

Targets of Opportunity (On Racial Palestinianization)

For death is to see death.

Mahmoud Darwish, *Memory for Forgetfulness*, 1995

Palestinians as a people and Arabs more generally, more regionally, as a pan-national self-identification emerged in *modern* terms first in the earlier decades of the twentieth century as expressions of anti-colonial and autonomous sensibilities, interests, and commitments. The heterogeneity among Arabs living throughout the region sought a more cohering identity in the face of intensifying British and French colonization after World War I, the discovery of large holdings of oil, growing anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia, and ultimately the founding of Israel. The name “Palestine” was reinvoked by the British in the early 1920s upon receiving a League of Nations mandate to rule over the territory after Ottoman imperial control in the late nineteenth century had folded it into the southern extension of Syria.

British modernization, as Salim Tamari has pointed out, accordingly transformed a complexly secular, cosmopolitan, broadly communitarian order under Ottoman rule – especially in cities such as Jerusalem and ports such as Jaffa and Haifa (but also more regionally in Beirut and Damascus) – into a more segregating, ethnoracially and religiously discrete and divided set of communities in contest with each other for resources, space, and political favor. Classic colonial divide and rule, ethnoracially fueled. This regional transformation of heterogeneity into the logos of an assertedly homogeneous ethnoracial polity, of ethnoraciality, its promptings and its implications, is what I trace here in the name of racial palestinianization.

The Order of Racial Palestinianization

These delimiting senses of collective selves solidified interactively at mid-twentieth century as the struggles in the area over and with an emerging Israel and its territorial assertions intensified. The realization of Israel in particular, first as an idea whose roots were planted and then the landscape of which was carved out squarely in the territory until the moment of Israel’s inception known as Palestine, united the longstanding and -suffering inhabitants of the area interactively as target of restriction and self-protection.

Thinking racially

Israel was an anomaly at its founding, reflecting conflicting logics of world historical events at the time between which its declarative moment was awkwardly wedged. On the one hand, it mimicked rather than properly mirrored the logics of independence fueled by decolonizing movements, though perhaps curiously closer in some crucial ways to Pakistan than, say, to India or other decolonizing societies of the day. On the other, it embodied *in potentia* as structural conditions of its very formation *some* key features of what coterminously was emerging as the apartheid state. In what follows, I am less identifying Israel as representing the apartheid state as I am tracing the ways in which, in conception and practice, it has come not just to embody apartheid elements but to represent a *novel* form of the racial state more generally.

In the latter spirit, Palestinians were the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine. They were indigenous in the sense of being and being “found” in the area, both by the nineteenth-century colonizing powers and by the increasing convergence of Zionist-inspired Jews in the territory after the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and especially in the wake of World War II. This is not to say Jews weren’t present in the area prior to the migrations from the 1880s, only that the numbers were small and overwhelmingly Sephardic, locally born and bred. Identified as the direct kin of biblical Philistines, by the mid-twentieth century Palestinians as a people were often seen as philistines as much in characterization as in scriptural name, conceived in the representational struggles as bloodthirsty and warmongering,

constantly harassing modern-day Israelites, debauched and lacking altogether in liberal culture. Terrorists, it seems, historically all the way down, to the toe-nails of time. Goliath cut to size by David's perennial craftiness and military prowess.

Israel came to be seen as an exemplary instance of what Michel Foucault, though in a different context, memorably has called "counter-history," as a historical narrative of insurrection, against the grain, establishing itself in the face of formidable and threatening power directed against it. Israel is forged out of a "biblical history of servitude and exiles," as a "history of insurrections" against state-imposed or -sanctioned injustices. In this, Israel held out hope and the promise of justice prevailed. Its founding narration, in short, is a complex of the history of struggles (Foucault uses the term "race wars" but it is clear from the examples he cites that he really has in mind group, even class, struggles) in which Jews were invariably the quintessential pariah, they who did not belong, but mixed with the civilizing European imperative, the white man's burden, of what I have characterized as "racial historicism."

Moses (Moshe) Hess, important for introducing Engels to the socialist fold and one of the first to articulate the Zionist vision, implored "the Jewish race" in 1862 to

be the bearers of civilization to peoples who are still inexperienced and their teachers in the European sciences, to which your race has contributed so much. . . . [Jews are to be] mediators between Europe and far Asia, opening the roads that lead to India and China – those unknown regions which must ultimately be thrown open to civilization . . . [Jewish] labor and industry [in Palestine] will turn the ancient soil into fruitful valleys, reclaiming it from the encroaching sands of the desert . . . (My emphasis)

Theodore Herzl, the father figure of the Zionist social movement, concurred: "The immigration of Jews signifies an unhoped-for accession of strength for the land which is now so poor; in fact, for the whole Ottoman Empire." The Zionist vision for Israel, as Ella Shohat has remarked, represents the modernizing imperative in a region seen as still marked by the biblical backwardness of its Arab inhabitants.

Israel, it is accordingly apparent, has been thought – has thought of itself in part precisely – from its initiating modern conception explicitly as racially configured, as racially representative. And those insistent racial traces persist despite the post-Holocaust European repression of the use of race

as social self-reference or -representation, as I make evident in the chapter to follow. In this, and as much as any other modernizing state, Israel accordingly has been caught in the race-making web of modernizing statehood. States assume their modernity, as I have argued in *The Racial State*, through racial articulation.

Israel, far from an exception, is a modern racial state knotted with and in constitutive contrast to the prehistory of Palestinian antiquity, of its historicized racial immaturity. Israel represents modernization, progress, industry and industriousness, looking to the bright future, the civilizing mission of the best that has been thought and could be taught. Palestine represents the past, failed effort where effort at all, antique land still tilled by hand and the perennial failure of governance, a place constantly in the grip of its time past and passed. The larger relational condition, a state racially characterizing itself in its founding self-representation, is one in which the state of the latter, materially as much as metaphorically, is fueled by the racially conceived, tinged (one might say singed) imposition of the former.

But this civilizing mission and self-determining drive thus initiated through Jews in the name of European civilization is one with a twist. Israel was forged, of course, in the fire and fury of all those migrations, the experiences of expulsions and exiles, arrivals and starting over, assimilations and abjected evictions, wrongful convictions and threatened extinctions. The war of races in which the Jew is the hounded, the perennial foe and fugitive, becomes in Israel's founding a protracted conflict in which the Jewish State, Herzl's dream, is turned into oppressor, victimizer, and sovereign. Vulnerable, victim, and vanquished become pursuer, perpetrator, predator. The State is transformed, as Foucault says, into protector of the integrity, superiority, and more or less purity of the homogenizing group, what Foucault marks as "the race." State sovereignty defends itself above all else so as to secure the group, its ethnoraciality, even to protect its purity, perpetuity, and power, for which it takes itself to exist and which it seeks to represent.

In "The Future of an Illusion" Freud notes that a culture in which the wellbeing of one group in the society is predicated on the subjugation or "suppression" of another will prompt intense hostility on the part of the suppressed. The deeper the hostility, the more likely the disaffected will act to destroy the culture, and in the extreme will reject the very premises on which the culture founds itself. Such an oppressive culture, Freud concludes, neither is likely nor justly "deserves" to perpetuate itself (as oppressing culture, as a state of oppression). A prescient insight, some 75 years ago,

Despite debatable stories of early Zionist settlers driven by socialist ideals of peaceful coexistence with local Arabs on land commonly tilled and towns cohabited, by the early 1970s Golda Meir could claim rhetorically that the Palestinian people did not exist. Romantic coexistence in these parts has always gone arm in arm with assertive claims to territorial and political sovereignty, on both sides of the conflict. In Israel's triumphant War of Independence (what Palestinians characterize as "Al-Naqba" or "the catastrophe," a root meaning curiously more or less synonymous with "Shoah"), Israeli gains expanded the territory ceded it by the original UN Partition Resolution by almost one third. It widened its cartographic waistline, evicting 750,000 of the 850,000 or so Arabs living within enlarged Israel in order to ensure a Jewish majority. The moral qualms over eviction-driven expansion are well characterized in novelist Yizhar Smilansky's short story depicting the Sartrean dilemma faced by a young soldier caught between executing evicted Arab villagers and contributing to securing Israel's infant existence. That dilemma seems now to have been resolved overwhelmingly in favor of the latter national prerogative.

In short, a dominant faction of the Israeli political establishment has been committed since earliest Zionist settlement, intensifying with the declaration of Israeli independence in 1948, not simply to deny Palestinian existence but to make the claim true, to act in its name and on its terms. An Israeli military planning document, known as Plan D (or Plan *Dalet*), formulated in the run-up to Israel's War of Independence in May–June 1948, sought "destruction of [Arab] villages by fire explosives and mining" after the villages had been surrounded and searched, resistance destroyed, and "expelling the population beyond the boundaries of the State."

Under Arafat, of course, Palestinians not only asserted a coherent identity, but also sought to reciprocate that denial: the state of Israel does not, should not, exist. But as duplicitous and dirty-handed as the Palestinian patriarch turned out, and however rhetorically insistent concerning Israel's denial and demise, it is a whole lot more difficult, it would seem, to activate denial of the existence of one whose semi-automatic is at your nose than it is to insist that a stateless people, a nation of refugees from – while on – its own land, has no rights. It is not that might makes right in this case, if any; it is that might manufactures the conditions and parameters, the terms, of political, and by extension historical and representational, possibility.

The Zionist fight against the British continues to be framed as a battle against colonial imposition. As Martin Sicker points out, it was touted at

least until 1948, and from today's vantage point somewhat ironically, as the struggle for "the liberation of *Palestine*" from British rule. Once the British vacated the territory, the ensuing Arab–Israeli war in 1948 was posed as a war of survival. Survival and security have been the dominant Israeli dispositions ever since. But Samira Esmeir reminds us that this relational logic of death and emergence reveals that birth in this instance is predicated on death, destruction, and eviction, moral and territorial.

Thus Meron Benvenisti reports that something like 200 Arab villages were abandoned in May 1948, and another 60 in June. By the time the dust had settled, nearly half a million Palestinians had been reduced to refugees, fleeing expanded Israel, never to be allowed to return. Israel came into being, came to be, by virtue both of Jews staring at their own individual and collective extinction and of Palestine's constriction, if not cessation, at least of its realization if not of its idea. That latter deathly denial, rationalized in the name of the former, is as much a part of Israel's history as it is repressed in, if not excised from, its official record. It is this tension between denial and repression that fuels Israel's sense of Palestine, and so of itself also.

