Relative Humanity: The Fundamental Obstacle to a Secular Democratic State Solution

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Conquest may be fraught with evil or with good for mankind, according to the comparative worth of the conquering and conquered peoples.’([1](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#1)) Theodore Roosevelt From the scandalous Nusseibeh-Ayalon agreement to the irreparably flawed Geneva Accords, the last true Zionists -- with the crucial help of acquiescent Palestinian officials -- have tried their best to resuscitate the two-state solution with the declared intention of saving Zionism. But it is arguably too little, too late.

The two-state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is really dead. Good riddance! But someone has to issue an official death certificate before the rotting corpse is given a proper burial and we can all move on and explore the more just, moral and therefore enduring alternative for peaceful coexistence between Jews and Arabs in Mandate Palestine: the one-state solution.

Blinded by the arrogance of power and the ephemeral comfort of impunity, Israel, against its strategic Zionist interests, failed to control its insatiable appetite for expansion, and went ahead with devouring the very last bit of land that was supposed to form the material foundation for an independent Palestinian state.

 The current phase has all the emblematic properties of what may be considered the final chapter of the Zionist project. We are witnessing the rapid demise of Zionism, and nothing can be done to save it, for Zionism is intent on killing itself. I, for one, support euthanasia.

Besides having passed its expiry date, the two-state solution was never a moral solution to start with. In the best-case scenario, if UN resolution 242 were meticulously implemented, it would have addressed most of the legitimate rights of less than a third of the Palestinian people over less than a fifth of their ancestral land. More than two-thirds of the Palestinians, refugees plus the Palestinian citizens of Israel, have been dubiously and shortsightedly expunged out of the definition of the Palestinians. Such exclusion can only guarantee the perpetuation of conflict.

 Relative Humanity and the Conflict

From the onset, the two main pretences given by the Zionists to justify their colonization of Palestine were: a) Palestine was a land without a people, an uncivilized wasteland; and, b) Jews had a divine right to “redeem” Palestine, in accordance with a promise from no less an authority than God, and because, according to the Bible, the Israelites built their kingdoms all over the Land of Canaan a couple of thousand years ago, giving them historical rights to the place.

By now, both the political and the religious arguments have been shown to be no more than unfounded myths, thanks in no small part to the diligent work of Israeli historians and archaeologists.([2](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#2)) Only brute colonial interest remains as the main logical motive and explanation for the dispossession and expulsion of most of the Palestinian people in 1948 to establish Israel in their stead.

At the very core of the rationalization of such an expulsion lies an entrenched colonial belief in the irrelevance, or comparative worthlessness, of the rights, the needs and aspirations of the native Palestinians. For instance, the author of the Balfour Declaration wrote: “The four Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land.”([3](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#3))

It is a classic case of what I call 'relative-humanization'. I define 'relative humanity' as the belief, and relative-humanization as the practice based on that belief, that certain human beings, who share a specific common religious, ethnic, cultural or other similarly substantial identity attribute, lack one or more of the necessary attributes of being human, and are therefore human only in the relative sense, not absolutely, and not unequivocally. Accordingly, such relative humans are entitled to only a subset of the otherwise inalienable rights that are due to “full” humans.

Perceiving the Palestinians as relative humans has played a decisive role in inhibiting the evolution of a unitary state solution, as will be shown below.

Paths to “Solving” the Conflict

Given the impossibility of realizing a negotiated two-state solution that can give Palestinians their minimal inalienable rights, there are three logical paths that can be pursued: 1) Maintaining the status quo, and managing the conflict, mainly by keeping some hope for the two-state solution alive, if only on paper; 2) “Finishing the job” by implementing full ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians out of the entire Mandate Palestine; and, 3) Launching new visionary, moral and practical decolonizing processes that can eventually lead to the establishment of a unitary democratic state between the Jordan and the Mediterranean.

Let us explore each of the three options:

Maintaining the Status Quo

Above everything else, the status quo is characterized by three attributes: 1) Denial of Palestinian refugee rights; 2) Military Occupation and repression in the West Bank and Gaza, and 3) a Zionist version of apartheid in Israel proper.

