

Behold, in Gaza, there is No New Year. All This for a Myth: We Have Lost Everything Beautiful

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"Another to haunt for all time. Oh to be able to stop the clock, turn back the hands, reverse the ticking, now and of history, for so much, of its recorded horrors of the "chronicle of lies agreed on."" —Felicity Arbuthnot, Global Research, January 5, 2024

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Behold, in Gaza, there is no new year, just old afflictions – life in tents without water or blankets, point-blank death for grandmothers and children, half the population starving, the broken and displaced "living out our nightmares before we even dream them" as Western leaders avow their genocidal fantasies. For Jews, writes Abe Louise Young, the times call for confronting "the killing myth" that is Israel, "an anathema to faith, an equation with an error: A country built on top of another country (that) is not the way home."

On Thursday, Tzipi Hotovely, Israeli ambassador to the U.K., [said](#) the quiet rabid part out loud when she argued Israel must destroy all of Gaza because "every school, every mosque, every second house" sits on a tunnel – even though most tunnels in Gaza were [built](#) decades ago by Israel – thus offering up on British national radio what critics agree is now an alarmingly common, clear "call for genocide." Her candor was grimly praised by U.K. journalist Robert Carter for exposing "how evil Israel's colonialist project is and what (its) true ambitions are – the total genocide and land theft of all Palestine." And so it goes. The Israeli assault on Gaza, as well as the West Bank, lurches bloodily on, with harrowing stories of mass executions of families, bodies left in the street for days under Israeli gunfire, prisoners forced to strip, adults going hungry to feed their kids, the forced departure of residents from their longtime "home, lemon trees, birds, words, books, world." "This year

has been very bad,” says a mother of five forced to flee to multiple schools. “When my daughters look at pictures from the past they start to cry. We have lost everything beautiful.”

Under the brutal, random orders of an Israeli military that views as “terrorists” anyone who doesn’t comply with the latest evacuation order, families are forced to repeatedly flee from home to home, neighborhood to neighborhood. Across Gaza City last month, that pitiless policy brought [multiple deaths](#). In one neighborhood, Moemen Raed al-Khaldi lay wounded and still for three days amidst the bodies of his dead relatives after soldiers suddenly stormed their house; they told the family to leave in Hebrew, which none of them understood, and in the ensuing confusion they shot dead his grandfather, grandmother, uncle, a pregnant woman and several others staying there. Nearby, his six year-old cousin also survived after soldiers shot his parents in front of him. In al-Rimal neighbourhood, soldiers ordered 24 residents of a building to evacuate; retired UN worker Kamel Mohammed Nofal was explaining that his four adult children, there with their spouses and nine children, were deaf and blind when soldiers shot him dead. At least 11 others were killed in al-Rimal, including an 8-year-old girl; the UN is [investigating](#) it as a(nother) war crime.

For those who survive, 90% have been displaced as Israel [calls for](#) evacuations from more and more areas, most recently around Khan Younis, where over 620,000 people once lived. Perhaps half of them have now [fled](#) to coastal Al-Mawasi, an empty, [narrow strip](#) of sand stretching south toward Rafah. Al-Mawasi was home to about 6,000, mostly Bedouin farmers and fishermen; today, hundreds of thousands of refugees live packed into makeshift tents. They stand in long lines for water, roam the streets looking for food or firewood – uprooting trees, collecting paper, taking down now-useless electrical poles – and despair that their children go to bed hungry and wake up cold. “We left the house crying for the (warmth) we left behind,” laments Muhammad Sadiq, who’d never fled Khan Younis in past wars, “and we went (to) a barren land with only sand.” Said 40-year-old mother Reem Al-Atrash, “People carry their tents, bedding, clothes and sorrows, and walk toward the unknown, weighed down by all their fears. Here we are just passers-by, living out our nightmares before we even dream them.”

Meanwhile, “Gaza is [starving](#).” In what aid workers call “the impossible reality of Gaza,” at least half the population is said to suffer from severe [hunger](#) – young children [face](#) the greatest risk – and all of it is classified in “a state of crisis,” with the highest share ever recorded of people facing “catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity.” Workers say many adults already go hungry so their kids can eat, but in the coming weeks at least 10,000 children under five could suffer “severe wasting,” the most life-threatening form of malnutrition: “The threat of dying from hunger is real.” Atrocities have also [spread](#) to the West Bank, where over 300 Palestinians, including 80 children, have been killed in [attacks](#) by soldiers and settlers, and the IDF have detained hundreds more “suspected of terrorist activities.” For Palestinians already long besieged and terrorized, says Nowar Nabil Diab, “Our memories are being erased.” He [mourns](#) his home, his sky, his morning with “a cup of tea and a feta sandwich” while listening to Lebanese singer Fairouz; now, he fears looking out a window. “Life is dwindling,” he says. “Fear is a loyal friend. It will never leave us.”

Still, amidst “the most savage war conducted in the 21st century against a civilian population,” one in which its perpetrator refuses to even consider ending a brutal occupation almost universally condemned, White House spokesperson John Kirby says there

is no U.S. plan to look into Israeli abuses and “we have not seen anything that would convince us we need to take a different approach (trying) to help Israel defend itself.” Shame, shame. They forget: “Never again” means “never again.” Recalling a Haitian resistance akin to that of Palestinians, some [cite](#) the Creole, “*Tout moun se moun*” – Every person is a person. For Jews today, [writes](#) Abe Louise Young, it is time to “look in the mirror.” “I was taught as a child to save money to plant trees in a desert called Israel, an imaginary place where a people without land discovered a land without people,” Young writes. Today, “I cannot celebrate or sing about this plot.” Instead, we must “tell of the lives stolen, of murdered fathers and mothers, teachers and bakers, fishermen and painters, newborns and toddlers, schoolchildren and teenagers, their hopes, skill, love and humor. This telling must be done.”

