

Ziofascist Violence and the Nakba 2.0: Jouissance and Necrocapitalism in the Consolidation of extremist Messianic Zionist far-right Ideology

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Abstract: This article traces the consolidation of the power of the extremist messianic Zionist far-right ideology in the settler-colonial apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state over the last decade. I argue that Ziofascist violence is not an aberration or a fringe movement in the history of the Zionist settler-colonial and apartheid project, but a constitutive feature of Zionist colonial ideology. It reflects the whole fabric of the settler colonial Jewish apartheid ethnocratic state. Unlike liberal Zionism, extremist messianic Zionist far-right ideology does not dress its intentions in the rhetoric of humanism and “democracy.” The article analyzes the reproduction of Ziofascism not only in relation to the libidinal investment in a theocratic dictatorship and its call for the new Nakba, or Nakba 2.0. It also examines Ziofascism in the context of an old history of a symbiotic relationship between far-right messianic Zionism and international fascist movements and its important structural position in advancing the interests of the necrocapitalist U.S. empire and the global capitalist class that sustain the Zionist settler-colonial and apartheid project. The article demonstrates that these interlocking factors instrumentalize the genocidal logic of the Zionist settler-colonial and apartheid project, by reducing Palestinians to the status of a disposable surplus population and relegating them to the “zone of non-being.”

Key words: Ziofascism, Nakba 2.0, genocide, jouissance, necrocapitalism

“It is inconceivable that those who oppose fascism throughout the world, if correctly informed as to Mr. Begin’s political record and perspectives, could add their names and support to the movement he represents.”

Albert Einstein, Letter to *The New York Times*¹

“I may be a far-right person, a homophobe, racist, fascist, but my word is my bond.”

Israel’s Far-right Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich²

1. Israel’s Drift to Authoritarian Capitalism: An Illiberal “Jewish Democracy” and the Populist Nationalist Model

Two important events happened towards the end of July, 2019 in Israel: The settler-colonial apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state of Israel passed its new Jewish nation state law, which has been in the making for over two years now.³ In addition, Hungary’s anti-Semitic Prime Minister Viktor Orban made a two-day visit to Israel.⁴ Despite the international uproar over the law, critics did not link these two interrelated events together, even though both events attest to a radical shift towards authoritarian, fascist governance in the alleged “only democracy in the Middle East.”⁵

As an apartheid settler-colonial ethnocratic state, Israel can no longer suppress or manage the contradictions that have accelerated its development into a racist apartheid state. These contradictions include its ethnocratic Zionist settler-colonial ideology, ethno-religious particularity in all its ambiguity (Jewish as a referent for both ethnic and religious identities), and the secular, egalitarian democratic ideals to which it has paid lip services for seven decades. In the larger picture of world politics today, moreover, traditional liberal democracies are becoming an obstacle to the power realignments in the region and around the world, forcing the settler-colonial apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state to find new ways to fit into the structural changes that the neoliberal global capitalist system is currently undergoing. Indeed, Israel emerged as the only winner of the Helsinki summit.⁶

In this context, the law inaugurates the Israeli ethnocratic settler-colonial state as an illiberal religious-based democracy and apartheid state, while Orbán's visit confers legitimacy on it within the global power shifts today especially, the rise of far right populist nationalist movements in Europe and the USA. This calls for inventing new strategies for universalizing the Palestinian struggle for freedom.

Illiberal Jewish democracy

Despite the uproar over the new law, this basic law did not introduce anything new in the way things have been done in Israel. Rather, this law merely enshrines the de facto colonial and apartheid realities in the Israeli ethnocratic settler-colonial state into a de jure status (law). At one level, therefore, this new law makes it possible to put the last seventy years of Israel's ethnocratic history of ethnic cleansing and apartheid politics into their proper context. Hence, this law has nothing to do with safeguarding Jewish identity, tradition, homeland or even Western civilization. Rather, it exposes the history of the Israeli ethnocratic settler-colonial regime in all its brutal realities, by revealing the suppressed ethno-nationalism that drives such regimes.

However, the attitude towards this constitutive apartheid and colonial history has always been expressed in terms of a "fetishistic disavowal"—we all knew what was really going on, but all the same.⁷ Thus, when Palestinian Knesset member Ahmad Tibi announced the "death of democracy" in Israel as a result of this law, it must be pointed out that it has been dead all along.⁸

Oren Yiftachel, a renowned scholar of Israeli ethnocracy, convincingly argues that Israel's democratic charade covers up a deeper ethnocratic apartheid structure.⁹ Such a structure, he points out, requires the institutionalization of racial laws that can guarantee Jewish supremacy and hegemony. Equality (before the law) and the redistribution of resources and rights become an elusive dream that will always be undermined at both symbolic and legal levels.

Thus, when Prime Minister Netanyahu states that “Israel is the nation-state of the Jewish people, and respects the rights of all of its citizens,” he is evidently obfuscating the oxymoron that is an ethnocratic democracy. The rights of all citizens in such an ethnocratic polity can be neither respected nor protected, since the “only democracy in the Middle East” is based on securing the privileges and rights of one particular ethno-religious identity only. The hierarchical and exclusivist principles of the Israeli ethnocratic settler-colonial state stand on the opposite end of the universal and egalitarian ideals of any secular polity that deems itself the state of all its citizens.

The fact that Arabic was also demoted into a “special status” language in this law discloses the implicit common belief that Arabic is the “language of the enemy.” Any illusions about multicultural relations and coexistence will consequently be exploded. Indeed, activists have long dismissed the multicultural façade in this ethnocratic scene for what it really is: in a playful pun on the Hebrew word for coexistence (*doo-qiyum* in Hebrew), they sarcastically call it “dookie.”

The Populist Nationalist Model

It is no coincidence that the law was passed at a time when the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was visiting Israel and meeting with Netanyahu. Orbán’s visit does not simply stop at consolidating the Israeli government’s ties with the European far right. As a symbol of the European far right, Orbán provides a blueprint for Netanyahu on how to suspend traditional liberal democracy and replace it with a religious-based democracy.

In a radio interview in May 2017, Orbán called for “building an old-school Christian democracy, rooted in European traditions.”¹⁰ This “illiberal democracy,” as he called it in a famous 2014 speech, is grounded in a belief in “the importance of the nation” and a vigorous opposition to “any supranational business or political empire.”¹¹ In the same speech, he also rejected the “Western European dogmas” that suggest that people should be “free to do anything that does not violate another person’s freedom.” The government has every right now to undercut freedom.

These illiberal ethno-religious democracies are sustained by a unique combination of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. First, they posit themselves as defenders of the West against “Muslim invaders”—Muslim immigrants and refugees for Orbán and radical and militant Islam especially, Iran, for Netanyahu.¹²

Second, they are getting mileage out of obscene abuse of anti-Semitism. While Orbán has been condemned for his blatant anti-Semitism, he still considers himself to be a hard core supporter of Israel.¹³ On the other hand, the Netanyahu government has been courting anti-Semitic clergy and public figures and hunting down anti-Zionist Jewish individuals and organizations.¹⁴ The deal here will ensure Israel’s silence over the

crackdown on the freedoms of immigrants and refugees in Europe, and the European silence over Israel's oppression of the Palestinian indigenous population not only in the occupied Palestinian territories, but also inside Israel proper now.