There is a sharp distinction, often lost, between the notion of self-hating Jew and that of self-critical Jew. To criticize Israel as a state formation, and the Israeli state and governmental policies as enacting, enabling, or turning a blind eye to particularly vicious expressions of humiliation, dehumanization, and degradation, as Judith Butler has pointed out, emphatically counts as the latter without amounting to the former. To criticize the government of Israel and its policies, even to criticize the partial grounds on which that state was founded, is not to criticize Jews as such, nor is it to place Jews anywhere and everywhere at risk, notwithstanding the reported spike in recent antisemitic attacks in the likes of France. It is not even to place Jews in Israel at risk. Quite the contrary; it is to point out the way in which such policies and governmentality manifest the very insecurity they claim to undo.

That there remains always the possibility of an Israeli government that does not discriminate against its own Arab citizens and Palestinian non-citizens, as numerous courageous groups and individuals within Israel itself are working under very trying conditions to secure, entails that criticism of Israeli state policy and actions need not be – and often is not – antisemitic. To make out an argument, even, for a single non-ethnocracially configured state incorporating Jews and Palestinians alike is not to call for the demise of Jews or the dissolution of Jewry. Israel was made by a mix of Jews wanting a place to call home, if not always to be at home, in a world

stricken by the guilt of deathly antisemitism. The idea of Israel subsequently came to tie Jews to one way of being in the world, to a singular commitment, the reifying stereotypification from which it was supposed to take leave.

Curiously, some radical Jewish Old Testament literalists call for ending Israel as we know it today in favor of reinscribing some originary biblical formation. And while they might be called crazy, I have never heard them characterized as antisemitic. So it is an irony that the considerable vehemence expressed by those in charging Jewish critics of Israel as "self-hating Jews" suggests an intense hatred of the very Jews at whom they are leveling the charge. The lance of "antisemitism" may just redirect uncomfortably.

To put it thus implicates Jews qua Jewishness as much in the necessity of critiquing the injustices in which the Israeli state engages as the refusal to criticize. More pressingly, the insistence that there be no such critique implicates silent and silenced Jews anywhere in that state's persistent injustices. This is a particularly knotted, if not inverted, expression of the traditional tensions between universalism and particularity, of selfhood and alterity, strangeness and alienation. The Israeli state is founded in the name of all Jews. That fact alone cedes to each Jew the responsibility not simply to defend Israel, no matter what; it demands of each also the critical attention to the especially egregious injustices the state exercises in the name of all.

As the Chosen People, self-anointedly so, Jews are the objects of both envy and scorn. Jews' "right to return" is magically drawn into a landscape apparently never abandoned as the Arab right is buried in the rubble of a landscape to which they assertedly never laid claim and from which they have recently been exorcised. Their homes are bulldozed away, their right to live, to *be*, in either Palestine or Israel, is always in question, under threat, uncertain, no matter how deep any ancestral, familial claim.

The "right of return" presupposes a belonging, a longing to be, a sense of security in a common place uniquely and always *ours*, a security coterminously common and false. For if all Jews were indeed to avail themselves of "return," it likely would be easier today to wipe Israel out with one blast, and with it all Jews, as Iranian president Ahmadinejad has called for, than it could have been under the Final Solution. The project of homogeneity, the artifice, the labor to realize a state of homogenized commonality, of familiarity and familiarity, in its name, are, synonymously, the ultimate threat to the group's existence. The "wandering Jew," accordingly, of "going and resting" as Gabriel Josipovici has so elegantly put it, of settlement and

unsettlement, is as accurate a characterization of the Jewish experience, Israel or no, as there is to find. It has opened Jews to being cosmopolitan and target, worldly post-national and vulnerable victim, exuberantly diverse and exclusionarily (even stultifyingly) homogeneous, engaged citizen and arrogant aggressor, progressive political critic and subjugating settler. That deathly weight of race, its anxious ambivalences, remarked upon in Chapter 1.

Religious interest groups in Israel and other supporters elsewhere of a restrictively ethnohomogeneous Israel consequently are concerned to control the conception and administration of "the true and pure Jew." This is a commitment not that logically far removed in the end from the likes of the "one drop rule." This idea of Israel requires "the Palestinian problem" to justify itself as the *Jewish* state, much as Germans required the racial logics of "the Jewish problem" and America "the Negro problem" to constitute themselves in earlier moments as self-projectedly homogeneous. In the face of its own increasingly radically Jewish heterogeneity – radically Jewish and radically heterogeneous – and so in the face of its own internal implosion, Israel seeks its familial artifice by projecting a threat both internal and purged to its shifting and shifted boundaries, at once within and without. From its earliest formative conception, a dominant order of Zionism articulated "the Jewish race" as creating coherence, artifice initially discursive homogeneity of and for "the Jewish people" in the face of a scattered and diffuse "nation." At the risk of dramatic over-generalization, if homogeneity tends to humiliate, heterogeneity tends to humble.

Israelis now require the Philistine, as Sartre once said about the Jew himself in France: if he didn't exist, he would have to be invented, as indeed he has been. *He* has been: for the figure of the Palestinian, of the threatening suicide bomber, of a refugee rabble reducible to rubble, is overwhelmingly male, supported by women considered, unlike their military-serving Israeli counterparts, too weak and too late to do anything about the state of affairs, the affairs of state. If men suffer for the state, or for the nationalist idea of one, women suffer more immediately for men martyred to the nationalist mandate or sacrificing and sacrificed to state security, and for the families they are left to feed, materially and spiritually. Few women walk the streets of the territories, on either side of the catastrophe, of "the troubles," to borrow a telling phrase from another not so distant time and place.

The project of Israel accordingly became the materialization of this homogenizing fabric. Israel as such cannot live with the Palestinians, purging them

persistently from green-line Israel, but cannot live without them, conceptually as much as materially, existentially as much as emotionally. Israel is no longer as dependent on Palestinian labor as it once was, a result of importing other others – Filipinos, Romanians, Thais – to do the dirty work for a pittance (though cheap labor at hand would still be economically preferable to the import). The presence of Filipinos and Thais likewise makes it possible for Israelis to think of Israel as cosmopolitan, as an ethnically heterogeneous late modern state evidenced by the ready availability of Asian food. Middle Eastern cuisine no longer dominates the eating culture of Israeli fare as it once did, especially in the larger cities and hyper-modern commercial strips of the residential suburbs.

Israelis nevertheless need Palestinians to command militarization, American support and weaponry, even its own sense of victimized self. They “need” Palestinians in another sense too. September 11 revived Israel’s renowned but at the time flagging technological revolution and computing industry by selling its products especially to the US as servicing Israel’s vaunted security system. Israel’s export of security products to America, among others, is up fivefold this decade, ranging from surveillance devices for airports and cities to tamper-proof biometric IDs and technosecuritized walls. Here, too, as Naomi Klein has pointed out, Palestinians have proved indispensable, as guinea pigs, experimental subjects for perfecting the technological apparatuses of securitization.

Israeli armed forces in the territories have increasingly strangled the flow of Palestinian goods from one Palestinian town to another, and have decimated and confiscated Palestinian fields for the sake of erecting a security barrier and separation wall. There are something in the order of 500–600 Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank. These consist of concrete watchtowers and armored vehicles from behind the anonymity of which the movement of Palestinian daily life is manipulated at official whim, opened up or closed down at invisible military command, as Avi Mograbi’s extraordinary docu-contrast, *Avenge but One of My Two Eyes* (2005), reveals in excruciating detail. Movement – of people, goods, money, water, sewage, automobiles, ambulances – is turned on and off, opened up momentarily and closed down just as quickly. Often on nothing more than military whim. The Palestinian territories beneath Sharon’s boot and vision, and those of his political offspring, have suffered more than 50 percent unemployment, with 60 percent of the population living below the poverty line (a mere \$2 per day). Health problems have spiraled, and securing health care is almost as hazardous as the health condition one might be seeking care to cure.

Israel’s current crisis, as the Palestinian one too, consequently, is as much economic as political, as much about the decimation of Palestinian survival and consumptive capacity as about Israeli self-security. It is a self-exacerbated crisis fed by a complex of factors. These include a contradictory collective egoism, exacerbated by perceived Palestinian intransigence and violence, and underpinned by a return to presumptions of racially conceived Palestinian in- or infra-humanity on one side and insistent Israeli assertiveness on the other. “All Muslims are murderers,” Israeli cabinet minister Boim declared knowingly in 2004. Well, what does that make all Israelis? Israel necessitates for itself the refusal of Palestine’s realization, and as that necessity is insisted upon and enacted, it contradictorily fuels the separatist pipe-dream of Palestine, of an independent Palestinian state rather than mutually recognized respect and a common coexistence.

Here, then, is the knotted dilemma facing the region: Israel’s sense of self, statehood, and security is predicated on restricting the scope of the same for those from whose landscape of life, loves, and longing the state of Israel was carved out. And Palestinian possibilities, in point of fact the very idea of a coherent Palestinian corpus, of Palestinian national aspirations, acquired a spirit, its very conception, as explicit resistance to and rejection of Israel’s stake, at the extreme, of its being as such. They need each other, at least rhetorically if not psychologically, as perpetual grounds and justification for their own existence as much as in seeking to undermine the possibility of the other. It’s as though existence of each is measured by the extent of the other’s demise. The lopsidedness in repressive power of course renders Palestinian destitution more concertedly palpable than the reversal, at least at present.

This curious, conflicted, and quite unconventional mix of sensibilities and commitments, logics and laborings continues to mobilize especially American support for Israel. Israel has been seen as anti-colonial and nationalist but in its drive for survival and security as deeply dependent on American support. As such, Israel is never anti-American, as so many others in the Middle East have been or become. Since the 1967 war the region has fallen increasingly into a quasi-colonial condition and its predictable resistance. Israel is seen and comprehends itself rather as kindred spirit, one with America, sharing a supposedly common Judeo-Christian set of sensibilities, dispositions, and values, sometimes now characterized as a civilization in the way Herzl and his colleagues were wont to do over a century ago, and more recently a common set of regional interests.