Denial of Palestinian Refugees’ Rights

Far from admitting its guilt in creating the world’s oldest and largest refugee problem, and despite overwhelming incriminating evidence, Israel has systematically evaded any responsibility. The most peculiar dimension in the popular Israeli discourse about the “birth” of the state is the almost wall-to-wall denial of any wrongdoing. Israelis by and large regard as their “independence” the ruthless destruction of Palestinian society and the dispossession of the Palestinian people. Even committed “leftists” often grieve over the loss of Israel’s “moral superiority” after occupying the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, as if prior to that Israel were as civil, legitimate and law-abiding as Finland! It is as if most of those Israelis who actively participated or bore witness to the Nakba were collectively infected by some chronic selective amnesia.

This denial has its roots in the Holocaust and in the unique circumstances created as a result of it, which allowed Israel to argue that, unlike any other state, it was obliged to deny Palestinian refugees their unequivocal right to return to their homes and lands, specifically to preserve the Jewish character of the state. This, the argument went, was the only way to maintain a safe haven for the world Jewry, the “super-victims,” who are unsafe among the Gentiles, and that goal is of course of much more import than the rights of the native Palestinians. No other country on earth today can ever get away with a similarly overt, racist attitude about its right to ethnic purity.

Besides being morally indefensible, Israel’s denial of the right of return also betrays a level of moral inconsistency that is in many ways unique. The Israeli law of return for Jews, for instance, is based on the principle that since they were expelled from Palestine over 2,000 years ago, they had a right to return to it. So by denying the rights of Palestinian refugees, whose 55-year-old exile is a much younger injustice, to say the least, Israel is essentially saying that Palestinians cannot have the same right because they are just not equally human.

Here are some more examples of this moral inconsistency. Thousands of Israelis whose grandparents were German citizens have successfully applied for their right to return to Germany, to gain German citizenship and receive full compensation for pillaged property. The result was that the Jewish population of Germany jumped from 27,000 in the early 90’s to over 100,000 last year.([4](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%224)) Belgium has also passed a law ‘enabling properties that belonged to Jewish families to be returned to their owners.’ It also agreed to pay the local Jewish community 55 million euros in restitution for stolen property that ‘cannot be returned’ and for ‘unclaimed insurance policies belonging to Holocaust victims.’([5](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#5))

But the quintessence of moral hypocrisy is betrayed by the following example reported in the Israeli newspaper Ha’aretz: “More than five centuries after their ancestors were expelled from Spain, Jews of Spanish origin … called on the Spanish government and parliament to grant them Spanish nationality... Spain should pass a law ‘to recognize that the descendants of the expelled Jews belong to Spain and to rehabilitate them,’ said Nessim Gaon, president of the World Sephardic Federation. … Some Sephardic Jews have even preserved the keys to their forefathers' houses in Spain….”([6](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%226))

Despite the above, one must not deny that the right of return of Palestinian refugees does contradict the requirements of a negotiated two-state solution. The latter requires Israel’s consent, which can never materialize. This makes the right of return the Achilles' heel of any two-state deal, as the record has amply shown. This is precisely why the right of return cannot really be achieved except in a one-state solution, which would allow the Palestinians’ weakness to be turned into strength, especially if they decide to adopt a non-violent path to establishing a secular democratic state, thereby gaining crucial international backing and transforming the conflict into a non-dichotomous struggle for freedom, democracy, equality and unmitigated justice. South Africa’s model has to be tapped into for inspiration in this regard.

Military Occupation: War Crimes([7](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%227)), Large and Small

Much has been written about Israel’s crimes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. I shall therefore limit myself here to a few particularly disturbing reminders.

Following a visit to the completely fenced Gaza Strip, Oona King, a Jewish member of the British parliament commented on the irony that Israeli Jews face today, saying: “…in escaping the ashes of the Holocaust, they have incarcerated another people in a hell similar in its nature - though not its extent - to the Warsaw ghetto.”([8](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#8))

Although Israel is now trying to present its Apartheid Wall([9](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#9)) as a security barrier to “fend off suicide bombers,” the truth is that the current path of the Wall is anything but new.(1[0](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#10)) It has been recommended to Ariel Sharon by the infamous “prophet of the Arab demographic threat,” Israeli demographer, Arnon Sofer, who insists that the implemented map was all his. And unlike the slick Israeli politicians, Sofer unabashedly confesses that the Wall’s path was drawn with one specific goal in mind: maximizing the land to be annexed to Israel, while minimizing the number of “Arabs” that would have to come along.

