separation between religion and state in the Middle East. No matter how far the reforms went in the Ottoman Empire or Egypt, there was always a place for Islamic religion and law in the state. In the last 20 or 30 years, this space has increased. Even under Mubarak, Islamist lawyers would file suits against intellectuals for blasphemy in the regular secular court system – and they would win. The reintroduction of Sharia into the secular court system was allowed by Mubarak. Why? Well, there was a kind of deal – the Islamists were allowed to take over a certain segment of the public space provided that they didn't mess with the government. (Eventually, they messed with the government, but that wasn't the original idea.)

TERRITORIALISATION OF IDENTITY

The fourth point is the impact in the Middle East of a genuinely westernising influence, which I call the territorialisation of identity. The Ottoman Empire may not have been a liberal country, but it was a very tolerant country. Minorities and majorities lived side by side in peace throughout the empire. But the advent of the Western idea of nationalism brought the related idea of linking society, community, and territory, and this led to horrific bloodshed throughout the region.

Once it became important to territorialise your religious identity, we saw military confrontations between communities. This is what happened in Yugoslavia. This is what happened in Cyprus. This is what is happening now in Iraq. This is what broke Lebanon up. This is what is now breaking up Syria.

NEO-TRADITIONALISM

The chaos in the contemporary Middle East is the cataclysmic expression of the failure of Western style modernisation. These are failed states which cannot provide for their people, and the people are rebelling against hopelessness. Egypt is the perfect example of that.

The inability of these societies to provide a decent life for their populations, and the widespread disillusionment with Western-style modernity and reforms, has produced the resurgence of what I call neo-traditionalism: political Islam, sectarian politics, tribal politics. In Egypt and Tunisia we see the Islamists versus the Secularists, in Iraq and Syria we see sectarian civil war. In Yemen and Libya there is tribal disintegration. The entire region is being destabilised because of this resurgence of neo-traditionalism.

How does this infringe upon the Arab-Israeli issue? As the residue of secular nationalism retreats into the background, religious forces in the conflict are becoming more salient. Hamas and Hezbollah are definitely far more motivated, and more central, to the armed conflict with Israel than Fatah and the remnants of the PLO.

Israel is also changing. Israel post-67 is not Israel pre-67. Israel post-67 has a much more religious kind of Zionism as a result of the Six-Day War and the occupation. The Messianic component of the Zionist endeavour is increasing. Classical Zionism was actually a way to push religion out of Jewishness. It was an effort to create an alternative, secular Jewishness, hence the opposition of the ultra-Orthodox to Zionism. There was always this rather marginal religious Zionism, but after 1967 it became far less marginal and is an ever increasing segment of Israeli politics.

For religious Zionists, the State of Israel is not the secular territorial expression of Jewish self-determination; it becomes the vehicle for religious redemption. *Atchalta de'Geulah*, as they would say – 'the beginning of redemption'. This is the opposite of what the secular Zionists of the earlier phase intended.

On the Jewish side and on the Muslim side, the conflict is becoming more religiously motivated. Israel demands the unification of Jerusalem 'by hook or by crook' under Israeli sovereignty. There is, I would say, a not very well treated Arab minority within the city. We see Jewish fanatics settling in Muslim residential areas as part of the takeover of even Muslim residential areas. And we see Jerusalem turning into the flash point of what is becoming an increasingly religious confrontation.

Abu Mazen has taken the confrontation to the UN and the ICC, while Hamas has taken it to the battlefield. The armed element of the conflict is becoming driven by religious motivations while the secularists are taking the confrontation somewhere else.

The increasingly religious nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the increasing focus on Jerusalem, are both deeply rooted in what I am calling the resurgence of neo-traditionalism.



'THERE IS A CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS': AN INTERVIEW WITH BENNY MORRIS

PROFESSOR GABRIEL NOAH BRAHM

*Israeli historian Benny Morris, author of *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* and *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881–2001*, spoke with Fathom advisory editor Professor Gabriel Noah Brahm. In this extract they discuss Morris's body of work, his critics, the obstacles to peace with the Palestinians, and his view of Israel's place in the 'Clash of Civilisations'. The full interview is available at the Fathom website.*

GNB: *Your work has been hugely controversial. Looking back, would you do anything differently if you could?*

BM: To be completely honest, in the interview with Ari Shavit, in Haaretz in 2004, I should have said some things in a more temperate way. Not that I have a problem with what I said, but there were one or two phrases which provided ammunition to hostile critics. But I don't think I have changed anything I have ever written. I would take nothing back regarding my views about 1948 or the conflict, because what I wrote originally and what I continue to write is always based on persuasive evidence.

Politically, the thing which has changed for me (and you can see that in my journalism), is my view of the Palestinians and their readiness to make peace with the Israelis. This is the crux. I would say that in the 1990s, while I was not persuaded by Arafat — the man was always a vicious terrorist and a liar — I thought then maybe he is changing his approach, because he now accepts the realities of power and what is possible.

But when it came to the crunch, when he was offered a two-state solution in 2000 by [Ehud] Barak, and then got an even better offer from [Bill] Clinton at the end of 2000, Arafat said 'no'. And I think this was the defining moment for me. He was simply unable to reach a compromise with Israelis.