It is also supported by the exclusion and isolation of the Palestinians. On his recent visit, it was reported, Orban did not schedule talks with any Palestinian leader, in a break with EU protocols.¹⁵ Moreover, there is a clear investment in Putin's Russia that conceals a more dangerous trend towards legitimizing oppressive authoritarian regimes.

The confluence of these events will make it easier for Israel and its allies to complete the liquidation of the Palestinian cause (and any reference to resistance and steadfastness) and carry out their land swaps and transfer plans, however partial, for the Palestinian Arab population in Israel proper. This will not make it easier, as some believe, to criticize Israel and show its true colors; rather, it makes it urgent for all those who believe in the universality of struggle to start linking the Palestinian struggle for freedom to the struggles of other disposable groups that are affected by these global far right regimes around a more fundamental antagonism.

2. The Rise of Ziofascism and the Impossible Third Intifada

The savage and irrational lynching of Mohammad Abu Khdeir on July 2, 2014, will prove to be a turning point in the history of the Palestinian struggle for freedom and human dignity.¹⁶ The seventeen year old Palestinian teenager was abducted on his way to the dawn prayers, brutally beaten up, forced to drink gasoline, and was incinerated alive by members of La Familia, a terrorist Jewish mafia affiliated with the racist Jewish soccer club, Bietar Jerusalem, and the extremist messianic Zionist far right ideology. Moha¹⁷mmad's barbaric lynching inadvertently provides the Palestinian struggle with a much needed and undivise universal symbol, around which the hearts and minds of people all over the world can be aligned.

Mohammad has become Palestine's Emmitt Till, the fourteen-year African-American teenager whose brutal murder is considered to be the spark of the civil rights movement in the US, at least in Mississippi. Mohammad has become the "sacrificial lamb" for the new Palestinian non-violent resistance movement, making it possible for the world to identify with the humanity and the suffering of the Palestinians. It will generate a new wave of international solidarity campaigns, intensifying the BDS movement and other forms of non-violent resistance to the Israeli apartheid state and Zionist settler colonial project in Palestine around the world.

Mohammad's barbaric lynching shines the spotlight on the extent of institutionalized racism in the apartheid Israeli state. The Netanyahu government and the Israeli mainstream establishment have created an institutionalized racist environment that tolerates and encourages

these barbaric acts against Palestinians. They have also allowed many of these terrorist crimes to go unpunished. The pervasive realities of Jewish terrorism, fascism, and the culture of hate against all non-Jews in historical Palestine, explode the myths of ontological Jewish victimization (the Jews as the “ultimate victim” of history) and the Israeli apartheid state as a peaceful country.

What’s more, the terrorist attacks of these Jewish extremist groups on Palestinian children, including abduction, running over, and lynching, could not have happened unless there is a systematic war going on in the apartheid Israeli state against Palestinian children.¹⁸ Tariq Khdeir, Mohammad’s Floridian fifteen-year cousin, was beaten unconscious by Israeli soldiers and over a half of the Palestinians arrested by the apartheid Israeli military and police forces in the civil disobedience and unrest that ensued after Mohammad’s lynching have been minors. According to human rights groups, moreover, about 60 percent of the Palestinian casualties of recent Israeli attacks have been minors.

More importantly, Mohammad’s brutal lynching reveals a new troubling trend in the radicalization of Israeli Jewish society. Extremist and terrorist Jewish groups are more willing now to take the law into their hands, in order to make up for the perceived inability of the Netanyahu government to maintain their repression campaign of the Palestinians and realize their dreams of Greater Israel more efficiently and rapidly.¹⁹ As the cracks in the edifice of the apartheid Israeli state become more visible under the pressure of international condemnation, state power seems to be shifting into the hands of Jewish terrorist groups.

According to these extremist terrorist groups, the hegemonic structures of apartheid control, occupation, colonization, and warehousing that have been used to mediate between the exclusive Jewish state and the occupied Palestinians, can no longer manage racial relations in accordance with their nationalistic Zionist ideology, prompting them to take matters into their own hands.²⁰ Their response then is to create a lynching culture that has taken private and communal forms of extra-legal violence. Needless to mention, these modalities of violence are not an irrational aberration in the apartheid Israeli state but must be considered as a constitutive part of the immoral and illegal apartheid Israeli state itself.

In the most recent fascist “Jerusalem Day” march, for example, this lynching culture assumed a clear ritualistic and festive communal character akin to the public spectacles (or picnics) common in the American South.²¹ A Palestinian commentator, passing into the middle of a “Jewish supremacist hate-fest,” describes the mood of a mob “drunk with power and capable of inflicting the worst against “the other” – the Palestinians.” In fact, he soon realizes that this mob, which comes from all walks of life in the apartheid Israeli state, was playing a game, ““spot the Arab’ game – if one Arab was seen, a call was made to the crowd and the

mobs moved to charge against the person, with no reaction whatsoever from the Israeli forces.”

Jerusalem Day turned out to be nothing more than a fascist pornfest for maintaining collective Jewish supremacy over the Palestinians through an orchestrated campaign of terror and intimidation under the protection of the Israeli army and border police. In a culture that views Palestinians as sub-humans and animals, who are “uncompassionate by nature,” murdering Palestinians and Arabs becomes, as the authors of the racist book “Torat Ha’Melech,” or “The King’s Torah,” a religious duty. The authors of this book, Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira and Rabbi Yosef Elitzur, maintain that Jewish law justifies “killing babies if it is clear that they will grow up to harm us, and in such a situation they may be harmed deliberately, and not only during combat with adults.”²²

It is a miracle that this spectacle of power did not end with the death of Palestinian passers-by, even though Palestinians were caught on camera barely escaping these vicious vigilante mobs. However, the recent barbaric lynching that claimed Mohammad Abu Khdeir’s life exposes the existential threat that racialized forms of extra-legal violence pose for Palestinians in the only democracy in the Middle East. These interpersonal forms of violence assert the power and prowess of sociopathic private citizens over individual Palestinians that are, nonetheless, invested in national symbolism. The apartheid Israeli society is slipping into a primitive stage, in which terrorists, vigilantes, and mobs renew their covenant with their god, as the “chosen people”—to use Menachem Begin’s words, the “master race” and “divine gods on this planet,” and their bonds with other co-nationals through human sacrifice.

It is not surprising, then, that these sadistic terrorist acts are packaged in religious rhetoric. Much like in apartheid South Africa and the American Jim Crow regimes of racial terror, religious discourse has been used to sanctify these terrorist acts and the regimes of racial violence that they represent. In particular, pathological Islamophobia plays a major role in the formation of this culture of racialized violence in the apartheid Israeli state. In both private and public forms of lynching, mobs have been reported to chant not only “death to Arabs,” but also “Mohammad is dead,” in reference to the prophet Mohammad.