But Sofer may be taking too much credit for himself. Ron Nahman, the mayor of the West Bank settlement of Ariel, has revealed to the Israeli mass-circulation Yedioth Ahronoth that: “the map of the fence, the sketch of which you see here, is the same map I saw during every visit [Ariel Sharon] made here since 1978. He told me he has been thinking about it since 1973.” There weren’t many “suicide bombings” going around then!

Four years ago, well before the intifada started, Ariel Sharon himself, it turned out, had evocatively called the Wall project the “Bantustan plan,” according to Ha’aretz.

Despite the Wall’s grave transgression against Palestinian livelihood, environment, and political rights, a “near total consensus”([11](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%2211)) exists amongst Israeli Jews in supporting it. Several official and non-governmental bodies in Israel, however, are concerned about the adverse effects the Wall might have on animals and plants.
The Israeli environment minister Yehudit Naot protested the wall, saying: “The separation fence severs the continuity of open areas and is harmful to the landscape, the flora and fauna, the ecological corridors and the drainage of the creeks. The protective system will irreversibly affect the land resource and create enclaves of communities [of animals, of course] that are cut off from their surroundings. I certainly don't want to stop or delay the building of the fence, because it is essential and will save lives.... On the other hand, I am disturbed by the environmental damage involved.”([12](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#12))

Her ministry and the National Parks Protection Authority mounted diligent rescue efforts to save an affected reserve of irises by moving it to an alternative reserve. They’ve also created tiny passages for animals and enabled the continuation of the water flow in the creeks. Still, the spokesperson for the parks authority was not satisfied. He complained: “The animals don't know that there is now a border. They are used to a certain living space, and what we are concerned about is that their genetic diversity will be affected because different population groups will not be able to mate and reproduce. Isolating the populations on two sides of a fence definitely creates a genetic problem.”([13](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#13))

Even Thomas Friedman, has predicted -- quite accurately, in my view -- in the New York Times([14](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%2214)) that the wall will eventually “kill” the two-state solution, thereby becoming ‘the mother of all unintended consequences.’

Israel’s System of Racial Discrimination: Intelligent, Nuanced but still Apartheid

US academic Edward Herman writes: “If Jews in France were required to carry identification cards designating them Jews (even though French citizens), could not acquire land or buy or rent homes in most of the country, were not eligible for service in the armed forces, and French law banned any political party or legislation calling for equal rights for Jews, would France be widely praised in the United States as a "symbol of human decency" (New York Times) and paragon of democracy? Would there be a huge protest if France, in consequence of such laws and practices, was declared by a UN majority to be a racist state?”([15](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#15))

Advocating comprehensive and unequivocal equality between Arabs and Jews in Israel has become tantamount to sedition, if not treason. An Israeli High Court justice has recently stated on record that: ‘it is necessary to prevent a Jew or Arab who calls for equality of rights for Arabs from sitting in the Knesset or being elected to it.’([16](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#16))
In every vital area of life, including marriage laws, urban development and education, Israel has perfected a comprehensive apparatus of racial discrimination against its Palestinian citizens that is virtually unparalleled anywhere today.

Ethnic Cleansing: Israel’s Final Solution to the Palestinian “Demographic Threat”

Israeli politicians, intellectuals and media often passionately debate how best to face the country’s demographic “war” with the Palestinians. Few Israelis dissent from the belief that such a war exists or ought to exist. The popular call to subordinate democracy to demography,([17](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%2217)) for instance, has entailed the adoption of reminiscent population control mechanisms to keep the number of Palestinians in check.
In a stark example of such mechanisms, the Israel Council for Demography was reconvened last year to ‘encourage the Jewish women of Israel -- and only them -- to increase their child bearing; a project which, if we judge from the activity of the previous council, will also attempt to stop abortions,’ as reported in Ha’aretz. This prestigious body, which comprises top Israeli gynecologists, public figures, lawyers, scientists and physicians, mainly focuses on how to increase the ratio of Jews to Palestinians in Israel, by employing ‘methods to increase the Jewish fertility rate and prevent abortions.’([18](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#18))

More concerned about the imminent rise of an Arab majority between the Jordan and the Mediterranean than with the oft invoked and sanctified “Jewish purity,” Ariel Sharon has indeed called on religious leaders to smooth the progress of the immigration and absorption of non-Arabs, even if they weren’t Jewish, in order to provide Israel with ‘a buffer to the burgeoning Arab population,’ reports the Guardian.([19](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#19)) The Israeli government’s view is that ‘while the first generation of each wave of immigration may have difficulty embracing Israel and Jewishness, their sons and daughters frequently become enthusiastic Zionists. In the present climate, they are also often very rightwing.’