GNB: *And that affected you how, exactly?*

BM: From that point on, I lost a lot of sympathy for the Palestinians — and I came to understand that they are not willing to reach a two-state solution. And then there was Mahmoud Abbas's rejection in 2008 of the Ehud Olmert proposals, which were fairly similar to the Clinton proposals of December 2000. Abbas was offered a state with 95 to 96 per cent of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, and he too said 'no'.

I understood that it wasn't really a question of a bit of territory here or there — it was a matter of the Palestinians non-acceptance of the legitimacy of the Jewish state. That was what lay behind Abbas's inability to accept any Jewish state next to a Palestinian state. This is really what it has always been about: for Arafat, for Abbas, and before them for [Haj Amin] al-Husseini in the 1930s and 1940s.

Let me add that during the 1990s I was working on my book, *Righteous Victims*, in which I looked at the conflict from its origins until 1999. Before that, I had written about segments of the conflict, about the emergence of the Palestinian refugee problem and about the 1950s, but in the 1990s I devoted my time to writing a comprehensive history of the clash between the two peoples — between the Zionists and the Arab world. I came to the conclusion, on the basis of what I read about the conflict during that decade, that the Palestinian Arabs were not willing to reach a compromise. What happened in 2000 capped the conclusions I had more or less reached on the basis of the material that went into *Righteous Victims*. I understood that even if there were some Palestinians who were genuinely moderate and conciliatory, and willing to live with a two-state solution, they would always be out-flanked, or crushed, by the much larger segment of the Palestinians who would be completely rejectionist.

Abbas can't reach a solution. Even if he were a real moderate, he would never sign on the dotted line. First, he would be shot by the Hamasnicks. Second, even if he wasn't shot by the Hamasnicks, the deal would come unstuck because Hamas would send out suicide bombers and enrage the Israeli right. There are simply too many extremists; the moderates end up bowing to their will. This is what always happens when it comes to the crunch.

GNB: *Was it then, a matter of a shift in focus — from a close-up look at the origins of the refugee problem, where you're naturally feeling more sympathy for the Palestinian refugees, to the bigger picture, where it was not so easy to retain as much sympathy?*

BM: Yes, maybe that's true. The focus of my original work on the refugees, and then my subsequent book on the infiltration problem and the border wars, did look more narrowly at the Palestinians and the bad things that happened to them. And this, with any normal, decent person, would generate sympathy — so this is true. But when you look at the wider picture, you end up attributing to them a great deal of responsibility for what happened as well.

GNB: *To return to the question of Palestinian rejectionism, Norman Finkelstein and Avi Shlaim have questioned the narrative you present, arguing that both the Palestinians and the Israelis did not accept the Clinton parameters.*

BM: This is not true. The response by the PLO to the Clinton parameters, which was published and is on the internet, is essentially a complete dismissal of any compromise on the 'right of return', which is crucial—the Palestinians offered no conciliation.

On the matter of territories, they were vague and they certainly didn't accept what Clinton

outlined — 94 to 96 per cent of the West Bank, 100 per cent of the Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem — all of this is insufficient for them. The Temple Mount, where Clinton offered a number of different alternatives — Israeli-Palestinian condominium, the Arabs owning the Temple Mount surface, the Jews owning the interior — these are variations on a compromise. On these there was no give at all by Arafat.

Clinton in his autobiography, and Dennis Ross in *The Missing Peace*, both insist that the Palestinian response was a total rejection of the Clinton parameters. Whereas Clinton said the Israeli response (which incidentally Israel didn't publish, and the Americans never published, though most of it is in my book, *One State Two States*), was much, much closer to the details of the Clinton parameters. In other words, there were one or two things that Barak's government wanted revised or re-discussed. They wanted more than 4–6 per cent of the West Bank — they wanted up to 8 per cent. But that was 'up for discussion'. The same applied to the Temple Mount, and the sacred basin around the Old City. I don't think Shlaim and Finkelstein are correct on this.

The Arafat response to the Clinton parameters, when a historian looks at it, is completely commensurate with the previous responses over many decades of Palestinian leaders to international and bilateral proposals for a compromise peace.

In 1937, the British Peel Commission put the first two-state solution on the table. Haj Amin al-Husseini and the Arab world (save for Prince Abdullah in Transjordan) all said 'no', and went back to rebelling against the British. They said 'no' to a peace proposal which actually gave them close to 80 per cent of Palestine's land surface, and gave the Jews 17 per cent. But the Arabs said 'no, we don't want this compromise, they [the Jews] don't deserve one inch of Palestine!'

In 1947, the international community put a second two-state solution on the table in the form of UN General Assembly Resolution 181, on 29 November 1947 — and the Arab world and the Palestinians again rejected it. That resolution offered the Palestinians something like 45 per cent of the country and the Jews 55 per cent.

Their problem wasn't only in the percentages, which had now turned less favourable to the Palestinians. The problem was with the entire concept of partition and a two-state solution. They said all of Palestine belongs to us, and that is the only solution we will accept. And the Jews, some of them, can live here as a minority.

Essentially Arafat did the same thing in 1978, in response to Sadat and Begin's proposal, at Camp David, of Palestinian autonomy. He did the same in 2000, with the Clinton parameters, and Abbas did the same thing with Olmert's offer in 2008. The problem here, when you look at it as a historian, is the consistency one sees in the rejection of a two-state compromise. This is what should make reasonable people depressed.