This religious rhetoric also betrays the sexual anxieties that Israeli Jews have about their own virility and masculinity as well as the Palestinians’ alleged excessive hypersexuality. Calling for avenging the murder of three Israeli teens, Rabbi Noam Perel, the secretary general of the World Bnei Akiva youth movement, wrote: “The government of Israel is convening for a revenge hearing which is not about mourning, the master of the house has gone crazy at the sight of the corpses of its sons, a government which will turn the army that was searching into vengeful soldiers, soldiers that will not stop at 300 Philistine foreskins.”²³ The biblical myth, according to which the future King David brought back

200 foreskins of the ancient Philistines he murdered, is used here to reassert Jewish sexual and political supremacy. Modern forms of lynching are meant to replicate the ancient barbaric war rituals that negate and dehumanize the Palestinian male Other through castration and the emasculation.

Mohammad's barbaric and savage lynching will not incite a Third Intifada. The objective political, cultural, and social conditions on the ground in the occupied territories and the Gaza strip preclude the eruption of such a revolutionary event.²⁴ Nonetheless, Mohammad's tragic death has managed to mobilize Palestinian youth all over historical Palestine in a way that even the daily violations of the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque has not. Palestinians can translate the energy of civil disobedience and public unrest into moral and political victories in the international court of public opinion, capitalizing on the formidable popular strength of their non-violent anti-apartheid struggle.

More importantly, Mohammad will become a "sacrificial lamb," making it possible for the world to identify with the humanity and the suffering of the Palestinians. It will generate a new wave of international solidarity campaigns, intensifying the BDS movement and other forms of non-violent resistance to the Israeli apartheid state and Zionist settler colonial project around the world.²⁵

3. Israel's Far Right Paramilitaries Are Fueling Even More Attacks on Palestinians

On May 11, 2021, hundreds of local residents in Fureidis, the town where I live, some 20 kilometers to the south of Haifa, came out to demonstrate against the attacks by Jewish supremacist and fascist groups on the Noble Sanctuary (Haram Al-Sharif) and the pending eviction of Palestinian families from the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah.²⁶ Videos shared on social media showed demonstrators blocking the intersection, burning wooden crate boxes, and waving Palestinian flags.

Two days later, the fourth war on Gaza had escalated, reports of a paramilitary group linked to Otzma Yehudit ("Jewish Power"), a far-right political party; and Lehava, a far-right Jewish organization (others say it is an Israeli riot dispersal police unit), marched on the main highway outside the town, firing tear gas and stun grenades at a handful of protesters who destroyed a light post at the entrance of the town. Local residents also reported that *mista'arvim*, undercover police operatives, have been deployed in the town to arrest suspected activists and quell the "internal intifada."

In the so-called mixed Jewish-Arab cities, the Israeli police have been working in cahoots with these fascist paramilitary militias to lynch Palestinians in the Arab ghettos (originally called concentration camps) and quell the "civil war" in these segregated cities.²⁷ The police have shot at passersby, broke into homes, and physically assaulted men, women and

children. Social media is full of videos and audio recording of concerned Palestinian citizens calling the police to complain about these militias and ask for their intervention, to be met only with apathetic responses or termination of the call.

The Israeli government has also instated a state of emergency, placing the local Palestinian populations under curfews, lockdowns and administrative detention. The Shin Bet (Israel's "internal security" service) has been mobilized to quell the protests, using the same surveillance technology they have used during the COVID-19 pandemic to track citizens as well as other "intelligence-collecting capabilities" to identify protesters and "locate, arrest, investigate and put the perpetrators on trial."²⁸

As opposition grows across the world against Israeli apartheid, it is important for observers to understand the role that fascist paramilitary and Jewish supremacist political parties play in fueling the violence across historic Palestine.

Far Right Groups Call for Attacks "Without Compromises"

The leaders of these groups make no effort at hiding their intention to widen the divisions within Israeli society and between Israelis and the Palestinians.²⁹ In an interview on May 10 with Ynet news, the leader of Jewish Power, Itamar Ben Gvir, stated tongue-in-cheek that his mission on the so-called Jerusalem Day was not to calm things down and de-escalate, but to accelerate the contradictions.³⁰

In their political platform, Jewish Power calls for a total war against those who oppose Israel, "without negotiations, without concessions, and without compromises." They advocate for a shift in Israeli military strategy from "defense to attack, from the policy of 'enemy containment' to the destruction and annihilation of the enemy."

Jewish Power and Lehava's philosophy is based on ultra-nationalism and "Jewish capitalism." Jewish Power and Lehava demonize Palestinians everywhere and incite violence against them, should they fail to accept second-class citizenship and declare their loyalty to the Jewish state. Their goal is the forcible expulsion of the Indigenous Palestinian population and their resettlement in the surrounding Arab countries, supposedly "their countries of origin."

Jewish Power's leaders glorify violence against Palestinians and call for the formal annexation of the West Bank, including Al-Aqsa Mosque, that can pave the way for a one theocratic Jewish state. By removing the "enemy" within, Jewish Power claims it can reduce the military budget and renew the welfare state.

The Israeli authorities are under no illusion regarding the origins of this spiraling wave of violence and Ben Gvir's role in it. For example, Israeli Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai has unequivocally blamed Ben Gvir and held his party Jewish Power and Lehava responsible for the violence in Sheikh Jarrah, Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, and the riots in mixed cities.³¹

He stated: “The person who is responsible for this intifada is Itamar Ben Gvir. It started with the Lehava protest at Damascus Gate. It continued with provocations in Sheikh Jarrah, and now he is moving around with Lehava activists.”

However, Jewish Power and Lehava do not, as Shabtai claims, undermine police work. Rather, the Jewish Power and Lehava militias operate under the protection of the Israeli police, especially in so-called mixed cities. What’s more, Israeli authorities have displaced the violence of these militias and blamed it on the Arab residents. In fact, the mayor of Lyd compared protests in his city to Kristallnacht (a Nazi pogrom against Jews that took place in 1938).³²

When Israeli mainstream voices (as well as some on the left) bemoan the dissipation of the dream of “coexistence” in these cities, they ignore how the Jewish supremacist and fascist groups have been working on gentrifying Palestinian neighborhoods and appropriating more land. They have established religious settlements modeled after West Bank settlements through the Biblical Seeds movement and other organizations.³³ As the internationally renowned rapper Tamer Nafar said, “Maybe we look at the word coexistence differently. But so far there is only one side, the Jewish side.”³⁴

4. Zionist Settler-colonialism 2.0: The consolidation of messianic Zionist far right ideology

Uri Avnery has long noted the “religious character” of the struggle over the Zionist settler-colonial project.³⁵ This fundamental contradiction is inherent to a state that defined itself as both exclusively ethnic and democratic.³⁶ However, as the internal contradictions that rip the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state escalate, the religious / secular divide has emerged as the fundamental antagonism.³⁷

As Michael Marder notes, moreover, the Haredi population is growing twice as fast as the overall Israeli population, making it likely for far-right coalitions “to become a constant feature of Israel’s political landscape.”³⁸ In fact, a well-funded government taskforce, chaired by the leader of the homophobic party Noam, has been tasked with “strengthening Jewish identity – a well-known code for encouraging Orthodox beliefs and observance.”³⁹

The ultimate goal of this messianic Zionist far-right ideology, along with its emerging “new settler” movement (Zionist settler-colonialism 2.0), is the establishment of a halachic theocratic state (the equivalent to Shari’a law), even though the concept does not exist in Jewish law.⁴⁰ In this state or kingdom, Jews have an “exclusive and inalienable right” over all parts of historical Palestine, based on the principles of Jewish supremacy and the subjugation of goyim under their racist theocratic rule.⁴¹

The question of the status of the Palestinians and the Palestinian Authority looms large in this ideology. While the hegemonic Ashkenazi

establishment stalled and thwarted any resolution to the Palestinian question through deliberately failed peace talks, extremist messianic Zionist ideologues do not equivocate about annexing all of historical Palestine under their control, with total disregard, even contempt, for international law.⁴²

In this apartheid theocratic dictatorship, according to Smotrich's manifesto, Palestinian Arabs cannot have a place in their indigenous homeland.⁴³ Instead, they should either accept their inferior status as "resident aliens," if they choose to remain, or be exterminated by the military, which "will already know what to do."