The Israeli far-right minister, Effi Eitam, prescribes yet another alternative: ‘If you don’t give the Arabs the right to vote, the demographic problem solves itself.’([20](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#20))
But, by far, the all-time favourite mechanism has always been ethnic cleansing.
Incessantly practiced, forever popular, but persistently denied by the Zionists, ethnic cleansing has in the last few years been resurrected from the gutters of Zionism to occupy its very throne.

The famous historian, Benny Morris, has recently argued that completely emptying Palestine of its indigenous Arab inhabitants in 1948 might have led to peace in the Middle East.([21](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%2221)) In response, Baruch Kimmerling, professor at Hebrew University, wrote: “Let me extend Benny Morris's logic …. If the Nazi program for the final solution of the Jewish problem had been complete, for sure there would be peace today in Palestine.”([22](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#22))

Then why doesn’t Israel act upon its desire now, one may ask? Prof. Ilan Pappe of Haifa University has a convincing answer: “The constraints on Israeli behaviour are not moral or ethical, but technical. How much can be done without turning Israel into a pariah state? Without inciting European sanctions, or making life too difficult for the Americans?”([23](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#23))

Offering a diametrically opposing explanation, Martin Van Creveld([24](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#24)), Israel’s most prominent military historian, who supports ethnic cleansing, arrogantly shrugs off any concern about world opinion, issuing the following formidable warning: “We possess several hundred atomic warheads and rockets and can launch them at targets in all directions, perhaps even at Rome. Most European capitals are targets for our air force. … Let me quote General Moshe Dayan: ‘Israel must be like a mad dog, too dangerous to bother.’ … Our armed forces are not the thirtieth strongest in the world, but rather the second or third. We have the capability to take the world down with us. And I can assure you that that will happen, before Israel goes under.”

That should amply explain why Europeans have lately ranked Israel first among the countries that are considered a threat to world peace.([25](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html%22%20%5Cl%20%2225))

Yet a third explanation, which concurs with Pappe’s, is that Israel currently enjoys the best of both worlds: it is implementing -- on the ground -- an elaborate mesh of policies that are making the Palestinians’ lives progressively more intolerable, and therefore creating an environment conducive to gradual ethnic cleansing, while at the same time not making any dramatic -- Kosovo-like -- scene that would alarm the world, inviting condemnation and possible sanctions.([26](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#26))

Israel - The Untenable Contradictions

Putting aside its colonial nature for the moment, can a state that insists on ethnic purity and institutionalized suppression of minority rights ever qualify as a democracy, without depriving this concept of its essence? Even Israel’s loyal friends have started losing faith in its ability to reconcile the fundamentally irreconcilable: modern liberal democracy and outdated ethnocentricity. Writing in the New York Review of Books, New York University professor Tony Judt affirms that: “In a world where nations and peoples increasingly intermingle and intermarry, where cultural and national impediments to communication have all but collapsed, where more and more of us have multiple elective identities and would feel constrained if we had to answer to just one, in such a world, Israel is truly an anachronism. And not just an anachronism, but a dysfunctional one. In today's "clash of cultures" between open, pluralist democracies and belligerently intolerant, faith-driven ethno-states, Israel actually risks falling into the wrong camp.”([27](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#27))

Avraham Burg, a devoted Zionist leader reached a similar conclusion.([28](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#28)) Attacking the Israeli leadership as an ‘amoral clique,’ Burg asserts that Israel, which ‘rests on a scaffolding of corruption, and on foundations of oppression and injustice,’ must ‘shed its illusions and choose between racist oppression and democracy.’

Secular Democratic State: New Horizons

No matter what our hypocrites, Uncle Toms or “false prophets” may say, Israel, as an exclusivist and settler-colonial state([29](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#29)), has no hope of ever being accepted or forgiven by its victims -- and as it should know, those are the only ones whose forgiveness really matters.