OBSTACLES TO PEACE

GNB: *In the US and Europe, of course, liberal folks think the obstacle to peace is the settlements.*

BM: Look, the problem is that settlements are an expression of occupation and expansionism. The settlements are the symbol of the fact that Israel has been in occupation of the Arab territories in one way or another since 1967. We left the Gaza strip, but we can still control the airspace, the borders, the water. We control everything — even though we are physically not in the Gaza Strip. And in the West Bank, there are a large number of settlements which express the will of some of the Israeli public to expand and take over the West Bank in general.

Many in the West have been living with things as they have been since 1967. They don't go back to 1967 and look at why Israel conquered these places, or why it ended up retaining these places, even in the first years of occupation. They look at what exists now, and they see tanks vs. Kalashnikovs, and Israelis basically stealing land from Palestinians. This dominates their view of what the conflict is about, and it's a mistake. But the Palestinians of course understand this and exploit it.

The problem is that the Arabs rejected Zionist and Jewish presence in the area. They rejected the legitimacy of the Zionist and Jewish claims to even part of Palestine, and they continue to do that. But now they say, 'well, the conflict is because of the settlements and the occupation'. What I would say is this: the settlements and the occupation are obstacles to peace, without doubt; but the bigger obstacle is the essential rejectionism of the Palestinian national movement. The religious wing of the Palestinian movement is open about this, while the so-called secular variety (which is really not so secular) is more subtle. But for both, their rejectionism is the essential driving force of the conflict.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that we have a prime minister who is very right wing — a prime minister who appears dishonest, where you don't know what he's actually thinking or what he's after. One day he says 'two states', one day he says 'no two states', so he generates a great deal of mistrust amongst enlightened people across the world. He may generate trust in the Katamonim [a Jerusalem neighbourhood] in Israel, but most thinking people don't trust the man, and this includes most thinking Israelis as well. Abbas appears to be a much more genial character than [Bibi] Netanyahu. He dresses in suits, he speaks the language of two states — he sounds normal. And Netanyahu sounds fishy.

GNB: *Do you think it would have made a difference if Isaac [Bougie'] Herzog had won the last election in Israel?*

BM: We'd be a bit better off, in terms of image and in terms of relations with the wider Western world. We wouldn't be any closer to peace, though, because I don't think Herzog has it in him to do what is necessary. And even if he does what is necessary, I'm not sure that would bring peace either.

Somebody like Sharon might have been able to deliver Israeli withdrawal from the territories. He did this with the Gaza Strip and slightly with the West Bank. He promised or seemed to promise that this is what he would do — a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, if you cannot reach an agreement with the Palestinians. This wouldn't have led to peace because, as I say, the Palestinians seem to want all of it — not just the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. But, at least in terms of Western public opinion and governments, unilateral Israeli withdrawal from 90 per cent of the West Bank, back to what is called the Defence Barrier, this would certainly put us in better stead amongst Western governments and publics.

But the Palestinians — or a large segment of them — would continue the fight, shoot rockets into Israel, make life unliveable in Tel Aviv, or flights untenable at Ben-Gurion International Airport. And Israel would have to reconquer the West Bank.

But maybe the Palestinians would surprise me by not shooting rockets if we withdrew from the West Bank. If Israel gave that a chance, at least, as I say, we would be doing the right thing in terms of the West.

ISRAEL AND THE 'CLASH OF CIVILISATIONS'

GNB: *Is there a 'clash of civilisations' taking place in the world?*

BM: I think there is a clash of civilisations. There are Western values at odds with an Islamic world whose attitude to life, to political freedom, to creativity, is completely different.

Arab regimes are all dictatorships — there's absolutely no value to human life in such regimes. Families care for their loved ones, but the regimes themselves don't show a great respect for civil liberties, nor for life in general in the Arab world.

The Islamic world is resurgent, and the radical wing in Islam is furthering the idea of actually taking over the world and turning it into one Islamic polity — a Caliphate. In other words, Islam is the correct religion, everything else is wrong and Allah's will is that Islam dominate the earth. This is what the radical Islamists want, though Hamas at the moment is busy with us so it doesn't express its universal pretensions. Other movements like Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, ISIS — they talk more bluntly about a universal message, which they are trying to both propound and achieve around the globe. So yes, there is a clash of civilisations.

Leaders like Obama would prefer to wish away this clash of civilisations. Many television stations completely ignore it and, like Obama, don't use the words 'Muslim' or 'Islamist' when it comes to terrorism — they just talk about 'international terrorism' or 'extremism'. Well, the real problem is Islamic terrorism and Islamic pretensions to world dominance. The fact that they sell millions of Osama [Bin-Laden] t-shirts in Cairo or Pakistan is a sign that they are popular. It's not just some minor, small extremist group.

GNB: *That all goes contrary to politically correct dogma.*

BM: Yes, they say that the vast majority of Muslims are moderate and peace loving and the same as us. I don't know if this is true. Maybe [Abu Bakr] al-Baghdadi, who heads IS [Islamic State], had it right when he gave a sermon and said Islam is not a religion of peace.

He didn't say that it is a religion of war, but that's what he meant when he said it's not a religion of peace. And then he said 'we have to go out on jihad'. I think a lot of Arabs believe that. I think they believe the West has been aggressing against them. They don't see it as a resurgent Islam attacking the West, but as a resurgent Islam defending itself against what they see as a Western incursion. And Israel is seen as the front line of the incursion. This is our problem.