As such, these extremist messianic Zionists openly call not only for the destruction and expulsion of the Palestinians, but also for "slaughter, pogroms, and total annihilation."⁴⁴ They only diverge on the methods to achieve these horrific goals, with some endorsing vigilante acts of revenge, while others promote the mobilization of the Israeli occupation forces.

As if the Ongoing Nakba, the smaller acts of Jewish terrorism and ethnic cleansing, is not enough, extremist messianic Zionist settler-colonial ideologues have been advocating for another major cataclysmic Nakba, not only in the occupied Palestinian territories but also within the borders of the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state. The Huwara-style Jewish settler-colonial terrorism and the attacks on the Stella Maris Monastery are just the beginning of this ominous trend.

The European Ashkenazi Zionist establishment (liberal Zionism) seeks to resolve these contradictions, especially the status of the occupied Palestinian territories in extremist messianic Zionist ideology, by restructuring the political and legal theaters and reintegrating the religious Zionist camp into its hegemonic structures.⁴⁵ Netanyahu's confident prediction that the "opposing sides will mesh" implies that the European Ashkenazi Zionist establishment will eventually incorporate extremist messianic Zionist ideology back into its fold.⁴⁶ To paraphrase Ilan Pappé's recent insightful comments, it is not "Judea" (or the Kingdom of Judea and Samaria, as others have called it) as a substitute for "Fantasy Israel," but "Judea" in the service of "Fantasy Israel."⁴⁷

Although the European Ashkenazi Zionist establishment has expressed concerns about the rise of "Jewish terror," the establishment continued to support Jewish terrorism by providing military cover for their terrorist attacks on Palestinians. These warnings were issued only because the establishment (the Shin Bet in this case) sees a correlation between Jewish terrorism and Palestinian resistance.⁴⁸

Extremist messianic Zionists, however, have been emboldened by their ascent to power, the world community's complicity in Israeli war crimes, and the normalization of relations with the Arab world that whitewash Israeli violations of human rights.

More importantly, the global rise of authoritarian capitalism has consolidated this extremist messianic Zionist ideology. Global capitalism

is seeking alliances with fascist movements, in order to undermine and do away with democratic structures of governance that try to mitigate or hinder the extractive accumulation of capital and surplus value. Unsurprisingly, extremist messianic Zionist ideologues have adopted the same playbook used by fascist movements worldwide. They employ the fascist distinction between the people and the enemy (“us/them”) and terms such as “wokism,” activist judges, and the “deep state” to criticize the “leftist attack on national unity” as part of their language.

Despite the hit to the country’s credit rating and the devaluation of the shekel, it is thus expected that global capital will continue investing in the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state, especially if or when these fascist messianic movements take over. In an interview with Bloomberg, Netanyahu dismissed the “noise in the short-term markets,” expressing his full faith in the “clarity in the long-term markets.” In fact, announced investing 7.2 billion dollars in Israel’s economy, which will “contribute about \$13.9 billion to Israel’s gross domestic product.”

Some commentators believe that the clashing socio-political and economic visions that structure liberal Zionist ideology and extremist messianic Zionist ideology can only be resolved in either a civil war or a military coup that will preserve the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state as a “communitarian democracy.” Ironically, the same was said about the “breakdown of trust” between the military and Netanyahu’s government in 1996.⁴⁹

Nonetheless, ideological and identification crises in settler-colonial Zionist ideology have neither lead to political dissensus nor to a mass exodus. There is a broad consensus across all forms of settler-colonial Zionist ideology, even among the right-wing architects of the judicial overhaul, that the mythic communitarian democracy, aka the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state, must always maintain its “liberal” veneer.

Extremist messianic Zionist ideology has merely accelerated the process of reconfiguring the structures of European Ashkenazi “illiberal” democracy into a full-fledged authoritarian capitalist state in line with international trends. The autocratic rule in the occupied Palestinian territories will become the governing model in the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state, ditching any semblance of democratic rule, however illiberal it has been.

Enjoy your revenge: from ideological identity to surplus enjoyment

Underpinning this extremist messianic Zionist discourse lies a shift in ideological structure—from a commitment to the cause of Zionism to a pursuit of its rewards or obscene surplus enjoyment. As Slavoj Žižek explains, ideology operates on two levels: On the one hand, there is the explicit ideological identity or discourse that appeals to the subjects, engaging them as followers of a particular cause.⁵⁰

On the other, there is the implicit message of ideology that is never directly stated, but through which subjects are incentivized to enjoy at a deeper level, if they continue to adhere to the cause. In essence, this excessive enjoyment serves as a bribe or a reward that a community bestows on its subjects for their loyalty and adherence to the rules.

In this extremist messianic Zionist discourse, the surplus enjoyment (killing Palestinians, driving over them, burning their homes, evicting them from their homes, confiscating their lands, building settlements, destroying their olive trees, Judaizing Al-Aqsa, etc.) becomes explicitly articulated. While these forms of surplus enjoyment were previously viewed as an exception in official Zionist discourse, they are now considered as the norm.

One commentator unpacked the essence and the covert messaging of this hegemonic extremist ideology.⁵¹ For him, the idea boils down to the following: “If a Jew wants land, it is his. If a Jew wants property, it is his. Every shekel given to a non-Jew is a waste. Every right given to a non-Jew is given to him conditionally, as long as it does not conflict with the needs and wishes of a Jew. Not every Jew, by the way. It is important to clarify: these are the Jews who are considered to be the holy vessels on whom the Spirit of God rests according to their claim, and they represent the entire nation, even if the majority of the nation disagrees with them.”

Zionist settler-colonial ideology is increasingly shaped by this explicit message, through which messianic Zionist ideology entices its subjects with the promise of obscene surplus-enjoyment, if they continue to adhere to this ideology. This explicit appeal to excessive forms of enjoyment is further sustained by discourses of victimization and grievance that settlers peddle in response to Palestinian resistance.