Israel is taken as an outpost of European civilization, a frontier of sorts, in an altogether hostile and alien environment. Brothers to Christians, keepers of the faith and holy sites, a flourishing democracy in the land of Christ and region of alien autocratic regimes. A defender against irrationality and irreverence of life surrounded by infidels, a tower of strength and stability fueling American industry. Readers of the same book(s) and lovers of the same culture. Israel is the only state outside of the European continental land mass to participate in the Eurovision Song Contest, for instance. In this scheme of things, it seems, Israel must be European, presumptively white. But in keeping with contemporary racial americanization, with born again racism, Israel's whiteness is transparent, virtual, invisible.

American evangelicals, major determinants of George W. Bush's political direction locally and globally, assumed the clash of civilization conception of foreign policy between the west and the rest, most notably between Christianity and Islam. They helped to turn support for Israel into something of a crusade. Abraham, the story goes, was promised by God all the territory between the Nile in the south and west and the Euphrates in the north and east. As Max Nordau, Herzl's assertive assistant, put it in addressing European Jews in 1907, "We shall seek to do in Western Asia what the English did in India" – and then catches himself by adding, "I mean the cultural work, not rulership and domination. We aim to come to *Eretz Israel* as messengers of culture and we aim to extend the moral boundaries of Europe all the way to the Euphrates."

In short, race, racelessly conceived in relation to and through religion, steers the interests of geostrategic positioning. Evangelical Christianity can seek superciliously to satisfy its own apocalyptic vision while asserting its support for Israel. Their sharing a mutual goal is predicated on a putatively common heritage, religious and cultural, evidence of America's distance from its own antisemitic history.

The history of enmity between Jews and Arabs, as Gil Anidjar so revealingly parses it, accordingly is a European history, a history long constituted within Europe and across its orbits, one the traces of which are streaked through the landscape and culture of contemporary Israel. It is a history in the (re-)making. Israel/Palestine thus revealingly figures the condition of postcoloniality, nervously straddles its fissures, on structural more than temporal registers.

The Europeanness of politically and religiously dominant Israelis renders the Promised Land and its members, in the minds of most Americans (not least evangelical Christians) and in the dominant Israeli imagination,

as normatively white. Israelis occupy the structural positions of whiteness in the racial hierarchy of the Middle East. Arabs, accordingly – most notably in the person of Palestinians – are the antithesis, a fact rendering the ambivalent situation of Arab Jews especially troubled, as Ella Shohat has demonstrated. Historically, politically, religiously, and culturally, Arabs are neither Jew nor (as such) white.

At the same time, the Jewishness of Arab Jews is complexly undercut by their Arabness. Popularly referenced as "Mizrahim," Yahouda Shenhav makes evident just how racially indexed such reference nevertheless remains by pointing out that it literally translates as "Easterners," itself code for "Orientals." Abba Eban, longtime foreign minister (1966–74), warned that "One of the great apprehensions which afflict us is the danger of the immigrants of Oriental origin forcing Israel to equalize its cultural level with that of the neighboring world." In the complex codes of Israel's raceless racial history, Mizrahim occupy a status as not-quite-white, more so than Palestinian citizens of Israel, to be sure, but less so than the whiteness, the Europeanness, of Ashkenazis. Mizrahim look a little like Israel's post-apartheid "Coloureds."

Prior to 1948, Jews living throughout what would become Arab states numbered somewhat short of one million. Today, that group collectively numbers just 8,000 people, a mere 1 percent of what it was prior to Israeli statehood. The Arab Jewish population of Israel, by contrast, has grown to almost 40 percent. They are in significant part de-Arabized (to riff on Shenhav's term) and de-nationalized, in order to be re-nationalized as they are re-oriented. To a degree Arab Jews became pan-ethnicized in Israel, Zionized in their pan-ethnicity even as their different national histories disarticulate their respective experiences. But they continue to occupy ambivalent, even anxious status in Israeli socio-economic life. A "necessary minority," given the country's broader demography, incorporated but significantly poorer and less powerful on every social index, a valuable intelligence commodity, given their ethnolinguistic backgrounds and cultural understandings, as Shenhav's account makes clear.

This ambivalence runs to the very early days of the state. "We do not want Israel to become Arab," declared Ben-Gurion in a fit of forthrightness. "We are bound by duty to fight against the spirit of the Levant society." Yet, because Jews, de-Arabized or not, they are better treated, considered to belong, with more access, rights, political representation, and increasingly political power and acceptance than non-Jewish Arab Israelis.

Palestinians, by contrast and especially in the territories, not unlike the racially marginalized and unwanted in racially oppressive social arrangements generally, have been evicted from the Kantian Kingdom of Ends. Ben-Gurion repeatedly affirmed the right of Palestinians to self-determination, even as he insisted in the spirit of racial historicism that they were incapable of developing or ruling the country, that they had no right of ownership over then-Palestine, that they were to be expelled.

This erosion of the right to a presence, even while acknowledging an abstract right to self-determination, underpinned the steady eviction from the Kingdom of Moral Ends. Over time, then, and perhaps as a response to politics on the ground, Palestinians came to lose as a consequence any claim to moral protection, to being a beloved neighbor. A senior Israeli military officer during the second intifada implored Israeli military personnel chillingly to be “Judeo-Nazis” in order, somewhat ambiguously, “to beat the Palestinians.” Another officer, even if self-consciously, opined uncannily in the daily press that “If our job is to seize a densely packed refugee camp or take over the Nablus Casbah . . . [we] must above all else analyze and bring together the lessons of past battles, even – shocking though this might appear – to analyze how the German Army operated in the Warsaw Ghetto.”

The term “Judeo-Nazi,” now readily rhetorically circulated among more vehement Palestinian critics of Israel, was actually coined by the late critical Israeli philosopher and rabbi Yeshayahu Leibowitz to refer to the unfortunate behavior of a group of Israeli soldiers in the wake of the Six Day War. Generally, the association by critics of Israeli state practices in any way with those of the Nazi brings howls of protest, dismissing such references as insensitive at best, downright antisemitic at worst.

It wasn’t always so. In a new biography of Menachem Begin, Avi Shilon reports that in the 1960s longtime prime minister David Ben-Gurion characterized Begin, himself later to become prime minister, as “Hitlerite” and “racist.” And an open letter to the *New York Times* damned the Herut Party, founded by Begin in 1948 and a forerunner to the conservative Likud Party today, as emulating “Nazi and Fascist parties.” The letter was signed by, among others, Albert Einstein and Hannah Arendt, firm if not uncritical supporters of Israel both. More recently, by contrast, the forcing by Israeli soldiers at a checkpoint of a Palestinian man to play “a sad song” on the violin he was carrying conjured images among Israeli citizens of Jews forced to play music to accompany mass murder in Nazi camps. And yet the outcry in Israel following publication of this “incident” was less against

the humiliation of Palestinians than for desecrating the memory of the Holocaust. It is disturbing, as a consequence, that having been coined by a prominent Israeli in a critical register initially, the term “Judeo-Nazi” has come to be occasionally embraced by some, even if ironically, as a term of the realm.

Palestinians (as Arabs more generally) are the new necropolitical targets of the world, heel on the face, eating dust when they have anything to eat at all. Desert people, which is to say deserted, reduced to philistinism, untrusted because normatively untrustworthy. And once deserted, having nowhere to turn, no one to appeal to but a few folks of conscience, they are fair game.

In August 2003, Israel introduced a disturbing new law: In the name of security, of not wanting to be overrun demographically, and so of the untouchable Jewish logic of survival, any Arab Israeli citizen marrying a Palestinian would be *required* to move to the Palestinian territories to live, or to leave the country altogether. Ethnoracial purging – deeply connected to but subtly differentiated from ethnic cleansing – is the process of removing, evicting (what Ghada Karmi calls “vanishing”) almost all Palestinians identified as such from green-line Israel. Since 1967, the Arab population of Jerusalem has declined from 72 to 28 percent. Palestinians born, bred, and residing on property they have long owned within the boundaries of “Jewish Jerusalem” are declared by the state residents of the West Bank. They may be registered accordingly as “absentee landlords” in the very houses in which they (illegally) reside, their property subject to confiscation.

Where ethnic cleansing involves wiping a country “clean” of an identifiable ethnic minority by wiping (many or most of) them out, ethnoracial purging involves forcing a considerable percentage of group members out of the national territory and so of the moral imaginary. They are moved further away, outside of national boundaries, more and more into enclosed enclaves, even within what is regarded as their own territory. Radically minoritizing the remainder, ethnoracial purging lies between the national(ist) purification of ethnic cleansing, on one side, and ban-tustanization, on the other. In a casual exchange, Philomena Essed has distinguished between *weeding out* and “rooting out,” the former repetitive task of revisiting the removal of persistent pests, the latter seeking to sterilize and condomize the territory against any possible return. Israel has long vacillated between these two modalities. In either case, racial palestinianization provides the prototype – the rationales and representations,

the logics and models, in short, the roadmap – for strategic social prophylaxis, for ethnoracial eviction and ethnoracial culling.

Palestinianizing the racial

As Sartre remarks about antisemitism, then, so we can observe about palestinianization, that it is not simply an idea or set of ideas but as much a *passion*. Racial palestinianization turns on a revulsion and repulsion related to dispositions of abjection, horror, hatred, anger, inferiorization. The Palestinian's vulgarity and aggression are the source if not the totalization of Israel's woes. Were it not for the Palestinian there would be no terror, no threat, no insecurity, no challenge to Israel's very existence, no recession, no economic burden, no refugee problem, no insecurity regarding demographic swamping, no limit on Jewish settlements in Judea and Sumaria. The Holy Land would be complete, unified, God's historical promise fulfilled. But perhaps too there would be no Israel (as we now know it)!

Racial palestinianization is thus a conceit about contemporary conditions in terms of a projected past conceived in terms of the politics of the present. The Palestinian is a Philistine, with philistine values, interests, and desires, a primitive in the sense of never having evolved beyond ancient whims, drives, capriciousness, viciousness, and the irresponsible impulses to which they give rise. The Palestinian is driven by nothing but unprovoked hate and anger, incapable of a higher order of values, of deeper causation, of responsibility as a product of free choice. Palestinianization, like the projection of "Palestine," in short, is a state of passion, its only rationality purely instrumental, crudely calculated and cruelly calculating, consequential, awe-ful. It is a state in which justification, reasonableness, freedom, and justice are feared, from which they have been expunged.