The truth is that the Zionist movement did define itself as a Western movement, with Western ideals of democracy and development. The Arabs who saw us come here in the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s, regarded us as an extension of the West. So it's not just us, it's them as well — we all see Israel as a part of the West and unfortunately we are at the forefront of this battle line of the clash of civilisations. There are other places where East meets West. Northern Nigeria, Northern Kenya bordering on Somalia, the Philippines, Thailand — these are the border lands between Islam and the West. And we're one of them, unfortunately.

GNB: *In your view, was the Palestinian rejection of Israel always rooted in Islamism? Was 1948 a jihad?*

BM: One of the things I understood from my work in the 1990s, and later, is that Islam plays a major role in the hatred of the Zionist movement by Arabs in the Middle East and in Palestine. It's not just a political matter of territory; it's also a matter of religion and culture which opposes the arrival of the infidel and his taking of Muslim holy land.

Sometimes Palestinian rejectionism is more political in nature, while at other times, such as now, Islam plays a major role in Palestinian thinking about the conflict with Israel and the Zionist movement. In 1929 the big riots were all about the Temple Mount and the Wailing Wall and how these holy places are being threatened by the 'infidel Jews'. We're in one of those times again, partly because the entire Islamic world has radicalized, including the Palestinians. When I was young, you could walk in the streets of East Jerusalem and never see veiled women. Never. So the Muslim Arabs of Palestine have changed over the last 40 years, and this is a reflection of what has happened in the Muslim Arab world in general.

You can't avoid the conclusion that Islam is playing a major role in what's happening. The business of the suicide bombers is another indication, Hamas are the people who in a sense introduced it into the conflict between us and the Palestinians at the end of the First Intifada and it got stronger during the Second Intifada.

Occasionally Israel captured would-be suicide bombers whose vest didn't work or who were weak-willed and didn't blow themselves up. Some were from the Fatah, which had begun to copy

Hamas and send out suicide bombers. When they interrogated the Fatah ‘secular’ suicide bombers, they found that their motivation was exactly the same as the Hamas suicide bombers: religion, the 70 virgins and paradise, and all the rest of it. The secularism of the Fatah is not that deep. It’s maybe a varnish. When you look into what drives the Fatah member towards resistance, especially towards suicide bombing — you will find he is exactly the same as the Hamasnik.

GNB: *It’s not an optimistic picture. Yet in Israel, you’re considered on the left. You’re a man of the Left, you refused to serve in the West Bank.*

BM: No, I’m not sure I’m considered on the Left. I used to be considered a left-winger because of the subject of my writing — the Palestinians. Nobody had looked at them before, at the refugee problem. Just your choice of subject puts you on the Left in Israel.

However, it’s true I refused service in the West Bank and was jailed in 1988. I consider myself a man of the Left, if the left in Israel is defined, at least in foreign policy terms, as somebody who supports a two-state solution. A lot of leftist Israelis by now wouldn’t regard me that way — because I’m pessimistic about a two-state solution and essentially say it’s the Palestinians who will never agree to a two-state solution. Some left-wing Israelis regard me as a right-winger because I have said that the Palestinians are to blame for the continuation of the conflict.



THE LEFT AND THE JEWS: TIME FOR A RETHINK

ALAN JOHNSON

A shorter version of this talk by the Fathom editor was delivered as a contribution to a panel discussion on 'The Left and Jews in Britain Today' held at the Pears Institute for the study of Antisemitism, Birkbeck, on 3 November 2015.

When we talk about the Jews and the UK left we are talking about a relationship-in-crisis. Our questions tonight: What went wrong? Can it be rescued?

Let me begin with some pre-emptive remarks.

First, I am better placed to talk about the Left than the Jews. Although I probably spend more time with Jews and in Synagogues than many in the room, I am not Jewish. But I am a person of the Left and have been since the late 70s when I was a teenage volunteer in Days of Hope radical bookshop in Newcastle (or Haze of Dope as some called it).

Second, I do not think the left in the UK should be uncritical of Israeli policy. The Left in Israel is not, so why should we be?

Third, despite some recent 'polls' and headlines, I don't think British Jews are about to start hiding in their cellars.

Professionals who deal with antisemitism do not see a wave of popular antisemitism but rather three distinct political antisemitisms; on the dwindling far right; in parts – I stress parts – of the British Muslim community; and in parts – again, I stress parts – of the Left.

It's this strand of distinctively left-wing hostility to Jews that I want to make some remarks about tonight. It has never been the dominant strand of opinion on the Left, and it is not so today; not by a long chalk. But it has always existed, it is growing today, and it must be part of any account of the breakdown in the relationship between Jews and the Left.

It was called the 'socialism of fools' in the 19th century.

It became an 'anti-imperialism of idiots' in the 20th century.

And it takes the form of a wild, demented, unhinged form of anti-Zionism – not mere 'criticism of Israeli policy' – that demonises Israel in the 21st century.

THE SOCIALISM OF FOOLS

Let's begin with a short 'who said this?' quiz.

Who said, 'The whole Jewish world constitutes one exploiting sect, one people of leeches, one single devouring parasite closely and intimately bound together not only across national boundaries but also across all divergences of political opinion.'? That was the 19th century anarchist, Mikhail Bakunin.