The Protests are the Obverse Side of the Judicial Reforms

Herein lies the truth not only of the judicial reforms but also the statewide demonstrations in the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state. The judicial overhaul is the brainchild of the right-wing think tank, Kohelet Policy Forum, which is funded by the American billionaire Arthur Dantchik. The Huwara pogrom, as one commentator aptly put it, is the embodiment of these reforms.⁵² He added that “the intention appears to be to undermine the rule of law and foster an environment of lawlessness under the Palestinian Authority.” Moreover, neutralizing judicial oversight is the “first crucial step towards realizing” the extremist messianic Zionist dream of a halachic theocratic state.

Similarly, the secular demonstrations opposing these judicial reforms reveal the inherent anti-Arab and anti-Palestinian ideology of the apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state. Protests organizers have insisted that these protests are an internal Jewish affair, and thus have intentionally excluded Palestinian Arab voices from these protests. They have also made it clear that neither the occupation nor the apartheid legal

system inside this “illiberal democracy” is a part of their campaign. The brawls between the anti-coup protestors and the anti-occupation activists resulted in the exclusion and silencing of the latter.⁵³

Although some fringe groups have tried to bring attention to the occupation to these anti-coup demonstrations, they are politically and ideologically ambiguous, to say the least. These groups are made of a disparate collection of army rejectionists/ objectionists, leftists and former establishment figures (ex-Mossad and military personnel). In their platforms, they are concerned about the humanitarian abuses and war crimes that the occupation military is committing in the occupied Palestinian territories. They do not even call for an end to Jewish supremacy and apartheid on both sides of the green line or propose any just solution to the Zionist problem. It seems that they would settle for a more humane occupation.

Moreover, some protests were held in the settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, but again protestors were more concerned about the toxic brand of Judaism that messianic settlers represented and the privileges they enjoy, more than they were concerned about the occupation or the apartheid regime they seek to perpetuate.⁵⁴ In fact, one of the protestors revealed not only that her soldier son served in Huwara, but also that somehow she “didn’t vote for a party that supports the settlements.”

In fact, the liberal Zionist establishment has used these demonstrations to witness to the vibrant democracy that the apartheid Jewish ethnocentric state is supposed to be. As Žižek says regarding the massive demonstrations against the US attack on Iraq in 2003, the establishment used these protests to legitimize its war. Hence, Žižek calls these protestors “beautiful souls,” because they did not only do nothing to prevent the war, but they also refused to see their complicity in the evil around them.

Moreover, some protestors have been more interested in aestheticized and commodified forms of resistance, inspired by Margaret Atwood’s dystopian *Handmaid’s Tales*, than in genuine emancipation for all. Such aestheticized and commodified forms of resistance clearly try to frame the threat of extremist messianic Zionist ideology as a nightmarish intrusion of unreal (fictional) power structures into the alleged rational democracy, in which they live.

Needless to mention, aestheticized and commodified forms of resistance can be easily coopted by consumerist capitalist culture that values surfaces and the superficial. Moreover, they turn activism into a marketable product and a passive form of engagement. As such, they risk losing sight of the political economic structures that underlie the violence pandemic, failing to serve the cause of liberation and emancipation.

These self-delusions merely perpetuate the mythic foundations of “the only democracy in the Middle East.”⁵⁵ Indeed, there is nothing transformative or emancipatory about these demonstrations. They

merely reflect the unwavering determination of the European Ashkenazi establishment to maintain its Jewish supremacy, power, and privileges.

Needless to mention, this Supreme Court itself has played a major role in upholding racist and discriminatory laws against its Palestinian Arab citizens and Palestinians under occupation alike. It clearly favored apartheid rule over “human rights.”

In line with international trends, it is not only expected that Palestinian resistance will continue to be delegitimized as anti-Semitic. Rather, Zionist vengeance and retaliation will be rebranded as the true resistance movement to Palestinian and pro-Palestinian «wokism.»

For international activists, socialist, and other social justice advocates, merely denouncing Zionism as “a racist, imperialist, settler-colonial project” is not sufficient. Activists must also emphasize how official secular Zionist settler-colonial ideology has been repackaged in messianic Zionist terms that glorify revenge, pogroms, and ethnic cleansing, without any acknowledgment of, or apology for, their crimes.

5. Frankenstein in Palestine: Ziofascism in Necrocapitalism

In his internationally renowned novel, *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the Iraqi writer Ahmad Saadawi offers a deeply evocative and harrowing portrayal of the devastating human toll of the American invasion of Iraq. He tells the story of the junk dealer Hadi Al-attag who pieces together a creature, the Shisma (the whatsitsname), from different body parts of the victims of American imperial violence and the sectarian violence it engendered.

In the novel, Hadi goes to the mortuary to retrieve the body of his close friend Nahem Abdaki after he was killed in a terrorist car explosion in Baghdad. The man’s body had been mangled and torn into parts, which were tangled with his horse’s flesh and the body parts of other victims.

In the mortuary, Hadi could not find the complete corpse; none of the corpses there were whole. He was shocked to find out that “the bodies of explosion victims were all mixed up together and to hear the mortuary worker tell him to put a body together and carry it off— take this leg and this arm and so on.” The junk dealer does just this, and ‘reconstitutes’ his friend into a body that becomes the body of the Whatsitsname.

Saadawi’s fictional narrative was inspired by the true story of a young Iraqi man who walked into the morgue to collect his brother’s body.⁵⁶ The man was shown one body part in the corner and was told to take whatever he wants from the body parts around the morgue and “make yourself a body.”

Strange corpses

In a harrowing echo of Saadawi’s narrative, the reality of the Israeli genocide in Gaza, which has claimed over 36000 precious Palestinian lives and over 81 thousand wounded, presents a gruesome tableau of dismemberment and death. In this “open-air graveyard” and “hell on

earth,” the amount of dismembered and mutilated bodies, flying body parts, unrecognizable bodies, incinerated bodies, flattened bodies, amputated bodies, tortured bodies, and stolen body parts, is unimaginable. In a recent interview with Open Democracy, the Palestinian writer Susan Abulhawa described the stories she heard from women in Gaza “as though they were torn from the script of a Hollywood horror film.”⁵⁷

Israel’s genocidal war on Gaza is increasingly centered around the decimation of the racialized Palestinian body. The images of five decapitated babies and the grieving fathers who were displaying their headless bodies to the world, coming out of the most recent massacre in Tal as-Sultan in Rafah, testify to the barbarity of the Israeli genocide in Gaza. In yet another “tragic incident,” Israel dropped 2000 pound bombs on this displaced people camp, courtesy of the Biden administration, in an area it has designated as a “safe humanitarian zone.” A Palestinian medic described how they retrieved a “large number of child martyrs from the Israeli bombardment, including a child without a head and children whose bodies have turned into fragments.”⁵⁸

The number of dismembered and decapitated bodies in Israel’s genocide in Gaza is unprecedented. According to an Al Jazeera Net report, “The percentage of intact bodies is only 10%. Most of the bodies are cut and torn, and 20% of them are difficult to recognize, mainly due to the large number of tearing and dismemberment, and the loss of the persons’ features.” In March, Aljazeera released footage of an Israeli military drone stalking four unarmed civilians in one of Israel’s “kill zones” and blasting them into bits.