Racial palestinianization is a projection, then, from arrogance and the racial labor of impotence. It is the disposition that arrogates to itself the source of universal and absolute judgment, ultimately over life and death, the quality of living and dying, over the state and civil society, the conditions of existence and civility. But it is a tenuous self-arrogation, one prompting death and destruction, on both sides, in the name of its execution that can never be satisfied or satiated. In creating the philistine, racial palestinianization licenses and unleashes the action-figure of its very invention. Samson, after all and altogether ironically, was the original suicide "bomber."

Supporters of the Kach Movement, the remnants of the outlawed political party in Israel initiated by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane and now listed as a "terrorist organization" by various western governments, rally support around the Samsonite injunction to avenge his blindness. In gatherings that resemble small heavy metal concerts in sweaty stuffed halls, a biblical professor longhair urges the adoring crowd to

Strengthen me
That I may avenge one of my two eyes
Revenge upon Palestine
Revenge, Revenge, Revenge
Upon Palestine
For God's sake.

Committed to reinstating the imagined biblical boundaries of Israel, these assertive extensions of Israeli sovereign power in the name of some antique theological imaginary of Jewish flourishing serve to render mainstream Israeli control over all aspects of Palestinian living and dying seemingly respectable, moderate, responsible self-protection.

By contrast, Arafat's interminable history, of course, was one of too often tragic and occasionally comic mistimings, miscues, and misdirections. The consequences were more than often bitter, even devastating, as much for his own people he claimed to represent as for Israelis he clearly did resent. Orientalize the Palestinian, philistinize him, and he will act out accordingly. The Arab is a dog, Arik had always said, the prototypical Judas; she a whore, the quintessential Delilah. He will howl, keeping you awake at night; she will infect you, blind you, sucking away your strength. Kill as many "worms" as you can, the Sharonites have always implored, for fear they will otherwise overrun you. Take their land, for it is ours. Destroy their houses, villages, olive groves, for they do not belong. We should have done so long ago; let's finish it now.

Racial palestinianization accordingly is the prevailing response to a state of perpetual war. Indeed, it *is* a state of war declared perpetual, a war made the normal state of affairs. Permanent war enables a state of emergency suspending all rights for the target population. But insofar as it is a permanent war, suspension is tantamount to evisceration: rights continue to exist in name only, shadow conceptions of a world lost, never to be reinstated. But if sovereignty is defined in terms of the power to define the exception, then turning the exception into the norm effectively eviscerates the

very grounds of sovereignty, as Wendy Brown has commented. As norm, as given, as the naturalized state of being, the exceptional ceases to be, well, exceptional, the power to define exceptionality is rendered irrelevant, powerless. In making war permanent, the (once-)sovereign has made itself dependent – on the Enemy, on maintaining the Enemy as such. The ground on which the sovereign stands, makes its stand, has become quicksand.

Israel has perfected the bifurcated condition its principal patron now tries to emulate: a permanent war elsewhere – its horrors hidden from view, complaint or criticism cordoned off behind the Wall or across the Ocean while the specter of peace and prosperity is maintained at home. But such a state – or states because the bifurcation necessitates always a doubling, two states of being, one here, the other there, one in peace but threatened always by the chaos beyond – requires, as Foucault says, that “truth functions exclusively as a weapon” in the relationship of force. Perpetual war licenses “a rationality of calculations, strategies and ruses.”

Force enables one to speak, to interpret the truth, to elevate one’s own proposals and claims to the status of truth while denouncing the other’s as lies, illusions, errors, as deluded even. Palestinianizing the racial thus involves also transforming truth into a relationship of force, speaking truth in the name of power represented racially. A group is racially branded, as Mahmood Mamdani reveals, when it is set apart as racially distinct thus rendering easier, and so more likely, its guiltless extinction, at least politically if not quite physically.

Since Sharon ascended to power by climbing the steps to Haram-al-Sharif in Jerusalem surrounded by surging rings of security guards, Israel has sought to dissolve, to destroy, the existence and self-determination of Palestinians as a people, politically, economically, socially, and culturally in a deliberate and deliberative process Baruch Kimmerling characterized as “politicide.” Thus, what I have been identifying as ethnoracial purging of Palestinians from green-line Israel has been joined to the logic of institutional politicide in the territories, culminating in almost complete social strangulation.

Dis-tilled landscapes

By 1948 Jewish Palestinians had metamorphosed into Israelis, increasingly independent and self-assertive. Jews everywhere were called to defend their right to exist as Jews in the wake of the real threat of a Final Solution

not yet finalized by realizing the State of Israel as the homeland of Jews anywhere. In the Promised Land, Jews made real the dream of Israel, made Jews everywhere proud by building a country unique in spirit, social commitment, and security for the globally insecure. But it did so in more than small part by moving into areas – villages, valleys, hillsides and city sections – left by Palestinians turned refugees, coming to inhabit the spaces fled if never quite abandoned. Transferring Palestinian place into Israeli space has been Israel’s life-long project, in the process marking such space with a new set of communal habits, other ways of living and being, other names in a different and differentiating language. Eviction was – is – also an *accentuation*, a shift in horizons of sharing as much as in their shape, of the boundaries as much symbolic as cartographic, in register as much as in registration.

Over the past half-century, then, Israel has managed to evaporate the Arab landscape by renaming, in Hebrew, places removed of Palestinian people though still haunted by the ghosts of those fled. Very often the names are those from the Old Testament. This evaporative renaming thus fabricates Israeli jurisdiction as an ancient biblical claim, reducing Palestinian insistence to return to a delusional, manic vision, to political propaganda, as former Jerusalem deputy mayor Meron Benvenisti characterizes it in his bitingly incisive study of this history of renomination.

Nadia Abu El-Haj points out that the Israeli investment in archaeology as a national interest represents not just a fascination with the past as past-time. Rather, it serves to stake an originary claim to the land, an unbroken material link to the antique imaginary, a legitimization of belonging, and the anchoring ground of the right to return. (*This is the heart of Abu El-Haj’s argument, one never addressed by her misleading critics. In this, the thrust of her argument is about recent Israeli history and the use of archaeology to advance a contemporary nationalist project, not a claim to a supposedly antique Holy Land unpeopled by Jews, which she nowhere contends.*) Renaming the landscape in antique terms, then, becomes the imprint of proprietorship. Visions of trumping rights to have been there always. If, as Ruth Kluger has remarked, “we start with what is left: the names of places,” then Palestinian beginnings are constantly eroded, upended.

As one example among many hundreds, Susan Slyomovics has written movingly and revealingly of how Ein Hod, an Israeli artist colony established in 1953 by Marcel Janco, one of Dada’s initiators, eventually replaced Ein Houd, a pre-existing Palestinian farming village south of Haifa.

This practice has been extended ever since by Jewish settlers throughout the West Bank, enclaving the Palestinian population into enclosed refugee camps in what might have been a common territory, prisoners in what is projected to be their own state. Israel's Samsonite smashing out of its originary claustrophobic territorial constraints has been purchased with almost every flexing at the cost of the increasingly imposed constraints of palestinianized claustrophobia.

The twenty-first century thus is not the first time Arab olive groves, old as the hills themselves, were shoveled away. If the clearing shovel is a tool of the State of Israel's founding, the bulldozer has become a tool of terror, a weapon of sometime (massive) destruction (now, if lopsidedly, on both sides) extending the cycle of violence between suicide bombings and demolished homes, shattered dreams both. Rachel Corrie's disfigured face serves as a haunting testament. Olive groves across stony terraces were stripped away from 1948 onwards, at first blush to make way for banana and citrus plantations, later for the modern marketplace of malls, and more recently yet for the dividing and divisive worlds of a Separation Wall.

Hamas leaders have been biblically "marked for death" in the shockingly honest, if ironic, phrasing of then-prime minister Sharon. And Palestinian families have been made to watch the demolition of their homes, in some cases whole apartment buildings, either where the buildings stand in the line of the Wall's progression or when a family member or building resident has been identified as a terrorist, the latter a practice of the Jewish Haganah (underground militia) dating back at least to late 1947. So as new settlement homes go up in the Palestinian territories – hundreds of new homes slated for the West Bank in October including those in the large, appropriately named settlement, Ariel – Palestinians are made to suffer through the tearing down of theirs. Construction rubble and garbage disposal from the consequent settlements are summarily dumped around Palestinian villages below, increasing the health risks of living in such close proximity to environmental hazards.

Biblical references to the angel of death fade beneath more recent images both of tattooed numbers and death camps *and* now also of demolished homes and the Star of David painted by soldiers on the walls of Ramallah, Nablus, and Jenin residential buildings, accompanied by the unit number of Israeli military battalions indicating the house had been searched. Lives reduced to rubble. Buildings marked for demolition. Bodies tagged for death. Worldly belongings reduced to longings. The stuff of suicidal motivations.

Large bombs are dropped from Israeli jets into dense metropolitan areas, terrorizing entire neighborhoods while targeting militant organizers for assassination. Every targeted assassination and its collateral killing, *like the counterpart suicide blasts*, conjures a furious political funeral turned revengeful political rally and a likely suicidal or missile explosion in urban Israel. Traces of homes lost, family fled or buried, hopes tattered, dreams destroyed, homeland now nothing more than someone else's hubris. The logic of deathscape and despair repeated in south Lebanon of late. Traces in the psyche matching traces in the landscape, the one a faint and faded resonance of the other. The apartheid state learned these lessons only at the cost of its own downfall.

The Separation Wall is at once a significant imposition of political control and a unilateral securing of additional territory for Israel as the line of the Wall is mapped in key areas deeper and deeper through Palestinian territory. Israel colonizes fertile fields and generous olive groves falling in areas of divergence between the Wall and green-line with little or no compensation to Palestinian proprietors. The Separation Wall accordingly is the equivalent of a massive, if reverse, enclosure act, transforming the West Bank into a permanent prison camp. The Wall interns both the heart of the Palestinian West Bank and encircles the sprawling refugee camps like Qalqilya and Tulkarm (for illustrative maps, see www.gush-shalom.org/thewall/index.html). Four Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem, totaling 55,000 residents, are being cut from the city, falling to the Wall's eastern side into the West Bank; at the same time, the Wall will incorporate Maaleh Adumim, the West Bank's largest Jewish settlement, into Jerusalem, adding 30,000 Jewish inhabitants to the city's population.