Who wrote, 'Whoever fights against Jewish capital ... is already a class-fighter, even if he does not know it ... Strike down the Jewish capitalists, hang them from the lamp posts!?' That was the communist Ruth Fischer, a leading figure in the German Communist Party in the early 1920s.

Who said, 'Wherever there is trouble in Europe, wherever rumours of war circulate and men's minds are distraught with fear of change and calamity, you may be sure that a hooked-nosed Rothschild is at his games somewhere near the region of the disturbances.' Well that was an editorial in *The Labour Leader*, organ of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in 1891.

I could go on. Trust me, these quotes are not aberrations. Read Steve Cohen's seminal work *That's Funny, You Don't Look Antisemitic*, for the entire sorry story about left-wing antisemitism. (It's available at the Engage site.)

But that is ancient history, you might say. What about today?

Well, left-wing antisemitism never went away. It became the 'anti-imperialism of idiots' in the last third of the 20th century, when vicious, well-funded and long-running anti-Zionist campaigns were conducted by the Stalinist states, in alliance with the authoritarian Arab states and parts of the Western New Left.

Those campaigns laid the ground for the form taken by left-wing antisemitism today — I call it antisemitic anti-Zionism.

Antisemitic anti-Zionism bends the meaning of Israel and Zionism out of shape until both become fit receptacles for the tropes, images and ideas of classical antisemitism. In short, *that which the demonological Jew once was, demonological Israel now is*: uniquely malevolent, full of blood lust, all-controlling, the hidden hand, tricky, always acting in bad faith, the obstacle to a better, purer, more spiritual world, uniquely deserving of punishment, and so on.

Antisemitic anti-Zionism has three components: a programme, a discourse, and a movement.

First, antisemitic anti-Zionism has a political programme: not two states for two peoples, but the abolition of the Jewish homeland; not Palestine alongside Israel, but Palestine instead of Israel.

Second, antisemitic anti-Zionism is a demonising intellectual discourse (as I outline in my chapter in Gabe Brahm's and Cary Nelson's book, *The Case Against Academic Boycotts of Israel*). The Left is imprisoning itself within a distorting system of concepts: 'Zionism is racism'; Israel is a 'settler-

colonialist state' which 'ethnically cleansed' the 'indigenous' people, went on to build an 'apartheid state' and is now engaged in an 'incremental genocide' against the Palestinians.

And there is the ugly phenomenon of Holocaust Inversion – the deliberate and systematic Nazification of Israel in street placards depicting Netanyahu as Hitler, in posters equating the IDF and the SS, in cartoons portraying Israelis as Nazis, and even in the language of intellectuals.

Third, antisemitic anti-Zionism is a presence within a global social movement (the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions, or BDS movement) to exclude one state – and only one state – from the economic, cultural and educational life of humanity: the little Jewish one.

And this is the real concern about Jeremy Corbyn. Not that he *indulges* in antisemitism himself, but that he has a record of indulging the antisemitism of others when it comes wearing an 'Israel' badge. And these days, it almost always does.

For example, Corbyn defended the vile antisemitic Palestinian Islamist Raed Saleh. Even though Saleh's murderous Jew-hatred was a matter of public record (hell, a matter of court records, come to that) Corbyn called Saleh 'an honoured citizen who represents his people extremely well' and invited him to take tea on the terrace of the House of Commons. Mind you, not many on the Left could rouse themselves to object to Saleh. Mehdi Hassan, then the Political Editor of *The New Statesman*, argued that the criticism of Saleh was an example of the media's 'lazy and simplistic demonisation of Muslims.'

Today is springtime for left-wing antisemitic anti-Zionism.

We have a left-wing poet, Tom Paulin, who compares the Israeli Defence Forces to the Nazi SS.

We have a left-wing Church of England vicar, Stephen Sizer, who links to an article saying the Jews did 9/11, and then says, anyway, prove that they didn't.

We have a left-wing comedian, Alexei Sayle, who jokes that Israel is 'the Jimmy Saville of the nations.'

Jenny Tonge, a left-leaning peer of the realm and would-be Corbynista, demands an enquiry into whether the rescue mission sent by Israel to Haiti had a secret agenda of harvesting organs for Jews in Israel.

We have trade unions breaking links with Israel and only Israel, left-wing protestors shouting down the Israeli theatre troupe at The Globe, and only the Israeli group.

Beinazir Lasharie, a Labour councillor in Kensington and Chelsea shared a video on Facebook claiming that ISIS is run by the Israeli secret service, and another one saying that she had heard 'compelling evidence' that Israel is behind ISIS. 'I've nothing against Jews ... just sharing it!' she wrote. Antisemitic anti-Zionism *never* has anything 'against the Jews,' you see. (The Labour Party has since suspended Lasharie, pending an investigation.)

There is relentless left-wing intellectual incitement, too. It has turned some of our universities into madhouses.

Ilan Pappé says US policy in the region is ‘confined to the narrow route effectively delineated ... by AIPAC.’

Yitzhak Laor claims that IDF ‘death squads’ are guilty of ‘indiscriminately killing,’ and of acts of ‘sadism,’ including ‘mass starvation.’

Omar Barghouti claims Israel has an ‘insatiable appetite’ for ‘genocide and the intensification of ethnic cleansing.’

Yehuda Shenhav in his book *Beyond the Two-State Solution*, claims Israel is ‘an aggressive war machine,’ seeking ‘the annihilation of the Palestinian people.’