Personal testimonies in Aljazeera report reveal how bodies arrive in pieces. The supervisor of the morgue at Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central Gaza Strip reported that “One day, a bag of body parts came to me. In it, I found livers, pancreas, and spleen. It was the first time in my life that I saw these body parts.” Two American surgeons describe the impact of the powerful American-supplied bombs that Israel is raining on the victims’ bodies.⁵⁹ They mention burnt bodies that “resembled blistered hotdogs more than human beings, shredded to pieces such that they can only be buried in mass graves.” They also describe how not only shrapnel but also “rock, floors, and walls” are lodged into victims’ bodies, “penetrating skin with waves of dirt and debris.”

The severe dismemberment and destruction of bodies in Israel’s latest genocidal war are very different from previous wars. One witness notes, “All corpses are strange. We have not seen these scenes before. We have not seen these dismembered body parts and these hollowed-out skulls. Sometimes skulls come hollowed out from the inside. The head is broken and completely hollowed from the inside. There is nothing in it. Shattered skulls, dismembered children. We saw it in this war, it’s all strange.”

The most traumatic scenes for him, however, are the ones involving martyred children. “Seeing the bodies of young children torn apart is a

painful thing, and these scenes are repeated before our eyes, and I dream about them at night, as if they are a video tape repeated before my eyes. We cry for them and cry about our condition, but we do not know what to do.”

Documenting and Writing (on) the Body

The dismemberment and mutilation of these bodies has been so extensive that they have become impossible to identify. Authorities and families have resorted to symbolic and literal acts of resistance and mourning to ensure that each victim is acknowledged and remembered as a human being, not just as a statistic.

As bodies pile up, the Palestinian Health Ministry employees photograph the victims and document the distinctive signs of their bodies by the bombing date. They want to make sure that the deceased are not lost to anonymity. The unidentified and unrecognizable bodies, however, are buried in mass graves of the unknown, before stray animals gnaw at the corpses and gather around them.

Many Palestinian families in Gaza have also routinely resorted to the controversial act of writing their children’s names on their bodies to confront the ghost of the anonymous shroud and “unidentified martyr.”

As a mother of three explains to Al Jazeera Net, “I found myself forced to write their names on their bodies in light of the occupation’s deliberate targeting of civilians, children, and women. No one is immune.” She also explained the reasons she inscribed their names on their bellies, because “the limbs are most likely the first thing a missile destroys.”

Other mothers doubt the effectiveness of writing their children’s names on their bodies. One mother noted that “there is no place in the body that is protected from the missiles that melt the flesh and turn it into pieces, as appears in the video clips.” For this mother, the utter destructiveness of the weapons used against them underscores the futility of any attempts to preserve even the smallest trace of identity. No action—no matter how desperate—can provide any measure of safety or identification for her children in the event of an attack.

Genocidal starvation

This war on the Palestinian body has reached its apogee in the overt genocidal mass starvation that the settler colonial and apartheid Jewish ethnocentric state has engineered against the displaced local population in Gaza. According to recent polls, 68% of the Jewish Israelis support starving Gaza children to death. Barbaric Israeli settlers have attacked, blocked, and vandalized aid trucks to prevent them from delivering humanitarian aid and food to a starving population.⁶⁰

This mass starvation war has escalated to a situation in which “93 percent of the people in Gaza are facing ‘crisis levels of hunger’ and a quarter of the population of the strip faces ‘catastrophic hunger and

starvation.” U.N.’s special rapporteur on the right to food, Michael Fakhri, condemned this starvation war as a “war crime.” Because of this famine, Aryeh Neier, the co-founder of Human Rights Watch and a Holocaust survivor, is now convinced of Israel’s genocidal intentions.

In this starvation war, the Israeli military destroyed the sources of livelihood and created conditions of food scarcity, forcing displaced Gazans to mix animal fodder and bird feed into whatever flour they can get to make bread. Moreover, the Israeli military has prevented international aid and food convoys from entering Gaza, depriving Palestinians access to food. Moreover, the recent attack on the World Central Kitchen convoy is meant to force other international aid organizations to suspend their activities in Gaza and intensify the starvation of the indigenous population.⁶¹

They have also committed a few of what have come to be known as “flour massacres” against Palestinians they have been starving, while collecting food aid. As one commentator speculated, “trucks laden with food might well have been bait in order to enable the waiting tanks, snipers and troops to cruelly eliminate these starving, unarmed youths en masse.”⁶²

In the context of a genocidal war, starvation is not merely about depriving Palestinians of food or preventing them from accessing the essentials needed for survival. By destroying the health and water infrastructure in Gaza, the Israeli military has also created the conditions for the spread of infectious diseases that make possible the “deprivation of food unto death.” Consequently, the number of deaths attributable to malnutrition and dehydration has climbed.⁶³

Israel’s starvation campaign has escalated and intensified past the starvation policies the settler colonial regime has been using to limit access to food during its blockade on Gaza. In addition to rationing food and banning “non-essential luxuries” such as coriander and instant coffee, but not frozen salmon and non-fat yogurt, the Israeli military made precise calculations of Gaza’s daily calorie needs, based on the average daily requirement of 2,279 calories per person. Now, however, Palestinians in Northern Gaza live on 245 calories a day, the “equivalent of a cup of cooked rice.”⁶⁴

Live Laboratory for Necrocapitalism

The decimation of the racialized Palestinian body in all its forms and the current campaign of deliberate genocidal starvation campaign are a part of the Nakba 2.0. This Nakba can be described as a total genocidal war Israel’s settler colonial regime, sustained by its messianic ideology, is waging against Palestinian civilians in the Gaza strip under conditions of necrocapitalist irrationality.

In the current restructuring of global capitalism, Israel’s genocidal war on Gaza and the tens of thousands of decimated bodies it produced are symptomatic of a broader, more disturbing trend in neoliberal politics

namely, necrocapitalism. Neoliberal capitalism is grounded in an economy of death that pursues the accumulation of wealth through genocidal technologies of death that monetize dead bodies and dismembered body parts.⁶⁵ Saadawi's novel registers this necrocapitalist irrationality through its fantastic creature the Shisma.⁶⁶ As the Palestinian surgeon Dr. Ghassan Abusitta said, "Israel is the tip of the genocidal iceberg," and can be only understood in the context of the Western "genocidal axis."⁶⁷

While European colonial powers historically structured their domination of colonized peoples globally around death, this has evolved into a new stage of unrestrained mass industrial killing that turns death into a major source of generating wealth and profit. This genocidal necrocapitalist system leverages imperial wars, settler colonialism, apartheid, racism, patriarchy, sectarianism, and other forms of hegemonic domination, to reduce bodies to disposable commercial objects. Such power structures conceal the true nature of necrocapitalism, even as they expand its coffers.

In Gaza, Western imperialism is expanding its necrocapitalist wealth. These activities seek to put in place geopolitical and economic plans, especially the gas fields in Gaza, Lebanon, and Syria as well as the new regional trade connectivity project and perhaps the Ben Gurion Canal scheme, through technologies of death that decimate the indigenous population and monetize their bodies.

In the necrocapitalist system, moreover, Palestinians in Gaza and their bodies have been used as objects and commodities that generate wealth and profit for the settler colonial and apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state and the global capitalist class that supports it. Israel is already making profit out of these technologies at the Singapore Airshow, the most important arms trade show in Asia.