Despite the pain, the loss and the anger which relative-humanization undoubtedly engenders in them, Palestinians have an obligation to differentiate between justice and revenge, for one entails an essentially moral decolonization, whereas the other descends into a vicious cycle of immorality and hopelessness. As the late Brazilian educator Paulo Freire writes: “Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also (though in a different way) those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human. … [The] Struggle [for humanization] is possible only because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed. … In order for this struggle to have meaning, the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way to create it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather restorers of the humanity of both.”([30](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#30))

Rejecting relative humanity from any side, and insisting on ethical consistency, I believe that the most moral means of achieving a just and enduring peaceful compromise in the ancient land of Palestine is to establish a secular democratic state between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, anchored in equal humanity and, accordingly, equal rights. The one-state solution, whether bi-national -- a notion which is largely based on a false premise that the second nation in question is defined([31](http://www.badil.org/en/publication/periodicals/al-majdal/item/822-relative-humanity-the-fundamental-obstacle-to-a-secular-democratic-state-solution.html#31)) -- or secular-democratic, offers a true chance for decolonization of Palestine without turning the Palestinians into oppressors of their former oppressors. The vicious cycle launched by the Holocaust must come to an end altogether.

This new Palestine should:

First and foremost allow and facilitate the return of and compensation for all the Palestinian refugees, as the only ethical restitution acceptable for the injustice they’ve endured for decades. Such a process, however, must uphold at all times the moral imperative of avoiding the infliction of any unnecessary or unjust suffering on the Jewish community in Palestine; grant full, equal and unequivocal citizenship rights to all the citizens, Jews or Arabs; recognize, legitimize and even nourish the cultural, religious and ethnic particularities and traditions of each respective community.

Israelis should recognize this moral Palestinian challenge to their colonial existence not as an existential threat to them but rather as a magnanimous invitation to dismantle the colonial character of the state, to allow the Jews in Palestine finally to enjoy normalcy, as equal humans and equal citizens of a secular democratic state -- a truly promising land, rather than a false Promised Land.

That would certainly confirm that Roosevelt is not only dead but is also DEAD WRONG!