Israel already has the ability to close both the territories – the West Bank and Gaza – and any of their cities, villages or refugee camps at will, to cut off almost all entrance and exit. Gaza today is more or less a closed concentration camp, almost completely cut off from its exterior but for underground arms smuggling tunnels and the occasional detonation of the border fence allowing inhabitants to cross momentarily into Egypt to stock up on supplies. Consequently, 80 percent of Gazans are dependent to some extent on food aid. The Separation Wall (now accompanied by Israel's recent resettlement of Israelis from Gaza) is designed to make permanent those states of encirclement, of dislocation and immobility of the West Bank as well. The Wall is a monumental icon any future generation will grow up thinking a natural contour scarring the landscape, both seal and sign of social incarceration.

Far from a temporary arrangement, the Separation Wall, then, is the final line in the roadmap of Palestinian politics, supplement to the dots marking Jewish settlements throughout the highlands of the West Bank while expanding the territory of green-line Israel – of what officially counts as the State of Israel – by 10 to 15 percent. The Wall is carefully constructed not to constrict the 29 or so superhighways connecting the illegally established Jewish settlements with Israel proper. These ethnonational highways, restricted to Israelis, allow for quick traversal of the Palestinian landscape beneath, unbothered by the crawling humiliation of Palestinians whose journey between village and town normally an hour or two away can consume a hazardous couple of days negotiating endless roadblocks and the degrading and often destructive whims of military personnel.

Israelis – especially Jewish Israelis – living outside the Wall in Israel proper (but then, what is outside?), accordingly can go about the civilities of their daily affairs oblivious to the oppression of occupation or to the fact that Israeli civil society is predicated on the erasure of its counterpart in the Palestinian territories. In an age where mobility is the key to any economic activity, educational opportunity, and social relation, the Wall is the structure of death, symbolically and socially, economically and existentially.

The more the Wall goes up, psychologically and materially, the more it calls forth suicidal impulses. This perhaps gives a new sense to what Foucault, thinking of an earlier historical moment, has called “the suicidal state.” Even the Israeli prime minister now recognizes the challenge, American apologists like Alan Dershowitz notwithstanding. In the wake of the Anapolis meeting in late 2007 to revive two state negotiations, Olmert declared bluntly that if the two-state solution fails, “Israel is finished.” He continued: “We [will] face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights.” Curiously and contradictorily enough, the contemporary South African legacy reveals that as any ethnoracially predicated “two-state solution” dissolves and equal voting rights prevail, justice is promoted rather than perishes, and racial tensions fall away. This recognition strengthens the resolution that only a single state is conceivable.

Occupation comes to conjure a double entendre, the possibility of inhabiting a singular homeland the hint of which is simultaneously conceived and killed off. Suicidal nihilism is the Palestinian default mode in response to the Israeli default of racial branding and group area acts. Suicide attacks are destined to destroy the desirable alongside the discarded even as they are a final desperate demand for recognition in the face of a

slow, strangulating social death. Encircling imprisonment produces a desperation born of nothing left to lose.

At the latest count, fully one quarter of young Palestinian *men* declared a willingness to engage in this act of brutal finality. An educational counselor working in one of the West Bank refugee camps, upon inquiring of the children where they thought they would be in 20 years, was shocked at the unanimous response: “Buried,” they said. These are the children of “lost hope” who have been seen digging up the Separation Wall in sight of armed Israeli soldiers – weapons cocked, trigger fingers twitching – removing pieces of metal making up the Wall in supreme acts of carceral defiance. Where all hope of a better life is undermined, the only substitute for hopelessness is sought from the solace of an investment in the afterlife. That the path to an afterlife projected as meaningful is thought to lie in taking the lives one is against as one takes one’s own is simply a measure of the hopelessness, a perversion of the perversion. Where racial palestinianization is fueled in the name of an absolutist sense of security, it produces in the objects of its calculations not fear but defiance of death, not awe but anger, buried perhaps but buried alive, the (social) dead striking back. The Wall at best throws itself at effects, intensifying the very causes it is supposed to deflate.

Targeted assassinations, effectively extrajudicial executions, while aimed rhetorically at all Palestinians, seek in their immediate destructiveness officially and officiously to kill the individual targeted. They do not look to obliterate the ethnoracially identified group, no matter whether or not many Israelis desire Palestinians to disappear completely. And yet, in seven years of the Al Aqsa or second intifada, more than four times as many Palestinians as Israeli Jews have been killed, 60 to 80 percent of whom were not involved in armed actions against Israel or Israelis and almost 25 percent of whom are children (nearly ten times as many Palestinian as Israeli children have been killed since September 2000). The cycle of violent death, the performative aspects of mourning, resentment, bitterness, and the resolution of revenge, serve only to reinforce already hardened responses, on all sides.

Collateral damage, to paraphrase Mahmood Mamdani, is not an exception in the war on terrorism but the exaggeration of its very point. It sends a message not just to the organizers of terrorist acts but to any passive supporters, any bystanders, anyone silently appreciating or vaguely sympathizing with the work of the branded terrorist. Racial branding makes it thinkable, targeted assassinations actualize its instrumentalization,

disappearance its prevailing effect. Disappearance has collateral consequence not taken into account in the cost-benefit calculus of a governmentality as much about annexation as about occupation. Not unlike behavioral violations in the US, young teenagers, and in some instances even adolescents, are imprisoned by Israeli authorities for as long as a year for stone-throwing, their parents uninformed even of their arrest by Israeli soldiers almost as youthful.

"A young man's war it is," writes Eavan Boland in another context, "a young man's war"

Or so they say and so they go to wage
This struggle where, armored only in nightmare,
Every warrior is under age –
A son seeing each night leave, as father,
A man who may become the ancestor

These experiences are as likely to produce a seething disposition to suicide bombing upon release as a love of life.

The rationality of domination at the heart of racial palestinianization, then, is reckoned as the strategies of subjugation and techniques of terror, the calculation of insecurities, again political as much as physical, global as much as local. Benny Morris, Israel's best-known revisionist historian, captures this logic perfectly: "When the choice is between destroying or being destroyed," he insisted in clarification of his unstinting commitment to retaining Israeli domination, "it's better to destroy." If the legitimating logic is on one side of the bitter divide, the neutrality of Morris's formulation suggests that the logic is not restrictable, as though these bifurcated choices are the only or best ones available.

Central also to the rationality at work is the reckoning of rationalization and obfuscation, of rephrasing and reframing, of renaming and restating. This is a fragile rationality, indeed, as Foucault remarks more generally, one deeply insecure because always open to reversals, reprimands, recriminations, retaliations, revenge. The pathological insecurity at the heart of racial palestinianization, an insecurity that is simply the extreme embodiment of the characteristic insecurities of all racisms, calls forth the most pulverizing responses to any resistance as a way to cover over its own insecurities. "Society must be defended," to use Foucault's provocative phrasing, sealed from suicidal infiltration, configured against contamination, walled off from the weight of its own history, plastered against pollution.

Recalibrating resistance

The self-determining response of the Palestinian people was to catapult Hamas into power, the very group to which Israel was instrumental in giving birth, and which now it seeks most to destroy. And to do so less because Hamas has stood up to Israel than that, in the face of relentless Israeli attack, it was seen to succeed, at least within limit, where Arafat's Fatah had hopelessly failed. Hamas delivered social services, providing the garbage collection, medical treatment, and food supplements for the starving, services the long-ruling Palestinian Authority could only complain about not having the resources to provide. In the lead-up to its winning formal political power in a democratic election, Hamas – like Hizbullah in Lebanon – succeeded in making more bearable on the ground the otherwise excruciating everyday existence of ordinary Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

In both cases, Israel sought to recalibrate the cost of such commitment to groups on record calling for Israel's demise, with decidedly discounted because deadly results. This, in turn, has fueled as much bitter anger, frustration, and a social death wish as rejection of the apparent agenda represented by Hamas and Hizbullah. It has turned Palestinian against Palestinian (and to a degree Lebanese against Lebanese), in bitter infighting with no clear Palestinian beneficiaries beyond the immediacy of marginally more resources from the west.

Hamas and Hizbullah have been widely characterized recently as "states within states," in good part because of the services they offer, the sense of militarist self-defense they have self-consciously constructed, and the loyal following they have conjured. While there is a sense to this, it is oversimplistic, and predicates the picture on a contrast and competitor to "legitimate" and conventional state formations. I think it more compelling to understand both as representing robust, organized responses from the realm of civil society to the sort of state demise and destruction that an aggressive, militarized neoliberalism has come to signal for those state formations not passing the latter's test for legitimacy. Here, such organizations are as much complements as competitors to states shirking their longer-standing caretaker commitment in favor overwhelmingly of their purely state repressive functionalities. And as competitors for, and to, state power, they are more or less ruthlessly constrained, decimated, marginalized (as has been Hamas's experience since asserting its authority and power in Gaza).

Palestinianizing the Racial

Racial palestinianization is today among the most repressive, the most subjugating and degrading, the most deadly forms of racial targeting, branding, and rationalization, not least in the name of racelessness. It is, as Mandela has commented, a fate worse than apartheid. I have nominated it racial *palestinianization* rather than *israelification* (which would be more consistent with the other modes of racial regionalization I have identified) in order both to connect it to the representational and political histories of orientalism and to indicate its occupational singularities in the order of contemporary racial expressions and repressions. It may help to draw together in some semblance of coherence its various instrumentalities elaborated above, not all of which need be implemented for the modality to persist or prevail.

First, and perhaps most basically, racial palestinianization is committed to land clearance underpinned by an accompanying, if not pre-dating, moral eviction. Territorial clearance in Israel's case has been prompted historically in terms of "redemption of land." This heart-felt historico-moral claim to land redemption, to retrieving territory always already biblically "ours," distinguishes racial palestinianization from classic modes of settler colonialism. Reclamation through settlement is extended by renomination, the shrinkage of Palestinian proprietorship materialized in the disappearance of recognizable title.

Dispossession of homes and groves, territory and terraces, through outright demolition, confiscation, or expropriation manifests homelessness in both the immediate and more nationalist senses of the term, and ultimately a virtually perpetual and perhaps permanent exilic refugeedom. (Fully one quarter of the world's refugees are Palestinian, according to the United Nations.) Traces of lives once lived, of the fabric of lives lost, are etched into the landscape, faint lines seeped into the foundations of the victor's architecture overlaid, phantoms haunting the ecology of the possessor. This population expulsion and transfer, while in some ways not unlike "forced removals" under apartheid, distinguishes racial palestinianization from that modality also.