Palestinians are thus viewed as subjects in a "live laboratory" for testing Israel's military technologies of death.⁶⁸ These military technologies thrive on the destruction of the racialized Palestinian body and the commodification of death. Israel's "mass assassination factory" is usually first tested in the occupied Palestinian territories, especially Gaza, before it is exported to the world in exchange for money and political support in international organizations.

These new military technologies of death, developed with the complicity of major tech corporations such as Google, include predictive policing technologies and combat drone programs called "Alchemist," "Gospel," "Lavender," and "Where's daddy?" that "use geographical, human, and signal intelligence to generate target recommendations for troops and military officials and to pinpoint strike targets."⁶⁹ Consequently, these error-prone AI systems marked 20 civilians killed for lower ranking Hamas members, and up to 300 for seniors. On average, the "most moral army" in the world accepted a 100 civilian targets for every Hamas official target with minimal human verification.

Gaza has also become a testing ground for drone-mounted robot dogs and remotely controlled bulldozers. In addition, they have tested Smart Shooter's "SMASH Dragon" armed drone system, which "eliminates both static and moving targets with extreme precision using assault rifles, sniper rifles, 40mm, and other ammunition." This is a part of the high-tech "frictionless" oppression of Palestinians.

Under necrocapitalist conditions, Palestinians have also become a source for a lucrative organ trafficking industry in the Jewish apartheid state. Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor raised concerns that Israel, "the biggest hub for the illegal global trade in human organs," was harvesting organs from confiscated corpses and corpses exhumed from mass graves in Gaza. After these bodies were released by Israel, medical experts found "vital organs such as livers, kidneys and hearts, alongside cochleas and corneas, were missing." Although Israel has previously denied harvesting organs from dead Palestinians, calling such accusations "anti-Semitic," Israeli doctor Meira Weiss asserted that harvesting organs from dead Palestinians dates back to 1996. She also noted that these stolen organs were used in "medical research at Israeli universities and transplanted into Israeli patients' bodies." Moreover, skin was allegedly taken from the bodies of dead Palestinians and African workers and stored in the Israeli Skin Bank to treat Israeli soldiers with burn injuries.⁷⁰

Under these necrocapitalist conditions, Palestinian lives have become worthless and a part of the disposable surplus population. Palestinians in Gaza, as William Robinson argues, are not only seen as useless for transnational capital.⁷¹ Moreover, in their history of resistance and armed struggle, they also threaten the foundations of the necrocapitalist system. Genocide is then one way for the ruling classes "to develop and extend new systems of mass social control and repression."

This dehumanization of Palestinians is grounded not in the Othering of the Palestinians, but in their relegation, in Franz Fanon's words, to the "zone of non-being."⁷² In this zone, Palestinian lives are not worth the recognition in the imperial Western media the way an Other is recognized. As Dalia Hatuqa posted, "There was more uproar over a debunked story of decapitated babies than there is over actual ones shredded to bits, burnt alive, decapitated & left alone in a hospital to die and get eaten by maggots. This is a product of the dehumanization of Palest. by the West - media included."

What's worse, Palestinian lives have become so worthless in the eyes of the imperial Western media that a genocidaire writer for the Atlantic shamelessly argued that "it is possible to kill children legally." In response, Francesca Albanese posted on X, "What kind of monsters have we become? Justifying the killing of children as "human shields" is the ultimate justification of Israel's genocidal logic and the endorsement of its "humanitarian camouflage", with civilians -even babies in incubators-

becoming abstractions between the self-perceived righteous and the perceived threat to be annihilated.”

Solidarity under necrocapitalism

Speaking about the racialized Palestinian body under necrocapitalism on this Memorial Day is incomplete without linking it to Aaron Bushnell’s heroic, yet controversial, self-immolating act. Bushnell served as a cyber defense operations specialist with the 531st Intelligence Support Squadron in the US Air Force, but held anti-imperialist views and believed in Palestinian liberation. His act was the second such self-immolation act in response to the Gaza genocide in the U.S.

His act of solidarity with the Palestinians must be understood in relation to the same necrocapitalist irrationality that has claimed the lives of over 33 thousand Palestinians thus far in this genocidal war, in addition to over 76 thousand wounded. Under necrocapitalism, even the lives of American soldiers mean nothing and are not a priority for the capitalist class in the US empire.

As he livestreamed his act on his way to the Israeli Embassy where he committed his selfless sacrifice, Bushnell made two main points. First, Bushnell declared his refusal to be complicit in the Gaza genocide. However, his refusal was not an individualistic stand, but reflected the majority position on the unapologetic complicity of the Biden administration in Israel’s genocidal war and their leading role in its management.

As Vetsaboutface, Veterans committed in the fight to stop U.S. imperialist violence, stated on Instagram, Aaron’s “opposition to the unjust violence against Palestinians is the majority position” and “that thousands of Veterans and Military agree with what Aaron said.” In fact, the majority of the American public disapprove of Israel’s genocide in Gaza.

Biden’s Zionist credentials and complicity in genocide are well known. Not only that his ambassador at the UN implicated the Biden administration in “the final solution” in Gaza, Biden himself had expressed no qualms about killing innocent civilians. He once told Menachem Begin, “he would go even further than Israel . . . even if that meant killing women or children.” Begin, whom Einstein called fascist who was once Britain’s most wanted terrorist, “disassociated [him]self from [Biden’s] remarks,” telling him, “No, sir; attention must be paid. According to our values, it is forbidden to hurt women and children, even in war... Sometimes there are casualties among the civilian population as well. But it is forbidden to aspire to this. This is a yardstick of human civilization, not to hurt civilians.”⁷³

Begin’s mythic portrayal of the Israeli military as “the most moral army” notwithstanding, Biden did not apologize and do not expect him to apologize for his genocidal intentions that serve the geopolitical and economic interests of the American empire. He once stated that he would never apologize for his support for Israel’s actions and considered the

bilateral assistance the US gives to Israel as “the best \$3 billion investment we make.” He also added that “If there weren’t an Israel, the United States of America would have to invent an Israel to protect her interests in the region.”

Since October 2023, the Biden administration has approved and delivered on more than 100 arms sales to Israel and sent troops to kill Palestinians in Gaza. Despite Biden’s fake outrage at the killing of the seven international aid workers for World Central Kitchen, his administration approved the transfer of thousands of bombs on the same day these workers were assassinated.

Under these necrocapitalist conditions, Biden’s humanitarian gimmicks have become an absurd and cruel joke. His grotesque plan to build a maritime humanitarian corridor and pier in Gaza, an idea proposed by Netanyahu, is just another ploy to gaslight the international community, weaponize aid, force the evacuation of Palestinians by sea, and enable the settler colonial and apartheid Jewish ethnocratic state to finish the genocide, while absolving it of its responsibilities. Israel, after all, will be the one inspecting the goods in Cyprus and managing the “security” for the port. Even some aid boxes Biden has airdropped on Gaza ended up killing the same starving Palestinians they were allegedly meant to help. In a dialectical Hegelian twist, his humanitarian assistance has become death.