The introduction to Noam Chomsky and Ilan Pappé’s book *On Palestine* – currently prominently displayed in our high street bookstores – spreads the lie that that in 2014 Israel was engaged in the ‘systematic carpet bombing of an entire population’.

What can we say about each of these examples?

Each is self-consciously ‘left-wing’, broadly defined. Each is ‘intellectual’ in the Gramscian sense of being informed by a world-view. And that world view is found in the murky borderlands where a modern anti-Zionism of a particularly excessive and obsessive kind co-mingles easily with classical antisemitic tropes, images and ideas.

HOW CAN WE EXPLAIN THE BREAKDOWN OF THE RELATIONSHIP?

The occupation is a big part of the crisis in the relationship between the Jews and the Left, of course. Whatever can be said about the self-defensive character of the Six-Day war in 1967, or about the serious security concerns that make Israel unwilling to simply walk out of the West Bank without an agreement, or about the actual reasons for the rejection of the Israeli peace proposals at the Camp David and Annapolis talks, one brute fact remains – and for most people it’s the only fact that matters, I get that – the Palestinians do not have a state or a vote and pretty soon it will be 50 years since 1967.

But that isn’t the whole story by any means.

The Left also needs to think harder about our relationship to a couple of our own values – assimilation and universalism. We need to understand better how we have *misused* those values in our understanding of Israel and the Jews and, as a result, have *misshapen* our relationship to Zionism as a project and Israel as a state.

What do I mean?

In the late 19th century, most of the Left felt that assimilation was the only acceptable Jewish response to rising antisemitism. For example, Lenin – setting up the ‘Good Jew / Bad Jew’ dichotomy that has been dear to the Left ever since – wrote that ‘the best Jews have never clamoured against assimilation.’ Many on the Left disapproved of the survival of *Jewishness* – of the Jews as a *people* with the right to national self-determination as opposed to individuals with civil rights.

The Left hoped to dissolve Jewish peoplehood in the solvent of progressive universalism. The proletariat, understood as the Universalist class par excellence, was to make a world revolution that would solve ‘the Jewish question’ once and for all, ‘in passing’.

But this left-wing universalism was always ‘spurious’ as Norman Geras put it, because it singled out the Jews as ‘special amongst other groups in being obliged to settle for forms of political freedom in which their identity may not be asserted collectively.’ ‘Jews,’ Geras noted, ‘must be satisfied, instead, merely with the rights available to them as individuals.’

And yet, in the 19th century and the early 20th century, many European Jews were zealots for both universalism and assimilation; *it was the name of their desire too*. (Speaking personally, I wish history had gone that way.)

But here’s the thing; *world history went another way* and Jewish history went with it. However, the Left did not get the memo. *That’s* the other explanation for the crisis in the relationship of the Left and the Jews today.

This is the way that history went: the failure of the European socialist revolution, the rise of Fascism and Nazism, the unprecedented transformation of the assault upon the Jews in the form of the Shoah, an industrial-scale genocide in the heart of Europe, the expulsion of the Jews from the Arab lands, and the degeneration of the Russian Revolution into Stalinism and antisemitism. All this left the appeal of assimilationism and universalism in tatters.

In response, Jews insisted on defining their own mode of participation in modernity and in universal emancipation: support for Zionism and a homeland for the Jews; the creation of Israel, a nation-state in a world of nation-states. Whether they moved to Israel or not, that was the choice of all but a sliver of world Jewry. And that remains the case today.

Crucially, parts of the Left – by no means all – failed to adapt to this great rupture in world history. This is all-important, for it utterly transformed the political meaning of ‘anti-Zionism’. Anti-Zionism meant one thing in the early 20th century: an argument among Jews, mostly, about how best to meet the threat of antisemitism. Anti-Zionism has come to mean something entirely different *after* the Holocaust and *after* the creation of the State of Israel in 1948: it has come to mean a programme of comprehensive hostility to all but a sliver of world Jewry, a programme for the eradication of actually existing Jewish self-determination.

Things got even worse. This post-Holocaust, post-Israel left-wing Anti-Zionism has been

converging with some forms of Arab nationalism and even political Islamism – which are both now coded as singularly progressive. The Left has its own version of Orientalism which infantilises the Palestinians and Arabs, puts them beyond criticism, and makes them the subject of endless western left-wing delusions. For example, take Jeremy Corbyn’s truly incredible claim that Hamas and Hezbollah are ‘bringing about long-term peace and social justice and political justice in the whole region.’

This convergence between parts of the Left and Arab nationalism, and later Islamism, was smoothed by two developments on the Left.

In the East, the Communist bloc’s decades-long ‘anti-Zionist’ propaganda campaign injected an ‘anti-imperialism of idiots’ into the global left during the cold war. We are talking about the mass publication and global distribution of antisemitic materials through the Communist Parties and their fellow travellers. Anthony Julius’s book *Trial of the Diaspora* tells us that 230 books were published in the USSR alone from 1969–1985 about a supposed Zionist–Masonic conspiracy against Russia. These books had a combined print run of 9.4 million.

In the West, David Hirsh has observed that whereas anti-imperialism was previously ‘one value amongst a whole set – democracy, equality, sexual and gender liberation, anti-totalitarianism’ included – it was raised to a radically new status in the 1960’s in the West as ‘the central value, prior to and above all others.’ And with this, a new Manicheism descended on the Left. Israel–Palestine was reframed. No longer were one people involved in a complex unresolved national question with another people. Now Israel became ‘a key site of the imperialist system’ and the Palestinians became ‘the Resistance’ to imperialism.