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Endnotes:
(1) Theodore Roosevelt, The Winning, reproduced in: Norman Finkelstein, “History’s Verdict: The Cherokee Case,” Journal of Palestine Studies, Volume XXIV, Number 4, Summer 1995, University of California Press.
(2) Several archaeological studies have shown that most of the stories in the Bible used by Zionists to buttress their claim to Palestine were indeed not supported by the region’s history, which is ‘based on direct evidence from archaeology and historical geography and is supported by analogies that are primarily drawn from anthropology, sociology and linguistics,’ as archaeologist Thomas L. Thompson has written (http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/copenhagen.htm). His findings are supported by the extensive, painstaking and authoritative research of distinguished Israeli archaeologists, including Ze’ev Herzog (http://www.prometheus.demon.co.uk/04/04herzog.htm) and Israel Finkelstein (see Aviva Lori, “Grounds for Disbelief,” Ha’aretz, May 10, 2003).
(3) The Origins and Evolution of the Palestine Problem, UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/aeac80e740c782e4852561150071fdb0?OpenDocument.
(4) Reuters, “Germany: Growing Number of Israelis Seeking Citizenship,” Ha’aretz, Monday, June 17, 2002.
(5) Yair Sheleg, “Belgian Prime Minister Apologizes for his Country's Actions During Holocaust,” Ha’aretz, October 07, 2002.
(6) DPA, “Sephardi Jews Demand Recognition from Spanish Government,” Ha’aretz, October 15, 2002.
(7) Amnesty International’s examination of Israel’s conduct during the current intifada led it to conclude that: ‘There is a pattern of gross human rights violations that may well amount to war crimes.’ http://www.cnn.com/2000/WORLD/meast/11/01/mideast.amnesty.reut.
(8) Oona King, “Israel Can Halt This Now,” The Guardian, June 12, 2003. http://www.guardian.co.uk/comment/story/0,3604,975423,00.html.
(9) The dubbed ‘Separation Barrier’ has been shown by many researchers to be in effect separating Palestinians from their lands, and isolating them in restrictive Bantustans, fully under the control of the Israeli military. As such, the only proper and accurate name that can be applied to this mammoth barrier is: Apartheid Wall, as many have begun to call it. For details on the Wall, refer to the Amnesty International report at: http://web.amnesty.org/pages/isr-index\_2-eng, which considers the wall a form of collective punishment, and therefore illegal, the Human Rights Watch report at: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/ga10179.doc.htm, the B’Tselem detailed position paper at: http://www.btselem.org, or the UNGA resolution condemning the wall at: http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2003/ga10179.doc.htm.
(10) Meron Rappaport, ibid.
(11) Ha’aretz Editorial, “A Fence Along the Settlers’ Lines,” October 3, 2003.
(12) Mazal Mualem, “Old Habitats Die Hard,” Ha’aretz, June 20, 2003.
(13) Ibid.
(14) Thomas Friedman, “One Wall, One Man, One Vote,” New York Times, September 14, 2003. http://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/14/opinion/14FRIE.html.
(15) Edward S. Herman, “Israeli Apartheid And Terrorism,” Z-Magazine, 29 April 2002. http://zena.secureforum.com/Znet/ZMag/articles/may94herman.htm.
(16) Herman, ibid.
(17) Lily Galili, “A Jewish demographic state,” Ha’aretz, July 01, 2002.
(18) Gideon Levy, “Wombs in the Service of the State,” Ha’aretz, September 9, 2002.
(19) Chris McGreal, “Sharon Takes on Rabbis Over Jewish Identity,” The Guardian, December 31, 2002.
(20) Yuli Tamir, “Divide the Land or Divide Democracy,” Ha’aretz, April 14, 2002.
(21) Benny Morris, “A new exodus for the Middle East,” The Guardian, October 3, 2002. http://www.guardian.co.uk/israel/comment/0,10551,803417,00.html.
(22) Baruch Kimmerling, “False logic,” The Guardian, October 5, 2002. http://www.guardian.co.uk/letters/story/0,3604,805123,00.html.
(23) Geraldine Bedell, “Set in Stone,” The Observer, June 15, 2003.
(24) Ferry Biedermann, Interview with the Israeli Military Historian Dr Martin van Creveld, January, 2003. http://www.de.indymedia.org/2003/01/39170.shtml.
(25) Thomas Fuller, “European Poll Calls Israel a Big Threat to World Peace,” International Herald Tribune, October 31, 2003. http://www.iht.com/ihtsearch.php?id=115858&owner=(IHT)&date=20031031121947
(26) Peace activists Gadi Algazi and Azmi Bdeir explain: Transfer isn’t necessarily a dramatic moment, a moment when people are expelled and flee their towns or villages. It is not necessarily a planned and well-organized move with buses and trucks loaded with people … . Transfer is a deeper process, a creeping process that is hidden from view. … The main component of the process is the gradual undermining of the infrastructure of the civilian Palestinian population’s lives in the territories: its continuing strangulation under closures and sieges that prevent people from getting to work or school, from receiving medical services, and from allowing the passage of water trucks and ambulances, which sends the Palestinians back to the age of donkey and cart. Taken together, these measures undermine the hold of the Palestinian population on its land.’
Ran HaCohen, Ethnic Cleansing: Past, Present, and Future, www.Antiwar.com, December 30, 2002.
(27) Tony Judt, “Israel: The Alternative,” New York Review of Books, Vol. 50, #16, October 23, 2003. http://www.nybooks.com/articles/16671
(28) Avraham Burg, “The End of Zionism,” The Guardian, September 15, 2003. Reprinted with permission of The Forward, which translated and adapted this essay from an article that originally appeared in Yediot Aharonot.
(29) Even the former deputy mayor of Jerusalem, Meron Benvenisti, says: “in the past two years I reached the conclusion that we are dealing with a conflict between a society of immigrants and a society of natives. If so, we are talking about an entirely different type of conflict. … Because the basic story here is not one of two national movements that are confronting each other; the basic story is that of natives and settlers. It's the story of natives who feel that people who came from across the sea infiltrated their natural habitat and dispossessed them.” Ari Shavit, “Cry, the Beloved Two-State Solution,” Ha’aretz, August 10, 2003.
(30) Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Herder & Herder, 1972, p. 28.
(31) Binationalism makes two problematic assumptions: that Jews are a nation, and that such a nation has a right to exist as such in Palestine. Clearly bi-nationalism cannot work between Palestinians on the one hand and the world Jewry on the other. But will Israeli Jews define themselves as a nation? Most probably not, since that would contradict the fundamental premise of Zionism. Then do Israelis regard themselves as a nation? Certainly not, since aside from parting with Zionism, that would include the 20% Palestinian minority within it.