In his characteristically blunt way, Bennie Morris formulates the two options Israel has always posed to itself regarding Palestine and its people: Create an apartheid-like state, a "homeland," in which most all Palestinians are located with radically reduced rights and power and

excluded from property ownership, quality education, and economic opportunities while their cheap labor is exploited to benefit the Jewish minority. Or create a majority Jewish state in Israel by expelling all or the bulk of the Palestinian population preferably to Jordan, Egypt, and Syria but more lately simply to the lock-up facility that today is Palestine itself. Israel has always vacillated between these two modalities. More recently it has opted to forego exploitable Palestinian labor for its replacement by the likes of Filipinos while transferring or displacing as many Palestinians as the world will tolerate from Israeli territory to the carceral condition that is Palestine.

Israel has moved from a single state possibility to establishing a state and a shadow state. The first, overwhelmingly for Jews, tolerates really small Islamic, Christian, and Druze minorities. The shadow state for Palestinians largely lacks self-determination, freedom, a viable economic foundation, and any sort of security for its inhabitants. This is not so much the state form of apartheid as a distinct modality of the racial state in denial about its racial predication: racial palestinianization.

Racial palestinianization is likewise marked by the accompanying establishment and expansion of settlements outside the internationally recognized borders of Israel. Recent reports based on Israeli administration figures by the Israeli anti-occupation group Peace Now on Israeli settlement patterns in the occupied territories reveal that fully 40 percent of the 122 settlements are on land *owned* privately by Palestinians. Israel has allocated Palestinian land unilaterally to settlements. While only a little more than 10 percent of the land so allocated is actually used for settlements, 90 percent of the settlements spill over onto privately owned Palestinian property appropriated with no due compensation and no resistance from the Israeli state. Fully one-third of settlement spread now lies outside of official Israeli allocations.

Three settlements, the first two of which are suburban extensions of Jerusalem, Maaleh Adumim Givat Zeev, and Ariel, sit respectively on 85, 44, and 35 percent private Palestinian property. Israel half-heartedly contests the numbers, though not the fact of land expropriation, which has proceeded on classic Lockean principles. The well-known case of Migron is exemplary. Israeli settlers driving northwards in the West Bank from Jerusalem would regularly lose cell phone service in one mountainous bend of the Jewish-restricted Israeli highway. Fearing for their security, they petitioned to establish a phone antenna, which was placed on private if uninhabited Palestinian hilltop property. Land the Israeli petitioners had

previously tried to settle. A small number of settler families followed quickly, putting down roots on territory they claimed to be deserted, quickly blossoming to nearly 50 families and now 180 “residents.” One, Aviva Winter, declared to National Public Radio in the US that “You just feel that it’s so right, so natural to be here.” This land is our land, our birthright, the law of nature. Empty, for the taking. Guarded by the Israeli military, serviced by state ministries (water, roads, nursery, postal service). Settlement through an enclosure act.

However these claims are collectively settled through land swaps as part of a horizonless peace negotiation, this is postcolonial state extension by any other terms. Israel has perfected its logic. The authorized settlements are intended to be permanent, indestructible. They serve to extend Israel’s reach, to widen its width between the Mediterranean and Jordan, appease its more extreme citizens while providing relatively inexpensive, state-subsidized and protected bedroom communities to newer Israeli immigrants, while squeezing Palestinians yet further. These settlements, Israel’s equivalents of Ahwatukee in Arizona or Mesa in San Diego, emulate the American dream, often with American capital investment. But they overlook the increasing squalor of Palestinian daily life in the valleys below. And they are just as segregating: a poll of Jewish Israelis soon after Sharon split from the Likud Party and formed Kadima revealed that 68 percent preferred to live completely separated from Arabs, and over 40 percent would like completely segregated recreational facilities. Recent polls of Jewish Israelis indicate that three-quarters reject an Arab family as a neighbor, and half would refuse an Arab visitor. Among Jewish students, 75 percent believe Arabs are “uneducated, uncivilized, and unclean” (the reverse stereotypes, while notable, are considerably lower). Rooting out has started to trump weeding out. These enclosure acts approach born again apartness, in broad sweep if not in style and detailed substance.

The recognizably red-roofed summit settlements thus serve simultaneously as expanded Israeli residential terrain, offering a counter to the territorial claustrophobia of the homeland’s narrow waistline, alongside pervasive “eye-in-the sky” security oversight of palestinianized shantytowns otherwise known as refugee camps. Holding the high ground has long been the logic of militarized dominance and domination. Settlement – the land of ancient debts reclaimed, calling in the historical chips – is accompanied by extended encirclement of Palestinian towns and villages deemed threatening to Israeli wellbeing and security, cutting Palestinians off from one another, effectively undermining any possibility of Palestinian coherence.

Palestinian life is turned into a living hell of perpetual siege and seizure, death and destruction, restriction and constriction. Hence the trading off of settlements between Gaza (already an enlarged hyper-camp) and the West Bank, the settler nostalgia to sustain the former abandoned by the state to the geostrategic calculation to extend the latter.

These forms of totalizing repression, territorializing annexation, and social suffocation claim in the name of the security imperative complete control because convenient and profitable, politically and economically. They cohere with and within two other central, even foundational and interactive, features of racial palestinianization, namely, occupation and militarization. Occupation extends the possibility – the license, the logic – of Israel’s political economy as militaristically driven, as a war economy, as a military economic complex serviced by a state. The military orders Israel’s regime of truth, as the late Tanya Reinhart made clear shortly before her untimely passing, shaping both how Israelis understand themselves and how the state structures conditions of life and death, the more so in the wake of Ariel Sharon’s command. Occupation is both inevitable prompt and outcome of this militarily mobilized state self-conception, in a sense circular analytic implicatures of each other. Occupation is to Israel’s military as blood is to the heart, lubricant to the pump. It not only primes the pump; it requires the switch remain incessantly on, demanding that the pumping should not cease or slow down in a state geared to the exercise of its central instrumentality.

Occupation not only licenses every sort of invasive activity conceivable; it likewise seeks to control the air above, the land, and the below-ground materialities too. It accordingly enables the exploitation of all strategic resources of the territory occupied – land, water, labor, produce – with no commensurate respect for political, civil, environmental, or even the most basic of human rights. It is, as Meron Benvenisti characterizes it, a “de luxe occupation,” with Israel bearing little of the fiscal cost for running the territories, which they have managed to bill to the developed countries of the world, most notably the Europeans.

People are killed, either as direct or indirect targets, without trial or trepidation, accidentally or collaterally. Curfews are imposed, randomly, 24/7. Schools are restricted, universities shut down, businesses shuttered. Palestinian life has no more value than an input in the geopolitical calculus of securities and losses, bits of manipulable data in the supreme (and extreme) militarization of expertise. Zvika Fogel was Israeli Defence Force (IDF) chief of staff of the Southern Command (responsible for the

control of Gaza) from February 2000. In an interview late in 2007, he revealed that the IDF quite consciously “promoted an armed confrontation with the Palestinians” that inevitably resulted in the outbreak of the second intifada in September 2000. The point was to provide a cover for repeated repression, sustained encirclement, persistent control.

Occupation encourages destruction of local, organic social institutions and infrastructure, making it impossible for Palestinians, for the local inhabitants, to govern themselves. Indeed, the point is not simply that they not be self-governing but that they cease to be recognized as local, that they become alien, intruders in their own land. And that occupation be denied, legitimated as historical birthright, as rightful, self-righteous settlement, if one is to believe the likes of Ephraim Karsh.

In short, this is a new modality of occupying state formation made possible conceptually by permanent infantilization, philistinianization. Palestine has been marked as the first “permanently temporary” state, to use Eyal Weizman’s incisive characterization. State boundaries are rendered impermanent, flexible according to the occupier’s needs and whimsical determinations, visible only to the day’s militarized cartographic dictates. Permanent impermanence is made the marker of the very ethnoracial condition of the Palestinian, and through the Palestinian of the possibility of the Arab as such. Lebanon is the latest case in the transformation from the neoliberal political economy of debt creation and regulation to the necropolitical disciplining of an otherwise unruly population through the threat of destructive violence and ultimately immediate and painful death.

Palestinianization’s temporary temporality is taken as much as ontological condition as political-military condition. The Palestinian is always between, always ill-at-ease, homeless at home if never at home in his homelessness, if anyone really could be, the explicit embodiment of Levinasian facelessness. Shifting, shiftless, unreliable, untrustworthy, nowhere to go, nowhere to be, the persona of negativity, of negation, of death’s potential. He is the quintessential Nobody, as Memmi characterizes the figure of the colonized, the embodiment of enmity, almost already dead. The territory of the state, at any rate, is multiply divisible, broadly between three islands but more locally between multiplying settlements both overlooking and cutting off one local population from another. Indeed, the determination of the local, of who belongs and who does not, of the very meaning of occupier, is being rendered increasingly and deliberately, purposefully, ambiguous, doubtful. Possession is nine-tenths of belonging, of being, to twist a cliché.

This self-estrangement, this *unheimlich* homelessness, is instrumentalized through the elevation of the state’s security apparatus as primary mode of governmental rationality and instrumentality. The main modalities of the terrorizing state today include targeted assassinations, expulsions, threatened deportations, collateral damage, perpetual imprisonments and preventive detentions under the most trying conditions, accompanied by incessant provocations. Emergent leadership and political elites are constrained, if not killed. Proliferated checkpoints make Palestinian movement all but impossible, painfully snail-pace, and life miserable. Access especially to and within city centers is open and closed according to the calculation of security risks, military movements, political whim. The population is economically and politically isolated, starved of the means to even a modicum of stable social life. Access to work and workplaces, hospitals and education is severely restricted, availability of food, medicine, and other basic necessities carefully managed and manipulated. People die daily as much from debilitation as from bullets in numbers that don’t show up on the administrative daily roster of the dead.

Israel seems to have perfected the security apparatus of almost absolute surveillance predicated on what might usefully be called controlling chaos. The point is to promote panic among a population or crowd of people, at once observing – gaining insight into – the reactions of members of the multitude. Random attacks in and on depersonalized public places, invasions, unannounced searches, bombs apparently missing targets, purposeful collateral damage, deliberate targeted assassination of moderates.