Left-wing ‘common sense’ shifted accordingly. Now, to support Israel’s enemies – *whatever* these enemies stood for, *however* they behaved – was a left-wing ‘anti-imperialist’ duty: in other words, antisemitism went ‘progressive.’ Writing in the *New Statesman* I called this intellectual malady ‘Campism’. Whatever word is used, we need the concept. How else can we explain why Judith Butler – a leading lesbian, feminist and socialist academic – could claim that ‘Understanding Hamas and Hezbollah as social movements that are progressive, that are on the left, that are part of a global left, is extremely important.’

When the Left can no longer distinguish the fascistic from the progressive, we really do have a problem.

HOW CAN THE RELATIONSHIP BE PUT BACK TOGETHER?

In brief, not by taking an ‘Israel right or wrong’ approach. Wrong in principle, that approach will only make worse the problem at the heart of the relationship between the Jews and the Left.

And nor should we give up on our duty to support a Palestinian state as an expression of self-determination of the Palestinian people.

But, look, we do need to radically rethink our demented anti-Zionism.

We left-wingers must rethink our refusal of the right to national self-determination of just one people, the Jewish people.

We must rethink our commitment to boycott just one state in the whole wide world, the Jewish one. That singling-out is antisemitic *in consequence*, I am afraid, whatever the motivations of individual boycotters.

Those left-wing refusals and those left-wing commitments are now, frankly, dangerous. We have to see that this left-wing anti-Zionism co-exists, cheek by jowl, with *a family* of anti-Zionisms, that some of the family members are vile and vicious and murderous, and that the left has become hopeless at policing its own borders.

Our task is huge: to build an intellectual firewall separating sharp criticism of Israeli policy – which is legitimate, as it is for any nation-state, and which, even when unfair, remains non-lethal – from the spreading demonology of Zionism and Israel which is not legitimate and which can be lethal.

Beyond that we need to hold our nerve, restate some basic truths, and think more creatively about how we can act in the world to make a positive contribution to securing these truths: that peace will only come through engagement and deep mutual recognition between the two peoples, that there is no alternative to negotiations and mutual compromise, that a final status agreement will secure two states for two peoples.



COEXISTENCE AT HADASSAH: REFLECTIONS OF AN ARAB SOCIAL WORKER IN ISRAEL

LAMIS SHIBLI GHADIR

Lamis Shibli Ghadir explains the challenges and the rewards of being an Arab social worker in the Ein Kerem Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem.

I am a social worker in the Paediatric Surgical Department and Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Hadassah University Hospital in Jerusalem, and I teach the students at the Hebrew University School of Social Work.

I am proud that we provide healthcare services for all patients, whether they are from West Jerusalem, East Jerusalem, the settlements, or Bethlehem and Ramallah; whether they are Jewish, Arabic-speaking Muslims, Christians or Druze.

Every day I work hard to communicate, to build trust, and to shield the patients from the conflict. But the rewards are huge. Hadassah is a fantastic institution that models co-existence.

BUILDING COMMUNICATION AND TRUST

Communication is a challenge. Half of the children hospitalised in Hadassah speak Arabic. Children from the West Bank must be accompanied by a family member and they rarely speak Hebrew. I help them to secure the permit; I talk with the army about the situation and advise the mother and the father. For children from Gaza, it's a bit different. There is a greater concern about security so young parents cannot come to Israel from Gaza. Instead, the child is accompanied by their grandfather or grandmother.

We have three Arab social workers in the paediatric wing. Two of us work in the Paediatric Oncology department because 30 per cent of patients are Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza and they don't speak Hebrew at all. We also have medical clowns, and we run courses for the nurses and the doctors to learn basic Arabic – so they can speak with the children. And we have translators, of course, but they are only a partial solution. A Jewish social worker talking through a translator still can't understand the culture as an Arab social worker can. For example, a nurse called me and said: 'This father won't hold his child. I don't think he wants his baby.' I said: 'Ok, but look, this is an Arab man. Maybe he isn't used to taking care of a baby at this age. It's not unusual.'

Communication can bridge divides. For example, I remember Yousif, a nine year old from East Jerusalem who had a heart operation and was hospitalised last summer during the Gaza war. His mother cried all the time, even when Yousif improved in the ICU. The nurses asked, ‘Why is she still crying all the time? Yousif is improving.’ You see, his mother had a relative in Gaza but asked me not to say anything about this to the staff. She said to me: ‘I’m afraid that if they know, they will not treat my children like the Jewish children.’ I told her, ‘We have wonderful staff, they will not do that.’ Over time she had more and more conversations with the nurses and developed a close relationship with them. Together, they celebrated Yousif’s birthday. And on the first day Yousif got out of bed a nurse took him to the Hadassah mall and bought him gifts. On his last day with us, his mother told the nurses, ‘I’m sorry, I have a relative in Gaza and I was afraid to tell you. I’m sorry that I thought that you maybe will hurt my child if you knew I had a relative in Gaza.’ They gave her a hug.

BEYOND POLITICS

Our goal as social workers is to separate the paediatric unit from politics. Half of our team are Arab social workers and half are Jewish; we do not enter political discussions with our patients because we don’t want to impact the quality of health care we give.