Here’s the entire piece. With thanks to [Vox Populi](#):

New Seeds For Old Stories

by Abe Louise Young.

“When I was a child, everything I heard & read about Israel was aspirational. We saved our quarters in cardboard boxes emblazoned, “Plant Trees In Israel!” People said, “Next year in Jerusalem!” to mean goodbye, to celebrate New Year’s Eve. We sang of *Yisrael* in plaintive prayers that seemed older than petrified wood. Being connected to something ancient made me feel more real (and when you are a little girl, many things conspire to make you feel unreal.)

Now, I understand that this Israel I learned of is a myth. *Yisrael* is a timeless spiritual space—the holy core, the center of everything. But Israel was built like a physics equation spliced into a river, a laboratory sent into a bloodstream. An equation with an error. A country built on top of another country, another culture it tried to bury, thinking the world too busy or guilty-feeling to care about the human beings living there; naming the Holocaust’s collective loss reason enough—good reason—to move in, to push out, with *carte blanche*.

An example: Today, I learn that the editor of the Jerusalem desk for the New York Times lives in a house built above a house stolen from a Palestinian editor and BBC Arabic Service journalist named Hasan Karmi. Hasan was forced under threat of death to leave his home, lemon trees, birds, words, books, world. The Karmi family became refugees from Palestine in 1948 so a Jew fleeing Nazi Europe could move into their house (free of charge), could call it his own address and refuge: Israel.

Did he use their plates? Their artwork? Did he keep or destroy Hasan’s library? Where are their family papers and embroideries? Their birds and their dog, Rex? The children’s clothes and toys? The president of Hebrew University inscribed his name on the facade. When the *New York Times* bought the new home built on top of it, the Karmi family had been erased.

I cannot celebrate or sing about this plot. The words that rise up are *unfair, unjust, unholy*.

I spoke to my father yesterday. He said, “There were very few Arabs in Israel when it was founded. Just a few, and they left willingly.” I said, “Dad, you’ve been lied to. Have

you heard of the Nakba?" "What is that?" he asked, "propaganda?" I order an oral history collection about the expulsion of 750,000 Arab people from Palestine to be sent to his doorstep, a Hanukkah present. He sends me *Start Up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle*. A miracle for whom?

Israel today denies that the people of Palestine exist as people. They are called dogs, human animals. How else to pretend that you did not steal their beds, their roofs, their gardens, doves, foods and dances, make them flee barefoot, execute them in lines against a wall? How else to pretend you do not confine them in prisons and a concentration camp, fly drones overhead that shoot bullets at anything that moves?

But people are not easy to erase. They write poems, keep archives, have children to tell stories to. They wear iron keys to the stone homes their great-grandparents built around their necks, even as they starve in plastic tents in the rain.

They share videos on Instagram of white phosphorus, made in Arkansas, burning through the legs of infants. They share videos of singing together while bombs drop, of baking bread on a metal plate held over burning paper as Israel starves them. They share videos of people they love dying, of mothers mourning, of babies and bodies pulled from rubble; they write new endings, they cry on camera. We hear the voices of Motaz, Plestia, Bisan around the globe; we read poems by Mosab, Rafaat, Naomi out loud.

What can we do? What can we do? How do we turn the hands of history, interrupt the seige? Around the world we call and plead with politicians to stop sending money and bombs to Israel, we hang ceasefire signs from buildings and overpasses, boycott, mass in millions to march, we watch our glowing phone screens and retch as we see Israeli snipers execute Palestinian children, soldiers press buttons to bomb mosques, bakeries, hospitals and universities. We cry out as we see the apartment buildings fall with families inside them, rage as we see Israeli soldiers laugh and dance with the lace underwear from dead women's dresser drawers.

All this for a myth. For stolen land. All this for a myth. For stolen land. To make a place for Holocaust survivors and atone for European crimes, to help Western presidents control the Middle East, and again, again, for white people's "safety" at the expense of brown people's lives.

Again. I was taught as a child to save money to plant trees in a desert called Israel, an imaginary place where a people without land discovered a land without people. Now I understand the killing myth, an anathema to faith

Israel, this is not the way home. Israel, we must look in the mirror. Yes: descendants of a holocaust immediately created another holocaust: oh painful, terrible truth. Oh repetition compulsion. Oh catastrophe. Truth tribunal, please commence; help us into a true story.

Those who continue to slaughter must be restrained by all nations of the world working together. The sacred, battered place must become one where people of any faith and race can live in freedom, without violence or apartheid, with equal rights to enjoy bread, love, children, the sea and the sunset, stories and buying tomatoes.

Each stolen home, each stolen acre of Palestine must be returned and every prisoner freed.

To tell of the lives stolen, of murdered fathers and mothers, teachers and bakers, fishermen and painters, newborns and toddlers, schoolchildren and teenagers, their hopes, skill, love and humor, will take many generations. This telling must be done. Each name of a soul taken must be spoken, engraved and gilded, embroidered with tatreez; each life must be grieved.

I was taught as a child to save money to plant trees in a desert called Israel, an imaginary place where a people without land discovered a land without people. Now I understand the killing myth, an anathema to faith. I want the money Jewish children save to go to the people of Palestine for five hundred years. I want all the years of the U.S. payments, \$318 billion to Israel, to pour into Palestinian hands as reparations. We must return what was stolen, heal what was harmed, apologize for every life ended. Let the next trees planted be peace groves, be olives and oranges watered by indigenous hands; protected by safe, loving, hands, tree-tending hands.

Let us learn from them how to live again on holy land.”

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