Space itself is open to constant rearrangement. Borders and boundaries are shifted according to harassing security mandates, checkpoints appear and disappear momentarily, buildings are bulldozed at whim, paths created for militarizing purpose not just across landscapes but through Palestinians’ personal homes in a process Eyal Weizman theorizes as the *elastic geographies* of “hollow land.” All this always visited on those assumed to be ethnoracially distinct, as already possibly suspect, exhibiting habits, behavioral dispositions, and cultural expressions deemed peculiar. And all done as much as possible out of the presence of international media or monitors, giving rise for the most part to what Derek Gregory, in a different context, has called “war without witnesses.” The forced absence of neutral witnesses, of almost any observers other than embedded reporters, removes every barrier to violent interventions, targeted removals, terrorizing collective punishments, or directed collateral injuries or death.

The teleology of creating controlled chaos in enclosed environments is to force those present to resort to "natural instinct," to flush out those trying for what is considered terrorizing purposes to blend in by making manifest their cultural habits, their implicit difference, to uncover their hidden agenda. Crowd control becomes a matter of checking out reactions to the randomization of reaction in the face of dramatically unpredictable possibilities.

On a recent visit to Israel we had an impossibly early morning flight that required a 3 a.m. airport check-in. Expecting relative sleepiness at the airport, we were shocked to find ourselves in a terminal busier than any airport worldwide at the height of rush hour. Pressed between seven or eight layers of formal security passage from the drive into the airport until one boarded the flight were irregular lines of people pushing and pulling, stress-making uncertainties about what line one was in or what the line was for, where one was headed or how long it would take. Watching over all of this seemingly random chaos were further layers of all-seeing eyes, some mingling easily in the crowd, others overhead, picking out panic, distinguishing difference amidst sleep-deprived activity: a too quick movement, furtive looks, sweat on the brow, foam at the corners of the mouth, too obvious attempts to blend in, a mixed couple traveling under different names, on different national passports signaling different places of origin. Israel's vaunted security management apparatus, as Ella Zureik calls it, immediately available for export to the rest of the world. The civic equivalent, one might say, of carpet bombing Baghdad. Insecurity manifested through unnerving norms, shock and awe.

The territory of the targeted population is reduced to a state of perpetual siege through closure and curfews, encirclement and sanctions, invasion and repression. Walls are erected, barriers go up, gates are locked, roads blocked, access denied. All critical opposition, and any cross-societal solidarity, is rendered unpatriotic, their "perpetrators" considered traitorous and treacherous, subject to high crimes of treason and incarcerable without trial.

Ornery organic leaders are marginalized or disappeared, by one means or another, their replacements handpicked in the name of a democracy promised or imposed. "We want you to choose your leaders, only not him. Or him. Or him." He'll be good "so long as he has been trained in the west, one of us, understands our ways, is on our payroll." Democracy for the damned, but not of them, as the response to the Hamas electoral victory has more than amply evidenced. If this is the prevailing racial modality for

Palestinians, it is not, as I said, restricted to them, or to assertion only by Israel. As Melani McAlister has remarked regarding the United States, the point has been not merely to support Israel in its palestinianizing ventures, "to act with them," but to emulate Israel in circumstances deemed similar, "to act like them" vis-à-vis the Middle East and Muslims, and perhaps more generally too.

It just may be that we are all, more or less, potentially Palestinians today. But is it also that the potentiality for "palestinianizing" is in each of us too?

Ehud Olmert, Ariel Sharon's successor as Israeli prime minister, has committed Israel wholeheartedly to his predecessor's plan, a mix of containerized Palestinian abandonment alongside regulating the trickle of Palestinian traffic through funneled openings, cattle crossings, easily closed. The mix of containment and funneling perhaps hastening the pace of claustrophobia and heightening the tensions.

As Israel reinvaded Gaza in early July 2006, and was on the verge of intensely hostile action in Lebanon to curtail the activities of Hizbullah, long a needle in Israel's side, Olmert declared revealingly that "the inevitable historical process of separation between Israelis and Palestinians" cannot be stopped. The declaration of historical inevitability, it is known from long experience, must invariably be ensured by bombs, bullets, and boots on the ground. Ethnoracial separation can only be guaranteed with the alienating engagement of deathly weaponry. The viciousness of Israel's response to the sometimes malarial mosquitos of Hizbullah and Hamas buzzing about its nose – effectively 10 pairs of human eyes for every tasteless tooth or suicide sting – only signals the mania of Israel's segregating vision and the painful vacuity of its Palestinian policy (malaria of course can produce significant death; how it is treated will determine whether the treatment is worse than the cure).

All this is the logical ratiocination of a state mobilizing around militarism: Israel is not so much a state that has a military; rather, it is a leading example of a militarily fueled society that codifies and mobilizes a state in its image.

At the same time, Hizbullah has demonstrated that there are forms of effective or at least curtailing resistance both to boots on the ground and to aerial attacks. Eyal Weizman has recently shown how an Israeli military think-tank counter-intuitively mobilized the rhizomatic mobilities of Deleuzian theoretical implications, putting them to work to effect domination over densely populated and architecturally impenetrable Palestinian refugee camps such as Jenin and Balata by controlling the

"geometrical syntax" of those packed urban spaces. The "operational theory" at work is for the military to go underground, "to swarm" the city like insects, "walking through walls" of apartment buildings, breaking down barriers linking a kitchen in one lived building to a living room in another, and a bedroom in a third until through these "polycentric networks" lighting upon the targets of their operational opportunity, Hamas or Al Aqsa operatives.

Arguably successful in controlling the refugee camps, the Israeli military pressed into play this "dynamic relational force field" of "thanato-tactics" in invading south Lebanon in the summer of 2006, with decidedly disastrous effects. Highly disciplined and keenly observant Hizbullah fighters figured out the IDF's operational tactics, lay in waiting as a spider might for the swarm of ants and blew up the buildings entered by the Israeli special operations forces intent on walking through walls. The body count mounted, Israel resorted once again to the politically disastrous pursuit of cluster bombing from above with spiraling collateral damage and international recoil from the horrors of innocent death. Before long, but not before far too much carnage, Israel was forced to withdraw.

Similarly, Palestinians in Gaza have conjured a counter to Israel's bombing from above. In the redeployment of force inside Gaza in late 2006, Israel took to announcing that it would target for bombing apartment buildings or homes it claims to house arms caches supporting Hamas- or Fatah-connected guerillas. This announcement, the deific marking for death of the non-compliant sons of the philistines holding Israel hostage, is supposed to minimize collateral damage in the "enemy city" by clearing out the targeted Casbah corridor. But Palestinians, regardless of political affiliation and inspired by Hizbullah's strategies of resistance tinged perhaps with a tiny emergent strain of post-Gandhian anti-violence, have figured out an effective counter-tactics, a living shield set to disrupt the politics of death. When the target is announced a large crowd of Gaza inhabitants from near and far, women and children, young and old, ring the target building, swarming of a counter kind. The Israeli air strikes have been brought to a standstill at least momentarily by weapons of the weak, to use James Scott's telling phrase, undone by the political cost of wiping out large numbers of peaceful protestors. The instrumentalist force field of military calculation encounters the ethical force field of anti-violent global outrage. Hamas itself seems not to have understood its own possibilities. In this specific instance at least a political tactics of sustaining life outwitted a military

tactics trained only to protect familial life by producing the death of the familiar stranger, of the enemy.

In the 60 years of its existence Israel can boast extraordinary achievements: election after democratic election, if exercised by and for its citizens alone, which exclude those limited to the occupied territories; enormous industry and modernization, learning and upliftment; the flourishing of desert landscapes, a compelling health care system, great commitment of its citizens to one another and to the idea of the state; an awesome military machine. But it suffers also in these assertive commitments considerable shortcomings: rampant corruption; a bullying aggressiveness; maltreatment or neglect of a rising range of its own citizens; an awesome military machine. The question is whether those achievements now inevitably rest upon its excesses. What Israel has come best to be known for and what it exhausts itself defending is a persistent brutality in its occupying forces that knows little limit and rampant violations of international law. That occupational brutality – an occupation the force of which can only be brutal – requires, as I have argued, at basis a conceptual raciality to sustain it.

Racial Palestinianization

Finally, then, I need to say what it is that makes palestinianization racial. Palestinians are treated not *as if* a racial group, not simply *in the manner* of a racial group, but *as* a despised and demonic racial group. Struggling to maintain the semblance of a fair, judicious, and impartial governing overseer, Britain's Peel Commission, reporting to the League of Nations in 1937 on the Arab "disorders and disruptions" in Palestine of 1936, refers repeatedly to the "*racial antagonism*" between Jews and Arabs (Palestinians). The Commission characterizes Jews as "a highly intelligent and enterprising *race* backed by large financial resources" in contrast to Palestinians as "a comparatively poor, indigenous community, *on a different cultural level*" (my emphases). Addressing the Commission, William Ormsby-Gore, British Secretary of the Colonies at the time, while claiming "to give equal weight to the interests of those two deeply divided, race-conscious and civilisation-conscious peoples," nevertheless projects onto Jew and Arab standard racial figurations already long embodied by the likes of Hess and Herzl. Ormsby-Gore stressed that

from the point of view of the Jew, the Arab belongs to a backward people, to what they would call a different and a lower civilisation. From the point of view of the Arab, with his aristocratic ideas, the Jew is called by the name of "Yahoudi," which is a term of contempt.

The Israeli state and its political and military representatives continue to devalue, debilitate, denigrate, humiliate, exclude, and evict Palestinians morally and economically, legally, territorially. And it does so in the name of their ethno-naturalized or ethno-historicizing difference. Palestinians are all terrorists, hiding bombs to aim at Israel beneath their beds, lurking at the border ready to kidnap the stray Israeli soldier, scheming incessantly to obliterate the state of Israel (I am not making this up: these are positions expressed to me, at various levels of volubility, by family long living in Israel). Especially at politically fraught moments, Palestinians in particular, and Arabs more generally (non-Arab Muslims too, if Ahmadinejad is anything to go by), respond with equal contempt, and sometimes in explosive kind, each ratcheting up the anger and frustration of the other.

But between the humiliations and devastations, there are daily examples of dignified resistance, from facing down bulldozers by courageous Palestinian and Israeli peace groups alike in order to hold onto private Palestinian land to protests in villages and border crossings, of making uncomfortable in their offices Israeli bureaucrats administering dehumanizing edicts committed to splitting married couples and families and embarrassing young soldiers brutally enforcing border crossings. Here, perhaps, the fuel for coalitional antiracist social movements to emerge and enlarge, ultimately to flourish.