For example, I had an eight year-old girl in paediatric intensive care. A kettle of boiling water had fallen on her and she had burns over 40 per cent of her body. Her father had been killed during the Second Intifada in a terrorist attack, but I didn’t know this. Ester (pseudonym), her mother, was a 43-year-old religious Jewish woman, a widow, with six children who lived in a settlement near Jerusalem. She was crying and concerned about her daughter’s condition. A nurse told me that the father had been killed during the Second Intifada. Our department’s policy is that in this situation, a Jewish social worker must take care of the family. The mother could not understand this and when the child was moved to the paediatric surgical department two days later, she asked the nurses to call me, saying ‘I want Lamis, she has experience with plastic surgeons and I want her.’ So I came to her. She said to me: ‘I can’t understand the condition of my daughter. I want you to come with me to the doctor and arrange the questions that I will ask them.’ I went with her and after that she asked me to come to talk with her every day. She was there for a month and a half and we had a wonderful professional relationship. We never talked about the father killed in the intifada. On the day she was released from Hadassah she gave me a big hug and said thank you for everything.

Sometimes, a Palestinian child needs urgent attention, so their parent comes to us in the ambulance without a permit. So I must arrange it on the phone with the security people who deal with permits. If the child is from the West Bank it’s easy; everyone can come in. Gaza is different. Gazan children can come with only one family member and to get a permit for another member, the first must go back to Gaza.

Actually, some children come to Hadassah in an illegal way. Parents in the West Bank know that Hadassah is an excellent hospital, and that if they come to Hadassah without any arrangement, the Director of Hadassah will not say 'no'. That's an issue right now, given the money problems in Hadassah, but we are a hospital and we cannot say to a father or a mother, 'give us money, or you can't enter.' Hadassah is not a bank, it's a hospital.

Sometimes we deal with children who have been arrested for throwing stones. They come to us from jail or with the police. In that situation, we need the parents to sign for an operation but the police may not want the family to have contact with the child. But we say that the parents must know about the condition of their children. So we talk with lawyers at Hadassah about how to resolve this.

As a social worker, the child is always a patient first and foremost. For example, in the Surgical Department we had a ten year old boy who had been hit with rubber bullets. He came in with the police, and could not see and was in pain. We said to the police: 'We need the father or the mother of the child. Sure, you can do your investigation and talk with the child, but we need the parents, because he is a child!' They consider what we say as social workers and appreciate our assessment, but it is complicated.

Access to Hadassah is so important for Palestinians. They think, 'Finally I'm in Hadassah. They will help me.' The hospitals in the West Bank are not at the same level, lacking plastic surgery, brain surgery, and the specialisations we have at Hadassah. Palestinians are very grateful to come here, and if they come through the Peres Center for Peace they will not pay, so it's fantastic for them.

And this is something that happens in almost all the major medical centres in the country. They take in Palestinian children and adults who need specialised treatment.

TOWARDS CO-EXISTENCE

Maybe, at its best, Hadassah gives us a glimpse of what co-existence can look like. The Hadassah Hospital Elementary School is 40 per cent Arab and 60 per cent Jewish. We offer music therapy, drama therapy, and cooking. You can see Arabic children and Jewish children cooking together, listening to music together, and celebrating Muslim and Jewish holidays. I explain the meaning of the Muslim holidays to the Jewish children and it's really fantastic.

Perhaps a medical crisis helps a person overcome their fears and preconceptions. Recently, for example, an ultra-Orthodox woman bore a baby with a severe heart defect. She was 39 years old and this was the tenth child she had given birth to in Hadassah. She was suffering from depression and taking antidepressants while her baby was in intensive care in another department. She wanted to be near her baby so I invited her to move into a family room near the ICU. But she was afraid because the other families were Arabs. (The synagogue attack in Har Nof had happened only

the day before.) I met her and said, 'I know all the mothers in the ICU, they are mothers that are facing the same difficulties as you, the same hard experiences as you, and they are concerned about their children's conditions, as you are. They too are crying all the time. I promise to come and talk with you every day.' In the end – it was a long conversation – she agreed to go to the family room.

One of my new students from the Hebrew University was sitting in on this meeting and was shocked that the mother didn't recognise that I was an Arab. The student said to me: 'I'm so sorry for you, how can you deal with this?' I told her that there are a lot of Jewish people here who don't recognise that I am Arab, and they talk about their difficulties to me. People bring the outside world to Hadassah and as a social worker I have to deal with what they bring, I have to understand each individual. This mother was suffering from depression and she was afraid. But now she has a wonderful relationship with the other mothers in the ICU.

Another example of bridging divides was our work with Musa, a baby boy with a heart defect. When his mother was 20 weeks pregnant she went to her Palestinian doctor in Ramallah. After an ultrasound scan she discovered that her baby had a heart defect and would die after he was born. She got a second opinion at the Islamic Hospital in East Jerusalem, which has an excellent relationship with Hadassah. The doctors there advised her to give birth in Hadassah where the child could be operated on. It was a very complicated surgery and he lived most of the first year of his life in paediatric ICU with us. I remember the first time he smiled. The doctor took a picture and ran down the hall in the ICU shouting 'Musa has finally smiled!' Musa has now celebrated his second birthday at home with his family. He needed a feeding machine and a ventilator, so the Palestinian Authority gave money to Hadassah and the hospital bought these machines at a special price.

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