Moreover, Biden doubled down on his complicity, by requesting that Israeli officials give written assurances that they will use U.S. weapons in accordance with international law. Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, who compared Palestinians to “human animals,” signed these assurances. Critics lambasted the absurdity of this idea, stating it “could have been ripped from the satirical newspaper *The Onion*.”⁷⁴ Critics have also made a link between Biden’s gaslighting strategies and the fundraisers that Pro-Israel megadonors Haim Saban and Casey Wassermann hosted for Biden to the tune of 42 million dollars.

This explains why the Biden administration even considered its abstention vote on the ceasefire resolution at the UN Security Council as “non-binding.” They not only rejected describing this move as a shift in Biden’s approach and policy towards Israel. They also accused United Nations special rapporteur Francesca Albanese as anti-Semitic for her report in which she described Israel’s ongoing genocide in Gaza as the culmination of a “long-standing settler-colonial process of erasure.”

The second major point Bushnell made in his act was the clear link he drew between his auto-cremation and the fate of Palestinians, highlighting the ontological precarity and disposability of the body under necrocapitalism. As an anti-imperialist activist, Bushnell was able to see that his “extreme act of protest” was “not extreme at all,” “compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers.”

In his anti-imperialist politics, Bushnell knew the impact of the

American produced and funded weapons that Israel drops in Gaza on the bodies of their Palestinian victims. These weapons include precision-guided munitions, small-diameter bombs, and other weapons such as the “meat grinder” AGM-114R9X Hellfire missile, which ripped into the bodies of civilians like the one that Israel dropped outside Al-Shifa hospital.

Ultimate Sacrifice

Herein lies the ultimate sacrifice Bushnell made. Like Medea, his action suggests an emphasis on the universal through which solidarities can be formed.⁷⁵ By self-immolating in his military fatigues, Bushnell not only negated his particular military identity and the expectations associated with his role and responsibilities as an active member of the United States Air Force.

More importantly, he engaged in a deeper, more existential negation of the frameworks and values that underpin the existing necrocapitalist world order. His very act of extreme protest became a critique of the system itself.

Hence, we need to reject the imperial Western media erasure and demonization of his sacrifice, which was immediately framed and dismissed as a case of mental illness. We also should renounce any third worldist anti-colonial rejection of his sacrifice on account of his military service and race, despite his anti-imperialist politics.

Similarly, the anti-colonialist reaction to Biden’s outrage and the outrage of the Western establishment political class over the killing of the seven WCK volunteers is misguided. It does not merely point to the racist system that values the mournable lives of white people over the disposability of Palestinian lives and the lives of other brown people. Rather, these politicians are outraged because they cannot obscure the truth that nobody is secure in the necrocapitalist genocidal machinery any more, except perhaps for members of the global capitalist class. In this sense, Chef José Andrés is correct to say that this is “a war against humanity itself.” Skin color is not a defense against the threat of necrocapitalism.

No matter how his act is judged, Bushnell’s selfless act has begun to inspire other acts of solidarity. On Easter Sunday Air Force airman Larry Herbert initiated a hunger strike outside the White House to protest against the deliberate starvation of the Gaza children. Anti-Zionist Jewish and student coalitional organizing on American campuses vigorously enact these ideals.

Despite the draconian measures used to censure, demonize, and dox them, student coalitional organizing represent the best traditions in American education. It is not only that Palestinian and anti-Zionist Jewish students activists are working together, but the National Students for Justice in Palestine (NSJP) has been significantly funded by Jewish organizations such as the Bafrayung Fund.

Like Bushnell, this coalitional organizing shows a new common

denominator around which people, those who are directly affected and those who are unconsciously affected by necrocapitalism, can rally. They show that solidarity can be formed on the basis of our structural position in necrocapitalism and ability to renounce the necrocapitalist system that permits genocides and instrumentalizes them for its expansion. By failing to act now, there will be no allies left when they come for you.

- 1 Mitralias 2023.
- 2 Bachner 2023.
- 3 Halfbinger and Kreshner 2018.
- 4 Trew 2018. On the collaboration between Zionists, fascists, and Nazis, see Werleman 2017 and Karoui 2023. In fact, Schneider 2024 argues that Israel's illiberal democracy has become a model for the far right around the world.
- 5 The slide into fascism was an inevitable consequence of the Zionist identification with Western colonialism and its religious messianism. Zionists established a religious-nationalist movement that, according to Rinon 2019, manipulated messianic ideology to fashion the new Jewish identity.
- 6 Chafets 2018.
- 7 Žižek 2006
- 8 Middle East Monitor 2018.
- 9 Yiftachel 2006.
- 10 Sputnik International 2018.
- 11 Tóth 2014.
- 12 Agerholm 2018; Ahren 2018.
- 13 Pfeffer 2018.
- 14 Tibon 2018; Landua 2018.
- 15 France 24 2018.
- 16 Wikipedia contributors 2024a.
- 17 On the history of the extremist messianic Zionist far right movement, see Shahak and Mezvinsky 2004; Kaplan 2005; Pedahzur 201; and Hirsch-Hoefler and Mudde 2020.
- 18 Abunimah 2002.
- 19 Chomsky 2013.
- 20 Halper 2012.
- 21 Abunimah 2014.
- 22 Cook 2010.
- 23 Hartman 2014.
- 24 Hilal 2014.
- 25 Weiss 2014.
- 26 Wikipedia contributors 2024c.
- 27 Aljamal 2021.
- 28 Tol staff 2021b.
- 29 Carlstrom 2017; Elizur and Malkin 2013.
- 30 Cook 2021.
- 31 Tol staff 2021a.
- 32 Zhao 2021.
- 33 Rapoport 2015.
- 34 *The New York Times* 2021.
- 35 Avnery 2006.
- 36 Araj 2023.
- 37 Shelah 2023; Matza 2023;
- 38 Marder 2023.
- 39 Maltz 2023.
- 40 Rothenberg 2022.
- 41 Keller-Lynn and Bachner 2022.
- 42 Kurtzer-Ellenbogen 2023.
- 43 Smotrich 2017.
- 44 Niv 2023.
- 45 Sharvit 2023.
- 46 Fritzhand 2023.
- 47 Papper 2023.
- 48 Fabian 2023.
- 49 Horovitz 1996.
- 50 Žižek 1999a.
- 51 Kleinberg 2023.
- 52 Kleinberg 2023.
- 53 Sella 2023.
- 54 Maltz 2023.
- 55 Haas 2023.
- 56 Hankir 2018.
- 57 Abulhawa 2024.
- 58 Abushamla 2024.
- 59 Sidhwa and Perlmutter 2024.
- 60 Tondo, Taha and Burke 2024.
- 61 Abunimah 2024.
- 62 Beeley 2024.
- 63 Conley and de Waal 2019.
- 64 Zhang 2024.
- 65 Khader 2023.
- 66 Khader 2024.
- 67 Abusitta 2024.
- 68 Loewenstein 2023.
- 69 Abraham 2024.
- 70 Black 2009.
- 71 Robinson 2024.
- 72 Portes 2024.
- 73 Oren 2011.
- 74 Conley 2024.
- 75 Žižek 1999b.

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