Israel has been founded and continues to be grounded on land and population clearance, on a rooting out that can never be more than a weeding out, on the ephemeralization of a people the ghostly tracings of which and whom can only continue to haunt Israel's landscape, cultural embodiment, and political calculation. And to haunt Israel's frustration at its incapacity to complete its monolithic mission, totalize its megalomaniacal vision, finalize its idiolectical solution to the Palestinian problem. Fueled by the psychic stress of melancholic negotiation in relation to the long-suffering experience of its European prehistory, Israel's founding and flourishing are at the same time embodiment and extension, resistance and repression, memorializing and masking of melancholic aggressivity, of aggression and aggravation. The immediate effect is no more or less than frustration bombing, intensifying the more it fails to produce its pronounced outcome.

Palestinians in particular, and Arabs more generically, are treated as a subjugated race, directly. Beaten in the name of devaluating stereotypes, concentrated in camps in the name of generalized security, displaced in the name of biblical right (effectively collapsing the historical into the transcendental, the naturalizing), killed in the name of retributive justice. A 2006 report in the mass-circulation Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharonot* has at least 25 percent of Israeli soldiers admitting to humiliating Palestinians just for the sake of it. Palestinians are ordered in the name of race rendered see-through, of a category in denial, of a conception unmarked because of a history cutting too close to the bone. This, in short, is born again racism revitalized, on the rebound.

Racial melancholia, Anne Cheng argues, is the suffering effected by the loss from failing to live up to the society's self-projection of democratic ideals. In mourning, Freud remarks, one understands the world to have suffered a loss; with melancholia, one experiences it as a loss of part of oneself, fixating on the sense of emptiness. Collective melancholia, I want to suggest by extension, is the exacerbated socio-psychic condition, the social stress, following from multiplier fixations and awkward hesitations: on the failure to realize these social ideals – of democracy, of morality, of justice; on the guilt attendant both to these failings and to the consequent denials "necessary" to sustain the fiction of the idealizations; on extending the historicist *fabrication* of ethnoracial distinction – whether articulated as natural inferiority or cultural difference – to shore up the façade of commitment to these ideals in the face of their imminent implosion; on the hesitations between embracing the fictions and their attendant rewards, at least totally, or letting go of them, giving them up, if not quite completely.

Raceless melancholia adds a twist. It screens off the violence of such exclusions even from conscious recognition at the cost of deepening the sense of one's (social) loss through denial, removing the terms of reference for a state the denial of which cannot be completely sustained. Hence the ongoing need to keep invoking the terms it is insisted (ought to) have (or have had) no reference. With melancholia we thus get the inevitable stresses on and of aggression and aggravation: in extending the exclusions and their terms of reference; in sustaining their conjoint denial; in looking repetitiously to reinstate legitimacy in the eyes of others, if not also oneself, while lamenting always its loss.

Melancholia often strikes too those trying to turn resistance into the pragmatics of grievance. For grievance all too readily – if not inevitably – fails to be fulfilling. This is so whether a grievance is formally upheld by the

courts or materialized in equalizing institutional access and effects, the materialities of institutional redress offering at best a salve but rarely a resolution to the psychic wounds of historical catastrophes. The fixation on the injury and its social recognition “culminates,” Freud says about melancholia more generally, “in a delusional expectation of punishment,” whether juridical or deific. The delusional expectation bespeaks a desire for fully recognized membership in a society the excluded intuitively know is incapable of it. Recognized, that is, as having social standing simultaneously as a member of the maligned racial group and as not merely such a member. Almost too much to ask of societies so fixated on the deniability of racial recognition they cannot help themselves but articulate?

*Americanizing palestinianization,
Palestinianizing americanization*

This critique of racial palestinianization is not to advocate for nor self-loathingly to desire Israel’s destruction, as so many bristlingly respond to any critical reflection on Israel’s *modus operandi*. I am concerned here insistently to question *not* Israel’s being, its right to exist, but rather its *forms of expression* and its *modes of self-insistence and enforcement*. I have been holding up to scrutiny, in short, the presumed singularity of Jewish ways of being on which the Israeli state is presumptuously predicated, a presumption that ironically reinscribes the restrictive, corrosive, even purging logic from which Jews historically have repeatedly fled. A two-state solution predicated on dismantling – effectively crippling – any of the cohering and enabling institutions of one partner state is tantamount to disabling one twin that the other might thrive.

Racial americanization and racial palestinianization thus are deeply related. If the former is a disposition to externalize death for the purposes of elevating life locally, the latter is a disposition to set for others life’s very distinct limits through death. Racial palestinianization involves the marking of a population as excess, as superfluous, while refusing to acknowledge, to see or conceive, the death and dominating destruction brought about under the force of racial americanization. Where racial americanization offers historical template and post facto legitimation, racial palestinianization now serves as embodied extension and testing ground for the implementation of its technologies and a trial balloon, a model among others, for how much a state-oiled military can get away with.

Sovereignty amounts in the final determination not just to the power or right to determine the state of exception, as Carl Schmitt so famously has put it. Achille Mbembe, following Foucault, emphasizes that it concerns even more basically power over the right to kill. No doubt the power over exception could be said to entail the power over killing. But the sovereign’s defining power over killing remains no matter the declaration of exceptionality. If every state killing is legitimated through the at least implicit declaration of exceptionality, exceptionality must either be instrumentally in service of sovereign power and not its ground, or it is simply moot. The sovereign’s defining power to kill accordingly must be more basic than the power over exceptionality.

America has sought to elevate itself to the self-declared world sovereign. Israel then is its troubled double, its frankensteinian shadow, at once mimic and model. This power over death, racially produced and performed, means nothing less than that sovereignty, historically, has manifested itself as the state of whiteness par excellence. Only now the sovereign power over death has become more tenuous, cut adrift from the anchor of classical racial conception, challenged by those willing as a social force to take their own lives as they take those of others in the name of a counter-history.

For a necropolitics gone global, the right to kill is no longer restricted to state institutionalities, challenged as they are now by their own necrophilic, suicidal spin-off action figures. Hobbes limits the sovereign’s power over killing – and as such sovereignty – by reserving to every rational being the right to protect oneself against all impending danger. Iraq and Israel-Palestine offer ample evidence of the sociological generalization of the Hobbesian limit case. One can only add, generalizing Gilad Atzmon’s deep insight, that these are not simply cases of neighbors not loving neighbors. Those so ready to inflict so much pain on others cannot possibly “like themselves either.” The implication of becoming murderous, with no reservation, no self-consciousness, no restraint, can only be a mania of the most debilitating, distorting, self-destructive sort.

America today, in contrast to European colonizing modalities of yesteryear and neocolonial shifts of the mid- to late twentieth century, is a regime, bent on shaping the occupied in its own image. It would not be too awkward to call this a *cloning* (perhaps more pressingly a *clonializing*) regime. Israel is its obedient if occasionally prodigal son, mixing the new modalities of cloned occupation with older settler forms of colonial domination. America seeks to mold the world in its own cultural-political image, to render disparate cultures and countries clones of itself, socially and

politically, legally and economically, culturally and axiologically. America the blueprint, sovereign power globally inscribed, the world replete with its more or less cloned variants. As Iraq most recently bares (*sic*) witness and despite some efforts to the contrary, one of the central outcomes of clonizing americanizations turns out to be a devolution into violent, ethnoracially driven separation. Segregation haunts the hand that feeds.

Born again racism gone global thus becomes the attempt to reimpose racial sovereignty in the face of the emerging global challenges to clonizing power. The artifice of racial homogenization is the necessary condition for effecting objectification, othering, and enmity that together form the substance of racial sovereignty. The model has been made most extremely palpable in the *vanishing* of an ethnoracially conceived population that Ghada Karmi has so painfully characterized in the case of the Palestinians. Social movements insistent on the project of heterogeneity – as much on the premises as the political economy, social architecture, and habitus – are committed to dissolving the cultures of racial restriction, disappearance, destruction, and death, their modes of thought and being, seeking to suffocate the stranglehold of racial sovereignty.

The elasticity of democracy in the face of heterogeneous challenges can be seen here, narrow and wide, at the edges and to the core. There are competing conceptions of democracy at work in this. On one hand, democracy as imposition, a democracy of the dominant, extending assumptions of racial historicism where those who have dominated suggest the unreadiness to govern themselves of those perceived as not like them, to claim independence, to shed itself of its own repressions and (pre-)occupations until the dominant clear the dominated, declaring them so ready. This is a democracy of loss imposed and immediately denied, loss manifested but unrecognized, the loss of evasions and facile apologies. These are partial and at least in part empty democracies, forced, despairing. I have been dealing in this chapter with the racial modalities predicated on this set of assumptions and motivations.

On the other hand, there are emergent democracies invigorated by taking their distance from their own more or less recent experiences with racial death, destruction, and domination. They seek in different and not always appealing ways, but seek nonetheless, to come to terms not simply with those unfortunate histories but more pressingly with the terms of vigorously interactive and transforming heterogeneities. Call this in general the democracy of determination mixed with the other side of denial, of dreams drummed up, often deferred, sometimes dashed.

There is loss here too, to be sure, taken up and evaded. But in the end they seek too the gain of national self-determination, casting away as best as possible from traditions of the dominant and imposed. The democracy of determination, determined and desiderative, seeks to break from a democracy of imposed domination, though nothing guarantees there won't be homegrown repressions in the wake of such a break and its attendant articulations. These are the themes with which the compelling film *La Nuit de la Vérité* (2004), for instance, grapples. They are the effects, the outcome of practices of self-willing and collective engagement, not only of resistance but of self-definition also by the racially regionalized in the face of their otherwise overwhelming repression and frustration, debilitating restrictions and oftentimes (self-)destructive reactions and retaliations. Such democracies – in post-apartheid South Africa, if a little uncertainly, more unevenly in the likes of Brazil, and from moment to lurching, destructive and sometimes self-destructive moment in Palestine pushing to break from the grip of Israel's making – seek to break as much with the conceptual architecture (in Eyal Weizman's sense in *Hollow Land*) of debilitating racial characterization as they do with the institutional political edifices built in their name. I turn to a variety of these complex, knotted cases in the chapters that follow.

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